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An Exploratory Study on Chinese Students Studying in Canada on “2 + 2” Joint Programs

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CHINESE STUDENTS STUDYING IN CANADA
ON “2+2” JOINT PROGRAMS

By
Chiyu Wang

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

In response to the trend of globalization and internationalization, the Chinese government opened the education market to allow foreign institutions to operate in the Educational Service Trade, especially in higher education. As a result, a significant number of joint education programs between China and Canada came into being in the last decade. The “2+2” Type, which is considered a typical mode, is the focus of this study. The aim of this research is to understand perspectives, expectations, and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian Universities.

The research was conducted with eight participants who were enrolled in the “2+2” joint programs of the China University of Petroleum. Surveys and interviews were employed for data collection. The findings provide useful suggestions for “2+2” joint programs students and administrators of cooperative universities; thus, such programs can be promoted and improved in the future.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 and in response to globalization and internationalization, the Chinese government has opened the education market to allow foreign institutions to operate in the Educational Service Trade, especially in higher education (Knight, 2004). With the development in various professions, there has been increasing demand for high quality educational resources and, as a result, a significant number of joint education programs between China and foreign nations came into being in the last decade (Huang, 2006).

The purpose of Chinese-foreign cooperation in education is to introduce advanced education resources that provide Chinese students the opportunity to receive various types of post-secondary education (Healey, 2008). The main form of the Chinese-foreign cooperation is to set up cooperative projects, which can be understood as the “two-campus” model, where students complete their first part of education at their home universities in China, and the second part at a foreign university. For students who are enrolled in the joint programs, their course credits can be transferred between the Chinese university and the foreign university (Huan, 2015). This kind of collaboration seems to be a win-win solution for the students, institutions, and countries involved (Huan, 2015).

In the last decade, the Chinese government has encouraged such collaboration. The *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools*, which is promulgated by the State Council (2003) asserts that

The State encourages Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools to which high-quality foreign educational resources are introduced. The State encourages Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools in the field of higher education and vocational education, and encourages Chinese institutions of higher learning to cooperate with renowned foreign institutions of higher learning in running schools.

(Chapter 1, Article 3)

With the deepening of education reforms and the internationalization of education, the number of Chinese-Foreign cooperation programs increased from only two joint programs in 1995 to 745 in 2004 (Ministry of Education, 2004). Consequently, the number of Chinese students who were willing to study abroad increased from 2.1 million in 2002 to 3.4 million in 2009 (Choudaha & Chang, 2012). Regarding foreign university partners, “most of them are from the countries and regions with developed economies and advanced technology” (Mok & Xu, 2006, p. 401). Almost 50% of the cooperative universities are from America, Australia, and United Kingdom (Yang, 2008). However, in recent years, the number of joint programs cooperating with Canada has been increasing rapidly (Huang, 2006).

Canada has more than 90 universities and 120 colleges (Duan, 2008), most of which are public institutes. Canadian values prioritize quality of education; thus, the Chinese Ministry of Education recognizes many reputable Canadian educational institutions (Duan, 2008). In

Canada, the internationalization of higher education has become the consensus and direction of the whole society. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (2007) published report pointed out that China has been the biggest source of international students in Canada since 2001. Until 2009, the number of enrolled full-time Chinese international students in Canadian universities was about 87,000, accounting for 43% of the total number of international students (Choudaha & Chang, 2012). At the same time, many joint programs have been initiated between China and Canada, and multiple approaches to these programs have been employed. According to Huang (2006), the cooperation can be categorized into the following three major types: the “1+3” Type, the “2+2” Type, and the “3+1” Type.

“1+3” Type: Chinese students study for one year in local campuses, then after being admitted, these students can go to Canadian campuses for advanced studies.

“2+2” Type: In this type, Chinese students study for the first two years at their Chinese institutions, then they move on to the partner campuses to complete the second part of their studies.

“3+1” Type: Chinese students complete the first three years at institutions in China, then they continue their studies on Canadian campuses in the final year. (p. 28)

According to Knight (2011), the joint programs are very popular and have five key benefits for the participating students: 1) they reduce foreign education expenses up to 30-60% than the students who study four years in overseas universities, 2) they allow students to earn degrees from both universities, 3) they allow students to return home university if students struggle at the foreign university, 4) they provide students with rich

international experiences for students, and 5) they allows cooperating countries to offer more overseas employment opportunities for students. These types of international cooperation programs are met with great favour by parents and students in China.

Huan (2015) observes that the “2+2” Type is the most common. When compared to the other formats, the “2+2” Type gives students enough time to adapt to the campus life in both countries. Therefore, this study focuses on the “2+2” Type, as it is more common.

1.2 Aims of the Research

Adapting to an unfamiliar place can be difficult; consequently, many international students face challenges outside of their home countries. Yang (2008) notes that Chinese international students are one of the international groups that experience high levels of challenges when adapting to a foreign educational system and culture. With the increasing number of joint programs entering the field and Chinese students going to Canadian universities, it is essential for Chinese and Canadian cooperative universities to clearly understand how satisfied these students are with their programs, learning, and life experiences.

The aim of this research is to understand the perspectives, expectations, and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian Universities (Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Based on the findings, the researcher hopes to provide useful suggestions for cooperative Chinese/Canadian post-secondary programs and their joint programs students, so that the joint programs can be improved.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Most international students suffer from “cultural shock” (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping & Todman, 2008, p. 63) because of the many changes experienced during their studies in overseas universities. As Figure 1 demonstrates, these changes can be attributed to the acculturation process, and the intercultural adaptation can be divided into two categories: “psychological adjustments” (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004, p. 142), which relates to the mental health and overall well being of the migrants; and “sociocultural adjustment” (Oguri & Gudykunst, 2002, p. 589), which relates to the behavioural and cognitive factors that are associated with effective performance during cross-cultural transition.

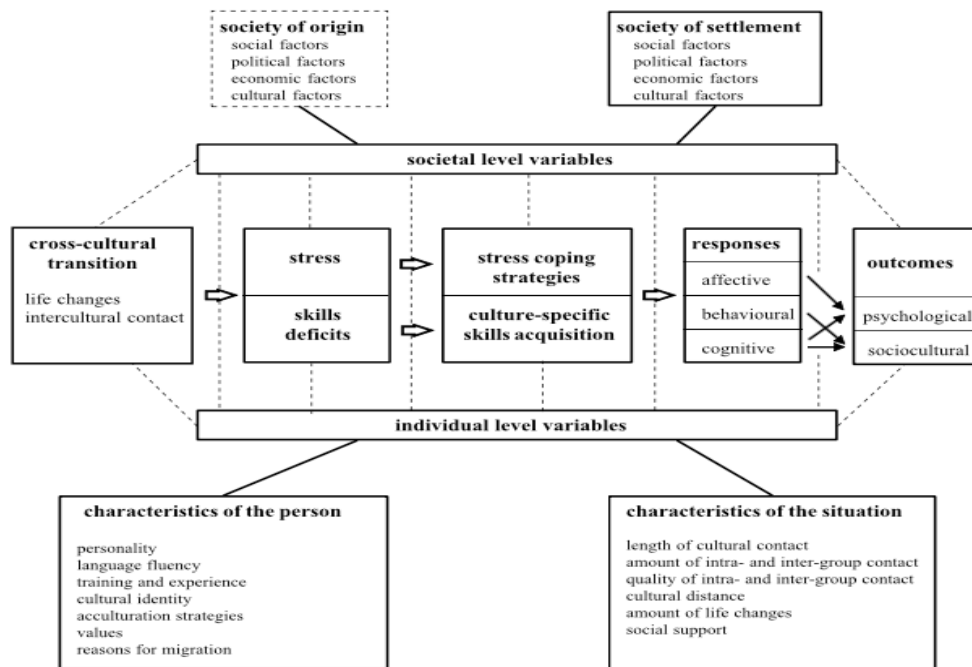


Figure 1. The acculturation process (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001, p. 44)

The acculturation process can offer valuable experiences, but can also be problematic. It can be positive, leading people toward an explicit life trend and helping them to improve their mental health in the new culture. However, due to the challenges associated with change

and adapting to a new cultural or conforming to new social expectations, the process can also have negative consequences (Dasen, Berry, & Sartorius, 1988).

1.4 Outline of Chapters

The first chapter outlines the background of joint programs in China and the reasons why many students and parents choose the “2+2” Type programs. It also presents the aims of the research and what aspects the researcher focuses on. The second chapter concentrates on a review of relevant literature. It focuses on three tasks: classifying the challenges that international students face, including language, academic, cultural, communication, and social problems; comparing the differences between “2+2” joint programs students and other international students; and identifying the limitations of previous research. In the third chapter, the researcher explains the research methodology, including the research questions, research method, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures. The results and findings from a combination of a questionnaire and interviews are presented in the fourth chapter, and the fifth chapter discusses the results and findings and provides suggestions for cooperative universities and “2+2” joint programs students. It also contains a conclusion, implications, and limitations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Internationalization in Higher Education

Internationalization in higher education appears to be a reflection of globalization (Qiang, 2003). Knight (1994) defined internationalization in higher education as “the process of integrating an international or intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” (p. 34). Knight (2003) later wrote that internationalization was defined as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 12).

International cooperation in higher education is not a new. From the Middle Ages to the end of the 17th century, there were arguments for “the use of a common language, and of a uniform program of study and system of examination to promote mobility of students and scholars and exchange of ideas” (Knight & de Wit, 1995, pp. 6-7). Since then, various driving forces have led to universities to form links with each other across national borders.

2.2 Challenges for Chinese International Students

For most Chinese international students, studying in overseas universities can be a significant life event that involves numerous changes. Many studies have explored the experiences, challenges, and barriers that Chinese international students face when attending such institutions. These difficulties include, but are not limited to, language, academic, culture, communication, and social life.

2.2.1 Language

Although all of the Chinese students must get a certain score in TOEFL, IELTS, or other language tests before they can be admitted to overseas universities, because China is a non-English speaking country, they still cannot communicate in English as well as most native speakers (Zhou, 2010). Mellish and Pan (2008) found that for some Chinese international students, the language issue has become a vicious circle. If a student has language problems, this student will lose his or her confidence when speaking English and will be too shy to participate in class discussions or communication with others, which further inhibits their English-language development and further lowers one's self-efficacy.

Another language issue for Chinese international students is that the way they speak is structured by the thought processes and the linguistic patterns of their own languages (Liu, 2015). When non-native speakers speak English, they will be interfered by the English expression (Bloom, 2014; Myles, 2002; Odlin, 1989), which is why many Chinese students speak or write English in 'Chinglish', or Chinese English. According to Pan et al (2008), "host-language proficiency not only influences the academic work of overseas students, but also affects their social lives and understanding of the host culture" (p.227).

2.2.2 Academic

Chinese students are often regarded as diligent learners (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998) because they seek to satisfy the expectations of their teachers and parents; however, Volet and Renshaw (1996) suggest that China's teacher-centered pedagogy has socialized Chinese students to unquestioningly accept information provided by textbooks and lecturers and

consequently seldom question what they learn or volunteer in-class contributions. Therefore, lack of active participation or involvement in class is one of the factors that cause academic difficulties for Chinese students. Upton (1989) suggests that most Chinese students are when an instructor's pedagogical approach relies on discussion, Chinese students are at a distinct disadvantage as more are uncomfortable with participating. This identifies an important issue during the process of adjusting in US colleges. Most Chinese students feeling that they are lost in classroom discussions when the instructors students employ colloquialisms speak about issues outside of the course content (Sun, Sangweni, Chen, & Cheung, 1999, p. 243). Holmes (2004) states that the most common reason for the low participation is that Chinese students lack critical thinking in the academic activities. According to Sun, Sangweni, Chen, and Cheung (1999), Chinese students studying in western countries indicated that the reason they keep silence in class was because they had not yet adapted to western academic environment.

For most Chinese students at foreign universities, plagiarism can be a serious problem. Students from Asian countries are often unfamiliar with expectations regarding academic integrity acknowledging material from other sources; thus, they unintentionally commit plagiarism (Volet & Renshaw, 1996). Huan (2015) suggests that part of the reason for this may be that many Chinese international students lack academic writing skills, for example, paraphrase, and quote. Drawing on educational and cultural perspective, Todd (1997) suggests "Plagiarism itself can be discouraged by the use of oral presentations, both as a means of improving language control, and as a tool within the overall assessment process" (p.

176). Thus, attention should be given to students' lack of familiarity with concepts that are culturally conditioned.

2.2.3 Culture

Cultural differences may be the most constant and difficult problem for all international students, especially Chinese students. This is because China has a long history, and Chinese cultures have been in existence for thousands of years (Keightley, 1996). In traditional Chinese culture, every student is socialized to believe that being successful and diligent is important. “Confucian philosophy views education as important job prospects and even more important as a means for building one’s character. Influenced by this philosophy, Chinese family values and socialization experiences emphasize the need to succeed educationally” (Yan & Berliner, 2009, p. 941). The expectations prescribed by this philosophy places a significant amount of pressure on Chinese students who enroll in a foreign higher education system. Zhang and Carrasquillo (1992) state that “Requirements and expectations of performance and upward mobility, guilt on the need to respect the sacrifice and duty of parents, respect for education and social compare with other Chinese family in terms of specific educational outcomes are all the values or practices in typical Chinese families” (p. 7).

2.2.4 Communication

Yan and Berliner (2009) state that Chinese students are not likely to ask for help from their professors and peers.

When asked the reason for Chinese students' unwillingness to present problems to their advisors, most of the respondents attribute that characteristic to the Chinese culture. In China, those workers who express the fewest problems are valued more. They are seen as more intelligent and hardworking. Chinese students' willingness to demonstrate their effort and devotion to work, however, has exactly the opposite effect on their supervisors. (p. 942)

For Chinese students, diligently working by themselves is a normal phenomenon (Balçetis, Dunning & Miller, 2008). However, in most Western cultures, individual work and teamwork are equally important, and teamwork, which plays an important role in both an individual's life and an organization's success (Kirugi, 2015), is often more important.

The second communication problem is intercultural communication. Several studies indicate that there is relatively little contact between overseas and domestic students. In the United Kingdom, only 15% of Chinese students said they had friends who were native to the United Kingdom and 43% international students in the United Kingdom had no way to get to know local students ("A Model of Shock," n.d.). In Germany, one survey found that about four out of five international students complained about limited contact with their lecturers and domestic students at the university (Heublein, 2014).

2.2.5 Social life

In many aspects, international students experience isolation and loneliness when they are studying overseas. Russell, Rosenthal and Thomson (2010) investigated 900 international students in Australia and found that 41% of Chinese international students experience high

stress levels. Sawir et al. (2008) found that one third of Chinese international students reported cultural loneliness. Cultural loneliness occurs when a person experiences loneliness while immersed in a foreign culture and that this loneliness leaves them feeling as though they are not understood and are unable to understand cultural meanings (van Staden & Coetzee, 2010). Rokach and Brock (1997) state that this cultural loneliness facilitates social inadequacy, alienation, interpersonal and self-alienation, which collectively leads to emotional distress. Likewise, Oei and Notowidjojo (1990) found that international students are significantly more likely to experience moderate to severe clinical depression and loneliness.

2.3 The Differences between “2+2” Joint Programs Students and “Other” International Students

The international students discussed in this study were undergraduate students enrolled in “2+2” joint programs. The differences between these students and “other” international students can be categorized in the following three aspects: previous experiences, current situation, and future outlook.

Previous experiences

These two types of students have different educational experiences prior to their entrance to an overseas university as international students. After graduating from high school, “other” international students go to overseas universities as international students directly, while the “2+2” joint programs students take the national entrance exam (Gaokao) and gain admissions into a “2 + 2” joint program at a Chinese university. They then study for

two years before they move on to an overseas university. The first two years provide the “2+2” students a buffer time to prepare for the next two years, but for the “other” international students are exposed to the local culture and educational system at the beginning of their university life. Therefore, “other” international students have much more time to adapt to modes of Western educational practice than the joint programs students.

Current situation

When the “2+2” joint programs students first arrive at overseas universities, the other international students have already familiarized themselves with the local life. Under the circumstances, the “2+2” students have to take classes with other international students and adapt the new environment at the same time, which would be a challenge to concentrate on both the sides.

Future outlook

Compared with “other” international students, some “2+2” joint programs students may delay graduation because of the credit transfer problem and language issue, which means that some of them may not complete the second part study in two years.

2.4 Limitation of Previous Research

With the internationalization and the cooperation between Chinese and foreign universities, the number of “2+2” joint programs students have increased dramatically. However, previous research focuses on presenting a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by Chinese international students and there is limited literature that deals with joint programs students specifically. In addition, the majority of research focuses on

Chinese students' learning in the United States and Australia, with limited research involving Canada. Therefore, this study explores the problems that Chinese students in "2+2" programs in Canadian universities face with the hope that the findings can help Chinese "2+2" joint programs students studying not only in Canada, but also in other countries.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Questions

In order to understand how participants perceive the “2+2” joint programs students at Canadian universities, the research questions investigated what students expect from their programs, what they experienced during the programs, and what they want to recommend for all Chinese joint program students and universities. The research questions are as follows:

1. What were the “2+2” joint programs students’ expectations before going to Canada?
2. How do the “2+2” joint programs students’ perceive their experiences while studying at Canadian universities?
3. What are the “2+2” joint programs students’ suggestions for the programs?

3.2 Research Site and Participants

The China University of Petroleum is located in Qingdao, Shandong Province. The reasons for choosing this university as the research site are as follows: 1) it is one of the Project 211 universities. The Project 211 of the National Key Universities was initiated in 1995 by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China with the intent of raising the research standards of high-level universities and cultivating strategies for socio-economic development (Li, 2004); 2) it is a comprehensive university that stresses the importance of international cooperation. According to the official website of China University of Petroleum, since 2004, the China University of Petroleum has already established cooperation and exchange relations with higher education institutions in the United States, Canada, Australia,

Great Britain, Russia, and other 30 countries and regions, the “2 + 2” joint programs of China University of Petroleum have been established to cooperate with United States and Canada since 2008 and by 2014, the total number of cooperation schools was thirty-three, including eleven Canadian universities; 3) it is the only university that granted permission for the researcher to do the study about “2+2” joint programs.

All participants were students who had already finished one year of study in Canada, which means they had at least one-year life experience at Canadian campus. This may include a fourth-year students or students who graduated. Therefore, the eligible population was students who registered in September 2015 or September 2014. After getting the approval from the Research Ethics Board (REB) of the University of Windsor, the researcher contacted the International Cooperation and Exchange Office of China University of Petroleum and asked them to forward an e-mail including a questionnaire and an invitation letter to all the eligible students. Based on the data from the official website of China University of Petroleum, the registered number of “2+2” joint programs students at Canadian universities has been over 40 students each year since 2014. Thus, the number of eligible students should have been at least 80 ($N=80$). All 80 students were contacted and invited to participate in the study by an email invitation. The researcher’s e-mail address was included in the e-mail so that “2+2” joint programs students who were interested in participating could easily contact the researcher. The target number of participants was 10 ($n=10$), which represented 12% of the eligible population. However, due to the fact that data collection was completed during the summer break, students may not have been checking their e-mail as

frequently as when if they were in school at the time. In addition, based on the information provided by International Cooperation and Exchange Office of China University of Petroleum, the actual number of students registered in “2+2” joint programs students in Canadian cooperative universities in the last two years were less than the expectation. Therefore, the expected participant number was not achieved. Eight participants were invited. To reduce the bias and error of the sample, variables such as the students’ gender, the time of going abroad, and discipline were controlled.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

In this qualitative research, two data gathering techniques were employed: a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The purpose of using two kinds of data collection was to gain detailed information from participants. The questionnaire (Appendix A) and the interview questions (Appendix B) were available both in English and Mandarin, because Chinese is the first language for the participants and some of them might prefer using Chinese for the questionnaire, the interview, or both.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

All eight participants received a survey questionnaire that contained some basic questions relating to demographic information, such as name, age, gender, year of study, major, their range of TOEFL or IELTS score, and whether they took any ESL lessons in Canadian. This information could provide clarity regarding participants’ perspectives in the interview procedure. All participants received and returned the questionnaires by e-mail.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview was designed to be a one-time in-depth conversation as prescribed by Legard, Keegan, and Ward (2003). The questions focused on gaining in-depth data to understand whether and how participants adjusted themselves to the new living and learning environment and perspectives of the joint programs. Considering the participants were in different schools, the interviews were conducted through WeChat—a software program that is widely used by Chinese students—and the time for interviews was scheduled based on participants' availability. The participants were interviewed individually to ensure that they felt relaxed and comfortable. To conform to the recommendations of Legard et al. (2003), the researcher, who designed the questions, conducted the interview to collect general information from the participants and lead the discussion toward detailed responses related to the study's topic. The interviews were recorded with digital voice recorders, which were transcribed and translated when necessary to text by researcher. During the interview, the researcher guided and allowed the participants to express their views freely.

According to Louise and While (1994), there are five key advantages to using a personal interview as the method for data collection:

It can compensate for low response rates typical of questionnaires; it is ideal for exploring participants' attitudes, values, and motives; it allows the research to evaluate the respondents' answers with respect to validity by recording non-verbal gestures, which is especially help when exploring sensitive issues; it allows the researcher to ensure that each question is by each respondent to facilitate easy comparability; and it

ensures that respondents do not receive assistance when preparing their responses. (p. 329)

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Caudle (2004) states that qualitative data analysis refers to the process of organizing and responsibly presenting data collected from sources, which may include interviews or on-site observations, which is particularly applicable to the current study, as well as documents. For the current study, the researcher analyzed the data from the questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The data analysis followed a four-step process outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984): 1) data reduction was conducted and data was organized; 2) data was categorized into concepts; 3) the data was reread and the themes summarized; 4) the implications were assessed and the findings presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Eight participants were involved in this study and they were asked to fill out a questionnaire and answer questions through a semi-structured interview about their experiences in “2+2” joint programs at participating Canadian universities.

All the participants were from the “2+2” joint programs of the China University of Petroleum and already had at least one year of experience at Canadian universities. When the questionnaire and the interview took place, seven participants were enrolled in Canadian universities, and one participant had already graduated. During data analysis, pseudonyms were given to the eight participants by the researcher: Abby, Bella, Cara, Daisy, Elaine, Faith, Galen, and Hank.

4.1 Survey Data: The Basic Information of Participants

Abby, a female, was studying at York University when the data were collected. She majored in accounting, her entry IELTS score was 5.5, and she had taken ESL lessons in Canada for six months.

Bella, a female, was studying at York University at the time of data collection. She was an accounting major, her entry IELTS score was 5.0, and she had taken ESL lessons for twelve months.

Cara, a female, had graduated from the University of Waterloo. Her major was mechanical engineering, her entry IELTS score was 6.0, and she had taken ESL lessons for about four months.

Daisy, a female, was studying at the University of Manitoba when the data were collected. Her major was accounting, her entry IELTS score was 5.5, and she had taken ESL lessons for six months.

Elaine, a female, was studying at the University of Prince Edward Island when the data were collected. She majored in economics, her entry IELTS score was 5.5, and she had taken ESL lessons for three months.

Faith, a female, was studying at the University of Waterloo when the data were collected. Her major was accounting, her entry IELTS score was 5.5, and she had taken ESL lessons for eight months.

Galen, a male, was studying at York University when the data were collected. He majored in human resource management, his entry IELTS score was 5.5, and he had taken ESL lessons for six months.

Hank, a male, was studying at University of Victoria when the data were collected. His major was mechanical engineering, his entry IELTS score was 6.0, and he had taken ESL lessons for three months.

Of the eight participants, six were females and two were males. When the data were collected, seven were in the “2+2” joint programs of China University of Petroleum and one had graduated. The participants were from five different Canadian university partners, which accounts for about 45% of the total number of cooperating universities in Canada. The four majors—accounting, mechanical engineering, human resource management, and economics—cover almost all the majors in the “2+2” joint programs. In order to know the

“2+2” joint programs students’ English level, the participants were asked to provide their entry IELTS score range and whether they took any ESL lessons. The answer shows that all the participants’ entry IELTS score was in the range of 5.0 - 6.0. This means that the eight participants (100%) did not meet the language requirement of direct admission, which is IELTS overall score of 6.5. Therefore, they all took ESL lessons for periods ranging from three to twelve months. The information presents in Table 1.

Name	Gender	Home University	Canadian University	Major	IELTS Score	ESL Lessons
Abby	F	China University of Petroleum	York University	Accounting	5.5	6 months
Bella	F	Above	York University	Accounting	5.0	12 months
Cara	F	Above	University of Waterloo	Mechanical Engineering	6.0	4 months
Daisy	F	Above	University of Manitoba	Accounting	5.5	6 months
Elaine	F	Above	University of Prince Edward Island	Economics	5.5	3 months
Faith	F	Above	University of Waterloo	Accounting	5.5	8 months
Galen	M	Above	York University	Human Resource Management	5.5	6 months
Hank	M	Above	University of Victoria	Mechanical Engineering	6.0	3 months

Table 1 Demographic Information of the Participants

4.2 Semi-structured Interview Data

In order to meet the aims of the research, the data were presented in the order of the interview questions.

1. “How long have you been or studied in Canada?”

When the data were collected, Cara had graduated from a Canadian university and had secured a job in Canada. At the time of the study, she had been in Canada for four years and had taken three years to complete the second part of her studies in a Canadian university. Daisy, who was studying in university, had been in Canada for two and half years. The other six participants, who were still studying in their respective universities, had been in Canada for one and half years (Table 2).

Name	Length of Time
Abby	One and half years
Bella	One and half years
Cara	Four years
Daisy	Two and half years
Elaine	One and half years
Faith	One and half years
Galen	One and half years
Hank	One and half years

Table 2 The Length of Time in Canada

2. “Why did you choose to come to Canada to study?”

In response to the question on why they chose to come to Canadian universities, various

reasons were given by the participants: Canada's wide selection of universities offering "2+2" joint programs, its universities' positive reputation, safety, lower costs, Canada's immigration policy, and the country's social environment.

The primary reason for coming to Canada was that it offers a wide selection of universities that offer 2+2Type joint programs, including: University of Waterloo, University of Alberta, University of Saskatchewan, University of Manitoba, University of Victoria, Saint Mary's University, Memorial University of Newfoundland, York University, Trent University, University of Prince Edward Island, and Thompson Rivers University.

Likewise, many came to Canada because of Canada's reputation for quality of education. Several participants noted that they believe that Canadian education is superior. Abby stated that she came to Canada because, outside of American ivy-league schools, Canadian schools have, "for many years... been considered the best in the world" and "Canadian universities are recognized and acknowledged by other countries as being the best."

Safety was also an important factor. Daisy said comparing several countries and that Canada is safer than America. Hank had the same opinion: "My family was a little concerned about the firearm control issue, so the teacher recommended universities in Canada."

Canada was also favoured because it is more reasonably priced than in other countries. Most participants believed that Canadian universities offered a similar or higher quality education at a lower cost.

Canada was also appealing because its immigration policy for international students is more beneficial than that of other countries. Two participants, Faith and Elaine, said that they

chose Canada because they could get a work permit after graduation, which means they had a chance to work and immigrant here in the future.

The final consideration was social environment. Canada is a diverse multicultural country, and according to Cara, “It is more ideal and friendly in terms of natural environment, people, political climate, and racial recognition.”

3. “What were your expectations before coming to Canada?”

Before leaving China, the participants already had some preconceived notions for Canadian lives. They all shared the expectations of Canada, but nothing related to the “2+2” joint programs.

Bella, Cara, Elaine, and Galen did not have any expectations except that they would complete their degrees. In addition, Abby hoped to experience nature, because she is a travel enthusiast: “I didn’t actually picture an expectation before I left China because I was kind of looking forward to any unexpected events in my life, but I did hope that I could finish my degree successfully and get to see as many fantastic nature views as I could.” Daisy, who is an outgoing girl, shared her expectations as well: “I think I was too young to have an expectation of my life in Canada, but I know Canada is a multicultural country, so I hoped to make some friends from different countries while here, and I think being in an English speaking country is a good way to improve my English skills and learn about different cultures.” Faith likewise offered her thoughts: “My expectation was mainly about the professional academic system, and I hoped to finish the degree as soon as possible.” Hank hoped he could find a job in line with his specialty after he graduated and secure permanent

residency in Canada.

4. “If you were asked to list three negative and three positive things you experienced during your study in Canada, what would they be?”

For participants, studying abroad and living in another country made an enormous difference to their lives. Each had many new experiences. According to data, their experiences with relation to the “2+2” joint programs was both negative and positive.

Negative Experiences

There are a number of negative experiences associated with the “2+2” joint programs, including language barriers, course credit transfers, rapid acculturation, living expenses, domestic chores, transportation, and the postal service.

Language barriers

It is no surprise that language is the most significant issue for many international students, including the students of the “2+2” joint programs. Some participants said that they had communication barriers with their professors and peers in class. Cara, who had graduated from university, recalled her first year’s experiences:

When I first came here, I took ESL lessons for four months. The accent and language speed of the teacher in language school didn’t differ much from my foreign language teacher in China, and I passed the ESL exam successfully. I thought I would not have serious language issues at least in learning; however, this idea totally disappeared on the first class in university. During the two hours of the class, I could not follow what the professor is saying and did not know what to do. I felt very depressed

after that class. During that time, I had to borrow my classmate's notes to catch up and learned by myself what the professor had taught that day. The teaching assistant was a domestic student: I wish I could ask him for help, but I could not communicate with him smoothly. This kind of situation lasted the whole first semester. (WeChat Interview)

Here, Cara demonstrates that even students who test well in language may struggle, and highlights two common issues: the struggle to understand native-language speakers in lecture, and the reluctance to seek help from native speaking support staff like teaching assistants.

Moreover, Daisy, who majored in accounting, noted that she failed a mid-term exam because she misunderstood the questions. After that, she realized that she had to dedicate more time to learning English. Hank added that language barriers often created awkward situations in informal occasions:

Once, I wanted to get off a bus, but I was unfamiliar with the road there, so I needed to ask the bus driver where I could get off. Then, I blurted out a sentence 'where I could get out of the car? ', I did not realize my mistake until my friend corrected me. (WeChat Interview)

Course credit transfers

Another issue for participants was course credit transfers. In the first two years of the "2+2" joint programs, students must complete 60 credits at the China University of Petroleum. Then they move to the partner campuses to complete the second part of their studies. In principle, at least 80% of credits should be transferred to the partner universities in Canada; however, usually only 50% - 65% of credits (30 - 40 credits) are transferred, and in

some instances it may be less. The explanation students receive is that some of the credits they have earned at the China University of Petroleum, such as English and physical education, are not part of the curriculum in the partner university programs. Hank described the experience:

Actually, only 36 of my credits were transferred. At the China University of Petroleum, I had many IELTS courses, and I understand that the curriculum was good for improving my English skills; however, credits for these courses could not be transferred to partner universities, and this situation will lead to delayed graduation or make-up lessons in summer session. (WeChat Interview)

Daisy expressed similar concerns:

My timetable is in a complete mess because of the credit transfer issue. I am taking the classes for junior year now, and during summer session, I have to take some classes at extra expense for the freshman and sophomore years because not all my credits were transferred. As a consequence, the cost of my education is increasing. (WeChat Interview)

Cara, a participant who had graduated from university, noted that she spent three years completing the second part of her degree, including four months for language learning. She observed that it is impossible for most students in the “2+2” joint programs to complete the second part in two years. Thus, the “2+2” joint programs might more aptly be referred to as “2+X” joint programs. The “X” means unknown. This issue leads to excess time, costs, and stress.

Rapid acculturation

In terms of Canadian teaching approaches, most participants considered the sudden change difficult to adapt to in a short period. Galen shared an example:

The Chinese education model is known as a ‘teacher-centered’ classroom, and I have to admit the model had disadvantages. However, I got used to it after experiencing the Chinese education model for over ten years. At the Canadian university, I have to adapt to a different teaching style while still learning new material for my program. Actually, I have great difficulty doing this. Therefore, I am at an academic disadvantage compared to domestic students and other international students who went to overseas universities directly after high school. I hope my situation is temporary. (WeChat Interview)

Group work was also a challenge for participants. They reported that they had to learn how to cooperate with group members, especially with the students who were the native English speakers. Hank shared an example:

I found that the professors in Canadian classes preferred group work, which happens very rarely in Chinese universities. My major is Mechanical Engineering, and there are not many Chinese people in my class. Because of my poor oral communication and limited relevant experience, I could hardly participate in my group, so I felt very bad. (WeChat Interview)

Living expenses

Compared with school dormitories, the fees of renting a house with friends is more affordable for most Chinese international students in Canada. For the “2+2” joint programs

students, they all live in student residence in China, so they lack experience of renting off-campus housing and living on their own. Daisy shared her experience:

I rented a room online with a Chinese landlord before I came here. The landlord sent me some pictures, a location, and a price for the room, then I signed a rental agreement with the landlord and paid 3 months' rent: two of them were a deposit, and one was my first month's rent. After arriving, I discovered that the other three roommates were students from another country. To be honest, at first, I was secretly delighted because I thought it was a chance to force myself to speak English. But about one month later, the delight was gone. My three roommates ignored me most of the time; they even didn't talk with me. More importantly, they were party-lovers; they held parties almost weekly, and the music was loud. I tried to communicate this situation with my landlord, but nothing changed. Two months later, I moved out to live with my Chinese friends. However, the landlord refused to return the deposit to me. She said I was ending the lease for personal reasons unrelated to her business. During that time, from my opinion, the most important thing was to settle down as soon as possible because I needed to focus on my studies. So, I just let it go. After that, I knew, according to *The Residential Tenancies Act* of Manitoba (See Appendix E), that the landlord has no right to ask for such a large deposit. (WeChat Interview)

Domestic chores

Studying abroad means leading an independent life, which includes cooking. Most participants could not cook when they first came to Canada, which is a common phenomenon

for Chinese international students. Elaine's experience is typical of many Chinese international students:

I never cooked before I came here. Before I went to university, I lived at home and my parents cooked for me everyday. For my two-years at university in China, I lived in school dormitory and ate at school canteens. During the early months in Canada, I solved the issue by frequenting Chinese restaurants and eating pizza and fried chicken wings, which led to high daily costs. (WeChat Interview)

Transportation

Abby, Bella, Hank and Faith all expressed similar issues with respect to transportation: international and local flights and railway costs in Canada are too expensive, compared with America and Europe, the trips between points of interest were generally very long; and public transit system was inefficient caused significant stress.

Postal service

Students were also dissatisfied with the postal service. Cara observed that only a limited number of items can be shipped to Canada, and Western online shopping systems are not as well developed as Chinese sites like Taobao (a Chinese online shopping website similar to eBay and Amazon). She also noted that shipped was expensive and that returns proved inconvenience.

Positive Experiences

Though participants outlined several negative experiences, they also noted a number of positive experiences.

In terms of academic study, Faith said that the ESL lessons provided a transition period that allow her to for the school courses:

During the language program, I met many classmates who came from different backgrounds and majors. The language teacher taught us plenty of academic knowledge, which is helpful for my present and will be helpful in future study, especially how to write the academic papers and how to do presentations. (WeChat Interview)

Some participants expressed that experiencing a new mode of education was positive. Daisy thoughts:

Studying in Canada has been a good opportunity to be trained and encouraged to be critical and logical, especially for group work as the discussion atmosphere in small-sized groups offered less hierarchical structures and more platforms to communicate with academic colleagues and professors. (WeChat Interview)

Bella said that students “are from various regions and backgrounds” and that “meeting and talking with them” instilled her with a broader worldview.

Abby, who was classmates with Bella in China University of Petroleum and was admitted by the same Canadian university, also has positive experiences in Canada:

Bella and I were very excited when we both got the offers from the same university.

After the visa had been approved, we went online to rent a house. We consulted some students who had renting experiences in Canada, and they familiarized us with Canadian landlord and tenant law. It is an experience for us to consider aspects of laws and contracts, and a signal of our upbringing. (WeChat Interview)

Some participants thought that Canadians were nice and helpful, which made them relaxed in an unfamiliar country. They also met some excellent and important friends in Canada and shared happiness and frustrations with each other.

5. “According to your observation, what are the differences between China and Canada in terms of the academic environment?”

The participants identified four differences associated with academic environment between China and Canada, as follows: teaching methods, learning purposes, evaluations methods, and cultural freedoms

Teaching methods

In respect to teaching methods, Abby explained that in China, if teachers incorporated a theory into their pedagogical approach that did not suit the students, they would simply expect the students to conform to the theory. In Canada, teachers used diversified teaching methods in class, like role-playing, and group work. She observed that there were likewise differences with respect to lectures: in China, teachers lecture while students are busy taking notes; in Canada, teachers allow students more freedom to be truly involved while they lecture. Daisy shared a similar opinion:

In Canada, instructors tend to let students learn on their own. Instructors will instruct students by giving lectures and providing study seminars to assist students of their achievement, but they will not tell the students what the answer is and how to come to this answer. The way they guide students will make students think more. (WeChat Interview)

These differences in pedagogical approaches underscored the differences between China's teacher-centered approach, and Canada's student-centered learning style.

Learning purposes

Just as there are differences in pedagogical approaches between the two countries, there are also differences with respect to the purpose of learning. In China, education is more like a competition. Due to the large amount of students, not everyone gets a chance to continue their studies at a higher level, which makes the atmosphere very tense. Hank notes that most students in China care about their grades more than the content they learned. The way Chinese students get high marks relies on rote memory, and many of them may not think further or deeper of the questions. In Canada, however, Hank notes that one of the most asked questions was "Why?" and they even liked to challenge the truth. This underscores China's exam-oriented approach, which contrasts with the more diverse assessment methods employed in Canada.

Evaluations methods

The methods of evaluation and examination also differ. Elaine offered some of her observations on these differences:

In China, after entering universities, most students will slack off in study. When I attended a Chinese university, the key to graduating was earning high marks on your final exams at the end of every semester. The ordinary performance did not play an important role in summative evaluation, and if we failed in the exams, we could be allowed to take make-up exams. While in Canada, entering the university is just the

beginning, and the pressure of study seems to be higher in Canada, especially for international students. There are many after-class projects that require extra efforts, which hold major portions of the final scores. If we fail in course in Canada, we have to retake it. (WeChat Interview)

This again underscores the difference between the diverse assessment methods that define the Canadian classrooms, and the exam-oriented approach embraced by China's Confucian pedagogical approach.

Cultural freedoms

Cultural freedom was also identified as a key difference. Galen noted that "In Canada, students have better resources to access latest research findings and larger space to think and present their ideas". In China, many resources, such as Google, and YouTube are blocked. Consequently, students have far less access to academic resources. In Canada, however, the expanded access to resources allows for more thorough research.

6. "How would you comment on the "2+2" joint programs?"

Three participants did not reply to this question, and others showed two viewpoints.

Some participants considered the "2+2" joint programs a good choice to study in overseas universities. In the first two years, they already had a basic concept of university campus life, although there were various problems. They could adapt to the study and living environment as soon as possible after arriving in Canada. They thought the programs offered an opportunity for them to experience different cultures, learn in an advanced academic environment, improve their English, and develop their independent skills.

However, some participants expressed that they would have preferred to go abroad in their first year of study. They thought the “2+2” joint programs seemed to be a waste a time.

Galen articulated this view:

I don't like the 2+2 approach at present. I need to take extra time for my language lessons and the courses cannot be transferred. At the same time, I have to adapt to all new things. It is a waste of my time. Compared with this, I'd prefer to go abroad in the first year, or finish the four-year courses in home country university. (WeChat Interview)

7. “What organizations/groups have you joined in Canada?”

For this question, only two students had relevant experiences. One took part in a video game club organized by Chinese Students And Scholars Association (CSSA); the other joined a pet club organized by WeChat Group. The rest of them did not participate in any organizations or groups.

8. “Do you have any close native-English-speaking friends?”

Of the eight participants, only three of them—Abby, Cara, and Faith—had close native-English-speaking friends. The rest stayed in Chinese social circles, which did not help them assimilate in the Western culture.

Those who did not develop native-English-speaking friend explained why they had not formed such friendships. Hank observed, “Chinese students tend to flock together, especially in a foreign land due to the English skill and culture gap.” Elaine said, her roommates were Chinese students, and all of her friends were Chinese: “Outside of class, I sometimes feel like

I am still in China. I wanted to make some new friends from other countries and join the school clubs, but I was a bit intimidated to communicate with them and I did not have the extra time to take under the pressure of intense study.”

9. “How many times do you communicate with your family every week? Any changes between the first year you got here and later on?”

For Chinese international students, the primary ways of communication with relatives overseas was WeChat. Some of the participants also made phone calls to communicate with grandparents, which is more convenient for the aged. According to the answers, four of them talked with their family one or twice a week, two of them two or three times per month, and the remaining two talked with family nearly once a day.

10. “What do you think your Chinese and Canadian universities could do to help Chinese “2+2” joint programs students make better adjustments?”

When asked about improving the “2+2” joint programs, the participants offered five suggestions: unifying the curriculum, discipline diversity, acculturation workshops, English language support, and pre-departure preparation.

Unified curriculum

Participants felt that the curriculum between the partnering schools should be unified. Hank observed that

Credit transfer is a very important part in “2+2” joint programs. If the credits cannot be transferred smoothly and completely, it will cause problems in course selection, time of graduation, and tuition fee. If curriculums in the first two years are same as those in

Canadian partner universities, the credits will be transferred more than the current situation and we will not worry about spending extra time and money on the second part of study. (WeChat Interview)

This view was supported by Elaine and Galen, and as noted, the lack of consistency often means that Chinese international students spend more time and money at the foreign institution.

Discipline diversity

Some participants pointed out that the choice of majors is limited. Bella thought that the majority of majors were only focusing on business, economics, and engineering in “2+2” joint programs, and she hoped the cooperating universities could increase the number of choices, especially in art, law, and news media. This could allow the joint program students to have the same options as other international students.

Acculturation workshops

Abby suggested that while at Canadian partner universities, “It would be useful to provide some workshops and seminars focused on teaching the Chinese international students about the differences between Chinese and Canadian culture, academic studies, and health insurance.” She also stated that, for the newcomers, information is the key to being able to quickly adapt to their new life.

English language support

According to participants, in order to improve the English skills of joint programs students, in addition to their own efforts, professors must also play an active role. Faith

suggested that the professors must provide more opportunities for Chinese international students, especially for joint programs students who just came to Canada. Such efforts may make them feel comfortable enough to express their opinions in class or communicate with professors.

Pre-departure preparation

Some participants noted that the China University of Petroleum should inform the students about the potential challenges and issues that students may face in Canada in advance. Hank offered his insights on this subject:

I hope we can have this relevant information on our official school website, including the challenges we are going to face and some relevant guidelines. It will help the students to prepare better. (WeChat Interview)

11. “What advice would you give others who are coming to Canada to study in “2+2” joint programs?”

Based on their own experiences, the eight participants collectively offered suggestions for the upcoming “2+2” joint programs students that focus on four themes: academic diligence, resource utilization, goals, and independence.

Academic diligence

They suggest that incoming students should be prepared to make more efforts to study English from the first day that they plan to go abroad to study as mastering English is the easiest way to adjust quickly and become successful faster in Canada.

Resource utilization

Participants also suggest that incoming students make the most of the resources provided by universities, such as the library, writing support, part-time jobs, and the professors' office hours. They also recommend making more domestic friends and communicating more with professors.

Establishing goals

The data also suggests that incoming students should have a clear idea as to what they want to accomplish. In particular, students who are purely interested in pursuing academic achievement should consider the rankings of the universities. Higher rankings generally mean better education. For those students who come to Canada for any other reasons, they should consider whether they want to simply study in Canada and leave, or eventually work in Canada and become immigrants. Finding a job in Canada could be quite challenging, especially for international students. Thus, for the students who want to stay and thrive in Canada after graduation, it is best to prepare a long-term plan.

Independence

Lastly, the participants recommend that incoming students be fully prepared to live independently. They should prepare themselves emotionally to live and study in a country that is totally different from their homeland. They must believe in themselves, and be confident that they can solve problems by themselves. Moreover, if they feel stressed out at, which is understandable, they should talk with someone they trust to ease their minds. Cara offers a maxim on this subject: "You cannot run the full marathon in one breath; take a break when necessary."

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The Current Situation of Cooperative Education

Due to increasing globalization, policy makers have been investing more in knowledge industries that will better prepare tomorrow's workforce to compete in a culturally diverse society (Turner & Robson, 2008). One effective strategy to accomplish this is to offer more cooperative education in higher education. Since the early 2000s, educational cooperation between Canada and China has become an important part of education exchange. According to Ying (2010), "Cooperative education is certainly a trend for globalization education, which is an effective way to cultivate talents with international competitiveness, and a new way for education development" (p. 419). Zha (2011) argues that "With the shift of economic power to the East, China has emerged as the world's second largest economy and its principal international education" (p. 101). In terms of challenges experienced by international students, Henze and Zhu (2012) suggest that "Challenges can last for different lengths of time – some problems are short-term, and can be solved quickly after arrival (accommodation, getting familiar with the library, etc.), while others are long lasting (language difficulties, intercultural communication with domestic students, etc.)" (p. 96). Because these issues can impact academic performance, it is critical that educators seriously study the existing problems of "2+2" joint programs in Canadian universities, especially given that they are typical of cooperative education.

5.2 Challenges and Suggestions

This study of Chinese students studying in Canada on “2+2” joint programs noted that there are many challenges, including language, credit transfer, academic study, and social life, each of which Chinese international students may face while studying in Canada.

With very few exceptions, the first thing to be mentioned about studies concerning experiences challenging the “2+2” joint programs students is the language barrier. The survey data showed that none of participants did meet the language requirement for direct admission to Canadian partner universities, which means the English skills of part of “2+2” joint programs students are below the standard. That is likely why Chinese students in the “2+2” joint programs only reported understanding between 40-60% of lectures during their first semester in Canada (Huan, 2015). This is one of the reasons that the joint programs students considered English a challenge during their studies. Moreover, language barriers may impede or inhibit academic learning, participation, and cultural understanding (Wu, Garza & Guzman, 2015), so mastering English is essential in the process of life and academic studies in Canada. For example, limited English skill can negatively affect academic writing: one of the consequences is that the “2+2” students have trouble paraphrasing when they want to make references. There are four key suggestions that may improve English among participants. The first is socializing or living with native English speakers instead of other Chinese international students. This can help them become immersed in the host culture and familiarize themselves with the language. The second involves taking an active part in workshops, seminars, and volunteer activities. These are ideal opportunities to communicate

with others, which can help students learn about the culture and improve their speaking. The third involves developing the habit of reading papers and research reports in core journals of their own fields. This will help them to improve their understanding of the academic lexicon in their field, which will generally not be included English language classes. The last requires overcoming tendencies to be shy or hesitating; in order to learn, students must be engaged in class discussion and should ask questions if when they do not understand course content.

The credit transfer issue creates significant issues for “2+2” joint programs students. The China University of Petroleum cooperates with Canadian universities through the Credit Transfer System. The program consists of two stages: first, students are required to complete their first two years, which include 20 subjects (60 credits) at the China University of Petroleum; then students move on to the partner campuses to complete the second part of their studies. However, there are two main reasons why not all credits can be transferred. The first reason is the curriculum settings issue, which prevents some the credits from being transferred between universities. The other reason is that though the course content is the same, they sometimes have different titles. It is easy to misunderstand if the credit transfer is based on the course title instead of a detailed course description (Huan, 2015). As a result, the “2+2” joint programs students are forced to take the same course twice. To address these concerns, universities need to strengthen the communication between and their understanding of each other’s curriculum planning. A unified curriculum could help students to complete the second stage study successfully and on time.

International students also need some time to transition into the host culture, as there are

different ways in teaching and assessment in China and Canada. Students should be encouraged to ask advisors for help whenever they meet problems. It is important that “2+2” joint programs students not be too timid about asking for help from school, professors, and friends.

Before the students came to Canada, most of them wanted to make friends with people from different backgrounds and cultures, especially with the native English speakers. However, based on the interview data, the “2+2” joint programs students and domestic students do not seem to have many common interests that could be shared, and most of them did not have any close native English-speaking friends. They did not even attend any organizations or social groups in Canada, and though two of the participants did join some clubs, those clubs were organized by Chinese students. By understanding its culture, then Chinese international students could acquire the language (Liu, 2015); therefore, students should learn the local culture and get to know more about the country first, which can accelerate their English learning. The administrators of the programs should make it clear to the students that one needs to be a positive and optimistic person to make friends from different backgrounds and cultures.

It should also be emphasized that the “2+2” joint programs students need to be familiar with Canadian laws. Learning about local laws not only helps them to protect themselves, but also prevent them from breaking the law. Many laws are different in each country around the world, so is easy to do something against the law without realizing it.

Through the above discussion, it is clear that there are many challenges to overcome if

the “2+2” joint programs students hope to succeed in Canadian cooperative universities. Moving from cultural shock to adaptation and adjustment requires time and effort (Wu, Garza & Guzman, 2015). Although there are certain areas for improvement, the “2+2” joint programs provide a special opportunity for the students to experience two different education systems that may benefit them, and by comparing the two systems, their critical thinking skills can be further developed. The positive elements of the program provide students with rich experiences, while the challenging elements stimulate them and allow them to develop their work ethic, confidence, and independence.

5.3 Implications

The findings of the research can help the cooperative universities and future “2+2” joint programs students to understand expectations of the programs and the experiences of Chinese students who have participated in the “2+2” joint programs at Canadian Universities. The findings outline some existing challenges for “2+2” joint programs students at Canadian Universities as well as some useful suggestions for cooperative universities and future “2+2” joint programs students. Upon considering this, the cooperative universities and future “2+2” joint programs students could make appropriate adjustments to promote and improve future outcomes both for the program and the students who enroll in it.

5.4 Limitations

This research was conducted with the China University of Petroleum “2+2” joint programs students in Canadian partner universities, and data were collected through methods of survey and interview to explore the expectations, experiences, and suggestions of “2+2”

joint programs students. In order to obtain a representative sample, this research involved “2+2” joint programs students from various Canadian partner universities. However, there were some unavoidable limitations.

First, the research was conducted on a small sample of participants—only eight students—and the results may not represent the majority of “2+2” joint programs students, and may not have highlighted some common issues that other students who did not participate experience.

Second, this study focused on a particular group of international students from a specific institution; therefore, the generalizability of the findings beyond this group of international students is limited and may not apply to students enrolled in similar programs at other universities.

Third, during the data collection, the participants were on summer vacation. Some of them went back to their home country, and some of them went away on vacation. This did not benefit the time for survey and interview.

Last, some of the participants’ lives did not measure up to their expectations when the research was conducted; therefore, some of their opinions might have bias by negative emotions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Recruitment Emil

(An e-mail, which includes an invitation letter and a questionnaire to all the eligible students, be forwarded by the International Cooperation and Exchange Office of China University of Petroleum)

Dear Participants,

My name is Chiyu Wang. I am a Master's student at the University of Windsor and I am writing my thesis titled "*An Exploratory Study of Chinese Students Studying in Canada on "2+2" Joint Programs.*" The research has been cleared by University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. As the research is the final requirement for my graduation, I kindly ask you to participate in this survey. All the information will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

The questionnaire survey and interview will be employed in the research. If you would like to participate in the study, please:

1) fill the questionnaire as follows, and if you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Questionnaire 问卷调查	
Name: 姓名:	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male 性别:
Home university in China: 中国就读大学:	University in Canada: 加拿大就读大学:
Major: 就读专业:	Email: 电子邮箱:
The Range of IELTS: 雅思成绩 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 4.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 4.0-5.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 5.5-6.5 <input type="checkbox"/> 7.0-8.0 <input type="checkbox"/> 8.5 or more	Or The Range of TOELF: 托福成绩 <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-60 <input type="checkbox"/> 61-80 <input type="checkbox"/> 81-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100 or more
Have you ever take any ESL lessons in Canada: <input type="checkbox"/> No 是否在加拿大参加过语言培训课程? <input type="checkbox"/> YES How long? 多久?	

2) contact Chiyu Wang or my supervisor Dr. Zuo Chen Zhang and provide the contact information below:

WeChat:	or	Skype:
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This interview will be considerably important to achieve the study objectives, so I sincerely invite you to voluntarily participate. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Chiyu Wang

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1	How long have you been or studied in Canada? 来加拿大多久了? (或者在加拿大学习过多久?)
2	Why did you choose to come to Canada to study? 当初为什么选择来加拿大读书?
3	What were your expectations before coming to Canada? 来之前, 对加拿大有什么期待?
4	If you were asked to list three positive and three negative things you experienced during your study in Canada, what would they be? 请列举出在加拿大读书期间能够积极影响你的三个经历和带给消极情绪的三个经历。
5	According to your observation, what are the differences between China and Canada in terms of the academic environment? 根据你的观察, 中国和加拿大之间关于学术环境有什么不同?
6	How would you comment on the “2+2” joint programs? 如何评价“2+2”合作项目?
7	What organizations/groups have you joined in Canada? 在加拿大, 是否参加过任何组织或者团队活动?
8	Do you have any close native-English-speaking friends? 是否有母语是英语的朋友?
9	How many times do you communicate with your family every week (If already graduated, the question would add (“while you were in Canada” at the end)? Any changes between the first year you got here and later on? 在加拿大期间每周和家人联系的次数? 刚来的时候和现在是否有变化?
10	What do you think your Chinese and Canadian universities could do to help Chinese “2+2” joint programs students make better adjustments? 你认为中国大学和加拿大的合作大学可以为提高“2+2”合作项目做哪些调整? 请给出一些建议。
11	What advice would you give others who are coming to Canada to study in “2+2” joint programs? 对即将来到加拿大的“2+2”合作项目的学生, 请给出一些建议。
12	Do you have any questions for me? 对于这个采访, 你是否有想问的问题?

Appendix C

Consent to Participate in Research

Dear Participants,

You are asked to participate in a research study, titled “An Exploratory Study on Chinese students Studying in Canada on ‘2+2’ Joint Program” conducted by Chiyu Wang who is a Master student from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. This study is interested in understanding perspectives, expectations and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities. Based on the findings, the researcher hopes to provide useful suggestions for joint program students and administration of Chinese and Canadian universities.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Dr. Zuo Chen Zhang and Chiyu Wang as follows:

Dr. Zuo Chen Zhang, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Ave, Windsor, ON, Canada

Chiyu Wang, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Ave, Windsor, ON, Canada

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Through this proposed study, I intend to understand perspectives, expectations, and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you are asked to fill out this survey. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime before the report done.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks, discomforts, or inconveniences associated with the questionnaire.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

This study is interested in understanding perspectives, expectations and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities. Based on the findings, the researcher hopes to provide useful suggestions for joint program students and administration of Chinese and Canadian universities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Your confidentiality will be protected by not mentioning your names/addresses in any of the reports.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be involved in this study. If you volunteer to participate in the survey, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer in the questionnaire, and remain in the study. Any withdrawal from the survey must be done before the survey is submitted.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to the participants by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). An electronic copy of this summary can also be provided at the participant's request.

Date when results are available: November 30, 2017

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data will not be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

Signature will be used for audiotaping.

Appendix D

Letter of Information for Consent to Participate in Research

Dear Participants,

You are asked to participate in a research study, titled “An Exploratory Study on Chinese students Studying in Canada on ‘2+2’ Joint Program” conducted by Chiyu Wang who is a Master student from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. This study is interested in understanding perspectives, expectations and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities. Based on the findings, the researcher hopes to provide useful suggestions for joint program students and administration of Chinese and Canadian universities.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Dr. Zuo Chen Zhang and Chiyu Wang as follows:

Dr. Zuo Chen Zhang, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Ave, Windsor, ON, Canada

Chiyu Wang, Faculty of Education, University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Ave, Windsor, ON, Canada

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Through this proposed study, I intend to understand perspectives, expectations, and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you are asked to fill out this survey. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime before the report done.

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This study is interested in understanding perspectives, expectations and experiences of Chinese students who are participating in “2+2” joint programs at Canadian universities. Based on the findings, the researcher hopes to provide useful suggestions for joint program students and administration of Chinese and Canadian universities.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Your confidentiality will be protected by not mentioning your names/addresses in any of the reports.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be involved in this study. If you volunteer to participate in the survey, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer in the questionnaire, and remain in the study. Any withdrawal from the survey must be done before the survey is submitted.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to the participants by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). An electronic copy of this summary can also be provided at the participant's request.

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RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

Signature will be used for audio-taping.

Appendix E

Consent for Audio Taping

[For Semi-structured Interview]

Participant's Name: _____

Title of the Project: An Exploratory Study on Chinese Students Studying in Canada on "2+2" Joint Programs

I consent to the audio recording of interviews.

I understand these are voluntary behaviour and that I am free to withdraw at any time before the survey is submitted. I also understand that the semi- structured interview is an event that all the information given by the participants will be protected by the researcher herself. I also understand that my name will not be revealed to anyone and that audio recordings will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. Recordings are filed by number only and stored in the password-protected computers; any hard copies related to the recordings will be stored in a locked cabinet.

I understand that confidentiality will be respected and that the audio recordings will be for professional use only.

(Participant's Signature)

(Date)

Appendix F

Manitoba The Residential Tenancies Act C.C.S.M. c. R119

Part 3 Deposits and Condition Reports

Security Deposits

Security Deposit Requirements

29. A landlord who requires a tenant to pay a security deposit shall comply with the following requirements:
 1. A security deposit must not be more than the equivalent of 1/2 the first month's rent payable under the tenancy agreement.
 2. A security deposit must not be required to be paid unless, (a) before the tenancy agreement is first entered into, the landlord notifies the tenant that a security deposit is required, and (b) before any assignment is made, the landlord notifies the prospective tenant that a security deposit is required.
 3. If a security deposit is required for subsidized housing, the rent payable under the tenancy agreement shall, for the purpose of calculating the amount of the security deposit, be the rent payable before the reduction on account of a subsidy.
 4. On payment of a security deposit, the landlord shall give the tenant a written acknowledgment of its receipt setting out the amount, the date it was received, and the rental unit and residential complex for which it was given.

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Chiyu Wang

PLACE OF BIRTH: INNER MONBOLIA, CHINA

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1989

EDUCATION: Qingdao No.1 High School, Qingdao, Shandong,
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