RMIT University
School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning

Motivation, Learning Strategies and English Language Learning:
Adult Chinese Learners in A Globalized Australia

Cong Yu
B. A. (Xiaozhuang College, China)

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DECLARATION OF CANDIDATE

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; and, any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies of adult Chinese ESL (English as a second language) learners in the process of acquiring English in the Australian context in the 21st century, with special reference to the relationships between their self-ratings of English proficiency and the independent variables of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies. Sixty young adult Chinese international ESL students who were studying at selected universities and/or TAFE institutes of Melbourne participated in the study. Three different questionnaires: (1) Background Information Questionnaire, (2) Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire (Gardner, 1985), and (3) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1990a) were administered to collect the data. Statistical analysis showed that the participants of this study generally possessed medium to high levels of motivation toward English learning in Australia, and the majority of them were instrumentally motivated in their orientation. The Chinese ESL learners also demonstrated a medium to high level of language learning strategies use. Social strategies were the most frequently used set of strategies reported by the participants. On the contrary, their use of memory strategies was at the bottom of the frequency level of all strategies sub-scales. The two variables of attitudes/motivation (motivational intensity and desire to learn English) were found to be significantly correlated with English macro-skills and overall English proficiency. Among the six sub-categories of language learning strategies, cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies, were significantly correlated with every English macro-skill and overall English proficiency. The findings of this study are discussed in light of the results of previous research studies for a more holistic scholarly view of the issue in the research context. Recommendations are also included for further research and practice.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Globalization is the driving force of our era, spreading rapidly across our world and resulting in social, economic, political, cultural and technological development. As a consequence, human beings are more intertwined than ever before, though there is the dark side of increasing globalization, such as global economic interdependence which accelerates economic division and other inequalities (Yano, 2001). Yet what brings people together so tightly? Ultimately, the necessary ingredient is communication.

As a communication tool, English has indisputably become the language of international communication in many multilingual countries and regions (Chew, 1999). It is English that allows “an Arab and a Chinese, a Russian and a Spaniard, or a Japanese and a German” to communicate with each other (DeSwaan, 2001, p. 6). With the rapid and extensive spread of the English language around the world, English is imposing itself as the language of world politics, business, aviation, global communications, and the media, including through the internet as well as being the language of the world’s tourist, sports and leisure industries, and of scientific research – more than half of the world’s scientific journals, especially in medicine, science, computer science, linguistics and education are written in English (Chew, 1999; Crystal, 1997; Salverda, 2002; Zhang, 2003). But as “the internet develops further”, the language of the internet “will not necessarily remain English only” (Salverda, 2002, p. 7). In fact, Salverda (2002) indicated that since the late 1990s, the English language had been in proportional decline on the internet as a result of the increasing number of the web population who were non native English speakers such as Chinese and Japanese. A survey in 2002 indicated that by far the most internet content in English was 56.4%, followed by German, French and Japan, which accounted for
7.7%, 5.6% and 4.9%, respectively (Wikipedia, 2007). Even so, English may still retain its current role as the necessary prerequisite for global communication; and the English language still maintains its importance and continues to be a means of world communication, international business, and social and cultural affairs (Pennycock, 1994, 2000; Yano, 2001).

“It was Kachru (1985) who divided English speakers into three groups and since then this model of three concentric circles has been the standard framework of world Englishes studies” (Yano, 2001, p. 121). Among the three groups of English speakers, each has a different relationship with the language: (1) first-language speakers (L1), who speak English as a first/native language; (2) second-language speakers (L2), who speak English as a second or additional language (ESL), i.e., whose English is “typically an official or societally dominant language needed for education, employment, and other basic purposes, and is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants” (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 4); and (3) the growing group of English speakers who learn English as a foreign language (EFL), i.e. English is “not widely used in the learners’ immediate social context which might be used for future travel or other cross-cultural communication situations, or studied as a curricular requirement or elective in school, but with no immediate or necessary practical application” (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 4). Graddol (1997), writing in the late 1990s, pointed out that “those who speak English alongside other languages would outnumber first-language speakers and, increasingly, would decide the global future of the language” (p. 11).

English, the world’s lingua franca, is the most widely spoken language at present and in the future (Cahill, 1995; Yano, 2001). There are currently about 430 million people speaking English as their first language, and a further 1.6 billion people who speak English as a second or third language (Watson, 2007). According to a recent report for the British Council (British Council, 2005) by 2015, altogether about half of the world’s population will be either speaking or learning English. The learning of
English has become an important factor in development, particularly for a country such as the People’s Republic of China (Li, 1999).

Zhang (2003) stated that the 1990s witnessed the English boom in China from elementary school up to colleges and universities, because from the early 1990s, English instruction in China, the world’s most populous country, has started at grade three in elementary school; and since the 1990s, many colleges and universities in China have required students to gain the College English Test (CET) certificate in band 4 as a necessity for their bachelor degree. According to Saville-Troike (2006), in China alone, it has been recently estimated that the number of people studying English goes beyond 155 million; among them, 10 million in elementary school, 80 million in high school, at least 5 million in universities, and 60 million adults in other instructional contexts. In addition, several key events at the beginning of the 21st century have brought or will bring some new motivations for the learning of English in China. These include the nation’s recent accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, the hosting of the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008, and the ever-increasing number of people going overseas to study (Watson, 2007; Zhang, 2003). The popularity of English seems to have reached a new peak with people all over China, and the status of English as “the dominant language for international communication” in China has been strengthened unprecedentedly (Bolton, 2002; Smith et al., 2000, p. 2).

The English language has spread significantly either as a second language or as a foreign language in today’s increasingly globalized world. Accordingly, more and more people learn English, and more and more people research the fields of English learning and teaching, either in the context of ESL or EFL.

Over the past quarter century or so, a large number of studies regarding second language acquisition (SLA) has increased. More and more research studies concerning various aspects have been carried out in the SLA field, especially English as a second
or foreign language, such as studies of attitudes and motivation. Following the two pioneers, Gardner and Lambert (1959), who began studying learners’ attitudes and motivation as influencing factors of learners’ second language - French - proficiency in Canadian context, growing number of researchers carried out studies concerning learners’ attitudes/motivation towards English learning in diverse contexts (e.g. Gao, 1994; Mian, 1998; Wong, 1982).

Among the numerous SLA studies, many have dealt with Chinese students, namely the investigation of Chinese ESL students’ learning strategies (e.g. Goh and Kwah, 1997; Ho, 2004), relationship between attitudes/motivation and learning English as a foreign language (e.g. Hsiang, 1992), cross-cultural accommodation (e.g. Bond and Yang, 1982), or questioning the myth of the Chinese learner (Nield, 2004) and so on.

Though numerous research studies looking into how English language learning by Chinese learners occurs in an ESL learning context has been abundant, there has been limited research done in Australia, and even less in examining the Chinese learners’ English learning with the interaction of their attitudes/motivation and their language learning strategies. Thus, the current study is designed to examine the English study of Chinese adult learners through investigating their attitudes/motivation in combination with their language learning strategies in the Australian context.

1.2 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The main focus of this study is adult Chinese ESL learners in the 21st century, their attitudes and motivation and language learning strategies in the process of acquiring English in the Australian context. The subjects of this study are adult Chinese ESL learners studying English in Australian tertiary institutions. The examination of their attitudes/motivation is in fact an extension of the work by Lambert and Gardner who, in the late 1950s in Canada, commenced their exploration of the nature of attitudes/
motivation in second language learning of French-speaking students learning English as a second language. The participants for this current research have both English as a foreign language and English as a second language learning experiences.

This study thus addresses the following four questions:

(1) What were the characteristics of Chinese learners in previous research studies and why were they motivated to learn English?
(2) What is the level of attitudes/motivation of young Chinese adult learners in the ESL context of Australia?
(3) What kinds of language learning strategies are the most frequently used and the least frequently used by young Chinese adult learners who reported themselves as using in the ESL context of Australia?
(4) What associations, if any, are there between background information, attitudes/motivation, and second language learning strategies in regard to students’ English study in Australia, with special reference to the relationships between self-ratings of English proficiency and the independent variables of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies?

In order to address the above research questions, data were collected to capture the traits of attitudes/motivation of Chinese international students and their choice of language learning strategies while studying English in Australia. Three different instruments were employed: (1) Background Information Questionnaire, (2) Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire (Gardner, 1985), and (3) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1990a).

Three sub-scales concerning attitudes/motivation were chosen from Gardner’s (1985) Attitudes/Motivation Battery Test in this study. They were: Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn English and Orientation Index. In addition, according to Oxford
(1990a) language learning strategies can be divided into six categories. Oxford’s SILL (1990a) version which was utilized in this project was designed for speakers of other languages who were learning English. The relationships between the student’s English language proficiency and each of the attitudes/motivation and language learning strategy sub-scales will be examined in a more detailed analysis.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research attempts to achieve the following objectives:
1. To identify the level of attitudes and motivation for English language learning by adult Chinese ESL learners in Australia;
2. To identify the most frequently used and the least frequently used second language learning strategies as reported by adult Chinese ESL learners in Australia; and finally
3. To examine the relationships between English language proficiency and the level of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies by adult Chinese ESL learners in the Australian context.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study may inform theories of ESL acquisition by investigating a group of learners that has been paid little attention in previous studies of ESL acquisition. Among the increasing body of international students on Australia university campuses, Asian students, particularly Chinese students, are now the largest international student group. After arriving in Australia, Chinese international students not only have to make efforts to adjust their lifestyle in order to adapt to a new environment and culture, but also have to conquer a language barrier in order to progress their academic work. In their home country, English is seldom used outside of the school
context. While living in Australia, however, international students have a concrete need to use English. Therefore, proficiency in English becomes a communication tool that they have to use everyday to cope with the challenges in their daily living and their different learning situations. Having both EFL/ESL learning experiences, it is assumed that Chinese international students might use certain language learning strategies that are different from their counterparts at home who only received EFL education in their home country. However, little research has been carried out to investigate what Chinese international students do to handle the language demands in their life while studying in Australia.

Numerous research studies have been carried out on attitudes/motivation and learning strategies in English as second language learning, but research on Chinese learners is limited, especially in Australia. Furthermore, most of them are conducted in an EFL context in which students learn English as a subject rather than as a living language. Most studies were carried out in the United States and the United Kingdom instead of Australia. Therefore, this research aims to expand the knowledge about Chinese students’ attitudes/motivation and their language learning strategies when they study and learn in an English-speaking environment. Specially, it should help researchers understand how mainland Chinese students are motivated to learn English and what English language learning strategies are frequently used in the Australian context in the 21st century.

1.5 Organization of the Chapters

The whole thesis includes six chapters. Chapter One consists of the background of the study, purpose and research questions of the study, research objectives, and significance of the study. The literature pertaining to theories and research related to second language acquisition, learners’ second language learning attitudes/motivation
and strategy use, as well as the Chinese learner is reviewed in Chapter Two. The population and sample selection, instrumentation, procedures used for data collection and analysis, as well as limitations of the study are documented in Chapter Three. The results of data analyses are reported in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. Discussion of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter Six. Following the last chapter references and appendices are attached.
CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

“Language is at the centre of human life” (Cook, 2001, p. 1) is a truism. People use language as a tool to convey messages and information; to express attitudes, feelings and emotions; to establish communion with others; to pursue their goals or careers; to exchange ideas or experiences; to identify the particular ethnic or linguistic group; to learn about the world and so on (Cook, 2001; Jakobson, 1996; Watson, 2007). It is not surprising that some people can do some or all the above actions in more than one language. As a result of migration and globalization, a second language has an effect on people’s lives, careers, identities and possible futures. Second language acquisition is more and more vital in people’s daily life, and it is an important task in the twenty-first century to help people acquire a second language more effectively (Cook, 2001). Accordingly, in order to communicate effectively with people with various backgrounds, research in second language acquisition has proliferated greatly, particularly in the past few decades.

This chapter is a review of the literature showing the importance of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies on second language acquisition (SLA), as well as the characteristics of the Chinese learner. In the literature review, the author will first introduce classic and more recent theories of second language learning, followed by a review of attitudes and motivation in second language learning, and of previous studies of language learning strategies in second language learning. Finally, the author examines the characteristics of the Chinese learner from previous research studies. Since the focus of the present study is Chinese international students, the related studies about their attitudes and motivation, their use of language learning strategies and their language learning characteristics are also described and
explored.

In order to review pertinent literature, a search of the databases ERC (Education Research Clearinghouse), EBSCOhost, Informit, ProQuest, and ScienceDirect was conducted using the following descriptors: Attitudes, Motivation, Language Learning Strategies, Chinese Learner/Students and Self-rating. In addition, a search in the journals Educational Psychology, Higher Education, Higher Education Research and Development, Language Learning, System, Studies in Higher Education and TESOL Quarterly yielded articles on the subject.

2.2 Second Language Learning Theories

Many researchers have tried to study how adults learn a second language from various theoretical perspectives. Ellis (1994) has written “there has been no shortage of theorizing about second language acquisition; the research literature abounds in approaches, theories, models, laws, and principles” (p. 248). Issues of language and literacy acquisition, especially in a multicultural context, have obtained increasing attention since the late 1970s. Minami and Ovando (1995) noted in their review of research concerning language issues that the main trend in the last three decades has changed from the more “linguistically oriented of the 1960s and 1970s, to one in which language, literacy, and multicultural education are viewed as the products of socio-culturally mediated process among individuals and groups” (p. 281).

The theoretical premises are established to bring about the current study by reviewing the main theoretical frameworks in second language learning. The theoretical perspectives can be classified into two parts. The first part consists of the earlier theories regarding language learning as an individualized activity, namely, the behaviourist theory and cognitive theory; the second part is made up of more recent theories which examine the second language learning as a procedure taking place in
social and cultural contexts, for example, socio-cultural theory and socio-psychological theory.

**Behaviourist Theory**

Behaviourist theory mainly influenced second language learning up until the late 1960s (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1996). In the behaviourist view, language learning is seen as the formation of habits, which are formed through responses to external stimuli (Skinner, 1971). The outcome of behaviourism is traditional audio-lingual instructional approach to second language learning, and behaviourism contributed to the major trends of teaching and learning practices in the second language classroom during the 1950s and 1960s.

However, behaviourist theory has limitation for language learning as it does not consider the learner as an active player in the learning process. Moreover, in behaviourist theory, a learner’s variables, such as one’s goals, beliefs and attitudes, have been failed to be regard as the role in language acquisition. Thus, learners may be unable to use the language well in real-life situations (Rivers, 1981).

**Cognitive Theory**

Over the past several decades, researchers have tended to link the process of language learning to the theory of cognition. Cognitive theory has had great influence on second language learning and teaching. The cognitive theory in second language learning concentrates more on how learners process the information between language input and output (Dembo, 1994), which means the human mind is major concerned in cognitive perspective. Since the 1970s, cognitive perspective has showed its influence on many teaching and learning practices, for example, the grammar-translation approach in the second language classroom (Dembo, 1994).

Although a variety of current theories and approaches, namely language experience approach, content-based approach and cognitive structural approach, were developed
from the principles of cognitive theory, like the behavioural theory, the cognitive theory failed to consider the interaction of people and environment in the learning process (Zhang, 1995).

Behaviourist theory and cognitive theory provided the research and practice of second language learning with theoretical support; however, in different social and cultural contexts, both of them were unsuccessful to explain the differences in the learner’s achieved proficiency (Liu, 1999). The more recent socio-cultural theory, which makes up the limitation of behaviourist theory and cognitive theory, has provided more insights into how social and cultural contexts influence second language learning.

**Socio-cultural Theory**

Socio-cultural theory is a theory of the development of higher mental functions which is rooted in 18\(^{th}\) and 19\(^{th}\) century in the writings of Marx and Engels, and which became most directly known from the research of the Russian psychologist Vygotsky and his colleagues; the term ‘socio-cultural’ is generally used in relation to both social and cultural contexts of human activity (Lantolf & Thorne, 2005). The core of Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory is to consider human cognition and learning as social and cultural whereas individual phenomena, and also according to Vygotsky (1978), the two primary means of learning occur through social interaction and language, which largely increases humans' ability to participate in social interactions and share their experiences (Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev & Miller, 2003). Although the present socio-cultural theory approaches contain various emphases, the goal of the research is to value the association between human mental function and cultural, historical, and institutional setting (Lantolf & Thorne, 2005).

With the passage of time, social-cultural theory began attracting more and more attention in education, especially in the second language learning area. The studies of individual characteristics such as attitudes, experience, anxiety, and contact with the target language speakers within different social-cultural contexts are all considered to
be in the socio-cultural perspective.

Over the past twenty years, perspectives on the role of a learner in second language learning have changed from being a passive receiver of knowledge to an active player in language learning (Liu, 1999). In the meantime, second language learning has been perceived as a social act that occurs in a social context; and different contexts provide different opportunities for language learning (McLaughlin, 1989; Perez, 1998; Spolsky, 1989). Additionally, in social-cultural theory, language skills are considered not to be isolated or generated separately from specific content, contexts, and social-communicative purposes, and language is perceived as a product of a social practice, which means the second language acquisition processes diversity cross-cultural groups and various contexts of social relationships (Towell, 1994).

**Socio-psychological Theory**

Social-psychological theory was originally an outcome of Mowrer’s views (1950) on individual development which laid emphasis on the significance of identification with a valued person (Zhang, 1995). This idea was later developed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) who stated that people would like to value and related to both particular individuals and foreign peoples. In the social-psychological theory, Gardner (1985) retained that if someone wants to be a successful second language learner, he or she must be psychologically planned to use various kinds of behaviour which set apart members of the target linguistic-cultural group. Additionally, in socio-psychological theory, a person’s success in second language learning will be determined by the person’s attitudes toward members of the target language group, and the attitudes are usually considered to be directly associated with motivation (Liu, 1999). That is to say, the learner’s positive attitudes toward the target language speakers are believed to play an important role in the language learning process.
2.3 The Role of Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning

Attitudes and motivation are very important factors in second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985). Many researchers have conducted numerous studies in this field. As is known, Gardner and Lambert are two pioneers in this research area. During the past half century, numerous studies have been conducted into attitudes and motivation in the acquisition of a second or foreign language. The studies on attitudes/motivation have been mostly conducted within the theoretical framework of socio-psychological approaches to language learning, which means that an individual who successfully acquires a second or foreign language gradually selects assorted kinds of behaviour which typify members of another linguistic-cultural group (Gardner & Lambert 1959, 1972). There have been many researchers carrying out social psychological research (Gardner 1985; Gardner & Clement 1990; Gardner & Lambert 1959, 1972; Gardner, Lalonde & Moorcroft 1985; Lukmani 1972; Oller, Hudson & Liu 1977; Spolsky 1969) to illustrate that the measures of attitudes and motivation have very significant relationships with second language learning. As the pioneers in this area, Gardner and Lambert (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert 1959, 1972) concluded that after 12 years of research in Canada, United States and the Philippines that the learner’s ethnocentric tendencies and his/her attitudes toward the other group are believed to determine his/her success in learning the new language and the learner’s motivation to learn the target language is thought to be determined by his attitudes and by his/her orientation toward learning a second language.

Since attitudes and motivation are two of the key factors related to second language learning, the first element for us to make clear is the role of attitudes in language learning. As Gardner (1985) commented after many years of research, the concept of attitude is complicated and its essence has been represented by many proposed definitions.

Lambert et el. (1973, p. 72) stated that “an attitude is an organized and consistent
manner of thinking, feeling, and reacting to people, groups, social issues or, more generally, to any event in the environment". Rajecki (1990) cited Allport’s (1935) definition of attitude – An attitude is “a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (p. 4). After considering previous definitions of attitude by other researchers, Gardner (1985) gave his own definition of attitude: “an individual’s attitude is an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual’s beliefs or opinions about the referent” (p. 9). Hence, in the present study, an attitude, based on Gardner’s work, refers to the Chinese adult learners’ beliefs about English and their views about the English courses they were attending (Gardner 1985).

According to the above definitions, attitude, as one of the most significant factors in language learning, influences how and what the students learn. Attitudes are formed as a result of the interaction between people and the interaction under the influence of circumstances (Mian, 1998). Attitudes make a vital contribution in shaping a view of the world that we live in. Baker (1992) draws the significance of attitude as a fundamental variable owing to its close connection to an individual construct system and its value as an indicator of public opinions and viewpoints. The importance of attitudes can not be ignored as they play very significant roles in second language learning as well. Savignon (1972) stated that attitudes are vital in an environmental situation for the reason that they determine the degree of interaction with speakers of the target language. Hammerly (1982) cites Lambert’s conclusion that “the factors of attitude and motivation are as important as intellectual capacity in determining success in second language learning” (p. 109). Usually, a new learner might be frightened of a second language, the new culture, the new social environment, or the speakers of the target language. However, Hammerly (1982) believes “second language study itself seems to improve the attitudes of learners toward the speakers of the language” (p. 109). Gardner and Lambert (1972) declared that the second language learners’ attitude toward the members of the cultural group whose language the learner is learning is the most
important factor in second language acquisition.

Different researcher proposed different classifications of attitudes. According to Stern (1983), three types of attitudes were distinguished: “(1) attitudes towards the community and people who speak the L2 (i.e. ‘group specific attitudes’); (2) attitudes towards learning the language concerned; and (3) attitudes towards languages and language learning in general” (p. 376), since these attitudes are considered to be influenced by the personality of the learner. However, Gardner (1985) proposed another categorization of attitudes in second language learning. In Gardner’s (1985) opinion, two types of attitudes were differentiated: one is the attitude related to education named “attitudes toward learning the language” (p. 39); and the other is an attitude related to society called “attitudes toward the other-language community” (p. 39).

Therefore, students’ attitudes are important in language learning, as their feelings and goals can lead them to react to the language itself and adapt themselves to the target language community.

In addition, many studies have been conducted to explore and understand the relationship between attitudes and perseverance, attitudes and classroom behavior and so on. According to Gardner (1985) all previous studies have demonstrated that a relationship between attitudinal characteristics and the behaviour in question exists. This may have many interpretations but one meaningful interpretation is that attitudes influence behaviour, such as motivation.

Motivation is one of the most essential elements of second language acquisition as well (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Ellis, 1994; Wen, 1997)). Many researchers have stressed the importance of motivation as a language learning factor (Graham, 1984; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dornyei, 1990). In terms of language learning, motivation is more specific when compared with its role in other subject matters (Brown, 2001a; Richards & Renandya, 2003). Moreover, motivation is another factor that decides the
learner’s success in second language learning, and it is an inner drive to fulfill a need or needs and is related to all aspects of second language learning. Student motivation is often measured by asking them whether they are “motivated” (Brown, 2000; Lightbrown & Spada, 2003). There is not a clear definition of motivation in the context of language learning, but almost all researchers agree that on the basis of their empirical studies, motivation has a clear link with the learning process (Gardner, 1985, Titone & Danesi, 1985). According to Gardner and Masgoret (2003), motivation in education refers to the individual learners’ effort to reach their goals with a positive aspiration, enjoyment, and persistence. Thus, in this study, motivation we refer to is largely based on Gardner’s distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation in second language learning (Gardner, 1985).

Many of the present theories of second language motivation originate from the early work of Gardner and Lambert (1959), who firstly make a distinction between integrative motivation and instrumental motivation, and this has had great influence on the subsequent research in this area. The motivational theory was developed by centering on language attitudinal variables, and integrative motive was believed as the key element of Gardner’s (1985) motivation theory.

From 1990, there was an expansion of perceptions in motivational research in second language learning, exploring numerous different motivation aspects, and by the end of the 1990s, research studies on motivation were characterised by various approaches (e.g. Dornyei, 1994, 1998). Nevertheless, recently, there have been many studies carried out to redefine the term motivation, as the core of motivation, integrative motivation, was questioned by lacking of applicability to some learning contexts (Dornyei, 2006).

Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) claimed that interactively motivated students are not only more active in language classes, but also more likely to interact with members of other cultural communities. Also, in Dornyei’s study (2002) in Hungary, integrativeness
was viewed as the association with a person’s mastery of a second language. Csizer and Dornyei (2002) expanded the concept of integrativeness to explain the motivational set-up in different learning contexts, though there is limited contact with second language speakers. Integrativeness is considered to be the most important component in explaining the language learning motivation (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005).

Gardner and his colleagues put forward the social-educational model in second language learning to explain how individual factors, such as motivation and aptitude, of society interact in L2 learning (Cook, 2001; Gardner, 2001; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Three major ingredients are found to influence the learners’ L2 success – motivation, aptitude and anxiety. According to the social-educational model, motivation has three parts: desire to learn a language, attitudes towards learning a language, and motivational intensity, which is the effort a learner is going to expend. The social-educational model largely applies to language teaching for local goals, in which the students have specific views on the second language group whose language they are learning through daily contact with them within the society, for instance, the position of Chinese learners of English in Melbourne. The social-educational model was applied to guide the current investigation of Chinese students’ attitudes/motivation.

As said by Gardner and Lambert, there are two kinds of motivation in L2 learning: integrative motivation, which means learning the language in order to take part in the culture of its people; and instrumental motivation, which refers to learning the language for a career goal or other practical reason (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert 1959, 1972). Gardner and Lambert (1972) hypothesized that an integrative motive is a particularly important source of motivation because it is firmly rooted in the personality of the learner; while an instrumental motive is less effective because it is not rooted in the personality of the learner. In Gardner’s social-educational model (1985, p. 9), the components of motivation for second/foreign learning are presented in the following equation:
Motivation = Effort + Desire to Achieve a Goal + Attitudes

After various sorts of motivation have been identified, Ellis (1997) has expanded the categorization to four main kinds of motivation, which are instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, resultative motivation and intrinsic motivation. Ellis (1997) also figures out that since motivation is “clearly a highly complex phenomenon”, these four kinds of motivation should be regarded as complementary rather than as individual and oppositional (p.76). So motivation is one factor that can sustain the learner’s learning of the second language.

In the mid 90s, Oxford and Shearin (1994) expanded the theoretical framework of language learning motivation from social psychology to “industrial, educational and cognitive developmental psychology” (p.25). Moreover, attitudes and motivation toward second language learning have been shown to have a connection with other factors, for instance, age or gender factors.

To sum up, attitudes and motivation are strong predictors of success in second language learning. There has been considerable research demonstrating that attitudinal and motivational variables are related in the field of second language learning. Although some may show the ‘negative’ results, the overwhelming evidence specifies that attitudinal and motivational variables connect to the successful performance of second language learning.

2.4 Language Learning Strategies

In the last three decades, there have been numerous studies of learning strategies used by language learners. These studies have been conducted mainly to find out what strategies learners use, as well as what factors affect these choices. Researchers into
second language acquisition are interested in determining the effect of strategy use on success in learning another language. Some have provided evidence which strongly indicates that learning strategies interact with other variables to affect language proficiency (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). So important is the role of strategy use in learning a second language that some theorists have included it in their models of second language learning (e.g. MacIntyre, 1994). “There are many threads in the cross-cultural, multilingual view of language learning strategies and the focus on students’ language learning strategies can empower teachers just as it empowers learners” (Oxford, 1996, p. 249).

Many studies indicate that the frequency of use of language learning strategies directly relates to language performance, regardless of whether performance is measured as a course grade, a class test score, a standardized proficiency test score, a self-rating, or something else (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). According to Oxford and Ehrman (1995), the setting of the use of foreign language learning and second language learning can make a difference in learning strategies. Also the researchers discovered that second language learners employed more strategies than did foreign language learners, and successful learners use an array of strategies. In addition, learning strategies can enable students to become more independent, autonomous, life long learners (Little, 1991).

2.4.1 The Concept of Language Learning Strategy

There has been a great deal of research on language learning strategies in the past few decades. Researchers have approached language learning strategies from different perspectives and thus produced a long list of definitions on learning strategies. Here we take a look at those viewpoints in chronological order.

In the late 1980s, Oxford and Crookall (1989) suggested that “learning strategies are steps taken by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information. Strategies are referred to as learning techniques, behaviors, or actions; or
learning-to-learn, problem-solving, or study skills” (p. 404). Again, Oxford et al. (1989) give the definition that “language learning strategies are actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques—such as seeking out target language conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task—used by learners to enhance learning” (p. 29).

In the early 90s, Oxford (1990b) gives an overview of language learning styles and strategies and finds that the use of strategies often relates to a person’s style preferences. Additionally, language learning styles and strategies are regarded as the chief factors which assist explain how and how well a student learns a second or foreign language. Oxford (1990a) states that learning strategies are “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (p. 8).

Then, in the mid 1990s, Green and Oxford (1995) again point out that “language learning strategies are specific actions or techniques that students use, often intentionally, to improve their progress in developing L2 skills” (p. 262). MacIntyre and Noels (MacIntyre 1994, MacIntyre & Noels 1996) generalize and cite from Oxford, Ehrman and Crookall’s earlier studies (Oxford & Ehrman 1989, p.374; Oxford & Crookall 1989, p. 185) that learning strategies are usually defined as “steps taken by the learner to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information”. Moreover, MacIntyre (1994) believes that “language learning strategies are the techniques and tricks that learners use to make the language easier to master” (p.185).

According to Grainger (1997), a language-learning strategy is a kind of skill or a particular action that a learner uses consciously to aid some aspects of his or her language learning. And as Ellis concluded, “learning strategies are the particular approaches or techniques that learners employ to try to learn an L2. They can be behavioural (for example, repeating new words aloud to help you remember them) or they can be mental (for example, using the linguistic or situational context to infer the
meaning of a new word). They are typically problem-oriented. That is, learners employ learning strategies when they are faced with some problem, such as how to remember a new word. Learners are generally aware of the strategies they use and, when asked, (they) can explain what they did to try to learn something” (Ellis, 1997, p. 76).

More recently, a clear definition made by Cook (2001) is that a learning strategy means “a choice that the learner makes while learning or using the second language that affects learning” (p. 126).

Previous definitions of a learning strategy, though causing some confusion through approaching language learning strategies from different angles, share some elements of commonality: language learning strategies are instruments or techniques or actions that language learners take with an aim of improving aspects of their language learning: accession, storage, recall, or use of information. And it won’t be surprising that researchers might find it difficult to categorize the types of language learning strategies.

2.4.2 Taxonomies of Language Learning Strategies and Their Assessment

There are literally hundreds of different, yet often interrelated, language learning strategies. O’Malley and Chamot (1990) divided language learning strategies into three groups. They are metacognitive strategies, for example: making a plan for learning, managing your own speech, or self-evaluation; cognitive strategies, such as note-taking, resourcing, or elaboration; and social/affective strategies, for instance, working with partners or asking for the teacher’s help (Cook, 2001; Gan, 2003).

Although many other researchers in the SLA field have conceptualized and classified learning strategies in various ways, Oxford (1990a) developed the most wide-ranging model to date. Oxford (1990a) suggests that dozens or even hundreds of learning strategies exist, depending on how narrowly these strategies are operationally defined or measured. She believes that language learning strategies can be classified, explained,
and exemplified in six coherent groups. Thus, she introduced a new system of differentiating language learning strategies. Although this classification system is still being refined, it is probably the most comprehensive, practical, and theoretically grounded one so far available. The six strategy groups are labelled memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social. The first three groups are known as “direct” strategies, because they directly involve the subject matter, in this case, the target language to be learned; the last three groups are called “indirect” strategies, because they do not directly involve the subject matter itself, but are essential to language learning nonetheless (Gan, 2003).

Language learning strategy research has received an overemphasis on metacognitive and cognitive strategies, which are confessedly very significant, at the expense of other strategy types that are also very useful. Some research studies indicate the existence of gender differences in strategy use (Goh & Kwah, 1997; Oxford, Nyikos & Ehrman, 1988; Osanai, 2000). Choice of language strategies also relates strongly to background, purpose of language learning, the nature of the task, and other factors (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Oxford, 1989). Language learning strategies appear to be among the most important variables influencing performance in a second language, and to be related to other variables, such as gender, age, and cultural background (Oxford & Leaver, 1996), and so on.

More recently, a large amount of research evidence suggests that the use of language learning strategies has an effect on how well learners acquire a second or foreign language (Chamot, 2001; Hsaio & Oxford, 2002). Some researchers and teachers provided instruction to students in order to increase the students’ L2 proficiency. To find out the strategies used by L2 learners, there are many assessment tools, for example: self-report surveys, observations, interviews, learner journals, dialogue journals, think-aloud techniques, and so on. The most widely used survey is Oxford’s (1990a) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Research studies, either outside the language field (e.g., Brown, et al., 1983) or investigations with language
learners (Oxford 1989; Oxford & Crookall, 1989; Skehan, 1989), frequently show that the most successful learners tend to use learning strategies which are appropriate to the material, to their own targets, needs, and stage of learning. More proficient learners tend to use a wider range of strategies in a greater number of situations than do less proficient learners, but the relationship between strategy use and language proficiency is complicated. Research indicates that actually language learners at all levels use strategies (Chamot & Kupper, 1989); however, some or most language learners are not fully aware of the strategies that they use or the strategies that may be most beneficial to employ.

2.5 The Chinese Learner

The present study focuses on university-level Chinese international ESL learners for two reasons. First, in the year 2006, Chinese students made up the largest international student population on Australian university campuses, with a population of 46,075 among the total of 172,297 (AEI Network, 2007). It can be assumed that a significant number of these students signed up for ESL classes in Australia. From the Year 2004 Market Indicator Data, published by the International Education Network of the Australian Government (AEI Network, 2007), there were 47,904 Chinese enrolled in Australia schools in 2002; 58,574 Chinese were enrolled in 2003; and 68,857 Chinese students enrolled in 2004. In 2003, among the enrolled students, 22,548 were enrolled in Higher Education, 14,595 in ELICOS (English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students); in 2004, 30,041 students in Higher Education, and 15,006 were enrolled in ELICOS. The total enrolment of Chinese students increased 43.7 per cent between 2002 and 2004. From 2002 to 2006, the number of Chinese international students remains the first place in the Australian International Market (AEI network, 2007). According to the AEI report (2007) data, in the year of 2006, there were 90,287 Chinese international students enrolled in Australian schools, universities, ELICOS, vocational education and others. It increased 10.5% when compared to the number of
Chinese international students in Australia in 2005.

Although various aspects of Chinese learners’ second language learning processes have been studied in the United States and United Kingdom, our understanding of their second language learning in the Australian context is very limited. So far only a few research studies have been done on Chinese learners in the context of Australia (e.g. Smith and Smith, 1999; Cooper, 2004), and very few has been focusing on Chinese international students’ attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies. Being a Chinese student herself in the area of researching English as a second language in the Australian context, the researcher feels the need to contribute to knowledge in regard to this group of ESL learners. In addition, the researcher’s background may provide unique insights into Chinese students and their behaviour.

As has been already shown, Chinese learners are often stereotyped as passive learners. However, recent research shows that such stereotyping has been questioned. In this section, we will examine who Chinese learners are, as well as the growing trend of Chinese learners studying abroad.

2.5.1. **Who are Chinese Learners?**

In most research studies, the Chinese learners are usually called “Confucian-heritage” learners who shared the “Confucian-heritage” cultures (CHCs) background. The Confucian-heritage learners not only refer to the students coming from mainland China, but also refer to the students from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, and Korea (Biggs, 1996). There have been different interpretations in understanding what is implied by “Chinese learners”. For a long time, the Chinese have been frequently described as rote learners and the Chinese style of learning has been widely considered inferior to the Western way. As many researchers (e.g., Yee, 1989; Chow, 1995; Watkins, 2000) have indicated, Chinese students are generally regarded as rote learners, memorizing what they have been taught and learned, and regurgitating it for the
In the Western literature, Chinese learners have been labelled as tape recorders (Biggs, 1996). They have constantly been portrayed as passive, teacher-dependent, unable to engage in independent learning, and given too much rote learning. Until the mid 1990s, there were some research studies carried out into those learners who belong to Confucian heritage cultures. From these research studies, Chinese learners were stereotypically defined as diligent, respecting authority and collectively (instead of individually) oriented (e.g., Ballard & Clanchy, 1991, Jin & Cortazzi, 1993; Watkins & Biggs, 1996). Moreover, Cortazzi and Jin (1996) suggested the Chinese learner to be hardworking as well as intelligent and persistent. In the late 1990s, Stephens (1997) claimed that Chinese students had been regarded as very brilliant and capable learners for a long time in the literature. This view is obviously contradicting the ones that label Chinese students as “rote” and “passive” learners.

Some recent research has begun to show that it is inappropriate to generalize about Chinese learners as passive or rote learners (Cheng, 2000; Littlewood, 2001). Memorising and understanding can not be separated into two parts. They are closely connected and the combination is an interlocking procedure (Nield, 2004). In fact, Chinese learners take memorization as a part of their learning process (Kontoulis & Williams, 2000; Watkins, 2000).

2.5.2. Historical Background of Chinese Learners Studying Overseas

The demographic changes in Australia in the second half of the 20th century have turned today’s Australia society into one that is increasingly multicultural and multilingual. Along with the rapid, complex social diversification, in the institutions of higher education in Australia the body of international university students continues to grow, especially from the source countries in Asia.
For over a century, generations of Chinese people have studied abroad with the aspiration of living a better life and absorbing the ideas of the new sciences and technologies. Their footprints can be found in almost every major country in the world. During the foreign-study movement, both active and inactive periods existed, in response to the fluctuations in modern Chinese history (Yao, 2004, p. 1).

According to the report of Yao (2004), the first Chinese overseas student was Rong Hong, who went to the USA to study in 1847, and from then on, western education gradually came into China. From Yao’s report (2004), we also know the change in the number of overseas students depends on the country’s development. Therefore, the number varies from one period to another. However, Yao (2004) mentioned how Chinese economic reform has brought forth a new surge in the numbers of those studying abroad, and the total population of Chinese overseas students is about 700,000 between 1978 and 2003. As a result of economic development, after 2000, the number of Chinese overseas students speeded up, which forms the present tide of Chinese students’ movement overseas.

2.5.3. Why Do the Chinese Choose to Study in Australia?

Nowadays, more and more international students are coming to Australia to study, ranging from primary school students to university students. It is reported that Australia has the largest number of international students coming from China, and the number is still growing every year. Australia has become Chinese students’ most desired destination country in recent years. Why do so many students come to Australia, even if the tuition fees are increasing per year? Amongst the many factors contributing to this trend, the following main reasons are listed by Yao (2004, p. 21-22).

(1) Australia as an English speaking country
Many Chinese overseas students, when choosing a country, decide their destination countries upon the second language they have studied. Most Chinese choose English as
the second language as the English language was taught from primary school in China. That is to say, most Chinese students have a foundation of English learning before they study overseas. Thus, English speaking countries have an advantage in attracting Chinese overseas students. Indeed, many Chinese go overseas not only to gain professional knowledge, but they are going to practise and improve their English skills as well.

(2) Flexible learning pathways offered to Chinese students
The education industry of Australia has been developed by offering flexible learning pathways which provide much more choice for overseas students. For instance, Australia and China intend to carry out a series of cooperative programs. In the cooperative programs, after taking preparatory lessons recognized by Australian universities, Chinese students can transfer to a setting up course in any Australian university at any stage of their education. It is the fact that educational exchange agreements have become a key component of Australia’s foreign relations and trade policies with China.

(3) Affordable courses and accessible for Chinese people
As a result of China’s economic development, increasingly Chinese people can afford the required amount for overseas education, but some of them have not been rich enough to be insensitive to the costs involved. And compared with the USA and UK, the tuition fee is relatively low and the living costs are also cheaper – these factors have driven Chinese students to select Australia. Because of the promoting of education by the Australian government, the process of gaining the student visa is easier to access than for the other two countries, which has also increased Chinese people’s interest.

(4) A good reputation of the Australian education system in China
There are many Australian institutions and graduates being highly regarded by world standards. Moreover, the good facilities, excellent researchers and teachers, and quality courses have won a good reputation for Australian education in China.
(5) The effective promotion of Australia education products in China
Alternatively, Australia has aimed to attract Chinese students by various ways, such as advertising, website information, and education exhibitions and fairs held yearly around some major cities in China. Therefore, Chinese people can easily obtain information about Australia education, and know how to get them prepared to study in Australia. All these made Chinese people become familiarized to Australian schools very easily.

(6) Australia’s social environment and natural beauty
Another reason that attracted Chinese people is Australia’s safe and stable society and multicultural diversity. Chinese people long to experience a different lifestyle in such good condition of the environment as well as the beautiful scenery.

Thus, these six main reasons and along with other factors, such as relaxed life style, multicultural society, non-discrimination, and so on, have all contributed to increasing the number of Chinese international students in Australia.

**2.5.4 Chinese Learner’s Attitudes/Motivation**

There are lots of research studies dealing with Chinese students, but those focusing on attitudes/motivation are limited. And among those limited studies, most of them have been done in the US or UK context rather than in the Australian context.

Wong (1982) did a study to examine the relationship between certain attitudinal and motivational variables and successful second language acquisition among native Chinese-speaking high school students in United States. Fifty students joined in the study, and four instruments were employed to collect the data: (1) The Hoffman’s Bilingual Schedule (Hoffman, 1934); (2) The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS); (3) Motivational and Attitudinal Assessment (Lambert, 1961); and (4) Personal Data. Statistical techniques, such as multiple regression analysis, Pearson’s correlation and t –test were applied in the study. The research findings indicated there
was no significant relationship between the motivational and attitudinal variables and native Chinese-American speakers’ English achievement; also there were no significant differences between the instrumentally motivated students and integratively motivated students.

Although Wong (1982) explored the relationship between attitudinal and motivational variables and language learning in an ESL context, the research subjects were the American-born Chinese students rather than Chinese international students. It may have different results when doing a study on Chinese international students.

Ten years later, with a purpose of investigating the relationship between attitudes/motivation variable and Chinese students’ English learning, Hsiang (1992) carried out a study at the University of Texas in the United States. Altogether, 51 students coming from Taiwan participated in the study. A combined questionnaire of Attitudes/Motivation Battery Test (Gardner, 1985, Gardner & Lambert, 1972, Jakobovits, 1970) and Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) as well as demographic information of the students was conducted to collect the data. The participants’ TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores were utilized as assessment of their English ability. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS-X) program was utilized for the data analysis. And the statistical method used in Hsiang’s study was multiple regression.

The results of the study showed that most of the students had intensive motivation during the English learning process. The participants’ attitudes toward learning a foreign language, the instrumental orientation, their desire to learn English, and their motivational intensity had positive correlation to their TOEFL scores. Moreover, the most reliable variable to their English performance was the subjects’ motivational intensity, which was also sustained by the students’ attitudes, especially their attitudes toward learning a foreign language. The findings of Hsiang’s research study echoed Gardner and Lambert’s viewpoints that a learner’s attitudes would influence his or her
language achievement and the person’s attitudes would also determine the level of motivation to learn the language; and motivation determines the degree of activeness a person has to learn the language.

More recently, a study was conducted by Gu and Schweisfurth (2006) to explore Chinese learners’ intercultural living and learning experiences in both Chinese and British educational contexts. The study was carried out in 24 universities in China which hosted the British Council’s English teaching development programs, and discovered perspectives of change in the Chinese teachers, who are learners in this teacher-training program. It was probing into the challenges Chinese learners face in adapting to the British higher education teaching and learning culture. In addition, the study enabled the researchers to compare the perspectives of Chinese learners in two contrasting educational and cultural contexts, and examined the adaptation that happens as a part of the learning process.

Both studies utilized semi-structured interviews and questionnaires for the British teachers and Chinese participants. In the China study, both the interview and the survey questionnaire data clearly demonstrated the impact of the Sino-British ELT (English Language Teaching) projects on Chinese project participants’ professional approaches to English language teaching. It seemed that the majority of the Chinese participants benefited from the input of British expertise on ELT theories and practices. However, the positive attitudes of the subjects did not mean they would discard the traditional teaching approaches. The participants’ decision was to integrate the new and the old in order to develop an approach that was suitable and appropriate in their class.

In the UK study, the results showed Chinese students’ strength of mind to survive and develop them in the UK higher education environment. Three major motivations of purpose of studying in the UK were found in their research study: (1) obtaining a higher degree and/or qualification; (2) enriching students themselves for a better
career, and third is improving English and learning knowledge; and (3) a psychological and physical struggle to live with an entirely different life pattern is considered as the most overwhelming experience of studying in UK universities.

It was clear from the two studies that different perceptions of teacher and learner and teaching and learning existed between the British and Chinese respondents, and that these differences were acknowledged on both sides. These studies have shed light on the issue of the motivation and adaptations of Chinese learners in China and the United Kingdom – two distinctly different contexts.

Also, several studies were carried out to examine the relationship between attitudinal/motivational variables and English learning achievement in regard to socio-cultural context. For example, Chen (2002) carried out a study on Chinese university students by examining the relationship between language anxiety and English learning. The study found that the anxiety was not related to language proficiency, whilst students’ overall interest in English helped reduce their anxiety level. More recently, with the purpose of exploring the perceptions of Chinese students’ success in ESL learning, Reynolds (2007) conducted a study on Chinese students, from sixth to eighth grade, studying English in the United States. The result indicated that there four major significant influences in their successful ESL learning: (1) social interaction and language usage; (b) reading and literacy proficiency; and (c) high aspiration for success.

In conclusion, there are considerable research studies concerning attitudes and motivation in the field of second language learning. Some results presented a strong positive correlation between the attitudinal and motivation variable and English learning achievements, for example, in Hsiang’s (1992) study, Chinese students’ intensive attitudes/motivation had positive correlation to their TOEFL scores, while others, such as Wong’s (1982) study, did not find any significant relationship between students’ attitudes/motivation and English achievement. But much research evidence
reveals intensive or relative strong motivation of Chinese learners, and the attitudinal and motivational variables were related to second language learning performance. Also, some research indicates the Chinese students’ English language learning is positively influenced by social interaction, high aspiration for success, and literacy language learning in socio-cultural context.

2.5.5 Chinese Learners’ Language Learning Strategies

Except for attitudes and motivation, research on the language learning strategies of Chinese learners is limited as well. The predominant view (e.g. Chow, 1995) in the literature is that Chinese students prefer passive teaching methods such as lectures, demonstrations, handouts, displays, films, and videos. Experiential exercises, case studies, role-plays and simulations belong to participative teaching methods and are least preferred. Problem solving and explorative teaching methods employed in the West would not fit with the Confucian derived preference for rote learning (Thompson & Gui, 2000). Students rely heavily on the teacher and seek specific instructions.

According to Volet and Renshaw (1996), there are three characteristics of Chinese students. They find that Chinese students tend to be surface learners instead of deep learners. They also find Chinese students are highly achievement oriented. Moreover, “Chinese students do not actively participate in tutorials” (p. 207).

Salili (1996) clarifies three Chinese students’ approaches to learning as: ‘deep’, ‘surface’ and ‘achieving’ approaches (p. 96), each based on its corresponding motives and strategies that have been identified. Kember and Gow (1989), in their study, found an approach which integrated deep and surface learning; and that approach was reported to be used by Hong Kong tertiary students.

Nisbet, Tindall and Arroyo (2005) did a study fairly recently with the aim of
investigating the relationship between language learning strategy preferences and English proficiency among Chinese university students. There were three research questions to their study: (1) What are the relationships among Oxford’s six categories of learning strategies (memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social), total learning strategies, and second language proficiency? (2) Which categories of learning strategies are predictive of (i.e., significantly correlated with) L2 proficiency? (3) Is there a difference in learning strategy preferences and proficiency by gender?

One hundred and sixty eight third-year English major students studying at Henan University in Kaifeng, China and ranging from 19 to 27 years old, participated in this study. Oxford’s (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and an institutional version (ITP) of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) were administered to the students. The SILL instrument is a 50-item self-report, paper-and-pencil survey that consists of statements about strategies used by language learners. The subjects respond to each item using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“never or almost never true of me”) to 5 (“Always or almost always true of me”). The IPT-TOEFL is a retired version of the TOEFL, which is used to measure English proficiency. Three statistical techniques were used for data analysis. They were Pearson product-moment correlations, multiple regression, and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

The results from the SILL in that study indicated that participants used learning strategies at a medium to high level. The most frequently used strategy is metacognitive strategies followed by social and cognitive strategies. Memory strategies were the least frequently used by participants in this study. In the study done by Nisbet et el. (2005), the English scores of the participants were higher than the average score for all undergraduate students worldwide. According to the first research question, six categories of learning strategies are significantly correlated with one another and with the total learning strategies score. Only one category of learning
strategies was significantly correlated with ITP-TOEFL score. Referring to the second research question, only one variable – metacognitive strategy – was significantly correlated with proficiency. The answer to the third question is that no significant gender differences were found in this study. Four possible reasons for the low level of correlation between learning strategies and proficiency are: a) possible use of strategies other than those measured by the SILL; b) variation in regard to application and/or orchestration of learning strategies; c) language areas measured by the proficiency test (IPT-TOEFL); and d) intervening factors, aside from language learning strategies. Cultural context and learner autonomy are the factors that influence the relationship between strategy use and English proficiency (Nisbet, et al., 2005).

Song and Cheng (2006) investigated the Chinese learners of English, reporting their strategy use and the relationships between strategy use and language performance on a national English proficiency test, which is the College English Test-Band 4 (CET-4). With two research questions, the author carried out the study in China. The two research questions were: what types of language strategies did this group of Chinese EFL learners under investigation report using? And what relationships, if any, existed between reported strategy use and language test performance on the CET-4? Which strategy use was the best predictor of language test performance on the CET-4?

In their study, one hundred and fifty six undergraduate students of non-English majors from a university in mainland China voluntarily participated in the study, and 121 valid responses were obtained. Among them, there were 69 females and 52 males. An adapted questionnaire, which includes three parts: (1) background information; (2) thirty-four cognitive strategy use items; and (3) thirty-items of metacognitive strategies, was employed in this study. The questionnaire used a 6-point Likert scale. Also, the CET-4 was adopted as a measure of language performance. An array of statistical performances, including descriptive statistics, factor analysis, t tests and regression analysis were employed for the data analysis.
The findings show that metacognitive strategies were used more significantly than cognitive strategies as reported by the students. A higher level of strategy use does not inevitably correspond to better language performance though. Using certain strategies seems to influence test performance whereas using others appears to have no effect. Studies of language learning strategies and how other learning and teaching factors contribute to Chinese students’ strategy choice are very limited. In addition, from the above collected studies, to the view of the researcher, the findings are still vague.

2.6 Summary

Chinese learners, defined as rote learners for a long time, are highly motivated in study. They left China to learn English and other skills from the mid 19th century and onwards, and from then on, more and more Chinese learners have studied abroad with the country’s economic development. As time has developed, more and more researchers have been questioning the generalization of the Chinese learners as rote learners. One purpose of this current research is to examine the characteristics of Chinese learners with respect to their attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies while they are studying in English as a second language context, Australia.

The literature review shows research into English as a second language has been very extensive, so are the studies into attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies in ESL context. However, research studies on attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies for Chinese learners’ English language learning are very limited; and most of the existing studies have been mainly done in US and UK. There is even less literature investigating Chinese ESL learners in Australia. This study is an attempt to identify what is the level of Chinese learners’ attitudes and motivation and what are their major language learning strategies while they are acquiring English in the ESL context of Australia.
CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological design and procedures for the study. This study is designed to investigate the attitude/motivation and the use of language learning strategies by Chinese international students who were studying English as a second language in Australia. To carry out this intent, the researcher examined the students’ English language learning in terms of five groups of variables: (a) Background Information, (b) Motivational Intensity, (c) Desire to Learn English, (d) Orientation Index, and (e) Language Learning Strategies.

In this chapter, the methods adopted for carrying out this study are presented in the following major sections: (1) population and sample selection; (2) instrumentation; (3) data collection procedures; (4) data analysis; (5) reliability of the instruments; and (6) limitations of the study.

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

This section describes in detail the sampling strategies employed in the study. The target population for this study consists of Chinese adult international students, including students from mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, studying at all language centres and/or TAFE institutes or universities in Melbourne, Australia. These students had already finished their secondary education and 12 years of schooling in a Chinese-teaching context, before they came to Australia and they have both English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) learning experience.
However, in any single study one cannot investigate the entire target population or the universe of subjects whom the researcher or the study is interested in, since such a selection of sample and collection of data would have involved an immense amount of work and expense. This study is not an exception and it had to limit its investigation to a small sample. It is believed that, suitable sampling can reach conclusions about an entire target population that are likely to be correct within a small margin of error by studying a relatively small sample (Borg & Gall, 1983).

Thus, the Chinese international students who were studying at some universities and/or TAFE institutes in Melbourne and attending English language courses were invited to participate in this study by employing snowball sampling as the sampling strategy. The researcher personally handed out the questionnaires to her friends who were willing to take part in this research and to support the data collection by sending survey questionnaires to their classmates or friends. Then they gained their friends’ participation in this data collection process.

Altogether sixty Chinese international students participated in this study. These participants were from Mainland China and Taiwan where Mandarin Chinese is the official language. Among these participants, some plan to pursue further higher education study in Australia; some have already started their further study in Australia, while some came to Australia just for the short term to improve their English language skills. The participants majored in various subjects in universities, such as accounting, finance, marketing, graphics design and, information technology, which are very popular studies amongst Chinese international students. The detailed background information of this group of sample population will be presented in Chapter IV.

3.3 Instrumentation

A survey questionnaire is a quite commonly used instrument for research to obtain information from subjects. The data of this study were collected through the three
questionnaires: (1) background information, (2) attitude and motivation assessment, and (3) strategy inventory for language learning. All questionnaires were set out in English, followed immediately by the Chinese translation for conveying the meaning clearly and obtaining accurate data. The description of these three instruments is presented in the following section.

3.3.1 Background Information Questionnaire (see Appendix 1)

A questionnaire with the purpose of gaining the participants’ personal background information was administered to the students. This questionnaire can be divided into two parts: personal information and English language self-rating assessment.

A. Personal Information
Ten questions asked the participants to provide information in terms of their name, age, gender, place of residence in China, type of accommodation in Australia, language spoken at the accommodation in Australia, times outside China, length of studying English, importance of English proficiency, reasons for studying English, enjoyment of English learning, and other factors around language learning. All these provide information on student individual characteristics in terms of their background information.

B. English Language Assessment
The students under investigation were asked to self-rate their overall English proficiency in two situations: one was to compare with the other students in the same class, and the other was to compare themselves with native speakers of English language. Both of them were given four scaled answers to choose: poor, fair, good, and excellent. Furthermore, the informants were asked to rate their own English skills concerning four macro-skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing on the multi-point measures (very poor, poor, just so so, fairly well and excellent). All the students’ English language assessment items are self-ratings. According to Oxford
advanced learner’s dictionary by Hornby (1997) “proficiency” means being “doing or able to do something in a skilled or an expert way because of training and practice” (p. 1180); while “skill” means “ability to do something well” (p. 1417).

According to Boud and Falchikov (1989), self-assessment refers to the involvement of learners in making judgements about their own learning, particularly about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning. It increases the role of learners as active participants in their own learning (Boud, 1995), and is mostly used for formative assessment in order to foster reflection on one's own learning processes and results.

There are arguments which claim testing scores are more reliable and valid measure of language, than self-rating. Cahill holds that “teacher ratings have been proved to be reasonably reliable and valid though test scores usually show better values of reliability and validity” (Cahill, 1979, p. 145). Cahill further asserts that some problems could be raised immediately in self-rating, such as overestimation, underestimation and approximation to reality, which lead to limitations of the results (Cahill, 1979).

However, there is clear evidence of reliable and valid research studies done through applying self-rating of language proficiency. Several previous studies using self-reported language proficiency rating to investigate language learners’ learning strategy use suggested self-perceived proficiency had a positive correlation between self-ratings of language proficiency and had a strong effect on language learning strategy use. For example, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found that self-ratings of language proficiency level had a significant relationship with language strategy use, when they conducted a study of language learning strategies among 1200 college students. Chang (1991) carried out a study with 50 Chinese speaking ESL students at a University in the Southeast region of the United States. The study demonstrates that participants who rated their proficiency higher than average used more strategies than
participants who rated their proficiency average and below average. Wantanabe (1990) also reported a moderate correlation in the case of Japanese university EFL students through self-rating procedures.

There are strong reasons why Cahill (1979), on the other hand, argues that it is “beyond the scope and resources” to implicate an “objective, standardized test in the English language” (p. 66) to all the students under investigation in a limited two-year research study. Especially in the current study, the sample students are university students. It is difficult to utilize teacher ratings concerning the four skills of English, since the teacher may hardly know every student well in a large class. Also, it is hard to employ a standardized and validated test of English language for tertiary-level adult Chinese international students in terms of every skill in the limited time of the study. Based on the above rationale, self-ratings of English proficiency and skills were deployed for the study.

3.3.2 Attitudes and Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix 2)

One of the main objectives of the study was an assessment of motivational variables on second language learning. The 21 items of Gardner’s (1985) Test Battery concerning attitude and motivation was administered in this study. The purpose of this questionnaire was to collect data to understand and analyze students’ attitude and motivation toward second language learning. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: (1) motivational intensity; (2) desire to learn English; and (3) orientation index, which were presented in the form of a multiple choice test. Students chose one of the choices provided that they felt best described themselves. The answers to each question are all presented in a randomized order to maintain the best possible level of reliability of the data. The weighting for each alternative did not appear on the student’s questionnaire.

The “Motivational Intensity” consists of ten multiple choice items and the maximum
score is 30. This section is designed to measure the intensity of a student’s motivation to learn English in terms of work done for classroom assignments, future plans to make use of and study the language and so on. A high score represents a student’s self report of a high degree of effort being spent in acquiring the language. Also, ten multiple choice items were included in the “Desire to Learn English” section. A high score (maximum=30) expressed a strong Desire to Learn English. The “Orientation Index” consists of one item. Students were presented with four possible reasons for studying English. Two of them stress the instrumental value and the other two reasons stress the integrative value. The subtest is scored dichotomously. Students selecting either instrumental reason are scored 1; those selecting either integrative reason are scored 2. All sections of the instrument substituted the word “English” for “French” whenever “French” appeared in the items. Responses to the questionnaire items are made by ticking responses from the multiple choices on a separate cover sheet.

3.3.3 Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (see Appendix 3)

Students’ language learning strategies were assessed through the self-report questionnaire: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning developed by Oxford (1990a). The SILL is a “Likert-scaled, self-reported questionnaire that assesses the frequency with which the respondent uses a variety of different techniques for second or foreign language learning” (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989, p. 2). Oxford first designed the SILL in 1986 and employed with an aim of measuring frequency of the use of language learning strategies used by the students at the Defense Language Institute in California; then the SILL was developed into two versions. One was designed for English language learners of foreign languages with eighty questions in that questionnaire. The other was designed for non-native English speakers of learning English as a second or foreign language, which was composed of fifty questions. The latter version, “Version for Speakers of Other Languages Learning English”, was utilized in this study, as well as many other studies on learners of English as a second or foreign language, such as Osanai (2000). Responses to the questionnaire items
were made by writing responses on a five-point scale on a separate cover sheet.

Fifty questions in the SILL questionnaire are divided into six sub-categories. These six sub-categories have been developed so that each question in the individual sub-category would promote better understanding and in-depth research of learner strategies in language learning (Oxford, 1995). The following is a summary of the six sub-categories of the SILL questionnaire developed by Oxford (1990a, p.17):

1. **Memory Strategies** (nine items): including creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing, and employing action.
2. **Cognitive Strategies** (fourteen items): including practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output.
3. **Compensation Strategies** (six items): including guessing intelligently, overcoming limitations in speaking and writing.
4. **Metacognitive Strategies** (nine items): including centering, arranging and planning, and evaluating one’s learning.
5. **Affective Strategies** (six items): including lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself, and assessing emotional feelings and motivations.
6. **Social Strategies** (six items): including asking questions, cooperating and empathizing with others.

Although the questionnaire had clear directions, the instructions and procedure were explained before the survey questionnaire was administered. It was made very clear to the participants that the survey questions have no right or wrong answers. The research investigation was interested in knowing the participants’ true and immediate feelings and responses to the statements in the survey questionnaire.
3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Before collecting the data of the research, a pilot study was conducted. The purpose of the pilot study was to establish the time required to complete the questionnaires, to find any deficiencies, to make improvements, and any other necessary editorial changes. At this stage all three questionnaires were in the English version and the participant was free to ask any questions to make the questions clearer during the test. A twenty-five-year old female Chinese international student who came from Taiwan participated in this pilot study. The participant studied at a TAFE institute of Melbourne and she came to Australia with the purpose of improving her English language skills in the short term.

Two suggestions were concluded from the pilot study. Firstly, it showed that around 30 minutes were needed to complete the questionnaires. Secondly, as the student had some difficulty to understand some items of the questionnaires in English version, it was, therefore, necessary for the researcher to translate all the questions from English to Chinese for the better understanding of the instrument and its items.

Data were collected through two stages. The first stage was the first three weeks of the first semester, 2006; the second stage was the first three months of the second semester, 2006. At the first stage, the researcher tried to obtain the approval for data collection of the Chinese international students in some selected language centres in Melbourne. However, it did not work out as expected. Then the researcher chose snowball sampling as the way of sample collection. At first, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to friends who qualified for the investigation and were willing to participate in the investigation, and the questionnaires were returned within a two-week time period. Then the researcher asked her friends to send survey questionnaires to their classmates or friends who were qualified and willing to join the study, and the questionnaires returned in four weeks’ time. There was a consent form (see Appendix 4) for getting the approval of participants’ participation and a Plain
Language Statement (see Appendix 5) for explaining the purpose of the study ahead of the questionnaires. Every subject was asked to fill out the personal background information sheet at first, followed up with the attitude and motivation assessment and finally the strategy inventory for language learning. The participants were given the questionnaires with the version in English, followed immediately by the Chinese translation. They were allowed to answer the survey questionnaires in either Chinese or English.

3.5 Confidentiality and Anonymity

This study has strictly followed the procedures and guidelines set for research studies by RMIT Higher Degrees Research Committee and RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 4, 5, and 6). Ethical issues are very important in conducting research with human participants. The researcher took the following five steps to protect the participants’ privacy and anonymity. First, the researcher made absolutely clear to all the participants that their participation in the survey was on a voluntary basis. Second, all the participants were advised that they could withdraw at any stage of the data collection. Moreover, they could discontinue with this data collection process and any unprocessed data may also be withdrawn upon their request. Third, code numbers were used in the transcripts to replace the names of the participants. Fourth, the researcher kept the answered questionnaires and consent forms in strict confidentiality.

In order to better protect the confidentiality of each student’s participation in this study, every participant’s name was matched up with a code number by the researcher. The data pairing the subject’s name to the assigned code number were kept separate from all research materials and were available only to the researcher. The students could answer the questions in either Chinese or English.
The above steps and measures play an important role in protecting participants’ rights and privacy. These measures can make the students who participated in the study feel comfortable. Furthermore, the measures were helpful for obtaining relatively reliable answers from the participants as well.

3.6 Data Analysis

The study used the data gathered by the three survey instruments to answer the research questions. The data obtained from the personal background information sheet provided more detailed information such as their gender, age, nationality, native language, length of studying English, current level of study in the language program, length of residence in Australia and their self-rated English proficiency. This information also allowed the researcher to do the comparison among the participants on the use of language learning strategies. The data was transcribed and if necessary, translated into English by the researcher who administered the battery of instruments.

The results of the questionnaires were analyzed by computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13.0). SPSS is a software system which is used for many univariate and multivariate statistical analyses and has facilities for sorting and merging files and manipulating data. The major statistical methods used in the analyses of data were: 1) Reliability analysis; 2) Descriptive statistics; and 3) Pearson product-moment correlations. Reliability analysis of the research instruments will be discussed in this chapter. Descriptive statistics and Pearson product-moment correlations among the possible variables will be reported in detail in Chapter IV and Chapter V, respectively.

3.7 Reliability of the Research Instruments

In order to help readers estimate the internal validity of this study, analyses of the
internal consistency of the research instruments were also conducted. This section presents the results of the reliability estimates for all the research instruments employed for this study. Reliability coefficients are used here to show the degree to which a sub-scale is internally consistent or reliable. All the reliability estimates are using Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha, which is the most commonly used standard measure of internal consistency reliability for multi-point items (Gay, 1992), for example the Likert items. Additionally, Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha is useful to evaluate uniformity of the instruments used in the research (Gay, 1992). In view of this, Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha is employed for the multiple-item measures such as self-rating English macro skills, self-rating overall English proficiency, motivational intensity, desire to learn English, and SILL strategy sub-scales. Generally speaking, the more items a group includes, the higher the reliability estimate could be.

Through using the SPSS program on a personal computer, the calculated results of the Cronbach’s alpha for self-rating macro English skills and overall English proficiency as assessed through the personal Background Information Questionnaire are listed in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Items Used in Questionnaire</th>
<th>Reliability Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-rating Macro English Skills (including average)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Q10 (a, b, c, d)</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-rating Overall English Proficiency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Q7, Q8</td>
<td>0.570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Q Stands for Question

There are two reasons for choosing the variables of self-rating English macro skills and self-rating English Overall English Proficiency instead of other items in the Background Information Questionnaire. First, these two variables are multi-point
items. Participants were asked to rate their English skills ranging from very poor, just so so, fairly well, to excellent, and overall English proficiency from poor, fair, good, to excellent. Score 1 to 5 was used by encoding the data to rate students’ responses. Second, self-rating English skills and overall proficiency are very important variables which may be influenced by the students’ attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies. Thus, it is important to the validity of the self-rating English skills/proficiency scale that was collected in this research study. So among the 13 items in the Background Information Questionnaire, self-rating English skills and overall proficiency are chosen for the reliability estimates. As seen from Table 4.1, the reliability is relatively low 0.570 for the overall level of English proficiency, but the reliability of self-rating of English macro skills, 0.888, is fairly high.

The reliability estimates for internal consistency for Motivational Intensity and Desire to Learn English and the total items of the Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire are listed in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Reliability Estimates for Attitude/Motivation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Items Used in Questionnaire II</th>
<th>Reliability Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Q1- Q10</td>
<td>0.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to Learn English</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Q11-Q20</td>
<td>0.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.808</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Q Stands for Question

Although the Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire consists of 21 items for the scales using the multiple choice format, the answers were graded by scoring 1, 2 and 3 to reflect the differences in participants’ choices. The reliability estimates were utilized for the Motivational Intensity and Desire to Learn English, because only one item was included in the Orientation Index, which was undoable for the reliability estimates. The reliability of the two attitudes/motivation sub-scales – “Motivational Intensity”
and “Desire to Learn English” – is very close. The reliability of “Motivational Intensity” sub-scale is 0.690, which is a little lower than the reliability of “Desire to Learn English” sub-scale, 0.706. The reliability estimate of all items in attitude/motivation assessment questionnaire is 0.808, which is reasonably high.

Table 3.3 demonstrates the reliability estimates for internal consistency for the six original SILL strategy scales and the SILL questionnaire as a whole. The reliabilities of the six strategy sub-scales fluctuated from a relatively low of 0.590 for “Affective Strategies” to a high of 0.877 for “Metacognitive Strategies”. The reliability of “Cognitive Strategies”, 0.847, is also fairly high. The reliabilities of “Compensation Strategies” and “Social Strategies” are calculated at the same results, 0.710, which is reasonably high and a little higher than the reliability of “Memory Strategies”, 0.687. The reliability of the SILL questionnaire as a whole is very high, at 0.936.

Table 3.3 Reliability Estimates for SILL and its Sub-scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Items Used in Questionnaire III</th>
<th>Reliability Estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Q1-Q9</td>
<td>0.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Q10-Q23</td>
<td>0.847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Q24-Q29</td>
<td>0.710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Q30-Q38</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Q39-Q44</td>
<td>0.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Q45-Q50</td>
<td>0.710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Q Stands for Question

To sum it up, the reliability estimates for assessing students’ English skills and proficiency, attitudes and motivation, and language learning strategies (as in Table 3.1, Table 3.2 and Table 3.3) ranged from a moderate 0.570 to a very high 0.936. They are relatively high to establish a satisfactory level of reliability of the test instruments for
this research study. This has laid a solid basis for the data to be reliable in both descriptive statistics and correlation analysis for the next chapter.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations to this study are resulted from the sample selections and the research design. Firstly, the participants are convenience samples recruited from university and institute. The possibility of generalizing the results in terms of different learning environments may be limited. Secondly, self-ratings of English language proficiency and skills could raise the problems of overrating, underrating and approximation to reality (Cahill, 1979). Thirdly, this study only uses questionnaires for data collection. The weakness of questionnaires is that what the participants think and what they actually do may be different. The data reported by the participants themselves is sometimes viewed as suspect because of possible social desirability response bias, i.e., a tendency to answer in the way the subject thinks the researcher would like (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995). All the answers to the survey questions were reported by the informants themselves, so questions of social desirability response bias might naturally be raised. In this respect, some measures were taken to minimize the potential existence of social desirability response bias. The students were assured from the start that their answers would be coded anonymously and would not be revealed to other people without their permission. Also, the students were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and their answers would not influence their course assessment at all.

Finally, this study's focus on Chinese learner might be too exclusive in terms of other ethnic groups, though this study could highlight to some degree the English learning of students from other non-English-speaking nations.
CHAPTER IV

Chinese Learners: Their Background, Motivation and Learning Strategies

4.1 Introduction

Through examining the existing literature in chapter two, debates on who Chinese learners were, and how their attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies impacted on their English learning in the ESL context were presented. In addition, we explored how these factors played a role in reshaping the current concept of “Chinese learners” or “Confucian-heritage learners” through looking at the changing pattern of Chinese learners who were labelled as “rote” learners. With the support of the review of the literature, the research strategy on examining how attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies are interrelated in affecting the students’ learning, and their English proficiency in the Australian context has been outlined in Chapter III. Guided by the designed research strategy, data have been collected from the participants for this study. We shall now analyze the data through SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) statistical procedures.

Descriptive statistics are numerical representations which illustrate how the participants perform on a test or questionnaire (Brown, 2001b). According to Pallant (2001) descriptive statistics have a number of uses: first, checking the variables for any violation of the assumptions underlying the statistical techniques that will be used to address the research questions; second, describing the characteristics of the research sample; and third, addressing particular research questions. This chapter is using statistics to carry out the second function of descriptive statistics that is to describe the characteristics of the research sample.
The statistics in the present study consist of Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard deviation. The mean is probably the most widely understood measure of central tendency, and standard deviation is a better and more useful measure of the spread of responses around the mean.

As we have described in Chapter 1, the major objectives of this study were to describe the adult Chinese ESL learners’ motivation and strategy use for learning English and to explore the relationship among these learner variables. This chapter reports the results of the descriptive statistics in the following four areas:

1. Students’ background and their views on English language;
2. English Assessment through self-rating procedure;
3. Level of students’ attitudes/motivation; and
4. Level of students’ language learning strategy use.

The correlations among these variables will be examined in Chapter V, and discussions of the findings of this research study will be set out in Chapter VI.

4.2 Students’ Background and Their Views on English Language

Background information of the students under investigation is first presented. Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 present the data concerning participants’ age, times and length of time outside China, and years of studying English. In addition, other characteristics of participants’ choice of the accommodation type, language spoken at accommodation, reasons for studying English, importance of English proficiency, and enjoyment of studying English were also included. Table 4.4, Table 4.5, Table 4.6 and Table 4.7 summarize these data respectively.

The participants in this study were 60 adult Chinese international students, 37 female and 23 male, who were studying at universities or language centres in Melbourne, Australia. The students were relatively young, since the data shows that the majority
of the students (81.7%) had ages between 20-25. Their ages ranged from 20 to 30, with a mean of 23.75 years. Of the 60 sample students, 54 students (90.0%) reported themselves as coming from different parts of Mainland China, while 4 subjects (6.7%) reported that they came from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and 2 subjects (3.3%) reported as coming from the Taiwan Area.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Students’ Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean=23.75   S.D. =2.245

Regarding the times outside China, ranging from once to five times, the students under investigation obtained a mean of 1.80 times. In Table 4.2, compiled from the research data, 56.7% of the total population reported that they had travelled outside China only once, and Australia was their destination. In other words, over half did not have any previous travel experience outside China before they came to Australia, and they selected Australia as their first choice to gain further study. Including their travel to Australia at present, fourteen students (23.3%) said they had travelled outside China twice; whereas three participants (5.0%) reported that they were outside China three times; eight students (13.3%) said that they had travelled outside China four times; and only one student (1.7%) reported as outside China five times. Altogether, 49 students stayed outside China for more than one year, and the majority people stayed between 13 to 36 months. A few of the participants stayed or travelled outside China for more than 3 years, because the duration of the study time is usually between one to three years.
Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Students’ Times and Length outside China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times Outside China</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Times</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Times</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Times</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time Outside China</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-12 months</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-24 months</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-36 months</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-48 months</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 months and above</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean of Times Outside China=1.80 S.D. = 1.132
Mean of Length of Time Outside China=28.05 S.D. =18.587

Participants were also requested to nominate the number of years they had been studying English language formally. As can be seen in Table 4.3, participants have studied an average of 11.51 years. Six students (10.0%) identified themselves as studying English formally for less than five years, whereas nineteen participants (31.7%) indicated that they had studied English formally for between six and ten years. However, twenty nine (48.3%) respondents said that they had studied English for more than 10 years but less than 16 years, and the remaining six students (10.0%) had studied English for sixteen years or longer with a maximum of twenty years.

Finally, participants were asked to answer whether, aside from English, they had learnt another foreign language. Twenty students (33.3%) reported having learnt another foreign language and 40 (66.7%) indicated that they had not learnt another
foreign language.

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics for Students’ Length of Formal English Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Formal English Study</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean=11.51    S.D. =3.656

Table 4.4 presents the descriptive statistics of the type of accommodation chosen by the students and the language spoken by the students at their accommodation. In the study, 44 students (73.3 %) reported themselves living in a shared house, the most popular type of accommodation, in comparison with home-stay, and living by themselves in flat/apartment. The remaining 16 students (26.7%) reported themselves living in other types of accommodation. It is noticeable that among the informants only two reported living in any type of home-stay, which seemed to be the least popular type of accommodation. When investigating the language used at the accommodation by the subjects, 44 participants (73.3%) reported Chinese was the language they used, followed by 10 students (16.7%) reporting to use both Chinese and English at home. Only six participants (10.0%) used English at their accommodation. So what makes the shared house the most popular type of accommodations? What are the reasons for Chinese as the most used language while English as the least used language at the students’ accommodation in Australia? At this stage, we think factors of saving money, cultural background, students’ English skills, their English proficiency, their length of English learning, are important reasons for this situation. We shall further discuss these reasons and their implications on Chinese learners’ English learning in later sections.
Table 4.4 Type of Student Accommodation and Language Spoken at the Accommodation Chosen by Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Speaking Chinese</th>
<th>Speaking English</th>
<th>Speaking Both Chinese and English</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared house</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat/Unit/Apartment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-stay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Background Information Questionnaire, six reasons were given to the question: “Why do you want to learn English?” Students were asked to choose all the applied reasons, including interest in the language, interest in the culture, having friends speaking English, required to take a language course to graduate, for travel or other reasons. Table 4.5 presents the results for this question.

Table 4.5 Reasons for Studying English (N= 60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require to graduate</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in the language</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For travel</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having friends</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in culture</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the data, about half of the samples (53.3%) chose the reason that they were required to take a language course to graduate; twenty students (33.3%) said that they were learning English because either they were interested in the language of
English or they needed it for travel. Only twelve students (20.0%) thought that their interest in the culture made them learn English. If we refer to Gardner and Lambert’s distinction between integrative and instrumental types of motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1972), this group of students seemed to be more instrumentally oriented than integratively oriented. Certainly it will be necessary to take a further look at the student’s motivational orientation through Gardner’s survey questionnaire on attitude and motivation in the section to come (Section 4.3)

In terms of the importance of English proficiency (Table 4.6), rating one for not so important, two for important, and three for very important, the subjects had a mean of 2.57, meaning most students thought it important for them to become proficient in English. The data also shows that 95.0% of the respondents considered English proficiency as important or very important when they were asked to answer the question: how important is it for you to become proficient in English? All respondents chose important or very important as their answers to this question, except three (5.0%) male respondents who considered it was not so important for them to become proficient in English. All in all, an overwhelming majority of the participants thought it important or very important to become proficient in English.

**Table 4.6 Importance of English Proficiency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of English Proficiency</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Important (3)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important (2)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so Important (1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean=2.57    S.D. = 0.593

In addition, Table 4.7 presents the frequency and percentage for the enjoyment of English learning by the participants. The participants obtained a mean of 2.68
concerning the enjoyment of learning English, from level one for those who do not enjoy learning English to level four for those who enjoy it very much. It seemed that the majority students enjoyed learning English a lot. The data indicates that 32 informants (53.3%) enjoyed English language learning a lot, and 8 students (13.3%) enjoyed English learning very much. Altogether twenty students (33.4%) reported that they did not enjoy learning English or enjoyed learning English only a little, about two thirds of the surveyed population still enjoyed the English language learning a lot or very much.

**Table 4.7 Enjoyment of English Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enjoyment of English Learning</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Much (4)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Lot (3)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little (2)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not Enjoy (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean=2.68   S.D. = 0.854

To sum up for this section, through looking at the general picture of the students under investigation in terms of their gender, age, place of residence in China, travel experience outside China, years of English learning, types of accommodation in Australia, and language used at the accommodation, the 60 young adult Chinese ESL learners, consisting of 37 female and 23 male, had an average age of approximately 24. Most of them have studied English for many years between 6 to 15 years. Around two thirds (73.3 %) of the participants chose shared house as their accommodation in Australia, and reported that they used Chinese as their language in their accommodation. In other words, young adults Chinese learners preferred using Chinese as communication tool in their accommodation in Australia, and preferred to live with students who shared similar cultural backgrounds with them. More than half
of the participants have travelled outside China more than once and around 30 per cent subject have learnt another foreign language. Over half of the students studied English because they were required to take English course to graduate, and they considered English proficiency as either important or very important. And vast majority of the students enjoyed English learning either a lot or very much.

4.3 English Language Assessment through Self-rating Procedure

Students’ level of English language overall proficiency and their specific English language skills were assessed through self-rating process. Three items were utilized in the background information for asking the participants to rate their English proficiency by themselves in different situations. Table 4.8 demonstrates the descriptive data of participants’ self-ratings of overall English proficiency against two criteria: one as compared with the proficiency of their classmates; and the other asked as compared with the proficiency of native English speakers.

Table 4.8 Participants’ Self-ratings of Overall English Proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Proficiency</th>
<th>Proficiency Compared with Classmates</th>
<th>Proficiency Compared with Natives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor (1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair (2)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent (4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean of Proficiency (compared with classmates) =2.42  S.D. =0.645  
Mean of Proficiency (compared with natives) =1.58  S.D. =0.645

As for the level of overall English proficiency, both compared with classmates and native English speakers, level one for poor, level two for fair, level three for good, and level four for excellent, these participants had a mean level of 2.42 when compared
with their classmates, meaning that most were at the level between fair and good; they had a mean level of 1.58 when compared with native speakers of English, indicating that nearly half of the students rated their English proficiency between poor and fair.

When compared with their classmates, the majority of these students (91.7%) reported themselves at fair or good level of English proficiency. Only 6.6 per cent (4 students) thought their level of English proficiency was poor. While comparing English proficiency with natives, those subjects, who stated that they were at fair or good level of English proficiency account for 50.0% (30 students). Nearly half of the participants (29 students) considered their English proficiency level as poor. In each situation, only one informant rated his/her overall level of English proficiency as Excellent.

Besides asking the students' overall English proficiency, one more question was used to ask about participants’ self-ratings of English macro-skills, including listening, speaking, reading and writing. Table 4.9 shows the frequencies and percentages for their self evaluation of their English language skills.

In terms of the level of specific English skills (listening and speaking, reading, writing, and overall), rating one for very poor, two for poor, three for just so so, four for fairly well, and five for excellent, the students had a mean level of 3.08 for listening and speaking skills, 3.23 for reading skills, 3.05 for both writing and overall skills, indicating that most of the informants considered their English skills were slightly above the level of just so so. More than half of the students reported themselves as the level of just so so in four skills (listening and speaking, reading, writing). Very few informants thought their four skills were either poor or excellent. Forty (66.7%) students considered their overall English skills as the level of just so so. Only two (3.3%) students believed that their overall English skills are excellent, and one (1.7%) subject thought his/her overall English skills are very poor.
Table 4.9 Participants’ Self-ratings of English Macro-skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>Reading Skills</th>
<th>Writing Skills</th>
<th>Overall Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just So So</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly Well</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mean of listening and speaking = 3.08 S.D. = 0.869  
Mean of reading = 3.23 S.D. = 0.789  
Mean of writing = 3.05 S.D. = 0.832  
Mean of Overall = 3.05 S.D. = 0.699

Generally about half of the population (46.7%) under investigation rated their overall English proficiency as fair either compared with classmates or native speakers, and around they rated their English listening and speaking, reading, and writing skills at the level of just so so. In other words, nearly half of the participants considered their overall English proficiency at the medium level. Very few subjects thought their English proficiency or skills at the level of either very poor or excellent, except when comparing the overall English proficiency with native speakers, when about half of them (48.3%) believed their English proficiency level as poor. Overall most of the students rated their proficiency or skills as good rather than poor. Thus, the overall English proficiency of the participant in this study is believed to be reasonably good.

4.4 Levels of Students’ Attitudes/Motivation

Descriptive statistics were as well computed for the Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire, which was adapted from Gardner’s (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, to assess students’ level of attitudes and motivation in three sub-scales:
(1) Motivational Intensity,
(2) Desire to Learn English, and
(3) Orientation Index.

Table 4.10 presents summaries of the descriptive statistics for the three sub-scales of Attitudes/Motivation Questionnaire. Both Means of Motivational Intensity and Desire to Learn English are 22.60, meaning more than half of the students obtaining relatively high degree of motivation in acquiring English and also relatively strong desire to learn English. The majority of the responses inclined toward instrumental motivation to learn English as a second language. This coincides with students’ response to the question “why do you want to learn English?” as discussed in Section 4.2, the result of students’ reasons for learning English being more instrumentally oriented.

Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics for Attitude/Motivation Sub-scales (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Possible Range</th>
<th>Min-Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>10-30</td>
<td>12-28</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>3.269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to Learn English</td>
<td>10-30</td>
<td>11-27</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>3.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Index</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to look further into the traits of attitudes and motivation frequency, the levels of Motivation Intensity and Desire to Learn English broken down into low and high levels and are presented in Table 4.11 and Table 4.12 respectively.

- Motivational Intensity

This section includes ten multiple choice items (maximum score = 30) which are designed to measure the intensity of a student’s motivation to learn English. The participants were asked about the work done for classroom assignments, performance in the language class, future plans to make use of and after school activities etc. The
students were asked to choose, the best suitable alternative for each case. A high score in this section represents a student’s self report of a high degree of effort being spent in acquiring the language (Gardner, 1985). The scores had a range of 12-28, and the average was 22.60 in the medium to high level. In the current study, for the convenience of this summary, score ranges from 10-15 is indicated as very low level of motivation intensity, whilst 26-30 as very high level.

Table 4.11 presents the percentiles for the different levels of Motivational Intensity. For the convenience of analysis, the scores were grouped into different levels of motivational intensity: 10-15 as very low, 16-20 as low, 21-25 as high, and 26-30 as very high.

**Table 4.11 Frequency Description for Levels of Motivational Intensity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Indicator of levels</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates that, of 60 subjects, more than half of the students (63.3%) scored 21 to 25 showing a high degree of motivation being spent in acquiring the English language. In addition, nine participants (15.0 %) reported that they were at very high levels of motivation intensity. The highest score that the participants gained in this scale is 28, which is close to the full score: 30. Eleven students (18.3 %) scored between 16 and 20 illustrate a tending-to-be low degree of effort that they spent in learning the English language. Only 2 students (3.4%) fell in to the “very low” category, showing a very low degree of motivational intensity and the lowest score obtained was 12, which showed bottom level of effort being spent in learning English.
When referring to the individual items in motivational intensity, 11 subjects (18.3%) showed a medium low degree of motivational intensity and 38 subjects (63.3%) fell in the range of medium to high. Among the items on this sub-scale, the three statements most selected by the participants were: “I actively think about what I have learned in my English class once in awhile” (65%), and “after I get my English assignments back, I look them over, but don’t bother correcting mistakes” (65%), and “if there were a local English T.V. station, I would turn it on occasionally” (65%). The next most selected items were that “when it comes to English homework, I work very carefully, making sure I understand everything” (55%), and “if my teacher wanted someone to do an extra English assignment, I would only do if the teacher asked me directly” (55%).

- **Desire to Learn English**

This scale consists of ten multiple choice items (maximum score = 30). The subjects were asked about their desire to learn English in terms of future plans, study the language and classroom performance etc. The students were required to choose the most suitable answer and the students who obtained a high score on this part expressed their strong desire to learn English. As well, the scores had a range of 11-27, with a mean of 22.60, and also for the convenience of this analysis, the score is divided into four levels: very low, low to medium, medium to high, very high. Score ranges from 10 to 15 indicating the lowest level of learning desire, 26 to 30 indicating the highest level (see Table 4.12).

Table 4.12 illustrates the frequency and percentage of students’ desire to learn English at the different levels. Still, of sixty participants, about eighty per cent of the students (78.3 %), who scored from 21 to 30, reported that they had either a high or very high level of desire to learn English. Among them, thirteen participants (21.7%) obtained scores between 26 and 30 with a highest score of 27, representing a very high desire to learn English. The remaining thirteen participants (21.7 %) scored between 10 and 20, demonstrating a relatively weak desire to learn English. Those students had very
low levels of desire to learn English.

Table 4.12 Frequency Description for Level of Desire to Learn English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Level of Indicator</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>Very low</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of individual items in desire to learn English, almost three-quarters of the subjects, (73.3%), agreed with the statement that “if it were left up to me to study or not to study English, I would definitely take it.” Also, the same proportion (73.3%) reported if they had the opportunity to see an English play, they would go only if they had nothing else to do. Forty three subjects (71.7%) stated that, compared to other courses, they like English the same as all the others. Thirty six students (60%) chose “as often as they could” as the response to the statement that “if they had the opportunity and knew enough English, they would read English magazines and newspapers.” Fifty per cent of the subjects found studying English very interesting in statement 16, and only 4 students found it to be not interesting at all.

- **Orientation Index**

Only one item is employed to measure and rank personal relevance in terms of motivational orientation: instrumental versus integrative. Four possible reasons for studying English were presented: (a) will be useful in getting a good job, (b) will be helpful in better understanding English people and their way of life, (c) will be in allowing subjects to meet and converse with more and varied people, and (d) will make them a better-educated person. The test is scored in a two-way classification. Students who selected either (a) or (d) representing the instrumental reason was
scored 1; those who selected either (b) or (c) representing integrative reason was scored 2. The results of the data are summarized in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.13 Frequency Description for Orientation Index**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation Index</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Reason</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Reason</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13 indicates that an overwhelming majority (76.7%) said they had instrumental reasons for learning English. This means the subjects think learning English will either some day be useful for them to gain a good job or make them a better-educated person. In this case, both male and female were inclined toward instrumental motivation, with female responses (48.4%) leading vs. male responses (28.3%). In the case of integrative motivation, 6 male (10.0%) and 8 female (13.3%) subjects declared that they learnt English for integrative reasons. That is to say, less than a quarter (23.3%) of the students believe studying English will either help them understand English people and their way of life better or allow them to meet and communicate with more and varied people.

To sum up for this section 4.4, this group of students are generally highly motivated with high level of motivational intensity and desire of learning English language. They were more instrumentally motivated; there was no very strong desire for the participants to integrate with English speaking people. However, prospects of “good job”, “knowledge of two languages”, and to be a “better-educated person” appeared to be the leading motivational factors.
4.5 Levels of Students’ Language Learning Strategy Use

Descriptive statistics were also utilized on participants’ responses to the SILL items in terms of learners’ strategy use in language learning. Informants’ self-reported frequencies of strategy use were measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, where a student never or almost never actively sought out opportunities to talk with native speakers of English, he or she would choose 1, and if the student seldom, sometimes, usually, or (almost) always used this strategy, he or she would choose 2, 3, 4, or 5 respectively. The greater the number that the students reported to seek out opportunities, the higher the frequency with which the participants tended to use the strategy. In other words, items with higher mean scores received higher frequencies of usage, and vice versa.

According to Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995), three levels of general language learning strategy use are suggested (p. 12):
(1) 3.5 or higher: high strategy use;
(2) 2.5 to 3.4: medium strategy use; and
(3) 2.4 or lower: low strategy use.

Participants’ responses to the SILL items indicate that they did use different types of strategies in their English learning process. Table 4.14 represents mean scores for the six groups of language learning strategies and an overall mean score. The data elicited by the SILL questionnaire indicated that the most frequently used kind of strategies by the participants was the group of social strategies with the highest mean of 3.52, followed by compensation strategies and cognitive strategies, which are reported to be employed with medium level of frequencies and with an average of 3.42 and 3.29, respectively. Also in the medium frequency level, using cognitive strategies is less common than metacognitive strategies with an average of 3.29. Affective strategies are also found to be less popular with an average of 2.87. Memory strategies were reported to be the least popular of all strategies with an average of 2.65. The overall
mean score of the SILL questionnaire is 3.17, which stays at medium frequency level of strategy use.

Table 4.14 Mean Scores for Language Learning Strategies (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Sub-Categories</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>2.655</td>
<td>.5500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>3.297</td>
<td>.6098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>3.428</td>
<td>.6502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>3.228</td>
<td>.7418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>2.870</td>
<td>.5841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>3.528</td>
<td>.6421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Average</td>
<td>3.177</td>
<td>.5849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 is a graphic representation of Table 4.14 in order to better capture the trend of strategy use for this group of Chinese learners.

Table 4.15 illustrates the number and percentage of all the six sub-categories of strategies use, including total average use of the strategies. The majority of the participants, altogether 55 students, reported as medium (37 students) or high (18 students) strategy users of language learning strategies. Specifically, 18 students (30%) fell into high level of overall strategy use, 37 students (61.7%) fell into medium level of overall language strategy use, and 5 students (8.3%) are low level users of the overall strategies.
Figure 1 Mean Profile of SILL Categories

Table 4.15 Frequency Description for Strategies Use (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Sub-scales</th>
<th>Low Strategy Use</th>
<th>Medium Strategy Use</th>
<th>High Strategy Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Average Use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of sub-scales, social strategies received the largest number of students, 33 participants (55.0%) reporting themselves as high frequency users, followed by compensation strategies, 28 subjects (46.7%) identify themselves as high frequency users. Only 4 students (6.7%) said they used memory strategies at a high frequency level. The subjects reported themselves generally as medium frequency users of all six sub-categories, except for the group of social strategies, 25 students fell into medium level, and 33 of them fell into high level of strategy use. As for low frequency users, memory strategies got the most participants, 21 (35.0%), followed by affective strategies, 14 (23.3%) participants. Only 2 students reported as low frequency users of social strategies.

Figure 2 is a graphic representation of the overall average use of the strategies by Chinese learners for this study. It clearly shows that a large piece of the pie (61.7%) are for medium-level strategy use, and a little smaller piece of the pie (one third) are for high-level strategy use; only a very small proportion of the pie (8.3%) represents low level of strategy use.

Figure 2 Percentage Profile by Overall Average Use of Strategy (N=60)
In order to gain in-depth understanding of the strategy use by the Chinese learners, the mean scores on 50 individual items of SILL reported by the subjects are examined and presented from Table 4.16 to Table 4.22 by each six sub-category of language learning strategies. As indicated earlier, in each strategy sub-scale, the mean score below or equal to 2.40 shows low level usage of the strategy; between 2.50 and 3.49 demonstrates the medium level usage of the strategy; above or equal to 3.50 displays the high level usage of the strategy.

Each category was labelled with a letter, which goes item number to indicate with category the item number belongs to. They are represented as the following: “A” stands for memory strategy, “B” means cognitive strategy, “C” represents compensation strategy, “D” is for metacognitive strategy, “E” means affective strategy, and “F” symbolizes social strategy. For example, “A1” means item1 of memory strategy. “B1” indicates item 1 of cognitive strategy. The sequence of the number follows that as they appear in the SILL questionnaire.

As for memory strategies (see Table 4.16), only one strategy, “relating what I already know to new things” (A1) is reported as the most frequently used language learning strategy. “Using flash cards to remember new words” (A6), “physically act out new words” in A7, and “remembering new words or phrases by their location” (A9) are reported as the low level of frequency use, which are less popular strategies. The remaining five strategies are found to be of medium frequency of use. None of the items is located at high level range of strategy use.

In cognitive strategies (see Table 4.17), “practicing the sounds of English” (B3), “watching movies and TV in English” (B6), “saying or write new words several times” (B1), “trying not to translate word-for-word” (B13), and “starting conversations in English” (B5) were reported as being highly used strategies. Their mean scores are all equal or above 3.50. Also, “trying to talk like native speakers” (B2) and “skimming English passage, then read it carefully” (B9) were observed to be
popular strategies. “Summarizing what I hear or read in English” (B14) was found to be the least popular cognitive strategy used by the subjects. However, none of the items in the sub-scale of cognitive strategies fell into the low level range of strategy use.

Table 4.16 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Memory Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (A1-A9 Memory Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 Relate what I already know and new things</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Use new English words in a sentence</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A8 Review English lesson frequently</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Connect the sound or picture of a new word to remember</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 Make mental picture of situation to remember new words</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 Use rhymes to remember new words</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7 Physically act out new words</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Use flash cards to remember new words</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A9 Remember new words or phrases by their location</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among compensation strategies (see Table 4.18), four out of six strategies were reported to be the frequently employed by the Chinese young adult ESL learners in this research study. These strategies are: “using similar words when I do not find exact words” (C6); “making a guess to understand” (C1); “trying to guess meaning without looking up a dictionary” (C4); and “using gestures when I can not find a word” (C2). The strategy such as “trying to guess what others will say next in English” (C5), and “making up a new word when I can not find a right one” (C3) were discovered to be of medium level of strategy use. None of the items showed low level of strategy use.

Among compensation strategies (see Table 4.18), four out of six strategies were reported to be the frequently employed by the Chinese young adult ESL learners in
this research study. These strategies are: “using similar words when I do not find exact words” (C6); “making a guess to understand” (C1); “trying to guess meaning without looking up a dictionary” (C4); and “using gestures when I can not find a word” (C2). The strategy such as “trying to guess what others will say next in English” (C5), and “making up a new word when I can not find a right one” (C3) were discovered to be of medium level of strategy use. None of the items showed low level of strategy use.

Table 4.17 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Cognitive Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (B1-B14 Cognitive Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B3 Practice the sounds of English</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6 Watch movies and TV in English</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1 Say or write new words several times</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B13 Try not to translate word-for-word</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5 Start conversations in English</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 Try to talk like native speakers</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B9 Skim English passage, then read it carefully</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B11 Try to find patterns in English</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12 Find the meaning of words by dividing into parts I know</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8 Write note, messages, letters, or reports in English</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 Use the word I know in different ways</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7 Read for pleasure in English</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B10 Find words in own language that are similar to new words</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B14 Summarize what I hear or read in English</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.848</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for metacognitive strategies (see Table 4.19), three strategies were found to be popular strategies. They are: “trying to be a better learner of English” (D4); “paying attention when someone speaking English” (D3); and “noticing my English mistakes to become better” in D2. The remaining strategies all fell into medium level of
strategy use, including “trying to find many ways to use my English” in D1, “looking for people I can talk to in English” in D6, “thinking about my progress in learning English” (D9), “looking for opportunities to read in English” (D7), “having clear goals for improve English skills” (D8), and “planning schedule to have enough time to study English” (D5). However, among them, “planning a schedule to have enough time to study English” (D5) with an average of 2.73, was the least popular metacognitive strategy reported. As with cognitive strategies, none of the items belonged to low level of strategy use.

Table 4.18 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Compensation Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (C1-C6 Compensation Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C6 Use similar words when I do not find exact words</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 Make a guess to understand</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 Use gestures when I can not find a word</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4 Try to guess meaning without looking up a dictionary</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5 Try to guess what others will say next in English</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3 Make up a new word when I can not find a right one</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In affective strategies (see Table 4.20), no strategy was employed with high frequency of use. However, five out of six strategies were employed with medium frequencies. These strategies were: “encouraging myself to speak English” (E2), “trying to relax when I feel afraid of using English” (E1), “noticing if I am nervous when studying or using English” (E4), “giving myself a reward when I do well in English” in E3, and “talking about my feelings of English learning to others” (E6). “Writing down my feelings in a diary” (E5) was observed to be the least popular strategy of all. In other words, this group of Chinese students hardly express their feelings of language learning, either orally or in written form.
Table 4.19 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Metacognitive Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (D1-D9 Metacognitive Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D4 Try to be a better learner of English</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3 Pay attention when someone speaking English</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2 Notice my English mistakes to become better</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 Try to find many ways to use my English</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D6 Look for people I can talk to in English</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D9 Think about my progress in learning English</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D7 Look for opportunities to read in English</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D8 Have clear goals for improve English skills</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D5 Plan a schedule to have enough time to study English</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.20 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Affective Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (E1-E6 Affective Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E2 Encourage myself to speak English</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1 Try to relax when I feel afraid of using English</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4 Notice if I am nervous when studying or using English</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3 Give myself a reward when I do well in English</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6 Talk about my feelings of English learning to others</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>0.982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5 Write down my feelings in a diary</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>0.951</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though social strategies (see Table 4.21) were reported to be the most frequently used strategies by the Chinese young adult ESL students, only two of the items showed high level of strategy use; they are “asking to slow down or say again when I do not understand” (F1) with a mean score of 4.08 which was found to be only by far the most popular strategy, and “asking for help from native speakers” (F4). “Asking
native speakers to correct my English” (F2); “trying to learn about cultures of native speakers” (F6); “asking questions in English” in F5; and “practicing English with other students” in F3 were all tending to be employed with medium level of frequencies.

Table 4.21 Mean Scores for Individual SILL: Social Strategies (N=60, in rank order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions (F1-F6 Social Strategies)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1  Ask to slow down or say again when I do not understand</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4  Ask for help from native speakers</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2  Ask native speakers to correct my English</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F6  Try to learn about cultures of native speakers</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F5  Ask questions in English</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3  Practice English with other students</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the individual items for the sub-categories of strategies, one on the one hand, the highest scores are seen in social strategy (F1), cognitive strategy (C1 and C6), and compensation strategy (B3 and B6). Specifically, the most frequently used strategies by the participants were: “asking to slow down or say again when I do not understand” (F1) with a mean score of 4.08; “using similar words when I do not find exact words” (C6) with an average of 3.85; “making a guess to understand” (C1) with a mean score of 3.78; and “practicing the sounds of English” (B3) and “watching movies and TV in English” (B6) with an average of 3.73 and 3.72, respectively (see Table 4.22).

Among the individual strategies, on the other hand, the least frequently used strategies by the participants were found to be: “writing down my feelings in a diary” (E5) with the lowest mean score of 1.90; “remembering new words or phrases by their location” (A9) with a mean score of 2.00; “using flash cards to remember new words” (A6) with an average of 2.03; “physically acting out new words” (A7) with an average of
2.07; and “using rhymes to remember new words” (A5) with a mean of 2.43 (see Table 4.23).

**Table 4.22 Five Most Frequently Used Strategies by Participants (N=60, in rank order)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.23 Five Least Frequently Used Strategies by Participants (N=60, in rank order)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Descriptions</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>0.951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A9</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.6 Summary**

The first part of this chapter provided the analysis of the descriptive statistics concerning the items of three questionnaires, which included the students’ background
information, their attitudes/motivation, and their language learning strategy use. In general, the participants of this research are young Chinese adults, mostly around 20-25 years old. They have generally wide travel and life experience outside China, with almost half of them have traveled overseas more than once. And the majority of the population has been outside China for more than 12 months. They mostly seed to like to live in shared houses, and tended to speak Chinese more than English at their accommodation. In general, this group of students have done quite long period of English learning in formal learning context; they all should have reasonably high level of communication skills, if not orally, at least in written form.

In addition, the participants of this study generally represented medium to high levels of motivation toward English learning in Australia, particularly in its instrumental orientation. And they demonstrated an average level of overall strategy use, though their choice of social strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies are generally higher. Social strategies were the most frequently used strategy group that was reported by the Chinese ESL students in this study. Notably, their use of memory strategies fell to the bottom of the frequency level of all strategies sub-scales. Their affective strategies are also among the lower level of choice.
CHAPTER V

Role of Attitudes, Motivation and Learning Strategies in English Proficiency

5.1 Introduction

In order to identify relationships between the background information variables, the attitudes/motivation variables, and the language learning strategy sub-scales, a simple Pearson Correlation-coefficient \((r)\) was performed on all the relationships in the present study. All were tested at the level of 0.05 or better \((p < 0.05)\).

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first part reports the correlations among the sub-scales of each of the three questionnaires; the second part presents the correlations among the different variables assessed by all the three questionnaires.

5.2 Correlations among the Variables of Students’ Background Information

The correlations among variables assessed through participants’ background information questionnaire will be presented in this section. Ten items concerning gender, age, place of residence in China, type of accommodation, language spoken at the accommodation, length of time outside China, years of formal English study, importance of English proficiency, enjoyment of studying English, and other foreign language learning were selected from the background information. The item regarding reasons for studying English was not chosen for this correlation analysis because the students could choose all the applied answers to this question. Then the items concerning overall English proficiency and English skills will be presented in a separately table.
Table 5.1 gives an overall picture showing some moderate inter-correlations existing in term of personal background information of the respondents under investigation. Generally speaking, the Pearson Correlations are between -0.242 and 1.

The highest Pearson correlation (r=0.461) exists in the correlation between importance of English and the enjoyment of English learning. This suggests that the students who enjoyed English learning were more likely to consider the studying of English as more important and vice versa. The table also shows that the correlation between higher age and years of English learning is significantly positive, which means, not surprisingly, the older the Chinese learners, the more likely they had spent a significantly longer time outside China, and had studied English for a significant longer period. Age was not significantly related to how important English was, nor to their level of enjoyment. Length of time spend outside China was significantly related to importance of English learning and to level of enjoyment of learning English. Again, not surprisingly, importance of English learning was very significantly related to enjoyment of English learning.

Table 5.1 Inter-correlations among Background Information Variables (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>.269*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years</td>
<td>.362**</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>.322*</td>
<td>-.100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.289*</td>
<td>-.096</td>
<td>.461***</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed);
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Length=Length of Time Outside China Years=Years of Studying English
Importance= Importance of English Enjoyment=Enjoyment of English Learning
Table 5.2 demonstrates the correlations among the variables with regard to English macro-skills/proficiency. As seen in Table 5.2, and not surprisingly, strong positive correlations were displayed among all four language sub-skills. All the Pearson correlation scored above r=0.50. The relation between listening and speaking skills and writing skills scored at 0.510. The highest correlation was found between reading skills and writing skills, which is 0.782. Overall English skills strongly related with every macro skill as the higher the level of each skill group one obtained, the higher the level of overall English language skill the person possesses of, but less strong between the aural/oral and literacy skills. In addition, it seems that there is positive significant correlation between each macro-skill of English and English proficiency sub-scales, compared either with their classmates or with the native speakers.

It is obvious that the higher the level of English macro skills one obtained, the higher the level of overall English proficiency the person may get. The participants who thought their overall English skills as high level were probably to be confident in their overall English proficiency when comparing with their classmates. The participants who believed their overall English skills and listening as high level were also likely to be confident in their overall English proficiency when comparing with native speakers.

Table 5.3 reveals the relationships between attitude/motivation sub-scales are quite different. Motivational intensity and desire to learn English are strongly related for this sample. The Pearson correlation is 0.65 between these two sub-scales and the association is positive, which means that the people have higher levels of motivational intensity also have higher desire to learn English. There is no relationship between Motivational Intensity and Orientation Index, nor between Desire to Learn English and Orientation Index.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Listening and Speaking Skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Reading Skills</td>
<td>.614***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Writing Skills</td>
<td>.510***</td>
<td>.782***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall English Skills</td>
<td>.746***</td>
<td>.777***</td>
<td>.753***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English proficiency (compared with classmates)</td>
<td>.451***</td>
<td>.471***</td>
<td>.402**</td>
<td>.516***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English proficiency (compared with natives)</td>
<td>.456***</td>
<td>.294*</td>
<td>.323*</td>
<td>.422**</td>
<td>.424**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
A Pearson Correlation analysis was then performed to determine the relationships among the language learning strategies sub-scales, including six sub-categories and overall average use of the strategies, used by a whole sample. Table 5.4 shows the results, which revealed that almost all the six-categories were positively and significantly correlated with each other, except for the relation between memory and compensation strategies, which was positive but not significant.

As shown in Table 5.4, all strategies were detected to be significantly correlated at 0.01 level of confidence. The strongest correlation among the six sub-categories was found between cognitive and metacognitive strategies at r=0.744.

The overall average use of strategies has a strong association with each sub-category of the strategies, since it is obvious that the more strategies a person uses, the higher level of the total average use of the strategies. The strongest correlation between the total average use and the six sub-categories was revealed in: (1) metacognitive strategies at r=0.878; (2) affective strategies at r=0.868; and (3) social strategies at r=0.832.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Motivational Intensity</th>
<th>Desire to learn English</th>
<th>Orientation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to learn English</td>
<td>.651***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Index</td>
<td>-.102</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
### Table 5.4 Correlations among Sub-scales of Language Learning Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Memory Strategies</th>
<th>Cognitive Strategies</th>
<th>Compensation Strategies</th>
<th>Metacognitive Strategies</th>
<th>Affective Strategies</th>
<th>Social Strategies</th>
<th>Total Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.466***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td>.621***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.519***</td>
<td>.744***</td>
<td>.480***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>.542***</td>
<td>.497***</td>
<td>.461***</td>
<td>.670***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>.356**</td>
<td>.721***</td>
<td>.651***</td>
<td>.693***</td>
<td>.551***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Average</td>
<td>.547***</td>
<td>.723***</td>
<td>.603***</td>
<td>.878***</td>
<td>.868***</td>
<td>.832***</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
5.3 Correlations among Students’ Background, Motivation and Language

Learning Strategies

One of the major purposes of the present research study was to identify the possible relations among different variables of the three questionnaires. Special reference would be lent to the relationships between the students’ self-rating of English proficiency/skills and variables of: (1) three sub-scales of attitudes/motivation; and (2) the sub-categories of second language learning strategies.

Table 5.5 gives an overall picture which shows some significant correlations existing between English language skills and overall English proficiency with attitudes/motivation sub-scales. Generally speaking, informants’ English language macro-skills and overall English proficiency are significantly related with motivational intensity and desire to learn English which suggests that the students who have higher motivational intensity or desire to learn English, have the higher level of all macro-skills of English and overall English proficiency. And vice versa: the students who have a higher desire to learn English are likely to have higher level of listening and speaking skills of English. If the students have higher level of motivational intensity, they are likely to have a higher level of English writing skills. However, the overall English proficiency and English macro-skills have no significant correlation with the orientation index.
Table 5.5 Correlations among English Macro-skills/Overall Proficiency and Sub-scales of Attitudes/Motivation (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Intensity</td>
<td>.400**</td>
<td>.352**</td>
<td>.437***</td>
<td>.394**</td>
<td>.442***</td>
<td>.281*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire to learn English</td>
<td>.489***</td>
<td>.363**</td>
<td>.342**</td>
<td>.422**</td>
<td>.350**</td>
<td>.285*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Index</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>-.064</td>
<td>-.177</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>-.113</td>
<td>.051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
The data has so far shown that the participants’ positive attitudes/motivation as a whole may enhance their overall English proficiency or English macro-skills. When we have a close look at the 21 individual items of attitudes/motivation sub-scales, five individual items that have the most positive and significantly associations with the English macro-skills or overall English proficiency are selected to be presented in Table 5.6. The two items that “after I get my English assignments back, I always rewrite them, correcting my mistakes” and “if the opportunity arose and I knew enough English, I would watch English T.V. programmes” have significant correlation with the participants’ overall English proficiency and their English macro-skills. The motivation that “when I am in English class, I volunteer answers as much as possible” also has a strong significant correlation with overall English proficiency and English macro-skills except writing skills, since most activities during the class are verbal or communicative, which are more related with listening and speaking skills than writing skills. Additionally, there are two individual items of attitudes/motivation significantly associated with English macro-skills. More specifically, the item that “I very frequently think actively about what I have learned in English class” is much more correlated with reading and writing skills than the item that “I would definitely take English, if it were up to me whether or not to take English.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the opportunity arose and I knew enough English, I would watch English T.V. programmes.</td>
<td>.313*</td>
<td>.393**</td>
<td>.314*</td>
<td>.373**</td>
<td>.333**</td>
<td>.378**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After I get my English assignments back, I always rewrite them, correcting my mistakes.</td>
<td>.431**</td>
<td>.288*</td>
<td>.317*</td>
<td>.331**</td>
<td>.297*</td>
<td>.305*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I am in English class, I volunteer answers as much as possible.</td>
<td>.411**</td>
<td>.263*</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.285*</td>
<td>.450***</td>
<td>.321*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I very frequently think actively about what I have learned in English class.</td>
<td>.312*</td>
<td>.357**</td>
<td>.375**</td>
<td>.318*</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would definitely take English, if it were up to me whether or not to take English.</td>
<td>.295*</td>
<td>.281*</td>
<td>.285*</td>
<td>.340**</td>
<td>.320*</td>
<td>.143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 5.7 shows the associations between the sub-scales of language skills/overall English proficiency and of the language learning strategies among the respondents under investigation. All associations are positive though only just over half are significant. Though not all are significant correlations, cognitive and metacognitive strategies have positive and significant correlations with each sub-scale of the language skills and overall language proficiency, suggesting that the students, who have higher levels of using cognitive and metacognitive strategies, are likely to have higher level of language skills/proficiency. Listening and speaking skills are significant correlated with social strategies and the overall use of the strategy.

The composite of memory strategies, compensation strategies and affective strategies have no significant correlation with any sub-scale of language skill or overall language skill at all. It thus seems that these groups of strategies may not significant affect the language skill for this group of students. Except for memory strategies and affective strategies, English proficiency when compared with either classmates or native speakers is significantly and positively related with each sub-category of the language learning strategies. This indicates that the students who have higher English proficiency are likely to have higher use of cognitive strategies, followed by metacognitive strategies, social strategies, compensation strategies, and of course the total average use of the strategies.

In addition, students who rated their overall English proficiency (compared with native speakers) as high were likely to use every group of strategies with high frequency. Participants who rated their overall English proficiency (compared with their classmates) as high were likely to have a high level of using all the strategy groups except with memory strategies and affective strategies.
Table 5.7 Correlations between English Macro-skills/Overall Proficiency and Sub-scales of Language Learning Strategy (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.226</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>.266*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.474***</td>
<td>.438**</td>
<td>.441***</td>
<td>.402**</td>
<td>.395**</td>
<td>.298*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>.260*</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>.294*</td>
<td>.307*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.406**</td>
<td>.293*</td>
<td>.305*</td>
<td>.363**</td>
<td>.354**</td>
<td>.379**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.263*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>.369**</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.306*</td>
<td>.331**</td>
<td>.377**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Average</td>
<td>.345**</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.206</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.285*</td>
<td>.384**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 5.8 presents data for the six selected individual strategies which have significantly correlations with both English macro-skills and overall English proficiency in this study. Actually, the correlation between English macro-skills/overall English proficiency and each individual strategy is various. However, these six strategies showed highest correlation with each English macro-skill and overall English proficiency variables, individually. Specifically, the strategy to “try to find as many ways as I can to use my English” (D1) had the highest correlations with English listening and speaking skills (r=0.579) among the 50 individual strategies; “read for pleasure in English” (B7) seems to have highest correlation with English reading skills (r=0.491); and “try to find patterns in English” (B11) seems to have highest association with English writing skills (r=0.508). The strategy that “notice my English mistakes to become better” (D2) indicates the highest correlation with students’ overall English skills (r=0.550) and students’ overall English proficiency (compared with classmates, r=0.460) than other individual strategies. The strategy that “ask native speakers to correct my English” (F2) is very significantly associated with English proficiency (compared with natives). These six individual strategies suggest that they might be the most helpful strategies to improve the students’ English macro-skills and overall proficiency in this study.

As discussed earlier, cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies are two most correlated groups with participants’ English macro-skills and overall English proficiency. Therefore, among the six individual strategies, four strategies are from cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies. It is interesting that the most frequently used strategies, such as “ask to slow down or say again when I do not understand” and “make a guess to understand” were not significantly correlated with either English macro-skills or overall English proficiency.
Table 5.8 Correlations among English Macro-skills/Overall Proficiency and Selected Individual Strategies (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D2  Notice my English mistakes to become better</td>
<td>.574***</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>.364**</td>
<td>.550***</td>
<td>.460***</td>
<td>.303*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7  Read for pleasure in English</td>
<td>.421**</td>
<td>.491***</td>
<td>.360**</td>
<td>.449***</td>
<td>.454***</td>
<td>.350**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2  Ask native speakers to correct my English</td>
<td>.488***</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>.322*</td>
<td>.384**</td>
<td>.399**</td>
<td>.403**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1  Try to find many ways to use my English</td>
<td>.579***</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>.354**</td>
<td>.474***</td>
<td>.326*</td>
<td>.411**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2  Try to talk like native speakers</td>
<td>.460***</td>
<td>.342**</td>
<td>.440***</td>
<td>.431**</td>
<td>.294*</td>
<td>.307*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B11 Try to find patterns in English</td>
<td>.513***</td>
<td>.485***</td>
<td>.508***</td>
<td>.494***</td>
<td>.364**</td>
<td>.332**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 5.9 presents the correlations between students’ background information as independent variables and self-report English skills among the sampled students as dependent variables. The most significant result to emerge from Table 5.9 is the critical relations between English macro-skills/proficiency and enjoyment of English learning. The results indicate that the informants who enjoyed English learning were more likely to be more confident in their English skills. In addition, the students who considered the study of English as important were more likely to report obtaining high levels of English listening and speaking skills, but the students who had a longer time outside China were more likely to have higher levels of English listening and speaking skills and overall English proficiency.

Table 5.10 reveals that the ratings of both English importance and enjoyment of English learning were significantly associated with motivational intensity and desire to learn English. These results indicate that, for this sample of adult Chinese ESL learners, students who held a high level of motivational intensity, and expressed a strong desire to learn English were more likely to report the studying of English as important and the enjoyment of English learning as high. However, the remaining correlation-coefficients do not indicate any significant relationship between other independent variables of personal background information and attitude/motivation sub-scales. The orientation index, measuring integrative and instrumental motivation, was unrelated to the individual characteristics.

Table 5.11 lists the correlations between personal information variables and language learning strategy sub-scales among the students under investigation. Enjoyment of English learning was found to be significantly associated with all types of language learning strategies, including the total average. The rating of English importance was also found to be positively and significantly correlated with almost all types of learning strategies, except for compensation strategies, which is also positive though not significant. In addition, the longer the students had learnt English, the more compensation strategies they were likely to use, and learning another foreign language
may affect the use of cognitive strategies and social strategies.

Table 5.12 presents the correlations existing among attitude/motivation sub-scales and language learning strategies of the students under investigation. It is very obvious that the students who have a high desire to learn English are more likely to have high level of strategy use. Metacognitive strategies have the highest significant and positive correlation with Desire to Learn English, which indicates that the students who want to learn English very much are likely to use metacognitive strategies more frequently. In contrast, the students who have a lower use of the memory strategies seemed to have a lower level of motivational intensity and desire to learn English.

Table 5.9 Correlations among English Macro-skills/Proficiency and Background Information (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>English Listening and Speaking Skills</th>
<th>English Reading skills</th>
<th>English Writing skills</th>
<th>Overall English skills</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with classmates)</th>
<th>English proficiency (Compared with natives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>-.072</td>
<td>-.039</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td>-.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Time outside China</td>
<td>.537***</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.305*</td>
<td>.312*</td>
<td>.301*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Studying English</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>-.031</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Importance</td>
<td>.302*</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of English Learning</td>
<td>.470***</td>
<td>.414**</td>
<td>.381**</td>
<td>.510**</td>
<td>.459***</td>
<td>.279*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 5.10 Correlation between Students’ Background and Sub-scales of Attitude/Motivation (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Motivational Intensity</th>
<th>Desire to learn English</th>
<th>Orientation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td>-.201</td>
<td>-.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Time outside China</td>
<td>.316*</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Studying English</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>-.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Importance</td>
<td>.434***</td>
<td>.581***</td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of English Learning</td>
<td>.580***</td>
<td>.636***</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).  
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.11 Correlation between Students’ Background and Sub-scales of Language Learning Strategy (N=60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Memory Strategies</th>
<th>Cognitive Strategies</th>
<th>Compen-sat ion Strategies</th>
<th>Meta-cognit ive Strategies</th>
<th>Affective Strategies</th>
<th>Social Strategies</th>
<th>Total average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.237</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>-.177</td>
<td>-.301*</td>
<td>-.204</td>
<td>-.260*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Time Outside China</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.360**</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.265*</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Studying English</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.277*</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>-.070</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of English</td>
<td>.329*</td>
<td>.451***</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td>.503***</td>
<td>.427**</td>
<td>.278*</td>
<td>.451**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of English Learning</td>
<td>.309*</td>
<td>.558***</td>
<td>.261*</td>
<td>.609***</td>
<td>.297*</td>
<td>.468***</td>
<td>.477**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).  
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 5.12 Correlations among Sub-scales of Attitude/Motivation and Sub-scales of Language Learning Strategy (N= 60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Motivational Intensity</th>
<th>Desire to learn English</th>
<th>Orientation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory Strategies</td>
<td>.275*</td>
<td>.385**</td>
<td>.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.732***</td>
<td>.673***</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>.387**</td>
<td>.367**</td>
<td>.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive Strategies</td>
<td>.665***</td>
<td>.690***</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>.493***</td>
<td>.538***</td>
<td>.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>.622***</td>
<td>.609***</td>
<td>.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average</td>
<td>.658***</td>
<td>.665***</td>
<td>.083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the correlations among almost all the variables assessed in this study, based on the data collected from 60 ESL Chinese international students who were studying at universities in Melbourne, Australia. Several major points can be drawn from the results of this chapter.

1) Motivational Intensity and Desire to Learn English were significantly correlated with each other and were also significantly correlated with English macro-skills and overall English proficiency. They were also significantly correlated with the six categories of language learning strategies and with the total number of learning strategies as well.

2) The six categories of language learning strategies were significantly correlated with on another and with the total number of learning strategies, except for the relationship between compensation strategies and memory strategies. Cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies were significantly correlated with every
English macro-skill and overall English proficiency.

3) As well, it is interesting to find that those students who live in home-stay enjoy English learning more than those who choose to live in shared houses. Their length of staying outside China closely relates to higher level of English proficiency, particularly in listening and speaking. And the more important they think English is, the more they would enjoy the English language learning.

4) It is also interesting to note that there was no significant correlation between English macro-skills and overall English proficiency with individual differences, such as gender, age, length of English language study, and the learning of other foreign languages learning in this study.
CHAPTER VI

Discussion, Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes and discusses the research findings of the statistical analyses presented in the previous chapter. The results of the data collected and the characteristics of the students will be discussed and will be presented in relation to the prior studies as reflected in the literature review corresponding to the following research questions as outlined in Chapter 1:

(1) What were the characteristics of Chinese learners in the previous research studies and why they were motivated to learn English?
(2) What is the level of attitudes/motivation of young Chinese adult learners in the ESL context of Australia?
(3) What kinds of language learning strategies are the most frequently used and the least frequently used by young Chinese adult learners who reported as using in the ESL context of Australia?
(4) What associations, if any, are there between background information, attitudes/motivation, and second language learning strategies in regard to students’ English study in Australia, with special reference to the relationships between self-ratings of English proficiency and the following independent variables: (a) attitudes/motivation; and (b) language learning strategies?

Accordingly, the discussion section of this chapter will flow in the following four parts:
(1) The attitudes/motivation of adult Chinese ESL learners;
(2) The use of second language learning strategy by Chinese learners;
(3) The relationships among personal information, attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies; and
(4) Other findings of the present study.

Based on the findings of the current study, conclusions, implications, and
recommendations for future research will be presented after discussion of the results.

6.2 Discussion of the Results

6.2.1 The Attitudes/Motivation of Adult Chinese ESL Learners

One major purpose of the study was to investigate the level of Chinese young adult learners’ attitudes/motivation of English learning in the context of Australia. Twenty-one items adapted from Gardner’s (1985) Test Battery concerning attitudes/motivation were administered to the research participants. Three subcategories are included in this adapted Test Battery: (1) Motivation Intensity, which assesses the amount of effort the individual expends in learning English; (2) Desire to Learn English, which assesses the extent to which the individual wants to achieve a high level of competence in English; and (3) Orientation Index, referring to the integrative vs. instrumental reasons for studying a second language.

As shown in Chapter IV, responses to the questionnaire by the 60 young adult Chinese ESL students indicated that the overall average level of motivation of the sample students fell into the range of medium to high level, with the same mean score of 22.6 for motivation intensity and desire to learn English; and the majority of the participants were more instrumentally motivated in their English learning.

The results from the data collected indicated that all subjects had a medium to high degree of motivational intensity and desire to learn English, which were in agreement with some of the previous research studies. For example, Zhang (1995) carried out a study on 741 Chinese secondary school EFL students’ strategy use and motivation for language learning in China. The results showed that Chinese secondary school EFL students had a moderately positive level of motivation for learning English.

Regarding Orientation Index, the data show an overwhelming majority of the students (76.7%) chose instrumental reasons for learning English, suggesting the participants learn English because it will either some day be useful for them to gain a good job or make them a better-educated person. As discussed in the literature review, Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced the concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation. In the context of language learning, instrumental motivation usually refers
to the learners’ will of learning a language for utilitarian purposes, while integrative
motivation refers to the learners’ desire to study a language to join successfully into
the target language community. Wong (1982) conducted a study on the roles of
attitude and motivation in second language acquisition among fifty adolescent native
Chinese speakers who studied at the tenth grade level at Washington High School in
the United States in 1981. The researcher administered the parts of Lambert-Gardner
questionnaire (1961) concerning attitudes and motivation for her study. The research
findings indicated that the majority of the participants (84%) felt “being
better-educated” and “getting a good job” were their primary reasons for learning
English. That is to say, most of the students were instrumentally motivated.

In addition, Hsiang (1992) carried out a study on the relationship between
attitudes/motivation and learning English of 51 Chinese students from Taiwan at the
University of Texas, United States. An adapted questionnaire of the
Attitudes/Motivation Battery Test (Gardner, 1985; Gardner and Lambert 1972;
Jakobovits, 1970) was employed in Hsiang’s study. The results found that the reasons
for the students under investigation to learn English was loaded more on utilitarian or
instrumental value. Also, Ho (2004) in her study with a group of Chinese-speaking
international ESL program students found that the Chinese-speaking students’
motivation towards learning English as a second language tended to be more
instrumental. And their integrative motivation seemed to have less impact on their
language learning.

In the current study, the results from research questionnaire are congruent with the
previous studies done with Chinese students. The majority of the Chinese learners
under investigation are instrumentally motivated in their orientation. An integrative
attitude takes second place. Orientations do not necessarily reflect motivation. Noels
and Clement (1989) demonstrated that some orientations are connected with
motivation while some are not. In other words, one might profess an integrative
orientation in English study but still may or may not be motivated to learn the
language. Similarly, one might profess an instrumental orientation and either be
motivated or not to learn English. In Gardner’s social-educational model of second
language acquisition, the factor most directly linked to achievement is motivation.
Therefore, “it is conceivable that an individual who is instrumentally oriented could
be more motivated than one who is integratively orientated and because of the differences in motivation may experience more success at learning the language” (Masgoret & Gardner, 2002, p. 175). It highlights further the question around the relevance of integrative orientation as one trait of motivation.

6.2.2 Chinese Students’ English Language Learning Strategy Use

Another objective of this study was to investigate what language learning strategies are the most frequently used and the least frequently used by Chinese young adult learners in the ESL learning context of Australia.

This issue was addressed through utilizing the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by Oxford (1990a). The mean score of the overall strategy use of the whole sample of students is 3.17, which shows that the Chinese international ESL students under investigation are medium-level strategy users. Based on the means of the six sub-categories, the social strategies had the highest mean of 3.52, and 58 out of 60 students (96.7%) reported that they used social strategies at medium or high level. This is the most frequently used kind of language learning strategies, followed by the group of compensation strategies, with a mean of 3.42, with 57 participants (95%) reporting a medium or high frequency of use. The least frequently used of the language learning strategies were the memory strategies with the lowest mean of 2.65 among the six sub-scales of learning strategies, and only 4 students (6.7%) said they used this kind of strategy very frequently. The frequencies for all the strategies were in the medium range (2.5-3.4) except for the social strategies which was slightly above that range.

The Chinese international students reported they used those strategies concerning social and functional communication activities more frequently than all other types of strategies. Social strategies involve asking questions, and cooperating and empathizing with others in order to enhance learning, and increase cultural awareness. An analysis of the 60 student responses showed that some of their most common social strategies were “asking the other person to slow down or say it again if I do not understand something in English” and “asking help from native speakers”. This suggests that ESL learners need English for their everyday life, and in these
communicative situations they use more language learning strategies to deal with language barriers (Ho, 2004). For instance, when they purchase items in stores or use a service over the phone, they often start the conversation in English, and if they do not understand what the English speakers say, they usually use social strategies to ask English speakers to slow down or say it again. Since the ESL learners live in the target language society, “asking for help from native speakers” is another favourite strategy when they happen to have a language learning problem. That is to say, compared with EFL learners, the Chinese ESL learners in the Australian context tended to be more stimulated or motivated to use social strategies more frequently because they possessed rich, immediately accessible linguistic input and an urgent need to use English in order to survive (Zhang, 1995). The finding is similar to some studies (e.g. Ho, 2004) done with Chinese student in which their results also revealed students’ social strategy use preference. However, the finding is contradictory to some other studies (e.g. Goh and Kwah 1997; Nisbet, Tindall & Arroyo, 2005) done with Chinese learners in which their results showed metacognitive strategies were the most frequently used strategies.

Another particularly interesting result from the present study is that memory strategies are the least popular language learning strategy group used among the 60 students under investigation. This indicates that the students spent significantly more time interacting and empathizing with others than memorizing and storing new information during their English learning process. The current study suggest only four subjects (6.7%) reported using memory strategies very frequently, but the mean score of 2.65, of the whole researched population, which is a little higher than the lower range (≤ 2.4) of strategy use, showing the participants reported using memory strategies below average level. This finding supported the previous research findings done by Goh and Kwah (1997). In their research, they found memorization was the least frequently strategy used among their 175 Chinese ESL students in Singapore.

The findings of Chinese learners relying on social strategy much more than memory strategy seem to contradict commonly accepted notions and reports of learning strategies of Chinese learners. Studies have reported that Chinese learners are inclined to using memorization as a learning technique. For example, Kohn (1992) carried out
a study of the strategies of Chinese university students which indicated that they were encouraged by their teachers to memorize and repeat texts to show their understanding.

Although Chinese learners have reflected a tradition of memorization in the previous studies, it is clear from the findings of the present study that the students under investigation made very little use of specific techniques or mnemonic devices to improve their memorization efforts. Some of the memory strategies included in the questionnaire are: connecting the sounds of new words to an image or picture, making a mental picture of a situation in which a word might be used, using rhymes, physically acting out a word, and remembering new words or phrases by remembering their location on pages and the board. Thus, memory as a learning strategy carries much richer collections than the conventional understating of memory as “rote learning” or “passive learning”.

Apart from showing the frequency of use of each learning strategy, the data also indicated that the students in general did not apply learning strategies very frequently. The means for five categories of strategies – memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and affective – all fell between 2.5 and 3.4, the range which Oxford (1990a) defines as medium use. The means for the most commonly used strategies, social strategies, was just a little above that range. The overall frequency of the current research sample’s strategy use (M=3.17) was lower than a SILL study on Chinese ESL students by Goh & Kwah (1997, M=3.23), and also lower than a SILL study on Asian ESL students by Osanai (2000) in Southeastern region of United States, and even lower than that from another SILL study on Chinese university EFL students in China by Nisbet et al (2005, M=3.45). The frequency of strategy use resulting from the current sample were lower than those results reported by all studies on SILL for ESL learners, which were calculated by averaging the means scores of all these.

Nevertheless, the data shows students in this study understand the importance of active learning to enhance their communicative competence and to be able to survive in Australia.
6.2.3 Correlations among Variables Investigated

There have been numerous research studies on attitudes/motivation and learning strategies, and many studies have shown the impact that motivation and strategy use have on second language learning success. However, early research into language learning strategies was mostly concerned with investigating what kinds of language learning strategies that learners reported as using, without attempting to address the links between strategy use and success (e.g. Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1987). Recently, research has focused on determining the relations between strategy use and language learning proficiency (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). Such studies have shown that proficient language learners employed more strategies in language learning than less proficient language learners.

One major objective of this research study was to look at the inter-relationship among attitudes/motivation, language learning strategy and English macro-skills and overall English proficiency. The aim was to look at the possible factors could impact on Chinese students’ English learning. The results showed motivational intensity and desire to learn English were significantly correlated with one another at the p<0.001 level. These two scales were significantly correlated with every self-rated English macro-skill and overall English proficiency at p<0.05 or better. This implied that a higher level of the motivation seems to enhance students’ English skills or proficiency.

Strategies are usually viewed as aids to language learning. They also influence the English macro-skills and overall English language proficiency. The data indicated six categories of learning strategies were significantly correlated with one another and with the overall score of learning strategies, except for the relationship between compensation strategies and memory strategies. Two categories of learning strategies - cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies - were significantly correlated with every English macro-skill and overall English proficiency. It is interesting to note that while participants in the current study reported using social strategies very frequently; the findings revealed the significant correlation between cognitive strategies and self-rated English skills and overall English proficiency was stronger than the correlation between social strategies and self-rated English skills overall English.
proficiency, perhaps most frequently used strategies did not always bring about high level of English learning.

Findings also exposed the close relationship between students’ self-rating of their language proficiency and strategy use. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) affirmed that greater strategy use accompanied the perception of higher proficiency, and Wharton (2000) demonstrated a significant correlation between these two factors, indicating the higher a student’s language proficiency self-rating, the more frequent strategy use was.

In this study, the following seven individual strategies, namely “noticing my English mistakes to become better”, “reading for pleasure in English”, “asking native speakers to correct my English”, “trying to find many ways to use my English”, “trying to talk like native speakers”, “trying to find patterns in English”, and “asking for help from native speakers” were the best strategies to enhance the participants’ English macro-skills/overall proficiency.

The Pearson product-moment correlation matrix of the motivation and SILL sub-scale highlighted that all the strategy sub-scales and motivation sub-scales, except for the orientation index, were positively correlated with one another at the p<0.05 significance level. The relationship between motivation and strategy use indicated that subjects with higher motivation level reported using language learning strategies at a higher frequency. Corresponding, those who reported using strategies more often also had a higher level of motivation. Thus, attitudes/motivation in language learning reflects the learner’s strategy use. These findings corresponded to the argument that a higher level of motivation is associated with deeper cognitive engagement, and then, higher motivation and deeper engagement in cognition could lead to better learning and performance.

6.2.4 Other Findings of the Present Study

One of the major purposes of the present study was to examine the conceptualisation and the characteristics of Chinese learners. The literature review delivers a mixed picture of the Chinese learner in the minds of past researchers: diligent, respecting
authority and collectively oriented, passive, teacher-dependent, unable to engage in independent learning, and too much rote learning. However, some recent studies question much of that stereotype of Chinese learner as “rote learner”. Chinese learners are, according to Nield (2004), not considered as the rote learners; because the Chinese learner relies on memorization as a part of understanding. Some researchers found that understanding is a long process and it requires considerable mental effort for Chinese learners.

According to Schumann (1978), when an ethnic group is large and has strong group encircle, second language learners will experience more intragroup interaction rather than intergroup interaction with the target language group. This may be not good for an ideal English language learning situation for Chinese ESL students. From the participants’ perspective in the present study, even though the Chinese are a large ethnic group in Australia, they have a tendency to live in a closed environment. Due to language barriers, culture differences and money saving, Chinese ESL learners under investigation prefer living in homogeneous communities, so that they will feel more comfortable. From the data elicited from students’ personal background information, among 60 participants, 44 stated that they lived in the shared house, and among these 44 subjects, 32 of them stated that they spoke Chinese only at their accommodation. However, the data showed positive correlation between Chinese ESL students’ choices of accommodation but not significantly.

In addition, the data reveals the longer time that a participant travelled outside China, the higher level of English macro-skills and overall proficiency that the person may get. English language is used as a communication tool in the globalized world. The students who obtained more travel experience outside China tend to have higher ability of English macro-skills and overall proficiency, especially the English listening and speaking skills.

Students’ attitudes toward English learning also had significant correlation with English macro-skills and overall English proficiency. Positive attitude which is enjoying the English language learning is likely to improve English macro-skills and overall proficiency. Whereas, it seemed that learning other foreign languages tend to have negative association with the English macro-skills and overall English
proficiency but not significant.

6.3 Conclusions

The present study was conducted to learn more about Chinese international students acquiring a second language in Australia. Increasing numbers of international students are coming to Australia, from all over the world, to pursue their higher education studies. Among the source countries for international students China comes in at the first place. The new living and academic environment may have some influences on the students’ learning of English. Various attempts have been made to investigate the second language acquisition from different theoretical viewpoints, including social-psychological theory, linguistic theory and other theoretical perspective.

This research began with a plan to investigate attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies among Chinese young adult ESL learners. This was accomplished by focusing on Chinese international students who were studying at universities in Melbourne, Australia. Sixty Chinese international students from China, including Hong Kong and Taiwan, were recruited. Three major aims that served as the basis for the study examined: (1) the motivation of Chinese young adult learners under investigation in the ESL context of Australia; and (2) language learning strategies that are the most and the least frequently used by the Chinese young adult learners; and (3) the association, if any, among personal information, attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies. Three designed and adapted questionnaires were employed as the research instruments for the study to collect data such as their personal background information, their attitudes/motivation of English learning, and their use of second language learning strategies. The background information questionnaire was designed by the researcher herself; the level of attitudes/motivation was investigated by a test inventory adapted from Gardner’s (1985) Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery. Language learning strategies were assessed by adopting Oxford’s SILL (1990a).

Data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics of the entire sample’s responses to the items of three questionnaires, and Pearson product-moment
correlations among background information, motivation variables and strategy use. Additionally, in order to help readers estimate the internal validity of this study, statistical analyses of the internal consistency of the research instruments were also conducted.

Questionnaire responses of the ESL students’ attitudes/motivation indicated that the majority of the Chinese young adult ESL learners are instrumentally motivated in their orientation. Integrative attitudes are less important. Social strategies are the most frequently used strategies reported by the students under investigation, and memories strategies are the least frequently used strategies by the participants. The overall level of the entire sample’s motivation was above medium level and the overall frequency of the strategy use was at medium level. All the attitudes/motivation sub-scales and language learning strategy sub-scales correlated positively with one another at a high level of significance.

Students’ individual differences, such as their motivation and language learning strategy use might greatly influence their English learning performance. The students’ motivation for language learning may influence their strategy choice and application as well. Attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies are important factors in the second language learning process. It is believed that with stronger level of motivation and higher level of strategy use, one can gain higher level of English language communication skills.

Chinese ESL learners also demonstrated a medium to high level of language learning strategies use. The Australia context is an ESL learning environment with richer comprehensible input, more opportunity to practice and use the language; students here are learning the knowledge and skills around language through flexible application of various learning strategies particularly, the social strategies. This ESL learning context can facilitate students’ language acquisition and help them maintain continuing motivation to learn English language.
6.4 Implications

The present research study has drawn on second language acquisition research and socio-psychological theory to examine young adult Chinese ESL learners’ attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies in the context of Australia. This study has provided valuable evidence about mainland Chinese international students in Australian universities, a group that was underrepresented in the previous research literature. It offers theoretical as well as practical implications for future research and practice.

Firstly, the findings of this study suggest that the students under investigation held a medium to high level of motivation, and the level of motivation has a significant correlation with ESL proficiency. That is to say, when the students have maintained frequent activities and contact with native speakers of English, their motivation will keep at a level of medium to high, which will improve their overall English proficiency. However, there was no significant difference between integrative orientation and instrumental orientation among the sample students in this study.

Secondly, the results of the present study also indicated that the level of students’ motivation may be a significant predictor for students’ language strategy use (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). In other words, the more a learner is motivated, the more language learning strategies he or she tends to use.

Thirdly, the study’s results reveal that a learner’s self-rating of English macro-skills and overall English proficiency are related to their strategy use (Chang, 1991; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Watanabe, 1990). The more language learning strategies a learner uses, the higher English macro-skills and overall English proficiency the learner tends to rate by him or herself, and vice versa.

Fourthly, the findings of the present study indicate that using one category of language learning strategies may trigger another category of language learning strategies. Almost all the sub-categories of language learning strategies are positively and significantly correlated with each other, except for the relationship between compensation and memory strategies, which is associated but not significant.
Finally, the present study provides insight for both ESL students and teachers in their search for ways to improve ESL macro-skills and overall proficiency as well. In the researcher’s opinion, it is the language teachers’ responsibility to inform the ESL learners that there is a diversity of language learning strategies available for different language macro-skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Successful second language learners employ a range of appropriate strategies in terms of different language macro-skills.

The findings of this study show that for Chinese ESL students, actively seeking out opportunities to interact with and participating to the activities related to speakers of the native language may greatly help improve their overall English proficiency. Specifically, students are encouraged to proactively involve themselves in “asking native speakers to correct their English”, “reading for pleasure in English”, or “asking for help from native speakers”. For ESL teachers, in addition to regular classroom teaching, it is recommended that they encourage the students to “notice their mistakes”, to “find many ways to use English”, “try to talk like native speakers”, or “try to find patterns in English”. Teacher awareness of this may promote the ESL learners’ language strategy use in a new country, and also help the students realize that more language strategy use may produce higher language proficiency (Osanai, 2000).

6.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, the author herself has some recommendations for the future research studies.

First, more replications of the present study using a larger sample of Chinese students are needed so that random sampling can be used in research sample selection process. The present study used the researcher’s personal network to gain volunteer friends to participate in the research may have caused the group to be homogeneous, and therefore, may cause the lack of significant differences in the analyses.

Second, further research studies into attitudes/motivation and language learning
strategies of second language acquisition are suggested to apply a diversity of more refined instruments since this study concentrated on three motivational variables. The attitudinal measures are needed to be employed in the future attitude and motivation study. In terms of language learning strategy, there might be some strategies that are not included in the SILL questionnaire, so other forms of instruments, namely, interview about the learning strategies, are advised to use. Hence, it is recommended that other attitudes/motivation measures and language learning strategy measures in further studies are applied, and many researchers continue working on better measurements measurement to qualify complex variables of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategy.

Third, further research should be conducted on both old and young Chinese students. The small sample of the young adult Chinese ESL learners can not represent all the Chinese learners’ characteristics. Also, it should be realized that different ethnic groups may provide different conclusions. Thus, it must take ethnicity into consideration when making conclusions regarding the effects of attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies on ESL learning performance.

Finally, instead of participants’ self-rating of the English proficiency or macro-skills, a standardized and validated test of English language is suggested to be used as the English language assessment in future research studies, as the standardized English test can show better values of reliability and validity of the research study results (Cahill, 1979).
REFERENCES


University of Hawaii.


Appendix 1: Background Information Questionnaire

个人背景信息

Direction: You can answer the following questions in either Chinese or English.
说明：你可以用中文或者英文回答以下问题。

1. Name 姓名__________        Age 年龄__________        Sex 性别_______

2. Place of residence in China 在中国的居住地

__________________________________

3. Type of accommodation you are living now in Australia (e.g. shared house, flat, apartment, etc.)
   你现今在澳大利亚所居住的类型 （例如：合租房，公寓，等）

__________________________________

4. Language(s) you speak at your accommodation in Australia
   在澳大利亚的家所使用的语言

__________________________________

5. How many times you have been outside China? 你出过多少次国？_________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country (Names)</th>
<th>How Long (in month)</th>
<th>Your Major Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. How long have you been studying English formally? 到目前为止，你学了多久的英文？

___________________

7. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the proficiency of other students in your class? 与同班级的别的同学相比，你怎样评定你的总体英语水平？

□ Excellent 优秀    □ Good 好      □ Fair 一般      □ Poor 不足的/较差的

8. How do you rate your overall proficiency in English as compared with the proficiency of native speakers of the language? 与英语为母语的人相比，你怎样评定你的总体英语水平？
10. Self-rating of English Skills  英语技能的自我评估

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English skills</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Just so so</th>
<th>Fairly well</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My listening and speaking skills</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My reading skills</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>My writing skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>My overall English skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Why do you want to learn English? (Check all that apply) 你为什么想要学习英语？（选中所有适合你的答案）

_____ interested in the language 对语言感兴趣
_____ interested in the culture 对文化感兴趣
_____ have friends who speak the language 有说英语的朋友
_____ required to take a language course to graduate 为了毕业要求而要选择一门语言课程
_____ need it for travel 需要在旅游时用到
_____ other (list): 其他原因（列出）： _____________________________________

12. How much do you enjoy language learning? 你对英语学习的喜爱程度有多深？

□ Very much 非常喜欢 □ A lot 挺喜欢 □ A little 有点喜欢 □ Do not Enjoy 不喜欢

13. Have you learnt other languages? If yes, what are they? 你如果学过其他语言，请列举： ________________________________
Appendix 2: Attitude and Motivation Survey Questionnaire

(Adapted from Gardner’s example, 1985)

Name 姓名_________________ Age 年龄_____________ Gender 性别______________

Instructions: Please circle the choice which suits you most on the answer sheet. Please note there is no right or wrong answer. 说明：请在答题纸上选出最适合你的答案。请注意答案没有对错。

1. I actively think about that what I have learned in my English class: 我积极回想我在英语课上所学到的内容：
   a) very frequently. 非常频繁。
   b) hardly ever. 几乎从不。
   c) once in awhile. 偶尔。

2. If I couldn’t learn English from school, I would: 如果我不能在学校学到英语，我：
   a) pick up English in everyday situations i.e., read English books and newspapers, try to speak it whenever possible, etc.). 会在日常情形中学习英语  （例如：阅读英语书籍和报纸，只要有可能就读英语，等等）。
   b) not bother learning English at all. 根本不会焦虑英语学习。
   c) try to obtain lessons in English somewhere else. 试着在别处获得上英语课的机会。

3. When I have a problem understanding something we are learning in English class, I: 当我在英语课上碰到理解上的问题时，我会：
   a) immediately ask the teacher for help. 立刻向老师寻求帮助。
   b) only seek help just before the exam. 只是在考试前寻求帮助。
   c) just forget about it. 不去管他。

4. When it comes to English homework, I: 当有英语作业时，我：
   a) put some effort into it, but not as much as I could. 会尽一些努力，但不是尽我所能。
   b) work very carefully, making sure I understand everything. 很仔细得做，并确保我弄懂一切。
   c) just skim over it. 只是浏览一下。

5. Considering how I study English, I can honestly say that I: 考虑到我如何学习英语，我可以诚实地说我：
   a) do just enough work to get along. 能应付就行。
   b) will pass on the basis of sheer luck or intelligence because I do very little work. 不做努力，只靠运气和老本。
   c) really try to learn English. 真正地去学英语。

6. If teacher wanted someone to do an extra English assignment, I would: 如果老师想要某人做额外的英语作业，我将：
   a) definitely not volunteer. 肯定不会是志愿者。
   b) definitely volunteer. 肯定是志愿者。
7. After I get my English assignments back, I: 当我拿到批改过的作业回来时，我：
   a) always rewrite them, correcting my mistakes. 总是重新写一遍，改正我的错误。
   b) just throw them in my desk and forget them. 只是扔进我的课桌不去理会。
   c) look them over, but don’t bother correcting mistakes. 过目一下，但是并不改正错误。

8. When I am in English class, I: 当我在英语课上时，我：
   a) volunteer answers as much as possible. 尽可能地自愿回答问题。
   b) answer only the easier questions. 只是回答简单的问题。
   c) never say anything. 从不说任何东西。

9. If there were a local English T.V. station, I would: 如果有当地的英语电视台，我会：
   a) never watch it. 从不看。
   b) turn it on occasionally. 偶尔看看。
   c) try to watch it often. 尽量常看。

10. When I hear an English song on the radio, I: 当我在电台中听到英语歌曲时，我会：
    a) listen to the music, paying attention only to the easy words. 听这首歌，但只关注简单的单词。
    b) listen carefully and try to understand all the words. 仔细的听并试着理解全部的单词。
    c) change the station. 换台。

11. During English class, I would like: 在英语课上，我喜欢：
    a) to have a combination of Chinese and English spoken. 用中英文夹杂着说。
    b) to have as much English as possible spoken. 尽可能地多说英语。
    c) to have only English spoken. 只说英语。

12. If I had the opportunity to speak English outside of school, I would: 如果我有机会在校外说英语，我将：
    a) never speak it. 不会去说。
    b) speak English most of the time, using Chinese only if really necessary. 大多数时间会说英语，只是在必要得时候说中文。
    c) speak it occasionally, using Chinese whenever possible. 偶尔会说一点，只要有可能还是用中文。

13. Compared to my other courses I learned before, I like English: 与我以前学地科目相比，我：
    a) the most. 最喜欢英语。
    b) the same as all the others. 喜欢英语的程度与别的科目一样。
    c) Least of all. 最不喜欢英语。

14. If there were an English Club in my school, I would: 如果在我们学校有英语俱乐部，我将：
    a) attend meetings once in awhile. 会偶尔出席一下活动。
    b) be most interested in joining. 最感兴趣去参加。
    c) definitely not join. 根本不会去参加。
15. If it were up to me whether or not to take English, I: 如果让我决定是否学英语，我：
   a) would definitely take it. 会毫不犹豫地学习英语。
   b) would drop it. 不会学习英语。
   c) don’t know whether I would take it or not. 也不知道是不是要学习英语。

16. I find studying English: 我发现学习英语：
   a) not interesting at all. 根本没有意思。
   b) no more interesting than most subjects. 不比别的科目有意思。
   c) very interesting. 非常有意思。

17. If the opportunity arose and I knew enough English, I would watch English T.V. programmes: 如果机会增加并且我懂得足够地英语，我会：
   a) sometimes. 经常看英语电视节目。
   b) as often as possible. 尽可能多地看英语电视节目。
   c) never. 从不看英语电视节目。

18. If I had the opportunity to see an English play, I would: 如果我有机会看英语比赛，我：
   a) go only if I had nothing else to do. 只是在没有别的事的情况下去看。
   b) definitely go. 肯定会去看。
   c) not go. 从不去看。

19. If there were English-speaking families in my neighbourhood, I would: 如果我的邻居是说英语的家庭，我会：
   a) never speak English with them. 从不与他们说英语。
   b) speak English with them sometimes. 有时候和他们说英语。
   c) speak English with them as much as possible. 尽可能地多和他们说英语。

20. If I had the opportunity and knew enough English, I would read English newspapers and magazines: 如果我有机会并且懂得足够地英语，我会：
   a) as often as I could. 尽可能多地阅读英语报纸和杂志。
   b) never. 从不阅读英语报纸和杂志。
   c) probably not very often. 可能并不经常阅读英语报纸和杂志。

21. I am studying English because: 我学习英语是因为：
   a) I think it will some day be useful in getting a good job. 我认为在将来对得到一份好工作会有用。
   b) I think it will help me to better understand English people and way of life. 我认为这将会帮助我更好的了解英语国家的人和他们的生活。
   c) It will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people. 这将可以让我遇见并与更多不同的人交谈。
   d) A knowledge of two languages will make me a better educated person. 掌握两种语言将会使我成为更有学识的人。
Worksheet for Attitude and Motivation Survey Questionnaire
(Adapted from Gardner’s example, 1985)

学习态度与学习动机调查问卷答题纸

Your Name 你的姓名_________________ Date 日期________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items 题号</th>
<th>Choice 选项</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a b c d</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>a b c d</td>
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<td>a b c d</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>a b c d</td>
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Appendix 3: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)


语言学习方法调查表

Name 姓名___________ Age 年龄___________ Gender 性别__________

Directions 说明

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. You will find statements about learning English. Please read each statement. On the separate worksheet, write the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells HOW TRUE OF YOU THE STATEMENT IS.

这个语言学习方法清查表是给英语作为第二语言或者英语作为外语的学生做的，你将会看到关于学习英语的称述语句，请阅读每一个称述语句。在分开的答题纸上，写下一.表示你真实情况的答案，答案用 (1, 2, 3, 4, 或者 5) 来表示。

1. Never or almost never true of me
   从不或者几乎不是我真实的情况
2. Usually not true of me
   通常不是我真实的情况
3. Somewhat true of me
   有些是我真实的情况
4. Usually true of me
   通常是我真的情况
5. Always or almost always true of me
   一直或者几乎都是我真实的情况

NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME means that the statement is very rarely true of you. 从不或者几乎不是我真实的情况的意思是这个称述表明你非常罕见的真实情况。
USUALLY NOT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true less than half the time. 通常不是我真实的情况的意思是这个陈述表明是你少于一半时间的真实情况。
SOMETHING TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you about half the time. 有些是我真实的情况的意思是这个陈述表明你大约一半时间的真实情况。
USUALLY TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true more than half the time. 通常是我真的情况的意思是这个陈述表明你多于一半时间的真实情况。
ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you almost always. 一直或者几乎都是我真实的情况的意思是这个陈述表明你几乎一直如此的真实情况。

Example (例题)

Read the item, and choose a response (1 through 5 as above), and write it in the space after the item. 读题并选择答案（从以上 1～5 中），并且写在题目后。

I actively seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers of English. __________
我积极寻找机会与说英文为母语的人交谈。__________
Part A  (A部分)

1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
   在学习英语中碰到新的东西时，我会考虑我所掌握的知识和新东西之间的联系。
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
   为了记住新的英语单词，我会在句子中使用新的英语单词。
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help me remember the word.
   我将新英语单词的发音和这个词所反应的图像联系起来，来帮助我记住这个单词。
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
   我在脑海中形成一个新的英语单词所可能被用到的情形来记住这个新单词。
5. I use rhymes to remember new English words.
   我使用押韵的方法来记住新的英语单词。
6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.
   我使用抽认卡来记住新的英语单词。
7. I physically act out new English words.
   我用肢体来演绎出新的英语单词。
8. I review English lesson often.
   我经常复习英语课。
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board or on a street sign.
   我通过记住新英语单词或词组所在的页码，板块或者街牌的位置来记住他们。

Part B  (B部分)

10. I say or write new English words several times.
    我说或者写下新英语单词几遍，以便记住新单词。
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
    我试着像英语为母语的人那样说话。
12. I practice the sounds of English.
    我练习英语的发音。
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
    我用我所知道的不同形式来使用英语单词。
    我用英语开始对话。
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.
    我看用英语主持的电视节目或者去看说英语的电影。
16. I read for pleasure in English.
Part C （C 部分）

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.
   我猜测我不熟悉的英语单词。

25. When I can’t think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
   当我在谈话中不能想出一个英语单词，我会用手势表示。

26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.
   如果我不知道英语中正确的词怎么说，我会自造出新的词。

27. I read English without looking up every new word.
   我并不是通过查出每个新单词的意思来完成英语阅读。

28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.
   我试图用英语猜出别人下面将会说什么。

29. If I can’t think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.
   如果我不能想出一个英语单词，我会用一个同样意思的词或者词组来代替。

Part D （D 部分）

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
   我试图找出多种方式来用我所学到的英语。

31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.
   我注意我英语学习中的错误并以此来帮助我更好的学习。

32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.
   当有人说英语的时候我会注意。

33. I try to find out to be a better learner of English.
   我试着成为更好的英语学习者。
34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
   我安排我的时刻表以至于我会有足够的时间学习英语。
35. I look for people I can talk to in English.
   我寻找可以和我用英语对话的人。
36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.
   我尽可能寻找足够多的阅读英语的机会。
37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
   我有明确的目标来提高我的英语技能。
38. I think about my progress in learning English.
   我思索我英语学习的进步过程。

Part E  （E部分）

39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
   只要我感到害怕用英语时，我会试着放松自己。
40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
   即使当我担心我会犯错误时，我也会鼓励自己去说英语。
41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.
   当我英语做得好时，我会给我自己一个奖励。
42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.
   我注意当我在学习或者使用英语的时候是否紧张。
43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
   我在语言学习日记中记载我的感受。
44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.
   我告诉别人我学习英语时的感受。

Part F  （F部分）

45. If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
   如果我不能理解英语中的某些东西，我会让别人说慢一些或者重说一遍。
46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.
   我让说英语的人在我说话的时候纠正我。
47. I practice English with other students.
   我与别的同学练习英语。
48. I ask for help from English speakers.
   我从说英语的人那里寻求帮助。
49. I ask questions in English.
   我用英语提出问题。
50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.
   我试着了解说英语人的文化。
Worksheet for Answering and Scoring the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning


语言学习方法调查表答题纸

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name 你的姓名</th>
<th>Date 日期</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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1. The blanks (_____) are numbered for each item on the SILL.
   在答题纸上的空格（____）前，题号已经标好。

2. Write your response to each item that is, write 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) in each of the blanks.
   根据每道题在每个空格处写下你的答案（就是，1，2，3，4，或者5）。

3. Add up each column. Put the result on the line marked SUM.
   加上每个纵向的数字，把这个结果写在下面标有SUM的地方。

4. Divide by the number under SUM to get the average each column. Round this average off to the nearest tenth, as in 3.4.
   用每个纵向的总和除以每个SUM下面的数字得到平均数，只要保留小数点后一位。

5. Figure out your overall average. To do this, add up all the SUMS for the different parts of the SILL. Then divide by 50.
   算出你总体的平均数。为了算出这个，将各个部分的SUM值加在一起，然后除以50。

6. When you have finished, I will give you the Profile of Results. Copy your averages for each part and for the whole (SILL) from the Worksheet to the Profile.
   当你完成以后，我会给你结果分析。从答题纸上把每个部分和总体的平均数抄写过去。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A</th>
<th>Part B</th>
<th>Part C</th>
<th>Part D</th>
<th>Part E</th>
<th>Part F</th>
<th>Whole SILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.____</td>
<td>10.____</td>
<td>24.____</td>
<td>30.____</td>
<td>39.____</td>
<td>45.____</td>
<td>SUM Part A ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.____</td>
<td>11.____</td>
<td>25.____</td>
<td>31.____</td>
<td>40.____</td>
<td>46.____</td>
<td>SUM Part B ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.____</td>
<td>12.____</td>
<td>26.____</td>
<td>32.____</td>
<td>41.____</td>
<td>47.____</td>
<td>SUM Part C ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.____</td>
<td>13.____</td>
<td>27.____</td>
<td>33.____</td>
<td>42.____</td>
<td>48.____</td>
<td>SUM Part D ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.____</td>
<td>14.____</td>
<td>28.____</td>
<td>34.____</td>
<td>43.____</td>
<td>49.____</td>
<td>SUM Part E ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.____</td>
<td>15.____</td>
<td>29.____</td>
<td>35.____</td>
<td>44.____</td>
<td>50.____</td>
<td>SUM Part F ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.____</td>
<td>16.____</td>
<td>36.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(总数)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.____</td>
<td>17.____</td>
<td>37.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.____</td>
<td>18.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38.____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.____</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
<th>SUM____</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>÷ 9 =</td>
<td>÷ 14 =</td>
<td>÷ 6 =</td>
<td>÷ 9 =</td>
<td>÷ 6 =</td>
<td>÷ 6 =</td>
<td>÷ 50 =</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Overall Average)
(总体平均数)
Profile of Results on the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

语言学习方法清查问卷结果分析

You will receive this Profile after you have completed the Worksheet. This Profile will show your SILL results. These results will tell you the kinds of strategies you use in learning English. These are no right or wrong answers.

To complete this profile, transfer your averages for each part of the SILL, and your overall average for the whole SILL. These averages are found on the Worksheet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>What Strategies Are Covered</th>
<th>Your Average on This Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Remembering more effectively</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>更有效的记忆</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Using all your mental processes</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>使用你所有的心理过程</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Compensating for missing knowledge</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>补偿丢失的知识</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Organizing and evaluating your learning</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>组织和评估你的学习</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Managing your emotions</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>控制你的情感</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Learning with others</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>与他人相互交流</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YOUR OVERALL AVERAGE 你的总体平均数**

________

**Key to Understanding Your Averages 理解你平均数的概要**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Always or almost always used</td>
<td>4.5 to 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually used</td>
<td>3.5 to 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Occasionally used</td>
<td>2.5 to 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generally not used</td>
<td>1.5 to 2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Never or almost never used</td>
<td>1.0 to 1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph Your Averages Here

If you want, you can make a graph of your SILL averages. What does this graph tell you? Are you very high or very low on any part?

If you want, you can make a graph of your SILL averages. What does this graph tell you? Are you very high or very low on any part?

What These Averages Mean to You

The overall average tells how often you use strategies for learning English. Each part of the SILL represents a group of learning strategies. The averages for each part of the SILL show which groups of strategies you use the most for learning English.

The best use of strategies depends on your age, personality, and purpose for learning. If you have a very low average on one or more parts of the SILL, there may be some new strategies in these groups that you might want to use. Ask your teacher about these.
Appendix 4: Consent Form

RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Prescribed Consent Form For Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires, Focus Groups or Disclosure of Personal Information

PORTFOLIO OF SCHOOL/CENTRE OF Design and Social Context
Name of participant:

Project Title: Motivation and English Learning Strategies: Adult Chinese Students in Australia in the Global Era

Name(s) of investigators: Yu Cong

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. I acknowledge that:
   (a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
   (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to RMIT. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5).

Participant’s Consent
Name: _______________________________ Date: _______________________________

(Participant)

Name: _______________________________ Date: _______________________________

(Witness to signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is 03) 9925 1745.
Details of the complaints procedure are available from: www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec
Appendix 5: Plain Language Statement to the Students

RMIT University
Design and Social Context Portfolio
School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning

February 1, 2006

Yu Cong
Research Student
School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning
RMIT University, Melbourne, 3001

Dear Participants,

My name is Yu Cong. I am undertaking Master of Arts by research in Language and Cultural Studies at RMIT University. The title of my research is *Attitudes, Motivation and Second Language Learning Strategies: Questioning the Stereotype of Chinese Adult ESL Learners in Australia*.

This research will look at how English language learning by Chinese learners takes place in an ESL (English as a Second Language) learning context through examining their individual characteristics in attitudes and motivation and in their language learning strategies. It aims at expanding the knowledge about Chinese students’ attitudes and motivation and language learning strategies when they study in the English-speaking world and highlight the issues around the perceptions on Chinese learners.

Now you are invited to participate in this research. This research involves a few questions on personal background information, one questionnaire on attitudes and motivation and one strategy inventory of language learning. Each questionnaire will take around 10 to 15 minutes, with a total of about 30 minutes for each participant. The information collected from you may appear in publication, but this will not be published with your true name; your identity won’t be revealed in any way. The data is kept for a minimum of 5 years and then destroyed. The data will be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet. The collected information and research findings will be available upon request at any stage of the research.

You can withdraw at any time and any unprocessed data may also be withdrawn. If you have any questions regarding this research, please do not hesitate to contact with me. You can write email to me to this address: s3093138@student.rmit.edu.au, or call me on this number: 0433242408. Or you can also contact my supervisors: Professor Desmond Cahill and Dr. Lynne Li. Their email addresses are:
des.cahill@rmit.edu.au, and lynne.li@rmit.edu.au.

Thanks for your help!

Sincerely yours,

Yu Cong
Bachelor of Arts in English Education
Xiaozhuang College, Nanjing
P.R.China

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745.
Details of the complaints procedure are available from: http://www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec.
Appendix 6: Plain Language Statement to the Language Centre

RMIT University
Design and Social Context Portfolio
School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning

Yu Cong
Research Student
School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning
RMIT University, Melbourne, 3001

January 20, 2006

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to seek your support in the data collection process for the research I have been undertaking with RMIT University.

My name is Yu Cong. I am undertaking a Master degree by research on language and culture under the supervision of Dr Lynne Li and Professor Des Cahill. I am looking at questioning the stereotype of Chinese Adult ESL Learners in Australia through an investigation into the traits of attitudes/motivation and second language learning strategies by Chinese learners. Although numerous research studies have been carried out on attitudes/motivation and language learning strategies, very few have been done on Chinese learners in Australia.

This research involves a few questions on personal background information, one questionnaire on attitudes and motivation and one strategy inventory of language learning. Each will take around 10 to 15 minutes, thus altogether about 30 minutes for each participant, as attached. The study will target 60 Chinese adult ESL learners in language centres of Melbourne, Australia, between the ages of 18 and 30. Twenty students are planned to get from your language centre to participate in my study if possible. I would prefer that students’ contact details be provided to me so I could contact them directly. But I am always prepared to go about this process in whichever way convenient to you.

We assure you that ethical issues will be strictly controlled and monitored through RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee. Student may withdraw from this research at any time they wish. Any unprocessed data may also be withdrawn upon their request. The information collected from the students may appear in publication, but this will not be published with their true names; their identities won’t be revealed in any way. The data is kept for a minimum of 5 years and then destroyed. The data will be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet. The collected information and research
findings will be available upon request at any stage of the research. I can be contacted for further clarification on the research project on email address: s3093138@student.rmit.edu.au, or mobile phone: 0433242408. Fully aware how this could affect your already busy life, any support to this research process would be greatly appreciated! I eagerly await your reply. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,

Yu Cong  
Bachelor of Arts in English Education  
Xiaozhuang College, Nanjing  
P.R.China

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Secretary, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, University Secretariat, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 1745. Details of the complaints procedure are available from: http://www.rmit.edu.au/council/hrec.