



# Chinese Learners



# HERDSA 2014



**Student members:**

Sze Man LI *School of Education and Languages,  
The Open University of Hong Kong*

Elaine LAM *Department of Government and International Studies,  
Hong Kong Baptist University*

**Scholar members:**

Professor Rui YANG *Faculty of Education,  
The University of Hong Kong*

Professor Lilian KWAN *Associate Vice-President Beijing Normal  
University-Hong Kong  
Baptist University United International  
College, P.R. China.*

**Facilitator:**

Emeritus Professor Owen HICKS  
*The University of Western Australia, Australia*

# Session Outline

Sze Man LI

Elaine LAM

Rui YANG

Lilian KWAN

Owen HICKS

- **Introductions and opening comment from each of the panel.**
- **Research insights on Chinese learners.**
- **Panel members' elaborations and participants' comments.**
- **Open forum.**



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**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

- ❑ 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

## Early Traditions Discontinued

- ❑ 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

## Renewed Interest in the Chinese Learner

- 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!**

**Email: [yangrui@hku.hk](mailto:yangrui@hku.hk)**



# Chinese Learners



# Thank you for your participation.



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**Millions of them, across China and the World.**

**Enormous variety in culture and abilities.**

**Confucian by degrees, fun to learn with.**