

Chinese Students' Expectations of Language Learning in Western Culture

Christina Wright

University of Worcester

(c.wright@worc.ac.uk)

Keywords: Chinese learners (Confucian Heritage Cultures), Confucian Philosophy, Western Philosophy, Western pedagogies; learning and teaching expectations.

Abstract

This paper reports a small-scale study investigating Chinese students' expectations of the teaching and learning techniques on a pre-session English language course at the University of Worcester.

The preconceived view of the Chinese learner is one of passivity in English language classes in the UK, yet this research shows such behaviour does not signify lack of enthusiasm but rather lack of practice or possibly fear of losing face. Students were aware of the techniques they would experience on the course and, in contrast to these Western preconceptions, were generally accepting and expectant of participative classroom behaviour.

However, those who had already been taught English by a native speaker showed greater awareness and acceptance of Western pedagogy. The personal attributes of the tutor, good teacher-student communication and a low-anxiety classroom environment were the factors they considered most conducive to good learning.

Introduction

In recent years the UK has experienced a steady growth in international student numbers from East Asia and China (Home Office, 2014), and Chinese students now form 23% of the overall full-time taught Master's population (HEFCE, 2014).

These statistics highlight the relevance of empirical research into the internationalization of UK higher education (HE) and of studies aiming to integrate different learning cultures to facilitate cultural synergy, particularly when some learning cultures are traditionally viewed as differing from those in the UK. As the number of students from Asia is expected to further increase with China's development as a major world economy, the ability to teach effectively students with a Confucian background requires insight into these differing learning cultures.

Like many other UK HE institutions, the University of Worcester runs pre-session language courses for students who need to improve their English in order to continue their tertiary studies in the UK. With predominantly Chinese students on the courses, my personal experience of teaching on such courses is that Western teaching techniques sometimes fail to elicit the required response from the classes. For example,

encouraging students to learn from one other and from their peers' mistakes is often met with passivity and can prove unsuccessful in these largely monolingual classes. Quantitative research data acquired from Chinese students at the University of Portsmouth in 2006 revealed that although Chinese students were aware of differences in the teaching and learning cultures, they were unable to actually define these differences (Cross & Hitchcock, 2007). This lack of knowledge about what may be expected of them could be the greatest problem for Chinese students in the transition between educational contexts, but instructors can only facilitate this transition if they have both an awareness and understanding of the values of the educational culture in China (Cross & Hitchcock, 2007).

The motivation behind this research is to gain further understanding of Chinese students' perceptions of the teaching and learning techniques they will experience in their English as a Second Language and English for Academic Purposes classes in HE in the UK; and ascertain whether or not they expect more student-centred, communicative learning activities. The data collection method was in the form of a questionnaire requiring both quantitative and qualitative responses. The latter also attempted to establish some understanding of how these students define an environment conducive to learning. Whilst the sample for this research was small (31), the findings, it is hoped, will inform tutors which teaching and learning techniques such groups of students may find difficult or unfamiliar, thus facilitating students' transition not only onto these English language programmes, but in HE in general.

Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHCs) and Western Educational Philosophy: the traditional differences

Chinese learners studying abroad are initially likely to frame their learning 'within a Chinese culture of learning' (Jin & Cortazzi, 2006: 8). In other words, they have expectations and beliefs about the teaching and how they interpret what occurs in the classroom, including the interaction. If Chinese students interpret British teachers' classroom behaviour through a Chinese interpretive system, British teachers will interpret Chinese students' classroom participation through a British culture of learning. However, if both teachers and students in this setting have an awareness of the opposite learning culture, then the interaction and transition between

cultures should be smoother and more productive (Jin & Cortazzi, 2006: 9).

Much has been written on the different approaches to teaching and learning in HE between Chinese students, from a CHC, and their Western counterparts. As Biggs (1996) explains, the teaching and learning culture based on Confucian values is generally regarded as highly teacher-centred, with the students largely passive since they are raised to respect the knowledge of tutors and thus avoid challenging them. The CHC classroom, therefore, is often characterized by the following commonly held preconceptions, identified by authors such as Cross & Hitchcock (2007), Shi (2006) and Wang (2006):

Lack of critical-analytical skills

- A lack of creativity and critical/independent thinking;
- Memorization, rote learning and a reliance on examinations;
- The teacher as the source of knowledge, an authoritative model who must be obeyed and not questioned;
- Students memorizing/internalizing the textbook;
- Students learning through concrete examples.

Passivity

- Students often reluctant to view peers as facilitators of learning;
- Students rarely volunteering but waiting to be addressed by the teacher.

Effort v achievement

- A focus on collective goals;
- Achievement through disciplined effort.

This pedagogy contrasts with the teaching and learning culture associated with Western educational values, which is based on Socratic philosophy, and arguably favouring a more student-centred, participative approach.

Lack of critical-analytical skills

To the Western observer, a CHC class may appear authoritarian and Chinese instructors initially seem to regard the *product* of learning, to pass examinations, as more important than the actual *process* of acquiring the knowledge. Thus, Chinese students can appear mainly concerned with the 'mastery' of correct information through memorization and rote learning. The tutor's role here is to transfer knowledge and expound the textbook, which students internalize; the student's role is to listen and memorize the content (Bailey, 2005). With this approach, Chinese students may appear lacking in critical analytical skills.

Passivity

Such perceptions are reinforced by the passive and accepting classroom manner of many Chinese students in Western education, not volunteering answers and not questioning the validity of the content (Biggs, 1996). This passivity is generally associated with the 'loss of face' issue whereby students feel embarrassed to disrupt the collective harmony of the class by making a mistake. Adherence to the Confucian principle of modesty (Chan, 1999) can also make Chinese students reluctant to express their true feelings or opinions for fear of embarrassing themselves or their peers. The typical lack of questioning and discussion in Chinese classrooms contrasts with Western pedagogy, in which the ability to analyse material critically is key to producing balanced arguments.

Effort v Achievement

Effort and achievement are also viewed differently in Chinese cultures: for Chinese students, effort is more important than ability, and achievement through disciplined effort far more valued than achievement through ability alone (Salili, 1996). In a learning culture where 'diligence ultimately outweighs ability' (Jin & Cortazzi, 2006: 12), effort and study skills are seen as controllable factors and Chinese students are more likely to attribute their performance to hard work than to the uncontrollable characteristic of ability.

Thus, it would appear on the surface that teaching in China is transmissive and learning passive. However, Shi (2006) notes that descriptions of the Chinese learning culture are controversial and challenges the view that typical Chinese learners are unable to think critically, are passive and obedient to authority; her study suggests that the influence of Confucianism on this learning culture is declining as her informants used different individual learning strategies in their language learning and they preferred equality with their teachers in an interactive and interesting learning environment. She presents the case, therefore, that the differences between Chinese learners of English and their Western contemporaries are not polar, and that the intricacies of the Chinese culture of learning are possibly misunderstood.

Demystifying the Preconceptions

Tani (2005) notes the contrast between Chinese students' apparent surface learning approach in class and their successful learning outcomes associated with a deep learning approach. Actually this deep learning is unsurprising, for although CHC is associated with memorization of texts and transmission of knowledge, Confucianism is defined by 'strong traditional elements of the student's own effort, the need for reflective thinking and independent interpretation, for internalisation of understanding and putting what is learnt into practice' (Jin and Cortazzi, 2006: 12).

The stereotypical view fails to take into account the emphasis on memorization of information as a means to accurately recall information in order to gain a *deeper* understanding of the content. The key word here is 'memorization', as opposed to 'rote learning', as the former can be seen as a strategy which facilitates understanding and the latter a simple surface strategy (Biggs, 1996: 54). In other words, memorization facilitates deep learning and the internalization of knowledge, which, after reflection, leads to an understanding of the content. Memorizing information in CHC is, therefore, a key aid to the internalization of knowledge rather than an end in itself. Furthermore, in valuing the product over the process, the emphasis is on the development of a skill first, *before* exploration and creativity using the skill, which comes later (Biggs, 1996: 55). Traditional Confucianism is actually inclined towards a deep approach to learning and emphasises reflective thinking, memorizing, understanding and, ultimately, questioning. These components are 'interrelated and integrated, and should be repeated for future and deeper learning' (Wing On, 1996: 36). Furthermore, CHC students do not wish to be spoon-fed information from a didactic authority but, rather, 'want to find knowledge themselves and find their own answers' (Littlewood, 2000: 34). Shi (2006) also found that Chinese learners prefer interesting and interactive classroom activities, as opposed to serious learning settings, and that they are active learners in that they employ various language learning strategies rather than rely on rote learning. Rather than sharp inter-country differences, there may actually be more difference in learning attitudes between individual learners from the same country than between Chinese and Western learners as a group (Littlewood, 1999).

Although lessons in China tend to be more teacher led than in the West, Bailey (2005) notes that there is more teacher-student social interaction in China, with students more likely to ask the tutor questions after the class, and where the model of teaching, according to Biggs and Watkins (1996: 274-275), is 'not so much one of simple transmission as one based on much interaction, in a complex and mutually accepting (if not warm) social context'; furthermore, Bailey's study (1996) indicates that for Chinese students studying in the UK, professional attributes are less important than personal attributes, although this could be because the students are in a new environment. Biggs and Watkins (1996) also highlight the collaborative learning that takes place with peers outside the classroom and which provides students with a support structure.

The Research

The research for this article used a questionnaire, which 31 Chinese pre-sessional students at the University of Worcester completed prior to starting their language course. The questions prompted quantitative responses about their expectations of classroom techniques in the UK and qualitative answers about their ideal learning environment. The students were asked to agree or disagree with various statements, each reflecting a type of classroom behaviour: pair/group work, asking and answering questions, and how students expected to acquire grammar. A Likert scale of 1 - 5 was used with '1' signalling strong agreement and '5' strong disagreement, and a student mentor and tutor were present to help with any language difficulties arising from the questionnaire. Respondents also wrote their age, gender, where they had learnt English and whether their tutors were non-native speakers (NNS) or native speakers (NS).

The sample was divided into those who had been taught English by a native English-speaking teacher in China (15), and those who had only been taught English by Chinese tutors (16), in order to ascertain whether prior experience of being taught by Western tutors would influence students' expectations in any way. However, whilst classes taught by NS may be assumed as more interactive due to the communicative focus of Western English language teaching, it should be noted that no specific information was sought regarding any instrumental differences that students might have experienced between the different nationalities of their tutors in their home country. Furthermore, whilst no interviews were carried out with this particular group, it is evident that further research in this area would benefit from both individual interviews and focus groups subsequent to the completion of the language course at Worcester.

Discussion of Findings

The quantitative results are shown in Table 1. The responses demonstrate that both sets of students, those with experience of Western English teachers (Group 1) and those who had only been taught English by Chinese tutors (Group 2), were generally accepting of these teaching/learning practices. As predicted, however, Group 2 students agreed slightly less (mean difference of 0.42) with all the statements except 'I expect the teacher to tell me how to form English grammatical structures', thus showing possibly less familiarity with participative classroom behaviour. Significantly, there was also an 82% increase in the choice of 'strongly agree' responses in Group 1 compared with Group 2.

Table 1: Quantitative Responses to Statements on Teaching and Learning Techniques

	Group 1: Western teacher experience						Group 2: Asian teacher experience only					
1 – 5 scale used to grade the statements (1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree):	1	2	3	4	5	avg grade	1	2	3	4	5	avg grade
Group/Pair Work:												
I expect to work in pairs/groups during most classes.	4	8	2	1	0	2.00	3	5	5	1	2	2.63
I am happy to work in pairs/groups during most classes.	9	4	2	0	0	1.53	3	6	3	3	1	2.56
Losing Face:												
If I am unsure of something, I will ask the teacher during the class.	8	4	2	1	0	1.73	3	6	5	2	0	2.38
If I am unsure of something, I will ask the teacher after the class.	3	7	3	0	2	2.40	2	7	4	3	0	2.50
If the teacher asks the class a question I can answer, I will be happy to speak up and give the answer in front of the class.	8	4	3	0	0	1.67	7	4	3	2	0	2.00
I will try to answer a question during the class, even though I may make a mistake.	5	4	5	1	0	2.13	1	6	7	1	1	2.69
I am comfortable making a mistake in front of the class.	1	9	4	0	1	2.40	0	10	5	0	1	2.50
Learning Language Rules:												
I expect the teacher to tell me how to form English grammatical structures.	5	6	3	0	1	2.07	6	6	1	3	0	2.06
I expect to work out the English grammatical rules by myself.	2	6	6	0	1	2.47	0	6	9	1	0	2.69

Group/Pair Work

Many students expected to engage in pair and group work during the course, thus indicating that students were aware of the learning benefits of practising the language with their peers. There was, however, a difference in expectations between the groups, with 50% of Group 2 either neutral or not expecting to participate in class interaction, compared with only 20% of Group 1.

The statement ‘I am happy to work in pairs/groups during most classes’ produced the most significant difference, with a mean score of 1.53 for Group 1 students compared with 2.56 for Group 2 students; furthermore, nobody in Group 1 disagreed with the statement, whereas in Group 2, four students (25%) showed reluctance to work in pairs/groups. One interpretation of this is that those with experience of native Western teachers may be more aware of what to expect on their English course. However, the fact that students in Group 1 were more accepting of communication and interaction suggests that exposure to different teaching techniques by Western teachers may have facilitated a subtle change in students’ approach to learning, possibly after students found these techniques valuable. This supports Shi’s (2006) research in challenging the Western stereotype of the Chinese

learner, and also demonstrates how students from a CHC can adopt practices traditionally associated with Western pedagogy. The positive disposition towards pair work also suggests that these students are active learners who see the benefit of peer learning. Such answers are inconsistent with the belief that the traditional Chinese learner is passive.

Losing Face

The responses show that most students were prepared to ask their tutor questions. Those with experience of Western teachers were 27% more willing to ask questions *during* the class; both groups, however, showed similar results on approaching the tutor after the class (a mean score of 2.45), a practice more common in China than the UK.

Interestingly, answering a question in front of the class produced a number of ‘strongly agree’ responses, the highest total (15) for any of the statements. Such evidence again contrasts with the stereotype of Chinese students’ reticence. Furthermore, students were generally more neutral than negative towards answering a question erroneously, although Group 1 was more accepting of this behaviour.

Unsurprisingly, the statement ‘I am comfortable making a mistake in front of the class’ produced the lowest agreement, with only one student strongly agreeing with the statement. The fact, however, that nearly 70% of the students did not feel negatively about making a mistake in front of their peers and only 6% strongly disagreed demonstrates that these students may actually regard mistakes as part of the learning process rather than losing face. This appears to support Littlewood’s (1999) suggestion that learning attitudes may vary more between individual students than between the different cultures, as many learners, regardless of culture and educational background, might also be uncomfortable with such classroom behaviour.

Learning Language ‘Rules’

Some indication of how students view grammar acquisition would also enable teachers to facilitate students’ transition between learning cultures and inform future teaching provision for such classes, hence the inclusion of the statements regarding language acquisition.

Students in Group 1 were slightly more accepting of working out the rules themselves, whereas the majority

of Group 2 responded neutrally to an inductive approach and no-one ‘strongly agreed’. However, the high overall number of neutral responses (48%) and the low level of disagreement with an inductive approach (two students) is indicative of the adaptability of these students: they were apparently responding to the statement with an open mind rather than a fixed notion of being told everything, as is often portrayed in accounts of CHC education.

The ambivalence of these students about how grammatical rules are acquired is also consistent with Littlewood’s (1999) findings that Asian students prefer to actively explore knowledge as part of a group. This lack of preference about learning language ‘rules’, however, may also demonstrate that these students view the actual memorization of information as leading to deeper learning rather than how it is presented to them, possibly reinforcing the point that students from CHC backgrounds *are* active learners who employ deep learning strategies.

Ideal Learning Environment

A summary of the qualitative responses for students’ preferred learning environment is found in Table 2.

Table 2: Ideal Learning Environment

What is your own definition of a ‘good teacher’?	In terms of activities, how would you describe your ideal learning environment (your ideal class)?
<p><u>Group 1 (experience of NS English tutors)</u></p> <p>The guide to students, not to parents Patience, positive Make sure we all know and can use what she teach Enthusiasm, knowledgeable, fair to do something Kind, professional, communicate to students A good teacher can teach us knowledge in a proper way and his/her class be more funny as well as vivid. He/She must be very kind and patient. Easy-going. A good teacher can spent much time to help me to study English. Talkative, Outgoing. Communicate with students and be a good partner. Responsibility and kindly. Friendly. Teach anything and be a good friend to me.</p>	<p>Divided into many group and we can communicate with each other. Quiet. Everyone can communicate with other people and they can help with each other. Hard-working environment; everyone study and discuss a lot of issue. Quiet, not so cold, everyone is hard working. Spoken loudly and with body language. Everyone speak English. No force and more interesting. We can discuss the main point in class and we can sit as a group. Active. Relax and happy, and the things we learn are very useful. Positive, active. Learning and communicating each other. Positive, great, like to study.</p>
<p><u>Group 2 (Chinese English tutors only)</u></p> <p>Positive, patience, tell me where is my mistake Love to communicate with students Know the students’ need, answer students’ questions patiently Friendly, patient to answer our questions kind Professional, warm, optimistic, responsible, patient More activities, more interesting Responsibility, have fun</p>	<p>Everyone like to talk with teacher All students and teachers join together Some groups in class, the teacher does not ask someone Name, people can speak whatever time Positive, friendly Patient teachers and a folk of diligent students More practical activities would be nice Good communication environment with teachers and classmates</p>

<p>Good teachers encourage and motivate their students to think on their own</p> <p>Care students</p> <p>Motivating the students to studying</p> <p>Nice and friendly for student</p> <p>Friendly</p>	<p>Quite happy games</p> <p>Just say my opinion honestly</p> <p>People like to study and help each other to improve other student</p> <p>Fun share</p>
---	--

What makes a 'good teacher'?

On the definition of a 'good teacher', answers for both groups were similar as many students rated the personal characteristics of friendliness, patience and positivity as important. For their learning environment, the overwhelming response for both groups was that the class should be interactive and relaxed, a harmonious environment in which students communicate openly with each other and the tutor.

Attitudes to peer learning

Peer learning is also seemingly welcomed, indicated by comments on working together and helping fellow students. This contrasts with the traditional description of the authoritative, passive classroom and again suggests that these students are active learners who are aware of the importance of peer learning. However, the fact that many students focus on the personal attributes of teachers could also, as Bailey (2005) suggests, be the result of an unfamiliar environment.

Emphasis on effort

Furthermore, the comments on the need for everyone to share information and for the teacher to give attention to everyone and 'all abilities' are indicative of the belief in Confucianist principles, that it is effort rather than ability which enables students to achieve their goals; ability, therefore, is simply an attribute controlled by effort and everyone can attain educational goals through effort. This egalitarian view underpins some of the responses in the research which suggest that with tutor and peer help, all students can progress, regardless of ability.

Conclusion and Implications

The results indicate that prior to the course students were generally aware of the communicative and participative nature of Western English language classes and expected their learning experience to be interactive. The general support for group/pair work also dispels the notion of the quiet, uncommunicative CHC learner, and suggests that contemporary Chinese students are not bound by traditional stereotypical traits. The fact that Group 1 students were considerably happier to interact also indicates that CHC students do learn to adapt to Western communicative teaching techniques. This suggests that once CHC students become more aware of the usefulness of pair and group work on a course, they may well realize the potential of high communication activities and be more responsive towards them due to an awareness that class interaction aids their communication and helps them achieve their learning.

The implication of this is that tutors should not hesitate to use communicative activities when teaching CHC students, as many expect such interaction and associate such techniques with Western-style teaching; tutors should also be aware that silence does not necessarily mean a lack of enthusiasm but rather a lack of practice or even fear of losing face.

Although the stereotypical traits of the Chinese learner were not overly apparent in this research, the responses do suggest a need to focus on strategies to improve communication levels so that all students feel confident in volunteering information in class and less concerned about 'losing face' right from the outset, both on pre-session and degree courses. The responses on the required personal attributes of their tutors also indicate that students are keen to develop their communication skills in, ideally, an open, friendly environment.

On the acquisition of new language structures, the varied responses demonstrate that the group as a whole had no fixed expectations of either a deductive or inductive approach to language acquisition. This suggests that these students would be responsive to different techniques in teaching grammar.

The aim of this small-scale study is to use students' expectations to inform future teaching provision, but no judgement is made between the differing educational cultures as to which is better. What is apparent is that the responses do not correspond to the stereotypical, passive CHC student. These students expected the classes to be interactive and participative, were aware of teacher-student communication, and also appeared open to the teaching approach used. Tutors could, therefore, draw on these expectations in their course planning and not hesitate to include communicative activities, regardless of any apparent passivity. However, they should also realize the value Chinese students place on a friendly classroom environment and the approachability of the tutor, not only in class but (crucially) after the class too. In order to maximise these expectations and facilitate communication, tutors could incorporate more opportunities for such interaction by holding informal group tutorials, even if that means reducing the formal class time. An understanding of Chinese students' perception of effort and collaboration can also enable teachers to reinforce the learning benefits of effort in the form of volunteering information and attempting to answer in class, not just on language courses but in HE in general.

References

- Bailey, C. (2005) The UK lecturers Don't Teach Me Anything: Chinese students' expectations of their teachers and implications for UK HE' providers'. In: Southampton Solent University Conference Proceedings: *The Chinese and South East Asian Learner: The Transition to UK Higher Education*. [Online] Southampton: Southampton Solent University. Available from: http://wlv.openrepository.com/wlv/bitstream/2436/83357/1/CB_Solent_05_final_version.pdf [Date Accessed 9 February 2013].
- Biggs, J. (1996) Western Misperceptions of the Confucian-heritage Learning Culture. In: D. A. Watkins and J. Biggs (eds.) Biggs, J. and Watkins, D. A. *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- Chan, S. (1999) The Chinese Learner – A Question of Style'. *Education + Training*. Vol. 41 (6/7), pp. 294 – 305.
- Cross, J. & Hitchcock, R. (2007) Chinese Students' (or students from China's) Views of UK HE: Differences, difficulties and benefits, and suggestions for facilitating transition. *The East Asian Learner*. Vol. 3 (2), pp. 1-31. Available from: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/schools/education/eal/eal-3-2/vol3_2_cross.pdf [Accessed 9 February 2013].
- Higher Education Funding Council for England [HEFCE] (2014) *Global Demand for English Higher Education. An Analysis of International Student Entry to Higher English Education Courses*. Available from: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/heinengland/HEFCE2014_08a.pdf [Accessed 17 June 2014].
- Jin, L. & Cortazzi, M. (2006) Changing Practices in Chinese Cultures of Learning. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*. Vol. 19 (1), pp. 5-20. Available from: <http://www.tandfonline.com.atlas.worc.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/07908310608668751> [Accessed 25 February 2013].
- Littlewood, W. (2000) Do Asian Students Really Want to Listen and Obey? *ELT Journal*. Vol. 54 (1) pp.31-36. Available from: <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org> [Accessed on 5 February 2013].
- Salili, F. (1996) Accepting Personal Responsibility for Learning. In: D. A. Watkins and J. Biggs (eds.) Biggs, J. and Watkins, D. A. *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- Shi, L. (2006) The Successors to Confucianism or a New Generation? A Questionnaire Study on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning English. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*. Vol. 19 (1). Available from: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07908310608668758> [Accessed 9 February 2013].
- Tani, M. (2005) Quiet, But Only in Class: Reviewing the in-class participation of Asian students. HERDSA Conference 2005. Available from: http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2005/pdf/non_refereed/030.pdf [Accessed 9 February 2013].
- Wang, T. (2006) Understanding Chinese Culture and Learning. In: P. L. Jeffrey (ed.) *Proceedings of the International Research Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education*, 14p. Adelaide, SA: Australian Association for Research in Education. Available from: <http://www.aare.edu.au/06pap/wan06122.pdf> [Accessed 4 March 2013].
- Watkins, D. A. and Biggs, J. (eds.). (1996) *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- Wing On, L. (1996) The Cultural Context for Chinese Learners: Conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition. In: D. A. Watkins and J. Biggs (eds.) Biggs, J. and Watkins, D. A. *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychological and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.

Biography

Christina Wright teaches academic writing and English as a foreign language at the University of Worcester's Language Centre and lectures in English language and linguistics on the English Language Studies course. She has worked in the field of English language teaching since 1990, including periods overseas in both Spain and Japan. Her teaching interests lie in semantics, and the development of reading and listening skills in English for academic purposes. Her research interest for her MA was the perception of lexical items across different speech communities.

