Chinese Learners

HERDSA 2014
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Facilitator:

Emeritus Professor Owen HICKS  The University of Western Australia, Australia
Session Outline

• Introductions and opening comment from each of the panel.

• Research insights on Chinese learners.

• Panel members’ elaborations and participants’ comments.

• Open forum.

Sze Man Li
Elaine Lam
Rui Yang
Lilian Kwan
Owen Hicks
Research on the Chinese Learner: A Personal Reflection

Rui Yang
University of Hong Kong

Plenary Session on Chinese Learners, HERDSA Conference 2014, Hong Kong Baptist University, 10 July
Early studies by scholars, such as John Biggs, were pioneering

Based well on previous solid studies mainly of students in Western societies

A cultural perspective by essence
Later studies of the Chinese learner have largely failed to carry forward the tradition.

“scientific” studies are often not scientific enough, while cultural perspective has not been cultural sufficiently.

Revisiting has achieved little.

Chinese conceptualization of learning is basically Western.
Contemporary interest in the Chinese learner has been often due to the need for serving Chinese students studying in non-Chinese societies.

Practically oriented, researchers are usually not well equipped with deep understanding of the Chinese culture.
Major Issues of the Existing Literature

- Taking for granted that today’s students from Chinese societies are Chinese

- Equating “Chinese” with “Confucian”, ignoring the substantial differences between Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist conceptualizations of learning
Future Needs

- Clearer knowledge of the differences between Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist understandings of learning, and their impacts on current students in Chinese societies
- More studies of the Chinese learner within one Chinese society and between different Chinese societies
- Better integration between scientific and cultural approach to research on the Chinese learner
Thank you for listening!

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Chinese Learners

Thank you for your participation.

HERDSA 2014
The Other Extreme

NWC (China) – the teaching and learning context.
Millions of them, across China and the World.

Enormous variety in culture and abilities.

Confucian by degrees, fun to learn with.