

Dissertation

**Negotiating Cultural Values
in Bi-national Relationships (...)**

(Volume I: Main Part)

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☞ *for mom* ☞

**Negotiating Cultural Values in Bi-national Relationships:
A Comparative Research on Children from German-Chinese Families**

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Research background and problem identification

Like love, family is a topic of eternal interest. Presumably, everyone will agree with the saying that each family has its own problems. Such a statement has existed since time immemorial and will certainly retain its significance no matter how societies develop. However, people seem to have become more familiar with a higher tempo of life as their normal routine since the turn of the millennium. Moreover, rapid development of technologies helps people get to know each other even within seconds. Kumbier and Schulz von Thun (2006: 11) argue that the globalization of the economy has undoubtedly strengthened the contacts between nations. Such a situation has provided people with great opportunities to meet others from different cultural backgrounds either abroad or within their home countries. Accordingly, not only for individuals but also for societies, confronting as well as negotiating with different types of cultures has become part of people's lives, especially of those living in multicultural societies. No matter for what reasons, people are leaving their homelands to travel, to study (like the author of this research), or to work overseas. This kind of situation nowadays has led to the appearance of a relatively new phenomenon: international "love" matches. Although their history can be traced back to biblical times, people in the past did not have as much opportunity to meet prospective partners from other lands as they do now. Distances are no longer barriers (Romano, 2001: xvi). This noticeable phenomenon has happened worldwide without consideration of what kind of nation it is.

The two nations with their respective socioeconomic and political systems, Germany and China are obviously involved in this situation. According to Hernandez (2006: 131), 4.5% of couples in Germany in which one of the partners possessed German citizenship were bi-national in the year of 2002. In China, it was reported that there were around 20.000 international couples more in 1997 than in the year 1990 (Geng,

2008: 269). Interestingly, the two nations have something in common in this respect in that German-Chinese relationships always figure in the statistics of bi-national love matches. Marriages between Chinese men from the gastronomy sector and German women were not unusual in the 1950s and 1960s (Flemming / Liang, 2007: 443-444). Although such marriages have their special positive sides that the mono-cultural families do not have, the huge cultural difference, especially in regard to educating children is likely to be a challenge for parents to face. German people emphasize the importance of being independent and tend to bring up their children in this way from an early age, for instance. By contrast, Chinese parents place more emphasis on teaching children to cultivate relationships.

Literature on this issue from these two countries also shows different situations. Research on migration has been mostly limited to immigrants as single persons. Unfortunately, still too few people are aware that migration is not a single project which concerns only one generation, but a project of families (Fuhrer / Uslucan, 2005: 7). Even so, research on migrants is much more than that of bi-national families as well as their children. Even in the metropolis of Berlin, public attention has so far hardly been focused on them in spite of the high percentage of bi-national / bi-cultural families (Curvello, 2006: 9). Related publications largely deal with the relationship to neighbors of Germany, e.g. Hernandez (2008): *“Sorry, honey, I understand only Spanish” - discussion on bicultural couples with example of German-Mexico*. The current publication of Schwantes (2009) offers a new dimension of this issue: German-Taiwanese families, whereas a comparative design between Germany and Taiwan is rather scarcely considered.

As to the situation in China, there is little information about bi-national families in modern society. Research on this issue at an academic level is seldom and largely deals with daily life issues of children’s growth, despite their national acknowledgement of the two publications of Long (2008), for instance. Therefore, it is hoped that the present research will make a contribution to the field. In addition, having been educated in a Chinese family for more than twenty years, then having

studied in Germany since the year 2002, the author of this research has personally experienced the collision of these two contrasting cultures. The way of Chinese thinking dominated in the first years in particular. But gradually it became clear that the local and the national culture and its customs had to be taken into account as well. This experience gave rise to a deep curiosity about those who were surrounded by these two cultures since birth. Thus both the objective and subjective reasons became the motivation to do this research.

1.2 Research ideas, objectives and questions

“It is most easy for two particular characters to encourage each other, but hardly possible to live together” (Zhou, 2009: 60). Accordingly, raising children is very likely to become a challenge for such people, those from different cultural backgrounds in particular. “*We were fine until the children came along* is a familiar refrain among many intercultural couples” (Romano, 2001: 113). As a matter of fact, negotiating cultural differences in parenting is influenced both by internal and external factors. But on the other hand, parents’ individual styles of parenting play a unique role in the process of children’s development of socializing (Hurrelmann, 2002).

Along with these understandings, this research aims to provide these two countries in question with firstly up-to-date information about German-Chinese families; secondly an analysis of parents’ way of coping with cultural difference; and finally recommendations on possible strategies for improving current situations from internal and external perspectives. To achieve those goals, the following questions are raised to be discussed intensively:

- How do German and Chinese parents put their ways of parenting into practice domestically?
- How do cultural, educational and language-related factors influence their way of parenting?

- What kind of disagreement / conflict do they face and what are their ways of negotiating?
- How could respective social backgrounds in these two countries be an influential factor for “foreign” parents to contact the local society and to help / hinder their practice of parenting?
- How could the related barriers be possibly overcome in order to effectively strengthen the interaction between bi-national families and the multicultural societies in which they are involved?

The current literature on intercultural relationships and children from bi-national families shows us that scholars working in different fields have made numerous efforts in this regard. Nevertheless, studies which were both comparative and empirical were, however, seldom. This project will include these two methods as its features. It is necessary to explain the traditional functions of comparative education, so that the two subjects of this research (German-Chinese families living in Germany or China) can be compared in a logical way. Hörner (1993), Döbert and Sroka (2004) stress the following functions of comparative studies:

- The idiographic function: looking for individual characteristics
- The quasi-Experimental function: looking for the universal
- The evolutionistic function: looking for developmental trends aiming at improving one’s own system
- The melioristic function: looking for better models

Accordingly, the idiographic and melioristic functions are used in this research to first find out respective features of those families in these two countries and then try to look for better models and practical strategies from which they could learn from each other. Although an analysis of the educational systems of these two countries is not an explicit aspect of this research, the characteristics of these systems are closely connected to the parents’ perceptions of their own upbringing. The melioristic function plays an important role in examining to what extent the parents are willing to learn from each other or they are determined to stick to their own opinions and

practices. This provides insight into the motivations of the parents as well as reasons for any changes which take place.

Looking at these two countries where the target groups of this research live, both differences and similarities exist. Lu (2006: 1-2) points out that China and Germany are located in the centre of Asia and Europe respectively. They have very different historical and cultural backgrounds. Although China is viewed as a developing country and Germany a developed country, they have something in common in spite of their differences. The two nations have created unique cultures in history and made their own contributions to the civilization of humanity. Lu (ibid) further argues that they have both experienced a hard time in the first half of the 20th century and both rapidly developed afterwards. Nowadays, each of them is an active body in its continent and plays an important role on the global stage. On the other hand, they also have their differences, their social transformation, for instance. An extra chapter is therefore dedicated to exploring their respective social changes during that period, for these changes provided significant codes to investigate the bi-national families in their countries effectively.

As another feature of this research, the qualitative method is of equal importance. Four different instruments are significant in the data collection. Since the majority of the children in this research were below school age, structured interviews with their parents were considered as the main way of collecting information. In addition, questionnaires and educational diaries were also prepared for the parents to collect additional information which the interviews might not include. In order to learn how far the children have got along with the two cultures of their parents, structured tests were especially prepared for them. All the research methods and outcome of the data collection can be found in detail in Chapter Four.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

Altogether there are seven chapters in this research. As the main part of this chapter, Chapter One, the following literature review focuses on intercultural relationships

from both historic and current perspectives. A brief history of German-Chinese relationships can be understood as the foundation of this research as a whole. This largely includes German colonial policy in the 19th century as well as the development of relations between these two countries in modern times. After that, a comparison of intercultural studies is made between non-Chinese and Chinese scholars. In fact, it provides an overview of their relatively similar research interests which have, however, been undertaken by scholars from different angles. Benefitting from the historical background and the current research-oriented positions the last part of the literature review shifts to the centre of this study: the family. The selected features and clichés of “Western” and “Eastern” families with special reference to Germany and China are the starting point in this subsection. To be precise, the example of the “Tiger Mother”, Amy Chua, whose parenting has currently aroused great attention in the “Western” and “Eastern” world, is discussed in detail, because the very representative practices as well as understanding of her parenting are related to the analysis section of this research.

Chapter Two presents the theoretical background and explanation of key terms. A variety of culture-related studies contributed by different scholars is under discussion. Key terms that directly or indirectly play an influential role in this research are subsequently clarified, e.g. cultural values; intercultural education.

As mentioned above, China and Germany have something in common in their social development. Chapter Three explores one of the most significant aspects which have become more and more important to their modern societies nowadays: multiculturalism. Different changes as well as existing issues in these two countries are categorized according to their closeness to this research, e.g. Opening-Up-Policy in China and bi-national families in Germany. Besides, the discussions of the two international conferences which were held in the capital cities of China and Germany respectively are viewed as the current input to this research.

Chapter Four, *research methods*, is the exploration of the previous section of *research ideas, objectives and questions*. This chapter focuses on the different methods of data

collection as well as their outcomes. They take us forward to the target group of this research: German-Chinese families.

In Chapter Five, findings of this research are shown. According to the order in which the interviews took place, the results of the families living in Germany come first. This section is followed by a presentation of the families living in China.

To conclude this comparative and empirical study, Chapter Six focuses on similarities and differences between the families in these two countries. Comparisons are made not only between the parents from these two different cultures, but also consider the impact of the respective place of residence, e.g. a comparison between the Chinese parents living in China and those living in Germany. This kind of comparison has enabled the research to gain a relatively deep comprehension of these families as well as the impact of the social backgrounds in which they are embedded.

Chapter Seven, the last chapter, is divided into two parts. The focus in part one is on the recommendations at different levels, which in fact interact with each other closely. They concern parents from bi-national families, school teachers and decision-makers. Part two summarizes some possible future study proposals that have arisen, to a certain degree, from the findings as well as the limitations of this current research.

1.4 Literature review of intercultural relationships

There is no doubt that research on children from bi-national families is not new. In fact, academic or non-academic publications about intercultural relationships can be more easily found than those which focus specifically on children. They have been written in different forms, e.g. biographies, autobiographies, etc. In this chapter, a chronological literature review is presented.

1.4.1 On the history of German-Chinese relationship with special reference to selected developments

The relationship between China and Germany has a century-long history, in spite of the geographical distance of around 8000 km. Their relationship, to a large extent, is

shown in three fields: political interactions, economic cooperation as well as academic and cultural exchange. All these factors have been dramatically influenced by the German colonial policy in the Chinese Shandong Province¹ (see the map below) from the year 1897 to 1914. Although it was a dark period in the Sino-German relationship, the outcome of the almost twenty-year colonial rule has been intensively argued by the Western and Eastern scholars. It would be impossible, therefore, to gain a broader understanding of the development of relations between these two countries without considering the colonial policy.



Map of China highlighting Shandong Province

1.4.1.1 German colonial policy in the 19th century

The history of political relations between China and Germany can be traced back to the 19th century. The fact that the navy of the German Empire², without any

¹ Shandong Province: located on the eastern coast of China, with an area of 156.700 km square and a population (2008) 94.000.000

² German Empire (1871-1918): one of the most powerful industrial economies in the world and collapsed following its military defeat in World War I

negotiation and warning, occupied most areas of the Shandong Province in China in November 1897 and that soon a ministerial area known as Kiautschou was created, became a turning point. In fact, interaction between German Prussia³ and the Chinese government with the aim of broadening economic relations as well as strengthening diplomatic and cultural association had been in existence for a long time. German military action definitely broke the previous relatively peaceful process (Mühlhahn⁴, 2005: 1-67).

Unlike the policy of consolidating the German position in Central Europe which was highlighted by the Prussian Prime Minister, Otto-von-Bismarck⁵, the diplomatic policy afterwards was greatly changed by his successors (Ye, 2008: 65). In comparison with the policy of Bismarck, the Emperor, Wilhelm II⁶, longed to create a German Empire as soon as possible. He pointed out that the Empire should catch up with other large countries, especially in the field of economic activities abroad. Besides, he had already in 1894 emphasized that once the other countries took action to occupy Chinese territory, Germany must react accordingly. Shortly afterwards, the German legion in Beijing of China announced for the first time that Kiautschou in Shandong Province could be seen as an option. As a result, in the following year the German navy established a stronghold in China (Mühlhahn, 2005: 74-84).

Domestically, Kiautschou of Shandong Province had been commercially and militarily used for already hundreds of years before the German occupation. It was not only a cultural but also an economic centre. Moreover, it functioned as one of the most important ports in China for the trade with South East Asia. Not surprisingly, its very special features satisfied the German desire for “establishing a commercial and navy stronghold along the Chinese sea” (Mühlhahn, 2005: 35). During the period

³ Prussia (1525-1947): a historic state originating from the Duchy Prussia, having substantial influence on German and European history

⁴ The original Chinese quotations were translated by the author of this research. This situation equally concerned other translations from the non-English literature in this research.

⁵ Otto-von-Bismarck (1815-1898): Prime Minister of Prussia (1862-1890), the first Chancellor of the German Empire in 1871, well known as “the Iron Chancellor” due to his powerful rule

⁶ Wilhelm II (1859-1914): the last German Emperor and King of Prussia (1888-1918)

from 1897 till 1914, the natural resources and the cheap labor force in Shandong Province were especially targeted by the colonialists. They suppressed and slaughtered the local people in order to achieve their goals. On the other hand, the Chinese local farmers and the working class did not give up, but expressed their opinions by means of demonstrations and strikes. Consequently, a number of German privileges in Shandong Province were gradually limited from the year 1910 (Mühlhahn, 2005: 36-212).

As there are always two sides of a coin, there are different points of view on the German colonial policy from the Westerners and the Easterners. From the Western scholars' point of view as a whole, they indicate that imperialism had a positive impact on the Chinese economy. Although it weakened Chinese political strength, it provided the society with new technology and motivation for reform (Mühlhahn, 2005). But on the other hand, Chinese politicians and historians viewed this event from another perspective. The foreign imperialism dramatically influenced and changed the economic development of Chinese history⁷. An introduction of technology could not be denied. Yet, it was still based on an unfair relationship which focused only on the side of German privileges. All in all, it goes without saying that the German colonialism was a dark period for the development of German-Chinese relationship. Its policy concerned not only the fields of politics, economy, military, diplomacy but also education and missionary work. No matter what the effect of the policy was at the time, it definitely offered meaningful codes for creating a normal and healthy relation in the future.

1.4.1.2 Political and economic developments in the 20th century

In the 20th century, the German-Chinese relationship in the political field basically experienced two different processes. Firstly, when the People's Republic of China was founded in the year of 1949, the two German states already existed: the Federal

⁷ Mühlhahn (2005: 12) quoted Mao Zedong

Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Soon after its foundation, China established diplomatic relations with the former GDR which was normally called East Germany. As a result, cooperation between these two communist nations started in almost every area including politics, economy, education and culture. By contrast, the Federal Republic of Germany, i.e. West Germany, was in complete isolation from China.

According to Zhao (2006: 349), during the 1950s and 1960s Chinese students were sent only to East Germany. Therefore, the cultural and the academic contact with West Germany barely existed for more than twenty years. Secondly, with the restoration of China's political seat in the United Nations in 1971, diplomatic relations with West Germany were eventually established in the following year. It indicated that a new page of history was opening. Wan and Tang (2006) pointed out that Mao Zedong⁸ met German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt⁹ in Beijing in 1975. Deng Xiaoping¹⁰ welcomed Chancellor Helmut Kohl¹¹ in 1984. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder¹² came to China in the year of 1999. Entering the new century, the relationship between these countries has been going smoothly due to the efforts of the new politicians. German Chancellor Angela Merkel¹³ was welcomed by the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao¹⁴ in Beijing in July 2010, which was already her fourth visit to China since 2006. All these events indicated that a healthy and steady political relationship between China and Germany has been successfully established. With regard to the economic relations between China and Europe, they can be traced back to the 1970s. Mette (2007: 445-447) states that the first group of Chinese traders going to Western Europe came from Qingtian, a city located in Zhejiang Province of South China. This city had a long tradition of making decorations from a special

⁸ Mao Zedong (1892-1976): the first President of China (1949-1959)

⁹ Helmut Schmidt (1918-): Chancellor of Germany (1974-1982)

¹⁰ Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997): Chairman of the Central Military Commission of China (1981-1989)

¹¹ Helmut Kohl (1930-): Chancellor of Germany (1982-1998)

¹² Gerhard Schroeder (1944-): Chancellor of Germany (1998-2005)

¹³ Angela Merkel (1954-): the current Chancellor of Germany since 2005

¹⁴ Wen Jiabao (1942-): the current Premier of China since 2003

material, soapstone. Traces of such traders can be found in the UK and France during the late 1870s. Inspired by the popularity of the oriental ornaments in Europe, they consequently became one of the first groups of Chinese migrants in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. In comparison with that, the Chinese in the gastronomy sector have been even more successful since World War II in Germany. The number of Chinese restaurants in Germany dramatically increased to around 3500 by the year 2000, since their first establishment in the early 1960s in the Federal State of North-Rhine Westphalia. (Flemming / Liang, 2007: 443-445).

1.4.1.3 Academic and cultural exchange: historic and current aspects

Apart from the political and economic interaction between China and Germany mentioned above, the history in the field of education seems to be the most fruitful one. During the seventeen-year German colonial rule (1897-1914), one university, four vocational schools, ten missionary schools and 26 public schools were established in China. Knowledge of the German language, history and scientific technology were introduced, in spite of the fact that “such cultural policy would be a means of strengthening the German political and economic effect” (Mühlhahn, 2005: 278-297). Moreover, the first group of Chinese who went to study in Germany arrived even earlier. In 1876, the government of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) sent seven officers to learn military skills in Germany. This event provided later groups of Chinese students with valuable experience (Ye, 2006: 715). Since then, traces of Chinese scholars, students and politicians can be easily found in Germany in almost every period of time.

More importantly, a great number of them contributed their knowledge to their home country. The former director of Beijing University, Cai YuanPei, for instance, was one of the most significant figures. He spent altogether six years learning and studying in Berlin, Leipzig and Hamburg in the 1900s. German advanced higher education was so impressive to him that gradually his experience of living and studying abroad gave him the idea of instigating educational reforms in China (Ye,

2006: 771-795). In addition, the first Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou EnLai, lived and conducted research in Europe, including Germany, France and the UK, for four years in the early 1920s (Qin, 2006: 3). Last but not least, the Chinese surgical expert, Qiu FaZu, dedicated his youth to his studies and career in Germany, as well. "I was living in Germany to study and work for exactly ten years (1937-1946), which was the period of World War II. The experience and the memory are so unforgettable that they still come to my mind nowadays" (Qiu, 2006: 200). Qiu was awarded the German Great Cross of Merit in 1985 for his assistance during war-time (Wan / Tang, 2006: 209). In the 1970s, China's relations with West Germany started to develop. For the first time, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) offered China ten scholarships. Therefore, Chinese scholars and students were sent to West Germany in 1974 for the first time (Zhao, 2006: 349). The Opening-Up-Policy of the late 1970s followed this direction so that more and more Chinese students were sent to Western countries. As far as countries in Europe are concerned, Germany is in top position to which most Chinese people have been sent or have chosen to do research or to study. There is no wonder that students from China make up the largest group among foreign students in Germany. More than 24,000 Chinese students registered at German universities in the year of 2004 (Oblau, 2006: 47). However, it is difficult to deeply examine the history of the Chinese studying in Germany since the Qing Dynasty because little academic research has been done so far in this field. More intensive research, therefore, is very much encouraged (Ye, 2006: 715).

1.4.2 Intercultural studies according to different scholars

1.4.2.1 Intercultural studies by non-Chinese scholars

In general, Western scholars have made numerous contributions to the issue of intercultural relationships. Their studies are insightful and deal with a wide range of ethnic groups.

O'Hearn (1998), for instance, gathered eighteen examples in which all authors are from bi-cultural backgrounds and live in the U.S. For instance, a writer was born in

England, raised in Canada and finally settled in Manhattan. Or an artist was originally from Vietnam and eventually immigrated in California. Based on people's own experiences, it turned out that the interaction between such people and the society in which they were living was the key for them to be accepted as well as for the natives to gain an open-minded understanding of immigrants. Friends, families and the society can be the source of strength, only if they are "mixing, accepting, extending and including" (See, 1998: 138).

By sharing people's personal experience, one author stated that children from intercultural marriages were, in fact, more concerned by their own identities than by those of their immigrant parents. "My mother never had to think about whether she was black. She was. I have to think about it, and turn the issue over in my mind, and gaze in the mirror and wonder, as I was so memorably asked, what I am" (Gladwell, 1998: 124). Moreover, from another vivid example of growing up in a multicultural environment (born in Hong Kong, raised in Asia and Europe and living in New York City), O'Hearn (1998) discovers that the skin color and place of birth are not actually the most accurate signs of identities. Cultural and racial amalgamation can create a new category in which origin and home are indeterminate.

By interviewing hundreds of couples in the U.S., Romano (2001) offers in-depth research on intercultural marriage. It was discovered that respondents fell into three main groups: those who are not very strongly tied to their own cultures; those who are less traditional or more adventuresome and those who are willing or anxious to venture a little further from the security and predictability of the familiar to marry across cultures (ibid:4). Altogether nineteen aspects of daily life were identified, such as religion, values and raising children, male-female roles and social class. These detailed discussions helped people to understand that intercultural couples should value the richness which can come from their lives instead of burdening themselves with integration they could not always accomplish. But on the other hand, patterns of the marriage were not actually from the same category, e.g. Japanese with American,

African American with Kenyan. As a result, suggestions given by such people might not be suitable for all kinds of marriages.

Unlike the United States, Germany is not traditionally an immigration country. Nevertheless, foreign workers have gradually been accepted by the public since the 1950s. They made a great contribution to the restoration of the German economy after World War II. According to Suvak and Herrmann (2008), at first they worked in the chemical and electronics industries and in corporations such as Ford, VW and BMW. The so-called “second industrial revolution” had an impact not only in the working places but also in the areas of daily lives. Experiences of immigrants in different generations have been carefully collected. However, they are restricted to immigrants living in West Germany.

Kumbier and Schulz von Thun (2008) examine the issue of intercultural relationships / communication with special reference to the study of psychology. Examples of cultural misunderstanding, multicultural irritations as well as logical solutions were presented. However, the circumstances under which the related problems appear are not categorized according to cultural identities.

To conclude, the above-mentioned discussions and findings about intercultural relations in Western countries have been available mostly in the form of autobiographies or biographies. Surely, they help people broaden their horizon. On the other hand, however, not much attention has been paid to studying the relations between two specific ethnic groups. Concerning German-Chinese relation alone, the findings again were moderate.

1.4.2.2 Intercultural studies by Chinese scholars

To a large degree, research on intercultural issues from Eastern countries, China in particular, can be divided into two parts: studies at the macro-level and at the micro-level. Geng (2008: 269) points out that there were few intercultural marriages in Mainland China before the year of 1978. This kind of marriage has become an option for open-minded people since the beginning of the 1980s. As a result, the number of

such marriages has increased year by year. The foreign spouses were from more than fifty countries among which the U.S., Canada and Australia were the three dominant nations. Later, people from East Asia, especially from Japan replaced the domination of North America. Statistics showed that the number of intercultural marriages in Shanghai increased from 396 in 1980 to 3182 in 2000¹⁵.

Apart from these general figures, superficial descriptions about German-Chinese relations were briefly mentioned in the related literature. The Chinese civil engineer, Li GuoHao, for instance, did research during the 1930s in Germany. He experienced that a German girl committed suicide, because her Chinese boyfriend was not accepted by her father. More dramatically, the German father shot the Chinese student when he visited the family after the girl's tragedy. "It indicates that for most of the German people, marriages with Chinese students are still unacceptable, because the cultural difference is too big. Furthermore, the living standard in China is low. It would be difficult for German wives to deal with" (Li, 2006: 196). The surgical expert Qiu, mentioned above, gives examples from his own marriage. Qiu (2006: 205) remembered that he did not dare to walk on the street or take buses with his German wife during the 1940s, since he had been unexpectedly checked by the police several times.

As far as German-Chinese families are concerned, the two female researchers, Long YingTai and Yimei Schwantes, have made their own contributions. Long (2005) shares the stories of her two sons with a German-Chinese background and comes to the conclusion that the children had successfully adopted the two cultures. They could speak the two languages well, for instance. Continuously, based on the discussion with her adult son, Long (2008) concludes that for children with bi-national background, it is hard to say which aspect of identity they are more concerned with: their own or those of their parents. Long's older son, for instance, always went to the international football team, instead of the German one, although he was fully aware of

¹⁵ Quoted by Geng (2008): Li (2006): The China's Forth Revolution of Marriage: Uncertainty became the largest characteristic. Journal of New Century

his German nationality. In fact, all of the discussions about the issue were based on the first hand experiences. However, it might be more useful, if the social background about China and Taiwan had been introduced, such as their school systems.

The comparative research about children with a German-Taiwanese background is another example. Schwantes (2009) examines 18 German-Taiwanese families in Munich. Parents from Taiwan and their children were the two target groups. Based on interviews and questionnaires, the researcher found out that the cognition of children's identities depended on how strongly their Taiwanese parents had integrated into the national's culture. All in all, the publications are remarkable. They help people acquire insightful knowledge of German-Taiwanese families and their children. However, there are limitations in these studies. As a matter of fact, the basic information about Taiwan and Germany was insufficient in Long's publications. Besides, not all the Taiwanese and none of the German parents were included in the research of Schwantes. It would be impossible, therefore, to acquire a complete understanding of the children's identities from these two different cultures. In fact, the educational level of the parents ranged from the middle school levels to the PhD. This kind of difference might weaken some of the findings as well. Last but not least, the age difference of the children in the study was large: from 10 to 29 (Schwantes, 2009: 107). In the present research, therefore, the historical backgrounds of German-Chinese relationships as well as the full participation of German and Chinese parents are considered as one of the most fundamental parts.

1.4.3 Selected features and clichés of “Western” and “Eastern” families

In order to continue exploring intercultural issues in a logical way, especially the aspect of bi-national families, this section concentrates on selected features and clichés of Western as well as Eastern families. As German-Chinese families are the target group in this research, characteristics from these two cultures are presented separately first. Instead of talking about parenting already, initially more emphasis is

placed on families. As a current example of how people have coped with two different cultures in the process of parenting, the “Tiger Mother” is subsequently discussed.

1.4.3.1 “Western” families with special reference to Germany

Surely, “Western” was and is not an easy word to be defined. Maletzke (1996: 38) stresses that “Western” was firstly a geographical definition, which was the opposite of “Eastern”. For a long time, people from Europe and North America have been considered as Westerners. As to Germany, it will not be possible to investigate issues of families, if the related situations before and after (re)unification in 1990 are not separately discussed. The main aspects are presented below.

First of all, the decrease in the birth rate changed the form of families. Hermanns and Hille (1987: 85) point out that a low birth rate is a characteristic in almost every industrial society. Already in the 19th century this situation could be found. Marriages were not offspring-oriented, which sharply contrasted with the related understanding in Eastern countries, especially in China. Consequently, in 1972 the number of deaths exceeded for the first time the number of newborns in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). “Germany has the highest population in Europe, with 82.1 million inhabitants; but the trend of demographic development is negative. This situation was aggravated by the dramatic demographic breakdown of East Germany (the former GDR), especially in the first years after reunification, and is still influencing German society” (Golz, 2005: 15-16). In 2007 Germany was in bottom position among the 27 countries of the EU on this issue. For every 1000 residents only 8.2 were born in 2008. Apart from the lowest birth rate, Germany also had the highest mortality rate: 10.3 of 1000 residents in the same year.

Secondly, contribution of all family members was stressed in German families. This was not only connected with the quality of family lives, but also with satisfaction of families. According to the comparative research on families between East Asia and Germany which was conducted by Boehnke and Rippl (1997), it is pointed out that the different distribution of roles between mother, father and child is in fact not the

key to guarantee satisfaction of a family, but it depends on the extent to which both parents and children put their effort into the family. In other words, the two-way investment of the couple is more important than the strict distribution of roles between men and women. Accordingly, children in the family are also seen as independent individuals who are supposed to make their own contributions. The quality of their independence is therefore strongly encouraged.

As to the related situation in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), the specific social background obviously played a significant part in children's education. Quiske (2000: 41) stresses that in the process of learning, children were supposed to be collective-oriented instead of individuals. Furthermore, the importance of society was more valued than a self-orientation in children's socialization. Hence, the goal was not the development of confident and critical personalities.

Last but not least, the relation between grandparents and their grandchildren is relatively looser in the German society, in comparison with the related situation in Eastern countries, China, for instance. There are different factors which might lead to such a phenomenon. Meischner (1997) discusses the influential factors in terms of their degrees of importance: distance of living, quality of relationship, ages of grandparents and their children and the regional structure. Concerning the role of grandparents in participating in caring for their grandchildren, different tendencies between East and West Germany were shown by the German Institute of Youth in the year of 1994: East Germany with 20% and West Germany with 30% (Meischner, 1997: 267-268). It indicates that German grandparents as a whole play a minor role in raising their grandchildren, despite the slight difference between the East and the West.

1.4.3.2 “Eastern” families with special reference to China

In comparison with Western families, families from Eastern countries, especially from China, do have some features which represent their own cultural and historical backgrounds. Moreover, certain traditional features have still been retained in modern Chinese society in spite of the rapid development of its economy. Largely, the distinctive features of Chinese families can be summarized by the following main aspects.

According to Meredith and Abbott (1995: 214), the foremost feature of traditional Chinese families is patriarchal. This certainly results from the ideology of Confucius in which the male constantly possessed a dominant position, the father and the eldest son in a family, for instance. Li (2010) also stresses that the Confucian philosophy is the “main pulse” of Chinese culture. In this philosophy, the different social division of men and women had already been suggested: men were responsible for external affairs and women were in charge of internal affairs. Qu (2009) investigates this issue from the traditional medical as well as the linguistic points of view and states that in ancient Chinese society the main task for men was to cultivate the ground.

This can be seen in the Chinese character of “male” (nán, in Chinese) which is shown as follows. It is made up of two parts. The upper one tián (in Chinese) means fields and the bottom one lì (in Chinese) stands for power (Qu, 2009: 101).

男 (nán) male

/ \

田 (tián) field 力 (lì) power

By contrast, the Chinese character of “female” (nǚ, in Chinese), particularly the ancient one, is also vivid. It looks like a woman who is kneeling on the ground with her hands naturally crossed in the front. The current and the ancient versions of this

character show that in relation to men's character of diligence which is strongly emphasized by the Chinese ancestors, modesty and tolerance are the more required qualities for the Chinese women (Qu, 2009: 105).

Female (nǚ)

/ \



current form

ancient form

The importance of children can be considered as another impressive characteristic in Chinese families. In Chinese history, it was admirable and a symbol for blessing when a family had many children. Due to the One-Child-Policy which was implemented in the 1980s in China, the only child has become the focus of attention of his / her parents and even the whole family. He / she is not only the link of the blood relation in the family but also the hope of his or her parents. If it is true that families are the main focus of Chinese people as a whole, their children are certainly the focus of that “focus”. As a result, Chinese parents have been willingly sacrificing themselves to ensure their children's development. No matter whether in history or in modern society, related examples are countless.

The famous story of “Three times moving house of Meng's mother,” for instance, has been learned by almost every Chinese people. Meng's mother moved house three times, until she found a suitable neighborhood for her son. It goes without saying that the success of the philosopher, Meng, was closely related to his mother's reasonable parenting. To cite contemporary examples, the parents of Lang Lang, the internationally acknowledged young pianist, and the parents of Ding JunHui, the

young master of international snooker championships, also decided to leave their hometowns with their children to support their children's careers.

As a matter of fact, the characteristic of filial piety in the Chinese families was closely connected with the previously mentioned feature. These two were inseparable. According to Meredith and Abbott (1995: 215), "Filial piety was a highly cherished value in the traditional Chinese family". Similarly, Wang (2008: 99) stresses that filial piety was the most important moral principle in traditional Chinese families. It came into existence already in the Shang Dynasty (16C. BC- 1066 BC) and became the universal norm of morality in the Zhou Dynasty (1066 BC- 221 BC). Basically, filial piety included respect for parents and obedience to them. When they reached old age, their children were expected to look after them till the last day of their lives. This was like a circle in which parents and their children closely depended on each other throughout their lives.

A similar argument could be found by Ye and Yang (2009), as well. The two scholars discuss this issue rather from a psychological angle. They point out that apart from the fact that filial piety in Chinese society is a kind of moral standard; it bears a multifunction of education, politics, religions and laws. It is the basis of the social fabric and the system of families. Besides, it is the source that people's relationships rely on.

1.4.3.3 Negotiating cultural values in bi-national families using the example of the “Tiger Mother”, Amy Chua

According to the above-mentioned discussions, it indicates that great differences exist between “Western” and “Eastern” families. Independence as well as individual value and space play an important part in German families, for instance. On the contrary, the authority of the parents and their children’s obedience to them are normally stressed in Chinese families. It is therefore most likely to be a tough challenge for the parents, if their children grow up in two different cultures at the same time. Presumably, the “Tiger Mother”, Amy Chua, is one of the most suitable examples of working on the issue of negotiating cultural values, since her recent publication at the beginning of 2011 dramatically aroused interest both in the Western and the Eastern worlds.

Although Amy Chua's book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (Chua, 2011) is not a scholarly investigation, it is worth trying to explore it from an academic perspective as, in spite of its non-academic character, the book has attracted the attention of both experts and non-experts in different fields. Politicians, educators and parents from different cultural backgrounds are talking about her book. This book has been translated into German and Chinese and has been intensively discussed in these two countries.

More importantly, Chua’s publication has touched the very significant issue of balancing parent/educator-oriented education and progressive education. These two different styles are still under discussion in Chinese and German societies. For the Chinese parents, children are seen as their hopes. The new generation has become more central to the whole family since the One-Child-Policy of the late 1970s. The status of children has in fact, been dominated by their parents and their school teachers because children are given little chance or even right to express their own interests. Zhou (2010: 73) is of the opinion that Chinese children’s dependence on their parents is so serious that they lack the ability to think and make decisions independently. The reasons for this do not lie in their nature, but are the consequence

of their upbringing and education as “education” as presented by Zhou includes parenting.

By contrast, progressive education (reform pedagogy) represents a totally different approach, in which children play the main role in this process. The importance of this kind of education / parenting is stressed by educators and parents in Western societies, German society being no exception. “The interest in ideas of the reform pedagogical movement from 1890 to 1933 has substantially increased since the beginning of the 1990s (in Germany)¹⁶. [...] One can recognize some of the essential features of the movement in the demands for more child-orientation, respect for individuality, project work, self-regulation, self-determination, and the education of an autonomous, social, democratic and humanistic person, etc.” (Golz, 1998: pp.189-194). One can imagine that it must be a huge challenge for someone who has to negotiate these two diametrically-opposed educational styles. Even if Chua cannot not be strictly considered to be Chinese¹⁷, one reality cannot be denied and that is that her Chinese roots have had a great impact on her character as well as her own way of parenting. “We¹⁸ brought Chinese food in thermoses to school. [...] we were required to speak Chinese at home. [...] We were never allowed to sleep over at our friends’ houses” (Chua, 2011: 16). Chua had no hesitation in passing on the same style of parenting to her daughters, the disapproval by mainstream society in her country of residence towards her methods notwithstanding. To sum up, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* provides a most pertinent contribution to the discussion of negotiating cultural values, especially in regard to the collision of East and West.

In order to “dissect” the “Tiger Mother” step by step, the following three aspects are discussed in depth. Firstly, the main features of Chua’s parenting and the factors of its formation are presented. Secondly, disagreements which happened in her family as

¹⁶ Addition of the author of this dissertation

¹⁷ She was born in the US after her parents immigrated to this country in the 1960s.

¹⁸ Chua and her sisters

well as her way of negotiating with it will follow. At the last, related discussions in the German and Chinese societies will be addressed.

1.4.3.3.1 Parenting of the “Tiger Mother” and factors of its formation

After looking at the first pages of Chua’s book, the strictness of her parenting could immediately be felt and made people’s eyes wide open, e.g. never allowing her daughter to watch TV, never allowing them to get any grade less than an A. Generally, such examples vividly embodied the way of Chinese parenting, especially under the title of that chapter: *The Chinese Mother*. “Although Jed¹⁹ and I didn’t explicitly negotiate the issue, we basically ended up adopting the Chinese parenting model in our household.” (Chua, 2011: 55) Based on this statement, it was assumed that Chua’s parenting in fact combines the characteristics of the traditional practice with her subconscious adoption of the Western mindset.

First of all, Chinese parenting dominated in this bi-national family: Chinese-American. The representative characteristics that most parents in China share could be easily found in the “Tiger Mother”: strict and future-oriented. She expected her daughters’ great achievement not only concerning their schoolwork but also the learning to play musical instruments. To achieve her expectation, Chua’s two daughters were constantly criticized, blamed and even threatened by their mother since they were small. This sounded incredible, for instance, “If the next time’s not perfect, I’m going to take all your stuffed animals and burn them!” (Chua, 2011: 28). What could be seen in that situation was simply her wish for success. Besides, like most Chinese parents, the traditional ones, in particular, Chua absolutely could not bear any disobedience of her children, because this opposed parents’ authority.

Secondly, the focus on her children’s future was another impressive aspect in the parenting of the “Tiger Mother”. This kind of thinking was closely connected with the goal of her parenting. The two daughters’ continuous achievement in music was the convincing proof. In Chua’s opinion, her parenting to her children was not only a

¹⁹ Chua’s husband: Jewish background (Chua, 2011: 6)

process of bringing them up, but more importantly, a kind of mission to carry on the success of her whole family. She directly pointed out such intention at the beginning of her book: “From the moment Sophia²⁰ was born [...], I was determined not to raise a soft, entitled child - not to let my family fall” (Chua, 2011: 22). Therefore, she understood childhood as a training period and a time to invest for her children’s future. As a consequence, the two daughters were fully occupied by doing their homework, practising their instruments and the Chinese language.

Last but certainly not least, the style of the “Tiger Mother”, to some extent, adopted some Western way of thinking which, it seemed, she had not realized at the beginning. Even if born as the second generation of immigrants in the family, the typical Chinese characteristics, such as less questioning but rather being obedient to the authority, were rooted in Chua. She clearly remembered during her studies that “I wasn’t naturally skeptical and questioning; I just wanted to write down everything the professor said and memorize it” (Chua, 2011: 31). Accordingly, she employed the very same method in her own parenting: “Look up every word you don’t know and memorize the exact definition” (Chua, 2011: 23). But on the other hand, Western openness instead of being reserved had equally a strong impact on her as well as the practice of her parenting: “I value cosmopolitanism, and to make sure the girls are exposed to different cultures, Jed and I always have taken them with us everywhere we traveled” (Chua, 2011: 87). It indicated that this active attitude played an influential part in the achievement of this Chinese mother as well as her children.

Certainly such an attitude alone would not have been enough for her success, because the following three factors must be included to explain her “secrets”. Factor one: it was her childhood education. The “Tiger Mother” herself was brought up in a strict way and she passed on almost the same model to her children, expectation of fluent Chinese, for instance. More remarkably, Chua supported such a childhood education and thought that was the source she gathered strength and confidence from. Factor

²⁰ Chua’s first daughter

two: it was the achievement of her parents, especially her father's. Chua spent a whole chapter in her book telling the history of her family. Being well aware of her parents' process of settling in the U.S. and their diligent pursuit of personal development, she was automatically provided with good examples to follow. Factor three: it was her own achievement. As the eldest child in the family, Chua came to realize her special role: "the one that everyone counts on and no one has to worry about. It's an honor to play that role" (Chua, 2011: 193). It suggested that such consciousness motivated her continuously and led to her personal success.

As a matter of fact, the success of these two generations in her family²¹ could be considered both as motivation and pressure for this Chinese mother. It seemed that the only acceptable way for her to be able to follow this "tradition" of her family was to educate an even more brilliant generation: "One of my greatest fears is family decline" (Chua, 2011: 20).

1.4.3.3.2 Disagreement in Chua's parenting and her ways of negotiating

The road of the parenting of the "Tiger Mother" was in fact not smooth. Disagreement and conflicts arose with almost every family member around her: her husband, her children, her parents, her mother-in-law and even herself. The extreme style of the parenting, including her understanding of hard-working childhood constantly challenged people's endurance. Besides, the entire social background as a whole did not support such a way of parenting at all which definitely made it more difficult for her. It would not be exaggerating to say that this Chinese mother was indeed a one-man band in this competition, while her opponents were all her family members and even the whole society. Directly, she poured out her feeling in the book as follows:

"Chinese parenting is incredibly lonely - at least if you're trying to do it in the West, where you're on your own. You have to go up against an entire value system - rooted in the Enlightenment, individual autonomy, child development theory, and the

²¹ The three junior sisters of Chua were equally successful in their own fields.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights - and there's no one you can talk to honestly, not even people you like and deeply respect" (Chua, 2011: 160-161).

No matter how successful the "Tiger Mother" was and what "tiger" in the traditional animal signs meant, she was more frequently involved in troublesome situations during her daughters' growing up. She started to realize the serious consequences of her parenting, especially when one of her children finally questioned her parenting goal by saying that "everything you say you do for me is actually for yourself" (Chua, 2011: 205) and publicly shouted back to her. This was the moment which made Chua reconsider her methods. In addition, such conflicts concerned not only the style of the parenting alone, but also the sensitive issue of her children's identities. Although both of them basically refused to be Chinese, their mother insisted on having another opinion. It was assumed that what Chua would like to stress to her children was the part of their Chinese origin instead of their social status.

In order to cope with the disagreements, a logical method was found by Chua. She summarized her own experience of living in a multicultural society and requested her children to carry it on: being willingly to "adapt". It suggested that in her opinion people should understand their own cultures from a global point of view and always be active to accept new elements. She stressed the combination of love with diligence as the key to success. Finally, she decided a "hybrid approach [...], the best of the two worlds" (Chua, 2011: 225) to continue her parenting of the traditional Chinese value of excellence and the Western focus on individuality.

1.4.3.3.3 Comments on the “Tiger Mother” with special reference to the German and Chinese discussions

In comparison with Long YingTai who also wrote her children’s stories in a bi-national family (German-Chinese) and even two books: *Child, slowly* (2008) and *Dear Andreas* (2008), Chua’s publication obviously aroused much more interest worldwide. Debates on her book took place both nationally and internationally. The two Chinese mothers both gained their higher education in the U.S. and became professors afterwards. Besides, Long’s social status seemed even higher than Chua’s: the first Minister of Culture in the City of Taipei in Taiwan. Why did the reaction to their publications make a big difference? The research showed that the Chinese language used by Long for her books was in fact a minor factor for not having more readers. By contrast, Chua’s book was in English. More significantly, she not only told stories of her families but also deeply discussed features of both Chinese and Western parenting and made numerous comparisons between these two.

As a matter of fact one of the distinguishing differences between the Eastern and Western education / parenting is children’s role in the process of learning, namely, whether they are the passive followers of textbooks or the active learners. Ellis and Fouts (1996: 41) clarify that “a child-centered approach to teaching and learning is one that shifts the center of gravity from the teacher to the student. An outcome of progressivism, child-centered education invokes the so-called doctrine of interest which states basically that a child should be allowed to study whatever he / she wants to study and the teacher’s role is to facilitate the child’s interest.”

Although the German translation seemed to consider the “Tiger Mother” as a positive example, e.g. *The Mother of Success*²², what they would like to point out was the current unchanged way of learning in modern China and in parallel to stress the importance of a child-oriented education as a whole. The history of this kind of understanding in German society can be traced back to the 19th century: progressive

²² German translation of the title of Chua’s book: *Die Mutter des Erfolgs*

education. It was regarded as a historic epoch (1890-1933) in which a movement of theory started and a type of new practice was employed. In fact, those practices were not really new, but were the realization of the traditional motives and models of reforms in a dramatically changed context of the social education (Oelkers, 1992: 9). Skiera (2003: V) also argues that there are shared basic motives of education, despite the different lines of reforms and arrangement for school:

- Children-oriented questions, requirements and interests instead of the strict domination of learning plans (“child-centered education”)
- New definitions of learning as an active, creative, independent, life-connected and natural practice instead of the domination of the passive forms of learning
- “New schools” as a model of good, harmonious and fair lives, instead of their character of pressure of “old schools”
- Education of “complete people” with their intellectual, physical and emotional abilities and possibilities, instead of the overweight intellectual learning

All these shared motives suggested that learning was naturally a kind of enjoyment and children were supposed to play the main role in this activity. In relation to the first motive of education, Gläser (1920: 77) clearly states that child-centered education indicates the acknowledgement of children’s rights. What a child requests and his / her first and top request was that people took it seriously.

Feedback from Mainland China on the “Tiger Mother” was diverse. Even so, a supportive voice could hardly be heard. The main focus was on the fact that Chua’s parenting made people reconsider Chinese education as a whole. The reality showed, however, that few parents in China would treat their children like the “Tiger Mother”, although they also expected successful school performance from their children. The example of Chua could not therefore totally represent Chinese parenting, because her model was based on the setting of a Western society and might not be suitable for all Chinese children living in China. On the other hand, what the readers seemed to have overlooked was the fact that Chua’s combination of strictness and love was a crucial factor in her parenting. For the Chinese parents, what they also have to keep in mind

is that children should not simply be viewed as immature adults. They have their internal values. Like every period in one's life, childhood has its specific values. What education should achieve is to provide children with a happy and meaningful childhood, in order to lay a strong foundation for their future lives (Zhou, 2010: 4-5). In fact, the most valuable effect of Chua's book is that it offers a platform for international exchange and discussion on the issue of parenting. Therefore, there is no need to purposefully set an Eastern model against Western styles. For Chinese parents, maybe especially for mothers, what they are supposed to do is not to copy the way of the "Tiger Mother". Instead, they need to think about what is missing in their own parenting.

1.5 Summary

Although it was initially only discussed in the field of business, it has become universally more and more important to deal with the issue of negotiating cultural values. This chapter largely offers an overview of related publications which are crucial to the discussion of coping with cultural differences in bi-national / international relationships. This was, in fact, the main reason for choosing "negotiating" as the main focus of the present research. In other words, negotiation and relationship are closely connected. McGinn (2006) argues that relationships have become a common theme in negotiation research. Negotiations affect and are affected by the form and content of the relationship between the parties.

In addition, Thompson (2006: 2) also points out that in the process of negotiating most people fail to reach integrative agreements which lead to mutually beneficial outcomes that satisfy both parties' interests. Such a statement has undoubtedly a close relationship with this current research, namely, to illuminate the outcomes of the negotiation processes between the parents. If they do not reach integrative agreements, what alternatives develop?

The above-mentioned literature shows that the issue of intercultural relationships has a long history, the German-Chinese relationship, for example. Its implication has

gradually broadened nowadays. What people have to deal with is not only relationships between nations, but also within their own families, bi-national families, in particular. Obviously, such a phenomenon is strong evidence of societal development as well as an urgent task for researchers to investigate. Yet, most of the above-mentioned research seems to spend more time describing the issues rather than working on the reasons behind the “events”. One of the reasons may be that the research is limited to one certain perspective, rather than exploring the issues in different ways. This current research, therefore, would like to widen the scope by paying equal attention to identifying the features / problems of the German-Chinese families and to revealing the reasons

Chapter Two

Theoretical background and explanation of key terms

2.1 Aspects of cultural values and culture-related research

“Culture” is one of the words that people frequently mention nowadays. It is, however, not always clear what it really means. Many definitions of “culture” indicate that its implication varies from context to context and user to user (Maletzke, 1996: 15). Cultural values, presumably the most central part of a kind of culture, have been discussed by authors in different ways, e.g. Schwartz and Lewis. This section presents some cultural studies which have been done by different researchers. Their versions of culture play an influential role in this research. In addition, a close eye is kept on the authors’ understanding of German and Chinese cultures.

2.1.1 Cultural dimensions and cultural value orientations according to Schwartz

Three cultural dimensions were summarized in Schwartz’s theory. In relation to the issue of the nature of relations or boundaries between the person and the group, a dimension of autonomy versus embeddedness was summed up by Schwartz (2006). People in the culture of autonomy are understood as autonomous and express their own preference and feelings. This kind of culture can be divided into two types: intellectual autonomy and affective autonomy. The former encourages to pursue one’s own ideas and intellectual directions independently. The latter encourages people to affectively pursue positive experience for themselves, e.g. pleasure and an exciting life (ibid: 140). By contrast, people in the culture of embeddedness are seen as embedded in their collectivity. The meaning of their lives is closely connectedly with their social relationships. It arises from identifying with the groups in which they are involved, and striving for their shared goals of life. The representative values in this culture included social order, obedience and respect for traditions.

The dimension of egalitarianism versus hierarchy is derived from the second societal issue of how to guarantee people to behave in a responsible manner to preserve the social fabric. According to Schwartz (ibid: 140-141), egalitarianism and hierarchy are two contrasting ways to deal with this problem. The culture of egalitarianism emphasizes people's awareness of their moral equalities. As human beings, they share basic interests and feel concern for everyone's welfare. Equality, social justice and responsibility are considered as the important values in this culture. Hierarchy is seen as the opposite of egalitarianism in this dimension. It is described as "the unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources as legitimate. People are socialized to take the hierarchical distribution of roles for granted and to comply with obligations and rules attached to their roles" (ibid: 141). Typical values in the culture of hierarchy are social power, authority and humility.

As the starting point for the dimension of harmony versus mastery, the third societal issue is addressed: how people manage their relations to the natural and the social world. Two different attitudes to this issue formed this dimension. The culture of harmony tries to understand the world and to appreciate it as it is, instead of making changes. A world in peace and unity, for instance, are typical values in this culture.

On the contrary, the culture of mastery encourages active self-assertion in order to master the natural as well as the social world, and to achieve groups of personal goals. In this culture, values like ambition and competence are strongly highlighted.

All in all, to each above-mentioned social issue, alternative responses are given by means of the three dimensions of culture. Specific cultural values can be found in every dimension. The following table was made in order to gain a complex review of these dimensions in a clearer way.

Table: Three cultural dimensions and their typical values

<u>Dimension I</u>	Autonomy	vs.	Embeddedness
	/		↓
	Intellectual	\	
		Affective	
	↓	↓	
<u>Values</u>	Broadmindedness	Pleasure	Social order
	Curiosity	Exciting life	Obedience
<u>Dimension II</u>	Egalitarianism	vs.	Hierarchy
	↓		↓
<u>Values</u>	Equality		Authority
	Social justice		Humility
<u>Dimension III</u>	Harmony	vs.	Mastery
	↓		↓
<u>Values</u>	World with peace		Success
	Unity with nature		Competence

Schwartz (2006) stresses that those different cultural value orientations are interrelated, although they belong to different categories. Studying their emphases is therefore an efficient way to characterize cultures. Based on examining 76 national cultures worldwide with the help of the three cultural dimensions, seven different orientations of cultural values are presented. These are the cultures of West Europe, English-speaking, Confucian, Africa and the Middle East, South Africa, East Europe, and Latin America. A brief explanation of each culture will be given as follows.

Culture of West Europe emphasizes intellectual autonomy, egalitarianism and harmony rather than hierarchy and embeddedness. But cultural differences within its region exist, due to the respective historical and social backgrounds (ibid: 158). Cultures in English-speaking regions are viewed as high in affective autonomy and mastery, but low in harmony and embeddedness.

In Confucian culture, a combination of cultural orientations is found. Schwartz (2006) argues that a “heavy” emphasis on hierarchy and mastery are connected in this culture. But in fact mastery and harmony are of equal importance in Confucian thought as

well. Unity between sky, earth and human beings in peace was understood as full harmony in Chinese history. Besides, it emphasizes “embeddedness more than all the European and American cultures” (ibid: 159).

In Africa and the Middle East, their cultural values are considered as high in embeddedness and low in autonomy. This indicates that people living there try to find meaning of their lives largely through their social relationships. They prefer to protect solidarity and traditional orders rather than cultivating their individual uniqueness (ibid: 160).

As the fifth cultural grouping, cultural orientations in South Asia are understood as high in hierarchy and embeddedness, but low in autonomy and egalitarianism. It is assumed therefore that people in this region are supposed to fulfill their obligations and to obey expectations from those in higher positions. In addition, humility and obedience are equally stressed by a hierarchical society (ibid: 160).

Compared with cultural orientations in Western Europe and the US, embeddedness is seen as higher in East European culture. But the degree to which this is so in this aspect is lower than in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Cultures in East Europe vary in hierarchy, mastery and harmony substantially.

Latin American culture, the last cultural grouping in the category, is described as high in hierarchy and embeddedness, but low in autonomy. It is close to the average of all the seven orientations of cultural values (ibid: 160-161).

Regarding the factors in relation to cultural orientations, socioeconomic, political and demographic factors are those which have impact on culture as well as being influenced by it. In order to demonstrate their relations, socioeconomic development, level of democracy and family / household size were chosen as measurements to be deeply discussed. After examining related statistics of countries worldwide, Schwartz (2006: 163-165) points out that cultural emphases on autonomy and egalitarianism predict increases in democratization. However, the prior level of democracy would not have an impact on cultural values, if development is controlled. As to the influence of demography on family/household size, it appears that Schwartz (2006)

investigates it in more detail. He examines average family/household size of countries worldwide and argues that cultural value orientations are strongly related to family size, for instance, the larger the average family/household size, the greater the cultural emphasis on embeddedness, hierarchy and mastery values.

On the other hand, family / household size influences culture as well. In fact, social norms play an important part in their relations, because they reflect what is normally required for families to function well. Typical features of traditional Eastern families can easily be found in Schwartz's arguments. They state that large households emphasize obedience to authority, conformity to social norms and fulfillment of role obligations unquestioningly. This indicates that such families discourage permitting family members to make personal decisions and pursue their own interests (ibid: 165-166).

More significantly, family size influences all the three cultural dimensions. Equally the three dimensions predict changes in household size. Smaller families increase autonomy values and promote decrease in family size, for instance. Decrease in family size happens, as far as the socioeconomic development is concerned. "The greatest reductions in household size have occurred in China" (ibid: 168).

What would be the consequences of those cultural orientations? Women's positions in a society and selected social attitudes and behaviors are under discussion in order to examine consequences of cultural orientations. According to Schwartz (2006), women's equality as well as their opportunities for autonomous decision-making is one domain in which cultural orientations influence social practices. For example, cultures which stress autonomy and egalitarianism rather than embeddedness and hierarchical and role-based norms can more easily promote women's equality. They would have more opportunities to become more independent and follow their own interests²³. Altogether three main categories are discussed to explore relations of cultural orientations with social attitudes in the research of Schwartz (2006): quality

²³ This was based on the survey of women's equality in 69 countries worldwide in four domains: social, health, education and employment in 1988 (Population Crisis Committee).

for children to learn, e.g. obedience and hard work; conventional morality, “must respect parents regardless of qualities and faults”, for instance; and tolerance for out-group members, e.g. immigrant / foreign workers as neighbors. Schwartz (ibid: 170-173) argues that people from embedded and hierarchical cultural backgrounds prefer obedience, hard work and unconditional respect for their parents. Usually, they strongly oppose behaviors that threaten traditional families.

Moreover, it is shown that readiness to accept immigrant / foreign workers as neighbors is lower in cultures of embeddedness and hierarchy than those of autonomy and egalitarianism, because the former cultures are likely to fear exposure to values, norms and traditions that differ from their own. As far as the related attitudes towards immigration in European societies²⁴ are concerned, cultures which stress autonomy and egalitarianism also perform more positively in acceptance of immigrants, as “the two cultural dimensions emphasize openness to tolerance for what is new and different as well as treating others as moral equals” (ibid: 174).

Based on the three critical issues which almost every society has to deal with, Schwartz (2006) presents three cultural dimensions and seven orientations of cultural values. They are connected to each other and interact with each other. More than 70 national cultures worldwide are divided into the seven cultural groupings which include the two different cultures in this current research. It has become clear that Germany and China have contrasting cultural orientations, after features and cultural emphasis of the cultural grouping were discussed in detail from a theoretical point of view. This certainly offered an important clue to better explore the formation of those parents’ parenting practice from these two nations as well as their focus later on.

²⁴ Fifteen West European countries were included in Schwartz’s analysis.

2.1.2 Negotiating cultural differences: “when cultures collide” according to Lewis

Lewis’s research on cultural differences is a wide-ranging discussion. It can be divided into three large sections which explore culture and its differences in a somehow casual way. The general aspects of culture, e.g. language, and the very specific facets of cultural characteristics of more than 40 nations are both included. Apparently, the author was good at capturing daily life examples as impressive introductions to unfold certain themes. The discussions are structured by a deep understanding of culture itself as well as cultural values from a global point of view.

Another significant feature of Lewis’s research is that the author frequently makes comparisons between nations or continents, when a certain topic is introduced. This phenomenon can easily be found in the introductory sections already. Such comparisons effectively help to gain the key implications of national cultures later on. As to the understanding of the term of “culture”, for instance, Lewis (2003: 26) argues that the taught-and-learned national concepts since one’s childhood become the core beliefs throughout one’s life. The author finds out an interesting phenomenon that a newborn Japanese child is put in the same room as the parents for the first years. On the contrary, British and American children often sleep in separate rooms. Consequently, children’s abilities to be independent and to solve problems vary (ibid: 25-26). As a matter of fact, the example of the Japanese parents also occurs among Chinese parents²⁵. Not surprisingly, the same weakness of Chinese children has been constantly criticized by Western parents.

Even if the different cultural emphasis leads to contrasting consequences, the author is of the opinion that “there is no good or bad, logical or illogical, in cultural values, just as one cannot argue about taste” (ibid: 5). What should be done to minimize the gap between cultural differences? According to Lewis (ibid: 2), a working knowledge of the basic traits of other cultures as well as our own would help to reduce unpleasant

²⁵ A similar situation which happened in this current research and the related discussions can be found in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

surprises, give insights in advance, and enable people to interact successfully with nationalities with whom we might have had difficulties previously. More practically, language learning is highly recommended as an effective way of getting familiar with foreign cultures, because language is seen not only as a tool for communication, but also a logical strategy for building integrated relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds (ibid: 8-90).

Accordingly, another important sociological concept has appeared in connection with these issues: acculturation. Just like the increasing interest in research on negotiation, acculturation has also been attracting the attention of more and more researchers, for it is “the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” Berry (2006: 13). At family level, the issue of acculturation also plays an important role “Among family members, acculturation often proceeds at different rates, and with different goals, sometimes leading to an increase in conflict and stress and to more difficult adaptations” (ibid: 14).

On the other hand, Marin and Gamba (2003) explore acculturation from another point of view: acculturation and changes in cultural values. In their opinion, the possible power of acculturation to produce significant changes in cultural values has important implications for their continued existence (ibid: 83). Concerning research on family, they stress that “an appropriate understanding of societal forces must include an analysis of family functioning and generational conflict that takes into consideration the acculturation level of the individuals involved and the effects of acculturation on the group’s values” (ibid: 91). As a matter of fact, the importance of integration is more stressed than acculturation in the German society. For policy- and decision-makers, integration instead of acculturation has been considered as the most acceptable status to be achieved by people with different cultural backgrounds.

As far as the German and Chinese cultures are concerned, sufficient examples are given in Lewis’ discussions. Each of them belongs to a different cultural category.

Roughly, national and regional cultures in the world, according to Lewis (ibid: 36), can be classified into the three following groups:

- Task-oriented, highly organized planners (Linear-active culture)
- People-oriented, loquacious interrelators (Multi-active culture)
- Respect-oriented listeners (Reactive culture)

Precisely, it is demonstrated that linear-active culture concentrate hard on one thing at a time and do it within a scheduled timescale, for it is considered as a way of achieving more efficiency. German culture is under this category (Lewis, 2003: 37-39). The basic value of German culture also reflects on organizing and managing in their business as well as people's behavior as a whole. "German basic values dominate strategies. [...] Punctuality and orderliness are basic (ibid: 71-72). Besides, directness, honesty and striving for perfection equally characterize the central body of the German culture. But on the other hand, Lewis also points out (ibid: 201-207) that Germans often suffer from a lack of knowledge of foreign cultures and liked to use the German language whenever they can, although they place value on education and generally have good language abilities.

In comparison with German culture, Chinese culture was put into the category of "reactive culture" which prefers to listen first and establish the other's position, and then react to it and formulate its own (ibid: 42). These features of such a culture have in fact an inseparable relation with Confucianism which stresses the importance of hierarchy and family in his ideology. Family is designated as the prototype of all social organizations in Confucianism and people are members of a group, not individuals. This understanding sharply contrasts to Western cultures as a whole in which the smallest unit is the personal one – the individual, and individualistic views are shown great respect (ibid: 4; 81). In addition, hierarchy in a society as well as a family are based on, according to Confucian views, the unequal relationships between father and son, older brother and younger brother, husband and wife, ruler and subject, and senior friend and junior friend. Virtuous behavior, e.g. loyalty to the ruler and

filial piety to the father, therefore, must be shown and thus would lead to a harmonious social order (ibid: 81).

As to the general characteristics of the Chinese culture as a whole, Lewis (2003) compares those between the Mainland and Hong Kong. In the ranking of the superior Chinese values, modesty, tolerance, filial piety and family closeness top the list. Authority figures, e.g. parents, teachers and bosses must be obeyed and should not be questioned. Again, these representative cultural values are strongly influenced by Confucian philosophies. “Confucianism exercises a strong influence on the daily lives and business cultures in China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong” (ibid: 382). In relation to Confucian teaching, collectivism is understood as another impressive feature of the Mainland’s culture. Lewis stresses (2003: 383) that a Chinese belongs to four basic groups: the work unit, family, school and community. It suggests that “harmony towards all”, one of the most important values in the Chinese culture, should be practically implemented in order to keep peaceful relationships with each other.

The true features of cultural values in Hong Kong were impossible to find out without consideration of its historical background. “Hong Kong was acquired by the British by way of a 99-year lease from China which expired in 1997” (ibid: 391). Since then, Hong Kong has become a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (HKSAR) on July 1, 1997 (Lee / Stewart / Chan: 2006: 354). Its historic function for trade made Hong Kong like a bridge between Mainland China and Western countries. Its culture gradually formed a mixture of the traditional and Western elements in consequence. Hong Kong’s economic success, in particular, was a reliable proof that its people created Hong Kong’s boom by their industriousness and intelligence. On the other hand, the Western way of thinking which was influenced by its time as a British colony enables the Hong Kong people, to a certain degree, to “combine strengths from East and West” (ibid: 392). This combination has made them open-minded and more familiar with the Western-oriented way of negotiating cultural differences than the traditional concepts. The different

communication patterns and listening habits between the Mainland and Hong Kong, for example, show that a more efficiency-oriented process as well as interaction with others characterize the specific cultural emphasis in Hong Kong (ibid: 393).

2.1.3 Implication of culture and cultural values according to Eagleton and Frow

Inspired by a list of scholars of cultural studies, Eagleton (2001) explored the implication of culture in five different aspects: *Versions of culture, culture in crisis, war of culture, culture and nature, and for a united culture*. Two aspects will be discussed in detail under the consideration of their practical impact on this current empirical research.

For scholars working on cultural issues, no definition of culture has been found which they all agree with. Eagleton (2001) tries to summarize the versions of culture in a way of reviewing its historic root as well as capturing its contemporary understanding in the modern society. The Latin root of the word “culture” was the verb *colere* which could mean almost everything, e.g. to look after, to care for, to live in, to worship, and to protect. It accordingly indicates that the definition of culture assumes a dialectics between the artificial and the natural. In this process, people and nature are interrelated. Moreover, culture also suggests a kind of ability, e.g. self-realization. Although human nature is not like plants, it is supposed be cultivated as well (ibid: 8-13). Along with the historical background of “culture”, Eagleton (2001) further explores different cultural relations in which the basic understanding of culture has been deepened practically. The relationship between culture and cultivation is not a one-way, but a two-way contribution. Cultivation does not always mean that people change or improve themselves. On the contrary, cultivation can also be carried out by its people. If a state wants to flourish, for instance, it has to plant the right spiritual conditions into its citizens. Culture in this sense can be understood as a way of moral educating. The state therefore embodies its culture that in turn embodies its people’s united humanity (ibid: 14-15).

There is something in common between cultures in spite of their differences. Mostly influenced by Eliot, Williams and Bourdieu, Eagleton (2001) clarifies the relation between culture itself and its bearers. The significant distinction is, in fact, not the different types of culture, but the different degrees of consciousness. As to the understanding of a common culture, a comparison is made by Eagleton (*ibid*) between Williams and Eliot. For Williams, a culture can only become common, if it is a collective product for all people. This kind of culture is managed through the constant practices of its members and is consequently newly defined. Thus, it suggests that Williams' idea of a common culture is closely connected with radical social changes. It required ethnics of shared responsibilities, comprehensive democratic involvement of social lives at all levels as well as equal access to the cultural practices. By contrast, in Eliot's point of view, a culture can also be common, if it is the work of the few privileged whose culture is normally "high culture". As a matter of fact, both William and Eliot confront common culture with homogeneous culture, for they both emphasize the irregularity and plurality of every up-to-date culture. Therefore, a unity of belief and behavior is the version of a healthy and popular culture. Hence, culture, as a form of behavior, embodies a system of beliefs in people's lives. The challenge, however, would be to integrate the beliefs into the behavior and at the same time to avoid the undesirable consequences (*ibid*: 157-162).

According to Frow (2005), attention of culture is paid to the organization of cultural values as well as their relations with the social system. In his comprehension of concept of culture, "culture is always a matter of what binds together and of what keeps apart. At its most basic, it is a concept that refers to the means of formation and of identification of social groups" (*ibid*: 2). Further, there is no longer a stable hierarchy of value running from the "high" to the "low" cultures, an idea which is also shared by Schwartz (2006). In relation to this concept, the concept of value is viewed as "an effect of social organization" (*ibid*: 4).

2.2 Explanation of further key terms

In relation to the focus and the closely related aspects of this research, some related terms must be clarified. These are multiculturalism, multicultural education, cultural values, collectivism and individualism, integration, assimilation and segregation.

Banks (2001) argues that multiculturalism embraces an increasing range of curricular, pedagogical and organizational practices at almost every level in the educational field. Multicultural education is a process in which the major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions. According to Gay (2001: 28), “multicultural education is a set of beliefs and explanations that recognizes and values the importance of ethnic and cultural diversity in shaping lifestyles, social experiences, personal identities, and educational opportunities of individuals, groups, and nations.”

Summarized by Gollnick (2001: 55), a variety of understandings of multicultural education which are described by different scholars can be found as follows:

- “The study of the meaning of culture, and relationship and influences between culture and education, with specific study of teaching, administration, and effectiveness of schooling as they relate to multicultural school populations (Alaska, 1991).
- Interdisciplinary, cross-cultural education which prepares students to live, learn and work together to achieve common goals in culturally diverse world (Kentucky, 1992).
- An interdisciplinary process rather than single program or series of activities. Concepts embraced by cultural pluralism, ethnic and intercultural studies and intergroup and interpersonal relations are included in this process. The basic aim is to help students to accept themselves and other persons as having dignity and worth (Washington, 1992).

- Education that is multicultural is a continuous, integrated multiethnic, multidisciplinary process for educating all students about diversity and commonality. Diversity factors include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, region, religion, gender, language, socioeconomic status, age, and persons with disabilities (Maryland, 1993).”

It has also been widely discussed by scholars working in different scientific fields, as far as the term “cultural value” is concerned. For example, Clyne (1994) contributes this aspect in “discourse structures across cultures”; Frow (1995) writes about “cultural studies and cultural value”, etc. Compared with them, research conducted by Schwartz (2006) appears to be more meaningful. From this he developed a related theory of cultural values. He stresses that values included six main features:

- 1) Values are beliefs that are linked to affect.
- 2) Values refer to desirable goals that motivate action.
- 3) Values transcend specific actions and situations (e.g., obedience and honesty are values that are relevant at work or at school, in sport, business, and politics, with family, friends, or strangers).
- 4) Values serve as standards or criteria that guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events.
- 5) Values are ordered by importance relative to one another to form a system of priorities.
- 6) The relative importance of values guides actions.

In addition, he points out that “cultural value emphases shape and justify individual and group beliefs, actions and goal” (Schwartz, 2006: 139). From an intercultural communicational point of view, Maletzke (2006) argues that value orientations are components which present the profiles of a culture. They do not exist separately, but are well connected with each other in different ways. Moreover, Gannon (2008) thinks that cultural values influence cultural practices, or the other way round. At times, both could lead to paradoxes in which the way things should be, e.g. values, is different from the way things are, e.g. practices. One of the most distinguishing

differences between Eastern value orientations and Western value orientations is certainly collectivism versus individualism. Kumbier and Schulz von Thun (2008) stress that in collectivism members of a culture are basically and essentially affiliated with the larger communities, e.g. nations, companies and families. Their major energies and aspirations are directed towards the success of the larger communities. By contrast, the personal development, basic rights as well as his / her dignity bear an inviolable value in individualism. Individualism is substantially connected with Western cultures and collectivism with Eastern cultures. More precisely, Li (2010: 55-58) is of the opinion that “for Westerners, everything serves for the individual’s values and rights, while the Chinese believe the collective is superior to everything as there cannot be a self without the collective”. Undoubtedly, this traditional value has been deeply influenced by the agricultural civilization of thousand years as well as Confucianism which is a culture that encourages the collective. In the eyes’ of Confucius, an individual could not exist without the consideration of his related groups.

To negotiate cultural differences and cultural value orientations, the three different attitudes towards them must be clarified: integration, assimilation and segregation. Integration is understood as a mutual adaptation or approach of cultures of the minority and the majority. It is described as in intercultural exchange in which each side is supposed to adopt the best perspectives of the opposite (Löffler, 2011: 80). In comparison to this, assimilation is viewed as complete integration, i.e. adjustment and becoming similar. This definition is used in two different respects. Assimilation is perceived as a description of social or cultural adaptation, from the empirical point of view. It is also a symbol of a certain ideal form of integration of immigrants into the receiving society, as far as the normative aspect is concerned. The two understandings are about the adaptation of one ethnic cultural grouping to the other, mostly a minority to the majority (ibid: 90). According to Luchtenberg (1997: 130-131), “assimilation has in general been rejected as a concept that neglects any opportunity for migrants to develop their culture, integration has been supported as a concept that

allows the development of a specific culture. Yet it must be acknowledged that this definition of integration has failed to become established in society or even in educational discussion, so that very often the notion of integration is synonymous with assimilation”.

Literally, segregation stands for separating one group of people from others. Such a way could lead to serious consequences which keep ethnic minorities far away from the social mainstream. Darling-Hammond (2001: 466) stresses the impact of segregation on inequalities: “[...] segregation of neighborhoods and communities intersects with funding formulas and school administration practices that create substantial differences in the educational resources made available in different communities. Together, these conditions produce ongoing inequalities in educational opportunities by race and ethnicity”.

Chapter Three

Selected aspects of multiculturalism in China and Germany

3.1 Multiculturalism in China

According to Teng and Weng (2001: 259), China is a multiethnic and multilingual land. Multiculturalism in Chinese society is shown by the contribution of its 55 ethnic minority groups and their interaction with the largest ethnic group, Han, which dominates nearly 92% of the population, although China is not traditionally a country of immigrants.

Moreover, almost every prosperous dynasty in Chinese history benefitted, to a large degree, from the idea of exchanging with the outside world, the Tang Dynasty (618-907), for example. Marrying someone who was from a different cultural background was included in this category. This section investigates three aspects of multiculturalism in China: the historical background with special reference to intercultural marriage and social and political changes in modern society since the Opening-Up-Policy. To provide current knowledge, the first conference on migration in Asia and in China will be discussed in the last part.

3.1.1 Historical roots of marrying a “foreigner”

Marriages of people between different cultures, races and religions have a long history in China. It can be traced back to the West Han Dynasty (206 BC.-23). Cui (2007) stresses that the complicated relationship between ethnic groups in ancient Chinese society and the variety of examples in literature consequently led to different types of those marriages. He names them “pacificatory intermarriages”, due to the fact that most of the marriages were for political reasons.

In terms of two different categories, the marriages could be divided into different types in ancient China. There were six kinds of marriages, based on the examples in literature:

- Marriages between the mainland kingdom and ethnic minority groups;
- Marriages between independent regimes and ethnic minority groups;
- Marriages between independent regimes;
- Marriages between ethnic minority groups;
- Marriages between the Southern Dynasty (420-589) and the Northern Dynasty (386-581);
- Marriages with other countries, (Cui, 2007: 4-6).

As for purposes and characteristics, those intermarriages can be summarized in another seven types:

- The type of governing borders in peace;
- The type of arranging military unions;
- The type of breaking up and disintegrating political power of ethnic minority groups;
- The type of borrowing troops from ethnic minority groups;
- The type of developing relations between Han and ethnic minority groups;
- The type of strengthening relations between Han and ethnic minority groups;
- The type of arranging political unions (Cui, 2007: 6-13).

The variety of these kinds of intermarriages showed different intentions of people in power. The majority of marriages had positive functions of decreasing wars and developing relations with ethnic minority groups. However, rulers of certain periods of time arranged such marriages simply to better their own political power and weaken other ethnic groups.

Throughout the whole history of intermarriages in China, the example of Princess Wen Cheng (623-680) had undoubtedly the most valuable significance. The Dynasty in which Princess Wen Cheng lived is considered as the peak in Chinese history, the

Tang Dynasty (618-907). Tufan, as the ancestor of the ethnic minority, *Zang*, had strong political power in the southwest of China at that time. Its rapid development aroused the attention of the Tang Dynasty. In order to build a relationship with this booming dynasty, Songzanganbu, the new leader of Tufan, wanted to marry a princess from the Tang Dynasty. After a long time of negotiating, Princess Wen Cheng married Songzandanbu in the year of 641 and lived in Tufan for forty years. Although this marriage had initially been for political reasons, fruitful achievement could be found in different fields. Cui (2007) emphasizes the following aspects. Above all, this marriage relaxed the hard relationship between the Tang Dynasty and Tufan and sped up their interaction. Secondly, the economic and cultural contact intensively improved. Princess Wen Cheng spread the advanced skills of cultivating and spinning of the Tang Dynasty to the people in Tufan, so that the local products of grain and the domestic handicraft industry developed effectively. Thirdly, the exchange of custom also improved. The style of dressing in the Tang Dynasty was partly imitated by the people in Tufan, for example.

3.1.2 Transformation since the Opening-Up-Policy

It goes without saying that the Opening-Up-Policy, also known as the Open-Door-Policy, which was initially launched by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, was a milestone in Chinese history, because that was the moment in which China eventually opened its “door” to the western world. Since then, dramatic changes have happened in almost every facet of Chinese society. The multicultural atmosphere could be gradually felt with the multiple cooperation and exchanges, especially in large cities. Those changes and development will be separately discussed from political, economic, social, cultural and educational angles.

3.1.2.1 Political and economic changes

The Cultural Revolution, the ten-year political catastrophe (1966-1976), changed the idea of “developing by laws” into “developing through revolutions” (Zheng, 2008: 98). Consequently, the system of legislation and the whole mechanism of governing were paralyzed. In order to improve this situation as soon as possible, the idea of “revolution of classes” was determinedly abolished with the end of this catastrophe. Instead, focus on economic development became the new political guideline. At the same time, restoring and completing the system of legislation was viewed as an important content in the new Constitution to improve people’s living standards.

Based on this understanding, the remarkable changes and achievements in the economic field could be largely characterized in three aspects: transition from the planned economy to the market economy; establishment of “special economic zones”, and the participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Lu (2008: 14) points out that the “dual system” of market price and the planning price was practiced at the same time as the way of transition at the very beginning. The necessary elements of free market were not fully created until the middle of the 1990s.

In relation to the development of the market economy, the establishment of the “special economic zones” in East China officially opened the “screen” of reforming the economy. These cities of Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou and Xiamen were firstly named as the “special economic zones”, due to their geographical positions of privilege by the sea. After a short time, the area of the “special economic zones” was enlarged to South China where the water traffic was equally convenient and practically connected with the first “special economic zones”. Those “special economic zones” were given a broad range of rights of economic administration by the central government. Furthermore, cooperation with western business and investment from abroad were highly encouraged. Accordingly, the local development effectively helped the process of economic development in other areas of China.

After practising the Opening-Up-Policy for twenty years, China joined the WTO in 2000. It indicated the acknowledgement of the Chinese achievement, in economy, in

particular. But on the other hand, this also led to negative effects. Lu (2008: 176) stresses that the balance of development between different areas is still difficult to keep, despite of the total growth of the economy.

3.1.2.2 Development at educational level

The Opening-Up-Policy had also a great impact on education. Its development with special reference to multicultural as well as international aspects could be shown at least in the following two ways: improvement in bilingual education and increase in number of students who study abroad.

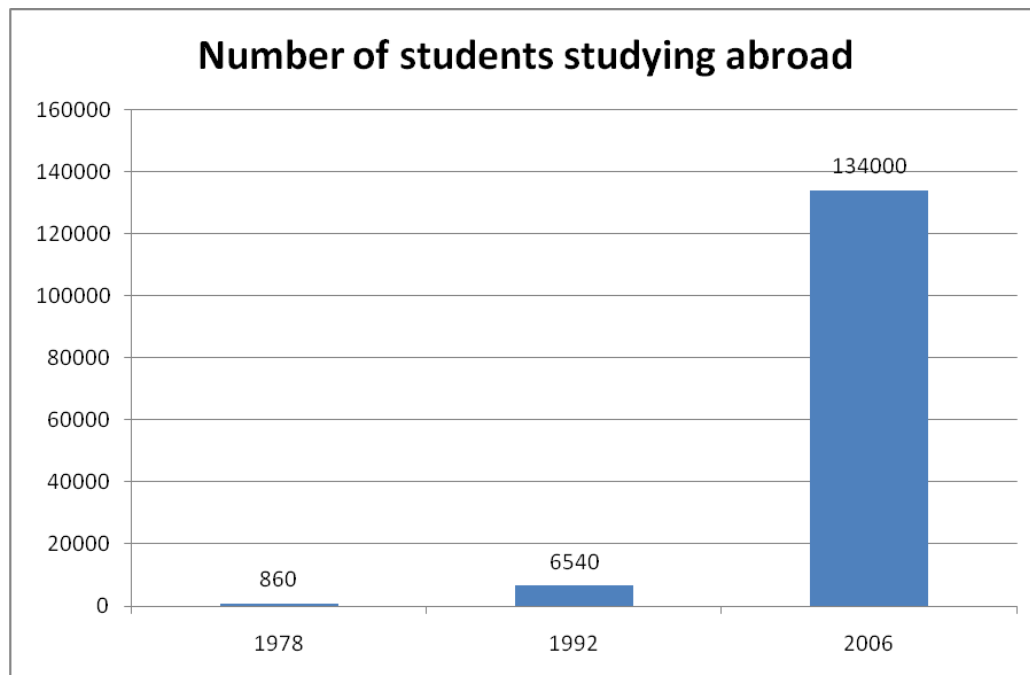
Above all, there is no doubt that bilingual education before and after the Opening-Up-Policy made a great difference. Teng and Weng (2001: 265) state that “bilingual education in China is understood as the instruction of a minority language and the Han language or Mandarin”. Theoretically, its development basically experienced three periods: the period of establishing bilingual education (1949-1957); the period of shifting policies on bilingual education (1958-1976) and the period of the rebirth of bilingual education (since 1977).

Practically, the period of 1949 to 1957 could be seen as the starting phase in which bilingual education was officially established for the first time since the foundation of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. Teng and Weng (2001) argue that in this period the right of ethnic minority groups to develop their own languages was declared in the first Constitution of China. Besides, people from ethnic minority groups had the option to choose between Mandarin and their native languages as the language of instruction. However, in the following period of 1958 to 1976 the related policies were dramatically changed so that Mandarin was the only language of instruction. As serious results, numerous schools in minority regions had to close down. With the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, bilingual education eventually opened a brand-new page. The rights of ethnic minority groups to develop their mother tongues including written and spoken forms were reaffirmed in the improved Constitutions. More significantly, “a flexible policy to enable minority students to

enroll in grades lower than those of Han students” was developed by the central government (Teng / Weng, 2001: 262).

In short, bilingual education after the political catastrophe has strengthened the interaction between ethnic minority groups and Han. The practice of multicultural education was more widely carried out. But, those achievements did not mean perfection. On the contrary, there are serious problems and difficulties which need to be solved, such as the huge difference of learning facilities between ethnic minority groups and the lower chances of minority students on the job market compared with Han students, etc. Secondly, investment of business abroad provided China not only with capital, but also information, techniques and experience of management. The increase in the number of students who go abroad to study is strong evidence that the interests of Chinese people have been growing. According to Lu (2008: 175), their number was lower than 900 in the late 1970s. In less than 30 years, the number dramatically increased more than 150 times. The following table illustrates this change.

Table: Number of Chinese students studying abroad



(Source: Lu, 2008: 175)

In the research on problems of integration of Chinese students, with special reference to the East German City of Magdeburg, Wang (2007) stresses that this study abroad focused at first on the former Soviet Union. Then, the USA gradually became a new option for Chinese students after the diplomatic relations between these two countries recovered in the late 1970s. European countries, Germany in particular, have attracted more and more attention of students and scholars from China since the late 1990s.

3.1.2.3 One-Child-Policy

Among the changes and development since the Opening-Up-Policy, the One-Child-Policy, this family-related program has to be mentioned because of its special features. Meredith and Abbott (1995: 217) point out that based on the Chinese government, “unless new families were limited to one child per family, the rate of economic development in China would be substantially reduced”. Launched by the central government in the year of 1980, every new family had to follow this program having only one child. This was also clearly stated in the Law of Marriage under the items of system of marriage and relation of marriage: “each partner has the responsibility for carrying out the One-Child-Policy” (2008: 1-4).

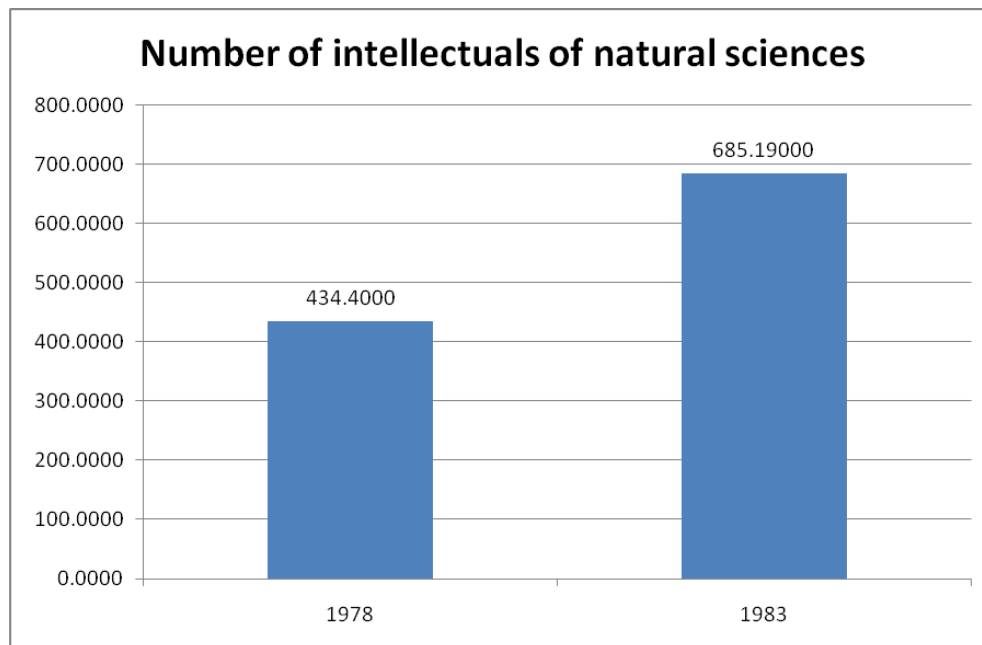
Practically, this policy has strongly influenced on the dynamics of families in Chinese society. At least, two aspects were representative: the central position of the child in the family and the relationship between the young and the elderly. Li (2010: 106) stresses that there have been more and more one-child families in China since this policy. Therefore, the only child has become the centre of the whole family. Besides, young couples, each of whom was also the only child of their parents, have to take full responsibility for looking after their parents which definitely overloads them. Precisely described by Meredith and Abbott (1995: 228), they report that “the burden of support of parents will be heavy on young couples, who will have to support parents of both husband and wife”. In other words, parents’ concern about their dependence on their only child automatically has become more sensitive than ever.

There is no wonder therefore that the traditional understanding of children's filial piety after thousand years is still popular in modern Chinese society²⁶.

3.1.2.4 New climate in societal and cultural aspects

Obviously, there have been wide-ranging changes in social and cultural aspects as well since the late 1970s in Mainland China. These included that relations between classes gradually improved, especially the status of intellectuals. Tang (2008) points out that before 1978 intellectuals' pursuit of careers was so strongly criticized that their motivation for doing research was constrained for a long time. Benefitting from the Opening-Up-Policy, the number of intellectuals dramatically increased with the new focus on modernization of technologies in national development. Their effects were gradually recognized and valued by the society. According to him (ibid: 147), the increase in the number of intellectuals of natural sciences shows this result (see the table below).

Table: Number of Chinese intellectuals of natural sciences

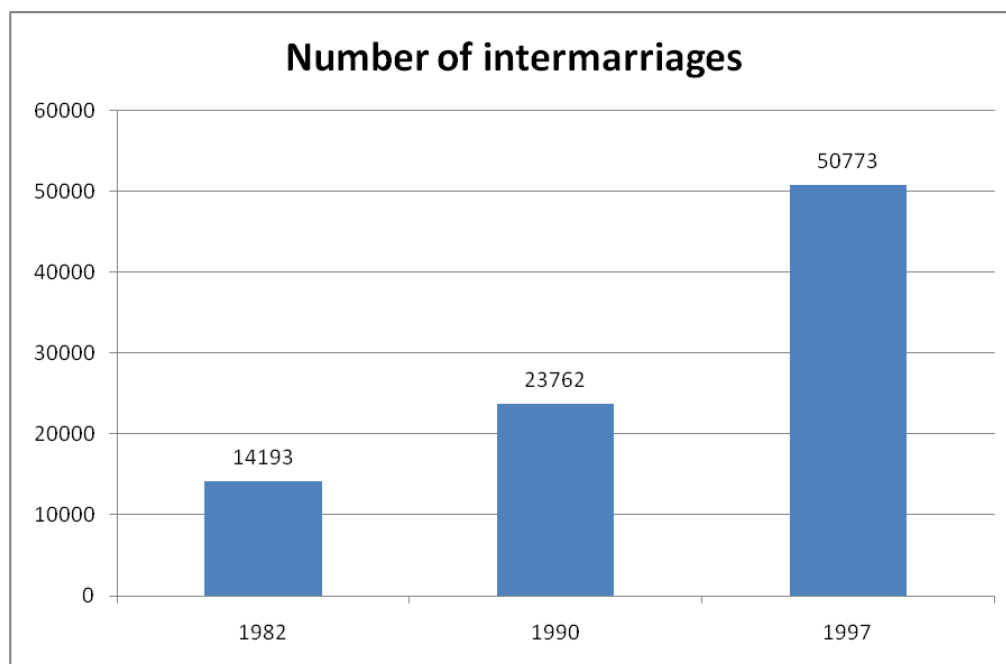


(Source: Tang, 2008: 147)

²⁶ This point will be discussed in detail in related chapters.

Apart from that, people’s consciousness of freedom, justice and individuality has become stronger and stronger. Privatization of marriages and families came into existence as consequence. Geng (2008) argues that since 1985 the models of nuclear families and families with few family members have become the main form in Chinese society instead of the classical pattern of “four generations under one roof”. This was closely connected with the One-Child-Policy as well as people’s desire for private spaces in family lives. Furthermore, the increase in the number of intermarriages since the beginning of the 1980s has become a related impressive phenomenon in the social and cultural area. Geng (2008: 269) reports that in the year of 1997 alone, intermarriages in Mainland China encompassed 53 different countries. People from the US, Canada and Australia dominated in those marriages in China at first. Afterwards, people from Eastern Asia, Japan in particular, became the main options. This new climate could be easily felt in the City of Shanghai, the metropolis of China. The following table presents the change in the number of intermarriages from 1982 to 1997.

Table: Number of intermarriages in China



(Source: Geng, 2008: 269)

3.1.3 “Migration in China and Asia: Experience and Policy”: Discussions using the example of a Beijing International Conference in 2010

It was for the first time that China was able to host a conference on the issue of migration at the international level in 2010. As a condition for a host country, China had previously become a member of the “International Metropolis”, an international network of researchers, policy officials and NGOs which share a common vision of enhancing migration and diversity policy by applying empirical social science research.

In cooperation with the “International Metropolis”, the conference was organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in May 2010 in Beijing. Undoubtedly, this conference could be viewed as showing the progress of research on migration in China. Not only did it make a contribution to this international scientific subject from China’s point of view, but also offered a practical platform for exchange with experts worldwide. This conference was intensive and fruitful. A large variety of themes based on the eight panels was discussed within the two days. The panels concerned:

- Migration Issues (Labor, Business, Marriage, and Education) and Policy in China and Asia
- Return Migration: New Development, New Responses
- Chinese Overseas or Chinese Diaspora
- Multi-ethnic Society, Identity and Social Cohesion
- The Skilled and Unskilled Migration: Experience and Policy
- Market and Ethnic Business
- Marriage and Gender
- Education and Youth Migrants

Each panel was also divided into several subsections which were related subject-wise. These included situations of Chinese migrants from different social classes in different continents and countries as well as their interaction with the local societies, such as “Temporary Chinese construction workers in Africa from then on”, “Flows of

people and the Canada-China relationship”, and “Chinese Immigrant transnationalism and socioeconomic integration into the United States”, etc. Altogether there were five topics about intermarriages which were divided into three different panels. The author of this research gave a presentation about the research background and some selected findings to date in the conference. The presentation was included in the first panel.

Limitations of the conference could still be found, in spite of its achievements. Above all, the majority of participants came from educational institutes, e.g. professors, or master and PhD students. Therefore, the voice about this issue from other related social organizations could be hardly heard. Secondly, the organization at some points was not logical. The eight different panels were planned to be discussed at the same time in different sections within the two days, for instance. This certainly made it at times difficult for participants to decide which one to take part in, especially for those who were interested in different panels. Moreover, the very closely related subjects were divided separately, such as “intermarriage”. For the researchers working on similar topics, this way was certainly not practical to learn from each other. Last but not least, the organizer did not chase the participants after the conference to gain feedbacks from them, especially those from abroad. This was obviously a loss as well. But on the other hand, all these disadvantages equally provided China with an opportunity to improve both in the content and in the organization for the future research on migration. In fact, the Chinese organizer seemed to already realize its problems at the end of the conference: “this conference was simply our first step. We still lacked experience of organizing. In order to host the next conference more successfully, those disadvantages must be improved as soon as possible” (Prof. Zhang, chair of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences).

3.2 Multiculturalism and intercultural education in Germany

The fact that the guest workers since the 1950s decided to stay in Germany instead of going home and afterwards had children and grandchildren has seemed to make the question of “whether or not Germany was an immigration country” no longer necessary. Hoff (2001: 824) elaborates even more precisely that “knowing that they would lose their work permit if they left Germany for more than 3 months, many hitherto itinerant ‘guest workers’ simply decided to settle there and have their wives and children join them.” Nowadays people from different cultural backgrounds can be so easily found in almost every German society that they have become part of it. Furthermore, foreign students are certainly another special “landscape” in the German universities. All this indicates that German society has a variety of cultures and is a multicultural society. According to Löffler (2011: 107), multicultural societies are mostly made up of a society of majority and different new cultural minorities. Multicultural societies are both the traditional immigrant countries, e.g. USA, Canada and Australia and the European countries into which guest workers and refugees immigrated after World War II. Their ethnic diversity is the result of the current of the former immigration. Accordingly, multiculturalism is understood as an ideology or a sociopolitical program which expresses rights of different ethnic cultural groupings and insists on their equal values (ibid: 106).

As a matter of fact, the characteristic of cultural diversity in German society has become more and more noticeable since the German unification of 1990. The transformation from that moment led to dramatic changes in almost every area. In the educational realm alone, activities had to be immediately started at all levels due to the fact that more and more immigrant children appeared in German schools. Whether or not they were ready to cope with this situation, politicians had to make related policies as soon as possible. According to Hoff (2001: 825-826), these four main policies on multicultural education were made in German society:

- Separation Policy: providing national schools for large homogeneous groups of pupils, mainly offered to children of the main guest workers from Turkey, Greece and Italy
- Assimilation Policy: providing single or group tuition to help children with language “problems” to acquire quickly the basic skills to follow the teaching in German schools, This policy still belongs to the current concept of “Ausländerpädagogik” (education for foreigners)
- Cooperative Policy: emancipatory approaches trying to establish cultural identity, guarantee mother-tongue alphabetization, modify general curriculum toward a multicultural representation of values, often focusing on bicultural comparison. The related term used in Germany and most Western European countries is intercultural education
- United Europe Policy: its focus is on Europe, replacing the old nationalism with new Eurochauvinism

Those different policies, each of which had its own interests, indicate that a relatively unified agreement on this issue has not been yet reached. Immigrant children consequently have still to struggle with the process of their integration. In order to demonstrate this issue in an effective way, one of the most representative policies, *intercultural education* should be discussed in detail. Influenced by the conception and criticism of education for foreigners in the former West Germany in the 1960s / 1970s, discussions on intercultural education initially referred to immigrant foreigners, especially their children and youth as well as their integration into German schools and the society. It has been increasingly underlined since the 1980s that this intercultural issue was in fact not simply connected with one specific grouping or migration, but an education for all people. Further, such education was necessary due to the three closely related political and social developments: international migration, European unification and the process of globalization (Krüger-Potratz, 2005: 14-15). Similarly, Nieke (1995: 30) stresses that intercultural education is understood as a necessary response to the lasting existing society with immigrants from other cultures

as well as the previously already existing ethnic minorities. In other words, it was the response to a lasting accepted multiethnic or multicultural society.

Hence, the following features of intercultural education must be clarified, in order to carry out its functions in a multicultural society:

- Intercultural education relates to all people. It is not a special concept simply for the education of people with immigrant backgrounds
- Intercultural education is not a special subject, but an important qualification of everyone and a task in all the disciplines and activities of educational science
- Intercultural and European education are not separable. They both concern lives in a pluralistic society.
- A school is one of the institutions which can help the growing generation focus on a global society and find a position for itself
- Intercultural education aims at the changes of patterns of comprehensions, adjustments and approaches
- Intercultural education aims at the changes of discriminatory structures in educational science
- Intercultural education is a developing task which required all involvement in the field of education
- Intercultural education as a direction of subject in educational science is both a special research realm and a dimension in all areas of educational science
- Intercultural education also means encouraging provisions of education for children and youth (Krüger-Potratz, 2005: 30-32).

But on the other hand, the course of discussions on intercultural education is very complex and controversial in the existing field of tension between universal and relative positions. Cultural universal understanding stresses the togetherness of all people and the possibility of universally applicable identifications as well as the general moralities and human rights. Such positions are a product of European thought which are basically guided by the spiritual traditions, mostly the European traditions (Golz, 1999: 223). By contrast, the position of cultural relativism

concentrates on the specific intrinsic values of every culture which should not be measured by the universal standards. What is important, however, is to acknowledge the equal values and human achievements of every respective culture. The current conditions in German society are not fully supportive, as far as the encouragement of foreigners' and immigrants' integration is concerned (ibid). Although everyone seems to understand that integration is a two-way process that requires contributions both from people having different cultural backgrounds and the locals, related changes and improvements are supposed to be urgently made at all kinds of levels. The following section will highlight one of the specific issues of integration into the German society.

3.2.1 Special problems of integration of the Chinese with special reference to students

The history of Chinese migrants in Europe as well as in Germany can be traced back to the 19th century. Mette (2007: 445) points out the people from the Province Zhejiang in Southern China could be found in Western Europe in the 19th century to sell their precious stones. As successfully settled as in other European countries, they branched out into the gastronomy sector in Germany in the mid-20th century. Flemming and Liang (2007: 443) report that there were about 3500 Chinese restaurants by the year 2000.

Academically, Germany was not foreign territory for the Chinese. Lu (2006: 1) mentions that at the end of the 19th century a group of Chinese was sent by the government of the Qing Dynasty²⁷ to Germany to learn military technologies. After the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, especially with the establishment of the diplomatic relationship with the former GDR in the 1950s and later on with the FRG in the 1970s, more and more students were deliberately sent to the two German states to study. Nowadays, they have become the largest group of foreign students in Germany, which means that more than 10% of foreign students are from Mainland China (Oblau, 2006 / Wang, 2007 / Huang, 2010). Does this dominant

²⁷ Qing Dynasty: 1644-1911

position also mean successful integration? Unfortunately not! They are often described as “reserved” and can hardly be seen in social activities. Why is that? What is the problem? Objectively, there are internal and external reasons. Oblau (2006: 124) stresses that China’s One-Child-Policy has had a great impact on the current generation of Chinese students. The majority of them have been the central figure at home since they were born. Their dependence on their parents is so strong that they could easily have difficulties in coping with a completely different life style in Germany as well as in their universities. Moreover, in the same research mentioned above Wang (2007) explores this issue from educational and cultural points of view and found out that it takes the students a long time to adapt to the totally different system of higher education in Germany. They definitely would prefer to improve their academic performance instead of “socializing”. In addition, the contrast between these two cultures at times automatically holds them back from integration into the local society. Those features which are certainly understood as advantages become even the barriers within this Western culture, keeping in groups, full concentration on studies, for instance. More recently, Huang (2010) has discovered a new facet that also has an influential effect on the integration of the Chinese students. They are not in fact mentally well-prepared to face a multicultural society, e.g. Germany. The awareness of integration is overshadowed by the importance of learning the German language by means of textbooks and the preparation for everyday life.

On the other hand, these problems of the Chinese students’ integration are due to external factors as well. Accepting and respecting another world interpretation and value system and culture, therefore, will not be possible without questioning one’s own culture (Golz, 2005 / Nieke, 1995). Reality shows, however, that German society has not fully reached that level, as far as its behaviors and attitudes towards foreigners are concerned. According to Huang (2010) physical and verbal aggression of the locals not only deeply depresses the Chinese students but also makes them hesitant or at times leads them to give up their attempts to integrate.

To conclude, in this two-way process of integration, based on the above-mentioned factors, there still remain numerous things to be improved. This process of the Chinese students could only work, when the both sides make their contributions at the same time. Even for the next generation of these students in Germany which either had two Chinese parents or grew up in a bi-national family, their Chinese parents' behavior and attitude might have a strong influence on them as well.

3.2.2 Social transformation with special concern for bi-national families

It goes without saying that the dramatic increase in the number of bi-national families has been one of the most remarkable changes in the social transformation since 1990. According to Falkner (2005: 172), bi-national marriages in the former FRG were about 3.8% in the year of 1960. This number already reached 10.7% after German unification in 1991. Moreover, this trend continued. As a result, one in every six marriages was bi-national in 2002. The incidence of those marriages was even higher in the capital. Curvello (2006: 8) points out that for almost every four newly-formed marriages in Berlin 2004 there was one bi-national type.

Historically, German women usually chose partners from Southern Europe and German men Eastern Europe and Asian countries (Schwantes, 2009). In comparison with the dominant nations from which the German men and women chose for their partners in 1997, the situation changed in two years both in nations and numbers. The following tables illustrate this precisely.

Table: Top 5 nations of bi-national marriages in Germany 1997

German men chose women from	Number	German women chose men from	Number
Poland	5230	Former Yugoslavia	5858
Russia	1886	Turkey	3934
Thailand	1617	Italy	1772
Former Yugoslavia	1260	USA	1220
Turkey	1073	Austria	934

(Source: The Sixth Report of Family, 2000)

Table: Top 5 nations of bi-national marriages in Germany 1999

German men chose women from	Number	German women chose men from	Number
Poland	5304	Turkey	3971
Russia	2223	Former Yugoslavia	3314
Thailand	2148	Italy	2005
Romania	1592	USA	1254
Ukraine	1436	Bosnia-Herzegovina	991

(Source: Schwantes, 2009)

Concerning children from those families, their number was equally noticeable. They made up 11% of the birth rate in 2001. This indicates that in every ten newborns there was one child from bi-national families (Falkner, 2005: 172). Just in the families which had a German parent, the related percentage reached 11.06 in 2003 (Schwantes, 2009: 12). But the fact is that they do not seem to have aroused too much interest both in the academic area and in the public. Research on their status is presently still less modest than those on migrant families.

3.2.3 “Immigration, Integration and the Image of Germany in the World”: Discussions using the example of a Berlin International Conference in 2011

Compared to the Beijing International conference of 2010, the Berlin conference of 2011 could equally be understood as an up-to-date reflection of the multicultural phenomena in German society. As the organizer of this conference, the “Institute for Cultural Diplomacy” (ICD) was founded in the year of 1999. By now it has become one of the largest independent organizations dealing with cultural exchange in Europe. This time the two main subjects were intensively discussed in the one-week conference: the current situation of immigrants living in Germany, and the related political and cultural engagements within and outside Germany. Participants came from different social classes: students, professors, politicians and representatives from local organizations. People from each social background were given the opportunity to present.

Obviously, the subjects concerned a wide range of topics: “the basis of the German Foreign Office”, “integration in the context of the Turkish-German relationship”, and “dimensions of integration in the EU”, etc. The variety of the topics showed that the organizer not only concentrated on the domestic issues, but also kept a close eye on Germany’s role in its neighborhood. From the perspective of the contents as a whole, the integration of the Turkish people which are the largest group of immigrants in Germany was still one of the main focuses to be discussed. Situations of other ethnic groups, Asian or African, for example, were not sufficiently mentioned, although these people also have their own problems and difficulties in integrating into the local society.

According to the discussion, Germany seems to be facing the challenge of whether or not the idea of multiculturalism is suitable for this country, since the largest group of immigrants have still not reached the level of integration as the local society expected. Besides, immigrants as a whole have always been considered as the risk to security for the locals. But as a matter of fact, this issue does not depend on the question of “whether or not”, but on the “how”. In his talk: “Multikulturelle Gesellschaft-(K)eine gescheiterte Idee?(!)²⁸”, Hartmut Behr, for instance, Professor of international politics at the University of Newcastle, UK, frankly pointed out that Germany has never fully achieved the conditions for becoming an immigration country. The following issues still need to be improved: bilingual education, multi-religious lessons, regulations for residence, etc. Therefore, fulfilling the needs for immigrants as soon as possible, instead of keeping discussing, is definitely more important for a multicultural society.

To sum up, the Berlin conference showed that Germany is more advanced in the aspect of dealing with the issue of immigrants than China. It has already gone beyond the level of simply presenting its achievements. On the contrary, more emphasis was put on the current issues and discussions for logical solutions. Besides, it was well

²⁸ Multicultural society- a (n) (un)successful idea? (!)

organized and all participants were gathered in the same group. More importantly, the organizer kept contacting the participants for weeks to ask for their feedbacks. This attitude showed that it took the issue seriously and was willing to make progress.

Chapter Four

Research methods

In order to realize the research objectives, e.g. to find out respective features and problems of parenting in the German-Chinese families from these two countries, a variety of research methods were employed. The main focus of this chapter will be on the methods of data collection and their outcomes. The part of *research procedure* in between is about the process of looking for interviewees and how to get them involved in this research. On the one hand, the description of this process presents the true social background which the German-Chinese families are facing. On the other hand, different reactions of the parents to this project can be understood somehow as the first-hand “findings” of this research. Although their different attitudes to this research seemingly just reflected their personal understandings of being parents in bi-national families, they were most likely to help better comprehend the true findings of this research in retrospect.

4.1 Methods of data collection

Largely, two groups of data collection played a big part in gathering crucial information from the German-Chinese families in these two countries. Four different instruments were employed in collecting the primary data which were family member-oriented. The secondary data provided basic knowledge of the cities in which those families lived.

4.1.1 Primary data collection

4.1.1.1 Structured interview

Twenty parents from the ten German-Chinese families all accepted the interviews which meant that none of them was missing in this process. Since interviews were the major method of collecting data, they were structured in a way of covering the topic and issues of this research as much as possible. This kind of interview guide approach was characterized by the feature that the interviewer could decide the sequence and

working of questions during the course of the interview. The outline of issues increased the comprehensiveness of the data and could make data collection systematic for each respondent. Those interviews remained conversational and situational (Patton: 1980 quoted by Cohen / Manion / Morrison: 2008: 353). The parents were separately interviewed and their spouses showed their presence by not letting their children interrupt the interviews. The interviewees were encouraged to keep talking when they seemed to be motivated by certain questions and would like to share their experience with the interviewer, on domestic punishment, for example. They were asked whether they could talk in English in the interview, for this thesis is written in English. Two German parents and one Chinese parent accepted it. The rest of them preferred their mother tongues (German / Chinese). Nineteen interviews were made in the homes of the interviewees and one took place in a café. In order to make the interviewees feel more comfortable about the sincerity of this research, a brief announcement of letting them remain anonymous was made before each interview, especially as they were asked if they would agree to the interviews to being recorded. Eighteen parents agreed to this, two did not.

4.1.1.2 Structured questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared for each parent in their own language (German / Chinese). The purpose for doing it was to find out more facets of interviewees which the interviews alone might not completely include. The 26 questions in the questionnaire were divided into three different categories: person, marriage and parenting. They were arranged in a certain order: from the basic questions to the open-ended ones. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008: 336-337), the ordering of the questionnaire was important. A common sequence of a questionnaire was as follows:

- Commence with unthreatening factual questions (e.g. age group, sex, qualifications etc.
- Move to closed questions (about given statements, for instance)

- Then move to more open-ended questions that seek responses on opinions, attitudes, perceptions and views.

It can be seen that this sequence moves from objective facts to subjective attitudes. For the majority of the questions, the respondents just needed to tick boxes (□) to show the answer they had chosen. More space was provided for closed as well as open-ended questions. The parents filled the questionnaires in the presence of the researcher.

4.1.1.3 Educational diary

The purpose of keeping educational diaries was to capture the parents' daily life practice of their parenting as well as to document any possible disagreement with their spouses and the children. Each diary included four questions / requirements, e.g. children's development and learning progress, and repeated it weekly. The parents were supposed to write at least once a week (more was possible) over a period of six months. A diary was prepared for each parent in his / her own language (German / Chinese). However, the majority hesitated to agree to do it, because of "lack of time". One family in China did not take the offering at the very beginning.

4.1.1.4 Structured test

The tests were divided into two groups due to the age difference of the children. The test for the children below school-age asked them personal questions, e.g. name and age, etc. Basic knowledge of Germany and China was added in the test for the school children, the capitals of these two countries, for instance. The purpose of doing these tests was to have the opportunity to directly contact the children and to test their language skills. Moreover, the extent of how far the school children had learned the cultures of their parents could also be tested. Both German and Chinese versions of the tests were available for the school children to choose. Most of them chose their school language and would do it in their own rooms. The researcher asked the younger children the questions orally with their parents alongside. All the tests were

given to the children after the interviews with their parents. The length of finishing it was measured from five to ten minutes.

4.1.2 Secondary data collection

In this section basic as well as representative information and background of the cities where the German-Chinese families were found is presented in the order the interviews.

4.1.2.1 Selected cities in Germany: Clausthal-Zellerfeld, Pulheim, Munich and Dachau

The five German-Chinese families lived in these four different cities which are located in different Federal States. The City of Clausthal-Zellerfeld²⁹ is located in the Federal State of Lower Saxony. It has an area of 33.96 square kilometers and a population of 14.000 (by the end of 2010). Like other German universities, Clausthal University of Technology attracts international students. Students from China are the largest group among them.

Pulheim³⁰ is located in the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia. It has an area of about 72.14 square kilometers and a population of about 53.000 (by the end of 2010). Schools of different types can be found there.

Munich³¹ and Dachau are both located in the Federal State of Bavaria. Munich is its capital city and has an area of 310.43 square kilometers. By the end of 2010 its population was 1.35 million. After Berlin and Hamburg, it is the third largest city in Germany. Strictly speaking, Dachau³² should be clarified as a town rather than a city. It is located in Upper Bavaria with an area of 34.85 square kilometers and a population of roughly 40.000 (by the end of 2010).

²⁹ source: <http://www.clausthal-zellerfeld.de/> (19.12.2011)

³⁰ source: <http://www.pulheim.de/> (19.12.2011)

³¹ source: <http://www.muenchen.de/> (19.12.2011)

³² source: <http://www.kz-gedenkatette-dachau.de/> (19.12.2011)

4.1.2.2 Selected cities in China: Beijing, Wuxi and Taicang

The five German-Chinese families of this research live in three different cities. Beijing³³, the capital of China, is also known as Peking. It is China's political, cultural and educational centre. For centuries it has been the heart of Chinese history. Nowadays it has an area of 16.800 square kilometers and a population of roughly 19 million.

Wuxi, a city with a history of more than 3000 years, is located in Jiangsu Province of South China. It enjoys a favorable condition of traffic and transportation by rivers, lakes and sea. It has an area of around 4700 square kilometer and a population of about 6.3 million by the end of 2010 (Han / Han, 2007: 246-253).

Also located in Jiangsu Province and having convenient networks of traffic, the City of Taicang³⁴ is famous for its great number of scholars and scientists, e.g. China's "queen of physic", Wu Jianxiong, and the Winner of Nobel Price for Physic, Zhu Diwen. Despite an area of 823 square kilometer and inhabitants of 466.000 by the end of 2008, a great number of German and Western companies can be found there (Ling, 2006: 1-4).

4.2 Research procedure

To find German-Chinese families with children aged from two to twelve, academic institutions and national organizations made their efforts. The German Embassy in Beijing, the School of German Embassy in Beijing, professors from different Chinese universities and from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, as well as experienced journalists from China Daily were contacted to ask for the access to those families. As far as the situation in Germany was concerned, the nationwide German-Chinese Societies played an important role.

³³ source: <http://www.beijing.gov.cn/> (19.12.2011)

³⁴ source: <http://www.taicang.gov.cn/> (19.12.2011)

4.2.1 First interviews

In the period of May 2008 until September 2009, altogether eighteen German-Chinese families have been asked to participate in this research. Eight families are located in four cities of China: five in Beijing, one in Shanghai, one in Suzhou and one in Wuxi. Another ten families live in six German cities: one in Berlin, one in Clausthal-Zellerfeld, one in Nuremberg, two in Munich, two in Pulheim and three in Magdeburg. Mostly due to the career prospects, one family in each country has in between left their home for their spouses' country. To be precise, the family of a German husband with a Chinese wife living in Beijing moved to Hamburg. And the family of the same kind in Nuremberg decided to go to Hong Kong.

A variety of methods have been employed to get the families involved in this research. First of all, electronic mails were sent to introduce the researcher herself as well as a brief introduction of this project. Secondly, phone calls were made to make an appointment with the family, when telephone numbers were available. Thus, different reactions of families both in China and Germany have definitely made the procedure of this research more challenging. One couple with their three children, one German father and two Chinese mothers from four families showed their faces in Beijing in the summer of 2008. The purpose of meeting the people was to answer their questions directly, on the one hand, and more importantly, to express the wish to keep contact for the years of the research. They all were very patient and showed their interests in this research. „Finally, there is someone who is going to work on this topic“ said a Chinese husband during the first meeting. The German father from another family gave practical advice for making interviews from his own experience. And one of the Chinese mothers provided useful information about literature for this study. All of them made the author of this research believe that they were willing to take part in this study. In reality, however, some of their spouses at the end rejected to be involved, because of „lack of time“.

The situation that happened in Germany was, to a large extent, a more complicated story. The methods of contacting the families remained the same as they had been used in China. The reactions of the families in West Germany contrasted sharply with the ones in East Germany. The first family the researcher met was in Clausthal-Zellerfeld, where the Clausthal University of Technology is located. Although it is merely a small town, in comparison with other German big cities, international students there were from more than one hundred countries. As it was the case in lots of German universities, the Chinese students were the largest group among foreign students in Clausthal. In this small-sized, but rather multicultural society, the couple, a Chinese woman and a German man made their acquaintance during their studies. They both were very willing to share their stories about their children even in our first meeting. Especially the Chinese woman dominated the conversation. Even if she preferred her mother tongue, the Chinese language, rather than German, to talk to me, her husband did not express any disagreement. In addition, he stayed there with us till the very end of the conversation. It turned out that the German husband had a basic knowledge of the Chinese language both in speaking and listening comprehension. With this encouraging starting point, the couple accepted the interview which went smoothly afterwards.

Concerning the families in Pulheim and in Munich, the procedure was more easy-going. One family in each city was introduced by the local German-Chinese Society. They were open to make contact either by writing emails or on the phone. It seemed that they were already prepared to take part in the research. And this was the case. Besides, the procedure in Pulheim unexpectedly progressed, according to the „snowball system“. It means that the interviewees introduced another German-Chinese family, who was interested in this research as well. Thus, two families from Pulheim made their contributions in this study. As to the German-Chinese Society in Munich, it was one of the first replies right after the initial request sent to those societies nationwide. In addition to sending a family's address and telephone number, the Society also followed the progress of this research by asking the family for

feedback of the interview. A few weeks later, another family from Munich was ready to be „researched”.

The story with one of the families in Berlin was different. The Chinese mother, for instance, was very interested in this research and had a lot of experience of this issue. After studying German in China, she has been living in Germany for almost twenty years. We had our first contact in December 2008. In between our appointments were canceled a couple of times. However, she did not withdraw but invited me to her place for our first meeting in late January 2009. We were alone at the beginning. When her three daughters came home from school, the Chinese mother automatically switched the language from Chinese to German. „None of them speaks Chinese,“ she said hopelessly to me. She let them repeat some Chinese words, such as „eat“, „holiday“. The girls did. After a few seconds, the oldest daughter stopped her mother in German, saying „Chinesischer Kurs ist zu Ende!³⁵“ Therefore, the mother explained that „at times, the youngest wants to learn Chinese a little bit. But the others, no way.” Afterwards, I enjoyed talking with the girls, aged twelve, ten and eight, respectively. It had to be in German, though. In spite of the fruitful conversation with the mother and the interesting interaction with the children, the official interview was later not accepted. Largely, it was due to the idea of recording the interview as well as the lack of participation of the German father.

Although I have obtained sufficient interviewees for this research, it would be more complete to also listen to the voices from such families in East Germany. In the City of Magdeburg, it seemed to be impossible to get in touch with any German-Chinese families. The first family I met was the only one introduced by the local German-Chinese Society. In fact, I had a nice talk with the Chinese woman on the phone to make our appointment. Having lived in Magdeburg for more than seven years, the woman stayed at home most of the time caring for her nine-years-old daughter. During the two-hour talk, she did not let her husband get involved into the

³⁵ Chinese lessons are over!

conversation. Consequently, I only learned about the issue from the mother's side. As to the official interview, it would be against her principles, because „family for me is holy and cannot be violated. Moreover, I keep a boundary between my family and the outside”. With this statement, this family was out of the question for this research.

I asked the Office of Foreign Affairs in Magdeburg for help and informed them that I would like to pay ten euros for the first cooperation from those families. Two months passed and I received their rejection. As my last hope, I asked my supervisor, Prof. Golz, for his suggestions. He wrote and called the Office of Foreign Affairs for their support. Finally, it worked in May 2009. They provided a list of addresses. There were five German-Chinese families, including the one that I had met already. Husbands and wives from two families were both originally Chinese. They were not categorized as candidates because some of them had received their German citizenship. Thus, only two families were left. In one of them, the mother of the German husband told me that her son worked in China and his wife and his daughter were with him. In spite of this situation, I asked for his email address and sent the information about this research, hoping that this family would be the interviewees in China. Or I could meet them up after their return. But there was no reply. In the last family, I was told by the brother of the German that they had migrated to the United Kingdom. Still hoping to gather some information from their experiences in Magdeburg, emails were sent to the couple. Again, no single word returned.

4.2.2 Second interviews

According to the above studies, three families in China and five in Germany have participated in this research until the end of 2009. Necessarily, emails were sent to ask for more German-Chinese families in China so as to balance the number of participants in these two countries. At the end of January 2010, the German woman whom I had been in touch with informed that her Chinese daughter-in-law was in Magdeburg for a few months. Consequently, an interview was made with this Chinese woman and she was willing to write the educational diary. In fact, this family lives in

the Chinese City of Taicang, where the German husband works. When I was told that her husband would like to contribute to this research as well, this family, therefore, was considered as a new interviewee for China. In addition, the Chinese woman informed that such bi-national families could easily be found in Taicang, due to the establishment of German-Chinese companies. The wish to find new families there was definitely expressed. As a result, the German husband of the Chinese woman was interviewed in March, 2010 in the City of Taicang. Successfully, another family from Taicang was introduced by the Chinese woman who was met in Magdeburg. All in all, the number of interviewees has been balanced in Germany as well as in China.

4.3 Outcome of data collection

4.3.1 Backgrounds of families living in Germany

Altogether five German-Chinese families made their contributions to this research in Germany. One of them lives in Clausthal-Zellerfeld which is located in the Federal State of Lower Saxony. Two families live in the City of Pulheim which is situated in the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia. And another two families can be found in Munich and Dachau both of which are in the Federal State of Bavaria of South Germany. According to the research, all these families live in two generations, i.e. father, mother and child. To present them in a traditional way, the background of the family members will be separately introduced in sequence of father, mother and child in the following sections. It has become well known that the “three concepts”³⁶ greatly guide the Chinese people’s way of thinking and their model of behavior. In other words, it suggested that the courtier had to be absolutely obedient to the monarch, the same with the son to the father and the wife to the husband (Qian, 2009, vol. I: 51). However, in this research so far it does not mean that the group of participants listed first is more important than the latter, as far as their role in the family is concerned. In fact, the mothers were always interviewed first during the

³⁶ Monarch is the concept of courtier; father is the concept of son; and husband is the concept of wife.

procedure, based on the consideration that the mother is the main designer of the child and the hand of pushing on the world is the hand of pushing the cradle (Wang, 2008).

4.3.1.1 Backgrounds of fathers

Among the five fathers from the German-Chinese families, four of them were German and one was originally Chinese. According to their responses, they were from 29 to 56 years old. Two of them attained their doctorates; two of them had a Diploma degree and one of them was qualified by the so-called state-run examinations to be a technician. They were all professionally active and well all married. Three of them got to know their wives by attending social activities; one of them made his future wife's acquaintance during his studies; and one of them met his wife while travelling. As to the language for communicating with each other, the Chinese father was the only one who mastered the language of his spouse, i.e. the German language. The rest of the fathers could only speak a little bit Chinese which was the mother tongue of their wives. As a result, three fathers, including the Chinese, mostly spoke to their spouses in German. One German father had to speak to his wife in both German and in English, because the wife's German was not yet adequate. Besides, one German father communicated with his wife only in English, due to the fact that she had little knowledge of the German language. It is necessary to mention that the Chinese father had become a German citizen and combined his name with his wife's family name.

4.3.1.2 Backgrounds of mothers

In relation to the findings of the fathers, responses of the mothers were given with the same requirement as the following. Of the five families, four were Chinese, two of whom had German citizenship, and one was German. According to the survey, they were from 28 to 47 years old. Their educational levels were ranked from the highest: Diploma degree (3x); Bachelor degree (1x) to the lowest: graduate from a vocational school (1x). Based on these results, the research showed that three of them with the Diploma degree were professionally active. The other two mothers who had relatively

lower educational levels were seen as the so-called “full-time housewives”. In addition, these two mothers were also the ones whose German language skill was not sufficient to communicate with their husbands: one had to talk to her spouse only in English and the other expressed herself with the help of English and a little bit of German. On the contrary, another two Chinese mothers had only minor problems with the German language. Compared with the findings of the fathers, the mothers’ responses to the language issue matched with them. Moreover, it is also necessary to point out that one of the two Chinese mothers with the German citizenship combined her name with her husband’s family name. The other emphasized during the interview: “I fully retain my Chinese name.”

4.3.1.3 Backgrounds of children

The survey showed that altogether eight children could be counted from the five German-Chinese families. Seven of them belonged to the target group of this research, except for one girl from her mother’s previous marriage. They were all born in Germany. Out of the seven children, there were two girls and five boys. Their age range was 2-11 years: i.e. 2yrs (2x); 3yrs (2x); 4 yrs (1x); 5yrs (1x) and 11yrs (1x). For all of them, the German citizenship was chosen by their parents right after their birth. Furthermore, they all attended the local German educational institutions (kindergarten or primary school). According to the observation and the contact with them, the children’s language skills varied greatly. On the one hand, they all spoke the German language nicely. But regarding Chinese, which was also one of the mother tongues of their parents, their knowledge was from the level of being unable to speak at all to the level of being both able to understand and speak easily. This finding indicates that the older children (5yrs and 11yrs) did not seem to benefit from their ages, because just these two were categorized as the lowest level. Five children out of the seven had both German and Chinese names. The other two girls were given only the German names, because “my family name was somehow not suitable for girls” explained the Chinese mother during the contact.

4.3.1.4 Summary

Based on the above-mentioned information of the family members, the following tables were made so as to highlight their most important characteristics in a more presentable way. The first two tables summarize the background of the fathers and the mothers. The next two tables horizontally compared the parents' responses, with special reference to their origins. Afterwards, the children's characteristics are shown in the last table

Table: Backgrounds of fathers in Germany

	Level of education	Professional status	Language(s) to communicate with spouse
Father in Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Dr.	Active	German
Father 1 in Pulheim	Certified	Active	German
Father 2 in Pulheim	Diploma	Active	English
Father in Munich	Diploma	Active	English / German
Father in Dachau	Dr.	Active	German

Table: Backgrounds of mothers in Germany

	Level of education	Professional status	Language(s) to communicate with spouse
Mother in Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Diploma	active	German
Mother1 in Pulheim	Diploma	active	German
Mother1 in Pulheim	Bachelor	non-active	English
Mother in Munich	Vocational school graduate	non-active	English / German
Mother in Dachau	Diploma	active	German

Table: Backgrounds of German parents in Germany

	Level of education	Professional status	Level of Chinese language	Experience in China	Combination of German name with spouse's family name
Father in Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Dr.	active	+	+	-
Father 1 in Pulheim	Certified	active	-	+	-
Father 2 in Pulheim	Diploma	active	-	+	-
Father in Munich	Diploma	active	-	+	-
Mother in Dachau	Diploma	active	-	+	-

Table: Backgrounds of Chinese parents in Germany

	Level of education	Professional status	Level of German language	Arrival in Germany (Year)	Citizenship	Combination of Chinese name with spouse's family name
Mother in Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Diploma	active	+	2004	Chinese	-
Mother 1 in Pulheim	Diploma	active	+	1999	German	-
Mother 2 in Pulheim	Bachelor	non-active	-	2003	Chinese	-
Mother in Munich	Vocational school graduate	non-active	-	1998	German	+
Father in Dachau	Dr.	active	+	1989	German	+

Table: Backgrounds of Children in Germany

Home	Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Clausthal-Zellerfeld	Pulheim	Pulheim	Munich	Dachau	Dachau
Sex	F	F	M	M	M	M	M
Age	2	3	2	3	4	5	11
Birthplace	DEU ¹	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU
Level of German	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Level of Chinese	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Educational institutions	DEU KG ²	DEU KG	DEU KG	DEU KG	DEU KG	DEU KG	DEU School
Citizenship	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU	DEU
German name	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Chinese name	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Experience in China	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

1: DEU = Germany or German

2: KG = Kindergarten (German)

4.3.2 Backgrounds of families living in China

Equally, the same number of families in China made their contributions to this research. Five German-Chinese families could be found in three different cities. Two of them live in the Chinese capital city, Beijing. Another two families live in the City of Taicang. One family has its home in the City of Wuxi. The last two cities belong to Jiangsu Province which is situated in South China. According to the survey, these five families live in two generations as well. In the following sections, responses of fathers, mothers and children will be shown separately, in the same order as presented before regarding Germany.

4.3.2.1 Backgrounds of fathers

With the exception of one Chinese father, the rest of the four fathers come from Germany. They were from around 36 to 45 years old. The survey showed that four fathers attained their Diploma degrees. One father graduated from a vocational school. They were all professionally active and were all married. Four of them met their

future wives during the working contact in China. One of them got to know his wife in social activities abroad. Concerning the language for communicating with each other, all the four German fathers could not speak their mother tongue totally to their spouses: three of them had to talk English; and one had to talk to his wife either in English or in Chinese. The Chinese father, on the contrary, has acquired satisfactory knowledge of the German language to communicate with his wife. However, the research showed that he did not apply for the German citizenship.

4.3.2.2 Backgrounds of mothers

Based on the first findings of the fathers in China, there are four Chinese mothers and one German mother from the five families. Their age range is about 30-40 years. Four of them attained their degrees of higher education: Master degree (1x); Bachelor degree (3x). Moreover, one mother graduated from a vocational school. Among these five mothers, three were professionally active. The remaining two were considered as “full-time housewives”, who take care of their children and do housework most of their time. None of the four Chinese mothers was able to communicate fully with her spouse in German, due to the insufficient knowledge of that language. Luckily, the German mother was the only one who could talk to her spouse in her mother tongue. It was noticeable that all of them retained their individual nationalities as well as their personal names.

4.3.2.3 Backgrounds of children

The children from the five German-Chinese families living in China totaled to eleven. Ten of them qualified for this research, one child was adopted by one family. Among the target group, there were five boys and five girls. They were aged from two to twelve years: 2yrs (3x); 3yrs (2x); 3yrs (2x); 6yrs (1x); 7yrs (1x); 11yrs (1x) and 12yrs (1x). Eight of them were born in China and three in Germany. The survey showed that all of these children had German citizenship. However, they were sent to different kinds of educational institutions in China. The majority went to the local

Chinese kindergartens or primary schools, a few of them to the so-called international kindergartens or the German Embassy School. The youngest children mostly stayed at home to be raised by their mothers and the babysitters. As to their language skills, it was found that all of them could understand Chinese. Those who attended the Chinese local schools had already acquired the ability to read and write Chinese characters. On the other hand, all these children were able to understand the German language as well. However, they preferred to respond in Chinese. Looking at their names, it can be seen that ten of the eleven have both their German and their Chinese names. One little girl has only her German name.

4.3.2.4 Summary

The following tables were equally made to give an overview of the background of the above-mentioned family members in China. Again, the first two tables present the most significant characteristics of the fathers and the mothers, without consideration of their home countries. Then, in the next two tables, more emphasis is put on their origins, i.e. parents from Germany and parents from China. The children's basic information was given in the last table.

Table: Backgrounds of fathers in China

	Level of education	Professional status	Language(s) to communicate with spouse
Father1 in Beijing	Vocational school graduate	active	German
Father 2 in Beijing	Diploma	active	English / German
Father in Wuxi	Diploma	active	English
Father 1 in Taicang	Diploma	active	English
Father 2 in Taicang	Diploma	active	English / Chinese

Table: Backgrounds of mothers in China

	Level of education	Professional status	Language(s) to communicate with spouse
Mother 1 in Beijing	Vocational school graduate	active	German
Mother 2 in Beijing	Diploma	active	English / German
Mother in Wuxi	Bachelor	non-active	English
Mother 1 in Taicang	Bachelor	active	English
Mother 2 in Taicang	Bachelor	non-active	English / Chinese

Table: Backgrounds of German parents in China

	Level of education	Professional status	Level of Chinese language	Arrival in China (Year)	Citizenship	Combination of German name with spouse's family name
Mother in Beijing	Vocational school graduate	active	–	2000	German	–
Father in Beijing	Diploma	active	–	2003	German	–
Father in Wuxi	Diploma	active	–	2000	German	–
Father 1 in Taicang	Diploma	active	–	2003	German	–
Father 2 in Taicang	Diploma	active	+	2002	German	–

Table: backgrounds of Chinese parents with in China

	Level of education	Professional status	Level of German language	Citizenship	Combination of Chinese name with spouse's family name	Experience in Germany
Father in Beijing	Vocational school graduate	active	+	Chinese	-	+
Mother in Beijing	Master	active	-	Chinese	-	+
Mother in Wuxi	Bachelor	non-active	-	Chinese	-	+
Mother 1 in Taicang	Bachelor	active	-	Chinese	-	+
Mother 2 in Taicang	Bachelor	non-active	-	Chinese	-	+

Table: backgrounds of children in China

Home	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Beijing	Wuxi	Wuxi	Taicang	Taicang	Taicang
Sex	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Age	7	6	2	3	12	11	4	3	4	2
Birthplace	CHN ³	CHN	CHN	CHN	DEU	CHN	DEU	CHN	CHN	CHN
Level of German	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Level of Chinese	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Educational institutions	CHN School	CHN School	Home	Int. ⁴ KG	DE Emb. ⁵	CHN School	Int. KG	CHN School	CHN KG	Home
Citizenship	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE	DE
German name	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Chinese name	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Experience in China	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

3: CHN = China or Chinese

4: Int. = International

5: Emb. = Embassy School

4.4 Method of analysis

“There is no one single or correct way to analyze and present qualitative data; how one does it should abide by the issue of fitness for purpose, [...] Qualitative data often focus on smaller number of people than quantitative data, yet data tend to be detailed and rich” (Cohen / Manion / Morrison, 2008: 461). Based on the feature of this study as a comparative as well as qualitative research, a variety of methods was employed for the data collection. They all aimed at the purpose of finding out difficulties, challenges and ways of negotiating of parents from binational families as much as possible. Triangulation was therefore used for the analysis in this research. Denzin (1970) stresses the goal of triangulation that “by combining methods and investors in the same study, observers can partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator and / or method” (quoted by Flick, 2004: 13).

With the help of clarifying the social, political and historical backgrounds of China and Germany which closely related to the issues of this research, equivalents of comparison between these two countries were theoretically established.

In relation to the central concern of this research and the research questions in particular, respondents’ statements from the interviews were seriously chosen and quoted. The section of findings and discussions analyzed the data collection in detail. They basically focused on the respective responses of the German and Chinese parents to the very same perspectives which served as the foundation of the conclusion afterwards. Similarities and differences between the parents could be consequently identified. This kind of comparison equally embodied similar and / or different challenges that the parents and the societies in which they lived were facing. Accordingly, recommendations from different angles were practically derived from the analysis.

Chapter Five

Research findings and discussions

This chapter presents and discusses the research findings. Based on the research procedure and the data collection which provided the backgrounds of the families in the previous chapters, this basic information will help us get a better understanding about the families' performance and their social interaction. Along with the objectives of this empirical study, findings and discussions will be shown in order of these two countries separately. Firstly, we will pay attention to the families living in the selected cities of Germany. To a large degree, they consisted of two groups of results: the societal factors and the non-societal factors.

Hurrelmann (2002: 173) points out that families are seen as a social microcosm in society. Parents' basic values unbrokenly passed on to the growing generations. Besides, it is also said that "children are a mirror which reflected the status of their parents" (Masaru, quoted in Wang, 2008: 77). Accordingly, it indicates that these kinds of factors which are present in the parents might play a great role in shaping their children's identities as well as their performance in the social environment. Consequently, the influence of those factors on the children is elaborated afterwards. An examination of the findings in China follows.

5.1 Findings and discussion of families in Germany

There were one Chinese father and four Chinese mothers from the five German-Chinese families living in Germany. In other words, one German mother and four German fathers could be counted. Although some of the Chinese had German citizenship, the following detailed discussion makes special reference to the parents' original cultural backgrounds.

5.1.1 Discussion of societal factors

Romano (2001: 103-106) states that “similar social background is an important ingredient in any marriage, intercultural or not, as it implies (but does not guarantee) similarity of education, attitudes, tastes, and manners. [...] Class difference, when it is present, is one of the major causes of conflict in intercultural marriage, as in any marriage, because it carries over into so many other areas. Social backgrounds will determine not only the behavior of the spouse but also the attitude toward many other things that will be a part of their life together: sex, educational goals, work, recreation, financial management, leisure activities, role definitions, and so on”. Presumably it can be seen that social background is a fundamental criterion for understanding bi-national families effectively. According to this research, eight from the ten parents gained their higher education degrees. Therefore, they were at the relatively same level of education, regardless of their almost 30-year age difference (28-56Y.). Whether or not this situation could cause conflict, we have to investigate from different aspects.

5.1.1.1 Parents’ childhood education / upbringing

This section largely concerns the education that the parents received from their own families, when they were small. Obviously, it sounds a little bit unbelievable, because one could hardly remember such things at a young age. However, the parents’ responses showed that it is just those memories that they still keep in mind nowadays have helped them build their own basic understanding of education.

5.1.1.1.1 Childhood education of German parents

The social structure and the political as well as the economic system have changed dramatically, since the German (re)unification in the year of 1989. As one of the consequences, the policy on families has been, to a certain degree, changed as well. The sixth “Family Report” which was edited by the Ministry of Families, The Elderly, Women and The Young reported in 2000 that the new federal government had

introduced a set of new policies on families after a long time of stagnation in this field. They emphasized the importance of having equal chances, justice as well as solidarity. Moreover, the special issues of families with international backgrounds were particularly under the consideration of the federal government (cf.: XII). As a result, the social backgrounds were totally different from the one in which the parents in this research were small and the one where they had their own offspring. Some of the German parents directly pointed this out as follows:

“I have to say that the situation in the 70s was different, when I was small. So we cannot just generally say which is good and which is bad. There are lots of changes. There were no babysitters, for instance, because mothers mostly stayed at home and had plenty of time for their children. But today the task has been taken by the babysitters. Besides, children had more contact with their relatives than those of nowadays, because they have to go to the kindergarten³⁷” (cf. p.255-256).

Though each of the German interviewees kept something different in mind about their childhood education, they all expressed that they would continue what they felt was positive from their parents’ way of bringing them up as well as trying to improve what had been missing or negative at that time. Largely, what they still remember are two groups of things. Firstly, they learned the basic skills from their parents, such as speaking and reading. Secondly, their parents were the first to teach them the moral values, being kind, honest, active and punctual, for example. One of them even learned a lot just from his parents’ behaviors, despite the fact that they hardly taught him verbally what should be done. Based on these experiences, all the German parents in this research found their own way to raise their next generations. “Parents’ educational and disciplinary styles depend a great deal on their value system: on how they perceive their role in life and their relations with others and on their perception of the world and themselves. In other words, how they will instruct their children to

³⁷ The quotation was translated from a German interview. This situation equally concerned other related quotations from the German interviews. In addition, the interviews are partly indirectly quoted. Readers will find the original and full versions at the respective pages of the appendixes.

behave will depend in part on whether their orientation is toward *doing* or *being*; on whether they believe in the equality of all people or in a hierarchical system; and on whether they see themselves primarily as individuals, and therefore responsible for their own future, or as an integral part of a group” (Romano, 2001: 118). In this statement, it can be easily seen that two kinds of different cultural values sharply contrast with each other. In Kumbier’s and Schulz von Thun’s point of view, individualism is more stressed by the western cultures and collectivism is, on the contrary, more related to the eastern cultures (2006: 14). Therefore, it is no wonder that the German parents in this research pass almost the same way on to their own children and even provide them with much more space for being individuals by doing themselves. From the most “exaggerating” response that “*I allow my son to do everything apart from something dangerous*” (cf. p.271) to the more reasonable idea that “*I try to build a relationship of friends with my children and we always discuss something together*” (cf. p.278), it shows that the value of being independent as well as of democratic thinking are the guidelines on which the current German parents’ base their parenting. Besides, some of them also saw the necessity for parents in general to take more time with their children which had been in fact definitely missing in their own childhood.

5.1.1.1.2 Childhood education of Chinese parents

Four of the five Chinese parents in this research come from Mainland China. One of them is from Hong Kong which was officially ceded by the British government in the year of 1997. Based on the principle of “One country, two systems” which was initially made by Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s, Hong Kong has been allowed to retain its capitalist system and the law unchanged. As far as this research is concerned, the five Chinese parents shared similar childhood education, in spite of the two socially and politically different societies in which they were rooted. In particular, it seems that the four from Mainland China were brought up by the same parents, because learning hard and the strictness of parents were the main things they could remember.

Obviously, their parents must have been in their youth during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), due to the around ten year difference of the four participants in this research. As witnesses and victims of this political catastrophe, the incredible experience was undoubtedly “printed” in the memories of the participants’ parents. “Millions of Chinese suffered or were killed as the nation was engulfed by cruelty and oppression on a horrific scale. Until this day, the events of the decade that ended with Mao’s death in 1976 constitute a scar in the national psyche, and academic study of the period is forbidden. [...] Most schools and universities were shut down and teachers humiliated” (Kynge, 2008: 32-33). Therefore, it is perfectly understandable that people who personally experienced such a hard time will definitely value the significance of education and highlight the importance of learning a great deal to their children. Especially for those coming from an intellectual family, this kind of instruction became central to their upbringing. One of the four Chinese parents from the mainland China straightforwardly described how educative the atmosphere in his family had been:

“In China, like parents of my age, they only had the chance to take the university entrance exam after the Cultural Revolution. People did not pay attention to culture and knowledge until then. As I come from an intellectual family, my parents were strict on me. They hoped my brother and I could go to the university. My parents taught us lessons, supervising our homework. [...] In family education, my parents spent more time on our learning and they spent more of their energy on us” (cf. p.273). Another respondent shared her stories from almost the same background: *“My father was a university professor and my mother was a school teacher. So my family environment was superior. My sister and I went to a school where most of the pupils’ parents were school teachers. My parents had comparison with other kids. And my family education was pretty strict under such an atmosphere”* (cf. p.251).

As another significant part of childhood education of these Chinese parents, including the one from Hong Kong, “the traditional Chinese family’s education” often appeared in their memories, as well, precisely, the strictness. This particular expectation had, in

fact, its historical root. “Chinese tradition teaches that diligence is not only a spiritual strength aimed at achievement, but part of the moral principles guiding one’s life. Diligence in working is also the means by which one makes up for any lack of natural talent. The Chinese nation believes that if one is diligent in studying and working, one will be successful. This fine tradition has been passed from generation to generation in such learned saying as, ‘One will vainly regret in old age one’s laziness in youth’ and ‘Keep learning as long as one is active’ [...] Furthermore, Chinese traditional society is based on an agricultural economy with a large percentage of small farmers. Since there was limited space for farming land, the only way to gather a larger harvest was to work harder and longer, from sunrise to sundown. Under this kind of economic regime, if you do not work hard, you go hungry” (Li, 2010: 123-126). Believing in those traditional ideas for generations, Chinese parents have been used to asking their children to do their best. *“My father always said: ‘we have to be strong.’ My brother, my sister and I had to do our best, otherwise my parents would have punished us”* (cf. p.265) the Chinese mother from Hong Kong replied in the interview.

Having this kind of childhood education in mind, the Chinese parents living in Germany would like to pave a new way which is more suitable and logical for the development of their children. They changed themselves from the obedient to the “rebels”, when the former little kids became parents. On the one hand, they did not agree with the overriding emphasis on learning any more. In their opinion, learning is simply part of life and there are lots of possibilities to gain success, because of the huge differences of social backgrounds which are not comparable. The idea of giving children more freedom to arouse their own interest instead of forcing them to satisfy the parents’ demands was well shared by the Chinese parents. Some of them particularly those educated in German universities possessed great consciousness of making a spiritually happy and open life for their children. The following responses showed the great difference of education from that of the respondents’ childhood:

“Times have changed. When my parents were young, they thought there were no other ways to get a better life except studying hard and going to the university. But

such a period is over and it doesn't exist any more. I just hope that my child will grow up healthily, will be a kind person and will have a free life. Learning depends on the environment and the children's abilities. But now, we have more chances than before to do what we want" (cf. p.251).

In addition, the parents tried to find a balance when the two cultures were facing a paradoxical situation:

"At the beginning I wanted to use my educational style to teach my children. But my wife usually taught them in the European or the German style. So it would be contradictory, if I still insisted only on the Chinese way. I cannot say mine was right and hers was wrong. So the two methods would be combined together. [...] I am trying to make my kids happy every day. Studying is hard work. My kids will feel suffering and I feel tired too, if they don't want to learn and I still force them to do so. I'd like to provide them with opportunities, when they want to learn something. But they need to go through it by themselves instead of being forced by the parents" (cf. pp.273-274).

But on the other hand, the parents also stood by some of the Chinese traditional values in education, when they got into conflicts with the German culture. Wang (2001: 29) argued that Confucian teachings were selectively valued as a means to maintain social order. [...] In the family, the children were obliged to obey their parents, the wife was obliged to obey her husband, and the younger brother to respect his elder. Certainly, this type of obeying and honoring one's parents as well as the respect to people was the fundamental part of moral principles which the parents in this research learned in China. It still plays a great role in their children's education. On the question of what was the influence of the childhood education, one of the Chinese mothers replied as follows:

"I will use the education style I accepted in my childhood on my son. For instance, he has to say hello when he meets people. Besides, if his friends come to our family, I will let him share his toys with them, because they are our guests. But it is not the case in Germany, mine is mine. When I take my son to the kindergarten, I will make

him say hello or goodbye to the teacher. But when he doesn't do what I said, I will feel he is not polite. It seems very common in the eyes of German people, because I ever discussed it with his German grandfather. He said: 'I was like it and I hated to say hello to someone.' But I hope that my son can always address people in a friendly way, whether or not he is happy. Maybe that is something Chinese" (cf. p.258).

All in all, people normally automatically revert to their own childhood to find a model for parenting, for teaching survival skills and the unspoken conventions of relationships (Romano, 2001: 114). The German parents, to a large degree, can be seen as the followers of their childhood education. They are aware of the social changes and timely improve the educational style to raise their children. Concerning the Chinese parents, they would like to become the reformers to lead a new way for their children, as they repeatedly emphasized the totally different education from their own parents'. But on the other hand, they will not completely give up their traditional cultural values in order not to compromise the German ones. Accordingly, they try to combine the two cultures into one solution to instruct their children. At the same time, they defend part of their original cultural background from fully fusing with the contemporary society.

5.1.1.2 Perception of culture

Ironically, people are so familiar with "culture" that they have not yet found a definition that is universally agreed on. Originally, the word "culture" is derived from Latin "colere" which generally means kind and way, as well as how people live their lives by thinking and doing. The idea of "culture" was weird in the Middle Ages. It was understood as the opposite of "nature" since the 17th century. Precisely, "culture" meant what people did according to their own determinations and fortune. By contrast, "nature" was something fixed. In modern society, "culture" simply concerns the way of how people live and what they do based on their own beings as well as the environment in which they are (Maletzke, 1996: 15-16). To people coming from a different cultural background, the Chinese, for instance, "culture" is certainly

something quite different. “Culture” in Chinese is wén huà. There are two different characters (see the explanation below).

文 : (wén) pattern 化 : (huà) customization

According to Qu (2009: 98-99), people should learn the two characters rather separately in order to gain a complex understanding of “culture”. In history, wén was a kind of pattern which stood for people’s impression. People used this kind of wén to write down, to gather as well as to refine all the human beings’ knowledge and their experience about nature, themselves and society. Continuously, the followers improved themselves and passed on what they learned about the wén. Eventually, it became a kind of strength with thousand-years-old foundation. On the other hand, huà had something to do with custom. The process of huà could change people’s lives by being customized. All in all, people could not create something new and even went forward without consideration of the process of huà. In the following section, the parents’ understanding of their own culture and the culture of their spouses will be discussed. Following their understandings of the issue, a picture of the influence on their children’s formation of identity should become easier to draw.

5.1.1.2.1 German parents’ perception of culture

According to the research, the five German parents had no definite comprehension of their own culture. Unexpectedly, most of them thought that they had little knowledge about the German culture, or even more frankly: *“I am not sure what the German culture is”* (cf. p.243). Besides, the German language was considered as the only thing that some of them could understand best as being German culture. For one parent, correctness and rules were the central principles of German culture. Therefore, it is no wonder that this kind of thinking has strongly reflected on the way they raise their children.

On the question of whether the parents would like to emphasize the German culture, when they were alone with their children, the research showed that the majority did not see the necessity. They will do it only at the request of their children, tell them about the German fairy tales, for example. Even so, it was not because the storyteller was German, as one of them pointed out: *“I don’t do it on purpose. My son is too small. I don’t think it’s a good idea to always emphasize one’s own culture”* (cf. p.256). On the other hand, two of them still saw the importance of discipline and punctuality as general symbols of the German culture. The German mother was the only one who would like to frequently teach her children about her culture. In her opinion, children should not be late for meals.

Concerning the culture of their spouses, the Chinese culture, the research showed that the German parents’ understanding was totally different and came basically from their own experience as well as that of their wives’. All of them have been to China and some of them have contacted Chinese people in their working places in Germany. It can be seen that their understanding of Chinese culture has many facets: a huge country, a difficult language, nice food, polite people as well as the closer relationship in a family than that in Germany. By contrast to these objective and nice impressions of China and its people, they also expressed some disapproval:

“The country is too loud to be suitable for living. I always got the impression of the Chinese I contacted that they take as much as they can, but they seldom give” (cf. p.279).

To conclude, most of the German parents in this research keep up their style of letting their children grow up freely. When something is different from the German culture, they insist on their own. Apparently, just their unconscious educational style, in fact, reflected the most representative features of the German culture, although they were hard to define. In comparison with their own culture, none of them ever stated that they had no idea what the Chinese culture was. On the contrary, they described it in a variety of ways. This kind of response seemed to interestingly embody the Chinese proverb: *“The person on the spot is baffled, the onlooker sees clearly.”*

5.1.1.2.2 Chinese parents' perception of culture

Since “culture” itself is already something complicated to define, it will not be easy either, to give a clear explanation about a culture with 5000 years' history, such as the Chinese. The research showed that the five Chinese parents expressed their respective understanding about their home culture from very different angles regarding the role that culture played in their daily lives in Germany as well as their parenting, in particular. “The Chinese, for four thousand years, when we were unable even to read, knew everything essentially useful of which we boast at the present day” (Voltaire; quoted by Liu, 2008: 424). Like Voltaire (1694-1778), the French writer, the Chinese parents in this research were proud of their original cultural background. Food, clothes, poems as well as the traditional way of thinking, etc. were all included in their responses to the understanding of their culture. Obviously, it was hard to find a more centralized comprehension even among the Chinese themselves. Furthermore, some of them confessed that Chinese culture played a big part especially in their first years in Germany: *“I was deeply influenced by the Chinese culture, when I came here from China. I felt that I was thoroughly filled with the Chinese culture”* (cf. p.230).

Gradually, they had to rethink about their home culture and to decide how they would go forward, when they came to realize that they were also faced with another different kind of culture at the same time. This point especially concerned the parenting of their children. Compared with the Chinese father, the research showed that the four Chinese mothers had more consciousness of considering the aspects of Chinese traditional education in their families. Experiencing the traditional education in China first and automatically perhaps even unconsciously influenced by the German mindset afterwards, the Chinese parents critically accepted part of the Chinese traditional parenting and at the same time absorbed some of the most remarkable characteristics from the western culture. This attitude basically fits well the idea of “including many things and all-embracing”, which was advocated by Cai YuanPei (1868-1940), the Chinese educator.

Firstly, the basic idea of the Chinese traditional education was valuable in the eyes of these Chinese parents. They would like to pass on to their children the idea of obedience to the elders, for instance. However, they would not 100% copy it. Filial obedience and modesty are well known in Chinese philosophy. People are supposed to be obedient to their elders and the elders' relatives. There is no discussion about it. That is what the *Three Characters Classic* tells the Chinese people that filial piety was ranked first in the traditional education of China. The Chinese character of it is called xiào, and is divided into two different parts. The upper one means the old (lǎo, in Chinese) and the lower one the young (zǐ, in Chinese) which was shown as follows.

孝 (xiào) filial piety

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老 (lǎo) the old 子 (zǐ) the young

Therefore, it indicates the continuity of the blood relationship. Today you are young and one day you will be old. If you do not listen to your elders now, how could you expect your children will be obedient to you in the future? (Qian, 2009: 37). Concerning the Chinese parents in this research, especially the mothers, they did not think that it was acceptable to be absolutely obedient without any condition. This kind of thinking contrasted sharply with the generation of their parents and definitely made great progress on this point. The following statement illustrated the issue:

The generation of my parents always said: 'you still have to listen to your parents, although what they said might not be correct'. I don't think I will do the same. The child and the parents can discuss with each other and exchange personal opinions. In the Chinese family, the kids are not allowed to talk back to their parents, even if they might have disagreements (cf. p.252).

Secondly, they regarded the idea of children's independence as one of the most crucial points to learn from German culture. Unlike most of the Chinese parents in China who were constantly around their children, the five Chinese parents in this research let their children decide by themselves and strengthened their independence even at a very young age, standing up themselves when they fell down, for example. Surely, it was not only a physical requirement but also a mental demand on their children's development to be strong and confident as individuals. Moreover, the parents appreciated the respect for personal freedom and personal space in their understanding of German culture. Accordingly, they preferred to create a relatively loose relationship with their children rather than treating them hierarchically. Last but not least, regarding their spouses' culture as a whole, the Chinese parents basically illustrated the German culture by the help of their respective experience of living in this country. Even if some of them had already become German citizenship, German culture was still seen as "the culture of others".

But on the other hand, the Chinese parents also realized that they had been partly Germanized, as far as the way of thinking and behaving is concerned. Relatively simple relationships with others and practical ideas of living which largely differed from Chinese cultural norms were accepted and adapted by the Chinese parents. All this different understanding of the German culture reflected on the parents' attitude towards the integration into the "host country" and the local society. The following section discusses this point separately.

5.1.1.3 Integration into the local society

In particular, this part concerns the Chinese parents in this research. Looking back at the comprehension of "culture" in the Chinese language, it seems that the Chinese ancestors were already fully aware of the importance of interaction for the development of a human being's history. As time passed, however, the domination of Confucian ideology for centuries and even in modern society, to a certain degree, has slowed down people's speed of moving forward. "It leads to a hierarchical society

between people and they take it for granted. [...] The negative effect is the replacement of individuals and the suppression of the human being” (Wang, 2008: 194). The five Chinese parents in this research had lived in Germany for at least five years up to at most twenty years, when they were interviewed in the year of 2009. Remarkably, the duration of residence did not necessarily relate to the degree of integration. One of them still had to talk to her husband in English in spite of her eleven-year residence in Germany, for example. The research showed that the following three factors played a great part in shaping their status of living in a “host country”.

Firstly, the level of education certainly counted in this process. Three of the five Chinese parents achieved their degrees in the German higher education system and had subsequently been successful in the job market. This experience certainly provided them with more confidence in interacting and negotiating with people from different cultural backgrounds. Besides, all these social behaviors had effectively improved their German language. According to the research, these three were those who were able to talk to their spouses in German. Secondly, the childhood education which the parents received in China could be discussed again from the integration point of view. Despite the fact that all these parents’ childhood education was generally strict and learning-oriented, there were differences in degree. Verbal and physical punishment was the most serious treatment that some of the parents experienced in their childhood “education”. It indicated that such experience strongly influenced their personal growth in many respects. Zhou (2009: 89) is of the opinion that the seemingly unnoticeable childhood is, in fact, the most significant season in one’s life. The seemingly short childhood is actually a long period, as the memory of it will accompany us through our whole life. One of the parents in this research told her story as follows:

For instance, I couldn’t accept beating and blaming in my family. I won’t give in if you can’t explain to me the principle. So since I experienced this, I will pay attention to it when I educate my own children (cf. p. 232).

As a result, such memories motivated the formation of the “bearer’s” rebellious characters on the one hand, and helped her tolerate the existence of different opinions in a multicultural society, on the other. Therefore, it made it easier for people to get involved in a new and more open living environment which they could hardly have experienced in their home country. Last but not least, it was a matter of individuals. Two of the five Chinese parents in this research were jobless. Their contrasting attitude to German society partly resulted from their living experience in their home country. Compared with the mother coming from Mainland China, the mother from Hong Kong was willing to explore the rest of the world in order to end up her repetitive job at home. The research showed that she actively involved herself in the new society, becoming members in the local organizations, for instance, despite her insufficient command of the German language. Benefitting from these efforts, the parent’s perception of the German culture was gained in a broader perspective than that of the mother who mainly learned the knowledge from the family of her husband.

5.1.2 Discussion of non-societal factors

Based on the societal factors which dramatically impacted on the parents’ way of raising their children, the following non-societal factors will explore insider facets which are more family-related. The societal and non-societal factors are not paradoxical and isolated. On the contrary, they are closely connected to each other, because the socialization in a family can be seen as the “primary socialization”. In addition, it is the family which in general forms the earliest as well as the most lasting personality of a new-born member in a society (Hurrelmann, 2002: 127). Studying bi-national families and especially their way of raising the children, numerous aspects can be involved. The following points were chosen, because they might directly mirror the different standpoints of the parents with different cultural backgrounds. More importantly, these will certainly lead to their respective parenting. Largely, these facets will be discussed one by one: parents’ understanding of “family”;

personal role played in the family; raising children concerning the aim, language learning and punishment; and the role of the grandparents.

5.1.2.1 Perception of family and personal role

It goes without saying that “family” is both a simple and a complicated thing to talk about. Calling it simple is because family concerns most people and it is the normal composite of a society. It is also complicated due to the fact that what constitutes a family can differ in different cultures and periods of time. Hence, people with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds might have their own comprehension of what a family is. Consequently, all family-related aspects could have been strongly influenced by the individual understandings, such as personal role played in the family. Hermanns and Hille (1987: 64) are both of the opinion that the definition “family” in the current western industrial societies concentrates on the life of the parents with their own or adopted children. In America society, for instance, a “family” had such features: the group living in a house under a single head; a group of immediate kinsmen; and the descendants of a common forebear (Lee, 1966: 5).

To understand the concept of family from a totally different culture, the Chinese, in an effective way, we have to start with the character once more. In Chinese, “family” can be generally called *jiā*, and made up of two parts. The upper one is pronounced *mián* and means houses, while the bottom one is named *shǐ*, and stands for pigs (see the explanation below). According to the Chinese ancestors, a house in which there were pigs could be viewed as a family. What would be the implication behind it? And why was the character *jiā* not made up by houses with any other animals, but pigs? As pigs were the earliest domesticated animals and especially good at multiplying, houses with pigs symbolized people’s wish for becoming prosperous. Thus, the Chinese ancestors concluded two main points to illustrate the “family”: having houses and many children (Qu, 2009: 114-115).

家 (jiā) family

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宀

(mián) house

豕

(shǐ) pig

What was the understanding of the parents from the German and the Chinese cultures? How would they describe the role they played in the family? Their responses are separately elaborated in the following sections.

5.1.2.1.1 German parents' perception of family and personal role

Togetherness with family members and emotional support for each other were the main understanding of family the German parents described in this research. They saw it as a place where not only the married couple but also all the family members were included, especially the children. Otherwise, it could not be called a “family”. In addition, family was the only thing people could trust and rely on. It required the support of everyone to solve problems and equally to share happiness. Interestingly, one of the parents illustrated “family” from a linguistic point of view:

Family is a place of familiarities, something you are familiar with. For example, I was in America for a couple of weeks. I was in Russia for six weeks and so on. It was always nice for me to come back home finding that everything was just like as it was before. It was not strange and nothing had changed (cf. p.240).

On the other hand, being individuals in a family was also stressed. Despite the togetherness with each other, family was considered as a tight group of individuals. It suggested that everyone had his own section and should be allowed to have his own interests. Concerning the personal role played in the family, male dominance takes a more subtle form in Western societies in comparison with non-Western ones. Women are afforded certain courtesies and certain customs are followed that demonstrate men's authority (Romano, 2001: 57). In this research, it showed that the “male

dominance” was not found among all the German parents. On the contrary, two of them even found hard it to describe their roles and rather they thought that they were simply one of the members in the family. The other two parents took into consideration the influence of other family members as well as sharing the housework, although they saw themselves as the decision-maker and the dominant wage earner. As the only one, the German mother confirmed her dominant role in the family by saying: “*I am the manager and take lots of responsibilities*” (cf. p.278). It is necessary to point out that three of the German fathers did think that they had spent less time with their children than their wives had. One of them was of the opinion that he normally had spent almost the same amount of time with his children as his wife had done. Besides, all the five German parents considered themselves as the supportive financial bodies in the family.

5.1.2.1.2 Chinese parents’ perception of family and personal role

“The traditional Chinese society was an agricultural society. Family was the most important social unit with regard to production and consumption. [...] A majority of the Chinese culture is built on the concept of family” (Li, 2010: 91). Accordingly, there has been a tight relationship between culture and family in China. Compared with the illustration of the Chinese character *jiā*, the research shows that geographic position as well as offspring did play a great part in the understanding of family given by the Chinese parents. The geographic position even became more family-related after the child was born. One of the parents described her feeling as follows:

I had no deep understanding of the concept of family before my child was born. I did not feel so many responsibilities. The foundation for a family was not as firm then as when I had my child. But after he was born, it was a totally different understanding. I feel lots of responsibilities and have to protect the family in every aspect, in order to give my son a healthy environment (cf. p.257)

This reaction obviously reflected the well-known phenomenon in most families in China: children are the centre of the family. At the same time, it differed from the

German parents as well. Although they both thought that it could not be called a “family” without children, private spaces and individual interests were still under consideration by the German parents. The Chinese parents, on the contrary, seemed to be fully involved with their children and spouses without thinking about their own existence any more. This kind of attitude towards the family certainly embodied their personal role, that of the mothers in particular. According to Confucius, a woman’s prescribed life status is to be a devoted helper to her future mother-in-law and a bearer of preferably male children (Wang, 2001: 40).

Similarly, Gulik (2007: 52) points out that the status of women is very low in the ideology of Confucius. Their first duty is to serve the husband, the mother- and the father-in-law as well as to be obedient to them. Moreover, women have to manage the housework well and to educate healthy boys. The research shows that a subtle trace of this traditional thinking, especially the duty of educating children could still be found in modern society. All the Chinese mothers were of the opinion that they took the responsibility of parenting and doing housework, even if two of them worked outside the home. Meanwhile, they came to realize that they actually played multiple roles in the family: mother, wife and “children”. But the role of mother had always its priority over the others. Even the only male Chinese parent, the Chinese father confessed that he was the assistant in educating his children in his family, because his wife played the main role. Just as the German fathers, he played the role of economic support and shared housework with his wife.

In short, there was something in common in the understanding of family between the German and the Chinese parents. However, differences existed. Because of the traditional and also interestingly similar mindset in respect to the family-related role, the fathers and the mothers from these two cultures partly followed the model of “men for the outside affairs and women for the inside affairs”. Although all the above-mentioned responses of the Chinese parents seemed to challenge the traditional proverb that “it was the father’s fault, when he fathered the child but did not educate him”, the parents in fact enlarged its implication based on their own experience.

Firstly, fathers' role in parenting could not be denied. Their role was unique and it was not comparable with the mothers' role. More significantly, "father" in the sense of the proverb should be understood as the elder or the parents as a whole, not simply the "father" alone. Hence, both fathers and mothers had their duties in educating their children and should not be generally separated in this issue. Among the German parents, this kind of understanding was apparently shared. For the jobless Chinese parents, the reality forced them to stay at home to fulfill more domestic duties, while their spouses did not have such problem and consequently maintained their Western individual-oriented cultural values.

5.1.2.2 Child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

The age range of the children from the German-Chinese families living in Germany was 2-11 years, when they were met in 2009. This period required the parents' full attention, because this is the period of rapid development of both physical and cognitive growth of a child (Chen, 2008). On this vitally important period of childhood, there have been traditionally different standpoints between Western and Eastern cultures. Born and educated in the US, and then married an American, the famous "tiger mother" still stood for her Chinese way firmly, when she came across the opposite view even with the close family members. "Florence"³⁸ saw childhood as something fleeting to be enjoyed. I saw childhood as a training period, a time to build character and invest for the future. [...] The girls³⁹ barely had time as it was to do their homework, speak Chinese with their tutor, and practice their instruments" (Chua, 2011: 97). Thus, it can be seen that the true difference in this point was rooted in the aim of parenting. Besides, the unavoidable issue of language learning was frequently confronted in most bi-national families. How the parents' would react, if their children did not satisfy their requests, or did something wrong, might also differ from culture to culture.

³⁸ Mother-in-law of the "tiger mother"

³⁹ Two daughters of the "tiger mother"

5.1.2.2.1 German parents' child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

In the eyes' of the German parents in this research, the development of characters and the development of abilities were seen as the main focus in their parenting. Being a kind and just person and especially having discipline and the ability to live logically in the future were expected by the parents from their children. Unlike the typical Western orientation that childhood should be enjoyed and children should not be given too much pressure of learning, the research showed that the German parents managed it in this context in a more reasonable way. They did not fully provide the space to let their children be "free-ranged". Rather they stressed the quality of individuals and their lives as the guideline in their parenting. Although they would not expect the best marks from the children in their (future) schools, the wish of their children could speak German and Chinese well was greatly shared among them.

The reality, however, showed that the balance between these two languages was not equally kept by all the children in the families. In addition, the age difference did not guarantee better grasp of the languages at all. The children aged two or three could understand or express themselves in these two languages well, but the five- and the eleven-year-olds were not able to speak the language of their Chinese parents, for example. This kind of situation was influenced by at least three factors:

Firstly, it was the social-economic factor. According to the research, all the children attended the local kindergartens or schools where the German language dominated and children from other cultural backgrounds could be found. "Mother tongue classes are in general not considered to be very relevant: they often take place in the afternoon when German children do not attend school, their results have no influence on a student's grade, the teachers are in general not integrated into the school, etc" (Luchtenberg, 1997: 128). It was assumed that the Chinese language of the children was scarcely needed in the educational institutions. But since these children were from bi-national families, the two languages of their parents should be both regarded

as their mother tongues. The research however showed that none of the family had sent their children to extra classes in order to improve their Chinese.

Secondly, parents' ability to speak their spouses' language played a big role, because it would directly reflect on the motivation of their children for learning the languages. The research showed that only one of the five German parents had gained the basic knowledge of the Chinese language and was able to communicate in simple sentences. Even if this parent mostly talked to his wife in German, their little daughter aged three could correct her father's Chinese, when she heard something wrong. Consequently, this kind of unnoticeable achievement would encourage the child to continue learning her parents' languages in parallel.

Last but certainly not least, parents' own attitude to their children's learning of these two languages, and more significantly whether or not they took any action, definitely counted in this process. The wish that the children grasp the languages well would mean nothing, if the parents and the children did not put any efforts into this process. One of the parents in this research shared her own feeling as follows:

I would like to educate my children bilingually. But we are in Germany and I can hardly speak Chinese. Our three children speak also little Chinese (cf. p.280).

It suggested that children from bi-national families might not have the best opportunity to master their parents' mother tongues without giving time and efforts from the both sides, although it is universally taken for granted. Especially, when the family is living in one of the parents' countries, the natural environment of the language of the majority has obviously its priority over the learning of the other language of the parents. Thus, for children, their motivation could be easily lost as a consequence. Concerning punishment to children in the family, it has been under discussion as an academic issue in a variety of branches. Only the punishment of clipping children's ears was intensively researched, such as whether or not it hurt children and how often they were attacked in this way (Haller, 1998: 123, quoted by Lamnek / Luedtke/ Ottermann, 2006: 125). In Germany, the law regarding parental corporal punishment was officially passed in the year of 2000. Education without

corporal punishment could lead to less aggression in social contact and more civilized behavior (Lamnek/ Luedtke/ Ottermann, 2006). This research shows that the German parents reacted in two different ways on this issue. The fathers would first see how serious the situation was and explain to their children why what they had done was unacceptable. As punishment, they normally sent their kids to their own rooms to calm down. For the most serious occasions, they would hit their children's backsides. As another reaction, the German mother straightforwardly related her means: scolding. It also happened that she had once clipped one of her children's ears. But afterwards, she realized that it had certainly not helped.

To conclude, all the five German parents largely did not support the idea of corporal punishment in parenting, in spite of their different reactions as a whole. In particular, the one who experienced such punishment in his childhood (even as the attacker himself), would totally avoid such means to negotiate with people having disagreement. As a lesson, the importance of having respect for others had aroused his attention since then. Accordingly, in his parenting he gave his children the right to speak out their own minds. Furthermore, they were allowed to do what they wanted, if their father came to realize that he had made a mistake, something which was not imaginable for most Chinese parents! In spite of the fact that the author of this research did not interview the children to directly ask them about this issue, the reasonable consideration and the behavior of the German parents seemed credible proof that they took this problem seriously and tried to manage it and improve it in a more sensible way.

5.1.2.2.2 Chinese parents' child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

Traditionally people in China were expected to learn hard at a very young age. The learning-related proverbs appeared frequently in the mouths of parents, school teachers as well as the elderly to motivate and encourage the young to try their best, "keep learning as long as you live", for instance. The *Three Characters Classic*, the

traditional classic of education in China, states that it is certainly not acceptable, if a child does not learn. And what can he do in the future, if he did not? In the opinion of the Chinese ancestors, the best effect of learning could be gained before the age of thirteen, because one's memory was at the best level till then (Qian, I, 2009: 26-27). The children in this research were in this age group.

By way of comparison, the "tiger mother" pointed out that "Chinese parents have two things over their Western counterparts: (1) higher dreams for their children, and (2) higher regard for their children in the sense of knowing how much they can take. [...] My goal as parent is to prepare you⁴⁰ for the future" (Chua, 2011: 8 / 49). However, this research shows that none of the Chinese parents seemed to dream of admirable success of their children in the future and considered learning as the central part in their parenting. On the contrary, their expectations were quite close to the Western open-minded ones. Ideas like "childhood is the time for enjoying", "education is cultivation" and "learning should be done from nature but not under pressure" could be easily found in their attitudes.

Besides, some of the parents even confessed that they did not plan for their children too much, which, to some extent, challenged the Chinese well-known philosophy: "you will soon have trouble, if you do not plan for the future". Raising the children healthily as the basic, the Chinese parents' focus on parenting was largely similar to that of the German parents. Living and thinking independently and being able to behave in a nice way were described by the parents as their educational goals for their children. Moreover, their attention was focused more on the children's own interests in order to invest it properly instead of the overriding importance of learning. In relation to taking part in tutorial classes which have been popular among the Chinese parents as a whole, the research showed that none of them had sent or would like to send their children to attend. One of the Chinese mothers finally found her own

⁴⁰ The two daughters of Chua

solution for her children, after comparing the different ways between China and Germany:

"[...], especially in China, all people send their children to the tutorial classes. If you don't, you will feel something missing and are afraid that you delay your kids. But in Germany, it all depends on the interests of the kids. The parents cultivate their kids in accordance with their interests. So, I will observe my kid for a while to find out what he is really interested in, and then determine a direction" (cf. p. 254).

In comparison with the relatively casual attitude towards the aim of parenting, the Chinese parents, the mothers in particular, regarded the learning of the Chinese language as very important. Two of them saw it even as the most important goal in their parenting. Being aware of the natural priority of the German language in the environment of the children, the four Chinese mothers strictly forced themselves to talk to their kids only in their mother tongues (Mandarin / Cantonese), in order to keep the balance. As a result, the children gained the basic skill of listening comprehension. As to the older ones, they were able to express themselves clearly in Chinese. When being asked their motivation and methods, the research showed that the parents understood the Chinese language as part of their identities and the best way to for their children to learn about Chinese culture.

Unlike the situation in the German-Taiwanese families that some mothers from Taiwan abandoned bilingual education consciously due to the worries that their children would be confused with these two languages and did not have sufficient German to go to school (Schwantes, 2009: 118), the Chinese mothers in this research, on the contrary, put their determined effort in this process. Being able to speak Chinese would not fully satisfy them. Some mothers pointed out that their children needed to learn the Chinese characters, as well. To achieve this, they often read Chinese books to their children, listened to Chinese songs and watched movies with their kids. More practically, they travelled back to China together regularly. At times, they invited their parents who normally could only speak Chinese, to come to

Germany. With all kinds of efforts, the children got more and more familiar with the Chinese language.

Compared with the mothers, the Chinese father in this research was not strict in requiring his children to learn his mother tongue. In his opinion, “mother tongue was the language of the mothers”. He seemed to be satisfied that his children had already achieved this step, because all of them were fluent in German. Whether or not they were going to learn Chinese was not an urgent issue at the moment. Therefore, the level of his children’s Chinese was the lowest among the other children from the families in Germany as a consequence.

As to another closely parenting-related issue, punishment, the traditional philosophy and proverbs of daily life suggested that it has been somehow encouraged for a long time in Chinese parenting. The Chinese ancestors stated that one was supposed to bear the slight hit, but had the right to run away with the hard ones, which was the conception of Confucianism (Qian, 2009, I: 21). Thus, it can be seen that (corporal) punishment, to some degree, was part of the education in Chinese history. The well-known proverb, “spare the rod, spoil the child” stood for this mindset in a more exaggerated way. According to the research, sending the children to their own rooms, scolding them and occasionally hitting their hands or backsides were the punishment the Chinese parents used. For the related Chinese philosophy, they did not think that it was totally wrong, because it must have a deep meaning in it (obedient to the elder). But practically, the parents would surely avoid the (corporal) punishment as much as possible in their parenting, especially those who experienced such things from their parents. Furthermore, they were fully aware of the fact that hitting children is not allowed in Germany. But on the other hand, the research showed that the Chinese parents did not seem to have the understanding yet that children should be given the right to express their minds freely in front of the parents. Only one of them showed a sign which was close to this point by saying “*parents have to find out reasons from themselves*” (cf. p. 253).

5.1.2.3 Role of grandparents in education

“Florence and I got along great for years, [...] but we started having conflicts after Sophia⁴¹ was born” (Chua, 2011: 96-97). Apparently, the different way of education between the mother and the grandmother led to the conflicts. In the eyes of Chua (the “tiger mother”), this situation made her realize some of the deep differences between Chinese and Western parenting for the first time (Chua, 2011: 97). Shared with another Chinese author, Long (2008: 50) related that in most Chinese families, the mother-in-law had the most respectful status and everyone had to listen to her. The new-born child did not belong to the mother alone, but to the whole family. The relationship in Western families was relatively simple. The mother of the child had the highest right and everyone respected her. Therefore, grandparents’ role in education and the parents’ relationship with them in binational families seems to be a sensible facet in parenting.

5.1.2.3.1 Role of grandparents in education from the German parents’ point of view

Among the five families living in Germany, no German grandparents were present in their daily lives. They lived separately from each other. All the German parents did not think that their own parents played too great a role in parenting for their grandchildren. Apart from the subjective reasons that some of the grandparents had died or were in a poor physical condition, the separate lives and the relatively loose relation with the families decreased the contacts between these three generations. Although all of them lived in the same country and some even in the same Federal States, they saw each other once a month on average. As one of the parents described as the following, it was a huge cultural difference from China:

⁴¹ One of the daughters of Chua

“What my impression in China was, the Chinese people are closer in a family. They live in the same city but still visit each other every week. That is what I am not familiar with in my German life” (cf. p. 244).

As to the parents of their Chinese spouses, the possibility to meet and to discuss issues of parenting with each other was much less. It was certainly due to the longer distance and the language barrier.

5.1.2.3.2 Role of grandparents in education from the Chinese parents’ point of view

Much different from the situation in China that most grandparents took half of the responsibility for educating their grandchildren, especially those under the school age, all the Chinese parents in this research were of the opinion that it was not possible in the German society. Obviously, it was not only because of the geographical distance, but also the cultural difference led to this contrast. One parent related from his experience:

“In Western countries, parents like to bring their kids up by themselves. It is impossible to leave the kids to the grandpa and the grandma. In my case, it is also impossible to send my kids to my parents in China. So you need to discipline and educate your kids by yourself. It has nothing to do with the grandparents” (cf. p.276).

The research showed that the parents normally went back to China with their children once a year, or every two years. Within two or three months of residence in China, they always liked to use this opportunity to show their children the Chinese culture, showing them round the city where the family lived, for instance. Consequently, the children had little time with their Chinese grandparents. Even though, some grandparents advised the parents to read Chinese books to the children.

As far as the contact with the German grandparents was concerned, the research showed two different ways of negotiation. Most of the Chinese parents preferred to hide their own opinions to avoid conflicts, should disagreements arise. The Chinese traditional philosophy of respecting the elders surely played a great part in forming

their attitude. But on the other hand, exceptions existed. One mother, for example, firmly stood by her own way instead of her mother-in-law's that parents should not buy things as a reward as soon as the children finished something. In addition, she and other Chinese parents understood gradually that the German grandparents gave them the full right to bring the children up by means of offering their own experience.

In sum, both grandparents from Germany and China hardly played a role of parenting in the families living in Germany. Despite the occasional disagreement, almost the same attitude of the German grandparents towards parenting was shown as Long (2008: 50-51) stresses that her German mother-in-law always said at the end of every discussion that all depended on the mother of the child.

5.1.3 Discussion on children's identities

Undoubtedly, "identity" is as complicated as "culture" to be described. It can be imagined that it would be harder to identify children from bi-national families, because they are immediately surrounded by the two cultures of their parents from birth. Romano (2001: 113) argues that intercultural parents would worry not only about the daily logistics of their parenting, but also the psychological impact of their being bicultural and the whole identity issue of their children. As most of the children in this research were of a very young age, the issue of their identities was rather considered by discussing on how their parents saw their differences in parenting as a whole and what their ways to cope with would be.

5.1.3.1 Influence of societal factors

In relation to the research questions, it suggested that the above-mentioned three social factors strongly influenced the elements which could fundamentally shape the children's identities. Firstly, parents' childhood education led to their respective parenting styles. Secondly, understanding of people's own culture and the culture of their spouses would decide the focus of the parenting. Last but not least, the degree of social practice reflected on the extent of the parents' integration into the local society.

First of all, it goes without saying that all the German and the Chinese parents in the families tried to educate their children in a better way than they were educated in their childhood. They kept the appropriate aspects of their own upbringing and improved the negative sides to form their current parenting styles. The research shows that the German parents did not see much difference in their parenting from that of their spouses. They suggested that it was the differences between individuals instead of the cultural differences between the couples or these two countries. Even if they knew some characteristics of Chinese parenting, there were largely negative examples, such as too many demands on the children. Certainly, they would not consider these points in their own parenting. Thus, it was assumed that the German parents paved a single way which was close to their own identities.

The Chinese parents, on the contrary, showed a comparative understanding of parenting in these two cultures. They saw not only the advantages of their traditional education, but also the weak facets that they would avoid in their own parenting. More importantly, the reasonable methods in Western parenting were well accepted among them and practically in use. In their opinions, disagreement or conflicts occurred, when their spouses criticized their way of parenting and preferred another method to educate their children. Yet, on this occasion it did not indicate that the Chinese parents would fully give up their own parenting to accept the German one, or the other way round. The research shows that the parents agreed that there were both advantages and disadvantages of parenting in these two cultures.

To find a solution, they would think about the situation once again and choose a more logical way to solve the problem. On the other hand, they also related that disagreement and conflicts in fact scarcely happened, because they and their spouses basically had the same overview of parenting. Besides, they summarized some useful pieces of advice to lighten conflicts: be modest and try to think about the issue from your spouse's point of view; do not argue in front of your children in order to decrease their confusion. In sum, parents' childhood education was not purposefully emphasized to add the special "color" to their children's identities. The children were

actually treated in a way in which the practical “ingredients” from these two cultures were more valued than their origins.

Secondly, the perception of people’s own culture and that of their spouses’ culture definitely had a great impact on their children’s attitude towards them, especially in bi-national families. In comparison with the research by Schwantes (2009) that some Chinese parents decided that their children should purely grow up with only one culture (the German), this research showed that all the parents took into consideration a significant influence of both their cultures. The behavior of the German parents apparently embodied the typical features of their own culture, although they failed to describe it verbally. Concerning the Chinese parents, none of them ever showed a tiny trace to uproot their own culture. On the contrary, the Chinese culture was one of the most crucial guidelines in their daily lives and the parenting. Moreover, there was something in common that all the parents had gained the basic knowledge of their spouses’ cultures and tried to deepen it by keeping the contacts with the family members from both sides. Obviously, this kind of active attitude would be a great help for the children to balance these two cultures. According to Schwantes (2009), the German culture dominated in the German-Chinese families living in Germany. But did not this kind of finding actually lack sufficient academic proof, if the researcher did not deeply investigate this issue from the cultural point of view? In addition, this author further points out (ibid: 127) that some Chinese parents fully gave up their own culture and as a consequence their children lost any interest in learning it. Clearly, it was not the situation in this current research on children from German-Chinese families.

Thirdly, as it was pointed out that the degree of the Chinese parents’ integration into the German society was different, the contrasting attitudes towards this issue accordingly influenced the social life of their children. The research shows that parents’ integration could be successful in getting actively involved in local society disregarding the German language as a barrier. In fact, the language skills could be automatically improved by attending social activities. For the children, their parents’

contacts with other intercultural families or German families would broaden their horizon and gradually help them become confident in society. Yet, if the parents mainly had contacts only with their family members, the life spaces of their children were surely limited, especially when they were small. As a result, those children's advance in the "real" world in the future could be slowed down compared with others who had been used to "socializing" at a very young age.

5.1.3.2 Influence of non-societal factors

As a matter of fact, there are numerous non-social factors which play important roles in forming children's identities in bi-national families. Simply their degrees in this process differed. The specific aspects selected for this research took into consideration that the majority of the children were small. It was therefore better to work out the issue of their identities in this period by focusing more on their parents' understanding of the family- and parenting-related aspects.

After finding out how the German and the Chinese parents understood "family", a clear line could be drawn which distinguished the two different understandings. For the German parents, "family" could be largely divided into two sections: the place of sharing and the space of individuals. However, "family" was more togetherness-related to the Chinese parents. The Chinese mothers, in particular, spent more time than their spouses in parenting. It was not only due to their different social status (unemployed or not), but also the well-known philosophy that women were in charge of parenting. Not surprisingly, the children in the families were more influenced by the Chinese parenting as a whole. The result was shared by Schwantes (2009) in her research as well. As far as the more parenting-related facets were concerned, the research shows that all the parents from these two cultures tried to make progress which was certainly missing in their own upbringing. One of the Chinese parents, for example, seemed to totally turn the traditional parenting into the Western one. Yet, the difference was what the German parents would like to achieve could be somehow generalized in almost all kinds of families without considering the cultural

backgrounds. By contrast, what the Chinese parents were basically trying to improve in their parenting is still the situation that both parents and children in the mainland China are suffering from: the unchanged examinations-oriented system. Zhou (2010) stresses that the model of “do not let our children fail at the running track” by making them get involved in the competition for the winner from kindergartens to universities just to gain the certificate, actually was not successful at the very beginning. In order to change it in their own parenting, the research shows that the Chinese parents adapted to Western flexibilities and took their children’s own interests into consideration. Apart from one Chinese parent, the others did a good job in balancing their children’s language learning. As to the grandparents’ role in education, the children hardly benefitted from both sides of their grandparents. Especially, those who had much doubt about their upbringing would normally not consider the children’s grandparents’ participation in their own parenting. All in all, the parenting in the German-Chinese families living in Germany was on the base of the Chinese tradition. Meanwhile, the select elements of parenting from the two cultures were practically combined.

As a seemingly minor but actually meaningful aspect, it is necessary to common on the children’s names. Romano (2001) reports that the choice of children’s names in bi-national families can be a cause of discord: e.g. whose family name should be used? This research shows that the choice of the children’s names seemed complicated, although disagreements between the parents could be hardly found. The seven children’s names from the five families could be categorized in three types: two of them had only their German names; another two had both German and Chinese names. The remaining three had their German surnames which combined with Chinese first names. According to the research, there were always somehow identity-related reasons behind their choices, despite the fact that the parents’ explanation sounded differently. For all the parents, the situation that Germany was the place of their residence played a major role in deciding their children’s names.

One of the Chinese mothers did not think that her family name was suitable for girls and therefore preferred full German names for her two daughters. Another two Chinese parents obviously had more identity-related consideration in their minds. The children's German names were well used among their German relatives and in their kindergartens. When they came back to China, they were called by their Chinese names. The following illustrations embodied the process of thinking of these parents:

I wanted to let him know half of him is German and half of him is Chinese (cf. p.253).

I don't want other kids to see my kid is different. I don't hope my kid gets confused on this aspect. His father wants him to have a German name. But for me, I don't hope my son will forget his mother's place of origin. So I hope he has a Chinese name, for the sake of fairness (cf. p.261).

Moreover, the parents related that they normally used their children's Chinese names at home and their children fully understood and accepted it. By doing so, one of the parents even discovered an interesting phenomenon which contrasted the different ways of naming children in these two cultures. This parent's observation was shown as follows:

When my son plays with other kids in China, I will say, you see, this is a little brother. This is a little sister. But in Germany, there is no such situation. It is just "Peter", or "Lukas". In China, if kids play together, mothers will say that this is a younger brother and you should be modest to him and you should take care of him. In Germany, there is no such issue of age. All people are equal (cf. p.252).

Once again, this vivid example confirms one of the leading concepts of Chinese philosophy. Li (2010: 10-13) argues that there was a unique relationship in Chinese society: the brotherly friendship. It is in fact the extension of the Confucian concept of brotherhood into the social conduct. Turning the social roles into the family roles of relatives' relationship is certainly a distinguishing feature in the Chinese society. In comparison with the Western individualism, the identification of one's self was more connected with interpersonal communication in the Chinese culture. Furthermore, it was interesting to find out that the remaining three parents and their children were

named in the same way. Both parents combined their Chinese names with their spouses' family names. Equally, they joined their spouses' German family names with Chinese first names which they carefully chose for their children. The research showed that it was because one of the parents "did not like the European names" and the other had a special consideration of the children's place of birth and their bi-national background.

To conclude, the parents' attitude towards their children's identities was mirrored in their selection of names. For most Chinese parents, their children's Chinese names were the link to their own identities as well. It was assumed that they strengthened the basic Chinese culture they valued in their parenting and had a special concern about their children's Chinese names in order not to lose half of their identities, even if all of them were German citizens from birth.

5.2 Findings and discussion of families in China

5.2.1 Discussion of societal factors

Geng (2008) points out that it was since the 1980s that the number of intercultural marriages as a new thing has more dramatically increased than ever in China. This results from the fact that the Chinese have had more opportunities to get into contact with people from abroad since the Opening-Up-Policy. This kind of relationship, however, could be mostly found in multicultural and economically developed cities in China, which well matched the location of the German-Chinese families in this research. Focusing on the same social factors which had been studied in Germany, but the different place of residence, this section works out the parents' individual understanding of their upbringing and "culture". Undoubtedly, these would provide a useful clue to explore the development of their children's identities in Chinese society.

5.2.1.1 Parents' childhood education / upbringing

5.2.1.1.1 Childhood education of German parents

The five German parents living in China described their individual childhood education in this research. They were all traditionally brought up by their parents. Although one of them had only his mother through his childhood, another German family frequently took care of him. Therefore, he related that he actually was raised by “two mothers and one father”. The research showed that most of the parents considered their mothers as the main figure in the parenting. What they could still nowadays well remember was their mothers' emphasis on the importance of learning by doing as well as their thoughtful care of their daily lives. Based on this kind of education, these parents confirmed that they would pass on this style of parenting to their own children. One of them described a detail how he benefitted from in his childhood education:

Although I am from Magdeburg, I speak standard German. It is not always the case in Magdeburg. I was very actively brought up by my parents (cf. p.311).

Moreover, the basic learning skills, such as reading and counting, was part of the childhood education for some of the parents. The research shows that all five German parents were of the opinion that their childhood education had a great impact on their own parenting and even on “the whole life” for one of them. Thus, it indicated that education of quality and the emotional care with principles were the focus on their parenting as a whole. This point especially concerned those who clearly realized out the contrasting differences of parenting between the Chinese and the Westerners. One parent shared his opinion with the researcher as follows:

In Germany, people try to educate their children to be independent. In China, people mostly have only one child and he has two grandpas and two grandmas. So it is very easy for the kid to become spoiled. Of course, loving and caring for the kid is part of parenting. But it should not be too much. Otherwise I think it is negative, because the child will never learn how to share with and how to get along with others, but just saying “I, I, I”. This is a big difference between the Chinese and the German. In my

opinion, the Western parenting gives children freedom. If a child falls on the ground, for instance, the Chinese parents will immediately help them stand up and saying “baby, baby”. But I am the type who simply says “stand up, nothing happened” (cf. p.326).

Accordingly, this typical Western style of parenting has been consistently carried on by these German parents. By contrast, there were also parents who hardly saw differences between parenting in these two cultures. As a matter of fact, they normally had little time with their children, due to the burden of their business. It was therefore no wonder that the lack of time might dramatically decrease those parents’ attention to their parenting and the comparison of that issue could hardly come to their minds as a consequence.

In short, the German parents living in China largely tried to improve parts of their parenting which they had not been satisfied with in their own upbringing. The German mother, for example, would rely more on her mother’s logical way of parenting instead of her father’s extreme strictness. On the other hand, the distinctive aspects of the Western or the German parenting which some parents were fully aware of were surly retained in their own family.

5.2.1.1.2 Childhood education of Chinese parents

According to the research, the family backgrounds as well as level of education of their own parents were the two basic factors to form the different childhood education of the Chinese parents living in China. Although the question of level of education of their parents was in fact not included in the interviews, a majority of them automatically mentioned this situation. It was assumed that the level of education of their parents certainly played a big part in the understanding of their childhood education, when these parents nowadays had to think back.

Largely, four kinds of childhood education were described by the five parents. Two of them related that they did not think that their parents had spent much time with them nor had offered education-related suggestions for them. On the contrary, they usually

decided what to do by themselves and were raised rather “free-rangely”. These people, therefore, found out later that it was maybe because their parents were not well-educated and had many children to care for in the family. Moreover, a slightly different childhood education was reported by another parent. Her mother was not well-educated and normally used corporal punishment to deal with her children. Her father, on the other hand, educated them by a reasonable way which this parent still appreciated very much after many years. She related some details as follows:

My father was not strict. I felt he was very kind. He never beat my sister and me. But I often heard other kids from our neighborhood crying, when they were beaten by their fathers. So I felt very lucky. When we made principal mistakes, my father would simply tell us not to do that again. His way of parenting is worth learning and acceptable. It has a certain influence on my style of educating my kid (cf. p.281).

Apart from that, the traditional Chinese parenting could be found in another category. One of the parents was obviously growing up in an atmosphere of having little freedom but force-related education. Having “very traditional parents”, this Chinese mother in this research was only required to learn hard. The examples, like “did not allow playing outside and if so, certain time of return must be arranged”, were still clearly kept in her minds nowadays. As a result, this parent summarized her childhood education that she did not accept the way of her parents’ education even at the very beginning.

As the last type of childhood education, the research shows that the grandparents from the mother’s and the father’s side played a bigger role than the parents. One of the parents was from a politician’s family and was brought up by her grandparents until university age. It was that time that she came back to live with her parents. What she could mostly say about her childhood was the thoughtful care of her grandparents. Apparently, her mother carried on this kind of nice temper to raise her children. Yet, her father was strict and made his children feel the distance to him. Despite of their different character, they all stressed the importance of learning which was generally well shared by most intellectual families.

Based on the parents' childhood education, the research shows that three types of one's own parenting could be summarized. Above all, parents who did not receive much care from their parents in childhood would surely fill the gap to spend more time with their children. Besides, one of them even preferred a strict way of parenting instead of her parents' loose attitude. Secondly, the type of "rebellious" sharply contrasted with the traditional education. More attention to the children's own interests and consideration of the children's point of view were seen as the new strategies to make progress. The third type of parenting could be named a Western-oriented one. Discipline as the guideline on parenting was well accepted by two parents. They were more determined to retain this idea, especially after they saw the better effect on their children compared with those who were purely raised in the traditional way.

5.2.1.2 Perception of culture

5.2.1.2.1 German parents' perception of culture

Whether or not the German parents as foreigners living abroad had more consciousness of their own culture than being at home, the research found out as follows. The majority of them described in detail their perception of German culture from different angles. Both the typical character which has been seen as the "label" of German people, e.g. diligent and punctual, as well as the rather Western-related living style, drinking coffee, for instance, were all involved in the content of the German culture. Besides, it was reported by the parents that these kinds of cultural symbols were part of their lives and would surely be retained by them. As a matter of fact, some of the parents were group leaders in their professional lives. It provided them, to some degrees, the opportunity to know the influence of their own culture in a global context which they could hardly experience in their own country. One of them related his own experience as follows:

People in China can immediately recognize Western foreigners from their look. Chinese people value the Germans very much. This is the advantage. I am the group leader in our company and also speak Chinese. Although I am the "foreigner" in the

eyes of my customers, they respect me very much. I feel very well living in China (cf. p. 326).

But on the other hand, there was one parent who did not think that he knew the German culture well. Equally, he knew nothing about his wife's culture, the Chinese, except the rough understanding of management and business life in his company. In this point, he contrasted strongly with the other four parents. Their understanding and examples they gave were very objective and representative, despite the fact that not all of them could directly identify the central point of the Chinese culture. The description of two parents, in particular, indicated that they had gained a variety of knowledge of the Chinese culture. The long history of its culture and tradition were impressive for them. It was related that Chinese culture and especially its architecture had a great impact on "the whole world" which in fact few Westerners knew. For one of the parents, the knowledge of politics, history and culture which he had gained from his studies could definitely not satisfy him any more, especially after "marrying a Chinese". To improve it, this parent intensively read the related books to renew his understanding. Unexpectedly, these two parents all mentioned the Cultural Revolution and Mao Zedong of whom they thought that he had made serious mistakes in this political event.

The research shows that another two parents failed to describe the Chinese culture verbally. However, they were getting closer and closer to the Chinese culture from their respective experience. The German mother, for instance, offered the following observation:

I came to realize that I did not understand this culture. My husband, for example, has not lived in Germany for long. But he can get along with both German and Chinese very well. I always have a problem to understand that. I am too direct. According to the Chinese way, people seemed never to say "no", but to smile all the time. I can't do that unfortunately⁴². But I am very interested in this culture (cf. p. 292).

⁴² This parent looked indeed serious during the whole contact and seldom smiled (the author's observation).

This vivid example, in fact, well illustrated one of the most representative features of the Chinese culture: reserve. Li (2010: 154-157) analyzes that the reserved style of Chinese people's talk and behavior has a historical background which could be traced back to the Period of Spring Autumn and Warring States (770 B.C. – 221 B.C.). "Courtesy" and "benevolence" were centered on Confucianism at that time. With time passing on, it has been strengthened by politicians and intellectuals as the norm of social behavior in the Chinese society. The well-known joke confirms this issue in an amusing way, although it has not been academically proved. It is said that Chinese people used to say "yes" instead of "no", because the ancient Chinese books were written from top to bottom. Thus, they made people nod their heads continuously during reading. That is why it was easy for Westerners to say "no", because their books were written from left to right which made them shake their heads all the time. In short, all these four parents shared the same opinion that the Chinese culture was very interesting.

As to the influence of their culture on parenting, all the German parents related that they would like to introduce it to their children. Yet, the difference was one of degree. The research showed that the parent who had little to say both about his own and the culture of his wife told his children about his country at times. In comparison to him, the other four parents apparently made more efforts in this direction. Reading German books for their children, for instance, was seen as a practical method to improve their knowledge. Moreover, they all agreed that they would not go too far considering their children's young age. On the other hand, one of the parents frankly expressed his pride that the German culture was "absolutely" the better one. But he refused to tell his child that the identity was half and half which was the opposite mindset of the Chinese parents living in Germany as a whole.

To summarize, the majority of the German parents living in China showed a relatively clear understanding of these two cultures which was certainly not the case of the German parents in Germany. Those who could understand their own culture well had equally an active attitude to the culture of the "host country". It goes without saying

that their different level of understanding might reflect on their own parenting as well as the cognition of their children's identities. These points are discussed in extra sections.

5.2.1.2.2 Chinese parents' perception of culture

According to research, four of the five parents gained their degrees of higher education in China and one graduated from a vocational school. Besides, one of them even pursued her studies in Germany for a period of time. Their educational status, however, did not seem to absolutely guarantee their knowledge of their home culture. On the contrary, it was considered as a difficult topic for some of them. Largely, their attitudes towards the Chinese culture could be divided into two kinds. Three parents were very attracted by the Chinese traditions, classical philosophies and customs. Compared with them, the research shows that culture had little influence on the other two parents. Yet, on the other hand, the five parents had something in common: that they all mentioned the Chinese and the German pre-school as well as school education. Automatically, a comparison between these two systems was made by the parents. The following opinions were related by two parents:

My son was attending a kindergarten in Germany. The teachers didn't ask the children to learn something by heart. My son spent three years there and learned painting. Most of his time was just to play. It was very different from the Chinese. I think the German one is too relaxed and doesn't seem to have a certain goal of educating. But the pre-school education in China is too strict and always goal-oriented. Children have to learn knowledge of primary school (cf. pp.299-300).

We cannot say the Chinese way of educating is totally bad. At least 50-60% is good. The weakness is that it gives children no freedom to think. Probably we cannot say the Western way is totally good, either. Their children are given freedom to do what they want, but there is no limit on what they must do (cf. p. 295)

Both the two parents agreed that these two different styles were extreme, because one was too free and the other was too demanding. In their eyes, it was not easy to say which one was good or bad, since each of them had its “merit”.

As to their understanding of their spouses’ culture, the German, the research shows the parents’ different level of knowledge. It was assumed that this resulted from their different experience of living and studying. For the majority who normally had been to Germany for holidays for a short time, their understanding of the German culture was limited to their brief impression of this country and its people, e.g. the clean environment and the reliable people. Even so, one of the parents further pointed out the same feeling of distance with their German family members, in spite of their politeness, which was equally shared by one Chinese parent living in Germany. Furthermore, one parent frankly related that he knew nothing about the German culture except its language and it was limited to the level of oral communication. By contrast to the majority of the Chinese parents, the flexible atmosphere of German education as well as the freedom-oriented way of thinking formed the main body of the German culture for one parent who spent some time learning and studying in Germany.

Consequently, the parents’ different extent of understanding their own culture and their spouses’ reflected on their respective interests in parenting. The research shows that it was in fact difficult to generalize their way of parenting, because each of them seemed to have their own focus on this issue. Two different patterns could be probably drawn considering their preference for a certain style of parenting. Above all, two of the five parents were certainly “fans” of Western parenting. In their practice little attention was paid to the Chinese traditions. Instead, the freedom- and discipline-orientated conceptions which symbolized the Western style were well adopted, their children were either sent to the local German school or an international kindergarten, for example.

The rest of the parents as another group obviously valued their home culture more than the other. However, their respective focus on parenting differed. The research

shows that the Chinese language was the central part of parenting for one of the parents. The mother talked to her children only in Chinese. Concerning the Chinese characters which are more difficult to learn, this parent preferred to teach her elder son in a casual way, such as explaining the characters on the package of food when her children were just eating. As a result, her four-year-old son was able to communicate with his mother in her mother tongue and learned a few simple Chinese characters. For this parent's little daughter (one and half years old), what she heard from her mother was purely the Chinese language as well. As to another parent in this group, the main focus of parenting was basically put on the traditional philosophy, e.g. respecting the elderly. Moreover, this parent stressed that his children must learn the classics of the Chinese philosophy. It was therefore assumed that such attention of parenting was the continuity of this parent's own upbringing.

Since the Chinese culture has been widely viewed as the one with a history of 5000 years, it was no wonder that the traditional virtue deserved the same attention by the other parent. According to the research, both this parent and her husband grew up in traditional families and had a close relationship with family members. Living in China as the current situation, this Chinese parent automatically strengthened the local way of thinking and behaving to her children, the "table rules", for instance. She gave an example as follows:

When you have dinner, you should keep sitting formally. You can't leave your seat, unless you finish eating. You should be polite and keep your voice lower, when you see elderly people. When my children eat out with my parents, they have to behave in a Chinese way (cf. p.305)

In fact, this example partly reflected on the focus of the Chinese philosophy as well. Besides, it is necessary to point out that the example strongly opposed the statement of one of the German parents living in Germany that Chinese parents did not strictly care about this issue, but always spoiled their children instead. All in all, the Chinese parents living in China shared the opinion that they normally did not teach their children the Chinese culture on purpose, in spite of the fact that the "weight" of their

home culture differed. More practically, some of them rather preferred the way of gradually “permeating” the facets of the Chinese culture into their children’s daily lives. Thus, the parents’ different focus of attention has led to different processes of the development of their children’s identities. This point is explored in depth in the section on the influence of societal factors.

5.2.1.3 Integration into the local society

This section especially concerns the German parents’ situation of adaptation to the Chinese society. According to the research, the duration of the five German parents’ residence in China was from at least six years up to at most nine years until the time in which they were separately interviewed in 2009 and 2010. Their motivation for coming to China was basically to pursue their careers. Moreover, four of them were the heads of a certain department in their companies in China. As the only self-employed person in the group, the German mother led a team for her own business. The research, however, shows their different degrees of adaptation to the local society in spite of their similar professional status. To a certain extent, three factors played a great part in the process of their adaptation.

Above all, the “cruel” reality gave some of them no choice of ignoring the local society, but made them involved as seemingly the only solution to “survive”. One of the parents, for instance, was the only German in his company. Especially in his first years in China, this situation let him hardly have any contacts with foreigners but only with Chinese people. Gradually, he even had the feeling that he had become partly Chinese. The following story was told by this parent in the interview:

I felt forced to integrate myself into the Chinese culture, because my Chinese friends cannot speak English well. I was partly assimilated. So in the first four years in China, I became very Chinese (cf. p. 311)

In fact, this example did not mean that this German parent had lost his own roots. On the contrary, he was fully aware of keeping a balance between the two cultures. As he related in the interview that he made a group of German friends in his second

company, he gradually became German again. Besides, he was daily on the way back to his German culture. The research shows that this parent's experience was representative for the fact that the bearer retained a realistic attitude towards the very true situation and tried to make efforts to improve himself. As a reward, he succeeded in integrating into the local society and his life in China benefitted from the two cultures.

Secondly, the parents' level of proficiency in the Chinese language was definitely another factor which made their degrees of integration different from each other. According to the research, one of the five German parents was able to talk with his wife in Chinese. Another parent had gained enough knowledge of the language for daily use. The remaining three parents mostly spoke English with their spouses. The research shows that the ability to speak the language of the "host country" was a strong predictor for being easily involved in local society. One of them, in particular, who had already come across the Chinese language during his studies in Germany, felt confident working with his Chinese colleagues and contacting the Chinese customers in Chinese. Furthermore, the acceptance by the local society would in fact encourage those parents to make more progress in the process of integration. By contrast, the other parents who were left behind from the local language point of view, had to face more challenges on this issue. If they did not take this issue seriously and made timely efforts to learn the language as the above-mentioned parent did, this attitude could lead them to fail in the process of adaptation.

Thirdly, the parents' degrees of understanding their own culture as well as their spouses' certainly influenced their performance regarding integration. According to the research, the majority of the German parents living in China showed their clear understanding of German culture and their interests in learning more about Chinese culture. This reasonable mindset helped them take action in their social lives, regularly meeting up with binational families, for example. Consequently, this kind of activity helped them exchange their own experience of living, working and parenting. Yet on the other hand, there was also one parent who did not spend much time

thinking about this issue. It seemed that he was fully occupied by his business. Even though he had lived in China for years, his concerns were actually far away from the local society. All in all, most of the German parents retained their consciousness to integrate into the Chinese society. At the same time, keeping their Western living style and contacting people with the same origin could be seen as their special strategies to practically balance the two cultures. The research shows that the majority enjoyed such life in China. It is assumed that this kind of satisfaction was only conditional upon their respective contributions to the local society. Otherwise, the interaction in a multicultural society which requires the two-way efforts could not have been achieved.

5.2.2 Discussion of non-societal factors

The very same elements which were explored in the German-Chinese families living in Germany are also examined in this section. The families' different places of residence might have an impact on their individual understanding of the following more parenting-related facets. As a matter of fact, the ideology of Confucius is still the leading concept of people's behavior in the current society, disregarding some of his old-fashioned statements. Moreover, Confucianism considered the family-related education as the basis of a person's development. Li (2010: 106) also stresses that the Chinese society is family-centered and Chinese parents are willing to sacrifice themselves for a good future of their children. Therefore, a careful exploration is useful to better discuss the children's identities later on.

5.2.2.1 Perception of family and personal role

5.2.2.1.1 German parents' perception of family and personal role

The five German parents offered a relatively brief description of "family". In their eyes, "children" were the common factor that they all mentioned in their understanding. Apart from that, different concerns were shown in the interviews. For instance, family was described as the basis to solve all kinds of problems. It was also a place where people could ignore the outside world for a while and enjoy the internal

peace. One of the parents understood family simply as “a small family with spouse and children”. It indicated that for the German parents as a whole, the “family” itself was seen as a relatively independent part of the society with little concern in the social functions outside the family. Instead, the individual-orientated meaning and importance were emphasized.

As to the roles that the parents played in their families, they all described themselves as the main bread-winners. This was closely related to their motivations for coming to China as well as their professional status in their working places. On the other hand, the majority of the parents did consider other kinds of roles that they also played in their families. They were aware of their importance in their children’s parenting, although it was at times hard for them to squeeze more time from their business to give their children. Interestingly, some parents saw this issue differently. It suggested that this was due to their respective individuality. One parent, for example, thought that he was absolutely the decision-maker and played a dominant role, because he was “the only male member in the family”. Therefore, he took a great responsibility for parenting his child. By contrast, another parent tried to build a reasonable relationship with his family members. He described it as follows:

With my wife, I am trying to build a partnership. With my children, I talk about friendship. I don’t give them pressure. When they have problems, I’d love to be helpful (cf. p.302).

Concerning the mother, the only German female interviewee in China, she was of the opinion that her roles in the family were multiple: the financial support, the educator and occasionally the cook. To summarize, the German parents living in China basically had two different attitudes towards their domestic roles. On the one hand, the majority did not deliberately stress the difference of roles they played. Rather it was barely their individual focus in their families, as two of them briefly mentioned their spouses’ roles which were partly different from theirs. Yet on the other hand, the absolute distribution of roles occurred as well. Boehnke and Rippl (1997: 67) support the idea of Slater (1971) that a strong emphasis on the difference of roles between

parents would have a negative impact on children's personal development. Besides, this current research showed that in the binational families, this attitude of mind of some parents definitely influenced their way of parenting and the formation of their children's identities. To investigate this issue in a proper way, the results are combined with the Chinese parents' findings in a separate section.

5.2.2.1.2 Chinese parents' perception of family and personal role

Historically, "family" bore a specific concern for the Chinese people. Meredith and Abbott (1995: 213) report that the beliefs which form the basis of the Chinese family could be traced back to Confucius (551 B.C. – 479 B.C.). His ideas have become the basis of social and political life in China for already more than 2000 years. From a linguistic point of view, Li (2010: 89-90) gives examples of some Chinese characters which all include the "family" (*jiā*, in Chinese) element, e.g. "state" (*guó jiā*), "expert" (*zhuān jiā*), and "public" (*gōng jiā*) etc. These examples embody the importance of family as well as its influence in the Chinese culture. Moreover, this characteristic well matches the findings of the Chinese parents in this research.

It shows that all the five parents saw "family" as a crucial part in their lives. Their understanding directly reflected the fundamental position of family in the Chinese philosophy. The well-known traditional idioms: "parents' happiness relies on their children's respect for them and their obedience; family's harmony helps all things be successful", have been nationally spread for generations in Chinese society. Three parents' descriptions were representative and showed an obvious trace of the family's influence on their home culture. One of them was as follows:

I believe family is very important for me and it is the smallest unity of a society. A harmonious society is made of families. So they are the most important part. I think that no matter what we do, we should regulate our families first before starting careers and making friends (cf. p. 298)

As a matter of fact, this kind of understanding is based on the Chinese classical concept of philosophy of cultivating oneself, putting family in order, governing the

state, and giving peace to the world. Apparently, this ideology had a strong element of classes because of the hierarchy-oriented system in the feudal society. In addition, it emphasizes a certain order that men in a patriarchal society were supposed to follow, in order to realize their personal dreams. On the other hand, the importance of family has been academically supported and often quoted since then. As a result, this ideology has been included in the textbooks of middle schools in China.

Another parent's understanding of family typically embodied the close relationship between individual and family. According to her, it was the family that made people complete instead of being simple individuals. Moreover, family was described as a unity in which parents and their children were all supposed to make an effort towards the same goals. It is also necessary to point out that one of the parents especially stressed his need of having a family and had a great concern for parenting, because that was the incomplete part in his own upbringing.

All in all, the research shows that the five Chinese parents basically retained the traditional ideas about families, regardless of their different levels of education. For them, a family did not exist separately but only connected with the society. It was therefore assumed that the outstanding characteristic in Chinese culture, namely the value of collectivism, was deeply rooted in their comprehension of family.

Regarding their roles, the parents did not fully follow the classical pattern of "men were responsible for the external affairs and women for the housework", although this has a long history. Li (2010: 94-95) argues that the dominating power of the male has a strong social background in the Chinese society, as the father and the emperor were both the core in the family as well as the government. However, the formation of the Chinese character of "woman" (*fù*, in Chinese) seemed to traditionally hint at women's "natural" role. The classical form of that character was shown as follows. It was made up of two parts: "female" on the left (*nǚ*, in Chinese), and a "broom" on the right (*zhǒu*, in Chinese). The character of "woman" in ancient China, therefore, meant that someone with a broom was cleaning. Women were also called the kitchen keeper. With the social changes, this was turned into the master of housework. But their roles

as the domestic owner remained. Even in the Chinese traditional medicine, related evidence can be easily found. Qu (2009: 108) stresses that the classical division of men's and women's roles was in fact a natural principle.

婦 (fù) woman

/ \

女 (nǚ) female

帚 (zhǒu) broom

The parents' own perception of their role, however, was largely based on their professional status. Two of the five parents were jobless and taking care of their children was consequently considered as their main business at home. Besides, "wife" seemed to be their second important role. Frankly, one of them did not think she played this role well, because most of her time was given to her children and her husband at times complained about it.

By contrast, the professionally active parents thought that they were doing multiple jobs. No matter whether husband or wife, no one was limited to a certain task. The classical division of men's and women's roles was deliberately decreased. In fact, as family members they made their contributions to both inside and outside affairs.

According to research, the role as parent took priority over other roles for all the five parents, in spite of their different perceptions of their roles. It suggests the fact that children were still the main focus in their lives which was the same situation among most of the Chinese parents in Germany. Furthermore, they did not agree with the traditional statement which put more emphasis on the father's role in parenting: it was the father's fault, when he simply fathered his children but did not educate them. On the contrary, the parents reported that "father" in this sense stood for parents as a whole. Parenting requested efforts of both the father and the mother. It was not a single task only for one of them, as parents normally had different ways of educating

and different influence on their children. This kind of improved perception was well shared by the Chinese parents living in Germany.

5.2.2.2 Child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

5.2.2.2.1 German parents' child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

The character-oriented education seemed to be the main focus for the German parents' parenting. It suggests that their interests in raising their children still followed the Western pattern, despite their residence in a foreign country. Opposite to the general idea that children were supposed to learn hard from a very young age in China, none of the five parents took this concern into consideration. On the contrary, the individual values, e.g. being independent and industrious, were stressed by the parents. Moreover, two of them especially strengthened the wish that their children had a true childhood and did not get involved in too much learning. This kind of attitude in fact reflected one of the most typical features of Western education of which parents in China normally disagreed with. One of the parent's opinions was shown as follows:

I want my kids to have their true childhood and not always learning at a very early age in a competitive situation. They have experienced that enough. I have got the impression that the school teachers in China just come and explain what it is. But the children are given little time to think it over (cf. pp. 292-293).

This parent's children went to a local Chinese school. What she reported was not an exception, but a common phenomenon that occurred in Chinese schools. Even among Chinese scholars, this issue has been intensively discussed. Zhou (2010) frankly points out that the current education system in China as a whole is still examination-oriented and has its unavoidable drawbacks. The general environment for children's development is not humanitarian, because they widely bear the burden of assignments and high expectations of their parents and school teachers which are in fact not suitable for their natural ages. In consequence, they are dramatically deprived of their childhood and their nature is damaged. Hence, it is easy to understand that the

German parents in China would definitely insist on their Western- related standpoints in their parenting.

As to the parents' attitudes towards their children's learning of language, they were closely connected with their goals of parenting. All of them expressed the wish that their children would be able to master German and Chinese. The research showed that nine of ten children from the five families in China had reached a good level of these two languages which differed greatly from the children in Germany. The children who belonged to the school age apparently had mastered the Chinese language with comprehensive skills including reading, writing and speaking. The younger ones who were still below school age were already able to express themselves in Chinese well. But the twelve-year old child who was the oldest one among the children was an exception, because he just had managed to learn the native language of his German father. The following two main factors led to these children's different levels of language.

Above all, the parents' method played an important part. The domestic practice would create an atmosphere in which the children were encouraged to learn the languages of their parents. According to the research, German was the only language the German parents used to talk to their children. Certainly, it was a reasonable way for their children's learning. One of the parents, in particular, valued the learning of these two languages from the very beginning and carefully undertook his "plan" from the first day of his child's birth. He reported that apart from German and Chinese, no other languages were spoken to the child, in spite of the fact that English was the language of communication with his wife. In fact, this parent's method was, to a certain degree, influenced by some unsuccessful examples in other German-Chinese families he had contacted. Namely, the learning of English replaced the learning of German for the children. Consequently, they were rejected by the local German schools, simply because they could not speak that language and not a single English word was useful there.

Secondly, the types of the children's educational institutions had a strong influence. According to the research, eight of ten children attended an educational institution. Half of them went to the local Chinese schools. Three were sent to bilingual kindergartens where English and Chinese were taught. These kindergartens were normally called "international kindergartens" as well. One attended the German Embassy School in which the German school system prevailed and the German language dominated. These choices for the majority of the German parents indicated their concern for the learning of Chinese, especially the Chinese characters which not all children from bi-national families as a whole could manage. Yet, there was still the idea that it was only a temporary decision, as one parent reported that he would like to send his children to stay in Germany later on.

Concerning punishment which universally seemed to be part of parenting, none of the German parents supported this idea. Although they were living in a society where the related proverbs strongly influenced the way of parenting, e.g. "spare the rod, spoil the child", the parents were determined to stand firm and preferred the way of explaining to their children or letting them be alone for a while to handle difficult situations. It indicated that this attitude had basically to do with their personal experience. The parent who had experienced the corporal punishment in her childhood would not allow it to happen with her children again, for instance. This very same example had been found by one of the Chinese parents in Germany. As to another parent who was brought up by a single mother, he fully understood how important a tolerant family for him as well as for his children was. Therefore, treating his children with principle was the course he decided upon. On the other hand, the German parents' mindset on this issue as a whole embodied one of the remarkable features of their home culture that children were considered as independent individuals and equally deserved respect from the adults. One of the parents, for example, mentioned his wife's home town where corporal punishment in the home parenting was taken for granted. Still he could not adopt this "tradition" in his own parenting, after he had lived in China for years.

5.2.2.2.2 Chinese parents' child-rearing in relation to goal, language learning and punishment

Let us first have a close look at the Chinese character of “education” (*jiào*, in Chinese). It is made up of two parts: “*xiào*” on the left means filial piety and “*wén*” on the right stands for all the culture-related aspects (see the explanation below).

教 (*jiào*) education

孝 (*xiào*) filial piety

文 (*wén*) culture-related aspect

Qian (2009, I: 37-38) analyzes that according to the Chinese ancestors education should start with the teaching of obedience. Children were supposed to learn respect for their blood relations and elders which meant that they were learning to respect the Chinese traditions. Similarly, Li (2010: 112-115) discusses this issue from the values' point of view. He stresses that in the traditional Chinese society the basic components were families instead of individuals. Parents raised their offspring and the offspring performed their filial piety towards their parents in return. Consequently, providing for parents has become an important content in the family lives in China. The related proverbs, such as “having a son to alleviate the old age”, has existed for generations and embodies the natural understanding for most of the Chinese parents.

It goes without saying that this proverb still has obvious traces of the feudal society in which male offspring was more valued than the female. Nowadays, “a son” should be properly understood as parents' children as a whole. But even so, it still suggests one of the representative goals of the Chinese parenting. Moreover, it also indicates children's subordinate position to their parents. This research shows, however, that the contemporary Chinese parents had little consideration for such traditions. More important for them was the education of their children's moral characters, being thoughtful, modest and honest, for instance. As to the traditionally overriding

importance of learning, none of them considered it as the centre of their parenting, an opinion which was shared by the Chinese parents living in Germany. Although four of the five parents had attained their degrees from Chinese higher education, they were questioning whether the current system was suitable for their children. The experience with one parent's son was shown as follows:

In my opinion, the kids in the kindergarten are too small to learn English. In the class of my son, most of the kids are less than four years old. One day, when I went to see him, he was only miserably staring at his English book absently (cf. p. 320).

This kind of experience was frequently mentioned by the parents. Accordingly, they certainly would like to “free” their children by showing them a relaxed attitude that they did not expect anything demanding from their kids. Yet on the other hand, the selection of their children's educational institutions seemed to let some parents get involved in a somehow troublesome situation. They were struggling with making decisions between the traditional and non-traditional educational institutions, because both did not fully satisfy them. In fact, there were two main reasons. Reason one, the two distinguishing models for education made the parents confused. One parent's daughter, for instance, was sent to a bilingual school where both Chinese and English were the languages of instruction. But after some time, her mother decided to change her school for a traditional Chinese one, because she did not think that her child had learned enough. Problematically, the pressure in the local Chinese one equally dissatisfied this parent's expectations. She shared her experience of choosing schools as follows:

I felt she learned little in the foreign language school.⁴³ Then I sent her to a local Chinese school. I was always confused which one was more suitable for her. In the foreign language school, she could organize a music band and her character was open and active. There was no pressure of learning. But what they taught was too

⁴³ This is what most of the Chinese parents call “bilingual schools”.

simple. Now back to a Chinese school, she has no time making models of airplanes, or other activities. What is taught there is pretty profound (cf. p.306).

Thus, it can be seen that the two models basically have a totally different focus of education. The Western-oriented institutions pay more attention to the education of children's qualities, the importance of which actually the Chinese educators have been aware of for long, but have barely put it into practice. By contrast, the traditional school's interests as a whole are still limited to the overwhelming teaching of knowledge disregarding children's comprehension. Deng (2007: 79) reports the results of the survey of Chinese children's development of 2005. It shows that the time children at almost any grade needed for their assignments were far beyond the national regulations. Their time was mostly occupied by learning and they were no doubt overloaded. This author frankly points out that "the current reality which opposes the education of quality still truly and stubbornly exists" (ibid: 77). Accordingly, most of the Chinese parents in this research expressed the same feeling that these two models were extreme.

Reason two, the high tuition fees charged by such Western-oriented institutions including the German Embassy School were impossible for some parents to afford at the moment, although they would have preferred their children to attend them. The Chinese father, in particular, expressed the following difficulties in his family:

The German School⁴⁴ is very expensive, nearly 700 to 1000 Euros for one month. Although my wife is German, we still have to pay. Other children's parents work in large German companies or work for the government. The company or the government will pay for it. But we are freelancers. Our children cannot go to this school, although we want them to. Please write to the German Ministry of Education and tell them that there are many such families in China which have come across such problems (cf. p. 296).

⁴⁴ It was the German Embassy School

It is well known that international educational institutions in China normally charge higher tuition fees than those of the traditional schools. This is largely because of their bilingual teaching as well as advanced learning facilities. Children from working class families scarcely have the chance to attend those schools. It was not surprising, therefore, that the German Embassy School also charged high tuition fees. This parent's statement was reliable, in spite of the fact that the researcher did not ask this School about its fees. Besides, the German father from another family did send his son to this embassy school, probably because he was an employee of a German company.

Did these parents' choices of educational institutions lead to different attitudes towards their children's language learning? Certainly not! Just as their German spouses, all the Chinese parents expected their children to well manage these two languages of their parents. As to the Chinese language alone, the parents equally valued the teaching of both speaking and writing in their parenting. Although four of the five couples had to communicate with each other with the help of a third language, English, the Chinese parents insisted on talking in their mother tongue to their children. Furthermore, in the eyes' of some parents, the Chinese language definitely bore the meaning of identities. One mother, for instance, sent her daughter to a local Chinese school saying "as a Chinese, she has to learn this language".

As to another parenting-related facet, strictness can be probably described as one of the representative features in the Chinese parenting. (Corporal) punishment which was often caused by strictness has been taken for granted as a tool of education. Zhao (2007) stresses that domestic violence to children was actually not new in Chinese people's daily lives any more. It was even the normal way for some parents. More precisely, Sun (2007) reports that not few Chinese parents in modern society still rely on the traditional idea of "spare the rod, spoil the child". Hence, it was certainly not a coincidence that one Chinese parent in this research mentioned the very same example which had happened to an acquaintance of hers. To explain this situation, Wang (2008) deeply investigated from a legal point of view. She argues that the

related legislation on domestic violence has not yet been passed. Although the Law of Protecting Non-Adults made some regulations to protect family members, numerous contents were not in detail and difficult to practise. This author further states that this issue has not been taken seriously and the false understanding that it is not a legal issue still exist in some people's minds. Therefore, Wang (2008: 224) summarizes that "domestic violence has not decreased with the rapid development of our economy and cultural levels. On the contrary, as a common phenomenon, it still exists in Chinese families".

Faced with such a social background, some Chinese parents in this research confessed that they had once used (corporal) punishment in their parenting, e.g. beating backsides or hands of their children. But principally, the majority could not support (corporal) punishment in parenting. To solve the problem, they had found their own methods. One parent, for instance, imitated the so-called American way of "time out" in which children had to sit in a corner for five minutes and were not allowed to talk. Another parent stated that loving instead of beating was her way of parenting. This mother further emphasized that the traditional idea of beating children was extreme. In her opinion, "*we are educating our children, but not to limit their thinking*" (cf. p. 299).

All in all, the Chinese parents developed their understanding on the issue of (corporal) punishment. More valuably, the related social background did not negatively influence their way of treating their children. In fact, more than one parent mentioned that they were influenced by the approach of their spouses. Being criticized or watching their spouses' behavior on this issue certainly helped them change into more reasonable ways of parenting. Concerning the well-spread proverb "spare the rod, spoil the child", one Chinese mother developed her new understanding of it which sounded more acceptable: "*it meant that parents must be strict with their children and should not spoil them*" (cf. p.305).

5.2.2.3 Role of grandparents in education

5.2.2.3.1 Role of grandparents in education from the German parents' point of view

Two contrasting attitudes to grandparents' role in education could be found among the five German parents in China. Three of them were of the opinion that grandparents played an important part in education, because they had fruitful life experience. Although one parent had lost his parents, he thought that the role of grandparents in general had practically been taken by the parents of his wife. As they were not professionally active any more, they had more time to play with their grandchildren which for the kids was very significant.

The research showed that these parents' own upbringing was an influential factor to help them support their ideas. One of them, in particular, was the only child as well as the only grandchild in his family. His relationships with his parents and the grandparents have been very close since his childhood. Hence, he still considered the participation of his parents as a practical way to let his child become more familiar with the German culture. He expressed his ideas as follows:

We send our daughter to stay with my parents in Germany for one to three months every year. Maybe three months are too much, but at least more than one month. It's very important for her to improve the language and to learn the culture (cf. pp.314-315).

As a matter of fact, such an example was equally shared by another parent who also agreed with the importance of the role of grandparents in education. Interestingly, these parents saw the role of their parents-in-law differently. For instance, simply the fact of playing with grandchildren as a role of grandparents certainly could not satisfy one of them. On the contrary, this parent thought that the participation of his Chinese mother-in-law in the education was negative, for she could not speak the standard Chinese language. His daughter could not understand her dialect. This example suggested that this German parent had a remarkable concern for his child's learning of standard Chinese language. On the other hand, there were also parents who saw little influence of their parents on their own children. Mainly, they thought that the

geographical distance between these two countries made constant contacts between the two generations difficult. Instead, one of them stressed that children's education should directly depend on their own parents.

5.2.2.3.2 Role of grandparents in education from the Chinese parents' point of view

According to the research, none of the Chinese parents lived together with their parents. It was not only due to the pursuit of careers for some of them, but also to the developed model of family lives which dominate in Chinese society. Li (2010: 102) argues that the contemporary structure of families in China has changed dramatically. The traditional form of "four generations under one roof" has been replaced by nuclear families. Therefore, the influence of the older generation has gradually weakened.

All the five Chinese parents in this research shared the same opinion that their parents took little part in their own parenting. Obviously, this was not because of the separate residences, but rather the contrasting ways of parenting which could cause disagreements or even conflicts. Meredith and Abbott (1995: 225) stress that although harmony in relationships is highly valued between older parents and their children in Chinese families, conflicts still occur. In this research, the different understanding of parenting between the two generations of the Chinese parents unavoidably challenged the traditional philosophy. Largely, their main differences in the understanding of education were shown in the care of children's daily lives. For the older parents, their ways of raising the little children typically embodied the features of Chinese parenting that parents fully fulfill their children's requests. In their opinion, parents should immediately bring children the milk, as soon as they want it. Parents were also supposed to hold the baby in their arms, as soon as he cried. Besides, one of the Chinese grandmothers could not understand that her little granddaughter slept alone instead of being with her parents. Such examples showed that the Chinese older parents continued the traditional way of spoiling their grandchildren and treated them still as "little emperors".

As to the young parents, especially those who had doubted the style of their parental education since childhood, they were determined to insist on their own ways of parenting. One of them described the following situation which had happened in her family:

I had many contradictions with my parents, shortly after the birth of my kids. They lifted the kids up once they were crying and gave the kids whatever they wanted. I'm on the same standpoint with my husband. I don't want my kids to be spoiled in the traditional Chinese manner like other kids. I stopped carrying my daughter when she was one and a half years old. I just took her hands when we went out. [...] My mother was afraid that my daughter touched anything dirty and she didn't allow her to play with sand. This was an idea of traditional old people. If there is any contradiction, I will insist on my own way (cf. pp.323-324).

Accordingly, this vivid example suggests that this parent's parenting had been partly westernized. She purposely avoided spoiling and focused more on the development of her children's independence. Coincidentally, some parents equally mentioned the role of their German parents-in-law. One mother in particular made a comparison of older parents' different attitudes to their children as well as the grandchildren between these two countries. She reported as follows:

In my family, the parents and the kids cannot be separate. It's impossible like the case in most Chinese families that grandparents take care of their grandchildren and the father and mother live separately. In Germany, I noticed that there was no such case. They can have their grandchildren for the weekend, but no way to leaving everything to them. So that is a totally different philosophy of life. Older parents in China care about everything for their next generation and the generation after the next. They fully give up their own lives. The German would say "I have my own life" (cf. p. 286).

What this parent described is definitely true, especially the Chinese part. Older parents willingly take the responsibility to look after their grandchildren to decrease the burden on their children, particularly when the kids' parents are both

professionally active. Concerning the related situation in Germany, a very similar description could be found among the Chinese parents as well.

5.2.3 Discussion of children's identities

“You cannot see the true image of the Mountain Lu, because you are within it.” This poem of Sushi who was one of the leading figures of literature in the Chinese Song Dynasty (960-1279), explains an interesting phenomenon of the relationship between the observer and the substance. At the same time, he hints at a logical method to gain complete understanding that people have to jump out from the setting they are in, so that they can observe from a brand-new angle.

The fact that the German-Chinese families chose China as their residence undoubtedly was a great challenge for the German parents, because the two cultures differ sharply from each other, in the aspect of parenting in particular. But on the other hand, it automatically offered them the opportunity to get to know their home culture in an international context and at the same time challenged their ability to cope with the local culture. As to the Chinese parents, they equally faced problems in rethinking about their own culture and to what extent they were supposed to include this part in their parenting. In this section, influence of the social and the non-social factors on children's identities is discussed separately as in the analysis of the families in Germany.

5.2.3.1 Influence of societal factors

In comparison with the Chinese parents, it was hard to find a type of “rebellious” among the German parents to pave a completely new way of parenting for their children. On the contrary, they largely accepted the way in which they had been raised in their childhood. The idea of being independent and learning by doing was still the focus in their current parenting. It suggested that they retained the Western style of parenting in their domestic practice. Even if they were aware of some features of Chinese parenting, they seldom absorbed this part into their own parenting, because what they normally were aware of were the weak points, e.g. learning pressure on

children. Moreover, the majority showed a better understanding of their home culture and their spouses' culture than the German parents living in Germany. Although they all saw the necessity of respecting these two cultures, some of them overestimated their own cultural background. Accordingly, their children were sent to the so-called "German schools" instead of the local Chinese ones. The research showed that the German parents shared the idea that they did not like to divide their children's identities into "half and half". But their practice obviously preferred their own origin in their approach to parenting.

It goes without saying that most of the German parents had integrated better into the local society than the Chinese parents living in Germany. On the one hand, it was because of their active professional status which provided them with ideal platforms for contacting the locals. On the other hand, they gave their time willingly to improve their knowledge of "host country". This attitude surely would speed up their process of integrating. Besides, the parents could be aware of the missing part of their own culture in their first years in China and made their efforts to balance the situation. As a result, they equally passed on the same idea in their parenting and emphasized the importance of their children's integration into the local society. It indicates that this kind of consideration embodied the features of the Western parenting of being open and active.

As far as the Chinese parents were concerned, most of them did not agree with their childhood education. Therefore, it was difficult for them to repeat the old model. The developed social dynamics as well as the new structure of families made them think about practical strategies of parenting. Their interests in parenting could be basically divided into two directions. One was certainly traditional. This group of parents valued the classical philosophy and the traditional norms in children's education, e.g. obedience to the elders. Another group focused on the Western style of giving children freedom, but not pressure. One of them even thought that there was no use to learn Confucianism any more which was in fact an extreme attitude. Compared with their German spouses' consideration about their children's identities, the majority of

the Chinese parents seemed to show clearer perception of their children's backgrounds with two cultures. They tried to include these two different elements in their parenting, although their preference was different and one of them pointed out that it was impossible to perfectly balance the two cultures of 50% and 50% for each. As a matter of fact, this attitude confirmed one of the contrasting characteristics of the Chinese culture that was modest and reserved. One mother, for instance, constantly tried to cool down her litter daughter's feeling of being beautiful.

5.2.3.2 Influence of non-societal factors

According to Hurrelmann (2002), children's personal development within the family is influenced by parents' conscious styles of parenting as well as their behaviors. The styles of parenting result from parents' experience and their impact on the social environment, in which they both were involved. The selected non-social factors in this research were closely related to parenting. Although the very same elements were discussed, there were special features which differed from those families living in Germany.

As foreigners, the majority of the German parents noticed that they were living in a society whose culture strongly contrasted with theirs. In regard to parenting, they were fully aware that it was a kind of "tradition" that most children in China were spoiled by their parents and grandparents. However, none of them followed it in their own parenting. Instead, they determinedly focused on their children's education towards independence. It was the same situation as with the German parents in Germany that the five German parents living in China were fully occupied by their jobs. Even if they noticed that parenting was part of their domestic responsibilities, the objective situation of being the leading figures in their working places (e.g. project manager) usually did not allow the parents to spend much time with their children. But it did not indicate that the German dimension in the parenting was missing and their children were consequently more influenced by the Chinese way. On the contrary, what most German parents emphasized and decided for their children

directly touched the weakness of the Chinese parenting as well as the education system in China as a whole. The research showed that this was also the “sensitive” facet which had caused disagreements between the parents.

Basically the disagreements arose in regard to two aspects: daily care of the children and the choice of their educational institutions. For the German parents, even the small children were supposed to sleep separately from their parents. It was not necessary to offer them food any more, if children stopped eating. It goes without saying that such a casual style of parenting was totally different from Chinese cultural norms in which children are the centre in the family and eating bears a great concern in people’s daily lives. The following statements were given by two Chinese mothers. They described the related situation in their families.

I think the biggest difference between us lies in the independence of our children. My husband thinks that they should sleep in their own rooms even at their young age⁴⁵. Sleeping is our biggest problem at the moment. Now the two children sleep with me, one left and one right. My husband totally disagreed with me on this point (cf. p.322). The point I insist on was the issue of the kid’s meal. In my husband’s opinion, it means that the child is filled, if he stops eating and there is no need to offer any more food. But I want my daughter to eat more. So I gave her a toy to attract her attention. At the same time, I fed her when she was playing with it. My husband would always say: why give her a toy? It’s time for the meal (cf. p.285).

As a matter of fact, these two mothers were attracted by the Western parenting which encouraged children’s independence and offered them more freedom. However, they practically could not stop “spoiling” their children in their daily care. This suggested therefore that their home culture had been deeply rooted in their minds and they would not totally compromise the Western style.

Another difficulty that happened in some families was the choice of the children’s educational institutions. According to the research, six of the nine children were

⁴⁵ The two children were aged two and three in 2010.

below the school age. They were either sent to the bilingual kindergartens or were looked after at home. As to the next step of how the children should be educated, confusion occurred in some families.

In fact, Western-oriented kindergartens in China are not new. Nowadays they can easily be found in large cities, e.g. Beijing, Shanghai. Their bilingual instruction (mostly English and Chinese) and the relatively little learning pressure on children were the main attractive points to the Chinese parents in this research. On the one hand, they hoped that their children could grow up in a relaxed environment. On the other hand, the “mark” of one of their identities, the Chinese language, would not be lost in this process. However, the direction after this period made some parents worry. One Chinese mother expressed her troubles in choosing schools for her children as follows.

My husband disagreed with sending our children to the local Chinese schools. I don't like their teaching methods, either. The learning pressure on children in China has been increasing. The knowledge of grade one and two in primary schools is taught already in kindergartens. So, we'll not send our children to the local Chinese schools. But what I worry about is that the children's Chinese language will be gradually lost after going to the German schools, as this language is hardly used there. They can only understand and speak Chinese, but are not able to read and write, because they will be completely dominated by the German language. So in my eyes, they become foreigners. In the future, there will be three Germans in the family, but only one Chinese, me. It's my feeling (cf. pp.318-319).

The German schools this parent mentioned are similar to the German Embassy School where the German language dominates. It can be seen from this example that this Chinese parent was struggling with the decision between the Western and the traditional Chinese way of educating. It concerned not only the tendency of her children's identities but also her own position in this process. Although the Opening-Up-Policy in China has been in operation for more than thirty years, the transition in the educational area has only just got underway. The establishment of Western

schools and bilingual kindergartens can be understood as one of the results of the social development. Besides, not few Chinese parents' choice for such educational institutions for their children is an obvious sign that people in China are coming closer to the Western education. In comparison to this, the unchanged way of instruction in the traditional schools gradually let Chinese parents, including those from bi-national families, lose their interests. The fact that numerous parents in China decide to send their children to tutorial classes shows that the parents in this research certainly did not follow this "fashion". Instead, the idea of considering their children's own interests was well shared by them. Obviously, it was not easy for the Chinese parents in this research to oppose the leading culture on this issue. Zhou (2010: 173) frankly states that most parents in China worry about their children's learning process since primary schools. Based on such worries, they made illogical decisions. Attendances at tutorial classes not only make children become the tools for examinations, but also overload them with new tasks. It was assumed therefore that the style of Western education had a strong impact on the Chinese parents in the families.

As a minor but meaningful facet, the children's names indicate their parents' thoughts about their identities. The research shows that eight of the nine children had both their German and Chinese names. One child had only her German name. It suggests that children's place of birth, their educational institutions as well as the residence of the families were the influential factors for this situation. Moreover, all the children had German citizenship, in spite of the fact that the majority were born in China. The research shows that the One-Child-Policy played an important role. Four of the five families had more than one child. Having a German passport made the children's regular return to Germany more convenient. Unlike some Chinese parents in Germany who combined their names with their spouses' family names, all the Chinese parents in China retained their full Chinese names as well as the Chinese citizenship.

All in all, the five German-Chinese families in China showed their own characteristics which another five families in Germany surely did not have. Unlike the children in Germany who were more influenced by the Chinese parenting, these children in

China were basically raised in a combination of Western and Eastern styles. The German parents as a whole demonstrated the priority of their home culture and consciously stressed the superior aspects in their parenting. For example, they did not “integrate” into certain practices, e.g. corporal punishment for the children, even if the local society took it for granted and the related legislation on this issue was incomplete. Concerning the Chinese parents, they tried to partly adopt the Western parenting in their practice, as they were aware of the weakness in the Chinese approach. On the other hand, China as the place of residence for the families strengthened the parents’ consciousness that the traditional dimension must be part of their parenting.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter is on the differences and similarities between the German and the Chinese parents which derive from the findings of the previous chapter. Conclusions are largely drawn from the social and non-social factors. Besides, this time more attention is paid to the parents' way of negotiating as well as their attitudes to the cultural differences. Comparisons are made horizontally and vertically, for not only parents from these two nations were different from each other, but even those having the same cultural background might also have their specific features due to the place of residence.

Along with the research question, the hypothesis of this research is tested: the related sociopolitical and cultural conditions have an influential impact on the degree of integration of bi-national families into the receiving country. In other words, bi-national families are equally influenced by the local society in which they live, especially in the sense of their social interaction. Falkner (2005: 178) points out that each individual like families are strongly influenced by the social context. For bi-national families the degree will be stronger, because the social and cultural context of at least one family member is something different. This difference is also perceived as "difference" by the social environment. In consequence, it affects those families differently. According to Scheibler (quoted by Falkner, 2005: 175), two factors are crucial for bi-national partnerships: the degree of cultural distance and the degree of social integration and its acceptance of the minority. Undoubtedly it is a great challenge for those people to find a common / new model of partnership which is not available in their own cultural contexts. Accordingly, three different patterns of adjustments in bi-national partnerships have been developed:

- One-way-adjustment – one partner gives up his / her own culture in favor of the culture of his / her partner ("asymmetrical solution")

- Alternative adjustment – the pair tries to keep a balance between their two cultures and to practise them in parallel (“simultaneous solution”). If it does not work, a compromise could be made or the pair could try to mix its own cultural concepts of value as well as actions
- Creative adjustment – in this pattern the pair creates a completely new model of behaviors and practices, for the cultural distance is too big

The two last patterns of adjustment provide the pair with sufficient opportunity to develop new competence, to broaden its own horizon and to arrive at an exciting reality of family life (Tseng, quoted by Falkner, 2005: 177-178).

6.1 Conclusion of societal factors

6.1.1 Conclusion of parents’ childhood education / upbringing

The research shows that there was a close relationship between the parents’ childhood education and their cultural background. To be precise, the childhood education of the parents embodies their cultural emphases which differed from each other. It suggests therefore that both German and Chinese parents experienced traditional childhood education at home and they all would like to pave a more suitable way of instructing their children. But how the way will be constructed led to great differences between them. For the German parents whether living in Germany or China, their own childhood education could be viewed as the basic pattern of instructing their children. What they preferred to emphasize in their parenting was exactly the features which they thought that they had benefitted from in their own childhood education, being independent and having principles, for instance. Even if these were different from the focus of Chinese parenting, they would not give them up to compromise.

As to the Chinese parents living in these two countries, different ways of negotiating could be found. The parents living in Germany showed more consciousness of keeping a balance between these two cultures in their parenting than those living in China. They tried to combine the elements which they had accepted from the styles of parenting with their own practices, e.g. more freedom for their children and respect for the elder. In addition, they expressed the similar idea of offering assistance to their

children as much as they could, but let them decide their own pursuit of interests. This point certainly made a great difference from the generation of these parents who were normally “guided” by their parents through the whole process of growing. It was assumed that this kind of strategy was strongly influenced by the emphasis on integration from the local society point of view and it could be considered as an improvement on performing their traditional culture in a global context.

Compared with those Chinese parents, the Chinese parents living in China showed their contrasting attitudes toward the way of raising their children. Although they all decided to improve the negative aspects of their childhood education in their own parenting, socioeconomic status of the families led them to focus differently. The tradition-oriented and the Western-oriented preferences existed in parallel. The general learning pressure on Chinese children in China as well as the dissatisfaction with the loose instruction in the Western-established schools made some parents prefer the traditional way. However, it did not indicate that these parents overemphasize the importance of the Chinese culture in their parenting. Trying to consider from their spouses’ points of view was their shared understanding of coping with cultural differences. For another group of Chinese parents, the “suffering” from their childhood education and the practical experience of living or studying abroad helped them become closer to the Western style of parenting.

6.1.2 Conclusion of parents’ perception of culture and their integration into the local society

It appeared that explanation of one’s own culture was not an easy task for the majority of German and Chinese parents who lived in their home countries, for they failed to describe and summarize them. In relation to the influence of their home cultures, they equally thought that they normally did not stress them on purpose, even when they were alone with their children, instead they led them to feel the culture gradually. As to the degree of understanding their spouses’ cultures, the research shows that the German parents gained more knowledge than the Chinese parents. This was not only

because that they all had travelled in China, but more contacts with the Chinese people in Germany also helped them deepen their understanding. Even though, the German parents stuck to their home culture and the way of Chinese parenting was seldom an option for them. The Chinese parents living in China, on the contrary, showed a compromising attitude to these two cultures, as far as the Western / German and the Chinese pre-school and primary education was concerned. This kind of situation basically resulted from the booming industry of Western educational institutions in Mainland China. Their different ways of instructing made it difficult for some Chinese parents to choose between the Western and the traditional one.

Accordingly, similarities and differences could also be found in another group of parents living in the host countries. More detailed explanations about their home cultures were expressed by both German and Chinese parents. Equally, they all liked to stress the respective features of their cultures in their parenting, e.g. discipline and filial piety. But on the other hand, an extreme attitude to their own culture was evident among the German parents. The dominant position was likely to ignore the dimension of Chinese parenting. By contrast, the five Chinese parents living in Germany shared the idea of combining these two cultures in their practice. Such reasonable attitude, however, did not guarantee their general level of integration into the German society. Their degrees of comprehending the local culture suggested that they had not yet fully overcome the cultural differences and a boundary between these two cultures still existed. Maybe the following statements of a Chinese mother could elucidate this:

Let me give you an example: the Cologne Carnival. It is very lively. People on the street celebrated greatly. But I always had the feeling that I admired them and could not enjoy it as much as my husband and my son. Just like our body, this culture doesn't belong to me, because there were 26 years in which I did not live in this country. So from this aspect, I don't think I have integrated so much (cf. p. 254).

Yet, the social conditions also had to be made accountable for this issue. Local hostility to migrants, those from Asia and Africa in particular, at times occurred which definitely would slow down people's attempts to be integrated. Looking at the

German parents living in China, they equally had lived in the host country for years, but were better integrated than the Chinese parents in Germany. Doubtless their success was due to their own efforts, e.g. participation at social activities, reading books about China. Besides, it was necessary to point out that more than one parent expressed the feeling of being treated in a friendly way by the locals and consequently the superiority of their home culture was recognized and highly valued in this foreign country.

6.2 Conclusion of non-societal factors

6.2.1 Conclusion of parents' perception of family and their personal role

At least two similarities in the parents' understanding of family were found by the research. Above all, nuclear families were the main image of family for the majority of the German and the Chinese parents living in these two countries. The traditional extended families were hardly under their considerations. It suggests that despite the different socioeconomic changes over the decades in these two countries, the same decrease in household occurred. People's understanding of family consequently changed from the traditional pattern to the developed model. Besides, "children" were viewed as part of the family among all the parents. However, they were more likely to take centre stage in the eyes of Chinese parents as a whole. Individual spaces and interests characterized the perception of family of the German parents. Accordingly, family was understood as somehow a separate unit from society as a whole by those German parents living in China. Thus, it could be seen that a relatively loose relation between individuals and families was generally shared by the German parents, irrespective of their different places of residence. Such understanding had an impact on the roles they played in their families as well. The majority of them saw themselves as the breadwinners in their families, due to their active professional status in the society. The division of personal roles in those families in Germany largely followed the pattern of "men for the external affairs and women for the domestic issues".

By contrast, the German parents in China were more aware of their role of parenting, although they were equally occupied by their business. But for their Chinese spouses, this idea was more important, because they all saw themselves as “parents”, first, and then were spouses. This kind of preference, especially among the Chinese women, existed in these two countries. Furthermore, the Chinese parents in China emphasized the importance of family in their personal lives. It had a close relationship with the society which differed from the German parents. It was assumed therefore that these three elements of individuals, families and the society created a circle and interacted influentially. But on the other hand, the classical division of roles of men and women became relatively loose in those families living in China. This resulted from the fact that the Chinese parents did not have to struggle with the job market and had no language problem in their home country. Even though two mothers mainly stayed home to look after their children, it was not impossible for them to go out to work like their husbands, for the babysitters were by their sides. Those Chinese parents who were unemployed in Germany, however, seemed to have no other better options than fulfilling their roles of parenting due to the language barrier. Their children were accordingly more influenced by the way of the Chinese parents.

6.2.2 Conclusion of parents’ perception of parenting goals, children’s language learning and domestic punishment

The research shows that there were numerous similarities in the understanding of parenting goals among the parents from these two countries. Quality-oriented parenting of the German parents practically embodied their cultural values, e.g. discipline and independence. The Chinese parents’ understanding appeared much closer to such Western ideology, even those living in their home country. Moreover, the traditional overriding importance of learning has lost its dominance among the Chinese parents nowadays. Instead, children’s own interests were more valued by their parents. But differences still could be found, as far as the classical parenting of filial piety was concerned.

In comparison with the Chinese parents living in China, those in Germany valued the traditional philosophy of children's filial piety to their parents. They emphasized its importance in their parenting and expected their children's respect for them as they had shown it to their own parents, although the parents further developed the meaning of this tradition. It was assumed that these Chinese parents retained the most central part of their home culture as their strategy of balancing the cultural differences. Such traditional moral principles could be understood as marks of personal identity for both the Chinese parents and their children living abroad.

A similar attitude was observed in the parents' understanding of their children's bilingual education. All the parents in these two countries expressed their wish that German and Chinese could be equally managed by their children. The reality showed however that there were always children in each country who failed to achieve this. Largely, the children living in China performed better in this field than those in Germany, especially their skills of writing the Chinese characters. Doubtless such achievement was benefited from the parents' seriousness as well as children's schools or kindergartens where the Chinese language was the main or one language of instruction. As a matter of fact, the significance of parents' mother tongues was widely viewed as a vehicle for upholding the parents' home cultures. In particular, the Chinese mothers living in Germany and China took this issue more seriously than their husbands. The decision to choose Chinese names for their children was another good example for valuing their own language.

Theoretically the German parents in China supported their children's bilingual education as well. But this idea could hardly work, if they had little knowledge of the Chinese language and they definitely preferred their children to go to German schools instead of the local ones. Furthermore, the current situation that bilingual education has still been under discussion in the German society and no practical strategies have been worked out for educational institutions certainly has become a barrier for immigrant children and children from bi-national families to acquire their mother tongues.

Regarding domestic punishment, the research shows that both German and Chinese parents had experienced it in their own upbringing, including corporal punishment. They did not support the idea that punishment was part of parenting as a consequence. The German parents living in these two countries dealt with this issue more reasonably than the Chinese parents as a whole because of their developed legislation on this issue as well as their cultural emphasis on democracy and equality. Their understanding of seeing children as equal individuals led to their logical ways of negotiating disagreement with their children. Although all the Chinese parents have already made progress, compared with their own parents, the trace of hierarchy between them and their children could still be found. In short, similarities and differences between the German and the Chinese parents existed in these parenting-related factors. What the German parents in these two countries insisted on was the opinion that Chinese parenting / educational system needed to be improved.

6.2.3 Conclusion of grandparents' role in parenting

All the ten families in this research were nuclear families in which no older generation was included. The majority of the parents from the two cultural backgrounds were of the opinion that the role of the grandparents was only modest in their parenting. The research shows that there were hardly differences among the Chinese parents on this issue. The contrasting way of parenting from the previous generation rather than the geographic distance was the true reason that the parents preferred their own ways to raise their children. In addition, they showed comparable understanding of life style between their own parents and their German-in-laws. By this means the parents could understand and accept the German grandparents' attitude to their grandchildren.

Differences of this issue occurred among the German parents, for the majority living in China had a great concern of their own parents' role in their parenting. Moreover, they emphasized the importance of their children's visiting their German grandparents. It indicates that these parents living in a host country were trying to strengthen their home culture through the participation of their parents. The involvement of their part

was undoubtedly another effective way of making the children get close to their German side of their identity, apart from the German parents' own effort in this process. But on the other hand, the German parents had little concern about their Chinese-in-laws' role in their own parenting. It suggests that language barrier was the basic difficulty for them to communicate with each other.

All in all, the relationship between the grandparents and the children largely depended on the parents' attitude to their own parents as well as their parents-in-law. Apparently, the parents' position was in the middle of this chain and they functioned as connections to combine the two sides. Once the parents doubted the role of the older generation, no matter from whose side they came, the children would be likely to learn little from their grandparents as a consequence.

To conclude, neither German nor Chinese parents in this research would completely give up their own cultures in favor of their spouses'. The pattern of "alternative adjustment" was largely shared by the parents from these two cultures. Even if the German parents living in China insisted on their traditional concept of parenting, the relatively welcoming social environment motivated their integration into local society and in consequence they realized the necessity of their children's integrated involvement as well. The transformation in the educational realm since the Opening-Up-Policy of the end 1970s, however, has not been yet fully accomplished in Chinese society. Although Western-oriented schools, kindergartens and textbooks could be easily found in the Mainland and were a symbol of eagerly learning for the West, the related policies seemed not to reach the key issue; their integration into the local societies as well as the culture of the receiving country was hardly taken into account, for instance. That is why the Western and traditional way of learning are still opposed. Such a situation has made it difficult for Chinese parents, those from bi-national families in particular, to choose a suitable path for their children.

Regarding German society, integration has been understood as the most encouraging pattern of adjustment for immigrants and foreigners for decades. Besides, it concerned almost every field (e.g. political, economic and cultural) to motivate people to become an integrated part of the local society. But the real social conditions made this wish of politicians seem to sound like little more than propaganda. The ethnic minorities normally do not have the chance to practise their mother tongues, for example. Social practice still seems separate from the political ideology. Combination of beliefs with behaviors, according to Eagleton (2001), is therefore an urgent task for German society in order to create a reliable image of cultural values.

Chapter Seven

Recommendations and future study proposals

It goes without saying that each family has its own features and problems. Hence, it is almost impossible to formulate suggestions which might be universally suitable for them all. In relation to the findings and conclusions of this research, however, some practical advice can be offered to at least make progress at different levels. In this section, recommendations are given in three dimensions: recommendations for parents from bi-national families; recommendations for school teachers and educators; and suggestions for policy- and decision-makers. The division of recommendations for German and Chinese parents as well as the societies where they live are also taken into account. Finally, possible directions of future studies of children from bi-national families follow as the last part of this chapter.

7.1 Recommendations from three dimensions

7.1.1 Recommendations for parents from bi-national families with special reference to German and Chinese parents

In general, parents from bi-national families face more challenges not only in marriage but also in parenting than those from mono-cultural families (Romano, 2001). The way people negotiate these challenges leads to the quality of life as well as the growth of children. In this research, extreme phenomena were found in both German and Chinese parents: overriding importance of the German culture; adoption of Western parenting almost disregarding Chinese traditions, for instance. Apparently, this kind of attitude could easily make their children feel more attached to one specific culture of their parents. A balance can therefore hardly be kept. Although both the German and Chinese parents showed their comparative understanding of parenting in these two cultures, their angles differed from each other.

The Chinese parents were aware of strengths and weaknesses in the traditional and Western parenting. For the majority, the idea of combining the strengths from these two sides was shared in order to create a practical model for their children. Such an

attitude to different cultures embodied the central part of their home culture: being reserved and tolerant. Yet on the other hand, an effective outcome will not happen, if the parents fully stick to their own traditions without considering their contemporary value in modern society. As a matter of fact, a related situation had already happened among some Chinese parents: the unsuccessful integration into the German society. More recently, the presentations about *Chinese culture and women's role* which were given by a Chinese expert from Mainland China in May 2011 were another good example. This expert was invited by the local Society of Traditional Chinese Culture Magdeburg and stressed the importance of modesty in people's behavior. It was assumed that the tradition of being reserved as well as filial piety, especially for women and children, were still overestimated by a group of Chinese living in their home country and abroad. The ignorance of the current social conditions is likely to prevent people from practising their traditions in a proper way, on the one hand; and to slow down their progress towards being integrated into the local society, on the other. Besides, their children's degree of integration might suffer from their parents' old fashioned behavior as well.

Regarding the German parents, what they mostly focused on was the weaknesses of Chinese parenting and way of learning. Those living in China, in particular, had the opportunity to witness some related issues of which they might already have heard at home. Such contrast between the two different styles of parenting helped them stick determinedly to their own culture and the way of raising children determinedly. Equally, this attitude cannot guarantee that their children benefit from the two cultures of their parents in parallel in the future either, if one culture always dominates the other.

Accordingly, practical strategies for those parents from bi-national families could be as follows. It is necessary for the Chinese parents to rethink over their classical philosophies, no matter where they live. Please do not forget that the social background of the foundation of those philosophies was feudal societies. That was why the importance of hierarchy and obedience was strongly emphasized. In order to

retain their own culture and pass it on to their children in a realistic way, consideration of the new element in a global context is unavoidable. Keep on what is still practical in parenting nowadays, e.g. respect for the elderly; and give up or try to improve the clichés, children's full obedience to their parents, for instance. This way of thinking might be equally useful for those Chinese parents who are big fans of Western parenting. As every success must consider its respective setting, complete imitation of a certain model is not the solution for sure. For all the Chinese parents from bi-national families as a whole, integration is an urgent task. It is certainly worth learning the language of the host country, because it is a practical way of getting close to a new culture and involved in the local society. Further, there is no doubt that modesty is a nice quality. However, being active is equally important in multicultural societies. That is the way of people getting to know each other and learning from each other. Only so, parents could have a strong influence to their children's performance in the future. In short, Chinese parents still need to more actively step forward in the process of integration. It does not mean that those living in their home country face no problems at all. On the contrary, efforts should also be made, for their German spouses have frequently mentioned the wish of sending their children abroad or back to Germany to study. Thus it suggested that their children or even the whole families would sooner or later face more multicultural societies. Therefore, the skills of coping with different cultures have to be mastered by both the parents and their children.

Recommendations for German parents seem to be the opposite of those for the Chinese parents. It should be useful for them to learn the Chinese culture from broader perspectives rather than seemingly focusing on the "dark" sides. This attitude could help them gain a relatively complete picture of this culture and help them to integrate into the local society. Besides, trying to learn or improve their Chinese language skills is equally recommended for them. Instead of going forward, stepping a bit backward from their own culture might be a reasonable way for having more spaces for these two cultures to be practised together, for "families have biological

roots that qualify the family environment as the best place for cultural learning” (Keller, 2006: 335).

7.1.2 Recommendations for school teachers and educators

Although school teachers and educators were not directly involved in this research, there were surely things to be improved according to the parents’ description. In German society, this group of people is facing serious challenges in spite of the fact that they are not new at all. The consciousness of Germany as a multicultural as well as an immigration country has to be increased. In relation to this aspect, concepts of integration and intercultural education need to be actively practised, for the process of integration requires efforts from all sides. These two concepts have become increasingly important not only in the sense of integration for immigrants to the receiving country, but also to help the members of the majority culture to become more tolerant and less prejudiced. Therefore, it is important to overcome hostility towards foreigners and people with a different cultural background (Golz, 2005: 7). As the research shows that unkind behavior of the locals to foreigners, e.g. students, children from bi-national families had truly existed, school teachers and educators have the responsibility to not only develop their own intercultural competence, but also strengthen this mindset in the class. The competence must include knowledge of other cultures as well as the ability to view all cultures equally and value their differences at the same time.

The challenge of developing personal competence is also faced by school teachers and educators in China. What is more important for them at the moment is the change from overloading children with learning tasks and examinations to a more realistic way of instructing, replacement of teachers’ dominant role in the classroom by a kind of cooperative learning⁴⁶ of students, for example. For administrators or teachers who

⁴⁶ “Cooperative learning is an approach to the teaching / learning process which has been proposed as a viable alternative to the current individualistic and competitive practices of schools. There are several forms of cooperative learning, but they all involve students working in groups or teams to achieve certain educational goals” (Ellis / Fouts, 1996: 55).

wish to bring about positive change in a more or less traditional school environment, therefore, cooperative learning would seem to be well worth exploring (Ellis, 2005: 182).

This recommendation equally concerns for teachers in kindergartens. Giving children a true childhood and making them enjoy the process of learning instead of being forced has been the wish of experts, parents and children for long. Zhou (2010: 250) argues that the first principle of preschool education should make children happy, but not force them to learn, participation to tutorial classes, for instance. The most serious problem of Chinese children was that they were unhappy. This kind of situation cannot be improved effectively, if the education system as a whole does not change. In comparison with children from Western countries, Chinese children seem to more depend on their parents and lack the spirit of independence. This did not result from nature, but was the consequence of education (ibid: 73).

In fact, there is a new tendency in modern society that traditional school and Western-style education institutions exist in parallel. They both, however, cannot fully satisfy parents' expectations. It indicates that on the one hand China is getting closer to Western education and is willing to introduce it to its people. But on the other hand, the contrasting teaching style seems not to be a better alternative for children and parents, because some Chinese parents complained that their children did not learn sufficiently. Since Western schools have become a powerful body in Chinese society, in large cities, in particular, the traditional education system could use this opportunity to benefit from them. The two different styles must not be opposite to each other. On the contrary, learning the strength of the other and improving one's own weaknesses might be a logical way of making progress. It has become well known that working hard is a tradition for Chinese people and diligence can be considered as one of their main characters. Western schools in China seem to challenge this tradition and have made Chinese parents, especially those from bi-national families, at times confused. They had no idea which way was more suitable for their children: the traditional or the Western one? Hence, integration into the local

conditions and maybe cooperation with local schools would be a useful strategy for decreasing such issues. It is reasonable for school teachers and educators working in Western education institutions in China to employ practical ways of teaching as well as build regular contact with parents and children to learn their feedback.

7.1.3 Recommendations for policy- and decision-makers

In spite of the fact that immigrants have become a greater and greater percentage in the German population for decades and the number of bi-national families has been increasing accordingly, the social climate does not seem to be totally fit for those people. “One third of today’s non-German population in Germany is Turkish; one third is made up of other guest-worker minorities from Yugoslavia, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal; and all other nations make up the rest. [...] But Germany has one of the lowest levels of naturalization of any Western country: only about 0.5% of resident foreigners a year become German citizens, compared with 2% in Britain, 1.2% in France, and 5.2% in Sweden” (Ardaph, 1991, quoted by Hoff, 2001). Moreover, as Germany has always understood itself to be a mono-cultural country, there was little room for unpopular multicultural approaches to school organization and curriculum. Neither the German constitution nor government policies define Germany as an immigrant country (Hoff, 2001: 823-825).

Under such social and political circumstances, it is no wonder that integration is still a serious issue in the contemporary German society as a whole. According to the survey from 2001 about East and West German people’s acceptance of immigrants and minorities, which was done by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), it was shown that there were no big differences between East and West, but intolerance was a phenomenon of young East Germans and older West Germans. The acceptance of immigrants was in general quite low all over Germany (Golz, 2005). Regarding the group of bi-national families, little attention has been paid to them, both publically and academically. The related legislation for those families is problematic. Schwantes (2009: 59-60) summarizes three aspects which

could cause difficulties for them: legal uncertainty; no equality with German-German couples; no equal treatment, the non-German partners would lose their right of residence in Germany, if they divorced shortly after the marriage, for example. In fact, there are no guaranteed laws of residence which could protect those marriages and families. Such inconvenient situation doubles the responsibility and pressure of the German partners in the families in consequence. From this research we came to the conclusion that the average degree of the Chinese parents' integration into the German society was lower than that of the German parents in China. In addition, those children in Germany were also, to some extent, left behind compared with those living in China, as far as the basic management of these two languages was concerned. Apart from the objective reasons, the related social conditions in the German society certainly played an influential part as well. Contributions at all levels therefore have to be made in order to really match the image of Germany as a multicultural society. The report of representatives of the federal government for migration, refugees and integration in the year of 2005 showed that the increasing importance of policy on integration in the European Union (EU) was institutionally and financially emphasized. It was suggested that a network of national platforms of contact for issues of integration had to be established. It should encourage the exchange of information and experience between the member countries as well as support the coordination of national and European policies on integration.

Without exception, German politicians therefore have to come to an agreement on their policies as soon as possible, when they equally enjoy the variety of cultures in their country. It is reasonable to try to improve their policies from immigrants' as well as points of view of people with different cultural backgrounds. The policies have to truly become a kind of encouragement for the integration of the people in question, instead of the case that "opponents of the multicultural society say integration when they mean assimilation" (Golz, 2005: 7). Politicians in this sense need to realize the value of integration of the cultural minority into the main society as political, economic and cultural enrichment as a whole. Together with this understanding,

practical strategies in the educational field have to follow in time, bilingual education in schools for instance. That should be a useful way of retaining mother tongues of children from migrant as well as bi-national families. In particular, bi-national families and their children should be considered more systematically. No one and no group of people in a multicultural society should be left in the “darkness”.

When we turn our attention to China, it seems that new strategies have to start with the understanding of “harmony”, for this term has never been so widely-propagated by politicians that building a harmonious society has seemingly become a central concern of the whole nation in the present day. Related literature tells us that Eastern and Western scholars had both reached the agreement that harmony is one of the predominant features in Chinese culture. They had explored its implication in different fields, e.g. politics, culture, history and linguistics, etc. According to Maletzke (1996: 83), harmony with nature was the representative orientation in many periods in the Chinese history. In fact, this understanding could simply be seen as the tip of the iceberg. Qu (2009: 179) emphasizes that harmony was both the central conception of the traditional medicine and the soul of the Chinese culture. What was significant was harmony with nature, with people and with oneself.

Again, the formation of the Chinese character of “harmony” might be helpful to understand the spirit of harmony practically. “Harmony” in the modern Chinese language is 和 which is called *hé*. Its traditional form is 龢 which is made up of two parts (see the explanation below). The part on the left is called *yuè* and stands for an ancient musical instrument which looked like a flute. This part can be equally divided into two different parts: 品 (*pǐn*) and 侖 (*lún*) (follow the explanation below). 品 means the three holes of the instrument and 侖 means order which indicates that playing music must follow a certain order. The left part of the traditional character “harmony” is also called *hé* which has two implications: presents the pronunciation of this character and can be understood as ripe corn. In Chinese traditional culture, ripe corn is both a symbol of harvest and attitude of modesty, because it looks as if people are bowing their heads (ibid: 179-180).

龢 (hé) harmony

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龠 (yuè) a musical instrument

禾 (hé) ripe corn

/ \

品 (pǐn) three holes of the instrument 龠 (lún) order

Historically, “harmony” has a long tradition in the Chinese society. According to Confucius, “in the usages of decorum it is harmony that is of value”. Mencius developed this idea by saying “a favorable climate is not as good as topographical advantage, topographical advantage is not as good as unity and coordination among people.” Accordingly, “harmony” has become not only a measure of value but also the goal of Chinese people’s association (Li, 2010: 33). Presently, the ideology of a harmonious society has been especially stressed since September 2004 in the 16th Conference of China’s Communist Party. This suggests an important change of strategy for China’s development (Wang / Luo, 2008). Yet, the reality shows that the international acknowledgement of China’s remarkable growth in economy as well as its national competence had been in fact at the cost of ignoring something important, education, for example. In order to improve this situation, policy- and decision-makers in China therefore need to enlarge their focus which has been mostly on economy. The following recommendations should be undertaken urgently.

According to this research and the Beijing International Conference of 2009, it is clear that the group of migrants and bi-national families in China have not been sufficiently considered by the central government despite their increasing number. In comparison to Germany, those people were not yet well organized in the Chinese society. Some German parents in this research, for instance, related that they went to meet other bi-

national families regularly, for there were no such organizations in the local society. Hence, a network at the level has to be made systematically. In large cities, such as Beijing, more networks should be taken into account due to the large number of those families. On the one hand, the networks could provide more opportunities for the parents or couples to exchange experience with each other. On the other hand, integration of the foreign partners into the local society is likely to be eased. Furthermore, such contact is equally an opportunity to deepen the knowledge of the receiving society of the “foreigners”.

In relation to the organization of these people, both traditional and Western schools need fundamental reforms, since parents from bi-national families are choosing these two styles for their children and neither of them has completely fulfilled their wishes. The examination-oriented education system has remained unchanged since the end of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1970s. At first sight, Chinese children benefit from this style which encourages them to learn hard and learn by heart. Certainly, this kind of examination-oriented education has its effect of “instructing an amount of knowledge and keeping the knowledge well for a short time” (Zhou, 2010: 11). These were the exact reasons that some German parents were persuaded by the Chinese spouses to prefer traditional schools for their children. The experience of Chinese students, especially those living abroad, however, shows that their traditional way of learning limited their abilities to learn, to analyze, and to solve problems independently. More important, their skills of integration were generally weak, compared with other international students. This phenomenon cannot be clarified as “harmony with people and with oneself” for sure. The national policy-makers therefore have to minimize children’s and students’ heavy work load by reducing tutorial classes and cancelling the entrance examination of universities (if possible). Instead, more emphasis should be placed on the encouragement of children’s abilities to question, to present and to practise. “Learning by doing” should not be simply retained as propaganda without any actions any more!

Regarding Western schools in China, the central and the local governments are supposed to provide them with necessary support which could help the investors know more about the local backgrounds. Regular contacts with heads of schools are equally recommended for politicians. Workshops and forums for school directors and administrators both from the local and Western schools should be regularly organized. Such exchanges and interaction might help the two sides reach the goal of “double-win” practically. On the other hand, investors and teachers of Western schools in this sense need to acquire their knowledge of the Chinese market as a whole as well as the local conditions as much as possible. The more they understand, the more realistic ideas are likely to be involved in their administration and curriculum, e.g. tuition fees. This new way of instructing of Western schools must not only be accepted by a certain group of people. On the contrary, it could make itself more beneficial to Chinese parents, if the basic elements of the local culture were properly taken into account.

In relation to the conclusion of this research, it should not be a coincidence that the Chinese parents both living in Germany and China criticized part of their traditional culture and the German parents as a whole normally did not consider Chinese culture and its parenting in their own practices. Undoubtedly, the mass media plays an influential role in guiding people’s way of thinking, such as television. “Television can be defined with equal plausibility as an art, as an industry, as a social force, [...] more recently, as a terminal for home-based work as well as entertainment and education” (Frow / Morris, 2000: 322). Related TV programs and literature have dominated the market for years in the Chinese society nowadays which have gained a kind of popularity. People are encouraged to relearn the traditional philosophies by different ways. But what is missing in this process is that the mass media has hardly considered the influence of timing on those traditions. Qian, a Chinese historian, once expressed his worries in an interview by saying “I hope this popularity is not simply false ‘heat’”. It was assumed that such kind of learning would not be helpful that much, if people did not combine the historical backgrounds of those philosophies with

the very present social constructions. Therefore decision-makers have to improve their guidelines in time and try to keep a close eye on the current value of the traditional culture in a global context. As China is traditionally a multicultural society and its plurality of cultures has been intensively strengthened since the Opening-Up-Policy as well as the return of Hong Kong and Macao to the central government in the late 1990s, exchange and cooperation have become more important and necessary than ever. “Cultural exchange is one of the main motivations of the human being to make progress. Human beings must learn from each other in order to go forwards. The final goal of their progress must be in a common field in a certain way” (Ji, quoted by Wan / Tang, 2006). People can understand and be willing to get closer to the culture of the receiving country, only if they benefit from these changes.

7.2 Future study proposals

It goes without saying that this small-scale research is simply an attempt to illuminate parenting and children from bi-national families by way of comparing two different countries. Limitations and weaknesses certainly exist. In fact, there are numerous possibilities to explore those families more deeply, for literature shows that they seemed to be forgotten by the public concern in their societies. Accordingly, the following proposals plan to continue the discussion on children from bi-national families. Above all, the age group of the children in a future study could be strictly limited to 13 to 19 years old. During this period of adolescence it is normal that teenagers demand more freedom from authority and usually rebel against discipline. Chua, the Tiger Mother, equally experienced a hard time to negotiate with one of her daughters, when she reached that age.

Instead of a virtuous circle, we were in a vicious spiral downward. Lulu turned thirteen and grew more alienated and resentful. [...] Every other word out of her mouth was “No” or “I don’t care.” She rejected my vision of a valuable life. “Why can’t I hang out with my friends like everyone else does?” she’d demand. “Why are

you so against shopping malls? Why can't I have sleepovers? Why does every second of my day have to be filled up with work? (Chua, 2011: 170-171).

In addition, the German educational TV program, *The Strictest Parents of the World*, also showed that the participants were under this age group. They were sent by their parents unknowingly to this program due to their poor behavior at home. A research on teenagers with bi-cultural backgrounds, therefore, would be an opportunity to directly listen to their voices. The objective of such research should be to find out their own understanding of cultural difference, identities and in which aspects they mostly have conflicts with their parents. Besides, their school teachers and peers need to be involved in the research in order to document these children's academic performance as well as their degree of integration at a social level.

Secondly, this current research has discovered that some Chinese parents both in Germany and China had the experience of studying abroad. Furthermore, Chinese overseas as well as those returning to China after their studies have aroused more and more attention of scholars to discuss their integration into the receiving societies and difficulties in being reintegrated into their home country. A future study could also choose such Chinese parents as one of the target groups. Because they already both experienced lives with both traditional and Western styles for a period of time, their way of negotiating cultural differences might have a strong influence on their parenting. This future study therefore has to compare the new challenges and their ways of coping.

Last but not least, research on comparing bi-national families between East and West Germany is another area of interest. According to the procedure of this current study, families in West Germany could be reached more easily than those in the East and they were more active in this research. A future study could therefore focus on the factors which might lead to different degrees of integration between those families. Local decision-makers would be invited to take part in the research to introduce their policies towards this group of people as well as issues they encountered.

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Erklärung

Ich erkläre, dass ich die eingereichte Arbeit selbständig verfasst habe. Sie wurde vorher nicht als Dissertation, Diplom- oder ähnliche Prüfungsarbeit verwendet. Alle benutzten Hilfsmittel sind in der Arbeit vollständig angegeben.

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PERSONAL DATA

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EDUCATION

May 2008- April 2012 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
PhD at the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education
Topic of PhD thesis: *Negotiating Cultural Values in Bi-national Relationships: A Comparative Research on Children from German-Chinese Families.*

Oct.2002 - Dec.2007 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
MA in English and Education
Topic of final thesis: *Social, Educational and Cultural Aspects of the Integration of Chinese Students in the East German City of Magdeburg.*

Jan.-June 2005 University of Nottingham, UK: Exchange semester in the Department of English

Feb.-Sep.2002 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
Intensive German language course with exam for admission to higher education (DSH)

Nov.2001-Jan.2002 Intensive German language course in a private language school in Cologne

Sep.2000- April 2001 Beijing Foreign Studies University, PRC
Intensive German language course with exam of intermediate level II

Sep.1997-July 2000 College of Arts and Science of Beijing Union University, PRC
Public Relations and Advertisement Design

INTERNSHIPS

- July-Dec.2010 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
Research assistant at the Chair of International and Intercultural Education
- Feb.-March 2006 INWENT (Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung gGmbH)
Magdeburg, Capacity Building, International Germany
Modern media and curricula development in vocational education and training
- June-July 2005 City Hospital School, Nottingham, UK
- July-Oct.2001 International Logistics Ltd Beijing, PRC
Consultation of culture and advertisement
- May-June 2000 Ge Hua Advertisement Ltd. Beijing, PRC

SCHOLARSHIPS / AWARDS

- Aug.- Oct.2011 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
- Jan.- March2011 Scholarship awarded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for PhD students in the final period of their research
- July2011 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
championship of table tennis for women, group of free time sport:
1st place
- July2008- Dec.2010 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
Scholarship for PhD students awarded by the International Office
- April2006- March2007 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
Scholarship for graduate students awarded by the International Office
- July 2010 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
championship of table tennis for women, group of free time sport:
3rd place

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- since Nov.2011 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
Member of film team
- May 2011 Magdeburg: interpreter of two presentations:
“Traditional Chinese culture”, “Business culture in China” (organized by the Society of Chinese Traditional Culture in Magdeburg)
- since Jan.2010 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
member of Association of Families
- since Oct.2008 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
member of international PhD students
- since Oct.2008 Magdeburg: member of German-Chinese Society in Saxony-Anhalt
- Sep.2005-Dec.2007 Otto-von-Guericke University Magdeburg
member of Association of International Relationships of Students’ Council
- Oct.2005-Dec.2007 Regular participation in study-based seminars (organized by Diakonie Germany)

CONFERENCES

- March 2011, Berlin Cultural bridge in Germany: A Forum for Young Leaders: Immigration and Integration: the German attempt --- new context and new goals“ Germany and the world: an international conference on immigration, integration and Germany’s image in the world [Organized by the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD)], giving a presentation on the topic of *Social, Educational and Cultural Aspects of the Integration of Chinese Students in Germany, with special reference to the East German City of Magdeburg.*
- May 2010, Beijing Migration in China and Asia: Experience and Policy [Organized by the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, PRC], giving a presentation on the topic of *Negotiating cultural values in bi-national relationship, with special reference to children from German-Chinese families* (a report on my PhD research)
- Summer 2010, Magdeburg Securing Success in School [Organized by Ministry of Health and Societies in Saxony-Anhalt, Ministry of Culture in Saxony-Anhalt, and the Germany’s Foundation of Children and Youth]
- Summer 2010, Magdeburg Bilingualism and Multilingualism [in a trilingual school]

PUBLICATIONS

- Wang, Chong Jiong (2011): *Aspects and Problems of Chinese Students’ Integration in Germany Using the Example of the City of Magdeburg.* [Homepage of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD)]
- Wang, Chong Jiong (2010): *Negotiating Cultural Values in Bi-national Relationships with Special Reference to German-Chinese Families.* (A brief introduction of my PhD research for the Beijing Conference 2010: “Migration in China and Asia”)

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Appendix I

1. Questionnaire (German and Chinese versions)

Sehr geehrte Familie,

ich bin Doktorandin für das Fach Erziehungswissenschaft an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität in Magdeburg.

Im Rahmen meiner Dissertation mit dem Arbeitstitel: *Bildung, Sozialisation und Interkulturalität in chinesisch-deutschen Familien*⁴⁸ habe ich diesen Fragebogen für Sie vorbereitet. Um Ihre Kindererziehung und die Bedeutung Ihrer eigenen Kultur in der Familie zu erfahren, spielen Ihre Antworten für meine Untersuchung eine wichtige Rolle.

Für Ihre Unterstützung bedanke ich mich herzlich, und ich wünsche Ihnen und Ihrer Familie alles Gute!

Chong Jiong Wang

⁴⁸ This title has been during the research gradually improved to the final version.

German Version

I Zur Person

1. In der Familie bin ich Vater
Mutter
2. Alter 25-30
31-35
36-40
41-45
46-50
51-55
56-60
3. Bildungsabschluss Kein Abschluss
 Hauptschulabschluss
 Realschulabschluss
 Abitur
 Berufsschulabschluss
 Hochschulabschluss: Bachelor
 Hochschulabschluss: MA, Magister, Diplom
 Doktor
 Sonstiges: _____
4. Gehören Sie einer Religion an?
 Ja, welcher _____
 Nein
5. Sind Sie berufstätig?
 Ja, als was _____
 Nein
6. Wohnen Sie in dem Land, wo Sie geboren sind?
 Ja (direkt zum Teil II des Fragbogens)
 Nein
7. Haben Sie die Staatsbürgerschaft des Landes erhalten?
 Ja
 Nein
8. Fühlen Sie sich in diesem Land wie ein Ausländer?
 Ja, immer
 Ja, aber nur manchmal
 Nein, gar nicht
9. Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Integration in die Gesellschaft ein?
 Völlig integriert
 Meistens integriert
 Kaum integriert
 Gar nicht integriert

10. Welche Ursachen haben Ihre Integration verhindert / gefördert? (mehrere Antworten möglich)

- Häufige Teilnahme an den Veranstaltungen in der Gesellschaft
- Gute Kenntnisse der Landessprache
- Geringe Kenntnisse der Landessprache
- Keine Lust auf Integration
- Sonstiges: _____ (und welche?)

11. Wie fühlen Sie die kulturelle Differenz zwischen Deutschland und China?

- Sehr groß
- Groß
- Nicht so groß
- Kaum Differenz

II Zur Ehe

1. Sind Sie mit Ihrem Lebenspartner verheiratet?

- Ja
- Nein

2. Ist Ihr Name mit dem Namen von Ihrer Frau bzw. von Ihrem Mann kombiniert?

- Ja
- Nein

3. Wie haben Sie sich kennengelernt?

- Vorstellen durch Bekannte
- Bei Veranstaltung oder im Studium
- Sonstiges: _____ (und wie?)

4. Können Sie die Sprache Ihres Lebenspartners sprechen?

- Ja, aber ganz wenig
- Ja, Umgangssprache
- Ja, fließend
- Nein, überhaupt nicht

5. Welche Sprache sprechen Sie mit Ihrem Lebenspartner am meisten?

- Deutsch
- Chinesisch
- Englisch
- Sonstiges: _____ (und welche?)

6. Wie alt waren Sie, als Ihr erstes Kind geboren wurde?

- 20-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 56-60

III Zur Kindererziehung

1. Welche Sprache sprechen Sie mit Ihrem Kind?
 Nur Deutsch
 Nur Chinesisch
 Beides
 Sonstiges: _____
2. Ist es Ihnen unangenehm, wenn Ihr Lebenspartner mit dem Kind seine eigene Sprache spricht?
 Nein, es ist in Ordnung
 Ja, ein bisschen
 Ja
3. Hoffen Sie, dass Ihr Kind die beiden Sprachen, Deutsch und Chinesisch, in Zukunft gut sprechen kann?
 Ja, sicher
 Nein, nicht unbedingt. Aber die Grundlagen von der anderen Sprache sollte es lernen.
 Nein, eine davon ist genug
4. Betonen Sie gerne Ihre eigene Kultur, wenn Sie mit dem Kind zusammen sind?
 Ja, sehr gern
 Ja, aber nur manchmal
 Nein, keine solche Überlegung
5. Haben Sie Ihr Kind körperlich bestraft?
 Ja
 Nein
6. Halten Sie Schläge als Strafe bei der Kindererziehung für eine erlaubte / sinnvolle Methode?
 Ja
 Nein, aber manchmal notwendig
 Nein, überhaupt nicht
7. Wie reagieren Sie darauf, wenn Ihr Kind etwas Schlechtes getan hat?
 Ich lasse es allein überlegen
 Ich führe es zur Einsicht
 Ich bestrafe es
 Sonstiges: _____
8. Sind Sie der Elternteil, der in der Familie am meisten mit Ihrem Kind zusammen ist?
 Ja
 Nein
 Fast so viel wie mein Lebenspartner

9. Wie beschreiben Sie Ihre Hauptrolle in der Familie? (mehrere Antworten möglich)

Verantwortung für die finanziellen Belange

Haushaltsführung / Arbeiten im Haushalt

Bei der Kinderbetreuung

Sonstiges: _____

10. Mit welchen Familien haben Sie häufig Kontakt? (mehrere Antworten möglich)

Bi-nationale Familien

Deutsch-deutsche Familien

Chinesisch-chinesische Familien

Keine häufigen Kontakte mit anderen Familien

11. Glauben Sie, dass es große Unterschiede bei der Kindererziehung zwischen Deutschen und Chinesen gibt?

Nein, kaum Unterschiede

Ja, aber nicht viele

Ja, sehr große:

(bitte Beispiele nennen)

Chinese version

尊敬的家长您好:

我是目前在德国马格德堡大学教育专业就读的一名博士研究生。根据我的课题研究: „家庭教育, 社会化, 以及跨文化性在中德家庭中的体现“, 我准备了这份问卷。为了很好的了解您的孩子所受的家庭教育, 以及您个人的文化在家庭中所起的作用, 您对该问卷的作答对我的课题进展无疑将会具有很大的帮助。故此, 对您的热情支持, 请接受我最为诚挚的谢意,

并祝福您及您的家人幸福美满!

王翀同

I 个人信息

1. 您是孩子的 爸爸 妈妈

2. 您的年龄段

- 25-30
 31-35
 36-40
 41-45
 46-50
 51-55
 56-60

3. 您的受教育程度 小学肄业
 高中毕业
 高等院校毕业: 学士
 高等院校毕业: 硕士
 高等院校毕业: 博士
 其它情况: _____(请填写)

4. 您有宗教信仰吗?

- 有 _____(请填写)
 没有

5. 您工作吗?

- 是: _____(请填写您的职业)
 否

- 6 您住在您所出生的国家吗?
 是 (请直接填写第二部分)
 否
- 7 您加入该国国籍了吗?
 是
 否
- 8 您感觉自己在这里是个外国人吗?
 是的, 绝对是
 是的, 但只是偶尔的感觉
 没有
- 9 您如何评价自己与这个社会的融合程度
 完全融合
 基本融合
 几乎没有融合
 完全没有融合
- 10 您认为造成上述情况的原因是什么 (可做多项选择)
 经常参加社会活动
 很好的对该国语言的掌握
 对该国语言掌握不够
 没有融合的兴趣
 其它原因: _____
- 11 您感觉中德之间的文化差异大吗
 很大
 比较大
 不是很大
 几乎没有差异

II 婚姻情况

1. 您和您的伴侣结婚了吗?
 是
 否
2. 您的姓名与您爱人姓名的一部分结合了吗?
 是的
 否
3. 您们是怎么认识的
 通过朋友介绍
 在参加活动或学习中认识的
 其它情况: _____
4. 您会讲您爱人的语言吗?
 会, 但只是一点点
 会, 基本日常用语
 会, 很流利
 不会

5. 您和您的爱人大多数情况用哪种语言交流？
- 德语
 - 汉语
 - 英语
 - 其他语种：_____

6. 您的第一个孩子出生时，您当时的年龄
- 20-25
 - 26-30
 - 31-35
 - 36-40
 - 41-45
 - 46-50
 - 51-55
 - 56-60

III 家庭教育

1. 您用哪种语言与您的孩子交流？
- 只用德语
 - 只用汉语
 - 中德双语
 - 其他语种_____（请填写）
2. 当您的爱人在您面前用他的母语和孩子交流时，您会感到不舒服吗？
- 不会，这很正常
 - 会的，但只是有一点不习惯
 - 会
3. 您希望您的孩子将来德语和汉语都讲得很好吗？
- 是的，很希望
 - 不一定，但是另一门语言的基本知识应该学习
 - 不一定，掌握一门就够了
4. 在您和孩子在一起时，您会有意识强调自己本国的文化吗？
- 是的，有强烈的意识
 - 是的，但只是偶尔
 - 没有这样的考虑
5. 您体罚过您的孩子吗？
- 是
 - 否
6. 您认为在家庭教育中，打孩子是一种可行的方法吗？
- 是的
 - 不是，但有时是必要的
 - 绝对不是

7. 当您的孩子做了令您不高兴的事是，您的反应会是什么？
- 让他 / 她 自己反省
 - 讲道理
 - 体罚
 - 其它方法：_____ (请填写)
8. 作为家长，您是在家里陪伴孩子最多的那位吗？
- 是的
 - 不是
 - 几乎和我爱人陪伴孩子的时间是一样的
9. 您会怎样描述您在家庭中的主要角色? (可做多项选择)
- 财政力量
 - 家务劳动
 - 照顾孩子
 - 其它角色：_____
10. 与什么样的家庭您经常保持联系? (可做多项选择)
- 跨国婚姻家庭
 - 德国家庭
 - 中国家庭
 - 不常与其他人联系
11. 在家庭教育中，您认为中国人和德国人有很大的差别吗？
- 几乎没有
 - 是的，但不是很大
 - 是的，很大
- _____ (请举例说明)
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Educational diary (German and Chinese versions)

Name _____

Alter Jahre _____

Sehr geehrte Familie,

dieses Erziehungstagebuch ist wie ein Spiegel, wodurch Sie im Laufe der Zeit etwas Neues von Ihrem Kind entdecken können, z.B.: Wie hat sich Ihr Erziehungsstil geändert? Was hat Ihr Kind in den letzten Tagen gelernt? Und welche Schwierigkeit bleibt noch? usw. Solche Fragen können Sie besser beantworten, wenn Sie dieses Tagesbuch für Ihr Kind sorgfältig schreiben. Als eine schöne Erinnerung an das Erwachsen-Werden Ihres Kindes lohnt es sich, das zu machen, oder?

Regel: 1. Bitte schreiben Sie ein bis zweimal (mehr möglich) pro Woche.

2. Die drei Fragen werden wiederholt. Bitte beantworten Sie sie so ausführlich wie möglich.

3. Ergänzen Sie bitte, wenn etwas Interessantes oder Unerwartetes passiert ist.

4. Das Erziehungstagebuch sollte mindestens ein halbes Jahr lang geführt werden. Schreiben Sie bitte 24 bis 48 Wochen lang in dieses Tagebuch ein.

Danach hole ich dieses ausgefüllte Tagebuch bei Ihnen wieder ab.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung und

viel Spaß beim Schreiben!



_____ Tag _____ Monat _____ Jahr

1. Bitte beschreiben Sie eine oder mehrere Episoden aus dieser Woche, die Entwicklungs- und Lernschritte des Kindes sowie Ihre Erziehungspraxen im Familienalltag veranschaulichen.

2. Was haben Sie in dieser Woche Neues über Ihr Kind erfahren?

3. Ist in dieser Woche bei der Kindererziehung etwas Unangenehmes mit Ihrem Ehemann / Ihrer Ehefrau oder Ihrer Kindern passiert? Und zu welchen Schlussfolgerungen sind Sie gekommen?



etwas Interessantes bzw. Unerwartetes

Chinese version

姓名_____

年龄_____

尊敬的家长您好:

这本育儿日记就好像一面镜子,随着时间的推移,反射着您的孩子的成长历程。比如,您的教子风格发生了哪些变化?您的孩子在近期内又学到了什么新东西?以及还存在着哪些困难,等等。而这些问题只有当您用心去填写这本日记的时候,才可能得到满意的答案。为了留下您的宝宝在成长过程中的一段美好记忆,还是值得用心去记录一下的,不是么?

填写要求:

1. 请您每周记录一到两次 (更多不限)
2. 三个问题会重复出现,请您尽可能详细的填写
3. 若是发生了任何有趣的或是意料之外的事情,也请您及时补充
- 4 这本日记记录期限为6个月,故请您至少填写24至48周,填写后到时由本人来领取

感谢您的大力支持

祝您记录愉快!



_____日_____月_____年

1. 请您记录一下发生在本周的一个或若干个您的孩子在学习方面取得进展的例子，以及在家庭生活中您的教子实践

2. 在本周您从您的孩子身上了解到什么新的东西？

3.在教子方面，您与您的孩子或爱人在本周是否发生过一些令您不太愉快的事情？您是如何处理并调和的呢？



一些有趣的或意料之外的事情

3. Tests for children of school age and below school age

Test for children of school age (German and Chinese versions)

1. Wie heißt du?

2. Wie alt bist du?

3. Fühlst du dich mehr als deutsch oder chinesisch?

deutsch

chinesisch

beides

4. Welche Sprache sprichst du besser?

Deutsch

Chinesisch

beides

5. Welche Sprache willst du lernen?

chinesisch

deutsch

beides

6. Welche Landkarte ist für China, und welche für Deutschland?



7. Welche ist die chinesische Flage, welche ist die deutsche Flage?



8. Was ist die Hauptstadt von Deutschland?

Bonn

Berlin

Köln

9. Was ist die Hauptstadt von China?

Shang Hai

Beijing

Hong Kong

10. Hast du hier mehr chinesische oder mehr deutsche Freunde?

11. Welches Essen schmeckt dir besser: chinesisches oder deutsches? Kannst du ein paar Beispiele nennen?

12. Fährst du gern nach China / Deutschland? Wie oft würdest du gern dorthin fahren, wenn möglich? Was hat dir besonders gut gefallen und womit bist du unzufrieden?

13. Male bitte ein Bild von deinen Eltern !

Chinese version

1. 你叫什么名字?
2. 你几岁了?
3. 你觉得自己是德国人还是中国人?
 德国人
 中国人
 二者都是
4. 哪种语言你说的更好
 德语
 汉语
 两种语言都好
5. 你愿意学习哪种语言
 汉语
 德语
 两种语言
6. 下面哪个地图是中国的，哪个地图是德国的？





4. 哪面是中国国旗，哪面是德国国旗？





5. 哪个是德国首都

波恩

柏林

科隆

6. 哪个是中国首都?

上海

北京

香港

7. 你在这里有更多中国朋友还是德国朋友?

8. 你更喜欢吃中餐还是德国菜? 可以举些例子吗?

9. 你愿不愿意回中国 / 德国? 多久回去一次? 哪些是你喜欢的和不喜欢的?

10. 给爸爸妈妈画张像吧!

Test for children of below school age

1. Wie heißt du?
2. Wie alt bist du?
3. Fühlst du dich mehr als deutsch oder chinesisch?
 deutsch
 chinesisch
 beides
4. Welche Sprache sprichst du mit deiner Mama?
 Deutsch
 Chinesisch
 beides
5. Welche Sprache sprichst du mit deinem Papa?
 Deutsch
 Chinesisch
 beides
6. Willst du beide Sprachen (Deutsch und Chinesisch) lernen?
 Ja
 Nein
7. Hast du hier mehr chinesische oder mehr deutsche Freunde?
8. Was isst du gern?
9. Fährst du gern nach Deutschland? Wie oft würdest du gern dorthin fahren, wenn möglich?
10. Kannst du ein Bild von deiner Mama und deinem Papa malen?

Appendix II: Interviews

Signs of transcription

Signs	Meanings
I	Interviewer
R	Respondent
.....	Unfinished sentence
-----	Break
/////	Sentence interrupted
_____	Vocabulary, sentence corrected by the interviewer
[?]	Unclear expression due to technical problem (e.g. recording problems)

The signs of transcription were not totally made in all the interviews because of the possible misinterpretation of meanings, when translated into other languages.

Table: Interviews in Germany

Date of interview	Place / setting of interview	Family status of respondent	Cultural background of respondent	Language used in interview	Length of interview	Method of recording
25.04.2009	Clausthal-Zellerfeld / sitting room of the family	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	47 mins.	Audio recorder
See above	See above	Father	German	English	1h.	See above
02.05.2009	Pulheim / bedroom of the family	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	34 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Father	German	German	34 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	45 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Father	German	English	29 mins.	See above
16.05.2009	Munich, sitting room of the family	Mother	Chinese	English	1h. 12 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Father	German	German	32 mins.	See above
17.05.2009	Dachau / garden of the family	Father	Chinese	Chinese	55 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Mother	German	German	41 mins.	See above
23.01.2010	Magdeburg / café	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	55 mins.	See above

Interviews in Germany

Interview 1: 25.04.2009, Clausthal-Zellerfeld, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to present the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families as well as the difficulties in educating children, so that afterwards to work out logical solutions for their problems. The interview we are recording today will surely remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. So I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. So firstly, I would like to know more about you, your background.

R: I was born in Fushun City in Liaoning province of China. My growth experience is very common. I visited primary school, secondary school, senior high school, then I entered Liaoning Engineering University. After I graduated I came to Germany to read economic engineering. Afterwards I transferred to energy system. After graduation, I work in the department of the university.

I: What kind of education did you receive in your childhood?

R: My family is a typical and common northern family. Maybe there is some difference between the northerner and southerner. For the northerner, whether father or mother is strict with children, it is that kind of traditional family. There is nothing special. I can't describe it very well.

I: Are you the only child?

R: Yes. There is only one child in my family.

I: How do you understand the concept of family?

R: For me, this question is divided into several phases. When I was young, I felt my parents and I are a family. When I was young, I felt family is staying with people you like. But at that time family is an obscure concept. I didn't feel I needed a home, because at that time the concept of family is staying with my parents, or I can say, wherever I am, family is staying with my parents. Afterwards I went abroad for studying, in this period of time I also felt that I had no home, because I felt that China is my home, my home is wherever my parents are, this was the only feeling. This idea didn't change until I wanted to marry, I felt that family is where you could stay with people you like, wherever you are, if only this person can live with you, then that is home. This is the concept of family. Afterwards I have children, then I feel family is staying with your husband and children. Time is different, the idea is different.

I: What influence does your local culture, or Chinese culture exactly, have on your daily life, especially under the situation that you live in Germany?

R: At the beginning it had great influence on me. Because when I just came here, I felt that I was thoroughly filled with Chinese culture. When I was in China I'm not a typical and traditional Chinese. Because the so called traditional Chinese feel that

their motherland is the first and great. If people don't do so, then you should not do so. I always want to know why I did so, what the target was for this. If you choose step 123 for a certain target, then maybe I feel step 456 is easier for that target. Maybe I will choose step 456 instead of 123. When I was in China, it was always this case. So when I arrived in Germany, I'm always easy to accept fangle and I have no any repulsion or resist psychology. The Germans said German culture is like this, this thing should be done like this according to the practice of Germany, I didn't say that is not ok, but I was considering why I have to do it like this, and which is the better way. Sometimes I will consider if this practice is Chinese practice or German practice, or a middle practice, or just my practice. In my behavior, it is not necessary to use a certain element to dominate me, but analyze according to the actual situation and the time condition, then solve the problem. At the very beginning, what Chinese culture gave me the most is politics, because I'm interested in politics and philosophy. In German, I often came across some problems, such as the German will argue with you the issue of Tibet or Taiwan. Since we accepted traditional education, when we were in China, Tibet or Taiwan is an inseparable part. But this is impractical in the mind of the German, because the concept of German is different from us. It is useless if you talk with them about these issues, they believe it is not the reason. So at the beginning, it is from surprising to angry to resisting to arguing with them, in the end I want to know what they are thinking about, and even accept their idea, or to say I accept the reality, admit this conflict, at last we live in peace with each other, so that is the process. This is the so-called culture conflict or concept conflict. German culture will influence me to a deep extent gradually, because I live here. At the beginning I believed that when the Germans do so then I can do so, but now I want to know why they do so, not follow them blindly, I often feel that they are reasonable. For instance, renting a house or buying a house. When in China, you will see that many people want to buy houses, none of them say "I don't buy a house". But in Germany, at the beginning you will want to rent a house, you will not have the idea of buying a house, because it is not practical. Gradually you will accept the idea of the German. Sometimes I feel I was really influenced by German culture to a great extent. It is the case when you pass the crossing, in China, we can go across the road if there is no car. But now in Germany, even if there is no car within the one kilometer to the right or left, I will stand there if it is red light. Anyway I have to stand there, although I feel somehow awkward, but many of my customs have been Germanized.

I: How would you describe your role in your family?

R: This is very complicated. Sometime I'm a mother, sometimes I'm a child, sometimes I'm a wife, they are not the same anyway. I feel this depends on your character. For instance, I play two roles in front of the children, sometime I regard myself as kid, playing with my kids together, I don't consider too much, anyway if the clothes are dirty then let it be, if I sit on the ground then let it be, that is the case. Sometimes I have to be serious, because if the children do something wrong, or you have to change their temporary idea, you have to persuade and educate them. Sometimes, not only for the kid, I have to take good care of my husband.

I: How long have you stayed in Germany?

R: More than five years.

I: What is the concept of German culture in your mind generally?

R: I feel German culture is a boring and practical culture. Why I say it is boring, for instance, if we Chinese chat together and play jokes, I can laugh to tears. But I didn't feel in German culture..., although some people are really very humorous, if the whole German family....., because I also join the parties of different people, but I've never seen any person can laugh to tears. I feel there is not much laughing stock in it whether it is language or imagination, I feel bored. But why I say it is practical? Although they do not have that abundant imagination, or laughable idea, their life is practical, they consider practically on things directly related to them. There is no gaudy idea or extravagant and wasting idea, this is my feeling. Basically German culture is boring and practical. Another point is, German culture is honest compared to Chinese culture.

I: Can you give an example?

R: For instance, the colleague relationship is relatively simple compared to that of China. It is also not the same between China and German as far as credit and honesty are concerned. But we cannot say China is not good in this aspect, because on the aspect of human development, if all people live in a simple way, then the brain will stop thinking, then for the entire mankind, people have no process improving their genes as a kind of creature. People must move on, they will cheat or lie more or less, this is a necessary process. Besides in many situations, we cannot only rely on intellectual training to improve a person's intelligence. And for interpersonal communication, there will be means, this is very normal. So what are the good points of the German practice for the human development on the aspects of brain activity and development, I don't know, but for practical life, they may be simple. There is no way to comment it is good or bad. Maybe due to this point, the Chinese are getting wiser and wiser? I don't know.

I: By knowing your growth experience, you accepted Chinese traditional family education. So to what degree will that influence your way of educating your children? Whether there exist some differences?

R: There exist. Because when I accepted education, I had my own feeling. For instance I didn't accept beating and blaming. I won't give in if you can't explain the principle. So since I experienced this, I will notice this when I educate my child. Although it's impossible for each parent to explain to the kids at any time, for instance, you are in a hurry for work, it's almost late, but the kids are naughty, they ask you to explain this stuff, you have no time to explain, but if parent can do that, they can try hard to satisfy the wish of the kids, to give them the right for reasonable explanation. I believe it is very important for me. Especially when the kids are small and I have plenty of time, I will think, you see, what good parent am I, why didn't my parents explain this to me, otherwise why didn't I follow their words? But now I think about this, because sometimes we are busy, time is closer and closer, I will that sometimes they were reasonable. Maybe my parents didn't explain to me because

they had more things to do, we should understand each other. At least when I come across this situation, I will recall the situations at that time, I will make some comparison, then I will consider how to do it well.

I: There is a saying in China “Spare the rod, spoil the child”. What is your opinion?

R: I believe that is useless. The only use is that for the parents, they can abreact their emotions. But for the kids, maybe they will be scared of this. They feel pain, so they will not do that next time. For a short time, it may be to manage the kids practically. But in the long run, maybe there are good points and bad points. The good point is that the child experiences this phase, he will think “I didn’t do that, didn’t do that bad thing”, but in the end he benefits from that, he experienced the feeling of being a good man, so he would know it’s good to be a good man. But I don’t think beating and blaming is the only way. Because one time, my kid was two years old, in fact the key is that you should know why the kids are naughty in this period of time. In fact on that day she was just very sleepy and hungry, in a bad mood and got angry. If you beat her this time, she will continue to blow her temper, and she is still sleepy and hungry, it’s useless to beat her. Unless you beat her until she cried to be tired and you beat to be tired, then it is over. But what is the use of that, I haven’t yet solved this original problem, the problem can be solved if you let her have dinner or have some sleep. In fact, I believe the key is to grasp the reason for the things. I don’t mean to beat and blame, we need to solve the problem, beating and blaming are not all the means, but just part of it. But I don’t believe they are very effective. I seldom use that, and there is no need to try, because mostly the problems can be solved by persuading and educating, so I have no need to try, except only one time. Just like what I said before, she was sleepy and hungry, at that time I was bored, and I gave her a slap. But she was still crying there, you were still bored, you beat her more, she cried harder. In fact your problem is that you don’t want to listen to her crying, but if you beat her, she will still cry. Just like self-torture, it is a vicious circle, so that is useless.

I: Do you have any disagreements with your husband on education style in the process of education? How would you balance this problem?

R: There may some differences more or less. For example, he believes the kids deserve punishment for this, but I believe it’s no big deal. Or at this time he believes rational persuasion is good, soften the kids with sentiment, this time I believe stern criticism is necessary, I need to tell the kids that is not right. This will happen often. But when this happens, we would use different ways. For instance, when I believe this is very serious, both of us should tell the kids not to do this with serious words, but my husband maybe believes that is OK, no big deal, then he will tell the kids not to do that, the kids also remember it. For this situation, it is because we have different analyses on the event, what I believe serious is not serious in his eyes, since this happens, then I can analyze rationally, just like a computer, I only need to calculate for another time. But for me, if I believe it is not that serious, then it is OK, I can give in. But if I consider that for two or three times, and I still believe it is a must to use serious words to persuade and educate the kids, then I will insist on that. But this rarely happens, because if the two persons can live together, they should have many

consistencies in many aspects. Besides they should have common views under most of the situations, they have common points on comments and analysis for every situation of every event, so there are fewer conflicts, this rarely happens. In most of the cases we can unify our opinions, persuade and educate the kids with the same method.

I: Another traditional saying in China is: “It’s father’s duty on the son’s mistake.” What’s your opinion on this?

R: I feel that mothers always like to talk much when they educate the kids, when fathers educate the kids, maybe just one sentence is enough, although there are few words, each sentence is important. So for the kids, if you talk much everyday they can’t accept it. But if father say one sentence, only one sentence, the kids can remember that sentence of course. Maybe it has something to do with this. So, father has great influence on the kids. It’s father’s duty on the son’s mistake. I feel there are many single-parent families, no father, then there is no education on kids? I just feel that the situation is related to the kids, it’s not necessary for the father to educate, the two parties of parents both have the obligations to educate. What’s more, the roles of the two parties are different. For example, on some safe games, maybe a mother plays more role, the mother will tell the kids to be careful when they play. For some games full of imagination or crazy, such as climbing trees, jumping high, jumping into a river, for such occasions, it is necessary for father to educate. At that time maybe he will teach the kids to be brave, strong, or bold. I feel that father and mother play different roles, it doesn’t mean that it is someone’s responsibility if the kids are not good, but that one is the selective development of the kid, the other is many factors, or education method, or education time, or education degree are different. So there is no way to comment like this.

I: If you stay alone with your kids, to what extent will you have the consciousness that you will take this chance to teach more about Chinese culture?

R: To my mind, if I am a robot, having not any demand of myself, just work as a mother, working as a robot, I hope I would set 100% of my program as educating the kids. For instance, on the aspect of Chinese, I give them a 100% chance. If I have time, every minute, every second, I will give them the Chinese cultural atmosphere, teaching them to speak and write. But in actual life, it is not the case. Because each person, although as father or mother, you are a person, you do not live for your kids. You have your own life space. For instance, if you are tired today, maybe you will think, you may take this time to read a Chinese book, but you have a sore throat, so you don’t want to read, there is no way. In fact the efficiency is not high. At least it is very different from your imagination. But emotionally I hope when my kids grow up, until they are 17, 18, or 20, they can communicate with me in Chinese. Besides they can use some rarely-used words to express their feelings, if they can even use some exquisite words, I will be very gratified, but whether this can come true, that depends on development. This is only the purpose of course.

I: I played with your kids today. I found that, especially the elder kid can use the two languages very well. Although the younger one speaks less, but if I talk in Chinese, she can understand all. You are successful on this aspect, what's the experience for this success? What advice will you give for the Sino-German families not only on language but also on other aspects?

R: I feel the so-called successful experience is that I have the conditions. I have the conditions to teach them Chinese. First is that I have time, the second, even if I have no time, I can afford my mother to come to Germany, or my father comes here. If so, there is one person speaking Chinese staying with my kids. Especially my mother comes here, she can't speak German, she can only speak Chinese. This condition is the best for the kids. On the aspect of character, although parents have great influence on the characters of the kids, but I hope I can give a chance to the kids, what character they will consider in future. For instance, I tell the kids when they grow up, of course not now, they have their own thinking, their own idea, for instance I criticize her for this idea, but after I do that, I will tell them that some people will not criticize them even if they do this. Then she is given a space to consider what kind of person she wants to be. It does not mean that I only give her a concept, or what my concept is. I will give them certain space to consider for themselves.

I: That means it's not always following somebody's advice, they accept what you say, right?

R: Right. For some tiny things, maybe I will be angry at what they did, but I will think of the fact that some people won't be angry at what they did, but this will not influence some people's feeling or sentiment, then they will have space, they may do or may not do, but what will be the next step? I only give them information. I won't require them to do something under pressure. I only want to play a helpful function in her life, I was lacking in this in my growth process. Because sometimes I consider what the event is, what others would do under such situations, but I had no information at that time, and I don't know why, it may have been the problem of my character or the family environment, but I never asked about that. I never wanted to require this help from my parents, in most of the cases, I had many question marks and I waited there alone. But there was no solution. In China, sometime I feel I don't know what kind of person I should be, because I saw many kinds of people, I contacted them, but I don't know what kind of person I want to be, my character changed in that period of time. One of the my clearest memories is that, for one period of time I wanted to be a very polite person, I want to express my appreciation to all people who ever helped me, and I did not want to bring trouble to them, anyway it was a very perfect period of time. Then I got on a bus and bought tickets, I can't remember why I was like that, anyway I remember that the bus steward said to me: "hey, you little child, why are you so wordy." That was the feeling, "whom do you learn from?", when I heard this, I thought, no one like a such a polite person. Then it's better for me to be a straightforward person, I wouldn't be polite to others, I don't need to say thanks to people, I live relaxed. Anyway that was the time for trial, I tentatively considered what people should do. Afterwards, I just follow my character,

feel it is ok if I'm happy today. The environment shapes people. So this is the difference between the northerners and the southerners. So as far as my kids are concerned, I will tell them what kinds of people there are in the world, how people will react over the same thing, she can also choose how to react on those things, all depends on her mind. But I won't know whether she would ask questions like me. If she doesn't ask me and I don't know when she will think about these questions, then I have no way to help her. Anyway I hope there would be less trouble in her growing process. I will try my best to help her, to provide more information for what she needs, make her avoid detours.

I: When you came up with this idea, that is, make yourself a polite person, how old were you then?

R: In secondary school, when I was 12, or 13, 14. Because in that period of time, my father was a soldier, he talked in a simple way: have dinner, wash clothes, do lessons. Just like a command. It would not be permitted not to do that. I thought: "How can you be like this? How can you command others like that every day? How can you require people like that? Can't you make me feel that you let me do this out of love for me? Can't you make me accept this in a soft way instead of commanding?" this is what I thought at that period of time. So I thought I could not be a person like this, I must become a polite person. Anyway I'm not clear about my ideas at that time, I had many strange ideas, I believe that maybe that age is the phase for brain cells to rapidly develop, so there were many strange ideas, besides I have much energy to consider these problems. Afterwards, maybe that period shaped a person's character. After that, a person's character may be shaped. Then a person will follow his or her character direction. There may not be great change.

I: In some traditional families of China, the parents hope their children can get advanced in the society very much, have great ambition for their kids, they believe studying is the first, and apply many tutorial classes for their kids. What ideas do you have about future education of your kids?

R: Theoretically I hope my kids are interested in everything. For instance, if I know a dance class, I will hope they would say: they want to dance. If they do not say this, to tell you the truth, I will be a little disappointed. I would think what a good thing of dancing, you don't even know how good dancing is, how can you say no? At least I have such an idea that, rationally if the kids don't like it, then that's OK. If they do not want to go, then that's ok. But for sometimes, generally I feel pity. Because for a kid, she hasn't tried some things, for instance, you talk about ballet with her, then she would decide not to go she doesn't even know what ballet is. But she will lose many chances enjoying many wonderful things by such a decision. I will try to infuse her with a kind of idea when I educate her: be interested in everything. Try everything bravely. I believe this idea is more important than adding more tasks for the kid. Because the kid will consider what this is, for example, I want to know the earth is round or square. If the kid wants to know from his or her heart, the kid will research by him or herself. There is no need for you to add a task for the kid, you must research this today, you must research that tomorrow. I believe this is the big

difference between the German and the Chinese. For instance, when I was at university, including when I studied here, I felt that I studied because I must study, I felt interesting when I studied, including taking exams, I felt it interesting. Knowledge is useful. But after I finished my studies, it was OK. Because I have family, I have a good life, so I have no such ideas like I should take another degree, or learn other new things, I just didn't have that concept and that motivation. But that is not the case with my husband. Although he doesn't need to take a degree, he is always learning new things. In the process of learning, his studying was not infused since his primary school, but full of interest. So I believe interest is more important than task. He has been studying new things, besides he doesn't feel tired. But for me, there is purpose for learning new things. Because I need to achieve the degree certificate, I will have no work without degree certificate, I have no money for dinner without work, so I study under this case. But he is just on the contrary, he did not study for his future job, but he just wanted to know more about the things, then he just went and studied. The purposes are different. I feel that this becomes a habit of his, then he studies for his whole life, just like the sayings of the Chinese: Never too late to learn. But in fact the Chinese can't do this. I believe most of the Chinese can't do this. Maybe there is really such person, but most of them do this for the reason of exam-oriented education. People are fed up, they have no such self-study ability, the desire for knowledge is simplified by the exam-oriented education. Just like feeding the kids, the Chinese parents worry the kids will be hungry, so they keep feeding all the time. If you keep feeding, the kid will feel filled, then he will not be hungry if the kid is filled up, the kid doesn't want to eat when the kid is not hungry, then you have to feed more. But for the German, it is like this, if you don't want to eat, then that is ok, you stay hungry, if you are hungry, then you will eat. When you want to eat, I don't need to feed you, then you eat yourself. My mom did so too. When she saw my daughters were hungry, she would take the spoon and feed the children. Then the kids would be accustomed to that. Anyway the kids were never starved, but they didn't know dinner was tasty. This is just like studying, I see you are free now, then I will bring you some books for reading, because you don't feel so bored, so you cannot feel something interesting if you read. But if I let you sit there day by day, give you a small chair, you can do nothing there, you feel very bored day by day, if I gave you a book, then you would feel this book was really interesting. Maybe everybody has such experience, he will have some demands naturally, you don't need to fill in, but he will pursue them by himself.

I: On the aspect of cultivating the kids, how would you influence the interests of the kids the in future? Cultivate them to be interested in everything instead of infusing them exam-oriented?

R: In fact this is a hard thing. Of course it varies individually. To give you an easy example, my two kids are having dinner. For Emilie, I let her have dinner like this: I said, Emilie, this is very tasty, then I begin to eat, I say it is so delicious, you have a try. Then she will have a try and then eat. But for the younger one, it is just on the contrary. If I say, I eat if you don't eat, then she will eat because she doesn't want to

let me eat. If the kids can't accept something unless you irritate them, then you stir them up. If you take their hands leading them somewhere and will follow you, then you take their hands and go. Emilie would go if you prevented her. If you say, don't eat this, Emilie, this is tasty, you don't eat it, this is not for you, this is not made for you, then she will have a try anyway. That Elin is just the opposite. Besides, if it's learning dancing, for this Emilie, I let her go every time it begins, I say Emilie, go dance, like a princess, how good it is if you can dance. Then she wouldn't go for dance. Once I said to her, OK, you don't want to dance, then you wait in the car, let the other little friends dance, you sit in the car. We sat there waiting, other kids were dancing in the room. We sat there without music and anything else. At that time my mom was there. For Elin, she will dance if you let her do so. She never resists. My mom and Elin danced in the room, I and Emilie sat in the car waiting, then Emilie began to cry. She said: I want to dance too. I said, just now you didn't want to dance when I asked you to, now there is no chance, now you can't go, you just sit here waiting, then she kept waiting. After Elin danced and came back after one hour, I said, you see, how happy Elin is for dancing, ok, let's go home. Then we left. I asked her: Emilie, do you like dancing? She said she liked, I said: will you dance if mom takes you to dance? She said: yes. The next time she really danced. Just because she knew it was boring sitting in the car, she knew dancing was funny. The kids are just like this. Sometimes she likes it, but she just doesn't say she likes, no why, implicit, unwilling, I don't know, I'm not clear, anyway that is the case, you have to work out ways to manage her. In fact she does like dance originally. You see she was very happy when she danced, then you know she likes dancing. But if you really say you go dance, she will not go. If you don't let her go, then she will go herself.

I: Your daughters' characters are not the same, right?

R: No, not the same, so I have to teach according to aptitude.

I: Good, so much for this. Thank you for your time!

R: You are welcome.

Interview 2: 25.04.2009, Clausthal-Zellerfeld, with a German father

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families.

R: ///// What is negotiating?

I: Aushandlung

R: Aus...

I: Aushandlung

R: Ok.

I: The main purpose of my research is to present the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families as well as the difficulties in educating children, so that afterwards to work out logical solutions for their problems. The interview we are recording today will surely remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So,

that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. So I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First of all, I would like to know more about yourself and how did you grow up

R: Ok. I grew up in a traditional location. I was born in Salzgitter Bad and then I had lots of places where we had to move to, because my parents had changed the working places during the education. So I was moving around about six times before I grew up, before I was eighteen. Yes, we have always lived in big apartments something like this. We always had lots of children around in the neighborhood.

I: Yes.

R: I would have found (something) more important when you say grow up. Grow up. Do you have something special in mind or education in school maybe or...

I: I mean more about yourself, your background. I mean...

R: Ok, so what I was doing when I was a child. Something like this?

I: Yes.

R: Ok, I always liked to go out and I liked to do sports when I was growing up. I made music, played guitar and piano, and what else? I liked to play computer and, yes, I liked to program by myself, I liked to make music by myself, so I recorded music, or something like this, so what else? At school, I was, when we had the primary school, then afterwards I went to the gymnasium after the fourth form. Yes, I passed my Abitur, when I was nineteen. So, something else?

I: And now?

R: En?

I: And now?

R: Then I studied at the University of Clausthal. And when I was 25, I began my PhD and finished it, when I was 29.

I: And your subject is?

R: Mathematics was my study's subject and production of plastics was the subject of my PhD.

I: Ok. And what is your understanding about the word "family"? What does family mean to you?

R: Family for me means having a home, also, a place we can go home to, we can share problems, and the good times you have with, so where you can tell what's going on during the day, family is support to each other, in one question, so support for each. Sometimes you need support, sometimes the other needs support. Family for me is to be together and to do things together in that way, that you are with each other. Let's say, something like fighting the world. But family is also something..... in a family you have a lot of individuals. But they are together. And it's something like a very tight group of individuals. Each one has a section and you have to allow the people to have their own interests. That is very important, the tolerance. For example, when I was a child, I did doing a lot of things. I want to go out into the world. I want to play with my people around. And for me it was nice to go out into the world. And it was always good to come home again and to see everything is like it was before. It's not

foreign. When you... for example I was in America for a couple of weeks. It was three or four weeks. I have been to Russia for six weeks. I have been to different places with other holidays with other children and so on. But family is the place of familiarities. So you are familiar. And there is nothing, there is nothing which is changed. There is something which you can always rely on. This is very important for me.

I: I see.

R: So if you make mistakes, when you are a child or whatever, of course you have to learn when somebody says you are not right. But when you are coming back, you always know that the people in the family love you and they want to help you. This is what I mean. And when you make mistakes, I don't know the word in English now, they will verzeihen. Verzeihen you know?

I:

R: Eh..... forgive, you will forgive me. This is also very important. So, that is what I, what I have in mind what I am talking about family, about love each other and so on.

I: I see. And the next question I'd like to ask is, when you were small, what did you learn from your parents?

R: Obviously, I don't know so much, because I was small. You were talking about the age of..... what kind of age?

I: What kind of..... As far as you can remember, what did you learn from your parents, when, when you were young? When you were, somehow, maybe 10, whatever, what did you learn from your parents?

R: I don't know. Because I have always been around a lot. And my parents have done things for us at the bedtime and so on. But I am always also around for example with my grandparents, with my aunt and so on. We have lots of activities. So I don't know when I learned something, I learned what kind of family part. So when you're talking about school things, for example, I have done my homework always on my own. So (I) didn't need help from anybody. So, so my parents didn't need to help me. (I) learned, yes, I learned practical things. So, did you..... when I have maybe problems with my teachers. So what did I learn? For example, my mama. I knew that I could always tell her my problems, for example, when I had problems with my teacher. She was always on my side. Maybe I was wrong fighting against my teacher. But my mama supported me from my point of view. She was.....she was----- yes, ----- she was prepared to fight for me against the teacher. For this I was very grateful. No matter what state I was in, my mama was always behind me and I could always rely on her.

I: I see.

R: What did I learn from my father? My father was a very patient man. And he always forgave my..... forgave my mistakes very fast. One example is that we were playing with a(n) electric.....a(n) electric train. A small boy had a(n) electric train, everything done by electricity. Yes, I was just switching off the electri....., switching on the electricity. He knew there was a danger, but nothing happened. And of course there could happen more and more, but nothing happened. So he just explained the problem and then I could understand it was dangerous what I had done and I should

not do it again. And that is all. So I don't have to.....I didn't have to feel that my problems or my things of what I have done wrong. So that I should feel then so I could only.....he only explained to me. That's everything. Or for example, I was playing football. And I liked the shoot against the wall. As you can imagine, there are windows, there are lights and so on,

I: Yes.

R: The day came when I was shooting at a light. I was shooting at it and it fell down. And I asked mama: oh mama, I have done something wrong. I thought, ok, maybe now I knew I had done something wrong. And now she would shout at me or whatever. She said: it happened. This is all. So this is very nice. When I made mistakes, there was nothing like remind me again and again. For example, other people did, maybe teachers, or whatever. They said, ok, you made a mistake. I see you learned yourself that you caused a problem, you had a problem. And let's solve it. You will never make such a mistake again. That is all. So this was very willful, for example, my daddy. He was always hurt when I was making mistakes. Because we made lots of things together, sewing things, or electricity for example, connecting electrical interfaces. Or we were building some wooden things together. I like sewing things and connecting things, using tools. When I made mistakes, he was always hurt. This was never a problem for me. This was also nice, this patience. Concerning that we could make things together and when I was doing something wrong, it was not a problem. Because I was small.

I: I see.

R: So this was what I practiced from my..... when I was a small child.

I: And to what extent, do you think, what you learned from your parents has also influenced the way in which you educate you own children now? Or ///

R: Maybe another fact. My parents both worked all day. We had a nanny. So maybe it was also factors. My parents were only at home in the evening. So maybe this is another thing why I don't know what my parents told me.

I: I see.

R: When we were together, we were making things, we were eating. Maybe in the evening, we played together. I played together with my parents a lot. We had a lot of games, a full cupboard only with games. We were playing a lot, when I was a child, something like board games. And, yes, this is another thing. You were asking-----, how the way my parents told me is influencing the way I am teaching my children.

I: Yes.

R: Honestly, I don't know. I can't imagine, because as I said we had a nanny for example, with my parents. I was for example, in the kindergarten the whole day. There are lots of people. For example, on summer holidays, six weeks, seven weeks. I went to my grandmother, my grandfather and my aunt and my uncle. They live together. So I would say, perhaps there were lots of influences of education, and not only my parents'. So that is why I cannot figure out what is the influence of my parents and what is the influence of the others. Because there is something like the normal life together with my parents and let's call it special life with other people.

And they have (been) changing. The other people are changing from day to week, or whatever. I have realized a lot of different possibilities of dealing with something. That is why I cannot figure out what is special for my parents and what is special for the others, except the two things that I have told you about my mama and my daddy.

I: As you told me your dad is quite patient and your mom is always behind you to support you. So that is somehow what you learned from your parents also influenced that you to behave also in this way with your children?

R: I hope that I do. It would be fine that my children would say the same, think about me when they are old. Of course now they cannot really estimate what is the----- value of my education. Honestly, I also don't know it. I just know that I want to help my children when they have problems. And I just hope that I have got everything all right. So that they finally say: ok, my dad and my mom are good parents. This is what I just hope, but I cannot do something like that, I can be successful. I just hope I have got everything right.

I: Ok, I see. In your own family how would you describe your role?

R: In your own family? That means in my.....here?

I: Yes, how would you describe it?

R: My role, yes, how to describe? I want to be there when the people need me. For example, the children get up, and of course I also have to get up so that they can have their breakfast and so on. And-----, I don't know there is a role or something like this. For example, other families like this that the father goes to work and the mama is maybe at home and mama has to----- look after the children and the papa has to earn money. Maybe this you can describe as a role. In my case I would not say that there is a role. At the moment there is a situation so as my wife was doing her studies, she had more time to look after the children. Now she finished her studies and she started to work. And when she has the opportunity to do more work, then she is able to work. Or for example, in the afternoon, I am coming home and I look after the children. And she can do things she likes, for example, she likes to do some sports. So in the afternoon, at the moment she is looking after the children, and because I have to work. But when I am coming home, for example, she is leaving and has the chance. So that she can go out to see her friends and so on. But-----, what I want to say is that a certain role or something like this I cannot really estimate. Maybe you can figure out some things and ask me that is maybe my role or something like this. I cannot talk about a role.

I: What I mean is that you are more responsible for, say, earning money, for your family? Or you are more responsible for playing with your children?

R: What I want is that my children know that their parents..... I want my children to have the opportunity to learn something. For example, some people said that reading books for them and so on and so on. Who is doing that? Is my wife doing that, am I doing that? Or sometimes our grandmother is coming from China to Germany..... or somebody else doing that for our children? This is maybe not so important for me. I want my children to have good opportunities to see new things and so on. For

example, they should not only sit in front of the TV. They should learn something new. They should go out and play. They should read books or play games. Earning money----- For me, earning money is not the important thing. I like my work very much. When I am working, I feel that what I am working is worth for me. That is why I like it very much. But as I said it is not really for earning money. Of course, it is nice to earn money so that we can afford holidays and so on. But this is not the first point for that. The-----, the----- other point like you said responsibilities or something, this is what I meant in the beginning, something like being individuals. We all are individuals. Everybody has their own interests of what they like to do. For example, working is one of my interests and these interests I like to do it. But there is another thing. We have responsibilities for each other. We have to take care of each other. And when I am coming home, I know that for example, I can support my wife so that she can go out to make some things of what she likes to do. So that she can plan something of what she likes to do for the future and so on. So this is something I want to have a plan for that I can make the people in the family content. So as I behave so that I can make my people, my family content. So it is very important. If I only work on my interest, for example, if I only work, my children not seeing me, it wouldn't be good. The wife goes to bed later. But if we could not talk to each other what happened during the day, or if she would not have the possibility to have some hours for herself, this would also not be good. The combination of who is living for what is very important. As I was taking my PhD, in the end phase I was working up to eighteen hours a day. So it was clear I was not at home. And I found how everybody was suffering here, that was at that time for me. In that case I knew that I was doing something wrong in that case. But as I wanted to finish my PhD, I had to follow my own interests in that phase. After that, I could realize that my family is there to forgive me for the amount of work which I have done for me to finish my PhD, and after that I was lucky that I could, could, I could take care of my children more. It was a pleasure for me to see how they grow up, how they learn, because the small one was one year. So she started to walk. She started to do things. And this was very good.

I: I see. In your daily life, how important is your home culture which means the German culture?

R: Yes. This is a very complicated question. ----- Honestly, I'm not sure what German culture is. When you ask me about what is German food. I don't know what the German food is. My mother likes to cook Chinese food, Indian food and so on. So it was-----, this was the first thing which I have no German or something like this. En-----, German as a language is the only in that case important, because it is the only language that I can understand so well and that I can make fun with it and so on. But honestly, I don't have a special relationship to German life. As I was saying, I was in Russia, I was in America. We made holidays in Spain, in France, and so on. I have seen lots of European countries, oh it's nice. ----- The only problem I could see is maybe the language itself. But as I was a child, I was, for example, in holidays. I went to a swimming pool. There were lots of kids around from different countries. So English children, Spanish children, Italian children and so on -----I was there for only

five minutes and then we played with each other. So I did not have problems with international contacts. So it was valuable for me to talk to each other and as far as I could do it. When you are a small child, you do not have the possibility to talk to each other. But somehow you understand each other, so you can talk to each other. But it was never a problem to play with Spanish people. And with German people it was the same. I just took the possibility to learn. Where I am, where are you, what is possible and then I took the chance to play with people or to make things of what I think is interesting.

I: And what do you understand the Chinese culture then?

R: En?

I: What do you understand the Chinese culture?

R: What I think what the Chinese culture is like or?

I: Or what does the Chinese culture mean to you? What is your understanding?

R: I have been to China for two months. En----- And if I am honest, I think that the difference... Let's not call it culture. Maybe I am not a very cultural guy. But I think that the life, the usual life of families is not different from Germany in China. You have to get up in the morning, then you have your food. The parents are going to work. They come home. They sit together with the family and finally you go to bed. That was the day. Some time you make some special things like making a small journey or whatever. When you take this as usual life, it is not so different. And-----, the problems are the same in China and in Germany. You have to care about money. You have to take care of children in traffic and so on. To understand what the fundamental thoughts of the people are, we have the same in China and in Germany. What my impression in China was that they are more.....en-----, Chinese people are closer in a family. For example, they like to meet the family. They live in one city still they visit each other every week. This has never been the case for me. As we were moving around in Germany a lot, we have the distance of 400 km to our parents, grandparents. So we only saw them every half a year. As I have said that I was going to them to spend my holidays there for six weeks. But it has never been the case that we have visited each other every second day as it was in China. This was one thing. So I think Chinese people live closer together, not only because there are lots of people, so they have more, more..... Yes, they want to get to each other more often than maybe German people. But I don't know if that is because there have always been outer boundaries in the suburbs of cities. So the density is not so high. Maybe in the intercity, if you talk to people in an intercity. Maybe it's different. Maybe they are also familiar in meeting people every day. This is not what I was familiar with in my German life. But in China, it was almost every day that the people meet each other. And this was something of what I have seen in China which is interesting. How much they have to tell each other. So that was worth seeing for me every day. What else was different in China? Of course, food is different. But I have been to China two times. The first time it was----- strange. 50% I like very much. 50% I didn't like, because of the species and so on. They are very different from what we have in Germany. But the second time, I ate 90% of the things. It was nice. Yes, this was

different. What else is different?-----, I do not know. There was nothing, there was nothing special about..... Maybe I am not somebody who lives culture. I am looking more at, for example, housing, how they are, older, higher, denser and so on. But it is also nothing special to culture. ----- En, -----, what I found..... Maybe I tell you something of my visit to China. What I found impressive was----- en, that the Chinese people are very industrious. So when I was in the home city of my wife, I was impressed how they can build roads kilometres long in one month. It was only something like building bridge, bridge, bridge and bridge. When you see something like this in Germany, it takes maybe half a year to make 500 metres. And then in one week half a city was, not half a city, but two kilometres of road were finished. And it is..... The living together in China is more like a community. So they are very proud of that. Other people also do something for the city and so on. And this is something that I think is not so actual here in Germany. Yes, here we have smaller groups, like a family. In China, of course, you have small groups, but being part of a big family, acting each other, with each other, maybe not only one family acting with each other, because you have very good friends. So you have not only good friends, so they are.....something like three or four families-----, en, interacting with each other, acting as a very big family. You know what I mean? And this was also impressive for me. So the state of support and----- taking care of what other people are doing is much higher than in Germany, of what I know from Germany. And this was very nice to see. I like that behaviour. To be maybe not only responsible for three people or four people, like here. So that you know, ok, my sister has problems, twenty kilometres or a hundred kilometres distance. Ok, I have to go there and I have to help her. Maybe similar when here.....when we build a house and so on, then the family also comes and helps you. But there, they are just travelling for four hours or five hours just to see them one day. And then they are travelling back. This is what I like very much. The love and the hearts, I think in China is deeper than it is the case here. And this was what I like very much, when I..... this is what I realized as the difference that they go on a long journey and only for seeing them for a couple of hours, then they go back, because of the work or whatever.

I: When you are alone with your children, to what extent, you maybe think you like to use the opportunity to highlight your home culture?

R: I don't know. I do not have..... as I said I don't know anything about the German culture. I don't go to museums. I don't, I don't like German music, for example. So there is no need for me to highlight something. The only thing that is important for me is that-----, I am not sitting around, having nothing to do. So just looking at children and being content is nothing I like. Maybe I..... When I am with my children, I----- try to be part of the game. For example, when they play with sand, then I also play with the sand. Or, I am explaining, ok, the sand is falling at my feet. Or, look, you can see how the wind goes, when the sand flies or whatever. Or when we-----, en-----, play in the forest, then I try to show them some things in the forest and so on. Of course, sometimes there are times when I don't..... I am a little bit tired or whatever, then I don't do so much. Then I just guide them around so that they see something

new. But they learn. There is nothing special about the German culture. I feel familiar in lots of different cultures. For example, I have been to Arabic countries where I have made holidays. And en----- They were very special, for example, in trading. And I love this trading very much, because of something like arguing, fighting against each other, and..... but still being friends during the, let's call it game, this trading, still being friends during the game, no matter how hard the trading is, after that you go as friend no matter if you want to buy it or if you don't want to buy it. And so, this was the experience in different countries and so on. And I like how the different people in the different countries behave. I see that it is different from how I behave. But I don't know if the way I behave is German.

I: As I figured out Emily speaks the German language very well, as well as the Chinese language, so/////

R: I cannot compare, because I cannot speak Chinese.

I: When you are alone with your daughters, you just talk with them in German, right?

R: Of course, because the only thing I can speak well is German. I can try to do it in English maybe. But when I am doing that, then I know that it is only to let them find a little bit familiar....., I am not talking about Emily, to let them get familiar with English words, so that she knows that there are English words. But what I will definitely not do is talking in Chinese, because my Chinese is too bad to talk in Chinese. She knows it much better than me. So there is no need for me to talk in Chinese, because when my wife does it or the Chinese family is doing that, she will learn much more than from me. From me she would learn only mistakes. And that is why I strictly stay in my German language. And it was never a problem. I think it was the best way, because Emily can distinguish between the languages and she corrects me when I am talking to my wife in Chinese. Then she is..... Emily is correcting what I am doing wrong and she says : 爸爸你不会说汉语 (Chinese which means: Dad, you cannot speak Chinese) . Ok, when my wife is, my daughter is telling me that, then, I think that's right. So I should not talk in Chinese.

I: Wow, you speak very well, at least this sentence, quite comprehensible.

R: Thank you very much. In communication, it doesn't matter, I can speak 200 Chinese words. That's enough to communicate about every day things. But I cannot explain something in Chinese. And en----- that, I cannot.....I don't know the grammar. I don't know the word. When I cannot do that, it doesn't make sense to do anything like this. Maybe I could do it in English with my big daughter, because she likes to learn something new. But I know that there is a major step from mother tongue to fluent tongue. I could only speak English fluently, when the level of words is not that high, it doesn't make sense.

I: Have you ever had disagreement with your wife, when you educated your children?

R: I know. There was no disagreement about cultural things. When there is disagreement, maybe about something like time planning and so on. But the time, it has nothing to do with Chinese or German. The main thing is what is necessary to do..... so what is necessary to do, because, for example, going to bed, or being angry with the children, what do we have, what kind of step. So this is the only thing. When

there is disagreement: what to do first. But there was never anything like cultural disagreement. I cannot..... I don't know anything about that. I'm thinking now, but..... Because when there was something like this, then it was maybe, oh, I see, she is explaining to me and then I could understand and then it was not a problem. Do you know what I mean?

I: Yes.

R: So some disagreement. Maybe I didn't understand in the first minutes, but after explaining it, then it became clear to me. Why she was acting like this? And why I..... Why we should do something like this? This is why I am saying I cannot remember any disagreement about that. I can't remember. I mean the situation.

I: And when your children did something wrong, what is your way?

R: I don't know. It depends on what they did wrong. When they repeat something a lot of times of what they do wrong, then I am getting angry very fast. For example, when the small..... they like to paint. And they have the painters still in their hands. We have different painters, wooden painters and so on. And the wooden painters have something like a cone, so you can hurt yourself. When they walk around with that, they can hurt themselves and I am not content. I am telling that, because it's dangerous to walk around with that. And this, en, I have to tell very often. When I have to tell that one time, or maybe even one time a day, each day being more times a day, then I am getting angry fast, because I think they should understand me the first time. When they are making mistakes, maybe, for example, they throw down a plate. It can happen that I am angry the first two minutes or three minutes. But as we cannot change it any more, then I just forget the problem. I tell them that is not good. And they know it's not good. For example, children like to play around, the big one is stronger than the small one. So the strong one, the small one is always the poor one and falls down and hurts herself. The big one..... She cries. And the big one doesn't know what has happened. I tell her very often that she has to be careful with the small one. And this is also sometimes the situation. So the small one is hurt. Then I am maybe angry one minute. But as I said, then the big one cannot do anything any more. It happened. I just can hope it will never happen again. And usually, when I calm down after half a minute, a minute or five minutes, then it's not a problem. I just explain the problem. Everything is fine. Sometimes children want to fight against the parents. So you say something, and the children don't want to do it. Then I have to show where the limits for the children are. Do they have to listen to me? Sometimes it's not important for me. Then I don't argue with them. But in cases where it is important, for example, that they should eat and that they should sleep or whatever, then I show them the limits. I speak my mind. I say..... I listen to them of what they think, because even.....although they are small, they are right of what they have to think. And then I let them do what they want to do. Of course it is very seldom, 5 or 10% of the cases. But I try to listen to them. It takes a while. But I can use this as a statement against them to see where the problems and the logics are. In cases where they are to get to agreement. Children start to cry and try to achieve their aims with crying and shouting and so on. Then I stop my conversation, because then I know the

children don't listen to me. Then I let them do. For example, when they started to beat me or whatever, because they cannot achieve their aim, then I sent them to their room. They stay there until they stop crying. And they know that they won't come out before they stop crying. With the small one, I am not doing it, because she won't understand. When she is crying, she will not..... I put her in her room. But with the big one, I know that she understands what I am saying. And she only wants to achieve the aim with the opportunity she have, has. And when she is crying, and beating me, then I get her to the room. Then she knows that after ten or five minutes, she calms down again. I can tell her what the problem is. Usually then.....she usually then does what she wants to do, what I am wanting her to do. But sometimes it also happens that it was very important for her. Sometimes I also realized that I was making a mistake in that case and then I let her do what she wants. It depends on the situation. I also know that sometimes I make mistakes during the procedure of arguing, but----- this because from situation to situation.

I: I see. Will you agree that punishment is a good way to educate children?

R: What is punishment? Do you mean physical punishment?

I: Yes.

R: Honestly, physical punishment, I don't think physical punishment works. My parents, when I try to achieve my aims, I have also done lots of things which are not good. There were some cases. For example, in Germany, we have something like..... We don't hit children into their faces. The only thing which is accepted in Germany is doing things on the bottom And the hit on the bottom, my parents also used in education. When I was doing something very wrong, they couldn't handle it another way. I realized as a child that I just have to shout loud when they are doing this. Then they stop hitting me. And then I do what I want. So I realized as a child that this way of punishing is for nothing. And this was very valuable for me. It doesn't bring anything good. It can happen, for example, there were some situations with the four-year old Emily. Well, I also hit her on the bottom, because I didn't know what to do in that situation. But it never solved the situation. And after that I always said that she was able to bring it to the situation that I hit her bottom. Then I took her. I saw that was the only thing she wanted. The only thing was hugging. That is German. Because when we have problems with each other, for example, she doesn't want to go to bed. She cries loud. She jumps up. She has a high bed. She wanted to climb down. She couldn't do it. She wanted to jump down, although it was that high and so on. I was really angry with her on that day. But the only thing that she wants is that I don't argue. You know what I mean? So there was a difference between us. And the only thing she still wants to have is that she knows that there is love between me and the child. So it happens sometimes that I hit her, but after a while, I realized what the real problem was in this.....So she does..... She wants to tell you that I want, she wants to get hugged. So she only wants to go. She only doesn't want to let me go, for example. And this is hard to find out during arguing what the real problem is in that case. And I realized from that, the only thing they have to know is that you are there for them. And then it is much.....the thing you want as parents is much faster than if

you punish physically. You know what I mean? Because I think there is no harder punishment than to let them be..... When you tell them go to your room, you tell them I want to be separate from you. I don't want to see you. I think this is the hardest kind of punishment they can get. You know what I mean? As I said with my parents physical punishment, it doesn't matter in what case, it means nothing to you. When there is a physical punishment which is applied, then you know ok, the physical punishment will be over then and then. Maybe as I said I just cry loud and the punishment is over and let me pass. So it doesn't bring anything for me or in this case for my children when this punishment appears. And this is why I need other ways to tell them what I want. Did I want to say----- en, right, about "on the bottom". We had sometimes, I lived in a village. And I had some..... As I said, in Germany we say don't..... any physical punishment is forbidden, except the one on the bottom. I realized when I was older, fifteen, sixteen and so on. I had schoolmates in school which, who always wanted to argue with me. So I was..... As I was a good pupil. They were the bad pupils. They were a group, always working against me and tease me There was a leader of the group. He was my biggest enemy. There I was.....en--- ----. There was one situation where I just clapped slapped a little bit his face, he was in front of me. I don't know if you.....what he wanted. I just clapped slapped his face and he started crying. And I saw, oh? What is happening? So what I want to say that is what I realized the situation when I was sixteen. I clapped slapped his face and this kind of en----- the decrease of his honour was so much that he is, that he is crying. And this is another thing which stayed in my mind. My parents always told me, we will never, for example, clap slap the face, because we won't do this. At this moment I didn't, I didn't..... I don't know why I did that, because I didn't have another situation. There were five or six people in front of me. And the boss was in front of me. I didn't know what to do. I just clapped slapped his face and he started to cry. And there what I realized, ok it's different, different of what you are doing. Physical punishment which hurts brings nothing. As I realized on the bottom. Physical punishment which decreases the respect of the other one, can bring people into a totally different state. He was the leader of the group, of six people, and then started to cry. This was a leading impression of my life. So I saw, ok, the respect for other people is very important. How to handle respect of people, yes. So regarding the first question what you had, physical punishment is nothing for me. The only thing is to show them the limits, to explain. When it's not possible to just separate the children from me, so that they can think about the situation, so that they can calm down, because I realized letting children just calm down is the best way to achieve my aims. For example, after school, men in Germany have the opportunity to go to the army for one year or to do civil service. I did civil service in an old people's home. And in this old people' home I realized, old people are similar to children. A lot of people cannot think any more. They can just eat. They can just sleep and go to the toilet and so on. Sometimes they are angry and you don't know why. They cannot talk to you or whatever. The best way to achieve aims is to be nice all the time. When you are nice to them all the time, no matter if they are in a good mood or bad mood or whatever.

The good way of achieving aims is to understand what is the problem, just to make them feel comfortable and then everything is fine. The way of doing something....., because you have plenty of time. You have to..... for cloth in two minutes. Then you won't be successful, because they feel en-----, they feel as if it is against them. And that is the same with children. When I say come on, fast, fast, fast, and they say what is..... I don't know. And Emily takes longer and longer and longer. And this brings nothing. So it is the same. When I am against my children, when I want to achieve something, it's maybe..... I am successful. But mostly I am faster when I can include them into my thoughts of what way ever. And then when they are with me, then they support me, not I have to bring them down what I want. Do you know what I mean?

I: I see.

R: So I had one year of experience before I had my children. And it was very valuable, because I had to take care of six people in general who I was responsible for. And all in all, there were 25 people who I was also indirect responsible for. This was a very good experience for my life.

I: So you mean, both old people and children need patience.

R: En.

I: And the last question is, according to your own experience, what would you say or what is your own advice to educate children in intercultural families?

R: I don't know. Every child is different. You cannot give advice. I will just say, usually you have the feeling of what is good. Usually you have things that are important for yourself. Everyone has to figure out what is important for themselves. Everyone has to figure out what is the special aim for their children. And there is no special advice. The best advice I give is that according to the aims of the different people, I may have to show the borders or the boundaries for the children. You have to ask yourself what do I let the children do and where do I have to stop what they are doing? But this has nothing to do with multicultural things. For every child, multicultural is just-----, I don't know, because my wife and me, we both are not very religious. Maybe it is more interesting for couples where there are different religions, for example, Catholic and Buddhism and so on. Well, you have to take time for each of the religion. When you have to decide what kind of religion the children should practise, then I think there might be problems which have to be solved. Or maybe the children have to be taught every, now I call it culture, every culture. But in our case, our culture is sport, to eat, going around or whatever. We don't have differences in culture, maybe differences in case of Chinese food and German food and so on. And I like my....., I like my German bread. My wife likes the Chinese..... Chinese sauce, very salty or whatever. But it doesn't matter. I just eat something else. That is fine. But except that difference, there is nothing which is separating of cultural things, only the case some special things, what you maybe like to eat, or eat or what ever. Yes, so sorry that I don't know any advice for that. But.....

I: You said something already. Many thanks for your reply.

R: No problem.

Interview 3: 02.05.2009, Pulheim, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to present the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families as well as the difficulties in educating children, so that afterwards to work out logical solutions for their problems. The interview we are recording today will surely remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. So I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. Firstly, I would like to know more about you, your background.

R: My father was a university professor and my mother was an editor in the publishing press of the university. My sister and I were in the same university. After I graduated, I worked in a institute of Sino-German enterprise for five years. My 26 years in China were spent in the school. I received Chinese traditional education. I came to Germany when I was 26 years old, I studied language after I came here, then I entered university for master degree. This is my experience.

I: As a Chinese female, how do you understand the concept of family? What does family mean to you?

R: Family means a place where my relatives stay, a place where persons loving me and whom I love stay. In China they are parents, my elder sister, here they are my husband, my kids. Family is the place your heart beats for, this is my understanding.

I: What was your family education like in your childhood?

R: Because my mother was a teacher, so my family environment was superior. My sister and I went to a school where most of the pupils' parents were school teachers. So my parents have comparison with other kids. My family education was pretty strict under such an atmosphere.

I: Ok, then to what extent does your education of childhood influence the way you educate your kids? Or to say, what are the differences?

R: There must be influences. In the past my parents had their own principle, it cannot be said that everything should follow the kids' idea. Theoretically it is the case, but after I had kids, sometimes I really feel that parents cannot do without emotional communications with the kids. When we stay with my kids, I always say will be as strict as my parents to the kids, but I still will often compromise to the kids. But I think times have changed. When my parents were young, they though there were no other ways to get a better life except studying hard and going to the university. I just hope that my kid will grow up healthily, will be a kind person and will have a free life. Learning depends on the environment and the children's abilities. But now we have more chances than before to do what we want. So times are different, the styles for educating kids are different.

I: As far as you are concerned, what's the significance of Chinese culture in your daily life?

R: That depends on the main content of Chinese local culture. In my opinion, on the aspect of family, the kids should follow their parents, obedient to their parents, the parents should love and protect the kids. This is the significance of Chinese culture as far as family is concerned. I'm like my parents on this aspect. I hope I can transfer this to my kid, that is, let him be obedient to his parents. It is not simply words to be obedient to the parents, this can be experienced in Chinese culture. The German also pay attention on respect, but their "obedience" is not as important as it is in Chinese culture. They care about their parents too, but they like to talk about their freedom too much, and they don't know very well how to love their parents. But in our love, a main part is obedience, not only respect. Obedience includes respect, but it's not disregard of principle. The traditional Chinese love is: I love you, I should discipline you, I should control you, you should listen to whatever parents say. I feel this is not completely right. The child and parents can discuss with each other and exchange personal opinions. In the Chinese family, the kids cannot resist even if they have many disagreement. This is still different in the present situation.

I: Then how do you understand German culture?

R: I think my understanding is that German culture and western culture respect the individual freedom and space. That is to say, the kids are independent individuals. The parents won't regard the kids as theirs like the Chinese parents. After the kids grow up to 18, the kids are independent, then they have they own right to choose what they want to do. Before 18 they are relatively independent. I think this is different from us.

I: If you stay alone with your kids, will you take this chance to teach more of Chinese culture to them consciously?

R: For instance, my little son plays with other kids. A very simple case is, in China, I will say, you see, this is little brother, this is little sister, but in Germany, there is not such practice. In Germany, it is just Peter, just Lukas. In China, if kids play together, the mother will say, this is younger brother, you should be modest to him. You are elder brother, you should take care of him. It is taught in this way. In Germany, when people are together, there is not the issue of age, all people are equal. In accordance with Chinese culture: the younger should respect the elder, the elder should respect the younger. As far as dinner is concerned, the superior should have dinner first, and the inferior should hold the dinner to the superior with respect. But there is no such situation in German, people have dinner together, there is respect.

I: I noticed that your kids have balanced development on the two languages.

R: My son speaks more German. Due to the environment, no matter what mom says, his first natural reaction, his first mother tongue is German in this family. Although Chinese is his second language, his first reaction is in German.

I: Is he able to understand Chinese?

R: He can understand. He can fully understand, and when I talk with his father, I teach him Chinese consciously. I often talk to him: "mom will make something for

you.” This means drink something or eat something. He learnt that after he often heard it. But when he speaks, he speaks more in German. When I am alone with him, I will speak in Chinese. If it’s bilingual, it should one-to-one, the parents should speak only one language to the kids, but it is hard to do.

I: How would you describe your role in your family?

R: Mother, wife.

I: Which is more important?

R: Of course the role of mother is more important. Because compared to husband, the kid is small and lovely, still in the phase of innocence, you have to teach him all, besides it’s the beginning of being a mother for me, maybe I have to pay more attention on this. The husband is an adult, for him it’s easy to communicate with people.

I: As for your kid’s name, he has both a Chinese name and a German name, so what’s your consideration for that?

R: On the one hand, I wanted to let him know half of him is German, half of him is Chinese. On the other hand, I wanted my kid to have a Chinese name. My Chinese relatives all call him Yi Chen, in German school he is called Tim.

I: According to your personal experience, what do you think the greatest difference or dispute is as far as educating is concerned between Chinese and German?

R: On the aspect of husband and wife, I haven’t found anything different up to now. But I found that, for instance, when I stay with a Chinese mother and a German mother, the Chinese kids play together, if there is dispute between them, the Chinese mother will interfere. In Germany, parents will not do so, if the dispute does not develop a certain degree. I feel this is good to some extent. Let the kids know social contact while they are young, let the kids know how to deal with the conflict with others. If it is not a big deal, then let them deal with it by themselves. We can only notice the kids’ response. We should let them know, they themselves can be teased, then we can observe their response, they themselves can deal with this problem. As the Chinese parents will interfere at a very early time, the Chinese kids don’t know how to deal with it on this aspect. Besides, Chinese parents really care too much about the kids, not only limited to dinner and clothes. But one point is that, maybe it’s too clear here, the kids play on the ground freely, on this aspect the westerners are open, they do not worry about everything for their kids.

I: How would you deal with it if your kid does things you are unhappy with?

R: I tried many ways, spanking, slapping his hands, of course we will not beat him seriously, just try. But the German feel they can’t beat the kids. But if we don’t beat the kids, we are afraid we can’t discipline them. But you should analyze according his age, sometime you should analyze your own reason. Parents have to find out the reasons from themselves. I believe the kids will be rational after they grow up. Slowly them will follow your words, they will accept when you talk, but sometimes my son doesn’t accept, then I punish him by making him stand in the corner, let him introspect himself, but it is impractical for my son.

I: How do you think about “It’s the father’s duty for the son’s mistake”?

R: There is a common saying that amiable mother stern father. But it is the other way round in my family. It is amiable father stern mother. In my family my mother was stern on me, my father just talked with me. In my family, I'm stern on my son, but if the son is very willful, then his father will be stern.

I: In China many parents hope their kids will achieve great success, they pay attention on cultivating their interests and hobbies, applying many tutorial classes since they are very small, hoping their kids will study better, what is your way to your kid?

R: Of course I hope my kid is a talent on all aspect, he is capable of everything. The first reaction as a mother is my kid has a gift on some aspects, especially in China, all people send their children to the tutorial classes, they are afraid they delay their kids. But I feel in Germany, it all depends on the interest of the kids, the parents cultivate the kids in accordance with their interests. I observe my kid and find what he is really interested in, then determine a direction. I want to let my child study a musical instrument, it is a hobby, whether he studies a musical instrument or drawing, it accompanies his life, it enriches his life. I still want to see what my kid is interested in, and cultivate him on this aspect. I feel I should still send the kid to the tutorial class based on his interest.

I: What do you think is the most important thing in parenting?

R: The most important thing is health. Physical and intellectual health, they are the same important.

I: Your kid is nearly three years old, do you have any experiences on cultivation of these years?

R: I think the deepest experience is time, it is very great to be parents, to be a mother, it's not easy. I have nothing to show off, each parent pass through like this. It's very tiring to be a mother, hoping the kid sleeps well, eats well, has no other problems. As the kid grows, there will be language or other new problems. After all we have to sacrifice us.

I: To what extent do you think you are integrated in this society as far as you are concerned?

R: I feel that I'm integrated in this society, because my husband and the neighbors are all German. The most important thing is work, every day he works with the German colleagues, But some things are still inborn, plus I had been living in China for 26 years, this means the time for a life's foundation was all spent in China, so I am a Chinese basically. Let me give you an example: Cologne Carnival, it is very lively, but it belongs to them no matter how lively it is, just like our body, it is not that kind of cultural background like blood is thicker than water. My husband and the kids will attend this celebration every year. On this aspect, I didn't integrate it into my life, but on the other aspects, I should be integrated, plus I have many German friends, we don't repel each other.

I: So German friends are a main part of your life circle?

R: Both Chinese and German friends. Especially after I had kids, I came to know many parents.

I: What plan do you have on future education of your kid?

R: I didn't think that far.

I: Did you ever hire a child minder, or did you bring up the kid exclusively?

R: I brought the kid up for two years. After I started working, I sent him to a kindergarten, and take him home after I leave work.

I: Is it established by the German?

R: Yes, German. On the one hand the kids need to communicate with other kids, on the other hand, I need to work, I feel bored at home. And it has proved really good. He learns language fast, plus he acquires new knowledge every day, and learns how to get along with other kids.

I: After you take your kid back from the kindergarten, will you teach him according to a plan at home?

R: I want to do so, but I am too busy to have time, I'm busy with cooking and cleaning. In fact we should spend more time playing together.

I: Thank you very much for the interview!

R: You are welcome!

Interview 4: 02.05.2009, Pulheim, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universitt in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und mglichst die entsprechende Lsung fr die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird spter anonym zitiert. Das heit, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht fr andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen fr meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausfhrlich wie mglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein, habe ich nicht.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst mchte ich sehr gerne etwas Nheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzhlen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ich bin 40 Jahre alt und verheiratet, ein Kind. Von Beruf bin ich im IT - Bereich. Ich treibe gern Sport. Als Hobby hre ich auch gern Musik.

I: Als Sie klein waren, was haben Sie von Ihren Eltern gelernt?

R: Von meinen Eltern habe ich Disziplin gelernt. Guten Kontakt mit Verwandten.

I: Was bedeutet Familie fr Sie?

R: Zusammengehrigkeit. Dass man Zusammengehrigkeit, mit dem man vertraut, man immer auf die Anderen verlassen kann. Die Familie bietet Alles zusammen.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Ich denke schon. Aber wenn man zu klein ist, kann man nicht genau daran erinnern, wie die Eltern erzogen haben. [?] Man muss aber so klar sagen, in den 70er

Jahren, als ich so klein war, war die Situation anders. Da kann man nicht pauschal beantworten, was gut oder schlecht ist. Es gibt viele Änderungen. Die Tagesmutter von heute gab es nicht. Früher blieben Mütter meistens zu Hause und hatten viel Zeit für die Kinder. Aber heute gehen viele Mütter arbeiten. Und den Tagesmüttern wurde die Aufgabe übertragen. Kinder hatten mehr Kontakt mit Verwandten. Aber heute ist das weniger geworden, weil sie in den Kindergarten gesteckt wurden.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Die klassische Rolle, mehr Geld als die Frau bringen. Den Haushalt machen wir zusammen. Man kann nicht pauschal die Rollen trennen, was die Frau macht und was der Mann macht.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Ich bin so klar, was die deutsche Kultur ist. Ich mache was, was mir gefallen ist. Nicht weil ich Deutscher bin. Es ist gar nicht der Fall.

I: Waren Sie mal in China?

R: Ja, schon dreimal.

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: Ein großes Land. Andere Kultur, andere Küche, andere Ernährung, also ganz anders. Besondere für Europäer ist es ein Kulturschock. In großen Städten ist Englisch auch nicht so üblich. Peking, z.B. Ich habe also immer Probleme mit der Sprache. Ansonsten habe ich die Kultur durch meine Frau ein Bisschen gelernt. Ihre Familie ist in China. Sie hat mir ganz viel erzählt, wie Chinesen leben, denken usw.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihrem Sohn sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ich kann die deutschen Märchen erzählen. Aber ich mache das nicht absichtlich, weil es das deutsche ist. Also mache ich nicht den Kulturunterschied. Nur von der Sprache machen wir den Unterschied. Er ist zu klein. Ich glaube, es ist nicht so gut, wenn man immer die eigene Kultur betont.

I: Was ist der große kulturelle Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrer Frau bei der Kindererziehung? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: Die Deutschen haben viel Disziplin, besonders Tischdisziplin. Chinesen, mehr Vermittlung von der Familie. Tischdisziplin ist wie man sich verhalten soll beim Essen. Man isst richtig von vorne bis zum Ende, nicht umspielen, mal essen, mal spielen. Nein. In China wird es nicht so strikt behandelt. Die Kinder wurden immer von Mutter, Vater, Oma, Opa gekümmert. Mit meiner Frau habe ich kaum kulturelle Unterschiede gehabt bei der Kindererziehung.

I: Wenn Ihr Sohn etwas Falsches getan hat, würden Sie darauf reagieren?

R: Es kommt auf die Situation an. Das kann man nicht pauschal sagen. [?] Es gibt auch kaum einen Kulturunterschied, glaube ich.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Disziplin. Gute Noten sind natürlich wichtig. Aber ich will meinem Kind keinen Zwang geben. Man muss nicht immer gut lernen und studieren, um eine gute Arbeit zu kriegen. In den 70er und 80er Jahren war so. Aber mittlerweile sieht man das anders.

I: Welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Von den zwei Sprachen gibt es Vor- und Nachteile. Mein Sohn lernt langsamer als die Kinder, die nur eine Sprache in der Familie sprechen. Aber er lernt parallel. Also spricht schon die beiden Sprachen. Das heißt, man soll die beiden Sprachen gleich im Alltag beibringen.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch!

R: Gern.

Interview 5: 02.05.2009, Pulheim, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to present the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families as well as the difficulties in educating children, so that afterwards to work out logical solutions for their problems. The interview we are recording today will surely remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. So I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First I want to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. I grew up in China. I joined the army then I was transferred to civilian work. I went to school in China and then I worked. Afterwards I met my husband and came to Germany with him. This is my experience.

I: When did you come to Germany?

R: I came in 2003, but I came here permanently in 2004 after I married.

I: How do you understand the concept of family?

R: I feel before the child was born, I had no deep understanding of the concept of family. I had not responsibility. The foundation for a family is not as firm as that with kids, that time I feel it's comfortable for the two of us staying together and care for each other. But now after we have kids, I feel the responsibility, I should preserve this family on every aspect. In the growing process of my son, the family must be complete, giving him a healthy environment for growing up, this is the different concept from the past.

I: What kind of education did you receive in your childhood?

R: I think it was typical traditional family education. For instance, the girls should go home after school, they are not allowed to speak to strangers outside home. My parents require us to sleep before eight at night, to lie in that bed. When I was young, my parents were stern on me. Even now when I go back to China, if I go out in the evening, I don't go home having dinner outside at nine in the evening, my mom will call me. I grew up in such an atmosphere.

I: Then does the traditional Chinese family education have any influence on your educating your kid?

R: Yes of course, I will use the education style I accepted in my childhood on my son. For instance, he has to say hello when he meets people. He can't touch others' stuff in their families and so on. I'm stern on my kid. He can't take others' stuff, just like my parents told me in my childhood. They said if you don't tell your children not to take a small stuff today, tomorrow they will take a big stuff. Besides, if my son's friends come to my family, I will let him share his toys with them, because they are guests. But it is not the case in Germany, mine is mine. When I take my son to the kindergarten, I will make him say hello or goodbye to the teacher. But sometimes he doesn't do what I said, I will feel he is not polite. It is very common in the eyes of German people, because I ever discussed it with his German grandfather. He could understand my son well and said: "I was like it and I hated to say hello to someone." But I hope my son can always address people in a polite way whether or not he is happy. Maybe that is something Chinese. Besides, I feel that the kids in Germany are not seriously treated on the aspect of dinner. I feel that the kids demand nutrition the most in childhood, you have to give them good health when they grow up, otherwise their brain or body can't keep up with it.

I: Then compared with the traditional family education you accepted, do you feel any difference in your cross-national marriage?

R: Of course there is. Although I accepted traditional education, after all I lived in a period different with my parents. The education in my childhood was totally different with the present. So maybe my education was not completely traditional. My education on my son must be totally different from what I got from my parents, I surely appreciate the Chinese traditional family education, maybe we can't adopt complete German education, western education, for instance, when the kid fell, or was injured, crying, I will not pay much attention, I will ask him to stand up by himself. If he wants something by the mode of crying, that is not ok. My son is not that kind of stubborn kid, but he will cry if he is not happy, but if you don't agree, then he has no ways. He is that kind of kid without much perseverance. So sometime I will give him choice, if he wants some stuff very much, and I want to buy it for him, this time I allow him to take this, but if he wants two kinds of stuffs, he can only choose one.

I: In your family, how would you describe your role?

R: My role? Because I don't work in Germany, I am the base camp, so at least I should do a good job on their life. I hope I try my best to educate my son to be not very Germany style but to be eastern characteristic. I hope to cultivate him into a Chinese style boy, caring for his parents, not the style that seems guest or friends with their parents. I like to treat my son the way our Chinese parents do, I can help him with money or on other aspects, and meantime I hope my son will be obedient like Chinese sons. So I make him shape a concept in his brain, I want to cultivate my son into a Chinese boy with exquisite sentiment, respect the old and love the young.

I: Then when you stay alone with your kids, will you take this chance to teach them Chinese culture consciously?

R: Of course. I feel I have a strong idea like this. I hope my son can use Chinese to express his willingness very well, I hope he can grasp Chinese, I hope every time he goes back to China with me in future, he can get along with my friends and my family members very well, knowing well the environment in which his mom grew up. I hope he can be integrated into my family members, so I think I have a strong idea to let him study Chinese.

I: Then what is the significance of Chinese traditional culture in your daily life when you live in Germany?

R: First it is the food culture. I have cultivated the stomach of my son into a Chinese stomach. The books I brought for my son are all Chinese style books such as ancient poem, nursery rhyme. I tell stories, sing songs for him, all are Chinese. The clothing culture is also Chinese, the Chinese clothing is colorful. I provide my son and husband with Tang suits, and old-man shoes. Anyway I feel most of the things are Chinese style.

I: Ok. Then how do you understand German culture?

R: Because I don't have so many social contacts, so I don't have a good understanding of German culture, my circle is my husband and their family members and his friends. Generally speaking they are warm to people, but I don't know their minds. I don't know the communications among the German according to these contacts with them, they don't hope you have deep touch with them, I feel the distance between us is a bit far. They look warm, but I think they may not be very close to you in their mind. I remember that my father-in-law and mother-in-law are good to us. Because when I go to their home, they make dinner for us, and give us gifts on holidays, we have never quarreled. But I feel it is just this makes me feel we are like guests. If you are always friendly, and it's harmonious on every aspect, this indicates you didn't show your true face, or we can say you are pretending yourself, you design a false mask for yourself, you don't like others to know your real idea. Because I don't live with my father-in-law and mother-in-law, we only meet one or two times monthly, I feel there is no need to show my unhappiness on my face. Besides, I feel that the Germans are likely to show their ideas on their face. My father-in-law and mother-in-law are old persons, I feel they have experiences and self-restraint, but they are like children, if they are not happy their face will change at once. And they will be happy again after a while, just like the kids, so I feel they are pure. They express all their wishes to you, but I feel I can't do this, normally I hide my ideas, I don't want to cause any conflict, that's the case.

I: Then depending on your personal education experience, what do you think is the greatest difference between Chinese and German?

R: I feel that the German have good cultivation consciousness on the kids, while we Chinese cultivate the kids very delicately. For the German kids, I believe their parents are more principled than us. Chinese parents will give in or spoil the kids if it's not principle problem when the kids cry. But when the Germans say "no", they mean so.

Another point is that, Chinese parents will do all they can to help the kids. So the Chinese kids' hand skill is not as strong as the German kids. Sometimes when the kids are playing something, the parents will consider whether it is dangerous. My husband does not believe so, he said: we Germans have a saying: this will not kill you, but only increase your resistance. Chinese mothers are more attentive, they pay more attention on exterior things, while the German pay more attention on cultivating consciousness.

I: Yes. But if your kid does something you are unhappy with, what will you do?

R: I criticize him, sometime I will let him stay in his room or make him go to the toilet to calm down, but if he cries, then he cannot come out. He cannot come out until he stopped crying. Sometimes, he throws dolls everywhere, I lock him in his room and tell him he must put the dolls in their right place, and then he can come out. I educate him like this, anyway he should calm down in an independent space.

I: How do you think about the Chinese old saying "Spare the rod, spoil the child"?

R: I feel it's not completely wrong. Sometimes there is need for you to spank him. But if you beat him, that is overdone. I feel that parents should give the kids 80% of happiness and 20% of disciplining to make them accept. But you cannot spoil the kids like Chinese parents, nor can you, like Germans only talk with them without disciplining them. The kids will forget after a short time. Spanking the kids when spanking is needed, of course you cannot abuse the kid, sometimes you should scare him. That is my idea.

I: Then how do you understand the saying "It's the father's duty for the son's mistake"?

R: I think this is correct. I feel the parents are the best examples for the kids. Because when the kids are young, their environment is pure, basically they stay with their parents. Then they learn from you what you are doing, they will remember it in their brains. If something happens, the kids will react like the mother and the father. But if you leave a bad impression on them, then they can't behavior well.

I: Then that means you understand this saying as it is not only the father's duty?

R: I don't think so. It is not only the father's duty to educate the kids, if the kids do something wrong, I will point it out at once, I can't wait until the second day, otherwise the kid will forget. So the word father is an obscure concept, "father" should refer to parents, not only to father.

I: In the educating process, what are the different ideas and different solutions between you and your husband?

R: Yes. Both of us have principles. I think whether it is China or Germany, even if you are the mother of China or Germany, you will still have different ideas on educating the kids. The mothers will be soft, while fathers will be tough. Sometimes when I see my son crying, I will coax him, my husband will say I have no principle. Sometimes I believe he has no principles either, when he said something to the kid, the kid cried, he would take up the kid and coax. I asked him: if you love the kid dearly, why did you blame him? Just like the Chinese saying: Beat you twice give you a date, isn't this the same? I think there is no other difference. In my brain, we haven't

quarreled on educating the kid, the only time was when he looked after the kid, he dropped the kid, I lost my temper on him. One time the kid rolled off the bed when he was five or six months old; another time was when he stayed with his father downstairs, the kid dropped from the sofa to the tea table. Generally I don't like arguing in front of the kid, I hope we keep the same opinion in front of the kid.

I: If you have different opinions, what will you do?

R: I will carry out my opinion toughly.

I: Could you give an example?

R: For example, he doesn't like my son to have long hair, but I like my son with long hair, so I don't have his hair cut, nobody can touch my son's hair, that's it.

I: I found that your boy is good at two languages, he expresses himself very clearly, and did you do this consciously?

R: Yes. The time he stays with his father speaking German is longer than staying with me. I can't speak good German, he learnt German with little friends and the teacher in the kindergarten. His father comes back from work and then goes to bed after having a rest, so the kid stays with me from morning till night, I ask him to speak Chinese when staying with me, sometimes he speaks German words, I will tell him I don't understand. If he speaks Chinese to me, I can understand that, especially when he wants something. Every year I take him back to China staying for a couple of months, in these times I found he learned Chinese very fast, so the language environment is very important. When he comes back to China, he contacts various people, they have various topics to talk to him, then he picks up many words, so he learns much, that's different from speaking Chinese in Germany.

I: Your child has a Chinese name and a German name, what do you think of that?

R: He lives in German, he is sure to have a German name. One reason is that I don't want other kids to see my kid is different. I don't hope my kid gets confused on this aspect; the other reason is that his father must hope he has a German name. But for me, I don't hope my son will forget my living place, so I hope he has a Chinese name. For the sake of fairness, here he has the surname of this father, while in China he has the surname of his mother.

I: He has your surname?

R: Yes, my surname. I gave him a Chinese name, the German name was given by his father and I feel this is fair.

I: If you call his Chinese name, he knows that?

R: Yes, when he sleeps at night, I will tell him the name of his mother, his grandma or the persons I know. He likes that very much, and he likes going back to China very much.

I: Did he have any maladjustment after he went back to China?

R: No. He likes Chinese dishes, and he likes China very much.

I: Please talk about your experience on educating, what advice can you give to other similar families?

R: The experience is not to discipline the kid too much, don't be too soft, make him independent.

I: Many Chinese parents want their kids to make great achievements, when the kids are very young, they apply for some tutorial classes consciously, what is your opinion on this?

R: I don't think so. I don't want him to be so tired. I don't want him to learn so much, I don't want my child to be a very special person, a very capable person, I think that will be too tiring. I want my child to live healthily and simply, I hope he will be a self-sufficient and independent person in future. I feel education is developing nature. Three languages are enough: German, Chinese and English. The kids should play as much as they can, anyway, I don't hope he learns too much.

I: You mean more freedom for him?

R: Right.

I: In your opinion, which target is the most important in the educating process?

R: I think the most important is to teach him Chinese, now it seems the purpose is reached, I hope to teach him to write Chinese words next.

I: Not only can he speak, but also can write.

R: Right. I feel this is very beneficial for his future, one is for his life, the other is for his career, his life circle will be opened, he can live or work in China or Germany. I feel that he grasped an important means for making a living in future.

I: Let's transfer the topic of education to yourself, to what extent do you think you are acceptable as a Chinese by this society when you live in Germany? Or let us say to what extent do you think you are integrated into this society as far as you are concerned?

R: I feel that I'm not integrated into this society to a great extent. I'm not a person that likes to communicate with others. So I didn't make many German friends, the German friends I know are my husband's friends, or his relatives. Besides, I feel that the Germans are warm outside and cold inside in my impression.

I: Is this one of the reasons?

R: Yes, this is one of the reasons. Besides I feel we have no much in common.

I: Do you have any special consideration on choosing the school for your kid in future?

R: For choosing a school, I just hope he enters the same school as other German kids, I don't hope we must send him to a special school, I don't think there is any need. My son's character is tough, my son is not an easy victim, I don't worry about him. It is no big deal if a boy suffers a setback, he should learn to accept it.

I: Right, thank you very much for your time.

R: You are welcome.

Interview 6: 02.05.2009, Pulheim, with a German father

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating of Chinese-German, (repeat) negotiating of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are

located in the multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions for the problems. The interview we are recording today will surely remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. So I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First of all, I would like to know more about you.

R: After working for some years, I wanted to work in China. I worked in Guang Zhou for one year. Later I moved to Beijing, where I got to know my wife. We went back to Germany. After three years, we got a son. He is now three and half years old.

I: Ok, I see. What did you learn from your parents, when you were small? I mean, what kind of education did you have in your family?

R: I got very traditional German values of right or wrong. Of course, when I was wrong, I always thought that my parents maybe were misunderstanding me. Since I am father and I know what my parents told me was right. But values have been changed somehow. What you should do as a father. What you should do outside.

I: What does family mean to you?

R: Family is the only place you can trust. You can really be together with it.

I: Has the education you got from your parents somehow influenced the way in which you educate your own child as well and what is the difference?

R: Sure. I teach my son how to behave and what is right and what is wrong. In the same way in which my parents taught me. The other is, of course, what everybody tries to do is to benefit from things parents taught us. We did not understand everything well, when we were small. But since we have our own child, we realize that our parents were right.

I: How would you describe the role you play in your family?

R: I am the guide and the decision-maker. Of course, influenced by my son and my wife.

I: How important is your home culture, the German culture for you in your daily life?

R: Every day, I would like to be correct and have more or less German values. You have the rules and you follow the rules. That is important. Of course, when in China, you have to have a different point of view. You have to give other persons the opportunity to find the way out. It doesn't have to be 100% correct. [?]

I: And how do you understand the Chinese culture?

R: It is very important to have a tact. Chinese people are very obedient. Between boss and employee, the boss is always right. On the other hand, you will be very surprised, if they fight something unjust. How they fight for it. They chat too much in restaurants.

I: When you are alone with your son, would you like to use the opportunity to highlight the German culture?

R: I try to tell him the rules and also show him what the line is. Don't cross the line. I don't care whether he cries. Here is the line and you have to listen to this. And of

course, he looks for the weaker person. Papa does not let me cross the line, then I will go to Mama.

I: According to your experiences, what is the main difference between Germans and Chinese in children education?

R: Chinese people make the child do lots of things without considering whether the children like it. [?] In my family, I would say I am strict. Of course, you cannot be hard all the time. But my wife, I would say she got trouble too much, because she let our son cross the line at times. One general feeling I have is that in China the way is another way round. Here in Germany, the father is the hard part and the mother is less hard. In China, the mother looks harder than the father.

I: What kind of cultural difference have you ever faced with your spouse when educating your child and how did you cope with?

R: I try to stay along and tell my wife we do not both have to agree with something but we have to follow the same rule.

I: How would you react, when your child did something wrong?

R: I tell him that he did something wrong. Most of the time, he cries. If he did something on purpose, jumping from the coach to the table, for instance, then I will beat him on the backside. And I will tell him why I did it. "I told you that before. You are not allowed to do this. But you still do this." Or I will let him go to his room.

I: I have noticed that your child can speak these two languages very well. ///

R: That is because of my wife. She speaks Chinese with him. At times she also speaks some German words with my son and me. I speak with my son only German.

I: In your opinion, what is the most important thing in the education of your child?

R: Hope he can speak Chinese well. But I will not push him to learn writing. If he wants to, it is OK. If not, then not. Besides, He should be kind and just.

I: What kind of suggestions can you give to such German-Chinese families?

R: Concerning the language, if you want your child to speak the two languages, the parents should be active. Tell the child stories at bedtime, for instance, and let him repeat what he has heard. If you live in Germany as we do, of course, schoolmates, friends, neighbors mostly speak German. So the other part of the parents, the Chinese mama or the Chinese papa should be active with their children in Chinese as well.

I: Many thanks for your time!

R: You are welcome.

Interview 7: 16.05.2009, Munich, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me. My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we

are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First of all, I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. My name is Pauline and I come from Hong Kong, 37 years old. I have been here for eleven years, since 1998 or 1997. I am not quite sure. I met my husband in Mexico. My son, Pouhei, is four years old. He was born in October 2004. I do not go out to work. I am a housewife.

I: When we talk about family, what does the family mean to you? How do you understand the word?

R: Family means to share things. We are living together. We love together. [?] People have children. They are family. Get married? That is not very important for me.

I: When you were small, what kind of education did you get from your parents?

R: From my parents? I finished high school. I did not go to the university in Hong Kong. I worked for ten years as a secretary in Hong Kong. Then later I met my husband. And I came here and stayed.

I: I mean how educative was your family to you? What did you learn from your parents?

R: I am not sure what you mean? I learned everything. For example, eh.....

I: What did your parents teach you, your mama, your papa? What did you learn from them?

R: It's hard to say. I didn't think about that. ----- I think all the things I learned from my mama is love. And my father always said: "ok, we have to be strong. People have to be honest. Be honest people and those things." It's hard to say. I learned from my parents a lot. We lived together for more than twenty years. We were not really close. I had my sister and my brother. We had to do our best, otherwise they would have punished us. I had my mind. Later on I wanted to do things in my own way. That's all.

I: And now you have your child. Do you think the way your parents educated you also somehow influenced //

R: I am not doing the same as my parents did for me. I am doing in this way. I try to tell my son a lot, share all the things with him. I'd like to know all the things about my son. It is very important for me. In the past, my parents didn't know what I was doing, how I was feeling, because they didn't have time. I still remember this. So I will do more things for my son. I think so.

I: Are there some differences between you and your parents? I mean the way of education.

R: I try to spend more time with my son than my parents.

I: Ok, I see. How would you describe the role you play in your own family now?

R: En-----I would say that three people are in the family. We have to talk. They talk about everything. Even my son, my son is too small now. But he has the right to keep on something. And I have to say I will let him do everything, if the situation is safe. I

think so. He decided something and my husband and I decided it as well. I do not decide all the things.

I: No?

R: No. Not really. Ja, some rules I have to keep.

I: Some rules.

R: Some rules (laughing). I have to keep them. I said to my son, for instance, he had to put the toy away, because it was on the floor. He had to do it. But he didn't like it. When he didn't want to do it, he cried, then I will be angry. Anyway, we spend a lot of time going somewhere with our dog. We are together mostly.

I: I see. You mentioned, when your son did something wrong, you would be angry.

R: Angry.

I: So I like to know /////

R: Ok. When he is not going to listen to me, not going to put the things away, not doing the thing I want, I will be angry. When I am angry, he is also angry. So I will leave him alone and he will start to cry. For example (laughing), he didn't want to wear his shoes, when we were going to take a walk with the dog and we were late. But he didn't want to wear the shoes and started crying. And I was angry and made him wear his shoes saying: we have to go. I told him the reason. He knew that and he did it.

I: The next question I would like to ask is: how important is your home culture in your daily life?

R: Home culture, you mean Hong Kong? I am Chinese. It is important for us. I am trying to tell my son all the things about the Chinese New Year, the Chinese people, Chinese stories. Here is something else. He knows lots of differences between Hong Kong and here. Many things he cannot do in Hong Kong, but he can do it here. I just told him that was the difference. Whether he will do it in the Chinese or the German way, I let him decide himself. How to use the Chinese chopsticks, or how to cook the Chinese food? Some Chinese do not do such things here. But we do.

I: When you are alone with your child, would you like to use the opportunity to emphasize the Chinese culture?

R: Most of the time, I tell him all the things in Chinese. Yes, I do it. I am a little bit open. He can keep long hair here, although he is boy. I said, no problem. I cannot believe when my parents saw him.....When he was two years old, he had long hair, lots of people in Hong Kong said, maybe he will have problem later. He was a boy, but had such long hair. I said, it is none of your business. He is only a child, two years old. It does not matter. It is OK. We went to a bridge. He did not want to wear his trousers, took them off. It does not matter. In Hong Kong, people will be shy. Children will not be allowed to behave in this way. Parents will not allow them to do such things. So he is always dirty. I do not care. Another difference I found is the medicine. When a child is sick, he will be sent to the doctor and given medicine. I will ask everything, but will not do that. I keep my child at home. When he is sick, I will call the doctor. You know what I mean? In Hong Kong, people believe the doctor. When the child is just sick, they go to the doctor and take what the doctor gives them.

I am not that type. I think, he will later have a problem, when he takes so many medicines. [?]

I: Do you prefer something Chinese?

R: Not really. Because I did not know. If I know, I will do it. I do not know so much. My sister told me I can try. But I am not the type. Not for me and for my child. Just let him drink water. That is what I believe.

I: Since you have been here for ten years, how do you understand the German culture?

R: I understand a lot, because from my husband, from my mother-in-law. Most of my friends close to me are German people. Sometimes we go to church together. Every people does different things. Culture, how to say that? Lots of people come to me. We talk a lot and share everything. I understand when we talk and I feel better. When I do not feel good, I call people and just talk. They listen and are kind friends. My neighbours help me buying something, if I have nothing to eat.

I: What difference have you ever faced between the German and the Chinese culture?

R: I do not accept I am Chinese and I am not German as well. I cannot be a German, because I did not grow up here, but in Hong Kong. I cannot change that. I learned a lot from China. I know the culture here, but I am not going to do the same way in Germany.

I: Concerning the way of education, have you ever faced the cultural difference with your husband, when you educate your son?

R: He decides alone. I think it is no problem. At the beginning he must know the difference between the Chinese and the Germans. When he understands, he will know which way he wants to go. We cannot control. Is this the answer you want?

I: Well. I mean whether there is a cultural difference between you and your husband. You want to educate your son in this way, but your husband prefers another way, for example. Have you ever faced such a situation?

R: I think it is not the cultural difference. Every family has such problems. We have conflicts as well. But I do not think it is the cultural difference. It is just between mama and papa. They have different methods. Sometimes we have to fight. I want my son in this way. But it might not mean it was the Chinese way. Not the country problem. Just because of the two different people.

I: In your opinion, what is the most important aim of your education?

R: Not yet. He is just a little boy. He has to go to the kindergarten. Two years later, he has to go to school. I am looking for a school at the moment, which school he can go to. He has to learn swimming. Not so far away yet, not aiming. No. I am planning for my son for the future. I teach him Chinese, how to speak and write. That is all.

I: Lots of Chinese parents want their children to get good marks at school///

R: No, no. It is from nature. When the child wants to learn, he learns. If he doesn't want to learn, he will not. I never thought about it. My son likes reading. When I read books, he likes the stories. When he watches films, I will try to tell me what is good, what is not good. I never thought what he will be. No parents can decide all the things. I belong to the people who love nature and all the natural things. What I control is that I do not allow him to eat so much sugar. I keep such things in the cupboard. But he

can keep the things in his room. He knows that is not what I like. So he will decide by himself. I want him to drink more water rather than juice. He has to learn the names of animals. I tell him they are all important, even an ant.

I: You give your son a lot of freedom.

R: It depends on the parents. I allow him to drive the bike to the kindergarten. It is not far away, just a short distance. Many parents would say it is not safe. It is dangerous. Maybe do it later, or something like this. But I allow my son to do everything. Just try.

I: In lots of typical Chinese families, you know, a child, especially a boy, does not only belong to his parents, but to the whole family. It means that the grandparents also have the right to educate their grandchild. What do you think about this point, and ///

R: I know what you mean. I allow lots of people to educate Pouhei. They have different opinions. When the opinion is too old-fashioned for Pouhei, I will say no, not this way for Pouhei please. Some German people, like Chinese, will say, when you finish this, you will get ice-cream or whatever. That is wrong. I told my mother-in-law not this way. I don't accept it. He has to go to bed at that time, not later and later, only because people are here. No, not this way. Once a week, I send Pouhei to other parents. They are our friends. Pouhei has to learn what other families do.

I: What kind of families?

R: Intercultural families. The children are Pouhei's best friends. They have their rules. They have to sit along the table. My son can see that other families have other rules as well. He will see there are differences. He will ask me why he is not allowed to do something in that family. I explain to him that is the difference. That is another family. Let me give you an example, swimming. In Germany, most people let children use the swimming ring, because it is safe. Pouhei has never used the swimming ring. I said, he has to learn from nature. He knows that it is dangerous. He has to know what is dangerous. He will get drowned, when he goes down in the water. I did not give him the ring, because he has to learn what dangerous means. Another solution is that he has to learn how to swim. When he has the ring, he always has fun, but he will not know what danger is. When the ring is not there, he will be afraid of water. That is what I mean. My sister in Hong Kong does it another way. I see it is different. It does not mean it is the traditional Chinese way. Some Chinese, one of my friends, his mama cannot swim. He is scared of water as well. I told my friend it does not help, when you use the swimming ring. It is helpful when the parents are not scared of water. I am not scared of all the things. Then my son will not be scared. That is why I like him to try all the things and let him learn all the things. Of course, accident. Everybody can have an accident. I take the risk, since anything can happen.

I: What kind of?

R: Bike, for instance. Cycling, he is too young to cycle on the street. But I let him do it. Of course, I am always by his side. He cannot go alone. I keep watching and help him look round. It is a hard job. I like him to have freedom and let him play. But I keep looking for him. That is different from Hong Kong. The parents from Hong Kong always said to their children it was not allowed. Then the children cannot do it.

The children don't understand what they mean not allowed. My son has the right to know what it does mean not allowed. He has to know what danger is.

I: How is the relationship between you and Pouhei's German grandparents?

R: He has only one grandma.

I: I'm sorry.

R: She likes him. She talks with me in a different way than she did with my husband. I can see it. When the grandma is here, Pouhei talks in a different tone. He puts things in order. He wants his grandma to do all the things. When Pouhei talks to his papa, the way is wild, aggressive. With me, softer a little bit. With Oma⁴⁹, he orders his Oma to do things for him. With Oma, he can do lots of things alone. For instance, he told Oma not to tell him, because he knows everything. When Oma takes him to bed, within five minutes, he can finish changing and brush his teeth. Everything is ok. He puts the towel on the basin. Very nice. With me? No way, within 20 minutes to finish. With his father, his father said "I do not know where your things are". He said "I do not know it either." So the two went to bed without washing. He knows, with different people, he will do things in different ways. He has learned good things from his kindergarten. But with mama, en.....

I: What kind of kindergarten? Are there also children from intercultural families?

R: Yes. Only maybe one third is from German families. Many of them are from Turkey, Hungary and Poland. I am not really sure how many children are Germans. It doesn't matter. The children speak German.

I: What kind of kindergarten?

R: Catholic. There is no difference between the Catholic kindergarten and the national-run kindergarten. Almost the same. Two people are for twenty-four children. One of them is a teacher, another is an assistant.

I: Can your son speak Chinese?

R: Only Cantonese.

I: He can speak German well, right?

R: Cantonese, perfect. German, not as good as Cantonese. But I think one year later we it be almost the same. Because I have more time with him than his father. I talk to him only in Cantonese. Only if he is together with other children , I also talk to him in German.

I: The last question is, what kind of suggestions you can give to such intercultural families, the German-Chinese families, in particular?

R: I think there is no problem for the parents, when they come from different countries. Mama comes from Poland and papa is from India. They are living here, for example. They will decide what to do for their children. I have my background and my husband has his background. We cannot put all our backgrounds to our son. My son had nothing, when he was born. After his birth, he has learned things from us. I am trying to tell him all the Chinese things. But he does not have to follow the way that I am saying. He has to decide the things by himself. He has the right to do the

⁴⁹ Grandmother

things he wants. Later, when I want to teach him some Chinese things, maybe he does not like it. As he maybe will only accept the German way. I teach him my mother tongue, because I can explain all the things. When I talk to him in Mandarin, I have to look for the Wörterbuch⁵⁰. I am not going to do it, as well as in English. I am not going to teach him English. He has to learn it in his school. I like to see birds, for instance. I take him to see birds. When the weather is hot, I allow him to swim in the river. Suggestions depend on the parents. Not to do the negative things. I am not telling him about the Iraq War, or things like this. Not now. I was born in Hong Kong. I do not know much about natural things. We have trees and birds enough. I have never touched a river, because my parents said it is dirty. I only saw banana trees. Other trees I saw were only in books. I learned them at school. But I never touched them. My son has to do it. That is important. He has to know it. It is more important than culture.

I: You remind me of something. Your name and Pouhei's. Is it because you have the German nationality that you are called Pauline?

R: No. People from Hong Kong have always an English name.

I: So you are really called Pauline, when you are in Hong Kong?

R: Yes, for a long time.

I: You got it from your parents?

R: By myself.

I: What about Pouhei?

R: People in this family have their names starting with P: Pauline, Peter and my dog Pedi. So I have to find a name with P for him as well. I do not like European names, so I chose a Chinese name. I can write it down.

I: Did you choose the characters first, and then///

R: Yes. The Chinese characters always have their meanings. One word, one meaning. My sister translated it as "Pouhei". In Cantonese, it is also Pouhei. We want this name, a Chinese name, but write it in alphabets. His family name is a German one.

I: His name is somehow a combination, right?

R: Well. He does not look like the German people, but from an intercultural family. His name is also half, half. I always remind him he is half Chinese.

I: Have you been to Hong Kong with Pouhei?

R: Yes, twice.

I: I see. Many thanks for your time.

R: You are welcome.

Interview 8: 16.05.2009, Munich, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heiße Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien.

⁵⁰ Dictionary

Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und möglichst die entsprechende Lösung für die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird später anonym zitiert. Das heißt, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht für andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen für meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausführlich wie möglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Zuerst möchte ich sehr gerne etwas Näheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzählen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ich bin 56 und habe Abitur gemacht. Fünf Jahre studiert. Es war DDR. [?] Ich habe Jura studiert, in München Philosophie.

I: Als Sie klein waren, was haben Sie von Ihren Eltern gelernt?

R: Reden habe ich gelernt. Ansonsten, habe ich Lesen und Schreiben von meinen Eltern gelernt.

I: Was bedeutet Familie für Sie?

R: Alles eigentlich. Oma, Enkel, Geschwister, usw. Ganz groß eigentlich. Nicht nur zwei.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Nein, nicht beeinflusst. Mein Sohn kann alles machen, was er will, außer Gefährlichen.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Eins von zwei und eins von drei. Ich sage nicht die die die. Ich spiele keine Rolle. Wir sind zusammen mit meiner Frau und meinem Sohn.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Gar keinen. Von der deutschen Kultur kenne ich nur die Sprache. Ich kann keine andere Sprache so gut wie Deutsch. Aber ansonsten kenne ich die Kultur wenig.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihrem Sohn sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Wenn mein Sohn hören möchte, sage ich ihm gern. Aber nicht nur etwas Deutsches. Ich will nicht unbedingt etwas Deutsches erklären.

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: Wenig. Ich kann nicht Chinesisch. Ich habe zwei Monate gelernt, aber es ist schwierig. Einen Grundunterschied zwischen der chinesischen Kultur und der deutschen Kultur habe ich nicht bemerkt.

I: Was ist der große kulturelle Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrer Frau bei der Kindererziehung? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: Als unser klein war, ist er immer zu meiner Frau gegangen und hat geweint, weil er von Jemandem Schläge bekommen hat. Es hat mit Kultur nichts zu tun. Es ist überall so. Was mich stört ist, kann ich die Sprache nicht verstehen kann. Das ist alles.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: dass er durchsetzen kann, was er will. Wollen wir sehen, wie es weitergeht.

I: Vielleicht haben Sie schon gewusst, dass ein Kind in den meisten chinesischen Familien nicht nur zu den Eltern gehört, sondern zu der ganzen Familie. Wie wichtig sind die Großeltern bei der Kindererziehung in Ihrer Familie?

R: Nein, nicht bei mir. Die Großeltern sind draußen. Alle zwei Jahre fahren wir nach Hong Kong zurück.

I: Wenn Ihr Sohn etwas Falsch gemacht hat, wie würden Sie darauf reagieren?

R: Es kommt darauf an, was er gemacht hat. Es gibt immer kleine Probleme, aber nicht so viel Schwierigkeiten mit meinem Sohn.[?]

I: Welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Ich habe keine. Als Pouhei klein war, war er immer zur chinesischen Gruppe gegangen. Bis zwei ein halbes Jahr. Und dann spielte er auch mit anderen Kindern. [?]

I: Waren Sie mal in Hong Kong?

R: Ja, ja, schon mehrmals. Wir waren auch in Peking, Xi' an, usw.

I: Was ist Ihr Eindruck von China und Chinesen?

R: Ameisenvoll. Wir haben eine Reise nach Peking gebucht. Wir waren in einer Gruppe. Der Reiseleiter will ein Haus von einer chinesischen Prinzessin zeigen. Am Mittag will ich mal Kaffee trinken und interessiere mich nicht dafür. Der Reiseleiter will, dass alle machen, was er sagt. Ich will also die Reise beenden. Ich weiß nicht, ob es typisch in China ist, oder nur der Reiseleiter.

I: Haben Sie die Reise hier gebucht?

R: Nein, in Peking.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch.

R: Gern.

Interview 9: 17.05.2009, Dachau, with a Chinese father

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns negotiation of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First of all, I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. I came from Shanghai, China. I went abroad for studying at my own expense in 1989, altogether I spent eight years in the university, because I had to pass the language test, then I began to work in 1998, it's almost ten years. Altogether I have been in Germany for 20 years.

I: Have you received the Germany citizenship?

R: Yes, I have. For the convenience of work, also because some business involves international confidence, it's mainly for the sake of work.

I: If we talk about family now, first how do you understand the concept of family?

R: The concept of family, in my eyes, should include the children and the parents. If there are only parents without kids, I don't think that is a family, just common life partners.

I: As far as you can recall in your childhood, what do you think you learnt you're your parents?

R: Study hard. In China, like parents of my age, they only had the chance to take the university entry exam after the Cultural Revolution. People did not pay attention to culture and knowledge until then. Because I come from an intellectual family, my parents were strict on me. They hoped my brother and I could enter the university. My parents taught us lessons, supervising our homework. They also taught us about etiquette, what we should know on manners to get along with people. In family education, my parents spent more time on our learning. They spent more of their energy on us.

I: Were there any differences in the education modes between your mother and your father?

R: My father's education style was a little hard, he talked less; my mother's words were soft, and she talked more.

I: To what extent, do you think, did the traditional Chinese family of your parents in your childhood influence on your educating your children?

R: In fact, it is much as far as percentage is concerned, because China's education style is totally different from German education style. Different environments have different requirements on the kids. In such cases, I will not copy the previous education method of China in German, I will not do so. At the beginning I wanted to use my educational style to teach my children, but my wife usually taught them in the European or the German style. So it would be contradictory, if I still insisted only on the Chinese way. Some families maybe use this method to educate their kids. They hope their kids can be famous or achieve success and have a good life. I am just trying to make the kids happy every day. Studying is hard work. If my kids don't like it but I force them to do so, they will feel suffering and I'm tired too. I don't like doing this, because life is short. When I put too much pressure on them at this early age, one result is that they can develop well, another is they cannot develop well. So I feel this style is infeasible. In short, the way my parents disciplined me is different from the way I discipline my kids.

I: Then what are the main differences?

R: The difference is that China has too much population, the chance for university is less, so you have to find a good job, enter a good school, the environment decides your fate. In German, the environment is better, competition is not that severe, as far as the whole society is concerned, although you don't go to school and you have no diploma, you can live a happy life, because in this society, the social welfare is pretty

good. In China, you can be also happy, but the possibility is small. Besides, for the kid, on the one hand you should help him providing some condition for him, but he still needs to walk by himself, you cannot force him to go. I support him in what he wants to do, I create conditions for him, but the he needs to go all by himself. If he can't walk now, maybe in future, if he likes it really, maybe he can walk out his way, then this style must be better than if I forced him to do so or accompanied him every day. This is my opinion.

I: In your family, how do you describe your role?

R: On education, I'm in the position of assistant role, my wife plays the main role, because I'm still traditional. The man works outside, the woman also works, but the woman is good at disciplining the kids, educating the kids, doing housework. I work outside to make money, then we are stable economically, then I will do some help if possible.

I: You lived in China for 20 years, to what extent do you think your local culture or Chinese culture plays a role in your daily life?

R: This is hard to answer. If there is a concrete problem then my idea may be different from my wife's, because I'm deeply influenced by Chinese culture. When I had just come to German from China, I felt that I was thoroughly filled with Chinese eastern culture, she is western culture. After a long time when the Germans' ideas are different from our Chinese', we can basically understand each other. Because you live here, sometimes it is not applicable when you use eastern culture, then I will be passive. Sometimes the two kinds of culture are really needed to be used for reference or for discussion. So the European culture is more used. Besides, you live in such environment, some deep ideas such as showing obedience to the elder generation, it must be eastern type. But some are western, first the interpersonal relationship is relatively simple. For instance, if you think in a simple way, you don't care for others' ideas, then many things become simple.

I: When you stay alone with your kids, will you take this chance to teach them more about Chinese culture consciously?

R: Seldom on this aspect.

I: Then how do you understand German culture?

R: German culture is a hard topic, because many things are different. As far as work is concerned, it is a very detailed thing. Apart from this, I have less communication with people, my kids can accept their culture and religion, I still have much understanding of that. For instance, to be honest, these things are practical. This is their culture. You seldom see that they quarrel in their work, for instance. Of course their interpersonal relationship is not very simple, similar to the east, but generally it is simple. In China, the relationship of the colleagues is very complicated, people speak ill of the others. The German don't do this, they know how to respect the others, respect the privacy of the others. I feel that good or bad, that is the life of the others. Everyone has its own foundation, a family's surroundings. On the other hand, if you think he is good or bad, you can decide whether to contact him, it's simple.

I: What do you think is the most important thing in family education?

R: Cultivate a spirit of independence, independent thinking, doing things all by yourself. The second is manners of getting along with other people, I believe this is very important to the character training of the kids. For the knowledge in the textbook, I feel they are bored. I give topics to the kids, they feel funny, they can think with their brain, it is good if they are interested in them. Of course every kid like games, especially computer games, I give them time for that. Other games like playing outside, playing football, or playing other balls, I will support them.

I: What will you do if the kid does something you feel unhappy about?

R: This depends. When the kid is in a bad mood, I will say some words of concern, but I will not beat my kid. I will try to persuade and educate, if he recognizes he did a wrong thing, then I will make him conscious about why he is wrong, what the bad influence of his mistake on others, what the results are. Of course when I'm tired back from work, or I come across some problems, I will lose my temper, but generally I will try to control myself. In my family, my wife is pretty strict with the kids, if she asks you to read foreign language, then you have to do so. So there are a strict person and a loose person in a family. The two persons are different. The two parents need to unify the opinions on educating kids, then the kid will know right from wrong.

I: How do you think about the saying "It's father's duty for the son's mistake"?

R: I feel it is not completely right. Because everybody makes a mistake, it must be so, because he saw it or learnt this, he was not born to be wrong. Then since he made such mistakes, the parents should persuade and educate him. If he makes this mistake for a second time, I feel it is not the mistake of the parents any more, it's the kid himself. On this point I feel we should see how the parents educate their kids.

I: Then how about that saying "Spare rod, spoil the child" ?

R: I believe it is probably right. But it has negative aspects. If you are strict with the kids, the kid will be a good person? That is not sure. This is not the case here. It is impossible to beat the kid. It's hard to judge it.

I: On which aspects do you and your wife have differences in the process of educating the kids?

R: For instance my wife requires the kids to play the piano for a certain time every day, do some reading for a certain time. She forbids them to play computer games and play at will. Besides, she requires that the kids must enter senior high school and university; I feel that it is OK, if the work gets better, step by step, there will be chances in the future. This is the difference.

I: Was there any conflict when you two had different ideas and opinions?

R: We will compromise to each other. I will insist on the Chinese way, which is teaching him extra lessons every day to help him go ahead. This is the Chinese way. But in Germany, after he finished the homework for school, he doesn't need to do any more, unless he wants to do it by himself, then it depends on him. So things will be different. The solution is compromise, let the kid do by himself. What's more, I feel the kid is tired and I'm tired too, if I sit there accompanying the kids everyday. And there is another question after he graduates, I'm afraid he is a pedant. In China, the parents supervise the kids to read, after graduating from university, the child doesn't

know thinking or manners of getting along with people, he still needs to learn comprehensively. On this point, there is a good point and a bad point respectively. I hope it is ok if everybody has a job and gets paid, then people can achieve balance. So I feel everybody should have something to do, this is the best for the society, the society will be in harmony. Generally, I feel it is not important what the kids are doing, what really counts is happiness.

I: You must know that many Chinese parents apply many tutorial classes for the kids when they are very small to make a better future for them, what do you think about this?

R: I feel this depends on whether the kid is willing to attend, whether he wants to do it or not, this should depend on the kid himself. I will not think about this by myself, but respect him, that is , in the life of the kid, in the childhood of the kid, what the kid really likes, what he is willing to do, for me, it is respecting him, I will not force him to do this or that, to avoid his complaining on me. So the importance is he is willing to do so, when he notices something he likes, such as football, playing the piano, after he notices, he just does it himself. If you like to apply for a tutorial class, then I will pay that for you and let you do; if you don't like that, then that is ok, it's over. My standard is his happiness in his whole life, the standard for happiness is not measured with money or other things. Happiness lies in your spirit, if you feel happy in your heart, then that is enough. As for how much money he makes for his work, or whether he doesn't make money, whether or not he enters university, that doesn't matter.

I: Another situation that you know in a Chinese family is that the kids not only belongs their parents, but also belongs to a big family, the grandparents always feel they have responsibility on educating the kids too, so sometimes they have different ideas from the kids' parents, what is the case in your family?

R: There is not such a case on the side of my wife's family here in Germany. On my side, my parents let the kid read more and tell more stories to him. In western countries, the parents like to bring the kids up by themselves, it is impossible for them to leave the kid to grandpa and grandma, if we leave him there for a month, we will miss him. So you need to discipline and educate your kid by yourself, nothing to do with the grandparents.

I: I would like you to talk about the name of your kids, obviously they have names combining Chinese and German, right?

R: The surname is their mother's, the second name is my idea. Because I think that if the entire name is Chinese, but the kids were born in Germany, then people will know you are a foreign when they look at your name. For the name of the kids, they all have a Chinese name and a German name, but only one surname. For Chinese tradition, I don't care too much about it, like carrying on the family line, I don't consider this.

I: Let's talk about your three kids.

R: The first child is my wife and her ex-husband's, then we have the second and the third kid. The eldest kid has lived with us since she was two or three years old, a daughter is better, she is sensible and studies hard, she is also good at housework. The boy will be lazy somehow, the second kid is in pupil school, the third is in

kindergarten. The eldest kid is close to her mom; the second kid is close to me, the third kid is in the middle.

I: In this cross-culture family, what advice would you give to other families like this Sino-German family, or other cross-national pairs, especially about your experience on educating the kids?

R: For this cross-culture family, generally speaking it is a kind of complicated family mode, much more complex than the single-culture family. Because people are different, some like a simple and peaceful life; some people like proposing new problems and different things, they have different choices. In this situation, the trouble in this family must be more than in the single-culture family. But one good point is that you can come to know the merits of the other side, you like the special points, different points from your previous understanding of the family in the process of your getting along with them, there are some fresh things attractive to you. It is not all good or all bad. So in this process, it takes time for adjustment, but this experience is the same for everybody, no matter what family it is, although the culture backgrounds are not the same, the working efficiency is pretty high if the two cultures are combined. Of course it is good if there are fewer problems, but sometimes for whatever family pattern, there will be problems or scraps more or less for the interpersonal relationship or the family relationship. Then it is a good study or adjustment processes how to solve this problem or how to deal with this problem. Anything could happen everyday in your life, but it depends on how you deal with it and define it. Generally speaking, I feel it's your choice of selecting a family pattern. But if you change to another way to go, you would fall in love with somebody else, anyway, you will return to the original place, there are still such problems, or they are changed to other problems, but they are the same. You need to think about how to solve the contradictions for future life, don't you? Another point is the different concept, I feel that there are good points in German culture, their culture is direct. They obey the time, they say things clearly, these are traditional things, the women are diligent, they are good at housework. Even if they have shortcomings, it is ok if they pay much notice on it.

I: You are pretty optimistic.

R: Yes. It can only be said that somebody gave me love, then I stopped finding love. Up till now I feel I'm very happy. I and my wife have same ideas for many times, when I want to talk about something, she is also going to talk about it. That is to say, after a period of adjustment we are familiar to each other, we know the minds of each other. Even when there are some conflicts in life or both of us are very tired, if both of us compromise, then that is OK.

I: Good. Thank you very much! It is very pleasant to talk with you!

R: You are very welcome.

Interview 10: 17.05.2009 Dachau, with a German mother

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-

Universität in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und möglichst die entsprechende Lösung für die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird später anonym zitiert. Das heißt, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht für andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen für meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausführlich wie möglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst möchte ich sehr gerne von Ihnen näherer erfahren. Also erzählen Sie bitte von sich selbst.

R: Also ich heiße Uta. Ich bin 47 Jahre alt. Ich komme aus Magdeburg. En-----, ich bin von Beruf, Dokumentarin, also für [?] Gesellschaft. Ich habe drei Kinder. Meine Tochter hat einen deutschen Vater. Sie ist 17 und lebt mit uns zusammen.

I: Als Sie klein waren, was haben Sie von Ihren Eltern gelernt?

R: Von meinen Eltern..... gute Sachen auf jeden Fall: freundlich zu anderen Menschen zu sein, pünktlich zu sein, wirklich, positive, auf mein Selbst zu achten, meine Gesundheit, meine Kleidung. Sie haben mir vorgelesen. Es ist was ich für meine Kinder zu wenig gemacht habe.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Sie hat mich schon beeinflusst. Aber ich habe etwas anders gemacht. Zuhause wurde ich geschlagen, zum Beispiel, ja, von meinem Vater. Meine Eltern haben wenig für meine Schulsachen gemacht.[?]

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist der große Unterschied?

R: Zu der chinesischen Erziehung?

I: Zu der Erziehung, die Sie ///

R: Von meinen Eltern?

I: Ja ja, richtig.

R: Ich glaube, ich behandle meine Kinder partnerschaftlich, freundlicher. Es wurde diskutiert, was wir machen. Mit meinen Kindern haben wir mehr diskutiert.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Ich bin die Mutter, die Bestimmteren, die Managerin. Ich bin schon sehr verantwortlich.

I: Wie verstehen Sie Familie?

R: Vater, Mutter, Kind. Für mich ist Familie kein Paar ohne Kinder. Zur Familie gehören Kinder dazu.

I: In Ihrem Alltagsleben, welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur ein, also die deutsche Kultur?

R: In der Erziehung der Kinder oder überhaupt?

I: Überhaupt.

R: Wir haben viel über chinesische Kultur geredet. Er isst gerne am Abend immer warm. Die Kinder essen chinesische Nudeln mit heißem Wasser drin. Ich lese deutsche Bücher vor. Wir schauen manchmal chinesische Dokumentationsfilme über Peking, die manchmal auch im deutschen Fernsehen gezeigt werden. Chinesisches Neues Jahresfest.[?]

I: Wie verstehen Sie die chinesische Kultur überhaupt?

R: Die chinesische Kultur habe ich durch meinen Mann und die Schwiegereltern bekommen. Ich fahre manchmal auch nach China.

I: Was ist Ihr Eindruck von China, Chinesen und der Kultur?

R: Vor zwei Jahren waren wir in China, in Shanghai und dann in Peking. China ist für mich ein lautes und schmutziges Land, nicht fürs Leben. Andererseits hat China eine lange Kultur, die verbotene Stadt zum Beispiel. In China ist es so laut und schmutzig, in dem man nicht leben kann. Die Chinesen, die ich kenne, sind sehr nett. Wir haben auch Chinesen gehabt, die nur ihre Promotion haben möchten. Sie möchten Deutschland nicht kennen lernen. Sie wohnen in einen chinesischen Wohnheim und kochen chinesisch. Was ich gelernt habe ist eine chinesische Studentin aus Peking. Sie war letztes Jahr da. Sie möchte Verfahren gegen der Lustverschmutzung lernen. Sie hat viele Informationen und DVD von uns bekommen, die von ihrer Universität haben möchte. Ich habe sehr oft solchen Eindruck gehabt von den Chinesen: nehmen was sie kriegen können, aber wenig geben. Es ist negativ. Aber ich habe es sehr oft erlebt. Ich kenne manchen chinesischen Doktoranden. Sie können aber nicht selbstständig arbeiten. Man fragt immer: „was soll ich machen?“ Aber für die Promotion muss man Motivation haben und selbst lernen. [?]

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihren Kindern sind, möchten Sie die Gelegenheit nutzen, etwas Deutsches zu erzählen und die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ja, schon. Das muss man ständig machen. [?] Manche Chinesen kommen zu spät zum Essen. Sie fangen langsam an. Das ist die Kultur. Meine Kinder dürfen dies eigentlich nicht. Sie sollen das eigentlich nicht machen.[?]

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Liebe und der körperliche Kontakt.[?]

I: Wenn Ihre Kinder etwas Falsches getan haben, wie werden Sie darauf reagieren?

R: Schimpfen. Ein bisschen laut werden.

I: Funktioniert das ?

R: Nicht immer. Und manchmal gehen sie in ihren Zimmer, wenn ich böse bin. Wenn der Vierjährige zu lange Fernsehen geguckt hat am Abend, dann soll er morgen wenig fernsehen.[?]

I: Also keine körperlichen Strafen?

R: Manchmal hat der Kleine eine Ohrfeige bekommen. Aber es funktioniert sowieso nicht.

I: Was sind die Ziele Ihrer Kindererziehung? Was wollen Sie bei Ihren Kindern erreichen?

R: Groß werden, das Leben verstehen können. Es muss nicht ein großer Beruf sein, aber glücklich sein.

I: Spielt auch eine wichtige Rolle, dass Ihre Kinder immer gute Noten in der Schule kriegen?

R: Nein, es ist nicht wichtig.[?]

I: Nach Ihrer Erfahrung, was ist der große Unterschied bei der Kindererziehung zwischen Deutschen und Chinesen?

R: Die chinesischen Eltern mit Kindern in Deutschland, die ich erlebt habe, möchten, dass ihre Kinder immer gut sind. Die Kinder wurden immer gefordert. Ich war mal in Shanghai, in einer Mittelschule. Ich war richtig schockiert. Das Gebäude ist modern. Aber es gab keine Bilder an der Wand, nur Tische, Bücher und weiße Wände. Und die chinesischen Eltern möchten immer stolz auf ihre Kinder sein. [?] Meine Schwiegereltern waren neun Monate in Deutschland. Sie sprechen kaum Deutsch und können nicht mit den Kindern sprechen. Sie sind eine verlorene Generation

I: Was ist der große Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrem Mann? Und wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: Er ist sehr unpünktlich. Mein Mann ist ein sehr egoistischer Mensch. Kinder dürfen nicht Schokolade auf dem Bett essen, glaube ich. Aber mein Mann gibt ihr Schokolade. Was ich schon denke ist, dass die kleinen Kinder in China sehr verwöhnt werden.

I: Bei der Kindererziehung, wie wichtig sind die Großeltern in Ihrer Familie?

R: Bei der deutschen?

I: Ja.

R: Mein Vater ist 80. Meine Mutter kümmert sich um meinen Vater. Die Eltern meines Mannes leben in Shanghai, also kaum Erziehung für meine Kinder.

I: Ich möchte mehr über Ihre Kinder erfahren.

R: Ich habe drei, ein Mädchen und zwei Jungen, Sie sind sehr fleißig.

I: Welche Schule denn?

R: Hauptschule. Der Kleine ist im Kindergarten.

I: Nach Ihren Erfahrungen, was für praktischen Hinweise können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere deutsch-chinesischen Familien?

R: Ich will nicht mit Chinesen heiraten. Es ist wirklich hart teilweise, schwierig.

I: Bei der Kindererziehung, auf was können Sie hinweisen?

R: Ich will meine Kinder in den zwei Sprachen erziehen. Aber wir sind in Deutschland. Und ich kann kaum chinesisch. Die drei Kinder sprechen auch wenig chinesisch.

I: Ich möchte mal nach den Namen Ihrer Kinder fragen? Haben Ihre Kinder auch deutsche und chinesische Namen?

R: Meine Tochter hat nur einen deutschen Namen. Meine zwei Söhne haben einen deutschen und einen chinesischen Namen.

I: Vielen Danke sehr für das Gespräch.

R: Bitte schön.

Interview 11: 23.01.2010, Magdeburg, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating of Chinese-German, (repeat) negotiating of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. First of all, I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. My hometown is in the northwest of China, in Gansu Province. After I graduated from university I went to Taicang for work. I met my husband. Before I was married I worked in a Korean enterprise, after I was married I had a baby, then I took care of the kid at home until she was more than two years old, at that time, I opened a company with a Germany. So I will come to Germany a couple of times every year, sometime I came here at Christmas, sometime in summer, sometime I come here at New Year holiday. That is the general case.

I: Good. How do you understand the concept of family? What does a family mean to you?

R: Family, for me, is like a bay, a place I can stop and rely on. When I'm ill or unhappy, home is the best place. For me, the family must be cozy, here all members get along very well, there is really a feeling of family.

I: When you were young, what was your parents' education style to you? What did you learn from your parents?

R: My father is not a strict father, I feel he is very kind. Since I had a memory, he had never beaten my sister and I for what we did wrong. From other parents like our neighbors in my childhood, I often heard other kids yelled, being beaten by their father, so I felt I was lucky that my father didn't beat us like that. When we did wrong, he would educate us not to do that, but he never beat us. But when we made principal mistakes, my mother would spank, but not seriously. I feel my father's education style is acceptable, deserves learning. Because my mother had no knowledge, she didn't go to school, so she was different compared with my father.

I: To what extent do you think you are influenced by your parents when you educate your kids? What are the differences between them?

R: As far as my father's education on me is concerned, it has a certain influence on my style of educating the kids. My father educated us well, I feel lucky that I have such a father. For our kid, my husband is German, so from the beginning, I have contradictions with him on some detailed problems of the growth of the kids. Now the

kids are growing up, I feel my husband's way was correct at that time. Now I told him "Thank you very much". He was very principled at that time, he insisted on his way. I felt that how could the German be like this? What a tough heart! For instance, when the kid cries, we Chinese will go and coax, but they won't, they just let the kid cry till the kid was tired, then he would sleep. My husband insisted on that. I wanted to open the door to have a look, he said no: "if you open the door, the kid finds someone comes in to look at him, he will have the dependent character". So my husband insists on not doing like that. So our kid is really obedient. When my mom came here she said: "I've never seen such an obedient kid." Generally the kid will cry when getting up in the morning, but my daughter never cries. She just plays in her bed.

I: Oh, that's great.

R: Very obedient. So now I'm grateful to my husband, he was right. Sometimes I feel she is crying, you should go and coax her, your heart is so tough. He said: "she is OK, you just let her cry". I think my husband is right.

I: How would you describe your role in your family?

R: My role is taking care of the kid, a kind mother, a good wife, considerate.

I: As a Chinese female, in your daily life, what role do you think Chinese traditional culture is playing?

R: On the aspect of the kid?

I: Either on family or the kid.

R: Local culture has some influence sometimes. But every time I was changed by my husband. Every time when we had discussions on the differences between China and German, he won in the end. He believes Germans are always correct, reasonable. He said, although Chinese culture has a long history and abundant, but as the society developed forward gradually, some aspects are destroyed by people. They cannot exist forever like in the past. Chinese culture deserves learning, but seen from the behavior of people....., so each time when I argued with him, he won.

I: How do you understand Chinese culture?

R: Chinese culture is unmatched in my eyes. The special traditional thing has thousands of years of history. It seems it is different from all of the other countries. The cultures of other countries are almost the same, but only the Chinese culture is unique in my eyes. I feel it's the only one.

I: Then how do you understand German culture?

R: I don't understand German culture very much. I just have some understanding of the German.

I: Good, you can say anything you like.

R: The Germans are generally higher than the Chinese as far as quality is concerned. In many places, if there are Chinese, there will be a sign. For instance, no loud talking in some places, but these are only for the Chinese. There will be no such sign for other foreigners. If there is Chinese in a restaurant, or hotel, there will be a sign of "No spitting". Sometimes I think why are these only aiming at Chinese? Why can't the Chinese be treated like foreigners? We can do this better, talking in a low voice, such as in a café. I feel we have great differences on this aspect.

I: This question is, when you stay alone with your kids, to what extent will you have the consciousness that is teaching more of Chinese culture? Like telling a story, speaking chants?

R: I think I never do that consciously, that is when I stay alone with her, I grasp the time to talk about Chinese things to her. Sometimes I will tell her some children's stories, but I don't teach her Chinese culture intentionally. I think she will study culture and history in school gradually. There is no need for me to teach intentionally. In fact I hope she learnt more of Germany. She could know Chinese history, but I hope she is a Germanized kid, not a Sinicized one.

I: Oh, I see. Does your kid go to kindergarten in China?

R: Yes. She goes to kindergarten in China. But she dropped out before she came here this time, because this time she will stay here longer. We want her to practice German well, then send her to a German School in Shanghai .

I: German school is that kind of international school, isn't it?

R: It is all the same as the German school. It is a complete German school as far as the curriculum is concerned. The tuition fee is the same as in Germany. It includes kindergarten and pupil school, it is completely Germanized.

I: What kind of consideration made you decide this? Why not choose a Chinese school?

R: No. First my husband insists on not sending the kid to a Chinese school. I also feel the Chinese school...., how to say? For some people they can lay a good foundation in Chinese school. But I think there is no problem if I talk with her in Chinese. She can also learn some Chinese in school, it is ok if she can write, it is ok if there is no problem in basic communication, reading books. If she really goes to a Chinese school, the kid will be too tired. At weekend, other classmates all go to tutorial classes, some attended classes for two day, Saturday and Sunday are occupied. If I don't send her to this interest class, then when she goes to school on Monday, other classmates will say: I read this, I read that...the kid will feel empty, that's not good. So my husband said: It's impossible for me to send my kid to study in Chinese school, they are even taught Maoism, so an antiquated thing. This cannot be discussed, it will be away from the topic. My husband knows the history of China better than me, my history is not good. He has read much about Chinese history. He insists on not sending the kid to study in Chinese school. We'll stay in China for additional two or three years, after that we may not go back to Germany, we may go to Singapore or Australia. I hope the kids will live in China of course, for that will be convenient, he said that's not good, we must go abroad for the kid. If the kid stay in China, generally speaking, it's not good to the kid's growth. Although we do our best to teach her the dos and don'ts at home, when she goes out she will see people running a cross during the red light, throwing rubbish on the road, spitting everywhere, she grows up seeing these, she will be influenced more or less. He insists on not sending the kid to Chinese school. So he would rather pay a high tuition fee and send the kid to German school.

I: When educating the kid, what is the most important in your eyes? Just now you said, many parents place great hopes on their children, the send them to the tutorial classes

when they are very young, make them study more from an early age. What do you think about the growth of your kid?

R: I think the performance is not very important. She may study some basic things, especially growing healthily on moral and quality. There is no need to rank first every day, it's OK if she learns well. But the most important is the physical and psychological cultivation, don't make her too introvert without communicating with people outside. As for studying, it's ok to develop gradually, I believe so.

I: There is Chinese saying: Spare the rod spoil the child. What do you think about that?

R: I don't think so. Maybe I will have such an idea before.... but now I have lived so long with my husband, I think if we beat the kid, there will be adverse function. You beat her more, she will think she wants to do this more. It is not good for her character. I don't support this, so I won't beak the kid. Spare the rod spoil the child, I think the saying refers to the past, beating the kid if he does not follow you. I think if the kid does wrong, you may explain it to the kid, talk with her kindly, "You should not do this, it's not good". The kid will obey, she knows that. For instance, my daughter painted on the wall when she was very little, I told her "It's not beautiful if you paint on the wall, you draw it on paper, then mom will hang it on the wall." I said so to her, she agreed and next time she won't draw like that. The kid will be obedient. When she was very young, there were many drawers at home, she pulled them herself, at the beginning I said: "you don't go and play there" but my husband said: you just let her go, if she gets her hand trapped and feels pain, she will never go again. That is true, once she jammed her hand and it was painful, she never went there again. She had a good memory, knowing that was not funny.

I: Another saying is: "It's the father's duty for the son's mistake" How do you think about that?

R: I don't think that's complete right. It's natural that the kids make some mistakes in the growing process. But you may talk to the kids when they are young. I don't think it's the duty of the father. Of course you should see what kind of mistake it is, small one or big one. If the father is a drunk, then the kid will be influenced more or less. A family, an incomplete family, single father or single mother, that must be different. The children's character must be different from the kids growing up in a complete family.

I: Do you think there is any difference between you and your husband on the aspect of educating the kid? How would you balance when you came across such a situation?

R: We had different opinions when the kid was very young. Now, gradually, what he said seems correct. The kid is four years old now, I have seen that in the growing process, all he said is advantageous to the kid, although I feel he is a bit cruel, a bit tough. When the kids fall, their parents don't pick them up but let them stand up all by themselves, but for us Chinese, we will run over to the kid and pick him up, help him. The German won't. Besides the kids do not sleep with their parents, they sleep alone in their room. The parents save worry by doing so. In fact the kid is comfortable and the parents have no worry. I believe this way is better than the way the Chinese do. The Chinese are so tired when they take care of the kid, the parents go where the kids

go. In fact I'm in the same situation, but after I had the kid, I think if you the kid wants to play then just let her play, it won't be too painful if she falls, there is nothing dangerous, just let her play. But sometimes the parents follow the kids wherever the kids go. But in fact how can the kids develop themselves, if parents always say: this is not good, that is not good. The clothes will get dirty and so on. The German are not like this, if the clothes are dirty just wash them, just let him play, play on the ground, in the mud. In the summer, we'll think it's not good to play on the water. But they let the kids play, that's good. Touch the earth, contact the stuffs outside, that's good to your health. The Chinese will think not going there, dirty, or put it into mouth and so on. After I experienced these, I feel the kids like to play so too, this is a good way. The Chinese are so tired in taking care of the kids, like my Chinese friend, the mother and the father take care of the kid together, they can't do anything else the whole day. They follow the kid all day, afraid that the kid hits the table and injures his tooth. Because my daughter has a walk learning cart, I sent it to her, her son is now learning walking. I asked her to go out and play, she said no, she had to take care of her son, I said "you may let your husband do that." She said no, "one person is not enough, my son is too naughty." I said "you have the walk-learning car. You may let him learn walking." She said, she used that once, her son's tooth hit it, bleeding, the tooth did not fall out, but was bleeding. I said it's normal, just let him hit himself. So you see the Chinese are afraid. For my daughter, hitting doesn't matter, if she hits, she will be careful, she will know that is painful. When my daughter was very young I was really worry-free. Now she grows older, she can walk and get strong. She was really obedient at that time. When I went out for dinner with friends, she just stayed in the cart sleeping, sleeping all the time after she was filled. When I went out with my friends, they were all surprised: your kid is so cute, why doesn't she cry? She really didn't cry. This kid was really strange, I nursed her once every 2 hours, I nursed her on time when time was up. Sometimes she did not wake up, then I put a milk-bottle in her mouth, she would go on sleeping, very cute. Now she grows up, can move, strong, she is the active kind.

I: Will there be a situation that you will insist on your own idea, as is the traditional practice in China?

R: Yes, there is. The point I insist on is the issue of the kid's meal. The Germans' point on this is, if the kid stops eating, then that's ok, that shows the kid's filled. I want her to eat more, I tried my way to coax her, gave her a doll, attracting her notice, feeding her when she was playing. He would say: "why give her a doll? It's time for the meal". But I will not run after the kid to feed her like other Chinese. My daughter has a baby chair, she sits in it, I give her a doll, then I feed her, that is when she was very young. But now she can eat all by herself. He just puts her there, if she stops eating, that's ok, he takes the food away. We Chinese want to let the kid eat more, the Germans will not insist, if she is hungry, she will eat naturally. Anyway I insist on this, give her a doll, coax her, feed her more.

I: You know that according to Chinese traditional thoughts, the kid does not only belong to their parents, the grandparents also feel they have obligations to discipline and educate the kid. Then what is the situation in your family?

R: In my family, the parents and the kids can't be separated. I jokingly told him, or we don't send her to German school to study, we directly send her to Germany, to your mother, we can also choose a good school there with quality teaching. He said, this is impossible, parents are wherever the kids are, they cannot be taken apart. It is impossible like in China, the grandparents take care of the kid, the father and the mother live alone. This is impossible. It is temporary to send the kid to grandpa and grandma, send the kid to them at the weekend, and make it come back in the evening. But it's impossible to leave the kid there for a long time, the kid must stay with mom and dad. First we need to think, for the kid, what is the feeling of the kid if dad and mom keep away from her. She will feel sad without parents beside her, my husband doesn't understand this. I know this, he will never understand. I even made a joke saying "whether we should have another baby, when we go to Germany, your mother can take care of the kid." He said: "you take it for granted, it's impossible." In China, the grandparents almost do all things, the young parents don't need to do anything. In Germany, I notice that there is no such case in his neighborhoods or with friends. It's impossible that the grandparents take care of the kid, while the young parents stay away. There is no such case. They can have a look at the kid to at most, it is impossible to leave everything to them. So the life philosophies are different. In China, the parents consider for the next generation. First they consider for their child, after the child has child, they will consider for the grandchild. But it is different in Germany, people think of how to enjoy life first saying "I need happiness, I should live a comfortable life, I want to travel. I take care of the kid for you, then what do the parents do, I have my own life." So that's a totally different life philosophy. Even though I ask them to take care of the kids, it's impossible for them to do this. The parents in China consider everything for the next generation, for the generation after the next generation, they give up all of their own life, I feel they are completely considering for their sons and daughters.

I: What's the opinion of your parents on this point?

R: My mom lives with us here sometimes, sometimes she said, now you believe everything abroad is good. I said, because it is right. You see my kid is so cute, right. My elder brother and sister also have kids, that is unmatched. My daughter has dinner together with the kid of my elder sister, my daughter said, your mouth should be like this (imitating her kid having dinner with mouth closed), should not be like that (imitating her kid having dinner with mouth open). Then my dad said: see, she knows this even now she is so young. I was surprised that she could even teach them by saying "your mouth should not be like this, that is ugly". Because when she was very young, I told her, that is ugly, she shouldn't be like that. You should eat with your mouth closed. It's very funny. When I mom sees the kid sleep alone in her bed, she will feel the kid is poor. I said, she will fall asleep, don't worry. Sometimes when she sleeps I look at her, she said, mom, you go to bed. Sometimes I go to her room to

cover her with the quilt, she is asleep. When I see she is so cute, I feel comfort. My mom will be urgent sometimes: The kid stop eating, you let her alone? For the kid of my elder son, his parents have run after him since he was very young, he grows up by feeding. I said, he will grow up naturally. There are many differences, my daughter eats things quietly, some kids sit at the table only for a short time, then will run away. I told my kid, you cannot leave even if only one person hasn't finished until the dinner is over. My daughter eats things slowly, she often finishes the last. She doesn't leave the table casually.

I: Just now you mentioned that when your daughter is communicating, she talked to you in Chinese, and to her father in German. The two languages are developing in balance.

R: She talks more with me. Because she went to the kindergarten there, Chinese was spoken in there. In this period of time in German, I am learning German, I talk to her in German, I also practice my German. But she said, mom, I talk to you in Chinese. She talks to her father in German, and to me in Chinese at once. It seems that she can react automatically. She didn't talk much German before this, she can only speak simple phases, and words. In the summer of 2008, I took her to Germany staying for three months, after she returned to China, she could not speak Chinese at all, all was German. I felt she was thinking something. It seems she cannot express, but after she goes to kindergarten, gradually she can speak Chinese again. The kid studies very fast.

I: Does your kid have a Chinese name?

R: No, only a German name, Eliza. My husband said that is too troublesome, if she has two names, then which one should we call her. One name is enough.

I: Does she have German citizenship?

R: Yes. We applied for a passport for her after she was born.

I: How about yourself?

R: I have still Chinese citizenship, I'm going to change to a German passport, otherwise it is not convenient to go to Germany. I apply for a visa every year, my husband and my daughter don't need to. So I think I just change if I want. The precondition is taking an exam, if you pass, then it is ok.

I: Then you will give up your Chinese passport?

R: Yes. A Chinese passport cannot be applied for again if you give it up. I didn't know this before, I heard this from the teacher when in school. If you give up Chinese nationality, then it can't be changed back. I do this just for the convenience of traveling, I don't mind to have the German passport, or to give up the Chinese passport. If we go somewhere, both of them don't need a visa, only I need one. When I got married, I applied for permanent residence, I was given a visa for three years. The German government changed, not it is strict. It is stipulated that for a three-year visa, I should come back to Germany and live for 3 months in one year. Sometime I didn't stay in Germany for 3 months, I can't always stay here, I should come back to China as well. In the past my visa can be used, now it can't be used, it is strict now.

I: Your kid was born in China, wasn't she?

R: Yes.

I: What's your experience in educating the kid through these years? What good ways or experience can you share with the parents of cross-national especially Sino-German families? For instance your kid has the advantages of language, in fact there are kids in this kind of family who can only speak one language. Please talk about your experience.

R: My experience is that the kids must follow the parents. If the parents say which is right, then the kid should obey. You are a kid, you have to listen to the parents. For instance, the kid cannot drink cola. You can't give what the kid asks for. When you have dinner, you just eat, you can't play this and that. That is, doing what should be done. The parents should make the kid feel comfortable, dad and mom love the kid. Another point is parents cannot spoil the kid. Praise or punish the kids when they deserve that. Plus the kids should be independent from an early age. They do something themselves, such as dropping something, you pick it up by yourself, it's not me that should pick it up. And do not be too self-centered. Like our kid, she is mixed-blood, looks special to some extent. Usually people will say this child is so beautiful, we will hear lots of these words. All is about praise wherever the kid goes. So sometime I think, we can't give her this sense all the time: I am very good everywhere. This is the sense of pride, I don't like she to have the sense of pride. Sometimes I want to cool her down.

I: In this kind of family of two cultures, how can the child absorb them with balance and live easily? Take your daughter as an example, does she have that kind of strong consciousness: "I'm German, I'm not Chinese" ?

R: She has no such strong consciousness. But when she talks about Germany, she will say "my Germany, I want to go to my Germany, my grandma's Germany". Last time she stayed in Germany for three months, I wasn't with her, just let her study German. Then after she came back she looked strange to me, but very soon she got familiar with me again. I met her, I remember, sitting in the car, she leaned in the car, seemed sleepy, I wanted to hug her sleeping in my arms. She said: "I don't want to lean." At that time I felt she was so strange after she came back from Germany. At that time she didn't know Chinese very well, she spoke German. She forgot Chinese, afterwards she got familiar again. This time she and her father came to spend Christmas, I didn't come. I was learning German, having class. She said happily: "will you go, mom?" Her father said: "mom won't go." She said: "why don't you go, mom? If you don't go, I will not know you after I come back." I felt so strange. It's only three months. She said: "I won't know you again." Yes, it's just those three months. You see, the kid remembers all that. About Chinese and German culture, I believe they are complementary. The Chinese take care of the kid spoiling it, sometimes it should be complementary. Germans strengthen independence more. I hope my kid will be more western, people all say she is Europeanized. My daughter looks like pure Westerner. I feel the western education style is better than the eastern as far as taking care of kids is concerned. The kid learns thinking independently about the dos and don'ts. Just like at school. There's a child, my brother's child, my niece, we have lived together for three years. At that time my brother had three children. They are not in good

economic conditions. We support them to lessen the burden of my brother, we let her live with us, afterwards we didn't give birth to the next child, this is like adoption. But we haven't applied for the adoption procedure, the procedure is troublesome. The female is required to be at the age of 30, I'm younger than that age. My niece was born in 1998, she is as tall as me now. Now she is westernized by me.

I: On which aspect?

R: Study. For instance, she studies English. In the evening, she came back to recite text to me. She recited very well, each sentence was correct. I said: "OK, you close your book." On the same text, I changed some words she couldn't answer. In Chinese school, the student says whatever the teacher says. They can't think independently, just like this kind of method for learning English, I feel it is really very stupid. What is the use of reciting the text so skillfully? Rather than the teacher makes dialogue with the student in class, this is easy to strengthen memory, that is more useful, isn't it?

I: Then what is the German school like that you plan to send your kid to?

R: It's completely the same as a German school. The environment and the class time are all the same. My daughter needs to have an interview. They won't accept you if you are not qualified. There are many Sino-German families like this My friend's daughter is six years old. In the past she went to the international school. Her father talked with her in English. This was a big mistake. Afterwards, they thought of speaking German, then they sent her to this German school, but she didn't want to go. Afterwards she studied some simple dialogue in a German family.

I: By my investigation nearly one year ago, whether in China or in Germany, I found out there are many such families everywhere. There are more in large cities like Berlin, Hamburg. In China, there are many families of this kind in Beijing, not mentioning Shanghai, then there are some in Jiangsu Province and Zhejiang Province. For this kind of family, what kind of advise will you give to them?

R: Like this kind of cross-national marriage, it is difficult at the beginning. It needs a long time for adjustment, because the culture difference is great. They need mutual understanding and consideration for the other side. You should not insist on your own ideas all the time, because it is hard for the two people to get along, they need consideration for each other. That's not easy. Sometimes, you feel it's hard to understand when you come across some problems. The life environments are different, the ideas are different, but when you look back on the past, you will feel there are some reasons in it. But at that time you would feel that's impossible for the Chinese, because Germans are principled, whatever will be, will be. There is no room to compromise. So give it more understanding. If you insist on yourself too much, I think there is no way. Like my husband, I have no way, he is very principled. There are also many Sino-German families, where the German husbands follow the Chinese wives, gradually, they become very Chinese-type families. There are many Chinese-type families, so the children are educated more in the Chinese way. Some mothers require their kids to go to Chinese school, require them to study Chinese good. Of course it is good to study Chinese well, but the kids are too tired. Why not let the kids live a happy childhood?

I: Thank you very much for your interview! I wish you a happy family!

R: You are welcome. Thank you!

Table: Interviews in China

Date of interview	Place/setting of interview	Family status of respondent	Cultural background of respondent	Language used in interview	Length of interview	Method of recording
04.08.2009	Beijing, sitting room of the family	Mother	German	German	31 mins.	Audio recorder
See above	See above	Father	Chinese	Chinese	32 mins.	See above
11.08.2009	Beijing, sitting room of the family	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	48 mins.	See above
See above	Beijing, balcony of the family	Father	German	German	40 mins.	Taking notes
05.09.2009	Wuxi, sitting room of the family	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	1h. 4mins.	Audio recorder
See above	See above	Father	German	German	25 mins.	Taking notes
06.03.2010	Taicing, sitting room of the family	Father	German	German	37 mins.	Audio recorder
See above	Taicang, sitting room of the family	Mother	Chinese	Chinese	41 mins.	See above
See above	See above	Father	German	German	34 mins.	See above

Interviews in China

Interview 1: 04.08.2009, Beijing, with a German mother

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universitt in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und mglichst die entsprechende Lsung fr die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird spter anonym zitiert. Das heit, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht fr andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen fr meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausfhrlich wie mglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst mchte ich sehr gerne etwas Nheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzhlen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ich bin nach China gekommen, weil ich Schneiderin bin und selbstndig arbeiten mchte. Ich will nach schnen Stoffen suchen, chinesischen Materialien, einer Seide.

I: Welche Erziehung haben Sie in Ihrer Familie bekommen, als Sie klein waren?

R: Mein Vater ist sehr streng und hat traditionell erzogen. Da er selbst als Kind in seiner Familie geschlagen wurde, hatte er sich vorgenommen seine Kinder nicht zu schlagen. Aber trotzdem haben wir vor ihm groe Angst gehabt. Meine Mutter, die Hauptrolle bei meiner Erziehung hatte, war Lehrerin in einer Schule, wo es geistig behinderte Kinder gab. Ihr Erziehungsmotto ist Erziehen durch Vorleben. [?] Mein Vater ist Knstler, Keramiker. Es ist sehr kulturell in seine Familie.[?]

I: Was bedeutet Familie fr Sie?

R: Familie fr mich ist meine kleine Familie, mit meinem Mann und meinen Kindern.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Eigentlich will ich es wie meine Mutter machen. Leider habe ich keine Zeit dafr. Manchmal will ich mit meinen Kindern schimpfen, wie mein Vater es mit uns gemacht hat. Manchmal will ich auch nicht, wenn die Kinder zu laut sind. Aber ich wollte es eigentlich nicht mit den Kindern so machen. China ist ein ganz anderes Land. In Deutschland gehe ich zu jeder Jahreszeit zur Kirche. Alle Schule sind von der Religion sehr geprgt. Die Jahreszeit ist bestimmen, dass man fr Ostern, Nikolaus und Weihnachten vorbereitet. Hier feiert man auch, aber ein bisschen durcheinander. Ich kann Weihnachten nicht Deutschland fahren, weil die Kinder keine Ferien haben, und ich muss auch arbeiten. Ich gehe jeden Sonntag zur Kirche.[?] Ich gehe auch zur chinesischen Kirche.

I: Wie wrden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Ich hoffe, dass ich die Hauptrolle habe. Aber ich muss Geld verdienen. Die Kinder gehen zur chinesischen Schule. Natrlich muss ich auch ihnen etwas deutsches

beibringen. Ich habe natürlich auch die Mutterrolle. Es ist klar. Ich bin auch Koch, aber nur zwei Mal pro Woche.

I: Kochen Sie gern?

R: Ja, weil ich nicht jeden Tag kochen muss.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Die deutsche oder die europäische?

I: Die deutsche.

R: Bevor ich nach China gekommen war, habe ich acht Jahre in Paris gearbeitet und bin auch sehr geprägt. Durch meine Arbeit bin ich von meiner Kultur sehr geprägt. [?] Ansonsten höre ich gern die deutsche Musik, z.B. Bach. Er spielt auch eine Rolle bei mir. Ich spiele auch was. Ich weiß nicht, was Sie meinen, Essen oder solche Sachen?

I: Ja, auch.

R: Wir sind in China und essen natürlich meistens chinesisch. Aber ich trinke jeden Tag Kaffee.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihren Kindern sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ja, ich lese die deutschen Kinderbücher mit den Kindern, täglich. Die Kinder sind zu klein, über die deutsche Geschichte zu erzählen. Wenn ich meine Kindheit und die Kindheit meiner Kinder vergleiche, haben sich viele Sachen sehr geändert. Es ist nicht der Unterschied zwischen China und Deutschland. Wenn ich etwas nicht verstehe, ist es wahrscheinlich nicht typisch für China. In Europa ist es wahrscheinlich auch so. Als ich klein war, durfte ich Kriminalfilm nicht gucken. Aber jetzt gucken Kinder nicht nur in China, sondern auch in anderen Ländern solche Filme.

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: Ich habe gewusst, dass ich diese Kultur nicht verstehe. Mein Mann, z.B. hat nicht in Deutschland lange gelebt. Aber er kann gut mit Deutschen und Chinesen umgehen. Ich habe immer ein Problem zu verstehen. Ich bin viel zu direkt. Nach der chinesischen Art sagt man nicht „nein“, sondern lächelt immer. Ich kann das leider nicht. Ich muss zugeben, dass ich die chinesische Kultur nicht verstehe. Ich bin aber an der Kultur interessiert. Aber ich kann Künstler oder Schriftsteller nicht nennen. In der Musik kenne ich mich überhaupt nicht aus. Ich kann nur die chinesische Umgangssprache. Aber ich kann die chinesischen Bücher nicht lesen.

I: Wie lange Sie sind schon ///

R: Acht Jahre.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Dass die Kinder wirklich die Kindheit haben. Ich will nicht, dass meine Kinder so früh nur lernen und der gegenseitige Konkurrenz ausgesetzt werden. Wir bekommen schon genug.

I: Besuchen Ihre Kinder außer der Schule andere Kurse?

R: Klavierunterricht. Wir haben auch eine Mallehrerin, aber sie kommt unregelmäßig.

I: Was ist der große kulturelle Unterschied mit Ihrem Mann bei der Kindererziehung? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: Ich muss sagen, es ist nicht der kulturellen Unterschied, sondern von der familiären Herkunft. Ich komme aus einer ganz normalen Familie in Deutschland. Ich habe Glück gehabt, dass ich mit anderen Kindern aus verschiedenen Kulturen aufgewachsen bin. Mein Mann kommt aus einem Dorf und ist dort aufgewachsen. Die Mutter kann nicht lesen. Er hat Geschwister. Aber es gab nicht genug zu essen. Als er zehn war, ging er zu seiner Tante und dort kam er zur Schule. Von dem Hintergrund hier war es ganz anders als bei mir. Die Erziehung bei Tisch z. B., will ich so machen wie meine Mutter. Man soll nicht ständig sagen, was die Kinder machen sollen, sondern man führt vor. Wenn jemand mit dir spricht, solltest du ihn anschauen.

I: Meistens haben Sie die gleiche Meinung mit Ihrem Mann bei der Erziehung?

R: Wir haben keine Auseinandersetzungen bei der Erziehung. Wir haben das gleiche Ziel in der Erziehung. Wir haben vielleicht unterschiedliche Arten. Mein Mann schimpft die Kinder aus und sagt: „du machst es so und so.“ Ich will z.B. mit den Kindern einfach zum Konzert gehen. [?] Und lass sie erwachsen werden. Die Kinder verstehen irgendwann den Grund dafür. Ich habe einfach den Eindruck in China gehabt, dass der Lehrer kommt und erklärt, was es ist. Aber die Kinder bekommen wenig Zeit, es sich zu überlegen

I: Vielleicht haben Sie schon gewusst, dass ein Kind in den meisten chinesischen Familie nicht nur den Eltern gehört, sondern der ganzen Familie. Wie wichtig sind die Großeltern bei der Kindererziehung in Ihrer Familie?

R: Wir leben nicht in einem Ort. Sie sehen die Kinder nur einmal pro Jahr.

I: Letzte Frage, als ein Ausländer in einem fremden Land und als ein Elternteil in einer interkulturelle Familie, welche Tipps können Sie solche Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Die Eltern sollen die Kultur gegenseitig respektieren und nicht immer nur die eigene Kultur zeigen.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch!

R: Bitte schön.

Interview 2: 04.08.2009, Beijing, with a Chinese father

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating of Chinese-German, (repeat) negotiating of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. So first I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. I was born in a village of Xiangfan in Hubei Province. After I graduated from middle school, I entered a Sino-German joint school in Wuhan studying brewing for three years, after that I continued studying brewing for another two years in a junior college, altogether I have studied brewing for five years. Because the school was established by German, so I studied German, afterwards I worked in the western professional company. I didn't study German very well, so I went to the Tongji Medical University in Wuhan studying German for six months. Then I entered a French company doing business, mainly selling beer from Germany. Then just because I did wine business with a French company, I started learning the technique of making wine. I kept learning French when I learnt wine making, in 2000 I went to Beijing Language and Culture University to continue my study of French, after that I learnt wine making, and have been engaged in the work on making wine.

I: What kind of education did you receive, when you were a child? What did you learn from your parents?

R: In my childhood I received the typical common rural family education in China. There were four girls in my family, in such a poor village in China, parents almost had no time teaching children, the children played outside without being cared about, it can be called free range cultivation! We were given some Chinese traditional culture education, the children were infused with the idea of studying hard and being active.

I: How do you understand the concept of family?

R: When I was young, I didn't have a special concept about family. Because apart from my parents, many family members lived together, we were a big family. My parents were busy outside, not having much time taking care of us, so as far as I am concerned, I have more concern for my own children.

I: To what a degree does the family education you received in your childhood influence your teaching method to your own children?

R: Because my parents had almost no time educating me when I was young, I did everything by myself. I was very eager to have the care and love from my parents, so I will give more concern to my own children, I don't hope that my children feel no concern from parents like what I feel after they grow up.

I: How would you comment or describe your role in your family?

R: The role of father. As a father, and also as the husband of the mom of the children, I am a figure responsible for everything in the family. I should shoulder the heavy burden of the family. You got to take good care of your wife and children, concerning everything in the family.

I: What role do you believe your home culture or Chinese culture plays in your daily life?

R: I believe this is not the function of local culture, if it is pure local life style, you can not live together with the foreigners. If you are a pure Chinese, you can not communicate with the westerns, you have a totally different life style, mental state and thinking pattern are also different. In these years I learnt German and French, I have communication with foreigners all the time, so as far as I am concerned, I'm not

a pure Chinese, I'm able to be accustomed to the life style and thinking pattern of the foreigners, so when I stay with them, I use the thinking pattern of the westerners, when I stay with Chinese, I use the thinking pattern of the Chinese. I use the pure Chinese thinking pattern to study and accept the advanced knowledge of them. But for more of the time you have to teach the traditional knowledge to your children and let them know. Because although they are half foreigners, half Chinese, I hope they can be aware of their being Chinese.

I: When you stay alone with your children, will you teach them some knowledge of Chinese culture consciously?

R: Yes. This is from the influence of the whole social ethnic, so I can't say that my child is pure German. Maybe their mother will say: "You are a German". But in the eyes of the German, they are not, because that is the reality of the society in Germany.

I: Then how do you understand German culture? What does German culture mean to you?

R: To tell you the truth, I have little understanding of German culture, I can only speak a little German. I understand nothing else. I can't even read German newspapers, so I really don't know what German culture is, what western culture is.

I: So what do you believe is the most important thing when you teach your child?

R: Moral trait. The moral trait of the child is the basis of being a man.

I: As far as teaching the children is concerned, on which aspects do you think you have different ideas with your wife? And how will you weigh and deal with this situation?

R: We almost have no different ideas. We can understand each other for most of the time. Children are taught to write and recite hard in Chinese education style, my wife does not believe that's good, but after six months, the effect is obvious, then she feels that is good, other German also feel that is good. After my children graduated from Grade One, they even knew more than the children in Grade Four. The Chinese children study hard since Grade One. But in western education style, the children play almost every day. They learn things when they play.

I: So you mean that your children benefit from Chinese educational style. Is it due to the good education method of the teacher or your personal effort?

R: We cannot say that the Chinese way of educating is totally bad. At least 50-60% of the Chinese education style is good. The weakness lies in it gives no freedom of thinking to children, it limits what they should do. Whereas in western education style, the children are given freedom to release themselves, there is no limit on what they must do. These are two extremes, but there is no good or bad between them, each of them has its merit.

I: Both of your children go to primary school now, don't they? What kind of school is it?

R: The second child doesn't go to school yet, she will start school in September. The first child goes to a traditional Chinese primary school.

I: What is the reason for that?

R: They are in China.

I: What about an international school or the school for the Embassy?

R: I have considered that. Too expensive, we cannot afford it. We don't mean not to let my son enter that kind of school. After a couple of years, when he can write good Chinese characters and has laid a foundation for Chinese characters, we will let him enter that kind of school. At that time we hope we have enough money, we will be able to send the two children to that school. The German schools are very expensive. You can bring this to the notice of the German government, and give some help to solve this problem. In Germany all compulsory education is free, but in China, German education is not compulsory. Although my wife is German, we still have to pay, but other children's parents work in big companies of Germany, or work for the government, then the government or the company has to pay them. But we are freelancers, the government doesn't give us money, so our children cannot go to the German school, although we want them to. No way, too expensive.

I: Is that kind of school based on the German educational system?

R: Yes. Hope you can tell the Ministry of Education not to neglect people like us. You do this job under the funds issued by the Ministry of Education or who pays you for this?

I: Scholarship of university.

R: Scholarship of university. Please write to the Minister of Education, tell them there are many such families in China, they can't receive education of German style, why?

I: Do you know their tuition fee?

R: Yes I know. It is nearly 700-1000 Euros for one month. After you go back to Germany, please let the Minister of Education know that you are concerned about, asking them to solve this problem. We have no way now. If we send our children to a public school in Germany, that is free, but it is not the case here. This problem not only exists in our family, many families come across such problems. The German spend so much money to lay the foundation to promote German culture, my idea benefits from the German approaches. Many years ago they invested in the beer industry in China, I studied there and I know the Germans, so many things happened. So you must write a letter to the Minister of Education of Germany, it will be so good if you can this problem.

I: If there was not the problem of the tuition fee, you tend to let the children enter their school?

R: Yes. They free the children's ideas, in this situation. But the Chinese education system is to let you follow the procedures, make you have no free ideas to communicate. Of course, if a person's ideas are suppressed, it is not easy to release them. But if a person's ideas are released and natural, it is OK to control him more.

I: How do you think about "It's the father's duty on the son's mistake" and "Spare the rod, spoil the child"?

R: This is a saying aiming at the fatuous Chinese, not for the universal Chinese. This traditional saying is only suitable for the family whose parents didn't have much knowledge. This won't happen in those knowledgeable and intellectual families. This is not a universal phenomenon.

I: Compared with some Sino-German families, some child only speak one language, that is German, so your child is more progressive on this aspect compared with them, what do you think about this?

R: Children can accept more things, and have accepting ability. They need such chances to accept such things. We want them to study French, English and other languages if there is a chance and attend such lessons.

I: In a Chinese traditional family the children not only belong to their parents but also to the whole big family, especially maternal grandma, maternal grandpa, paternal grandma and paternal grandpa. What role do the grandmother and grandfather play in the family education of the children in your family?

R: My parents have little influence on my children, almost no influence. We depend on ourselves to teach our children.

I: For the mixed marriage, especially Sino-German marriage, what kind of advice on children's education could you give to the parents?

R: I really don't have any experience. But one point is that parents should have as much time as possible to stay with the children, they need to afford time to cultivate their children.

I: Good. Thank you for your invitation!

R: You are welcome.

Interview 3: 11.08.2009, Beijing, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. So first I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Sure! I lived in a cadre family when I was young. But my parents needed to work so they have no time to educate me. They sent me to my grandma's family. My maternal grandma was a very famous pediatrician, my maternal grandpa was a businessman. I often went to their place. In my memory, I grew up in the wonderful life in the village. Afterwards I went back to my parents when I went to school, my parents gave much of love to me, but my father was very strict to me, so I grew up in the environment of a strict father and a kind mother. My parents took much account of my studies, afterward I entered Shanxi Normal University to learn foreign languages. After I had graduated, I taught for over a year, I joined the army when I was 18. In

China politics is first, so I grew up in the atmosphere of being admired and worshipped. Afterwards I left for Germany studying in the University of Mannheim, Germanic Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics. After that I stayed in Germany, and met my husband in Austria. Because I was much affected by western education, I didn't feel much of a culture conflict. I feel my experience is very simple, I don't know the society very well, making friends is very direct for me. When I was young I lived an easy life, I had no difficult memory, I grew up in the process of being admired. I didn't live a rough time in Germany, I met with my husband and we got married, then I gave birth to a son. I stayed at home for one year, he went to the nursery of our university when he was one and a half, so I could continue studying. My experience is really too simple. But I like to attend social activities very much, when I was in German, there was a Sino-German Friendship Association at the Delta of Rhine and Neckar, I was chair of this association, I like to moderate a program very much. So I moderated the Mid-Autumn Festival Party. Due to business communication, I had a good relationship with CEO and chairmen of many large enterprises in German transnational groups. Meantime I acted as advanced consultant for two enterprises in Germany, when they merge with the large companies in China, I help them as a bridge or a tie, they would invite me to the important negotiations. Afterwards, due to the expansion of my husband's business scope, we had to go back to China very often, so when our son was at the age of six, which was also school age, we had decided and bought an apartment, so we don't have to live in a Beijing Hotel. Then my child went to the embassy school here. I had a daughter three years ago. I gave most of my time and energy to her, but I didn't give up association with people. We did anti-poverty programs in China, one is the developing association, the other is the magazine of China Anti-poverty Association. My life is always related to international exchange, whether enterprise exchange, culture exchange, or art exchange. This means I've never left what I'm good at. Today you sit here and want to know about my family, I feel that is all. If you want to know something else, I could talk more to you.

I: I would like to know your understanding of the concept of family. What does family mean to you?

R: I believe family is very important to me, family is the smallest unit of society. I feel that no matter what we do, we should regulate the family first before starting careers and making friends.

I: When you were small, what kind of education did you receive from your parent in your family?

R: Parents' education. My mom gave me much love, letting me study. She did not let me do housework. So now I'm not good at housework. My father was very strict with me. I feel that there is a gap between me and my father. But the two children in my family have no such feeling.

I: What kind of difference do you believe is there between your own education style you're your parents' style?

R: I seldom criticize my children. I have always been encouraging them. I believe if you want your children to love you, firstly the parents should give love to them, I devote my heart to my children, to my friends, so the natural character of human beings can not be changed. I hope my character and temper would leave virtues to my children.

I: Then in your family, how do you define your role?

R: I feel I play many roles. Firstly I'm a mother, I feel I'm a mother full of love. Meantime I want to be a good wife. I feel there are many roles for a female. You need to be recognized by your friends, you need to have your own career. I am a female with a career and I am a person who brings happy things to the society. I always want to give love to make the world a better place.

I: In your life, what role do you think your local culture, or Chinese culture plays in your daily life?

R: I feel I chase for freedom, I like being free at all times. I feel there was little influence from Chinese culture, because I learnt foreign languages very fast. I understand the culture of freedom, the western culture, I understand the feeling of developing yourself freely, this is better than Chinese culture. I have not much understanding of Chinese traditional culture, I like western freedom. I feel I don't need to study Confucianism. I just need to teach my children to freely develop their creativity, giving them a happy, free, and knowledgeable life, this is my idea.

I: When you stay alone with your child, will you give them more Chinese culture consciously?

R: No.

I: How do you understand the Chinese two sayings "It is the father's duty on the son's mistake" and "Spare the rod, spoil the child"?

R: I believe neither of them is correct. Both of them are extremes. We are educating our children, but not to limit their thinking. I don't think beating and blaming are feasible methods, I feel you give them love and then they will love you. We hope the children can be free, can do what they like in this society, so I don't agree with either of the sayings.

I: How do you understand German culture?

R: I feel their education is free. I don't know whether Chinese education is good, or German education is good. It is too relaxing and natural from kindergarten to school education, I wonder if it's good for the future of Germany. I feel that the German children have no great ambitions. Most of them are like this. But it's too strict in the kindergarten of China. Children have no free time. I feel that they are two extremes in China and Germany, one is too free, one is too suppressing, so I sent my daughter to an international kindergarten, maybe I'm in the middle.

I: What is the difference between China and Germany, concerning education?

R: For instance, German people like to take the baby into the yard not long after they give birth to the baby. So I also took my son for a walk three days after he was born. I didn't have postpartum period, I went out every day for fresh air. My son liked living in Germany. He attended a kindergarten in Germany. The teachers didn't ask the

children to learn something by heart. My son spent three years there and learned painting. Most of his time was just to play. It was very different from the Chinese. I think the German one is too relaxed and doesn't seem to have a certain goal of educating. When we came back to China, we also took our children back to China. But the pre-school education in China is too strict and always goal-oriented. Children have to learn knowledge of primary school.

I: What will you do if you have a different opinion on education from your husband?

R: When we have a disagreement, for most of the time I do things according to my husband's method. I will not insist on my way for most of the time, because the children follow their father's words.

I: What do you think is the most important thing in the process of educating children?

R: The most important thing is that I want to cultivate them to be independent and strong. I want to cultivate them into confident persons. And I require them to carry things through to the end for everything. I feel these qualities are important, every day they should know what to do and have a plan, thus their life won't be too bad. The terrible thing is that they have no target, no plan, so I cultivate them on these qualities, having strong faith, being confident, setting up targets, and making plans.

I: In a Chinese traditional family the children not only belong to their parents but to the whole big family. What role do the grandmother and grandfather play on in the family education of the children in your family?

R: The German grandpa and grandma are far away from us. But when the children go to their house, they love them very much. My parents do not live Beijing. So my husband and I are mainly responsible for educating the children.

I: Last time when I paid a visit, I found your little daughter had a strong language ability to convert between the two languages. How do you make her reach this?

R: In fact, when I was pregnant, I pay much attention to antenatal training, the baby not only listened to music, but also got in touch with many languages, so when she was very little, she could sing English songs. We followed the German custom sending the child to kindergarten when she was three years old. I sang English songs to her every day, the child listened to me, so she had good language ability. Her father insisted on showing her books after he came back from work, this made a deep impression on the child. My daughter likes listening to music, she can explain her feeling for music. I and her father gave our children much love and much time. For my husband, our children are more important than his business.

I: In China, for the development of the children, they are provided with many tutor classes outside school when they are very young, what do you think about this?

R: I think every parent hopes their children are outstanding, but we don't want to force the children to do things. You see, when my son was getting older, he only attends one group after class. We didn't let him attend any other class. My daughter attends an English class, in this early education class, she can study until she is five or six years old with certain amount of tuition fee. When she grows up we will let her study playing the piano, we don't want to force her to learn other things, if she is interested, then we'll apply for her.

I: Your child grows up in a Sino-German family, in accordance with your own experience, what kind of experiences do you have? And what suggestion could you give?

R: I feel our family with transnational culture is very interesting. My children have accepted international custom, culture, education, philosophy since they were very young. When they grew up, although they have no special techniques, but depending on their language gifts, they will have a good life. So for this kind of cross-culture family, I believe these children are lucky, the family with a single culture is somehow dull. I believe if we expand their imagination and creativity, their life will be more splendid. In future if the Sino-German family club is established, I will invite you to develop it with me together, doing a meaningful thing for society. Family is an element for society. If every small family pays attention to develop itself well, then the society will be much better.

I: Right. Thank you very much for your time! I wish your children good health and your family happiness!

R: Thank you!

Interview 4: 11.08.2009, Beijing, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universitt in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und mglichst die entsprechende Lsung fr die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird spter anonym zitiert. Das heit, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht fr andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen fr meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausfhrlich wie mglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein, habe ich nicht.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst mchte ich sehr gerne etwas Nheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzhlen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ich habe BWL studiert. Whrend des Studiums habe ich viele Praktika gemacht, bei SIEMENS, bei Mercedes-Benz. Ich bin viel gereist, nach Europa, Sdamerika, und Indien auch. Jetzt lebe ich in China und ich habe mit meiner Frau viele Veranstaltungen von der deutschen Botschaft mitgemacht.

I: Was bedeutet Familie fr Sie?

R: Familie ist sehr wichtig fr mich. Sie ist die Basis, um alle Probleme zu lsen. Ich hole meinen Sohn mit meinem Fahrrad ab. Wir reden ber seinen Tag in der Schule unterwegs.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Es war sehr ähnlich wie die Erziehung in meiner eigenen Familie in China. Wir reden ganz viel miteinander. Aber meistens habe ich wenig Zeit für meine Kinder. Es gibt sicherlich einen Einfluss der Gedanken, die Mentalität. Ich bin stolz auf meinen Familienmitglieder. Man soll den Kindern nicht zu viel Stress geben. Manche Ausländer glauben, dass die Erziehung in China schlecht ist, weil die Kinder immer Stress von den Eltern und von der Schule bekommen. Mein Sohn, z.B. geht zur deutschen Botschaftsschule. Es gibt keinen Stress. Aber er kriegt auch immer gute Noten. In China gibt es zu viele Leute, aber wenig Plätze zu studieren. Deswegen muss man sehr guten Note haben damit man einen Platz fürs Studium bekommen kann. Also sind die chinesischen Kinder unter Leistungsdruck.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Ich bin der Partner meiner Frau und der Freund meiner Kinder. Ich gebe meinen Kindern keinen Druck. Wenn sie Probleme haben, helfe ich ihnen gern. Darüber hinaus bin ich der Ernährer in der Familie.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Die deutsche Kultur bedeutet für mich Ehrlichkeit, Fleißig und Pünktlichkeit. Als Deutscher werde ich es immer beibehalten. Soweit ich weiß, gibt es ca. 5000 Deutschen in Beijing, Davon kenne ich ungefähr 2500. Ich habe viele Kontakte mit ihnen. Meistens sind sie als Administratoren in der deutschen Botschaft und deren Schule oder in den deutschen Firmen tätig.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihrem Sohn sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ja. Wenn ich mit meinen Kindern allein bin, erzähle ich gern etwas über Deutschland. Allmählich wissen meine Kinder, insbesondere mein Sohn, ganz viel über Deutschland.

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: China hat eine lange Geschichte und Tradition. Seine Kunst und Architektur haben einen starken Einfluss auf die ganze Welt. Viele Ausländer wissen wenig davon. Bis zur heutigen Entwicklung hat China einen Stillstand erlebt. Mao Zedong hat schlimme Fehler gemacht. Viele Leute sind verhungert. Seit Ende der 80er Jahre hat China sich schnell entwickelt. Ich finde, dass das Leben in China, in Peking vielfältiger als in Deutschland ist. Wenn ich nur in Deutschland gelebt hätte, hätte ich nicht so viele Leute aus der Botschaft oder CEO kennengelernt.

I: Was ist der große kulturelle Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrer Frau bei der Kindererziehung? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: In China spielt die Hierarchie eine bedeutende Rolle. Einmal wollte meine Frau meinen Sohn einen chinesischen Senior als „Opa“ begrüßen lassen. Mein Sohn wollte aber nicht und sagte:“ er ist nicht mein Opa.“ Meine Frau war das sehr peinlich. Weil es sehr typisch in China ist, dass man den Fremden als Familienmitglied nennt. Die Chinesen legen also viel Wert auf die Beziehung. Beim Essen gibt es eine bestimmte Sitzregel. Man möchte gern mit der berühmten Person Fotos machen und „Zum Wohl“ trinken. Auf der anderen Seite soll das Verhalten von manchen Chinesen, berühmte Personen inklusive, verbessert werden, z. B. spucken auf der Straße. Nach

meiner Ansicht ist meine Frau Europäer geworden. Wir haben ganz viel diskutiert über Kindererziehung, Kultur, usw. Ich glaube, dass jedes Ehepaar ständig diskutieren soll. Man hat mehr Verständnis füreinander.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Erziehung?

R: Ich denke, dass man die richtige Kindheit haben soll. Man soll von Klein an das Teilen lernen, Liebe mit Freunden, mit Verwandten teilen. Man bringt Leistungen durch das Tun.

I: Wie wichtig sind die Großeltern des Kindes bei der Kinderziehung in Ihrer Familie?

R: Die Erziehung der Großeltern ist unwichtig. Die Erziehung soll das Kind direkt von den Eltern bekommen.

I: Welche Erfahrungen haben Sie bei der Sprache von Ihren Kindern gemacht?

R: Mein Sohn ist in Deutschland geboren und hat dort den Kindergarten besucht. Er hat chinesisch mit seiner Mutter gelernt. Sie haben zusammen die chinesischen CDs gehört und Filme geguckt. Als mein Sohn erst mal in China war, wollte er lieber deutsch sprechen. Er hat mir geholfen, das Chinesisch von unserer Putzfrau zu übersetzen. Im vergangenen Jahr hat mein Sohn mir erzählt, dass das Englisch von manchen chinesischen Studenten schlecht ist. Das finde ich auch. 90% der Chinesen sprechen schlecht Englisch. Meine kleine Tochter spricht gut Deutsch und Chinesisch. Sie besucht einen internationalen Kindergarten in Peking.

I: Wie verstehen Sie die zwei chinesischen Redewendungen: es ist der Fehler des Vaters, wenn das Kind nicht erziehbar ist und wer den Stock schont, verwöhnt das Kind?

R: In Deutschland haben wir ein ähnliches Sprichwort: der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm. Ich glaube, man soll nicht pauschalisieren.

I: Welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Meine Tipps wären, dass binationale Familien ständig eigene Erfahrungen miteinander austauschen sollen. Die Eltern sollen die Kinder nicht schlagen und den Kindern nicht zu viel Stress geben. In Deutschland gibt es das Einschulungssystem. Also kann man die Schule nicht auswählen. In der Grundschule gibt es zahlreiche Kinder aus verschiedenen Ländern. Sie können nicht gut Deutsch sprechen. Es ist auch ein Grund, dass wir nach China umgezogen sind.

I: Was sind die Ziele Ihrer Kindererziehung? Was wollen Sie bei Ihren Kindern erreichen?

R: Ich möchte die Flexibilität erhalten. Es kommt darauf an, ob meine Kinder in China zurechtkommen können. Aber ich glaube, dass ich meinen Sohn nach Deutschland zum Studium schicken will. Meine Tochter wahrscheinlich auch.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch!

R: Gern.

Interview 5: 05.09.2009, Wuxi, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education

Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. So first I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes. I'm a mother of three kids. After I had my kids my work is taking care of the three kids.

I: Then how do you understand the concept of family? What does the family mean for you?

R: That's important of course. I hope the family members can stay together as long as they can. Everybody is healthy, and happy, I think this is of great importance.

I: What education did you obtain from your parents in your childhood? What was your family atmosphere and education atmosphere?

R: In my childhood my parents didn't have much time taking care of my sister and I, because my parents don't have much knowledge and due to their character, I did my things all by myself. I grew up like this gradually.

I: Compared with the family education you got from your parents, to what extent do you think does it influence your educating your kid?

R: Differences? When I was young, my parents were not strict with us. They released us doing what we wanted to do. Relatively I'm stern with my kids. First, my kids are not allowed to tell lies. This is the most important. Besides I feel it is good to let them study and deal with it by themselves. Sometimes I will be stern with them to correct their poor living habits especially the habits on study.

I: In your family, how will you define your role?

R: Of course the role of mother is the most important. I feel that my role is taking good care of the kids and my husband.

I: In your daily life, how do you understand your Chinese local culture especially on the aspect of educating your kids?

R: My husband is German, I'm Chinese. But we seldom talk about this. I feel there is little difference between his parents' family and our Chinese family. His family is also traditional one. On the aspect of educating kids, I feel there are not many differences from China. His mother is strict with the kids, she believes parents should not be too lenient and spoil the kids. But for the kids, I feel there is no big difference, because they are still young, there are no complicated things involved.

I: Ok. As a Chinese, how do you understand Chinese culture?

R: Most of Chinese culture is good and deserves our learning. But as far as understanding is concerned, this problem is hard to answer. Chinese is profound. It is

difficult if you communicate these with the kids. We can only penetrate in life. But for me, I don't think there are any big differences.

I: When you stay alone with the kids, will you take the chances to teach them something about Chinese culture consciously?

R: Sometimes I will. For instance, I will talk about something traditional, like Chinese holidays, or life habit or tell them some stories.

I: What rules will you follow?

R: For instance, when you have dinner, you should keep sitting formally. You can't leave your seat, unless you finish eating. You should be polite and keep your voice lower, when you see elderly people. When my children eat out with my parents, they have to behave in the Chinese way. I talk about this to my kids all the time. Because it is also the same in my husband's family, his mother requires these things too. The kids are not allowed to play if they don't finish dinner and ask for permission. In the evening before sleep, everyone should greet saying I'm going to sleep. I feel their family pay much attention to etiquette. Many Chinese families do not pay attention to this. I feel this habit of Germans is very good, the say hello after they get up in the morning, greeting each other, you will feel comfortable in your heart.

I: Your husband is German, then how do you understand German culture?

R: I don't have much understanding of German culture. But their culture can be reflected on family life, there are differences between Germany and China, I feel that their traditions are very good, they are polite to others Their behaviors are very good. They are polite to each other, very courteous, also very warm hearted. Not all of them are open. The people I contacted are very traditional.

I: You must have heard of two sayings, one is "Spare the rod, spoil the child", another is "It's the father's duty for the son's mistake", what is your understanding about that?

R: It is reasonable to some extent, I agree with that. I understand that the meaning of rod is being strict, it does not really mean beating with sticks, I feel "Spare the rod, spoil the child" means the parents must be strict with the kids, they cannot spoil the kids. And as for "the father's duty", father has the responsibility to educate the kid, father cannot do nothing on this aspect. Because the wisdoms between father and mother are different, father will educate with his soft aspects, the targets of the parents are the same, but the methods are different. The kids may receive different results. In my family I am very strict, my husband spends less time with the kids, but I feel although the time is not long and he is not stern on the kids, but I feel the kids follow his words. So father has responsibility to educate the kids. Although it is "father's duty" but I don't think it is the responsibility just for one person, is it?

I: In your educating process, what are the disagreements between you and your husband?

R: Basically we don't have disagreement. He can only feel my attitude toward the kids is not good sometimes, but he understands that, sometimes the family stuffs are boring, so my attitude may be bad, he understands that. He often reminds me to show a good attitude to the kids. But he agrees I'm a bit strict with the kids. My three kids are all good and tractable.

I: In your opinion, what do you think is the most important on educating the kids?

R: First I should let them understand to be a good person. I don't like if they lie. I hope they grow up without hatred in their hearts. I hope they are kind, and understand others on good aspects on being a human, and can get along with others.

I: Then what kind of school do your kids go to?

R: The school is fine, a relatively good school.

I: That kind of common Chinese school?

R: Yes.

I: It is the same case with your second child, right?

R: My son goes to the foreign language school, he learnt more, apart from culture courses, he learnt much in other courses. My elder daughter also studied in foreign language school for two years, there were few kids in her class, only seven kids. She didn't study well in Grade One and Grade Two, when she did homework back from school, I needed to sit beside her, anyway it was tiring. After Grade Three, I sent her to a foreign language school, after that she studied easily, and studied well, I didn't know her English is so good that she can write an essay, and she gets along with her classmates and teacher. But I felt she learnt little and then I sent her to Chinese school. I was always confused which school is more suitable for the kid. Maybe a comprehensive one is better. In foreign school, she could organize a cheering squad, a music band and her character would be open and active. There was no much study pressure. Now back in Chinese school, she has no time making a model airplane or an investigation, but she still needs to learn Chinese.

I: Then did you transfer her from the international school to the common school for the sake of language?

R: Mainly due to study. I feel what they teach there is simple, what is taught in Chinese school is pretty profound.

I: Many Chinese parents apply for many tutorial classes for their children's better development when they are young, did you ever take it into account?

R: I have deep experience. I have not much requirement for my kids, I want them to be healthy physically and psychologically. I applied for some tutorial classes since they went to the kindergarten, but if I believe they have no interests, I will change. My daughter attended classes for dance, music, drawing, but she couldn't continue, after wards, she went to school, I didn't apply for any such class for her. Since Grade Three and Four, they have interest class, she applied herself, and she attended computer class, Tae Kwon Do class. My son is in Germany, his granny applied for flute class, he doesn't practice much, but he plays very well.

I: Then do you have any vision on the education of your kids? Such as will they go to university in China?

R: I hope after my daughter finishes senior high school, she will enter the university in Germany, that will be better, but I'm not clear about the major, but I will leave this for her own choice. I also have the idea that the boy goes abroad for senior school. As for secondary school, it depends on his future plan, after all it will be determined by their ideas.

I: Then do you think Chinese basic education is important?

R: Yes. I feel the better place for studying Chinese is in Chinese school, and when they graduate from Chinese school, they can at least write a Chinese essay, I feel that is OK, I can arrange them to study in Grade Six.

I: Just now I know that your kids develop German and Chinese with balance, what is your experience on this aspect?

R: Of course I am very pleased. The kids are amazing, their absorbing ability is like a sponge, very fast. My elder daughter is seldom in contact with German, she learns English in foreign language school, she goes to Germany only in summer and winter vacation, her granny teaches her some German, I can see that her German is pretty good now, she talks with me in Chinese at home, in Germany she talks with me in Chinese, talks with her granny in German. But I feel she doesn't understand the meaning, but she can guess it very quickly, now she is studying the textbook at her same grade, her granny takes it and asks her to study, she makes rapid progress. My son lives in China for half year and lives in Germany for half year, so he can speak both Chinese and German, after he comes back to China, he speaks Chinese only, he speaks German to his father or sister, but Chinese to me.

I: I think this is not an intentional requirement, for instance in China, speaking Chinese is required here.

R: No. They have freedom speaking what they like.

I: Would you please talk about the names of your kids? They have Chinese names and German names, right?

R: For the German name, when I was pregnant, I started choosing a name, but the German name of my son was selected by his Germany grandpa, the Chinese name was selected by me. For my younger daughter Isabella, his mother selected some girl's names, we choose one from them. Her grandma spoke many names, I listened to the pronunciation of these names, then I chose Isabella, because for some German names, I can't read, but it is impossible that a mother can't read her kid's name, this name is easy to pronounce, and sounds beautiful, so that was decided. The Chinese name was chosen by me.

I: Only Tingting has a Chinese name?

R: Because Tingting has Chinese citizenship. Tingting is her Chinese name.

I: Do the other two kids have a Chinese name?

R: Both of them do.

I: There is still another situation, in China, the kids do not only belong parents, they also belong to the whole big family, that is to say, the grandparents have the responsibility to educate the kids, is it this case in your family? I mean on the aspect of the maternal grandpa and grandma, paternal grandpa and grandma.

R: Of course. If we go back, I rest my heart that his mother takes care of the kids. I feel some of her ideas are even more advanced than mine. Maybe we accepted traditional education, there are some drawbacks. His mother started reading some books about the health and education of the kids before I was pregnant. Since I was

pregnant, his mother paid much attention to my food, I felt very assured when she took care of the kids. She likes staying with the kids.

I: On the aspect of educating the kids, do you have any differences from the grandparents on educating style?

R: No. When I was in Germany, I was not strict with the kids, I'm afraid his parents would not have the same opinions if I did so. As far as I am concerned, if mother blames the kids, they will feel uncomfortable. In front of my husband's mother I will not be very strict considering empathy. On education we are basically the same. When the kids are not obedient, it's for sure that we would be strict with them. We would let our son stand behind the door, or let him enter the toilet, he is not allowed to have dinner. There is difference on another aspect, for instance, my son got a fever, his mother insisted on not taking medicine for him, they gave him vitamin and water, but the anti-biotic medicine is not good for the kids, so we gave him febrifuge. I know they were also right, but I was afraid if the kid had a fever for a long time, so I gave him febrifuge. If we went to the hospital, the doctor would give him fluid infusion. If I go to the German hospital, the doctor will require not to use fluid infusion, they will give you an injection and some medicine. I feel this is a big difference.

I: Is this a difference of culture in your eyes?

R: I believe so. If the doctor uses fluid infusion, that must be a serious disease. They don't take medicine immediately for cold or fever.

R (Interviewee's husband): Culture difference. If you have a fever in China, the doctor will ask you to take a blood test and give you fluid infusion, but if this is in Germany, the doctor will not say, you should have fluid infusion.

I: According to your own experience, for the parents in cross-national marriages, especially the parents in Sino-German families, what advice would you give to them?

R: You don't have to worry about language. I feel, although there are many differences between Chinese culture and western culture, it has something to do with the individual, has nothing to do with the eastern and western culture. I get along with my husband's mother very well, we respect the life customs of each other, other small aspects can be overcome.

I: How about the aspect of your kids' growth?

R: There is no problem on the aspect of the kids' growth, her education is the same with mine. My mother-in-law gives freedom to the kids, not disciplining them. I'm a bit strict on the kids. But we have no conflict, our ideas are the same.

I: Thank you very much for our interview!

R: Thank you, you are welcome.

Interview 6: 05.09.2009, Wuxi, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universitt in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der

kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und möglichst die entsprechende Lösung für die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird später anonym zitiert. Das heißt, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht für andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen für meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausführlich wie möglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein, habe ich nicht.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst möchte ich sehr gerne etwas Näheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzählen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ich habe in Deutschland Wirtschaft studiert. In Taiwan habe ich Chinesisch gelernt. In 2002 war ich wegen eines EU-Programms nach Wuxi gekommen. Seitdem bin ich der technische Leiter in einem Projekt.

I: Wie verstehen Sie den Begriff „Familie“?

R: Familie bedeutet für mich Vater, Mutter und Kind. Sie ist eine Gemeinsamkeit.

I: Als Sie klein waren, was haben Sie von Ihren Eltern gelernt? Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst? Was ist der Unterschied?

R: Ich habe die Grundkenntnisse von meinen Eltern gelernt: lesen, zählen, z. B. Ich glaube, es gibt kaum einen Unterschied zwischen den beiden Erziehungen. Man gibt an die Kinder einfach weiter, was man von seinen Eltern gelernt hat.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur, die deutsche Kultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Ich habe keine Ahnung, was die deutsche Kultur ist. Der Deutsche benutzt Messer und Gabel beim Essen. Wir haben andere Feiertage als in China, z.B. Ostern und Weihnachten.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihrem Sohn sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ja, aber nur manchmal.

I: Wie verstehen Sie die chinesische Kultur?

R: Über die chinesische Kultur weiß ich nicht so viel, obwohl ich in China viel gereist bin. Durch meine Arbeit habe ich das Arbeitsleben und das Management in einer chinesischen Firma kennengelernt.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kinderziehung?

R: Ich werde meinen Kindern die Grundideen geben: Fleißig, Sauberkeit und die Sprache. Ich glaube, der kulturelle Unterschied hat mit der Erziehung nichts zu tun.

I: Bei der Kinderziehung, wie wichtig sind die Großeltern Ihres Kindes in der Familie?

R: Die Großeltern spielen eine wichtige Rolle bei der Kinderziehung in meiner Familie, weil sie viele Erfahrungen vom Leben haben. Meine Kinder fahren regelmäßig nach Deutschland, um bei meinen Eltern zu bleiben.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Ich habe die Rolle der Finanzierung in der Familie.

I: Wie verstehen Sie die zwei chinesischen Redewendungen: es ist der Fehler des Vaters, wenn das Kind nicht erziehbar ist und wer den Stock schont, verwöhnt das Kind?

R: Beiden stimmen ich nicht zu. Aber Schlagen hilft manchmal.

I: Welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Kinder sollen mehr Sprachen lernen. Es ist wichtig für das Leben und die Arbeit in der Zukunft. Und zwar kann man überall auf der Welt leben. Je früher desto besser. Mein kleinstes Kind lebt im Moment in Deutschland. Mein Fritz, fünf Jahre alt, besucht einen internationalen Kindergarten in Wuxi. Danach werde ich ihn zur normalen chinesischen Schule schicken, um die Sprache richtig zu lernen. Meine große Tochter besucht eine lokale chinesische Schule hier.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch!

R: Bitte schön.

Interview 7: 06.03.2010, Taicang, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heiße Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universität in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und möglichst die entsprechende Lösung für die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird später anonym zitiert. Das heißt, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht für andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen für meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausführlich wie möglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein, habe ich nicht.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst möchte ich sehr gerne etwas Näheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzählen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Ja. Ich bin in Magdeburg geboren, Deutschland. 37 Jahre alt. Fast 6 Jahre lebe ich in China, in Taicang, Jiangsu Provinz. Mittlerweise bin ich in einer Firma, in Taicang. Ich bin mit einer Chinesin verheiratet. Wir haben ein Kind. Zusätzlich haben wir eine chinesische Nichte seit drei Jahren bei uns. Ich habe Marketing, Fachrichtung über China studiert.

I: Danke schön. Was bedeutet Familie für Sie?

R: Ich habe meine Familie in China gegründet. [?] Habe Nägel mit Köpfen gemacht. Familie bedeutet für mich ein Ort, wo ich mich zurückziehen kann, wo ich ruhiger werden kann, wo ich abschalten kann, wo ich nach der Arbeit auf andere Gänge kommen kann. Das ist für mich Familie. Ja, wo ich nicht allein bin, wo ich Kinder habe.

I: Als Sie klein waren, welche Erziehung haben Sie von Ihren Eltern bekommen?

R: Mein Vater als [?] zu Hause. Ich bin im Großen und Ganzen durch meine Mutter und Großeltern erzogen. Meine Eltern haben sich sehr bemüht, mich gut zu erziehen. Ich bin zwar Magdeburger, aber ich spreche Hochdeutsch. Das ist nicht immer der Fall in Magdeburg. Ich wurde sehr aktiv erzogen.

I: Sie sind Vater und haben Ihr eigenes Kind. Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst?

R: Ja, auf alle Fälle. Ich bin ein Einzelkind und als einzelnes Kind aufgewachsen, auch das einzige Enkelkind meiner Großeltern. Dadurch haben Sie sich sehr auf mich konzentriert. Vielen Sachen, die meine Eltern mit mir gemacht haben, beziehe ich auch auf meine Tochter. Ich erinnere mich selbst daran, wie meine Eltern mich erzogen haben. Meine Mutter erinnert mich Momentan daran, pass auf, du hast die und die, Babymilch bekommen. Du hast die und die, Kleidungsstücke als Kind angehabt. Das war warm. Das war gut. Du musstest dann und dann ins Bett. Du musstest Mittagsschlaf halten. Du musstest am Abend um drei Viertel acht ins Bett usw. Das war gut für dich. Das machen wir auch so. Ich bin sehr eng mit meiner Mutter verbunden. Durch die Kommunikation mit meiner Mutter [?], deutsche Seite auf Kind zu erziehen. Der chinesische Anteil in Taicang ist auch ein großer Einfluss auf die Erziehung. Die chinesische Oma hier, die chinesische Tante und der Onkel sind hier in Taicang, muss ich Gegenseite, die andere Hälfte, die deutsche Seite für Elia so viel wie möglich gestartet wird.

I: Gibt es einen Unterschied zwischen Ihrer Kindererziehung und der Erziehung, die Sie bekommen haben?

R: Einen Unterschied zwischen der chinesischen Erziehung und meiner Erziehung, oder?

I: Einen Unterschied zwischen der Erziehung für Ihre Tochter und der Erziehung, die Sie von Ihrer Eltern bekommen haben.

R: Wenig, sehr wenig. Ich gehe sehr stark, nach dem, was ich erfahren habe.

I: Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein? Also die deutsche Kultur.

R: Ich bin seit 2004 hier. Ich muss sagen, dass ich in den ersten Jahren, in den ersten vier Jahren, wo ich in einer anderen Firma war, aufgrund dessen, dass ich der einzige Deutsche in der Firma war, am Anfang nur mein chinesischen Freunden hatte. Ich hatte kaum Kontakt zu Ausländern. Meine chinesischen Freunde haben kein Englisch gesprochen, damit war ich irgendwie gezwungen, mich sehr stark in die chinesische Kultur zu integrieren und mich damit zu auseinandersetzen. Ich wurde teilweise assimiliert. Deswegen bin in den ersten vier Jahren sehr chinesisch geworden. Ich muss sagen, ich bin später bei der neuen Firma, ich bin seitdem wieder deutsch geworden. Ich habe einen großen deutschen Freundeskreis aufgebaut und bin langsam auf den Weg zur deutschen Kultur, täglich zurück nach Deutschland gekommen.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihrer Tochter sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ich möchte meinem Kind nicht sagen und erklären, „ich habe ein deutsches Kind oder ein chinesisches Kind“. Ich will meinem Kind erklären, dass die deutsche Kultur unbedingt besser ist. Aber ich möchte, dass mein deutsches Kind, Elia, weiss, woher sie kommt. Die Hälfte ist deutsch. [?] Wir werden versuchen, die beiden Kulturen für unser Kind zugänglich zu machen. Ich will, dass sie beide Sprachen sprechen kann und die chinesischen Schriftzeichen schreiben kann, die viele Kinder aus solchen Familien nicht lernen. Das heißt, die Kinder können die chinesische Sprache sprechen, aber sie können nicht schreiben. Ich will das bei Elia nicht. Sie hat die beste Voraussetzung.

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: Für mich persönlich ist die chinesische Kultur sehr interessant. Seit ich mich mit einer Chinesin verheiratet habe, setze ich mich mehr und mehr mit der Geschichte auseinander. Es gibt aber auch ein Problem für mich im Moment. Ich habe zwar an der Fachhochschule Politik, Geschichte und Kultur studiert neben der BWL. Aber seitdem ich mit einer Chinesin verheiratet bin, muss ich mich mit der Kultur auseinandersetzen. Viele Bücher über chinesische Geschichte, auch über die jüngste chinesische Geschichte habe ich gelesen, was seit Mao Ze Dong passiert ist. Ich muss sagen, ich war schockiert. [?] Die Kultur wurde zerstört. Deswegen ist es schwierig für mich zu sagen, dass viele Sachen für mich nicht verständlich sind. Viele Sachen sind immer noch. [?] Ich muss sagen, viele Freunde von mir haben die kulturelle Eigenart, auf die Fehler, die in den letzten 60 Jahren passiert sind. Ich habe ein Problem damit. Mehr und mehr. Deswegen glaube ich auch, es ist gut, dass ich wieder zu dem Weg, was ich war, Deutscher.

I: Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Das wichtigste ist, dass man vorher plant. Wir haben bei der Schwangerschaft eine konsequente Planung gehabt. Zum Beispiel haben wir gesagt, Ok, haben wir viel auseinandergesetzt, viel gelesen, Erfahrungen anderer..... klassische Musik im Kinderbauch, dass sie die Klaviermusik wahrnehmen kann. Wir haben jeden Abend Klavier im Schlafzimmer gehört. Es war nicht so schön für mich. Aber heute zeigt sich mir, dass Elia sehr Musik begeistert ist. [?] Sie tanzt gerne, singt gerne. Das ist für mich ein Zeichen, wo ich denke, das zeugt schon vom ersten Tag der Schwangerschaft, die klassische Musik, Klavier. Das ist nur eine Kleinigkeit. Unser Kind ist in China geboren. In China ist es so, aber bei vielen Deutschen auch, wenn das Kind schreit, braucht es Milch. Meine Mutter hat mir beigebracht, wenn das Kind schreit, klar, muss es Milch haben. Der Körper braucht Milch. Wir wissen, das ist ein Säugling, der alle drei Stunden Milch brauchen sollte. Ich habe ein Papier genommen. Ich sagte, um zwölf, um drei, um sechs, um neun. Wir machen ein Zeichen. Das Kind bekommt Milch. Wenn das Kind fünf vor drei schreit, lass sie schreien. Und meine Frau: „wie kann man? Das ist nicht gut. Das ist schlimm für das Kind.“ Ich habe zu meiner Frau gesagt: „pass auf, vertraue mir ein oder zwei Tage, dann ist das Kind ruhig.“ Das hat sie gemacht. Wir haben es genau so gemacht. Wir haben sie schreien lassen am ersten Tag und dann ist sie ruhig. Weil sie weiss, wann die Milch kommt, punkt. Alle drei Stunden, auf die Minute ihre Milch. Und damit haben wir später die

Zeit verlängert, alle vier Stunden. Wir haben eine ruhige Babyzeit gehabt. Das heißt, das Kind hat einen ruhigen Schlaf. Wir haben zusätzlich eine sogenannte Nachförderung gehabt. [?] Das Kind schläft nicht in unserem Schlafzimmer. Es ist gefährlich. Viele Kinder ersticken dabei. Wir haben es von Anfang an in der Kinderkorb gelegt. Wir haben das Kind auch sehr früh, nach einem viertel Jahr oder nach einem halben Jahr, zu der großen Tochter ins Kinderzimmer gestellt. Meine Frau hat gesagt, das kann man nicht machen in China. Das Kind muss bei den Eltern bleiben. Teilweise bis zu fünf Jahren legt es bei den Eltern im Schlafzimmer usw. Ich sagte, nein. Das ist nicht gut für die Kinder. Für uns ist es auch nicht gut. Ich muss arbeiten. Ich brauche meine Ruhe. Es ist für die soziale Entwicklung des Kindes sehr gut, wenn sie mit einem anderen Kind schläft, [?]. Die Planung haben wir von vorher an konsequent durchgehalten.

I: Ich möchte wissen, was der große kulturelle Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrer Frau bei der Kindererziehung ist? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen? Wenn Sie solche Meinungen haben, aber Ihre Frau etwas anderes.

R: Meine Frau kommt grundsätzlich aus einer sehr abgelegenen Provinz. Dort ist die Methode der Kindererziehung relativ sehr bäuerlich. Wenn die Kinder geschlagen werden, sagte meine Frau, es ist so. Es muss so sein. Ich habe meiner Frau gesagt, wollen wir ein deutsches Kind oder ein chinesisches Kind? Oder ein mehr deutsches Kind oder ein mehr chinesisches Kind? Sie sagte, wir müssen ein mehr deutsches Kind, auch gerade ein mehr internationales Kind haben. Sie hat mir von vorher an vertraut. Ich habe ein grosses Management gemacht. Ich habe gesagt, was wir beobachten sollen. Sie hat es ganz umgesetzt. Hat mir sehr dolle vertraut. Z.B. gibt es Sachen, die nicht nur zwischen Deutsch und Chinesisch, sondern allgemein sind. Das heißt, ich sage was zu meinem Kind. Ich sage A. Und meine Frau sagt, es ist falsch. Es ist B. Oder ich sage ja. Es darf das. Und meine Frau sagt, es ist nicht richtig. Auch wenn ich verkehrt liege, einen Fehler mache, lassen wir es trotzdem geschehen. Wir gehen in einem anderen Raum, dort sagt meine Frau zu mir, es ist nicht gut. Das kann nicht sein. Wir müssen es anders machen. Aber nicht Autorität verlieren vor dem Kind. Es ist ganz wichtig bei uns. Ich habe es auch bei Europäern gesehen. Ich habe einen Freund, einen Österreicher mit einer chinesischen Frau in Taicang. Sie haben auch gegenseitig Autorität. Sie haben es Widersprechen vor dem Kind. Seine Frau schlägt das Kind, wenn das Kind ein Fehler gemacht hat, also Schlagen als Erziehungsmethode.[?] Er sagt, nein. Es ist nicht gut. Hat er einen Schrei mit der Frau vor dem Kind. Das ist ein sehr großer Fehler. [?] Das machen wir nicht. Auch wenn wir unterschiedlicher Meinungen sind, machen wir es hinterher. Oder in einem anderen Raum. Das ist der kulturelle Unterschied.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Auf alle Fälle bin ich der finanzielle Background. Es ist klar. Ich arbeite, obwohl meine Frau eine kleine Firma hat. Sie hat Marketing in Taicang studiert. Sie macht im Moment einen B-1 Schein. Das heißt, sie ist nicht die klassische Hausfrau. Sie es geschafft, sich weiter zu entwickeln. Wir haben keine Putzfrau. Wir haben uns vor der Geburt unserer Tochter konsequent gegen eine Putzfrau entschieden. Wegen des

schlechten Einfluss es auf die Erziehung des Kindes. Auch gegen ein Kindermädchen. Eine Putzfrau, das Kind kann mit der Frau alles machen. Es kann die Frau schlagen. Sagt zu der Frau, gibt mir was zum Essen, was zum trinken, also herrlich. Ich sagte, nein. Meine Frau übernimmt die Hauszeitrolle. Ich bin bei der Rolle der Ernährer. Aber wie eine großer Planer, wie bei der Babyerziehung, meine chinesische Tochter, also meine Nichte, versuche ich, so weit wie möglich zum Europäer zu erziehen. Ich mache die große Planung. Das ist meine Hauptrolle. Ich bin der einzige Mann in dem Haus. Das heißt, ich bin wie ein Zentrum, sowohl für meine Frau als auch für meine Kinder such für meine Schwiegermutter, die manchmal da ist. Ich bin die zentrale Person, die Leitfigur zu Hause.

I: Was bedeutet dies B-1?

R: Das ist ein Sprachzertifikat, ein Deutsche Sprache Schein. Das heißt, wenn man anfängt Deutsch lernen möchte, als Chinese, kann man am Goethe-Institut in Shang Hai oder weltweit lernen. A-1 ist der Grundkurs. A-2 ist Mittel Level. B-1 ist der Kurs meiner Frau. Wenn sie später einen deutsches Pass bekommen hat, macht es das einfacher. Wir können in viele Länder auf der Welt reisen. Dann braucht sie kein Visum mehr. Sie macht gerne Reisen. Deswegen macht sie B-1. B-1 befähigt sie dazu. Es sind viele Voraussetzungen, z.B. drei Jahre verheiratet sein. Es ist die Voraussetzung, die man erfüllen muss um einen Reisepass zu bekommen. Es ist die B-1 dazu. Es gibt auch einen Integrationstest in Deutschland. [?] Man muss das bestehen. [?] Wer weiss, wozu das führt? Aber auf alle Fälle ist es für den Reisepass. Es hat auch ganz toll geholfen bei der Erziehung des Kindes. Meine Frau spricht nicht nur Chinesisch mit dem Kind. Sie spricht auch viele Wörter Deutsch. Am Anfang die Wörter wie essen, schlafen, komm her, ja, nein, gut, böse, usw. Sie gibt sich tolle Mühe, Deutsch zu lernen.

I: Ist solcher Sprachkurs von hier organisiert?

R: Der Sprachkurs, die deutsche Behörde akzeptiert nur einen B-1, nur vom Goethe-Institute. Die Goethe-Institut gibt es weltweit, in Peking, Shanghai, Guangzhou, usw. Die Goethe-Institute sind Sprachinstitute. Die Zertifikate werden von den deutschen Behörden anerkannt.

I: Alles klar. Wie wichtig sind die Großeltern bei der Kindererziehung in Ihrer Familie?

R: Generell sind die Großeltern sehr sehr wichtig. Meine Mutter war halbtags tätig. Mein Vater war nicht da. Ich war deshalb viel bei meinen Großeltern. Von meinem Großvater wurde ich praktisch erzogen. Meine Großmutter war mein Background, mein Hintergrund für mich. Leider ist es uns hier so nicht möglich. Das heißt, meine Mutter ist so weit weg von Taicang. Ich bin maximal zweimal im Jahr in Deutschland. Die chinesische Oma hat einen Nachteil: sie spricht kein Hochchinesisch. Meine Tochter versteht nicht, was sie sagt. Aber sie war im letzten Halbjahr bei uns und ist nun zurück in der Provinz in den letzten Wochen. Sie hat aber einen großen Einfluss auf die Nichte, die große Tochter. Ich muss sagen, wir lassen Elia einmal pro Jahr für ein bis drei Monate in Deutschland, drei Monate ist zu lang, aber mehr als einen Monat in Deutschland. Lassen sie allein bei meiner Mutter. Meine Großeltern leben

noch. Sie wohnen nebenan. Mein Onkel wohnt dahinter. Wir haben einen sehr engen Familienbezug. Elia wird dort allein gelassen. Für die sprachliche Entwicklung und die kulturelle Entwicklung ist es für meine Tochter wichtig. Meine Mutter versucht, die deutsche Kultur bei der Erziehung beizubringen. Z.B. man soll nicht auf die Straße spucken. Man soll beim Essen nicht Schluckauf machen. Solche Sachen, die kulturellen Unterschiede. Ich möchte nicht auf einmal Schluckauf beim Essen. [?] Nur weil wir Deutschen denken, das gehört sich nicht. In China bedeutet es: es schmeckt. [?] Oder ins Taschentuch schnauben. Die Deutschen schnauben ins Taschentuch, wenn man erkältet ist. In China ist es nicht gut, weil die Chinesen, wie ich gelernt habe, sagen, wie kann man die eigenen Keime wieder zurück in die Tasche stecken? Es muss weg vom Körper. Es muss auf die Straße gespuckt werden. Wer hat Recht? Die Deutschen, die Keime ins Taschentuch stecken? Oder die Chinesen, die Keime auf die Straße spucken?

I: Letzte Frage, welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung, nach Ihren Erfahrungen?

R: Man muss sich vorher klarmachen, was man will. Möchte ich mit einer Chinesin in China 20 Jahren leben? Möchte ich, dass dann auch mein Kind in China lebt und in China groß oder in China alt wird? Wenn man sich klar ist, dass das Kind international erzogen wird, nicht nur deutsch, aber international, dann gehe ich zwei, drei, vier Jahre ins Ausland, nach Asien, nach Europa, nach Deutschland, dann weiß man schon, dass man Wert auf die Sprache legt. Es ist ganz wichtig bei der Erziehung. Sprache spielt eine große Rolle, gerade als Deutsche. Ich schicke meine Tochter in den chinesischen Kindergarten und auf die Grundschule. Und dann gehe ich zurück nach Deutschland. Dann wird das Kind ein Jahr zückgestuft. Es ist generell so. Lege ich aber von Anfang an fest, dass mein Kind in drei, fünf Jahren in die deutsche Schule gehen soll. [?] Und dann irgendwann entschieden wird zurück nach Deutschland, dann wird das Kind nicht zückgestuft, sondern kann in die gleiche Stufe eingeschult werden. Es ist eine wichtige Sache. Wie ich von vielen Freunden von mir erfahren habe. Sie haben die Kinder mit Englisch und Chinesisch erzogen und möchten die Kinder für die deutsche Schule anmelden. Dann wurden die Eltern informiert: sorry, kommen Sie wieder, wenn das Kind Deutsch spricht. Weil in den Kindergarten nicht Englisch gesprochen wird, kein einziges Wort, konsequent Deutsch und Chinesisch, so wie wir es vom ersten Tag an gemacht haben, zweisprachig. Aber nicht Englisch, weil das Kind sowieso Englisch lernen kann. [?] Wichtig ist, dass mir von vorher klar ist, was ich will. Was ich haben möchte? Was für ein Endprodukt? Ich habe am Anfang die Planung gemacht, das Management für die Produktion.

I: Sie wohnen in China, als Ausländer, welche Hinweise können Sie den Eltern aus interkulturellen Familien geben?

R: Man soll sich mit der Kultur auseinandersetzen. Es macht das Leben einfacher. Man soll nicht auf die Uhr schauen. Ich bin hierher gekommen. Ich bin ins Hotel gezogen. Ich sagte, ich will eine Wohnung. Mein chinesischer Kollege sagte, nein, es ist unsicher. Ich sagte, nein, ich will eine Wohnung. Ich habe einen Dreijahresvertrag.

Ich bin hier. Ich lebe hier. Ich will mich zuhause fühlen. Es ist von meiner Seite ganz ganz wichtig. Man muss sich wohl fühlen. Man soll sich mit Chinesisch arrangieren. Man sollte sich etwas mit Kultur auseinandersetzen. Ich hatte am Anfang, alle Monat, einen Kulturkoller. Ich bin am Abend gelaufen und geguckt. Es ist gefährlich, wenn man die andere Kultur nicht akzeptieren möchte. Ich gebe noch drei, fünf Jahre in China und dann werde ich China verlassen. Nach Deutschland nicht unbedingt. Meine Frau sagt „Niko, ich gehe immer mit dir.“ Ich bin Kosmopolitik und kann überall leben. Zwei, drei Jahre machen wir noch. Es hängt von meiner Firma ab. Ich habe keinen Vertrag mehr. Mir steht es frei. Die andere Tochter, die chinesische Nichte, reist auch mit. Wenn wir nach Singapur gehen, dann muss sie gut Englisch sprechen. Sie hat lange ein Problem. Aber wenn wir nach Deutschland gehen, spricht sie nicht Deutsch. Es ist Ok. Vielleicht kommt sie in ein chinesisches Internat, um ihre Ausbildung fortzusetzen. Alles für die Kinder.

I: Alles Gute wünsche ich Ihnen und Ihrer Familie! Vielen Dank für das Gespräch!

R: Gerne.

Interview 8: 06.03.2010, Taicang, with a Chinese mother

I: First of all, many thanks for your time and willingness to have this interview with me! My name is Chong and I'm from China. I'm doing my PhD at the Education Department at the Otto-von-Guericke-University in Magdeburg. My research concerns the negotiating of culture values in German-Chinese families. The main purpose of my research is to introduce the characteristics in the children's education in German-Chinese families, which are located in multi-cultural societies. That is the first one. And the second is to show the difficulties in educating children, this process, and of course, to afterwards find logical solutions to the problems. The interview we are recording today will remain anonymous in my dissertation afterwards. So, that means, without your agreement I will not use this interview for any other purposes. As it is one of the most important sources for my research. I would like you to reply as much as you can to my questions. So first I would like to know more about you. Would you please introduce yourself?

R: Yes, sure. I have nothing special, I grew up in a common family, and I'm a native of Taicang. I started to work in Shanghai upon my graduation from college. I knew my husband at the company, and then we married. Now we have two kids, that's the case.

I: OK. As a Chinese woman, what's your opinion about the concept of family?

R: I think family is a unity, a harbor, a necessary period in life. Although some people prefer not to get married, a family at this period makes your life complete. You have your spouse and your kids. Everyone make efforts toward a brand-new direction, it's the family making yourself complete instead of being a simple individual.

I: OK. What kind of family education did you receive in your childhood?

R: I didn't agree with the education manner from my parents in my childhood. They are very traditional Chinese parents, in their opinion, knowledge is the bets, and they have no other requirements on you. They hope you could go to college. They applied

too much compulsory education on me in my childhood. You are not allowed to go out playing, but have to stay at home. They must call you to ask you coming back on time if you go out in the evening, as if the freedom margin is very small. I absolutely don't hope this story to happen again to my kids. My parents have their own plans as for my major at college, my future career plan, etc, and they hope me to follow their intentions. I don't agree with them.

I: As parents of your kids, what do you think are the differences between your education style and that of your parents, or are there any influences from them?

R: I hope I take the perspective of my kids into account. I allow them to do their favorite things. Different from the generation of my parents, they take their perspective for granted, they only consider their own favorites, without considering the real intention of the kids. The biggest difference between them and me is that they always asking their kids to do as they want. Including they always ask me to follow their intentions in my current marriage and career development, and they will be upset if you don't follow their intentions. It's this kind of feeling.

I: How do you describe your role in your small family?

R: My major role in my family is to take good care of the kids. The housework is done by the maid, I think I'm not a qualified wife, for I spend too much time on taking care of the kids. Therefore, my husband complains sometimes, and now we are seldom together. We could gradually improve the situation while the kids are growing up.

I: In your daily life, what's the effect of your local culture, that is, what's the effect of the Chinese culture in the education of your kids?

R: I hope the kids are dominated by the local culture. As for education manners, including many books published on children education, actually the integration between the east and west has been realized to some extent, it has been westernized. In my opinion, some good education approaches have been far from the ones employed by the generation of my parents. The education approaches employed are westernized more and more, however, of course, they are different from the ones employed by my husband. For example, the cultivation of the kids' independence is different between us. However, it's getting closer, and some Chinese traditions are not so fundamental. We take care of the kids ourselves instead my parents. As for culture indoctrinization, now the kid is 4 years old, and the Chinese culture was dominated on the kid over the 4 years. Anyway it's in such an environment. Mostly he is together with me, I will also particularly tell him something about the Chinese traditions, for example, stories. I hope to deliver more Chinese culture to him. As his father plans to send him to a German school, I worry he will lose the Chinese culture including the language. That's what I am worrying about.

I: When you are together with your kids alone, will you have the intention of taking this chance teaching them the Chinese culture?

R: I had this intention at the beginning. I would even choose the stories with Chinese elements. Now it's getting better, for I think his interest shall govern, it depends on what does he like, including what types of games to play, what kind of animations to

watch, etc, I respect his intentions. His Chinese is very sound now, he can understand German while talking with his father, but he always answer in Chinese. It's such a case. Generally I respect his intentions. I will also tell him something about China consciously or unconsciously. I will not tell him that I will teach something or will not teach something today. Even in reading words, I will tell him to look at the words on packages of snacks. I just mention it to him in real life scenes. It means that I will not tell him that we have a study plan today, and we must finish them today. I want to offer him with a free environment. I do not discipline the younger kid, for she is just one and half years old. As long as she eats well, plays well and feels happy. I also speak to the younger kid in Chinese. Her father speaks to her in German. However, Chinese is dominant. But I don't know what it will be after their schooling. Chinese is not spoken in German schools, they will receive systematic German education after they going to school, I guess they might forget the Chinese mastered day by day. So I worry about this very much.

I: As you mentioned just now, will they go to German schools in Shanghai?

R: Yeah. Their father will disagree with sending them to local Chinese schools. I always do not like the education manners employed by the local Chinese schools, either. Now, the pressure on students is increasing in China, and the kids start learning knowledge from kindergarten. The knowledge of Grade 1 and Grade 2 of primary schools are taught at the kindergartens. The kids have to take exams before going to kindergartens, for example, those top level kindergartens in Shanghai. I have been lived in Shanghai for 9 years, and my husband and I have been living in Shanghai for 5 and 6 years. The pressure on students is very heavy. Exams are required before being enrolled to key primary schools and middle schools. Generally, a kid shoulders much more pressure in primary school than we did, and there are too many after-class training classes for them. The kids have to learn Olympic math and their burdens are too heavy. Therefore, we will not send our kids to local Chinese schools. But what I worry about is that they will gradually lose their Chinese capabilities after going to the German schools for systematic German education. They could only listen and speak, just like their father, their father speaks fluent Chinese, but he cannot read and write. He cannot understand some profound conversations when I talk about some in-depth and profound topics with him, and the communication is impossible then. For you will fail to clearly express your ideas, and you could only clearly express your feelings in your native tongue. We come from different cultural backgrounds, and it's impossible to compel him to improve his Chinese to such a level. Now I'm also learning German, but it's really very difficult to improve my German to the level of native speakers. Therefore, I think it's a pity that the couple fails to have more in-depth and profound ideological interactions and communications. I worry it will happen to my kids, that is, they will stay on such routine and simple communications like me in future. My children could neither read the Chinese books, nor could they write. They could not read Chinese books, because they cannot read the words. They will not accept many Chinese concepts, because they are completely dominated by German. In my opinion, they are completely foreigners. In the future, there will be three Germans in the family,

but only one Chinese. It's just this kind of feeling. It's impossible to balance the two cultures, anyway one of them should be highlighted. For sure I will teach him Chinese in future, but it's impossible that I could teach him perfectly for the restrictions of my capacity. Even if inviting a Chinese teacher to teach my son, he cannot reach the school level. I will keep on considering this. I think it's very difficult. Some efforts are required to enable him reading Chinese books and talking with me.

I: How do you understand the German culture?

R: I don't have a high exposure to the German culture, for I have always been in China. I learn English during my study. After meeting my husband, I first use English and then shifted to Chinese to communicate with him. My current understanding of Germany is based on several vacations and Christmases spent together with him in Germany, I got in touch with some other Germans during that time. It's just superficial but incomplete understanding, then what do you want to hear?

I: Just based on your impression, for example, what's your feeling by mentioning the German culture?

R: I think the Germans are very creditable and reliable among the Europeans. I think the Germans are very formal, meticulous and reliable, and you can trust them. Not like those flighty French and Italians. The Germans are very stiff and rigid, but you will feel they are very steadfast. It seems I don't have a profound understanding of their culture. Maybe I will gain more and more understanding after I start to learn German. According to the several travels to Germany, I feel the Germans are very polite, however, you will feel somewhat indifference and arrogance, anyway you could feel something different. Besides, those friends of my husband's, we could play together, the other strangers stand on ceremony when I meet them. Germany is very clean. For the moment, I don't have other understandings.

I: Based on this question, talking about the Chinese culture, what's your understanding of it?

R: Talking about the Chinese culture, I think the Chinese culture is dominant in my mind for I'm still a Chinese. Of course, some things are unsatisfactory to my husband in China, I don't if they belong to the domains of culture, that's some humane issues, such as the politeness and cleanness. He thinks China....., that's the remarks on the Chinese government. All in all, he thinks China ignores environmental protection, there are many negatives in development and pollution. However, some ancient cultures and idioms of China are always valuables of China. The Chinese historical culture is very precious. I also expect my kids could learn.....from me, I cannot wish them to learn very well, but anyway it's the background culture of their mother. I worry that the opportunities are not there for them to learn this.

I: Have your kids received the German citizenship?

R: Yes. Both of them have got the German citizenship. China has the one-child birth control policy. After getting the German citizenship, it will be easier to travel around. It's difficult to the Chinese to travel, regardless of the destinations. I don't consider to apply for German citizenship at the moment, for currently I'm living in China.

I: Just now you mentioned the coaching classes and your expectations on your kids. So in your opinion, what are the most important thing in the education of children?

R: Coaching classes are very common phenomena in China. In fact, I don't want my boy to learn something more at those training classes, it might be influenced by my husband, now I'm different from those traditional Chinese. Those traditional Chinese hope their children could be outstanding and successful. China has a very big population, you must study hard to be somebody someday. It's really hard to take other roads. Our two kids don't have so heavy pressures to face up to the competition. I only want them to be happy and to have the most fundamental moralities as politeness, a sunny character and a kind heart, then it's OK for them. I will not have high requirements on other aspects. Even now at the kindergarten, my son is the most special one. I send him to a bilingual English-Chinese private kindergarten, where German is not taught. The teacher often tells me that he is too naughty in class, always walking around, and has no interest in learning this and that. Then I tell the teacher that we don't want to ask him to learn this or that. In my opinion, the kids in the kindergarten are still too young to learn English, now they are less than 4 years old. One day when I went to see him at the kindergarten. He was miserably staring at the book absently. The teaching was reading the word elephant, the other kids followed the teacher. The teacher said: Niky it's not this page, it's here, and then turned to that page for him. He said oh, and then continued to stare at the book. I don't agree with such a Chinese education manner. Therefore, I always tell the teacher that we have no requirements on him. As long as he likes to go to the kindergarten and as long as he is happy. Now the teacher gets our idea and attitude, and now lets him be. If he doesn't want to study in class, the teacher will tell him not to be naughty, just hold the book or just draw pictures, and he could do everything he likes as long as he is not disturbing other kids. The teacher is treating him in this way. I tell her, OK, as long as he likes. He cries in the morning, for he dislikes the class, and asks me not to send him to the kindergarten. It's very painful, he says, "mom, I don't want to the kindergarten!" I tell him it's a must, every kid must go. Then he says he could only cry if I insist on sending him, and he says in a lovely poor way. I tell the teacher just let him do whatever he wants, we have no expectations and requirements on him. Now it's like this. However, the teacher often comes to me and complains that now he even doesn't sleep, the kindergarten has a rule that every kid must sleep for 2 hours, but he doesn't like it. The teacher also thinks she has spent too much time on the kid, the teacher could write something when the kids are sleeping, but now she has to take him to the playground when the other kids are sleeping. The teacher thinks she is treating the kid specially, so that she also wishes us to be stricter on him. Therefore, his father wants to send him to German school as soon as possible, but I worry he will lose his Chinese language after going to the German school. I already know a little girl whose father is an Austrian. The little girl's Chinese is not as good as before after going to the German school. This is the largest contradiction, and now most of the disputes between me and my husband are about attending the German school or not. My husband knows that I really don't want to send him to the

German school, but I know there is too much pressure on the kid at the Chinese school, and I worry about the Chinese style education approaches. It seems a compromised option is not available, and now it seems that the kid will go to German school by 80% possibility.

I: As for the bilingual you mentioned just now, is that Chinese-English bilingual?

R: Yes. There are many bilingual schools in Shanghai, and many of them are very good. But his father thinks it's unnecessary for him to learn English at present, for he even doesn't learn German. I know this, anyway his father is a German, he has to learn and speak German, but I will not agree if he doesn't even speak any Chinese. Therefore, you see I have no way out, then we might send him to the German school.

I: Are those bilingual kindergartens international ones?

R: There are many bilingual kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools in Shanghai. But they are not completely international schools, like the American and British International schools, only English is taught. The bilingual schools are products of social development. Some rich parents in China might send their kids to bilingual schools for they want them to study abroad in future. Or the hybrid families, like us and those western families expecting their kids to learn some Chinese culture during their stay in China. So they will be more competitive in international community in future.

I: The next question is about your understanding of two old Chinese sayings concerning education. The first is: spare the rod, spoil the child.

R: Yeah, really all the parents in the past are doing like this. One day I encountered a mother of one kid, in the same class with my son. She looks like a white-collar worker, should be exposed to western culture. She says, all of you don't beat your child, but I keep on beating my kid, and I believe in rod education. She says, "I beat him for about 2 years, from his disobedience at the beginning to 3 years old. Now he totally listens to me. One eye contact is enough for him to know I don't allow him to do that, even without telling him not to do it, and then he will not do that. He will be obedient after you beat him for 2 years, now, everything is very well, he is just like one of my friends". I've never beaten him, but I once slapped his palm. He might be jealous about his younger sister after her birth, and sometimes he kicked his sister on purpose. His sister would fall down after being kicked by him for she just started learning to walk, and then she would cry. Then, we would slap his hand. For the poor girl was so young, and fell down pushed by her brother. We would beat him for we were angry. And I also slapped his hand for several times because he beat me first, and I got very angry. I locked him in his room. I punished him severely, for I was really very angry. But I think he really has a bad temper different from the ordinary kids. He would throw down all chairs and tables once he was angry, and what I could do is to lock him in a small space and ask him to introspect. It's about twice that he threw down the stuff in the room when I locked him up, which was very impressive to me. He was quiet after I locked him, and he worked it out by himself. I asked him if he realized his mistake or not, and he said sorry mum. Then I would explain to him. You could not explain anything once he got angry, and he would beat you whatever you said.

Therefore, I think it's intrinsic, not taught by us or spoiled by us. He was born with a bad temper. I can only lock him up when he gets angry. Now I get another approach, and I learn from a book, the Americans call this time-out method. That is, ask him to sit on a chair in a corner for 5 minutes, and we don't talk to him while just looking at the watch. Now we are trying this approach to see if it's working. Because he can see nothing if we lock him up, and he is isolated just like being deserted, which is not good. So now we start to try this approach, ask him to sit in a corner for introspection of his mistake. You cannot explain to him when he gets angry. You could sit down and explain to him why does he get angry and why he gets angry when he calms down. He will get it and will say, ok, mum, I will not do this again. He will promise you, but he might forget and repeat the mistake in a few days.

I: How do you comment "it's the father's duty for the son's mistake"?

R: I think the "father" refers to parents, not only refers to the father. It should refer to the responsibilities of parents. Really, sometime, the habits of the kids are cultivated by the parents. Take my kids for example, we usually don't carry with them even when they are very small. But many Chinese parents, particularly the grandpas and grandmas always carry the kids until they are very big. Like the son of my classmate, 1 year younger than my son, now about 3 years old, they carry the kid wherever they go, and the kid is very heavy, more than 15 kg. I tell them that they must correct this habit of the kid. Actually, this habit is attributed to the parents. I stop carrying my daughter when she is 1 and half years old, and I just taking her hand when we go out. Some habits of the kids are cultivated by the parents, for example, watching TV while eating. Of course, the kids could eat more while watching TV. You could feed them more while they are watching TV if you feel their appetites get smaller, but basically it's not a good habit. When the habit is cultivated, you cannot stop them but to spoil them, then a bad habit is formed. For example, when we see some interesting tools at the kindergarten or other places, my son will tell me to take away, and I will tell him that we cannot take them away, for it's a property of the kindergarten, and it belongs to all the kids here. You could play with it, but you must return it afterwards. The parents should not ignore some trivial habits, if they take away things from others even without getting permission, then they will gradually form the bad habit of snitching. The parents have the responsibilities of correcting their children's bad habits. If you don't correct, the kids will take it for granted after repeating it several times.

I: According to your personal experiences, do you think there are any distinctive cultural differences between you and your husband on the education of children?

R: Let me see. I think the biggest difference between us lies in the independence of the kids. In his opinion, the kids should be more independent. I think they have been more independent than other Chinese kids. But he thinks they should sleep by themselves more early. Sleeping is the biggest problem of us now. Now both the two kids sleep together with me, one left and one right. In the beginning, they slept in separate small beds which continue for a long time, but once my son was ill, and then I put him beside me to cover him with the quilt, and later, he got accustomed to it. He

could not sleep by himself then, and he always shouted and cries late at night. Then he was afraid of staying in an empty room by himself. Later I put a footlight in his room, so as to light up the room. But he still cried. Then, I went to my daughter's room first, and then went to my son's room, and repeated this several times a night, and I got very tired. So that later I decided to put both of them beside me, and I stopped breastfeed the little girl at night, and she didn't ask for milk the whole night. In this way, it's more convenient for me to take care both of them, as a result, now both of the kids are sleeping together with me, and my husband totally disagrees with me on this. In his opinion, the kids should sleep in their own rooms. But it depends on specific conditions. We should wait and see, and I think to put them in one room, then my son could be braver. Now, he will still wake up at night if he sleeps by himself, just like being frightened. Later, I consulted many other parents, they said their kids also ran to their room at 3 or 4 o'clock at night, and slept beside them. They also wake up in the evening, actually, all the kids of this age are the same. It's impossible for them to sleep through until the morning without waking up. They want to see their mum if they want to pee at night. I plan to put up the two kids in one room after we move to our new house. The maid and I will get up at night to cover them with their quilts. We will see if the boy can sleep together with his sister. As for other aspects, my husband thinks my son has too many snacks. My son likes eating snacks. He likes everything, including fruit, biscuits and other miscellaneous foods. I don't clearly prevent him from eating this or that, anyway, I think eating is not a bad habit. But his father worries that he might be a big fat guy if he has too big an appetite. Basically, I don't stop him from eating. I only put some restrictions on chocolates and candies, but I have no restrictions on fruit.

I: It's like this: you know according to the Chinese tradition, the kids not only belong to their parents, but the whole family. The grandpas and grandmas also have the responsibilities and obligations of looking after and educating the kids. Then what's the situation of your family?

R: It's fine. We haven't lived in Taicang for several years, we are living in Shanghai. My parents seldom come to Shanghai, and just come over on festival reunions. I had many contradictions with them shortly after the birth of my kids, they lifted the kids up once they were crying, and gave the kids whatever they wanted. I'm on the same standpoint with my husband concerning this issue. I don't want them to be spoiled in a traditional Chinese manner like other kids, so that I had many contradictions with my parents on this. As for wearing clothes as well, I think we should not put on too many clothes on the kids, they should just wear the same ones as the adults. Please look at the kids outside in winter, they are dressed up like balls. My daughter only wears a sweater and a coat. But if my mother takes care of the kids, she always put more clothes on them as long as I'm absent. Shortly after the birth of my baby, the baby always cried at night for milk. The doctor told us to let the baby be, for we went to those private hospitals run by foreign doctors, and told us not to feed the kids even if they asked for milk, and that we could quit the night feeding when the kids were more than 1 year old, and one week later, the baby would know it's the time for

sleeping instead of being fed. But my parents didn't agree with this, and criticized us for being incapable of taking care kids. They worried the kids might get ill and worries about the consequences of crying all night. But later the kid got accustomed to it as the doctor said. The first kid was very strong, so that they stop saying that for the second one, like when I quit breastfeeding for my daughter this time, my mother just said ok, just listened to the doctor and let her cry. They would not involve in the fostering of the children, and I have several quarrels with them concerning this. Later, they gave up for they have witnessed our advantages and success by our approaches.

I: How will you balance when you have a disagreement with your parents?

R: The two kids are still small. Those contradictions do not pose a big problem. Just as I mentioned above, crying, my mom is very afraid of my daughter touch anything dirty, so she wipes and washes her hands. She doesn't allow her to touch this or that, to play with sand, this is an idea of traditional old people. She doesn't come here often and I don't ask her to come here often either. The main and the I take care of the kid. When I go out and play with her, if she touches something, I won't stop her. If there is any contradiction, I will insist on our way. If they have different ideas, they just say something, they don't insist on their way, it is up to our idea.

I: The last question. On the aspect of cross-national marriage, especially on the aspect of educating the kid, what methods or advice will you give to a similar family based on your personal experience? For example, your kids develop Chinese and German evenly.

R: As for advice, I feel compromise is needed. We, my husband and I cannot be too strong. Sometime I feel I'm too strong with my culture. I hope the two kids will..... at that time I didn't even want them to apply for German citizenship, I have an unsafe feeling myself, that is , I feel the three of you are all German, talking in German, and growing up under German culture. I am isolated, it's just this kind of feeling. But later I think, since we are a family, an integrated unit. I study German and I want to be integrated into you. On the aspect of Chinese culture, I try my best to invite a Chinese teacher, and I teach some at other times, I can only try my best to balance the so, it's impossible to make each culture account for 50%, there must be emphasis between them, I can only try my best. Since it is a family and you choose cross-national marriage, then we should understand each other, there are many problems that I didn't expect or believe easy. The kids will talk in Chinese and German, but you will find gradually, there are many problems you have to consider. Speaking touchy-feely, in this family, love is the key. Love between the parents, love among the kids, the basic thing is all of you get on well with each other. As for which culture is the dominant one, that is minor. The key is that people are happy together, whether it is in China or in Germany, the harmony of a family is the most important. Another point is putting yourself in their positions, thinking on the position of the other side, don't be always thinking what you want. On their positions, what would you do if you were them, then you will understand more of each other. I think that's all.

I: Ok. Thank you very much for the interview. I learned a lot. May your family be happy!

R: You are welcome.

Interview 9: 06.03.2010, Taicang, with a German father

I: Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich entschlossen haben, mir ein Interview zu geben! Ich heie Chong und komme aus China. Ich promoviere an der Otto-von-Guericke-Universitt in Magdeburg im Fach Erziehungswissenschaft. In meiner Untersuchung geht es um den Umgang mit den kulturellen Werten in deutsch-chinesischen Familien. Die Hauptziele meiner Arbeit sind, Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten bei der kindlichen Erziehung in deutsch-chinesischen Familien darzustellen, die in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft leben. Und mglichst die entsprechende Lsung fr die Schwierigkeiten zu finden. Der Inhalt von Interviews wird spter anonym zitiert. Das heit, ohne Ihre Erlaubnis wird das Interview nicht fr andere Zwecke benutzt. Weil das Interview eine der wichtigsten Quellen fr meine Arbeit ist, bitte ich Sie also, nach Ihrer eigenen Erfahrung so ausfhrlich wie mglich meine Fragen zu beantworten. Haben Sie noch Fragen?

R: Nein.

I: Ok. Fangen wir an! Zuerst mchte ich sehr gerne etwas Nheres von Ihnen erfahren. Also erzhlen Sie bitte von sich selbst!

R: Kein Problem. Ich heie Sasa. Ich bin beruflich nach China gekommen und habe hier meine Frau kennengelernt, beim gleichen Arbeitgeber. Ich habe 7 Jahre in China gelebt. Ich habe BWL studiert in Konstanz. Bin 31 Jahre alt. Wir haben zwei Kinder. Ich komme aus dem Schwarzwald, Sddeutschland. Ich selbst habe auch multikulturellen Hintergrund. Mein Vater ist Deutsch. Meine Mutter kommt aus Serbien.

I: Was bedeutet Familie fr Sie?

R: Das ist etwas wichtiges fr mich. Familie ist Geborgenheit, Zuhause, da wo man sich wohl fhlt, wo die Menschen sind, die man am liebsten hat, die man am meisten mag. Das ist die Familie fr mich.

I: Welche Erziehung haben Sie von Ihren Eltern bekommen, als Sie klein waren?

R: Komplizierte Frage. Meine Mutter war Alleinerziehender. Das heit, ich bin ohne Vater aufgewachsen. Aber ich hatte das Glck, dass mich meine Mutter bei einer anderen Familie untergebracht hat. Tagsber. Das heit, ich habe zwei Mtter und einen Vater gehabt dadurch. Es war die Erziehung. Sie waren echt deutsch geprgt. Ich habe immer noch ein sehr gutes Verhltnis zu den Leuten. Ich war 15 Jahre bei der Familie. Meine Mutter musste zur Arbeit gehen, tagsber.

I: Hat die Kindererziehung, die Sie in Ihrer Kindheit bekommen haben, auch die Kindererziehung in Ihrer eigenen Familie beeinflusst?

R: Ja, klar. [?] Die Erziehung hat Einfluss auf das ganze Leben. Die Erziehung, die man als Kind bekommen hat..... und dann ist da die Erziehung als Teenager, und dann als Erwachsener. Und dann gibt man sie an eigene Kinder weiter. Umwelt spielt eine Rolle.

I: Gibt es einen Unterschied zwischen den beiden Kindererziehungen?

R: Klar. Es gibt ganz verschiedene Sachen. In Deutschland versucht man zu machen, dass die Kinder selbstständig sind. In China hat man meistens nur ein Kind. Man hat zwei Opas und zwei Omas. Die verwöhnen das Kind natürlich sehr. Klar, es gehört dazu, dass man es liebt und nett zu dem Kind ist und es verwöhnt, aber nicht zu sehr. Ich glaube, es ist negativ. Das Kind lernt nicht unbedingt zu teilen, mit anderen Kindern zu teilen, umzugehen, immer nur ich ich ich. Es ist ein großer Unterschied zwischen Ausländern oder Deutschen und Chinesen. Ich glaube, westliche Erziehung gibt Kindern Freiheit. Wenn ein Kind hinfliegt, in China, sind alle Leute dahinter, „Baobao, Baobao⁵¹“. Ich bin der Typ, stopp, steh auf. Nichts passiert. Natürlich, wenn das Kind weint oder sich verletzt hat, ist es natürlich was anderes. Aber es ist der kleine Unterschied.

I: Wie würden Sie Ihre Rolle in der Familie beschreiben?

R: Ich bin der Vater. Die Vaterrolle ist ganz wichtig für die Entwicklung des Kindes. Wir haben einen Jungen und ein Mädchen. Besonders für den Jungen ist der Vater sehr wichtig. Die Rolle, so gut wie möglich auszufüllen. Ich bin beruflich auch viel unterwegs. Wenn ich den ganzen Tag nicht zuhause bin, bin ich zeitlich sehr begrenzt. Ich bin derjenige, der Geld verdient. Meine Frau kümmert sich um die Kinder. Sie macht den Haushalt und unterstützt mich. Ich bin die Geldbeutel. Ich bin auch gern, Vater.

I: Sie sind Deutscher und wohnen in China. Welchen Stellenwert nimmt Ihre eigene Herkunftskultur in Ihrem Alltagsleben ein?

R: Als westlicher Ausländer, als deutscher, das sieht man in China sofort. [?] Das heißt, die anderen Leute haben ihre eigene Wahrnehmung. Ich denke, für westliche Ausländer ist das Leben in China sehr gut. Die Chinesen schätzen die Deutschen sehr hoch. Von Beruf auch. Ich bin Betriebsleiter in der Firma. Ich spreche auch Chinesisch. Ich bin bei Kunden als „Lao Wai⁵²“. Der Kunde schätzt sehr: „给点面子“⁵³ Es ist ein Vorteil, als Deutscher. Die Japaner in China werden nicht immer so behandelt, aus historischen Gründen. Ich fühle mich wohl in China, sehr hoch geschätzt. Die Sprache ist nicht einfach. Ich habe sie im Studium gelernt. Habe sie auch durch meine Frau gelernt.

I: Wenn Sie allein mit Ihren Kindern sind, haben Sie den Gedanken, die deutsche Kultur zu betonen?

R: Ja, die Kinder wurden in China geboren und leben in der chinesischen Umwelt. Mir ist aber wichtig, dass sie auch von Deutschland erfahren und die Kultur kennen lernen. Deswegen spreche ich mit ihnen nur Deutsch. Natürlich mache ich es auch gern, von Deutschland zu erzählen. Aber typisch deutsche Werte, das erzähle ich nicht, dazu sind sie noch viel zu klein. Die Kinder sind von der Vaterkultur mitgekommen. Wir machen auch multikulturelle. Wir wohnen in China. Es ist nicht meine Verantwortung, Deutsch meinen Kindern nahe zu bringen.

⁵¹ Baby, baby!

⁵² Foreigner

⁵³ Do me a favor!

I: Was bedeutet die chinesische Kultur für Sie?

R: Wie meinen Sie das?

I: Sie haben eine chinesische Frau und wohnen in China, schon sieben Jahre. Aus Ihrer Erfahrungen, was bedeutet die Kultur für Sie?

R: Am Anfang, als ich meine Frau kennengelernt habe, war die Kultur unterschiedlich von meiner. Es ist wichtig, dass man aufeinander zugeht und nicht nur seine eigene Kultur behält. Die andere Kultur respektiert, probiert zu verstehen. Ich bin nicht typisch deutsch, falls es das überhaupt gibt. Meine Frau habe ich über 8 Jahre kennengelernt. Es ist wichtig, dass man sich gegenseitig respektiert. Nicht probiert, die andere Kultur umzubauen. Jeder ist wie er ist. Das muss man beibehalten. Es ist ganz wichtig.

I: Sie haben zwei Kinder, einen Jungen und ein Mädchen. Nach Ihrer Meinung, was ist am wichtigsten bei der Kindererziehung?

R: Die sind noch sehr klein. Aber wichtig ist, dass man später selbstständig ist. Als Eltern bieten wir alles, was wir können. Aber später muss man auf eigenen Beinen stehen. Natürlich will ich stolz auf meine Kinder sein. Wenn sie später nicht zur Uni gehen und anderes machen wollen, was ihnen Spaß macht, ist es Ok für mich. Sie sollen etwas selbstständig sein, gute Menschen, was gut es für die Gesellschaft tun. Auch ihren Beitrag zu der Gesellschaft leisten können. Wie sie das machen, lassen wir sie selbst entscheiden. Meine Verantwortung ist, lass sie selbstständig denken. Ich sage nicht, was sie später machen sollen, vom Beruf her.

I: Was ist der große kulturelle Unterschied zwischen Ihnen und Ihrer Frau bei der Kindererziehung? Wie sind Sie damit umgegangen?

R: Meine Frau denkt ähnlich wie ich, wie sich die Kinder entwickeln, die sollen selbstständig sein, usw. Mein Sohn will Elektroniker werden. Ich sage Ok. Aber meine Frau will, dass er zur Uni geht, um einen hochwertigen Beruf zu haben. Es ist ein großer kultureller Unterschied. Im Topberuf, mit Uniabschluss. Ihre Eltern machten es genau so. Aber ich glaube, es ist wichtig, dass sich die Kinder immer wohl fühlen im Leben. Machen, was sie wollen.

I: Vielleicht haben Sie schon gewusst, dass ein Kind in den meisten chinesischen Familie nicht nur zu den Eltern gehört, sondern zu der ganzen Familie. Wie wichtig sind die Großeltern bei der Kindererziehung in Ihrer Familie?

R: In der chinesischen Familie, oder? Meine Eltern leben nicht mehr.

I: Es tut mir Leid!

R: Macht nichts. Die Großeltern sind durch meine Frau abgedeckt. Großeltern sind wichtig. Sie haben Erfahrung. Sie sind nicht berufstätig. Also sie haben Zeit, mit den Kindern zu spielen, etwas zu erzählen. Wichtige Sachen für die Kinder.

I: Letzte Frage, als ein Ausländer in einem fremden Land und als ein Elternteil in einer interkulturellen Familie, welche Tipps können Sie solchen interkulturellen Familien geben, insbesondere bei der Kindererziehung, nach Ihren Erfahrungen?

R: Als Ausländer ist es wichtig, sich zu integrieren. [?] Man muss offen sein, sowohl als Ausländer als auch bei der Kindererziehung. Nur deutsche Erziehung ist langweilig. Jede Kultur hat ihre Besonderheit. Zum Teil ist sie ganz toll, zum Teil

nicht so toll. Man muss die Vorteile bei der Erziehung kombinieren. Man soll auch akzeptieren, wenn man anders aussieht. Man soll offen sein, so weit wie möglich für die fremde Kultur. Eigene Identität soll man auch bewahren und wissen, wo meine Wurzeln sind. Es ist wichtig.

I: Vielen Dank für das Gespräch! Ich wünsche Ihnen und Ihrer Familie alles Gute!

R: Gern, hat mir Spaß gemacht. Alles Gute für Ihre Doktorarbeit!

Erklärung

Ich erkläre, dass ich die eingereichte Arbeit selbständig verfasst habe. Sie wurde vorher nicht als Dissertation, Diplom- oder ähnliche Prüfungsarbeit verwendet. Alle benutzten Hilfsmittel sind in der Arbeit vollständig angegeben.

Name

Datum / Ort