

Jiayin Li-Gottwald



# Chinese Migrant Parents and Complementary Schooling in Germany

A Sociolinguistic Ethnography

Jiayin Li-Gottwald  
Chinese Migrant Parents and Complementary  
Schooling in Germany

To Lily, Hope, Michel, Bobby and Marian

To my mom, for her unwavering and unconditional love, and for the endless support which made this book possible. I am deeply indebted to her.

Also, to my father, who I have not seen for many years but who provided the knowledge of my entire childhood world. He guided a young girl's curiosity in searching for the truth.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this book to my family, to different kinds of migrates, to those who still dream of emigrating, to their spirit and courage.

### *Lily*

Born in China, my mom Lily had never left her country to live elsewhere until she was in her fifties. In the year 2000, she left China in search of a different life. Having no linguistic skills or formal state education, she settled in California. While enjoying the sunshine and California spirit, life in the golden state has not been an easy challenge. I remember my trembled heart when I had to witness her everyday life in her new country.

### *Marian*

My mother-in-law Marian was born in a village in former eastern Germany now a part of Poland. When the village where she was born became part of Poland at the end of the Second World War, she, at the age of six, fled on foot with her family to West Germany. To start living temporarily in some local people's house<sup>1</sup>, engaging in any possible education which she had limited access to, she established her own family, built her own house, and eventually, became a senior nurse in a local hospital where she worked until she retired. Life is not easy but she has managed.

### *Hope*

Born in Los Angeles, my daughter Hope is now growing up in Germany after spending three years in Beijing as a small child. At the age of 13, Hope speaks fluent German, Mandarin and English, while leaning Latin and Russian, contributes her passion to learning the piano and cello, while attending a local elite German school. Her dream is to return to her birthplace and prepare for the future adventure.

### *Joe Joe*

My brother Joe Joe is a successful entrepreneur, with his business empire in China and further success developing in California. Educated at the University of Cambridge, he is fluent in English and Chinese. His freedom of space is

<sup>1</sup> At first, her family lodged as refugees with a local family in West Germany, in line with the government's policy on re-settlement.

worldwide, his spirit of ambition is high. He is a different kind of immigrant, a kind of superiority beyond the most people's comprehensions.

*Michel*

My husband Michel, a middle-class German businessman, has been travelling around the whole world, but is dedicated to his life in Germany. Although he has dreamed of emigrating somewhere warm and sunny since his youth, life has so far kept him in his motherland. He still talks about emigrating here and there, just to make sure his dreams will not become an illusion.

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I am deeply indebted to my mom, who, from the start, has enabled me to have a life filled with experiences that lit the desire for this study; who encouraged me to carry on with my university studies and to begin this path of the PhD; who has endlessly supported every step of my life so far without any expectations; who is never disappointed when my life choices do not coincide with what she would have wished for me. Her unwavering and unconditional love has made this book possible. Her pleasure and pride in my achievement has touched me immensely. Her belief and courage for life has been the motivation of this book.

Words are not adequate to express my deepest and heartfelt thanks to my husband for his unbroken patience, support, encouragement and trust. I would like to express my appreciation for the enormous amount of time he invested in listening to my research progress, and the difficulties and disappointments I have encountered. I am humbled to recount his unfailing support during the most difficult time in his life. I am also grateful to his and his mother's terrific help with childcare, which made my study and trips to London possible.

Finally, I would especially like to thank my daughter Hope, who as a young child started this journey with me, who has been both a witness and the exceptional inspiration for this study, and who is the reason for my being.

## Introduction

Like so many of today's Chinese in Germany, I am a relatively recent arrival to the country, having spent most of my life elsewhere. At the age of 30, I came to Germany with a dream of building my own family. Although I had no local, cultural, and linguistic knowledge of the country, I thought I was going to settle down. Born in Beijing, I spent much of my childhood in the old city of Beijing, investigating every corner of the Forbidden City and Qian Men Da Jie. My world was the inner two rings of modern Beijing, a world which was childish, fun, and safe. My teenage years saw me in Scotland, where I found myself alone in a small village, learning about Scottish weather and British education. In my memory it is cold, windy, and full of curiosities. I try to remember the time of my 20s, which unfolded in England where I received my Bachelor and Masters degrees. I recall a phase of colours and self-confidence.

Later, life has split into different parts: family life in Germany, PhD in London, and spending time with my mom and brother in California, in the States. While I was able to commute easily between London and California where I was familiar with the local cultural patterns and fluent in the language, I found that it was rather difficult to engage myself with my German environment. The world here was foreign; I had never felt so far away before. The most difficult thing was not becoming fluent in a third language, not making sense of the local customs, but creating my own friendship circle. On the one hand, it took me a long time to become friendly with the local Germans because of their different socialisation norms. On the other hand, I was out of reach from any Chinese communities in the country. Unlike most Chinese migrants in Germany, my path to the country had nothing to do with the classic Chinese settlements (see Chapter 1): I did not come to the country for higher education where one can forge solid friendship in universities; I did not have any companions from China with whom I could share my own confusions and vulnerabilities. Marrying a German does not help me to stay in touch with my own flesh and blood. Indeed, I was, for a while of the time, vulnerable in the country for which I had so much hope.

The impetus for this research arose from my own migrant experiences and life trajectories, and it would never have taken place, if my daughter had not been attending a Chinese complementary school in Germany prior to the research. It all began with my thrill at seeing one or two Chinese people every once in a while, at the very early stage of my life in Germany, sometimes later encountering them on a street, and hearing Mandarin on a bus, a train or in other public settings in the major city where I have settled. The curiosity about my own ethnic migrant group in Germany came to the fore some years prior to this study, when I registered my daughter to learn the Mandarin language in a local Chinese school. On that day, I entered a place where I was overwhelmed

by the memory deep inside of me. It had been a long time since I had seen a crowd of Chinese and greeted them by saying nihao 你好 (how are you). Many Chinese parents were there at the school, divided into different groups. They were chatting, joking, sharing food, playing mahjong and practising yoga. There were so many of them that I was not able to count them all. However, I was primarily interested in their stories.

Until recently there was a dearth of studies on Chinese communities and the lives of Chinese migrants in modern Germany. The need to investigate Chinese communities in modern Germany was widely ignored by the scholars of social sciences (Güttinger 2004). However, this absence has drawn increasing attention, in particular from scholars with ethnic Chinese minority backgrounds, and the topic of Chinese communities in Germany has slowly become an emerging theme in the field of sociology studies over the past few years. For instance, Maggie Leung, a Hong Kong-born researcher, has conducted a series of studies related to the important strategy of ethnic networking for Chinese-run business in Germany (Leung 2001, 2005b), the construction of Chinese migrants' identities in Germany (Leung 2006), and the question of how Chinese immigrant tourism business owners and related suppliers pursue their business opportunities in Germany and their practice of transnationalism and transculturalism (Leung 2005a, 2009). Silvia Van Ziegert, a second-generation Chinese-American of Hong Kong descent, studies the culture of diasporic Chinese communities in both the United States and Germany, suggesting that overseas Chinese are constantly reconstructing Chinese culture, forming transnational linkages (Ziegert 2007). In a later study, Qilan Shen, a Shanghai-born writer, portrays a detailed picture of the formation and diversity of an evangelical Chinese community in Leipzig, Germany, with the focus on the transnational mission and immigrant lifestyle of the community members (Shen 2010). Nevertheless, few of these studies have taken place in the domain of sociolinguistics. With an emphasis on Chinese migrants social-linguistic (oral) interactions, the current book intends to contribute to the legends of first-generation Chinese migrants and open up discussions on the phenomenon of Chinesische Schule (中文学校/Chinese school) in modern German society.

In this book, I focus on the parental social interactions established at a Chinese complementary school in a major city, in Germany, hoping to demonstrate the significance of the interactions for first-generation migrant parents. To be more specific, I investigate the empowerment and the constraints of such parental social interactions for the first-generation migrant parents. Here I am following the concept of social capital, which broadly refers to the value of the interactions of social groups. The three most influential notions of social capital are: the ways in which resources potentially and actually reside in durable social networks with an emphasis on the reproduction of social inequality (Bourdieu 1986, 1987, 2018); the ways in which certain social structures facilitate social actions which support youth education (Coleman 1988, 1990b); and

individual connections, trust, and norms of reciprocity with attention given to civic engagement (Putnam 1993b, 1995, 1996, 2000). My aim is to contribute to knowledge on ethnic Chinese minority studies in the field of sociolinguistic ethnography with a focus on the value of social interactions in relation to the concepts of social capital as well as including the notion of Guanxi 关系, which refers to the interpersonal relationship in Chinese society (Bian 2001; 2006; Chen and Chen 2004; Lin 2001; Qi 2012, 2013). This provides a Chinese perspective that adds to the anglophone literature.

The research for this book took place at Hua Hua School, a pseudonym for a Chinese complementary school in Germany. Hua Hua School has more than 500 students and is open one day each weekend. Over the whole day, parents and students come and go, and many parents remain at the school while their children take lessons. I conducted the research with the participants, namely, the parents who waited at the school. All the participants were China-born and came to Germany as first-generation migrants. Participants were between the ages of 30 and 50, and their origins were from across Mainland China. All my participants are multilingual. Their linguistic repertoires include more than one language; for example, many of them spoke varieties of Chinese, German and English.

My immediate concern was a desire to gain a deeper understanding of the social interactions of Chinese migrants in Germany. Given my own narratives and social background, inevitably I focused on parental interactions, in particular, parental social interactions among first-generation Chinese migrants in Germany. Sending my own child to a Chinese language school operated by a local ethnic Chinese community, I witnessed the intense social interactions at the school site and the resources that emerged from the parental group interactions. My own multilingual repertoire allows me to participate at the school site, listening to conversations, grasping meanings and collecting data which is most interesting. This impression formed the starting point for this book. As a researcher, I am informed by qualitative research, since the nature of the question posed for this research presumes the need for an exploratory and interpretive approach. I also see myself operating in a post-structuralist paradigm where the world is discursively constructed and truth is socially shaped. I therefore see the phenomenon of social capital as being discursively constructed through the social interactions among my participants in this study. Bearing in mind the material basis of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and the fact that the main social capital theorists in this study do not take a poststructuralist approach to the concept, I treat the data of this study as discursively constructed. Following Block (2014), I intend to reconcile the material world with the discursive social truth and draw attention to the interaction of social structure and human agency, which sees structures facilitate and constrain individual actions while individual actions serve to constantly reshape and reproduce the same structures (ibid). In other words, by looking into the spoken interactions among

my parental participants and how they construct social relations with each other, I intend to explore how social capital is generated and comes into being through their social interactions.

Considering ...language as a site for the construction and contestation of social meaning (Baxter 2003, pp.6), I place my special interest in the parental linguistic interactions taking place among my participants. In particular, I draw my attention to their spoken interactions since spoken interaction was the most intensive form of practice during their gatherings. Drawing on Michel Foucault's theory that social reality is discursively constructed and language is both deeply related to knowledge, power and truth, and the means through which the social world is created by individual subjectivities (Foucault 1991), I pay close attention to the parental spoken interactions and attempt to reflect on the discursive practices during their interactions in relation to the issues of social capital.

Three key parental groups emerged during the fieldwork at the school setting. As the parents met regularly in these three groups, I noticed their intensive interactions with one another through endless chatting, joking and gossiping. In studying their spoken interactions, I draw on Lemkes (1995) notion of social voice, which refers to the voices of our communities that are available to and used by people who speak in order to make the meaning comprehensible in the community in which they are embedded (pp.24-25). Thus, my interest in the three parental groups spoken interactions resides within the social voice of the participants and its interrelatedness to the value of their social interactions, as seen in informational exchanges, mutual support, emotional backup, social inclusion/exclusion, marginalization/elimination, both within and beyond the Chinese complementary school site.

Over time, the study has been shaped by a diverse body of literature focused on: firstly, social capital theories, such as the value of group networking related to personal profit, children education, community development, civic participation, bridging to host society, and the construction of social class and groups; secondly, the most related concept to social capital, Guanxi, in Chinese scholarship; and thirdly, poststructuralist questions, such as the discursive practices of social relations, individual self-positioning, and the discursive positioning of others within power relations. From initial readings in sociolinguistics and social capital theory, other texts have come to inform my approach. The most important of these come from: Bourdieu's work on the structure of society, habitus, and the accumulation of capital; Putnam's concepts of social capital, civic engagement, and society development; Colemans ideas of community and parental engagement in young people's academic success; Foucault's knowledge of discursive practice within power relations; Chinese scholarship on Guanxi; migration studies, and sociology.

One of my intentions is to build on the body of work on complementary schooling in applied and sociolinguistics by examining the phenomenon of social capital in the setting of a Chinese complementary school in Germany with reference to the parents rather than their children. I aim to develop this by taking a post-structuralist perspective on the discursive practice of self-positioning, the availability of social space, marginalization, and the practice of resource inequality in the investigation of the accumulation of social capitals in three different parental groups. Taking a sociolinguistic approach, I explore the notion of social capital through an ethnographic study of social interactions among a group of first-generation Chinese migrants in Germany.

To explore these issues, I have structured the study around three overall questions, namely:

1. What is the nature of the social relationships among first-generation Chinese migrants in Germany in the setting of their children's complementary school?
2. In what ways do the parental groups and their interaction in the complementary school setting facilitate their social status in the Chinese migrant community and wider German society?
3. What do the findings suggest about social capital in complementary school settings and its significance for first-generation migrant parents?

The first part of Chapter 1 sets the scene by depicting a broad picture of the history of Chinese migration to Germany, dating back to the early 19th century. The second part introduces the concept of complementary schooling and current development of complementary schools with a focus on Germany. While it reviews the recent literature on complementary schooling and highlights the most significant studies, it also exposes the lack of attention given to the role of complementary schools as sites where ethnic migrant parents come together. The end of this chapter raises the question of the significance of Chinese complementary schools for first-generation migrant parents beyond the education of their children.

Chapter 2 explores the concept of social capital and the notion of Guanxi through various theoretical approaches and different cultural perspectives. From an Anglo-European perspective, I explore the three most significant notions of social capital. Following the review of his work on the symbolic, class-based and hierarchical modern social system (Bourdieu 1977a, 1984, 1987), I firstly consider Bourdieu's class-based nature of social capital (Bourdieu 1986). I then discuss Putnam's promotion of civic engagement and community development through social capital (Putnam 1993a, 1995, 1996, 2000). Finally, I examine Coleman's idea of family and community social capital which facilitate young people's educational achievement (Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Coleman 1988, 1990a). These are followed by a review of social capital from

a Chinese perspective, in which I explore the philosophical root of interpersonal relationships among Chinese people, dating back to Confucianism (Bian 2006; Bian and Zhang 2014; Confucius 2008; Oxnam and Bloom n.d.; Zhang et al. 2005). I conclude this part by explaining the most recent Chinese scholarship on the concept of Guanxi (Bian 2006; Chen and Chen 2004; Dunning and Kim 2007; Lin 2001b, 2012) which is related to the value of social relations. Following these, I contend that Guanxi, which is a significant social phenomenon in Chinese society, is a similar concept to the Anglo-European version of social capital.

Chapter 3 acts as a bridge between the theoretical concepts and the data. In this chapter, I discuss the design of the empirical study as a small-scale qualitative study with an ethnographic approach. I firstly describe the philosophical stance that leads to my choice of a qualitative study based on the nature of this research. I then present the framework of the ethnographic study and its key feature of participant observation, followed by a reflection on the methodology. This is followed by a detailed description of the data collection methods: the interviews, participant observations, and fieldnotes of this study. I then introduce discourse analysis as the analytical tool and demonstrate its value as the most appropriate for taking account of the social, cultural, and political contexts of the focus of this research. I conclude this chapter with a demonstration of my analytical steps.

As part of the analysis, Chapter 4 explores the data from the group of participants that I named the Networkers. I consider the topics and content of their spoken interactions. I focus on the way they formed the group, the features of their interactions, and the value of such spoken interactions for the members through analysing the discursive practice (Foucault 1991) of their social interaction. I apply different notions of social capital and various concepts of Guanxi to the data and review the relevance of these theoretical concepts in my empirical work. Chapter 5 mirrors Chapter 4 in that it considers similar matters in the data of the Cosmopolitans. Chapter 6 follows the same line of discussion and considers the data of the Marginalised. While there is substantial overlapping of the themes among the data of three groups, the topics and content differ related to talks, such as self-positioning, their circle of social associations, engagement with the local ethnic Chinese community, and so on.

Chapter 7 collates the main findings that have emerged in the previous three chapters. It discusses the discursive practice of parental interactions according to the conceptual and theoretical framework of Chapter 2 and relates my understanding of different practices of parental interactions in the school setting to the various notions of social capital, social inequality and social class. I argue that the Chinese complementary school offers a safe space for first-generation migrant parents to generate bonding social capital (Putnam 1993b, 1995), community and family social capital (Coleman 1988). However,

I contend that while the school provides a safe environment for its more socioeconomically privileged parents to access resources that emerge during their interactions, it offers little support and few resources to its disadvantaged parents. This seems to reconcile Bourdieu's point about the material basis of social capital and inequality in the structure of the material world (e.g. Bourdieu 1986, 1987, 1990, 2018).

In the concluding chapter, I draw together the main findings that have materialized in the course of my research and provide a space to reflect on experiences related to the study. I reflect on the questions of how my own positions, experiences and perceptions have shaped the research, as well as the strengths and limitations of this research. I conclude this chapter with an outline of the knowledge I have gained regarding the three main research questions.

# 1 A first glimpse of Chinese Migrants in Germany and Complementary Schools

## 1.1 Introduction

During the period of this PhD research being conducted, I have been a witness to a dramatic increase in Chinese migration to Germany. The most recent statistic in 2016 by the Federal Institute for Population Research (Bundesinstitut für Bevölkerungsforschung<sup>2</sup> 2017) estimates that there were roughly 212,000 Chinese inhabitants in Germany. The Chinese constitute the third largest non-European foreign ethnic group in Germany, following those from Syria and the USA (see Table 1). At the final stage of this study, taking into account the people of Chinese descent and Chinese ethnicity from other countries in South-east Asia, it might be that the ethnic Chinese community in Germany consists of many more members than the official national statistics suggests.

Table 1: Non-European immigrants in Germany, 2015

*(Herkunftsländer nichteuropäischer Zuwanderer nach Deutschland)*

Country of Origin	Syrien (Syria)	USA (USA)	China (China)	Indien (India)	Brasilien (Brazil)
Population	440,000	324,000	212,000	161,000	94,000

Source: Bundesinstitut für Bevölkerungsforschung (2017)

In this chapter, I aim to set the scene for the study by considering the context in which it was conducted in order to demonstrate how the Chinese migrant community is moving from a modest number in Germany to a sizeable community. Drawing on Jordan and Düvell's (2003) definition of migration - the movement of people across borders, both by choice and under economic and political forces, which involves stays of over a year (pp.5) - when I refer to Chinese migrants in this book, I primarily speak of Chinese people who are long-term residents in Germany. Of the various categories of people moving across borders since the Second World War, such as political refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants (Block 2006), the majority of the Chinese migrants involved in this study can be considered as economic migrants. However, I assert that Chinese migrants are heterogeneous in terms of their origins, their linguistic repertoires, and their socioeconomic and cultural status. In particular, I emphasise the social, cultural and economic differences of mainland

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Institute of Population Research

Chinese migrants in Germany. Firstly, it is necessary to review the historical accounts of Chinese migration in Germany in order to trace the social and historical reasons for its existence. This is important to the context of the study as a means of understanding the trajectory of Chinese migrants in Germany and comprehending their relationship to both the host community and the local ethnic Chinese community. These are particularly related to the participants who will be introduced in the later chapters. I will first look at the beginning of Chinese migration in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Germany and reveal the reasons why such a phenomenon took place. I will present three historical periods of Chinese migration into Germany, and at the end, focus on the recent rapid increase in the Chinese population of Germany. Thus, I hope to sketch the waves of Chinese migration to Germany and to expose the key political, cultural and historical forces that have had significant influences on various groups of Chinese migrants during each wave. Secondly, it is of my interest to highlight the diversity of Chinese migrants in terms of their linguistic, social, economic and political standings in order to present the current ethnic persona of the Chinese community in Germany. This will later assist the readers understanding of the social, cultural and political backgrounds of the various groups of participants portrayed in the later chapters of this study. Finally, I will introduce the phenomenon of complementary schools since it was in one such school that the participants of this study regularly gathered and where the fieldwork took place. I will review recent studies related to complementary schooling and briefly introduce the history of Chinese complementary schools in Germany.

## **1.2 Chinese migration in Germany**

### *1.2.1 The history of Chinese migration in Germany*

In this section, I will demonstrate the trajectory of Chinese migration over the last two centuries in Germany. Following a chronological order, the discussion is based on four historical periods: the early settlement; World War II and the post-war period; the post-economic reform period in China; and the new wave. I hope these will provide insights into the historical, cultural and social backdrops of the Chinese community in Germany, and thus assist the reader in understanding the participants who are presented in the later chapters of this study.

### 1.2.1.1 The early settlement:

The early settlement of Chinese migrants was the result of colonization and can be defined as starting with the arrival of the very first two Chinese in Germany in 1822 (Gütinger 2004) and ending with the community of a few thousand Chinese living in Germany in the 1930s before the Nazis gained power (Amenda 2011; Benton 2007; Gütinger 2004). During the first wave of Chinese migration, Chinese migrant patterns aligned with Germany were composed of different groups of sailors, construction workers, merchants, students, and artists who came from various regions in and outside of China and spoke different Chinese languages (ibid).

One major group consisted of Cantonese-speaking sailors and small business owners. The members of the Cantonese-speaking community were mostly from the Canton province in China and Hong Kong. They established themselves in the early Chinese Quarter area of Hamburg and ran small businesses such as restaurants and shops with about 200 residents (Amenda 2011; Benton 2007).

Later, another Chinese migrant group settled and built up a Chinese Quarter in Berlin in the 1920s. Yu-Dembksi (2011) reveals that most of the Chinese who lived in the Chinese quarter in Berlin came from Zhejiang Province with a peasant family background and only spoke their own home dialects<sup>3</sup>. Most of the members of the Zhejiangnese community were merchants and construction labourers. In line with the development of early Chinese migration in Europe, Cantonese and Zhejiangnese were two of the major Chinese communities across Europe at the time (ibid).

On the one hand, these two groups of Chinese migrants in both Hamburg and Berlin had different origins, spoke different languages and worked in different industrial areas. On the other hand, they faced similar issues and problems in Germany. Amenda (2011) portrays the lives of Chinese sailors in Hamburg in the 1920s and partially explains the backgrounds that limited the development of the Chinese community in Germany at this time. He notes that politically, the local Hamburg authorities rigidly controlled the Chinese migrants and their population density. From a sociocultural standpoint, as reflected in books, news articles and general attitudes during that period, Chinese migrants were stereotyped and presented as unwelcome intruders, criminals and cultural strangers (ibid, pp.54). Meanwhile the similarly-sized and structured Chinese community in Berlin faced the same situation. The local Berlin government violated the Chinese migrants' residential and business rights, since it was believed that Chinese of lower status were not capable of 'adjusting to the local customs' and that they 'present a danger to society' (Yu-Dembksi 2011, pp. 66). Amenda (2011) describes the image of Chinese migrants in

<sup>3</sup> Yu-dembksi states that many of these people were from Wenzhou and Qintian, which is significant relevant to some of my participants.

the 1920s in Germany by stating that ‘Chinese migrants embodied the racial and cultural other, and they were staged as a threat to German society...’ (pp.58). Under such suppression, Chinese migrants in the quarter kept their ‘modest existence’ (Yu-Dembski 2011, pp. 67). As will be discussed later, these Cantonese and Zhejianese Chinese migrant ancestors are particularly relevant to the backgrounds of several participants introduced in the later chapters of this study.

Another major group of early Chinese settlers in Germany was Chinese students in Berlin (Benton 2007). Around 1904, the first group arrived in Berlin, and by the 1920s, the Chinese had become the fourth-largest group of foreign students in Germany. Unlike the Chinese mentioned previously, who came from simple social backgrounds, Chinese students and artists were from prosperous families and were welcomed by the host society, enjoying a cosmopolitan lifestyle in Berlin in the 1920s (Yu-Dembski 2011). Under the influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917, a strong Communist movement emerged in Germany. During 1918-1933, many of the Chinese students were actively engaged in the Communist Party of Germany (Die Kommunistische Partei Deutschland), promoting Communist ideas among Chinese seamen and organising strikes among Chinese crews (Benton 2007). These students later returned to China and became elite members of the Communist Party of China (ibid). This elite group of Chinese migrants was rarely mentioned in any mainstream political debate and/or public discourse at the time. For the German public, Chinese migrants were associated with sailors, merchants and cheap labourers who lived in Chinese neighbourhoods. (Amenda 2011; Benton 2007). However, the account of elite migrant student predecessors sets the scene for the later Chinese students to study in Germany and is extremely relevant to a number of my participants presented in the analysis chapters.

### 1.2.1.2 World War II and the Post-war period

After Chinese migrants slowly settled in Germany in the early 1920s, the national political sphere in Germany disrupted their settlement. During the Third Reich, World War II and the Post-war period, the Chinese population dramatically decreased. According to the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commissions statistics (cited in Benton 2007), in 1935 a total of 1,800 Chinese lived in Germany. More than 1,000 of them were students based in Berlin, and a few hundred were seamen based in Hamburg. During World War II, most Chinese left Germany; in particular, almost all the students left the country. According to Gütinger (1998), among the rest who stayed during the war, more than three hundred of those who lived in Berlin were arrested and sent to work camps (*Arbeitslager*) in 1942. The very few of them who survived World War II left the country in the late 1940s.

During the Post-war period and two decades afterwards, the number of Chinese remained under a few hundred (Giese 2003) and most of them were in the restaurant business (Leung 2006). The low immigration rate was partly caused by the national political sphere in China when the country had a closed-door policy during its various political movements including the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s.

### 1.2.1.3 The post-economic reform period in China

China's economic reform starting in 1978 enhanced its trading relations with Western countries and increased the opportunities for its citizens to go abroad. Emigration trends especially started to go up at the second stage of the reform in the late 1980s and 1990s. This high wave of migration is partly evidenced by the significant increase in the Chinese population in Germany since the late 1980s. From 1978 to 2001, the numbers of Chinese increased 64-fold and the most significant increase happened between 1983-2001 (Giese 2003). In particular, the Chinese from mainland China have become the most dominant Chinese ethnic population since 1983 (Giese 2003; Leung 2006).

During this second wave of Chinese migration into Germany, the Chinese ethnic community developed into a more heterogeneous group. In particular, the migrants from mainland China were highly heterogeneous in terms of their sociocultural backgrounds and status and brought with them distinct local and regional heritages. By the end of 2001, various groups of Chinese lived in Germany with a total population count of 63,111. Of these, around 12,000 were students, which in terms of occupation, made up the largest group of Chinese in Germany at the time (Giese 2003). Giese (2003) also points out that even during the suppression of democracy movement of 1989 and the following years of repression and isolation, Chinese student numbers kept rising due to the political and financial support offered to Chinese students by the German government. The studentships offered during the period from the late 1980s to the end of the 1990s are particularly relevant to the early migration trajectories of a number of my participants, who came to Germany during the period following the 1989 incident and were sponsored by German government to pursue high education. Another consistent increase was from the 1990s to the end of 2000, when Chinese students became the largest foreign student body in Germany (Giese 2003). This followed the rapid growth in the numbers of Chinese students abroad since the economic reform in 1978 (Cheng and Miao 2010; China Education Online 2017), which was due to the lower cost of the tuition in Germany in comparison to the UK and the States, a high demand for higher education (Giese 2003; Xu and Küpper 2014), and opportunities to have courses taught in the English language in many German universities (Maeder-Qian 2018). Such examples can be found among some of my participants, who came to Germany to complete their higher education.

The second-largest group of Chinese by the end of 2001 was employees. More importantly, the employment sector has become more diverse. Instead of employees in small traditional family businesses and the restaurant industry, such as cooks and waiters, there is a clearly an increasing level of employment of Chinese people in German institutions and mainstream companies, as well as more interest among the Chinese in trading and commercial investment (Giese 2003; Leung 2001). Zhang (2003) also points out the notable trend for highly skilled Chinese migrants, such as specialists and students in natural sciences, engineering and technology, to immigrate to Europe, and he asserts that together with United Kingdom and France, Germany is one of the three most popular destinations to work in Europe. These two types of employment were 'followed by the rapidly-growing economic sector of commerce and trade which was recognised as the third biggest employment area for Chinese nationals' (Giese 2003, pp. 169). Following the segment of students and employees, 'irregular migrants and asylum seekers' were listed as the next group of Chinese migrants in Germany (Giese 2003, pp. 170). A great many examples of professional diversity existed among my participants and their family members, which are presented later in the analysis chapters.

#### 1.2.1.4 The new wave of Chinese migration

After the millennium, the Chinese population in Germany significantly increased. This third wave of Chinese migration into Germany was caused by both the changes in immigration policy in Germany and the domestic situation in economically- booming China. Due to various social economic reasons, such as low birth rates, high economic demands and skilled labour needs, German immigration laws encouraged more skilled migrants. Meanwhile, the rapid economic rise within China had given the people more freedom to choose their own lifestyles and to travel around the world. People with high levels of economic success in China had opportunities to live or work in a different country. These developments are particularly pertinent for some of the participants in this study, who possessed decent educational qualifications and great wealth in China, who came to Germany for a chosen lifestyle.

In 2013, there were 101,030 Chinese nationals residing in Germany not counting Chinese from other countries and regions where ethnic Chinese also constitute a substantial portion of the population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2013). Compared to the year 2001, when 63,111 Chinese nationals lived in Germany, the population of Chinese nationals had increased by a factor of 1.6 times by 2013. As noted at the beginning of this chapter (see Table 1), the broader Chinese community in Germany was estimated to be roughly 212,000 in 2016, when the Chinese population reached its highest point in the history of its migration to Germany. However, due to historical, social, cultural, geographical and political reasons, it is believed that the Chinese community is

one of the less-studied ethnic groups in Germany. In particular, very few scholars have studied the post-millennial Chinese migration to Germany (Benton, 2007).

## *1.2.2 Chinese immigrants in Germany*

### *1.2.2.1 A heterogeneous group*

Though Chinese immigrants from mainland China comprise the majority of ethnic Chinese in Germany and their population has been increasing rapidly in recent years, research has not kept pace with the community's expansion. It is meaningful to me both personally and professionally to consider matters arising from this particular Chinese community. In the following sections, I firstly attempt to present a broad picture of some of the diversities of the Chinese population in mainland China with a focus on features that are later closely related to the mainland Chinese migrant community in Germany. This aims to provide the backdrop for the first-generation Chinese migrant participants in this study.

For centuries, China has had tremendous cultural, geographic and linguistic diversity. In contemporary mainland China, the population of nearly 1.34 billion is made up of 56 ethnicities. The majority are Han Chinese with over 91.5% of the whole population (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2011). However, it is crucial to note the significant linguistic, cultural and customs differences within various groups of Han populations. For instance, Cantonese people, Hokkien people, and Hakka people are defined as Han but within these populations there are significant cultural and linguistic differences (Chang 2016; Hsiao and Thiong 2007; Olson 1998; Yang 2012). In addition, Han people from Shanghai are quite different from those from North China in terms of their linguistic practices and local customs.

Similarly, mainland Chinese migrants in Germany are heterogeneous in terms of their linguistic repertoires, origins, and religious affiliations. As mentioned in the early settlement section, studies stressed the linguistic and origin differences among the early Chinese migrants in Germany (see section 1.2.1). Most traditional overseas Chinese communities originate from Guangdong, Fujian and Hainan, and speak Cantonese, Hokkien, and Hakka (Li Wei and Zhu Hua 2010). The linguistic repertoires of Chinese diasporas are also traditionally dominated by these three languages in Germany. The new wave of immigration from mainland China into Germany after the millennium has also brought Mandarin and other forms of the Chinese language to the diasporic community in the country. This is also the case evidenced by the fieldwork of the current study. In addition, attention needs to be given to their various socio-economic backgrounds and identities. For instance, the earlier example of

Giese's (2003) study gives a general view of social, professional and political status differences among Chinese migrants in Germany through identifying different professions and political status of ethnic Chinese. Given my own knowledge of Chinese migrants in Germany, I view the Chinese migrants from mainland China as heterogeneous: each individual varies in terms of geographical homeland, financial and educational background, linguistic repertoire and migration experience. Such differences are indeed portrayed by detailed examples of my participants and different participant groups in the analysis and discussion chapters.

#### 1.2.2.2 A dispersed community in Germany

In general, the Chinese community is distributed across all regions of Germany (Giese 2003; Yu-Dembski 2011). Unlike the ethnic Chinese in North America and the UK who mostly settle in greater New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, greater Toronto, Vancouver, London, and Manchester (see, Pamuk 2004; Statistics Canada 2006; Statistics UK 2020; Zhou 1998), ethnic Chinese migrants are dispersed across all parts of Germany with a slightly higher percentage of them living in Berlin, Hamburg, and Bremen (Giese 2003; Yu-Dembski 2011).

#### 1.2.2.3 A low-profile community

Since the very early 1920s until the present day, the Chinese community has been perceived as a silent, 'inconspicuous', 'invisible minority' and 'unproblematic' ethnic group in the German host society (Yu-Dembski 2011; Giese 2003; Van, Zigert 2006). Compared to other minorities, it seems typical for the ethnic Chinese to remain inconspicuous or even invisible in public affairs and to not attract any social or political attention in German society. This situation has become particularly more salient since a major focus of media attention and political and public debate has been directed to the ethnic Turkish community and most currently to the refugee movement in Germany<sup>4</sup>.

#### 1.2.2.4 A self-reliant community

Being physically dispersed and politically 'inconspicuous', the Chinese migrant community heavily relies on its own community networks and support systems in order to survive in Germany. Survival strategies are needed in a number of ways - from running a business, to dealing with employment matters, and to getting financial aid. For instance, in her series of studies on ethnic

<sup>4</sup> During the final phase of this study, the spread of Covid-19 the virus worldwide has put Chinese nation group on the front line of discussions.

Chinese-owned businesses in Germany, Leung highlights the significant roles of ethnic networks in Chinese owned IT businesses, restaurant businesses, and tourist-related industries (Leung 2001, 2005a, 2005b, 2009), and points out that an ethnic network ‘serves as an important source of support, entertainment and a sense of belonging’ in both business and private matters (Leung 2008, pp. 172). It is noteworthy that traditional places for community social space such as Chinatown do not exist in Germany (Giese 2003; Van Ziegert 2007). Rather, festivals, celebrations, and other gatherings are normally held in Chinese restaurants in bigger cities (Giese 2003) or in rented buildings of local schools, universities and other institutions (Ziegert 2007). Thus, some well-known local Chinese restaurants, Chinese complementary schools and Chinese churches have become the centre of ethnic communities and link private and business matters for their own ethnic communities. In this study, I intend to focus on the Chinese migrant social interactions which emerged in one of the centres of their community in Germany – a Chinese complementary school.

Thus far, I have discussed the development of Chinese migration history and introduced the key features of Chinese migrants in Germany. I have also highlighted the self-reliant and intensive ethnic networking facets of the ethnic Chinese community in Germany. In the next section, I will introduce the phenomenon of complementary schools in some of which intensive ethnic social interactions of migrant community are believed to be taking place.

### **1.3 Complementary schooling**

In this section, I shall start to define complementary schooling and introduce its original social and political circumstances in modern society. I will then provide an overview of the literature on complementary schooling and give a brief introduction to what has been investigated in the field and what has been revealed to date. I will pay special attention to studies with a focus on how the schools serve migrant communities beyond the education of their children. In particular, I will address their function as social spaces for migrant communities, as this topic forms the aim of my own study.

#### *1.3.1 Defining complementary schooling*

Complementary schooling is a global phenomenon and has a history alongside the settlement of minority migrant groups in many countries. Such schools are normally set up by and for minority ethnic groups in order to maintain their own community culture, religion and linguistic heritage and are also called supplementary schools, mother-tongue schools, community schools, heritage

schools, Saturday schools or Sunday schools (see, Creese and Martin 2006; Li Wei 2006, 2009, 2010; Martin et al 2006). The ideology embedded in the term ‘complementary schooling’ promotes a non-hierarchical and complementary relationship to mainstream schooling (Creese and Martin 2006). Often complementary schools are very much self-reliant and excluded from mainstream policies. It is claimed that the ‘powerful motivation’ behind the continuing development and expansion of complementary schools lies in the desire to maintain linguistic and cultural resources and cross-generational communication (Barradas and Chen 2008; Li Wei 2006).

### *1.3.2 An overview of the literature*

As a result of the continual development of complementary schooling, the social and political debates around it, and the cultural and educational impacts it has on children with migrant backgrounds and ethnic minority communities, there is a body of literature on complementary schooling in the field of education and sociolinguistics. In the following paragraphs, I will briefly introduce some of the recent research literature devoted to complementary schooling.

Recent research addresses different topics at various complementary school settings across varied minority groups. The major studies investigate issues such as identity development, bilingual education, pedagogy, and classroom management with focuses on different ethnic groups of children in various countries. These include the Gujaratis in the UK (Creese et al. 2006) the Turkish in Germany (Vierra 2011), the Chinese in Los Angeles in the United States (Zhou 2008), and the Chinese Mandarin speakers in the UK (Li Wei and Wu 2009; Wu 2006).

Many of the studies are based on classroom observations and look at how languages are conceptualized in an environment of linguistic diversity and how such linguistic ideologies are played out in pedagogy and practice. For example, one of the main focuses is the linguistic practice of children in complementary school classrooms (Creese et al 2008; Li Wei and Wu 2009). The key finding of these studies is that multilingual children mobilize their linguistic resources through using two or more languages in the classroom simultaneously. This is defined as ‘flexible bilingualism’, indicating the bilingual strategies of using two or more languages concurrently (Creese and Blackledge 2010). The notion of ‘flexible bilingualism’ suggests that the multilingual repertoire does not manifest itself in neatly compartmentalized linguistic practice; rather, it is experienced holistically (See further studies in Creese 2006; Creese and Blackledge 2010; Li Wei and Wu 2009). This has informed the later development of ideas such as translanguaging (Creese and Blackledge 2010). The practice of children’s ‘flexible bilingualism’ in complementary schools has been captured, for example, in Li Wei and Wu’s (2009) study, which shows

that Chinese heritage children utilize their diverse linguistic resources simultaneously, contesting and challenging the static notion of languages being retained as separate entities and thus requiring separate teaching.

Another major finding suggests that complementary schools are unique settings in which to serve ethnic minority children to help them to develop their multiple identities<sup>5</sup>. This is used primarily to theorise the notion of hybrid / third space identity between the host community and migrant community, which challenges the static idea of fixed ethnicity, linguistic identity, and culture (see, Creese et al. 2006; Li Wei and Wu 2009; Souza 2010).

While studies overwhelmingly reveal that complementary schools provide space for negotiation of ‘flexible bilingualism’ and ‘multi-identity’ for the children, a small number of studies have looked at complementary schools from the perspective of the parents, such as the reasons for the parents to send their children to complementary schools, the parents’ language ideology in regard to their heritage language, their belief in ethnic community identity, and their contributions to complementary schools (see Lytra 2012, 2014; Martin et al 2006). For instance, in Martin et al.’s (2006) study about bilingual learning and teaching in a Gujarati complementary school in Leicester, UK, the researchers reveal that some of the parents sent their children to the Gujarati class because the parents had missed the chance to learn the written forms of the language. Lytra’s (2012) study on parents’ construction of language and identity in two Turkish complementary schools in London reveals that the parental conceptualisations of Turkish identity and Turkish language ideology vary based on their migrant histories and personal experiences. For those parents who were raised in Turkey, their children’s Turkish identity is connected with their use of “straight/normal” Turkish, whilst heritage, history and culture are more the concern of the politically active Cypriot-Turkish parents. Additionally, Lytra (2014) shows a close parental community network behind a Greek complementary school during the making of a commemorative book celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Greek School of Lausanne. Despite all the issues discussed in the literature on complementary schooling outlined above, social capital has not been an overt focus of these studies.

Thus far, I have briefly introduced some main findings of current studies of complementary schooling in the field of education and sociolinguistics. In the following section, I will briefly present the phenomenon of such schools in Germany with an emphasis on Chinese complementary schools as an example of the immediate context of my research.

<sup>5</sup> Multi-identity refers to ‘a combination of ambiguity and sophistication’ of various identity positions around ethnic children’s ‘ethnic and linguistic diversity’ (Creese et al 2006, p. 27).

### 1.3.3 The research context: Complementary schools in Germany

In Germany, tremendous consideration has been given to religion-based Turkish complementary schooling due to the country's immigration history. The concept of complementary schooling can be traced back to the mid-70s, when Turkish guest workers reunited with their families in Germany and faced the challenge of raising their children in an Islamic tradition (Vierra 2018). For this reason, courses about the *Koran* were offered to young Turkish children. These classes were often located in mosques and focused on religious education. Ever since, the phenomenon of 'Die Koranschulen' (Koran Schools) has attracted significant attention from scholars, media and public debates. Studies of Koran schools in Germany mostly revolve around transnational identity studies for first-generation Turkish migrants and Turkish German youth, focusing on the construction of belonging, religion, social integration, and social conflict (Braunschweig 2006; Vierra 2011, 2018).

In contrast, Chinese complementary schools attract much less public debate in Germany. The early Chinese complementary schools were mostly founded in the 1980s in major cities in Germany, such as Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt and Bonn, alongside the Chinese immigration wave in the 1980s and 90s discussed earlier in this chapter. Most of the early schools were set up by Chinese graduate students with the purpose of teaching their own and their friends' children the Chinese language. Similarly to the low-profile ethnic Chinese community, Chinese complementary schools have neither drawn much attention in public discourse nor in mainstream research in Germany. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Chinese complementary schools are often briefly mentioned as a community space in recent studies of Chinese immigration in Germany (e.g. He 2007; Huang 2008; van Ziegert 2006).

Chinese complementary schools are indeed a popular phenomenon among Chinese ethnic minority communities and are deeply associated with Chinese migrants and their families in the host country. Ethnic community networking opportunities and the mutual support systems created through such schools have significant impacts for the transnational process of migrants and their lives' trajectories in the host country. Such ethnic networking phenomena at Chinese complementary schools have attracted the attention of a number of recent scholars and researchers in Germany. For instance, He (2007) points out the important networking function of Chinese complementary schools for both Chinese heritage adolescents and their parents in Germany.<sup>6</sup> Other recent research about Chinese immigration in Germany also mentions the ethnic networking function of Chinese complementary schools in Chinese communities (Huang 2018; Van Ziegert 2006).

<sup>6</sup> The original statement is in German: 'Wenn Moscheen der Treffpunkt für die Muslime sind, dann ist die chinesische Sprachschule ein regelmäßiger Treffpunkt bzw. ein wichtiges Netzwerk für die Chinesen, egal ob Jugendliche oder Erwachsene' (He 2007, pp. 117).

### 1.3.4 The Gap

Despite these considerations, few of these recent studies of Chinese migrants have focused on revealing the value of the community social space in Chinese complementary schools in Germany. Nor have the majority studies of complementary schooling presented earlier in this chapter focused on the ideas of community space (see section 1.3.2), although some of the studies opened up discussions on the space of socialisation for the children and parents offered by complementary schools (e.g. Blackledge and Creese 2010; Creese et al. 2008; Li Wei and Wu 2010; Lytra 2012, 2014). For instance, first, the emphasis of third space identity in the afore-mentioned complementary schooling studies in the field of sociolinguistics seems to give an account of the context of third space/complementary schools in promoting bonding within migrant community and building links to the host society (see studies in Creese et al. 2006; Li Wei and Wu 2009; Souza 2010). However, these studies have not yet been particularly related to the idea of migrant social relationships and little reference has been made to the notion of social capital. Second, in terms of studies with an emphasis on linguistic practice discussed in the earlier section, some of the scholars might look at linguistic resources and repertoire at complementary schools as a form of cultural (educational and linguistic) capital for the children (e.g. Creese 2009; Zhou and Kim 2006). Nevertheless, little concern has been given to the notion of the construction of social capital in complementary school settings with an emphasis on the parents. Finally, some earlier-mentioned studies of complementary schooling might have shed light on the aspect of parents' involvement in complementary schooling in terms of their linguistic ideologies and their beliefs in heritage identity (e.g. Francis, Archer and Mau 2010b; Lytra 2012, 2014). However, very few studies have been conducted with a sole focus on the parents, and none of them appears to have investigated complementary schools as community social space from the point of view of social capital. At this point, I feel it would be helpful to have a concentrated focus on the value of such social space for migrant parents. This focus leads me to look at another form of capital, social capital, for the first-generation migrant parents within the setting of complementary schools. I am going to draw on three key theorists in the field of social capital. Additionally, as this study is closely related with first-generation Chinese migrants, I am also going to look at how social capital is understood within a Chinese perspective, in particular the phenomenon of *Guanxi*.

## 2 The Notions of Social Capital and the Relatedness to the Concept of Guanxi

### 2.1 Introduction

The idea of group ties bringing benefits to the members of the group seems to be one that has been held by modern society for many years (Portes 1998). Since the second half of the twentieth century, the term most commonly used by scholars in the field of social science for the value of group ties and community participation is ‘social capital’ (Bourdieu 1977, 1986; Coleman 1987, 1988; Lin 1999, 2001; Portes 1988; Putnam 1993b, 1995, 2000).

In this book, I endeavour to bring different perspectives on social capital into conversation with the intention of theorising the nature of social relations among first-generation migrant parents in a Chinese complementary school setting and to shed light on the notion of social capital in the field of sociolinguistics.

In this chapter, I aim to introduce the concept of social capital and review the insights of its most prevalent notions from three key scholars: French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, American political scientist Robert D. Putnam, and American sociologist James S. Coleman. Following this, I address the closely related Chinese notion of Guanxi based on the work of Nan Lin, Bian, and Zhang. By availing myself of these complementary approaches, I hope to lead the readers on a path towards an understanding of the value of the parental interactions in a Chinese complementary school site, which will be discussed in later chapters. Taking the position that group membership has value for both the individuals and the group as a collective unit, in the first section of this chapter I explore the importance of group membership through the eyes of the three most significant schools of thought on social capital to date. First, I consider Bourdieu’s class-based notion of social capital, in which the size of the network and the amount of resources an individual possesses are key factors for the aggregation of social capital. I then introduce Putnam’s notion of social capital, which focuses on civic engagement, and regional and national development. This is followed by a discussion of Coleman’s approach to social capital, which outlines the impact of family and community social capital on children’s human capital. Although the original work of these French and American schools did not acknowledge much of each other’s work, I intend to compare their different approaches and applications of social capital in this study and present my own critical reflections on the concept. Given the nature of this research, I also aim to include the concept of Guanxi, which represents the closest Chinese perspective on social capital in the later section of this chapter.

Alongside the discussion of social capital, I review the applications of the notions of social capital in contemporary research literature in the field of migrant studies, educational settings, and sociolinguistics in general. So far, I have given an account of the general framework of this chapter. In the following sections, I will review some details of the three significant notions of social capital, starting with the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.

## 2.2 Three notions of social capital

### 2.2.1 *Class-based notion of social capital*

Bourdieu has been highly influential in many areas of social science, particularly in the field of sociolinguistics, and many of his terms have entered the canon in the field of language and education. To understand his standpoint on social capital, it is necessary to conceptualize social capital within the framework of his theory of a symbolic social system, in which ‘symbolic power’, deeply embedded in our social system, is socially and culturally created through legitimizing the values and way of life illustrated by the dominant groups, thus preserving social domination and privilege (Bourdieu 1977b). Within a symbolic social system, the legitimacy of the existing social order is ‘*misrecognised*’ through the practice of ‘symbolic power.’ Drawing special attention to social conflicts and opposing interest groups (the dominants and the dominated), Bourdieu points out that ‘symbolic power’ normalizes the practices of the dominants, especially the ruling intellectual classes, as seen in the fields of education, media and cultural institutions. Thus, the practice of life of the dominants that is often presented through their cultural preferences, style, fashion, music, accent and use of language, and their taste is ‘*misrecognised*’ as highly valued (*ibid*).

Bourdieu’s theory of social systems suggests that ‘symbolic power’ produces/reproduces social order to benefit those who have power, and the existing social order produces/reproduces itself through all institutions in a particular way that maintains that society’s established hierarchical system (Bourdieu 1977a, 1977b, 1987, 1990; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). Thus, in order to pursue interests, power and social positions, individuals are engaged in the process of production and reproduction of the social order through different institutions, such as different educational institutions. In the process of social reproduction, Bourdieu’s conceptualisation emphasises existing social systems and structures supporting the current social order, whereas he gives little attention to individual human agency.

Bourdieu's claim of a 'symbolic system' of social structures reveals his deep belief in the existence of a class-based, hierarchical modern society system. He further elaborates social class as 'the existence of a space of differences based on a principle of economic and social differentiation' (Bourdieu 1987, pp.3). Thus, social class is not only based on material possessions but is also 'status emergent in cultural activities and markets' (Block 2014, pp. 52). For Bourdieu, both the drive to be recognised by others and the desire to be worthier and more valuable than others are the ultimate causes of differentiation of social class. Atkinson (2015) comments that Bourdieu views class as 'the fundamental principles of social and cultural difference within a society, the different conditions of life tied up with those differences and the power, struggle and domination invested in them' (pp. 61-62). This view of social class has been taken up and developed in more contemporary literature. For instance, Savage et al. (2013) point to the multi-dimensional perspectives of social class and its profound concerns 'with forms of social reproduction and cultural distinction' (pp. 223); Block (2014) considers social class as 'the distribution and redistribution of material resources' (pp.94) and that it is based on everyday life experiences. This leads to his further development of a multi-dimensional model of class experiences of people's day-to-day lives (Block 2012, 2014), in which he identifies the key dimensions of class experiences as: property, wealth, occupation, place of residence, education, social networking, consumption patterns, spatial relations, mobility, and life chances (ibid).

An important point to draw from Bourdieu's understanding of class and the social world is his recognition of the significant force of social power that drives the structure of the social world and differentiates each class group, which he identifies as various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986, 1991, 2018). His theory of social class is identified by the combination of varying degrees of social, economic and cultural capital. In other words, the ability, capability and property of an individual to be 'misrecognised' as legitimately valuable is Bourdieu's theory of capital (Atkinson 2015).

This approach to capital is driven by Bourdieu's belief that 'the social world is accumulated history', in which every moment of presence links to the previous one and 'capital is accumulated labour' (Bourdieu 1986, pp.241):

which, in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible. And the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices (ibid).

In this sense, capital can be understood as the social powers which regulate one's positions in the 'social space' over time. One key contribution of Bourdieu's notion of capital is his identification of four distinct forms of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1986, 1987). In this, Bourdieu clarifies his concept of social capital and its close interrelatedness with other forms of capital. According to Bourdieu the most fundamental is economic capital: it refers to one's total wealth and includes financial assets and monetary goods. Secondly, his most distinct notion of cultural capital refers to forms of knowledge, attitudes, education, and demeanours learned from exposure to role models in the family. These are inherited, embodied in family units and differentiated by social classes Bourdieu maintains that:

cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e. in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee (Bourdieu 1986, pp.243).

This conception of cultural capital is further explained by Block (2014) as the following:

It is subjective because it is 'embodied', as one's ever evolving psychomotricity and the 'feel for the game' required to interact with conspecifics in social activities. It is objective: first, as existent in material artefacts (cultural goods like books and gadgets), which come to index distinction and taste; and second, as the congealed social validation, legitimation and recognition conferred onto those who have the right educational qualifications or taste in art or other forms of cultural expression (Block 2014, pp.53).

In Bourdieu's (1984) work, *Distinction*, there is a profound explanation of the relatedness between cultural capital as well as taste and particular social class groups, such as the institutionalised and legitimated cultural capital and taste possessed by educated middle/upper-middle class. Atkinson (2015) relates this notion of cultural capital to human intelligence, which can be measured 'through education qualifications', including the use of certain modes of language as well as 'the capability to articulate and formalize abstract principles of, and logic relationships between, items and experiences in the world' (pp. 62). These include, for example, 'recognizing art work as Impressionist', 'linking one's behaviour to global warming' or 'seeing a politician's speech as 'ideology' in action' (ibid). Thirdly, social capital is 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' and is also 'to membership in a group -- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collective-owned capital' (Bourdieu 1986,

pp. 248-249). Finally, in *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu refers to symbolic capital as: 'the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability' (pp. 291) and later further addresses it as a 'degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity or honour and ... founded on a dialectic of knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*)' (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 7). Therefore, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital refers to resources available to an individual mostly in a form of prestige, which signifies 'all the other capitals when perceived as legitimate...granting authority or recognition' (Atkinson 2015, pp. 63). Once symbolic capital becomes legitimate within that culture, it is viewed as a crucial resource of social power (Bourdieu 1991).

Bourdieu (1986) argues that there are convertible interrelationships between all forms of capital, not only the legitimation of any or all other capitals into 'symbolic capital' but also the convertibility between economic, cultural, and social capital. For instance, economic capital is 'at the root' of all forms of capital and 'different types of capital can be derived from economic capital' (pp. 252). Bourdieu claims that the convertibility among different forms of capital constructs the standpoint of the reproduction of social force/capital and the combination of varying degrees of social, cultural and economic capital distinguishes an individual's class position (*ibid*). For instance, both cultural and social capital can be converted on the one hand into economic capital, such as educational qualifications and a title of nobility (*ibid*), which might enable an individual to gain access to better career opportunities and additional business resources. On the other hand, accessing social capital needs the investment of both cultural and economic capital. In particular, social capital can only be accumulated through certain social structures, so that an individual with high educational status and/or substantial wealth would be able to become a member of a group with a high social status (*ibid*). This clearly suggests that the process of the accumulation of social capital is strongly orientated to the existing social hierarchy and linked to the resources to an individual has access.

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of capital and his claim regarding the convertibility between various forms of capital go beyond the standard definition given in classical economics of capital as monetary wealth. It moves from the emphasis on money as a social force causing social struggles (Marx and Engels, cited in Block 2014), to a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of social forces that shift the structure of social space, in that the total amount and composition of capital individuals and their connections possess defines a person's relative position in a given social world (Bourdieu 1987). Those who share similar positions are placed in similar conditions and therefore, 'have a chance of the same *habitus*' (Bourdieu 1987, pp.5), which refers to an individual's constitutions of tastes, skills and dispositions based on his/her life/family trajectory (Bourdieu 1984, 1990).

To Bourdieu, social relations draw on the ‘sense of one’s place’ in the social world, which refers to the way ‘the disposition acquired in the position occupied involves an adjustment to this position’ (Bourdieu 1987, pp.6). He argues that associations and social connections between individual groups take place as follows:

that objective distances tend to reproduce themselves in the subjective experience of distance. This sense of one's place is at the same time a sense of the place of others, and, together with the affinities of habitus experienced in the form of personal attraction or revulsion, is at the root of all processes of cooperation, friendship, love, association, etc., and thereby provides the principle of all durable alliances and connections, including legally sanctioned relationships. (Bourdieu 1987, pp.6).

An important point to draw from this claim is that individuals make sense of their own places and those of others in particular social spaces and experience social relations based on their sense of their own and others’ positions in the social world. As Navarro (2006) comments, the similarity of individuals is ‘developed through processes of socialisation and determines a wide range of dispositions that shape individuals in a given society’ (pp.6).

In this process of making sense of similarities and differences between oneself and others in the ‘social space’ (Bourdieu 1987, pp.1), Bourdieu argues that individuals have opportunities to build up relations with others who can help them engage in the pursuit of interests. This view is helpful for us to understand his assertion of the self-interested nature of social group relations. More precisely, an individual needs to be associated with others in order to access resources: associations, private clubs, classes, friends’ networks and other types of networks and the profits arising for individuals from such group membership are defined by Bourdieu as social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). He argues that ‘the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible’ (ibid, pp. 249). Thus, he reveals the self-interested nature of group networks and specifies the shared benefits as the eventual forces for the construction of social connections. As Portes (1998) comments, ‘the benefits accruing to individuals by virtue of participation in groups and ... the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource’ are the fundamental basis of Bourdieu’s notion of social capital (pp. 3).

Similarly, in Bourdieu’s sense, social capital as one of the four forms of capital is also ‘accumulated labour’ (Bourdieu 1986). He argues that ‘the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possess in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected’ (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 249). In other words, social capital will accrue once the individual has access to the economic, cultural or symbolic capital that is possessed by others in the individual’s social connections. In this sense, the number of that individual’s social connections and

the resources possessed by her/his social circles are significant for the accumulation of social capital. Quinn (2010) comments that Bourdieu's notion of the accumulation of social capital 'is shaped by the material, cultural and symbolic status of the group and its habitus or life world, and thus patterned by structural inequalities' (pp. 66).

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital goes beyond the study of its defined forms and functions. It moves from a conceptualisation of social capital as functional to a view of it as natural, paying close attention to the class-based and individually focused nature of social capital. Thus, in order to pursue interests, power, and social positions, individuals are engaged in the process of the production and reproduction of the social order. Another significant point is that Bourdieu's distinctive recognition of the class-based and individually focused nature of social capital is not only connected to his theory of class-based social hierarchy and re/production of existing social order, but also couched in his illustration of social capital in relation to other forms of capital, and the convertibility between all different forms of capital.

It must be noted that Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital and symbolic capital have been influential in sociolinguistic studies, which lead to further discussion on his notion of linguistic capital. It is particularly noticeable that in recent times there has been an increasing call for a return to social class in the field of applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, which is informed by Bourdieu's work on capital and class. For instance, Block (2014) calls clear attention to the significance of social class in applied and sociolinguistics in relation to resource inequality and its role in making 'sense of the social realities' in our current modern society (pp.2). Elsewhere, Snell (2013) focuses on the semiotic resources of working-class children's choice of linguistic forms and raises the issues of the inequality caused by the educational response towards such choices at schools. A number of other sociolinguistic studies have placed a similar focus on social class (see further studies in Block 2016; Block & Corona 2016; Snell 2014, 2018; Preece 2018, 2019). For instance, Preece's (2019) most recent work studies the intersection between identity and social class among students in higher education institutions in the UK. In this work, she focuses on different experiences students have in relation to their multilingualism in higher education and investigates how students' social class backgrounds impact on their multilingual experiences. Preece concludes that while certain languages and linguistic practices are viewed as resources, others are required to be erased. While university students from upper/middle-class background 'experience their multilingual repertoire as resources and assets', the multilingual repertoire of students from working-class backgrounds is devalued. Thus, she claims that the plurilingual pedagogy in anglophone higher educational institutions reproduces social inequality to wider society. This seems to resonate with Bourdieu's notion, discussed above, of educational institutions

reinforcing social inequality, which is informed by his concept of cultural and social capital.

More developed discussions of Bourdieu's notion of social capital have appeared in the field of economics, with attempts to understand its interrelationship with the process of economic development and business growth (e.g. Lin 1999, 2001b). In the area of migrant studies, despite Bourdieu's lack of attention to ethnicity, research primarily investigates the social, cultural and economic resources available to different migrant communities, the connections between different forms of available resources and the negotiation of social capital in their engagement with life in host countries. One example is the lack of resources and potentials in host countries, particularly the struggle to accumulate social capital within a poor migrant community. For instance, in Cheong's (2006) study of a Hispanic immigrant neighbourhood in Los Angeles, she reveals the difficulties Hispanic immigrants faced in building social capital due to the lack of other forms of capital and resources available to them. Cheong examines the physical, psychological, social-cultural and economic features of the Hispanic neighbourhood, and the result shows a dearth of clean and accessible community space, a fear of being in the neighbourhood, tensions concerning discrimination and inter-ethnic conflicts, and a daily battle for financial survival in the Hispanic minority community. She concludes that the particular communication models created amidst the poor living conditions, fearful psychological conditions, conflicted socio-cultural climate, and impoverished economic situation massively affect and limit the creation of social capital in the community. As Cheong concludes, social capital is 'both an outcome and exacerbation of social and ethnic inequalities', and 'some immigrant families may enter the disadvantaged underclass while drawing on the various forms of capital provided by their ethnic communities' (ibid, pp. 5).

Thus far, I have given a brief review of Bourdieu's theory of social power, social order and his various forms of capital with a particular focus on his notion of social capital as resources that emerge from existing social order and structure and its close relationship with other forms of capital. In the next section, I examine issues of civic engagement and the related notion of social capital, following American political scientist, Robert Putnam.

### *2.2.2 Social capital and civic engagement*

Robert Putnam has been highly influential in promoting studies of social capital in areas of social politics, focusing on the functions of social capital for community and national development. In particular, he emphasises the significance of social capital in the development of civic community and social cohesion, revealing its importance in people's engagement with the life of their communities, including areas of politics, public affairs, community welfare

and development. According to Putnam (1995), social capital refers to social networks, norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness, in which social networks are 'connections among individuals', norms of reciprocity indicate 'mutual expectations that a benefit granted now should be repaid in the future' (Putnam 1993a, pp.172), and trustworthiness refers to social trust among individuals fostered by social networks and norms of reciprocity (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000).

Therefore, Putnam introduces social capital as 'features of social organizations, such as trust, norms and networks, which can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (1993a, pp. 167), emphasising its nature as being for the public good and promoting social capital in terms of community benefits, social strengths and collective goods for the development of society as a whole.

Taking the position that social capital is the essence of communal or/and national strength, Putnam argues that civic engagement, namely 'active participation in public affairs' (Putnam 1993a, pp. 88), provides space for the generation of social capital and is thus the fundamental base for a well-developed region or/and nation. He emphasises that 'reciprocity', which is the 'social ability to collaborate for shared interests', is the most fundamental matter to the civic community as it 'generates high social capital and underpins collaboration' (ibid, pp. 182-183), whereas collaboration works better in 'a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement' (ibid, pp. 167).

This notion is elaborated in his early study of local governmental development during the period of the regional governmental reformation in Italy in the 1970s and 1980s. Based on a longitudinal survey with comparisons spanning two decades and a simultaneous comparison of twenty regions along multiple dimensions in modern Italy, Putnam (1993a) concludes that civic engagement is one of the most powerful forces for the success of the northern regions in Italy. He claims that the 'intense horizontal interactions' (ibid, pp.172) bring 'together agents of equivalent status and power,' cultivate generalized reciprocity, and 'facilitate communication' (ibid, pp. 174). These are essential for such civic engagement, whereas 'vertical networks' which link 'unequal agents in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence' are not able to sustain social trust and cooperation since vertical networks contain dependent relations among the 'agents' and the vertical flows of information are less reliable (ibid, pp. 173). A key claim he made in this study is that social capital, 'embodied in horizontal networks of civic engagement, bolsters the performance of the polity and the economy' (ibid, pp. 176). Here, the idea that 'horizontal interactions', the interactions of individuals with relatively equal social status and social power, create the best interactions for social capital appears to be somewhat plausible, if we follow Bourdieu's early assertion that people from similar sociocultural backgrounds tend to build up networks where they

can make great use of each other's resources (see earlier section). However, Putnam has not conducted further discussions on the possibility of unequal access to resources among different social groups, nor has he mentioned the ultimate class-based and self-interest driven nature of social capital. Whereas, for Bourdieu, there was an important connection between the nature of social capital and the accumulation of it, Putnam primarily focused on the functional side of the concept.

An important point to draw from Putnam's notion of social capital in his later studies of the decline of social capital in America (Putnam 1995) and its relatedness to public life (1993b, 2000) is his introduction of two forms of social capital: bonding (inclusive) social capital and bridging (exclusive) social capital. As Putnam comments, the former is 'inward-looking and tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups' while the latter is 'outward-looking and encompasses people across diverse social cleavages' (Putnam 1995, pp. 22). Putnam states that bonding social capital bolsters special reciprocity and activates solidarity; by contrast, bridging social capital enables the linkage to 'external assets' such as resources that are not normally found in one's own social group, and 'information diffusion', which is the sharing and spreading of information.

Putnam also points out that bonding and bridging usually take place simultaneously in many social groups; for example, the African-American church community unites the same race and religion but also different classes of people (Putnam, 2000). In his later work, Putnam claims that 'high bonding might well be compatible with high bridging, and low bonding with low bridging' (Putnam 2007, pp. 144). This seems to be credible, if we consider Bourdieu's argument that the existing social order re/produces social hierarchy to benefit those who have power; in this sense, individuals who have extensive resources and knowledge of networking tend to sustain their resources both 'in-group' and 'out-group'.

It must be noted that Putnam's identification of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital offers a theoretical approach for studies related to the phenomenon of in-groups and out-groups, in particular, in the fields of migrant studies, ethnic community education and migrant bilingualism, mostly focusing on its role in promoting social cohesion. For instance, Zhou and Kim's (2006) study reveals that while the resources offered by the Los Angeles Chinese community through Chinese complementary schools and other Chinese community afterschool institutions - such as help with school work and exam training - provide support for their children's high academic achievements, the ethnic community fails to support the Chinese youth in their post-graduation employment opportunities. Zhou and Kim (2006) conclude that the 'bonding' social capital generated in the Chinese complementary schools does not assist their children in finding a career in the fields of science or engineering that most of

them have been studying, since there is no 'external' support from the host US community.

With a similar approach, Hagan (1998) focuses on the settlement of the Mayan community in Houston, Texas, and investigates the impact of the community-based network on Mayan immigrants' lives. She suggests that well-established community-based networks provide rich resources for Mayan immigrants to successfully adapt to the host society, highlighting the positive impacts of bonding social capital for migrants' engagement with the host society. However, she also concludes that the dynamics of the network support male Mayan migrants to enable them to develop further in terms of economic and legal status while they constrain Mayan migrant women's development in the long run, and notes the need for greater focus on gender in further studies of the notion of bridging and bonding social capital.

In the field of sociolinguistics, powerful discussions often focus on the connection between bilingualism and 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. For instance, Grim-Feinburg's (2007) research on a bilingual programme for Mexican migrants shows the generation of both 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital through improving bilingual (Spanish and English) competence in a Mexican transnational community in upstate New York, suggesting that involvement in bilingual language programs increases the migrant community's social capital and facilitates connections both with the Mexican community and the New York host society. Another example is in Zhao's (2013) study, which investigates the role of ethnic group networks for a particular group of Chinese migrants from Fujian province. Conducted in Fujianese communities in New York City and Philadelphia, the study reviews the importance of community language-based networks in maintaining profits for new 'illegal' migrant workers and underground bank owners. Although the term 'bonding' social capital is hardly mentioned in the study, it is an empirical instance of the use of bonding social capital for the members of a tightly-knit, community-language-based, Fujianese ethnic group, particularly for those undocumented migrants with few economic possessions and no legal status or linguistic capital. In this study, Zhao reveals the high level of ethnic solidarity and enforceable trust within the Fujianese community, while at the same time presenting a vivid picture of the constraints and empowerment of bonding social capital for the most vulnerable members - the 'illegal' migrant workers - in the community. Thus, the research also seems to reveal a significant element of social class within the generation of 'bonding' social capital, which is often overlooked in Putnam's early works.

Unlike Bourdieu, who sees individuals' possession of resources and social status shape their connections with certain groups of people, Putnam relates the accumulation of social capital to individual social skills and believes that people who are able to make social connections and friendships are more likely to have the potential to generate both in-group and out-group resources. In a

sense, Putnam's study of social capital seems to discount the matter of social class and its significant role in regulating one's social relations and connections with others. For Putnam, a fairly cooperative environment for one's social relations and interactions appears to be the foundation of social cohesion and community/national development, which is intrinsically linked to his theory of the generation of social capital. While Putnam overlooks Bourdieu's major work, he highly values American sociologist James Coleman's theory of social capital. In the next section, I will review some key issues of Coleman's notion of social capital.

### *2.2.3 Social capital and youth education*

James Coleman was a major American scholar of social capital theory in the field of education. He is well known for highlighting the significance of social capital in relation to human capital. Coleman illustrates a picture in which members of a community are able to access resources inherent within families and communities, collaborating and cooperating in the pursuit of community youth development. Coleman believes that social capital emerges in particular social relations and social structures. He defines social capital as 'a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure' (Coleman 1988, p 98). In his studies, Coleman particularly focuses on different social relations and structures which enable people to benefit from the resources embodied within them. As Burt (2000) remarks, this approach to social capital refers to a function of social structure that produces benefits and advantages. Coleman (1988) identifies three forms of social relations in which he believes social capital emerge. Firstly, the form of 'obligations, expectations, trustworthiness of structures' implies social structures in which 'people are always doing things for each other' based on 'the trustworthiness of the social environment' (pp. 102) and 'bounded solidarity' (Portes 1998, pp. 8). Secondly, the form of 'information channels' refers to 'social relations that constitute a form of social capital that provides information that facilitates action' (Coleman 1988, pp.103). Portes (1998) describes this as the most common function attributed to social capital and 'a source of network-mediated benefits beyond the immediate family' (pp. 12). Finally, 'norms and effective sanctions' indicate the 'effective norms' that are 'reinforced by social support, status, honor and other rewards' and 'facilitate certain actions' and 'constrain' other actions so that one acts 'in the interest of the collectivity' (Coleman 1988, pp. 104). Portes (1998) states that this is 'created by tight community networks and functions as a source of 'social control' which 'is useful to parents, teachers, and police authorities' to 'maintain discipline and promote compliance' (pp. 10).

James Coleman applies this notion of social capital to the field of education and explores the impact of family participation and community support on children's academic achievements. From this perspective, the emphasis of social capital shifts to 'the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organization and that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person' (Coleman 1990b, pp. 300). These resources include family participation, community norms and social networks, which Coleman identifies as family and community social capital (Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Coleman 1988, 1990a, 1990b). As Portes (1998) comments, this type of social capital functions 'as a source of parental and kin support' and benefits the children's personality and educational development (pp. 10-11). This is first demonstrated in Coleman and Hoffer's (1987) large-scale study funded by the U.S. government, in which they compare high school students' academic achievements in basic skills by measuring the standardized tests in various subjects within three sectors: public schools, private Catholic schools and non-Catholic private schools. They find that students in Catholic schools performed better than those in the public and non-Catholic private school sectors. Based on their investigations of the social contexts and resources of the Catholic school students, they conclude that family participation, community norms, and social networks within the Catholic community are key factors for the success of Catholic high school students.

In his later work, Coleman takes a closer look at the impact of family and community on school students' academic performances by exploring such effects on equal education opportunities in the United States. He tries to unearth the sources of unequal opportunities in the American school system among 'blacks, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, Mexican Americans, Oriental Americans and whites' (Coleman 1990a, pp. 69). Based on a large-scale national survey, which covers around 4,000 elementary and secondary schools across the States, he examines the influences of schools, families and community on students' academic achievements and concludes that it is a child's family and community social background rather than the school s/he attends, that has the most impact on a child's achievement at school. Coleman (1990b) identifies the key variables of such family and community social resources, namely, 'the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up', as social capital (pp. 334). He asserts that the inequality of school opportunities is indeed mostly driven by these variables. Thus, according to Coleman, family and community social resources are the essential force that reduces the inequality of the school education system in the States. This notion is further elaborated in Zhou and Kim's (2006) study of the origins of the extraordinary educational achievements of the children of Chinese and Korean migrants in the United States. Focusing on the Chinese community in the county of Los Angeles, their study suggests that ethnic resources in the local Chinese community, such as non-profit 'Chinese

language schools' and 'for-profit' private institutions, which both offer after-school childhood education programmes and college preparation for ethnic Chinese children and youth, increase the Chinese migrants' children's high educational achievements.

Coleman further argues that human capital possessed by the parents (the parents' education) will not play a significant role in the child's academic success without being intertwined with the participation of the family and community. He focuses on the social structures in which social resources emerge in families and communities and concludes that certain forms of family and community relations foster the support for the children. Coleman thus considers the family participations as the social capital of the family and the community norms and social networks as the social capital of the community. The former refers to the relations between the parents and children in a family and relies on the parents' presence in the family and attention given to the child. The latter refers to the social capital constituted within the outside community and consists of the social relations among the parents and the relations between the parents and the institutions of the community.

Coleman emphasises one particular social relation that fosters the social capital of the community, which is a 'social structure with closure' (Coleman 1988, 1990b). In this sense, 'closure' refers to 'the existence of sufficient ties between a certain number of people to guarantee the observance of norms' (Portes 1998, pp. 6). In the context of a child's development, such a structure with 'closure' in a community indicates 'the parents' friends are the parents of their children's friends' (Coleman 1988, pp.106); this enables the parents to monitor their children, encourage the children's positive behaviours and/or limit negative influences, and facilitate social capital for the child's development. Thus, the necessary condition for the emergence of community social capital depends on the social structure of 'closure'.

This seems to be evident in Vesely, Ewaida and Kearney's (2013) study of an early childhood education (ECE) programme offered to local communities in order to support migrant families in their children's educational development in Washington DC, in the States. The study investigates how low-income Latina and African migrant mothers generate human and social capital for their children through the ECE programme and reveals that the relationships created with ECE teachers, staff and other mothers through the programme are valued as a major benefit for parenting their children in the host country. The research shows that the 'reciprocal relationships' built with other parents through the ECE networks offer 'a variety of parenting supports, including logistical, emotional and informational supports' (pp. 755), which reflects Coleman's core notion of family and community social capital.

Coleman's concept of social capital focuses on its positive impacts as the public good on community youth development. He takes a close look at various

social relations in which useful social resources emerge for children's development within family and community units, and reveals the impact of such resources on young people's school outcomes. In his studies, Coleman displays overt interest in revealing particular forms of social capital and stresses certain social relations and social structures that enable positive functions of family and community social capital in relation to the development of children's human capital. This allows the exploration of community and family social capital in relation to youth development, providing some structural frameworks for further social capital studies, and highlighting the significance of social capital in the field of education. Portes (1998) concludes that Coleman provides two main contributions to social capital theory. The first of these is his work on the 'social control' function of social capital, i.e. tight community networks function as a social force for parents and teachers to maintain discipline. The second is the parental and kin support function of social capital, exemplified in Coleman's work on East-Asian stay-at-home mothers who were engaged with their children's homework. Coleman theorises social capital as resources of social cohesion and integration, particularly resources for youth education. However, along with Putnam, Coleman's concept of social capital also fails to problematise the relations between individuals and neglects to consider the power relations and conflicts which exist in our class-based modern society.

So far, I have interpreted literature and studies through different lenses of social capital. Although some of Putnam's work is based in Italy (see Putnam 1993a), much of his research (e.g. Putnam 1993b, 1995, 1996, 2000), along with Coleman's (e.g. 1986a, 1986b, 1987, 1988, 1990a, 1990b), focuses on modern American society. Bourdieu's (e.g. 1977, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1990) insights emphasise French society. While mindful of these significant Anglo-American and European readings of social capital, I feel that it is important to look at social capital through a Chinese lens in the following section, as this study mainly focuses on first-generation Chinese migrants.

### **2.3 Guanxi and its relatedness to social capital**

To bring a Chinese perspective to bear on this literature, it is necessary to explore how social capital is understood within Chinese scholarship. The closest Chinese concept related to social capital is *Guanxi*, which describes people's social relations from a Chinese perspective, deeply rooted in Confucian culture and dominating the functioning of Chinese society (e.g. Barbalet 2015; Bian 2006; Bian and Zhang 2014; Lin 2001a, 2017). In order to understand the concept, first I feel it is necessary to give a brief introduction to its ancient Confu-

cian standpoint. Confucianism emphasises human relatedness in a social context and promotes the following values: familial piety, which entails respecting one's parents, elders and ancestors; humaneness, which involves caring for and considering other human beings and seeking out harmonious relationships with others; and ritual consciousness/propriety, which entails doing things properly in all aspects of life (Oxnam and Bloom n.d.). These three core values of Confucianism reveal two important aspects of traditional Chinese ways of living: first, the importance of and priority given to respecting tradition, social roles, institutions and social hierarchies; and second, the potential for, and goal of human beings coexisting in harmony (Zhang et al. 2005). Both elements overtly emphasise the importance of harmonious human social relations in an existing social hierarchy, which, for some, are the goals of maintaining ancient Chinese social and economic order via stressing the importance of associating oneself with others within the 'social and natural orders of the world' (Bai 2006, pp. 15).

This Confucian view of human social relationships has been essential for the operation of contemporary Chinese society, and it has been intensively examined in numerous modern studies on the concept of Guanxi in Chinese society. The essential point of 'reciprocity and the mutual responsibility' for one another in Confucianism (Oxnam and Bloom n.d.), which is rooted in the modern Chinese concept of Guanxi, seems to provide a common ground for a discussion on the links between studies of Guanxi and the notions of social capital discussed above.

I first borrow the most basic definition of Guanxi from Chen and Chen (2004), which is 'personal connections between two or more people' (pp. 308), in order to present the simplest meaning of the Chinese word. However, Guanxi can be understood as a more complicated phenomenon: it often refers to the building of complex social relationships in Chinese society and 'is a dominant form' of social and economic exchange among the Chinese people, with the emphasis on the side of social exchange (Lin 2001a, pp153). It is further regarded as the reflection of reciprocity of long-term obligation (Qi 2012), relationship ties, trust (Yang 1994) and sentiments (Lin 2001a). Through these, exchanges of feelings and material goods are both involved (Yang 2001). Such exchanges 'are used to cultivate and strengthen relationships that are expected to continue. In the process, not only obligation and advantages are achieved, but also some degree of trust' (Smart, 1993, pp. 400). Many researchers take a network/social ties approach to the study of Guanxi, focusing on the analysis of the form of Guanxi, the measurement of its social dimensions, and the investigation of its types of social ties. While early scholars focus on Guanxi's familial, pseudo-familial<sup>7</sup> and kinship obligation based on sentiment and closeness in rural agricultural Chinese societies (Liang 1949/1986, cited in Bian

<sup>7</sup> Referring to intimate friendship, a general indication is that friends call each other sisters or brothers (Lin 1989).

2017), recent studies have engaged with its favour exchange and networking nature within kinship and non-kinship relations based on trust, loyalty and asymmetric social exchange in contemporary urban Chinese societies (Bian 1997; Bian 2001; Lin 1998, 2001a; Yang 1994). In particular, some contemporary scholars point out that the core of cultivation of Guanxi lies in one's reputation as a giver of favours and a bridge to resources within all sorts of kin and non-kin social relationships (Bian 2001; Lin 2001a). It is noticeable that a common argument made in these studies of Guanxi is its close interrelatedness to social capital (see Chen and Chen 2004; Dunning and Kim 2007; Lin 2001a). This approach views benefits and resources as the ultimate goals of the practice of Guanxi and it is imperative to take into consideration of social capital in the discussion of Guanxi. For instance, Yanjie Bian, a Chinese - American scholar who is prominent in the study of Guanxi theory, has conducted numerous studies related to social network theory and the concept of Guanxi, focussing on the Chinese cultural background of the concept with a global social network approach. In these studies, he has conducted analyses of the different levels of the social ties embedded in Guanxi and measured the outcomes of the benefits obtained through Guanxi (e.g. Bian 1997, 2006, 2010, 2017). Bian defines Guanxi as 'a dyadic, particular, and sentimental tie that has potential of facilitating favor exchange between the parties connected by the tie' (Bian 2006, pp.312) and considers Guanxi as 'local knowledge', a form of networks with 'particular ties', and a mobiliser of resources (Bian 2017). Thus, for him, Guanxi is a form of networks/social ties with a Chinese cultural context, in which benefits and resources/social capital are articulated and individual/organisational achievements take place. This approach to the concept of Guanxi can be traced back to Bian's early definition of 'Guanxi capital', through which he particularly identifies the social capital couched in the form of Guanxi (Bian 2001). Social capital in a Guanxi context is further examined in a study by Bian and Zhang (2014) in which they further identify corporate social capital embedded in Guanxi culture and outside it, and compare the difference. One of Bian's contributions to the study of social capital and theory of Guanxi is his identification of social capital articulated in specific forms of social occasions within Guanxi culture; for example, the building and development of Guanxi through social eating, drinking and significant cultural events, such as, holidays, festivals, and birthdays in China (see Bian 2001; Bian et al. 2005).

However, not every scholar sees Guanxi as a form of social relations that is specific only to Chinese cultural contexts; many emphasise it as a universal phenomenon with a prevalence in Chinese cultural societies. It is quite plausible that many elements of Guanxi appear to be significantly relevant to the Western notions of social capital discussed earlier in this chapter. There is indeed a growing body of literature that considers Guanxi as a neglected Chinese form that conveys social capital. For instance, Nan Lin, a China-born scholar, educated in Taiwan and the United States, and now holding a professorship at

Duke University in North Carolina, is well known in the field of social networks and social capital studies, particularly in relation to human social and business relations within Chinese cultural contexts. Taking a network-building approach to the notions of social capital, Lin pays close attention to the process of social network building and the measurement of social capital (Lin 1999, 2001b, 2008). A similar network approach was applied to his study of Guanxi. For instance, in his (2001a) article, Lin presents a detailed analysis of the nature of Guanxi and articulates the following traits of the concept: its instrumental purpose; its access to direct and indirect social ties and benefits; its maintenance on a 'sentimental or emotional basis'; its rational practice; the ways in which its imbalance in transactions (between favour-seeker and favour-giver) leads to the promotion of both the giver's and the seeker's reputations and 'social standing'; and the way it is sustained over time. Thus, he concludes that Guanxi is 'enduring, sentimentally based instrumental relations that invoke private transactions of favours and public recognitions of asymmetric exchanges' (pp. 159) and believes that such characteristics show traits of general 'social exchange' (a long-term commitment to maintain relationships) (ibid, pp. 160). He argues that Guanxi is a universal phenomenon of social relations rather than a unique type of social relations in Chinese cultural contexts, despite its deep Confucianism roots and prevalent operation in Chinese culture and society. Lin (2001a) maintains that although economic exchange is involved, the ideology of social exchange for social capital - 'built through maintaining of exchange relationship in which favour giving and favour receiving are transacted' and 'measured by reputation' (pp.160) - is dominant in Guanxi. In addition, Lin (2008, pp.6) notes that the accumulation of social capital, which is highlighted as 'investment in social relations with expected returns', is the goal of the practice of Guanxi. This resonates with Bourdieu's notion of social capital discussed earlier in this chapter, emphasising the individual level of social capital and its exchange of mutual gain. Far from being separate and separable, Lin clearly explores the close interrelatedness between the Western versions of social capital and the Chinese concept of Guanxi, and this is supported by various other scholars. For instance, in Qi's (2013) article, he explicitly matches the key words of Guanxi to the essential elements of Coleman's (1988) and Putnam's (1995) concepts of social capital as follows: 'xinyong' as 'trustworthiness;' 'renqing' as 'norms of interpersonal behaviour;' 'mianzi' as 'face;' 'huibao' as 'obligatory reciprocity'' (pp. 13). Thus, Qi emphasises that various characteristics of social capital are conveyed in the notion of Guanxi. Later, Pantea (2015) further contends that similarly to Putnam's (1995) 'bonding' social capital, Guanxi develops a united community to share resources and information, whilst it shares the same characteristics as Putnam's (1995) 'bridging' social capital in that it fosters links to the outside world.

The above studies of Guanxi explicitly emphasise the interrelatedness between Guanxi and elements of social capital, indicating a symbiotic relationship between the two concepts in which benefits and resources/social capital are brought into being through the practice of Guanxi. Despite its deep connections with the essentials of social capital, it is worth noting, first, that Putnam's approach to social capital is civic engagement-based with the focus on democratic participation, while the idea of Guanxi points to individual social gain and the maintenance of the status quo through personal relations in the existing social hierarchy. Second, most concepts of Guanxi study focus on the economic and social exchange within various social relations and interactions, whereas Bourdieu's notion of social capital emphasises the accumulation of resources within a hierarchical societal system and re/produces social inequality. As class difference is an emerging topic in this study, I attempt to align myself with reference to different notions of social capital and with consideration of Guanxi as references to gain a finer-grained understanding of social relations in the complementary school setting in Germany. In the following chapter, I will present my research methodology and demonstrate the path to my empirical research and fieldwork.

## 3 Research design and methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

Having set out the conceptual framework for the study of social capital in relation to parental social interactions, specifically to a group of first-generation migrant parents at a Chinese complementary school site in a major city in Germany, I explore the role of the school for first-generation migrant parents beyond the education of their children and reveal the significance of parental social interactions. In this chapter, I introduce the research methodology and design used in exploring these issues. This is followed in subsequent chapters by the analysis of the findings, which focuses on the following three research questions:

1. What is the nature of the social relationships among first-generation Chinese migrants in Germany in the setting of their children's complementary school?
2. In what ways do the parental groups and their interaction in the complementary school setting facilitate their social status in the Chinese migrant community and wider German society?
3. What do the findings suggest about social capital in complementary school settings and its significance for first-generation migrant parents?

As I address these three research questions in the subsequent analysis chapters, I aim to shed light on the main focus of the study, which is the value of the social interaction for first-generation migrant parents at Hua Hua School. Thus, the aim of this study is threefold: first, to understand first-generation migrant parental interactions as an informal practice of a Chinese complementary school in a major German city by reviewing the nature of their group interactions at the school setting; second, to reveal the empowerment and constraints of such social interactions on the lives of the parents in Germany; and third, to theorise the significance of their social interactions at the school in relation to social capital.

The first part of the present chapter begins with a discussion of the research design, giving a critical account of ethnography and the reasons for choosing an ethnographically-orientated approach for the study. I will then present an overview of the research setting, including details of the school along with a rationale for selecting this school and why it forms a representative context. This is followed by an introduction to all the participants in regard to how they were recruited, why they are representative, the ethical issues that needed to be

taken into account during the research, and the relationship between the researcher and researched. Next, I will discuss the research methodology chosen for the study, giving an account of each of the data-collection tools and the data-collection process. This includes the total amount of data collected, the relationship of the data sets to one other, issues that were faced during data collection and their resolution, and an explanation of the steps taken during fieldwork. Finally, I describe my approach to data analysis and how this has been carried out in a systematic manner.

## **3.2 Research philosophical stance**

Throughout this study, my belief in the nature of truth and what I accept as knowledge have been the driving forces that guide my approaches, including the design and process of research. During the first research phase, I was informed by the notion of social constructionism that reality is relative, multiple and uncertain, and that knowledge is perceived (Rubin and Rubin 2012). This suggests that truth is ‘socially constructed’ through shared understanding of objects and activities, and reciprocal interactions between individuals and groups based on the experiences and expectations that they bring to a situation (Gergen and Gergen 1991). Thus, reality is an on-going meaning-making process, in which ‘social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors’ (Bryman 2012). These natures of reality are particularly significant to the onset of the present study, as it aims to explore the phenomenon of human experiences, their negotiations, and their construction of meanings through social interactions.

## **3.3 Research methodology**

### *3.3.1 Qualitative study*

These philosophical stances drew me to consider the research methodology and methods especially with regard to choosing the most appropriate approach. I chose to conduct a small-scale qualitative study with the aim of investigating social interactions of first-generation migrant parents and the negotiation of their social positions through such interactions. The choice of qualitative approach was, firstly, made on account of the complex and in-depth nature of researching the lives, feelings and experiences of people that form the basis this study. Secondly, this approach was selected based on the attempts of this

research to prioritise the participants' subjectivity, human agency and experience. Through these factors, I hope to give voice to, and to present a viewpoint of, the parents.

Qualitative research examines 'things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' and 'involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the world' (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). Such inquiry is specifically relevant to studies of human social relations (Flick 2009), such as the values, opinions, feelings, experiences and social contexts of particular people as it seeks to capture the development and/or patterns of individuals' lived experiences and life trajectories (Beck 1992). The nature of qualitative research is constructive and descriptive and is able to provide an in-depth insight into human lives and captures the complexity of human meaning constructions (see Denzin and Lincoln 2003; Geertz 1973; Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2014). In this respect, qualitative research is also 'the process of displaying the knowledge and findings as a substantial part of the research process, a continuous process of constructing versions of reality' (Flick 2018). Thus, a qualitative approach is well suited to my understanding of the nature of truth and intention of studying the complex lived experiences of the first-generation migrant parents through their social interactions with one another.

### *3.3.2 Ethnographically orientated multilingual research*

The approach taken for data collection of this empirical study is ethnographically orientated. Ethnography 'involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives over an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions - in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995, pp.1). Cameron (2001) highlights a number of distinct features of ethnography and two particularly important features for this study are: firstly, the involvement of 'on-going regular contact' and participation by the researcher in the field; secondly, the research is conducted in a 'naturalistic setting' in order to understand the way of life of the participants (pp.54). In this sense, I took part in my participants' social interactions with each other at the Chinese complementary school for a period of time in order to explore the experiences they made in the broader sociocultural context in which they were immersed. This was carried out during my ten-month period of visits to Hua Hua School and the effort of regular involvement with the field and the participants. It is worth mentioning that although ethnography has its origin in anthropology, it need not necessarily follow the classical anthropological practice of long-term, intensive participant observation, but instead may involve more limited encounters with the field

(Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski 2008). In the case of this study, the onset was inspired by my involvement prior to this research with my daughter's Chinese complementary school located in another major city in Germany. It had been an extensive engagement with Chinese complementary schooling over a couple of years during my daughter's visits to her Chinese school. During that time, the aspect of parental interactions caught my attention and I was also involved in their networks. Such experiences formed the basis of my own intuitions in my engagement in conducting fieldwork for this study.

It is worth noting that the similar path I share with the participants - i.e. a first-generation Chinese national migrant, a parent of children in Chinese complementary schools, speaking the same languages as the participants - enables me to enter the school site easily and to be involved with the parents. It is particularly significant to point out that multilingualism is the key feature of this research. The multilingualism of both the researcher and the researched is central to this study. The similar linguistic repertoire I share with the participants has played an essential role for the fieldwork, defining a very different relationship between me and the participants. It would be difficult to be involved in the research site, in particular the informal parental interactions site, if I was not able to understand their languages and follow their conversations. During the course of this research, I have adopted Holmes et al.'s (2016) three-part conceptualisation of multilingual research, namely, 'realization', 'consideration', 'informed and purposeful decision-making' when linguistic issues and choices arise (pp. 90).

Another essential issue in ethnography is the significant role of the researcher in the research. The researcher's own cultural, educational, social and economic background as well as his/her own interpretations are crucial in making sense of the complexity, intricacy and interrelatedness of everyday activity in fieldwork (Blommaert 2001; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Goldbart and Hustler 2005). Thus, the understanding of myself as one part of the research process is significant in this study. I was aware of my self-constraint and the partiality of my interpretation and of the fact that my own narratives and subjectivities have crucial impacts on every stage of the research. The way I asked interview questions, the way I interpreted the answers, the angle I took for conducting the observations are shaped by my understanding and experiences of the world. While I do not subscribe to all of the ideologies encompassed in the domain of triangulation in ethnography, in particular those striving for reliability and validity, I find that Walker, Holloway and Wheeler's (2005) argument for 'authenticity' and 'trustworthiness' offers a convincing explanation of my methodological stance in fieldwork and data collection; that is, while subjective interpretations in qualitative research are inevitable, the researcher needs to make the assumptions visible. In the case of the present research, therefore, I have endeavoured to maintain awareness of my subjective interpretations and to make these visible to the readers.

## 3.4 Research design

### 3.4.1 *The local context – Hua Hua School*

In this section, I set the scene for the local context of this study in which the fieldwork took place. Hua Hua School is a Chinese complementary school located in, BCity<sup>8</sup>, a major city in Germany. Its main focus is to teach ethnic Chinese children the official Chinese language – Mandarin – with emphasis on sharing and imparting Chinese culture. At the time the fieldwork was being conducted, a small number of classes were offered for children from different ethnic backgrounds. The school was founded in 1992 by a group of Chinese doctoral students from various universities in Germany and was later handed over to the local Chinese community with the support of the education department of the Chinese Embassy. Hua Hua School operates in a local mainstream school and is allowed to use most of the school facilities, such as the classrooms in three different school buildings, the car parks, the playground, and the school auditorium.

When I conducted fieldwork, the school had nearly 500 children attending 36 different classes. It ran each Saturday during term time. Classes were divided into two sessions: morning classes were from 9:00 to 12:45 and afternoon classes were from 13:15 to 15:00. The children were able to attend either of the sessions according to the availability of the classes and their own Saturday schedules. There was a break from 12:45 to 13:15, which enabled the afternoon classes to get ready and allowed the teachers who taught through the whole day to have a lunch break.

Through personal contacts, I gained access to Hua Hua School and was able to visit the school before any official data was collected. During my first visits to the fieldwork site and over the course of data collection, my research interest and aim were shaped towards obtaining a deep understanding of the complexity of the informal parental interactions which I observed during my initial observation. This type of research interest requires the focuses on ‘a(n) *unique situated reality*: a complex of events which occurs in a totally unique context’ (Blommaert and Jie 2010). Due to the complex and contextualised nature of the phenomenon I wished to explore, I decided to focus on a more profound exploration of the phenomenon of parental interactions in the school setting within the limited time period and resources. Being able to conduct the fieldwork in a Chinese complementary school in a different city where my daughter did not attend provided some emotional distance for me as a researcher to step back and get a fresher insight into what was happening in an unfamiliar school setting. Through this I was hoping to avoid some difficulties

<sup>8</sup> pseudonym

in ‘native ethnography’, such as difficult relationships with participants who are also colleagues and friends, taking things for granted, and carrying preconceived notions to the site of fieldwork (ibid).

### 3.4.2 *The participant groups*

#### 3.4.2.1 Selection strategy

In order to investigate the parental social interactions through their spoken conversations at the school, I selected my participants by following their informal social interactions that occurred in the school setting. During the fieldwork period, there were a number of parental groups who gathered at the school setting while their children attended classes. Three of the groups normally came together for a chat. While two of these three groups usually met at the principal’s office located in school building A during different time periods of the day, the third group sometimes got together in the entrance hallway of school building B in the winter or in the school playground in the spring and summer. The fourth group met in another hallway at school building B for the purpose of practising ‘*Tai chi* 太极’ (one of the Chinese traditional martial arts), a fifth group sometimes gathered in the school playground for religious purposes, and another group came together for other sports activities. In this study, I primarily focus on the three chat-groups, since the focus of the study is the parental spoken interactions at the Chinese complementary school. I have named the three-parental chat-groups the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans, and the Marginalised. These names are based on the demeanours which emerged in the data presented in the later chapters.

The numbers of each of the chat-groups varied from time to time due to the fluid and evolving nature of the grouping process. Although during each of my visits to the school, each interaction group contained a different number of participants, the key participants regularly appeared at the setting. The table below shows the names of the key participants with a short profile of each group, and a more detailed profile of the participants for these groups is demonstrated in the data chapters.

Table 2: Key Participants of Three Parental Groups

The Networkers	The Cosmopolitans	The Marginalised
River (F)	Snow (F)	Tinnie (F)
Shang (F)	Fanny (F)	Cancan (F)
Lucy (F)	Gu (M)	Carol (F)
Mercy (F)	Hoo (M)	Qinqin (F)
Xue (M)	Kong (M)	Hanna (F)
	Wendy (F)	Sus (F)
	Ying (F)	
	Ling (F)	
	Inger (F)	

Source: author

Aside from one female of Chinese descent from Vietnam (whose children changed to a different Cantonese school not long after my fieldwork began), all the participants in this study came from various regions in mainland China and had migrated to Germany as adults. As discussed in the background chapter (Chapter 1), Chinese migrants in Germany have various social, linguistic, cultural and regional backgrounds. It is essential to bear such differences in mind in order to perceive the individual and group differences of the participants in the later analysis chapters. For instance, apart from the tremendous cultural, geographic and linguistic differences they brought from China, the participants also reflected a wide range of social and educational experiences from China, Germany and the States, and they were all from diverse social, economic, and educational backgrounds. The majority were also multilingual, speaking German, Mandarin and the languages of their own region in China as well as English. These backgrounds are crucial for my understanding of their interactions with one another. It will be revealed in the analysis section that participants' personal backgrounds and personal narratives are complexly interrelated in the way in which the three groups take up their subject positions when they negotiate their social position during the interactions.

#### 3.4.2.2 The locations

The three chat-groups were physically located in different places. The Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were located in the director's office in the

school building A. The room was as big as a proper school classroom: about 40m<sup>2</sup>. The room was designed as an office for the school management and also provided a space for teachers to have a quick lunch break. However, at the time of study, it also functioned as a gathering room for the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans during their children's lessons. Adjacent to the teachers' room was a small storage room where all the schoolbooks were kept. On one side of the room, next to the long glass windows, a couch, two armchairs and a couple of school chairs were arranged around a glass coffee table. On the same side, in the corner, there was a tall indoor plant. On the other side of the room next to the door, there were two bookshelves with glass doors. Except for one or two very cold and snowy Saturdays in the winter during my field-work visits, the room was often occupied by various numbers of parents.

The Networker group consisted of five to ten parents and was physically present every Saturday morning from 9:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. The key participants of this group had all attended universities and had professional careers in China before they came to Germany. At the time of the study, they were in their thirties, forties and fifties. The Cosmopolitan group consisted of a different number of participants each time when the fieldwork visits took place. They regularly gathered every Saturday afternoon from 12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. The number of participants varied from three to fifteen and five of them were regular participants. I was able to follow their major interactions and conduct two phases of in-depth interviews with them. Before they arrived in Germany, they had completed advanced levels of education in China and the States and were all involved in professional jobs in China or the States. The majority of the participants were either in their forties or fifties.

The Marginalised group was often located in the school playground or in the entrance/stair hall in school building B. When their children went to classes, the participants always gathered in front of one or two of the garden chairs in the playground when the weather was good. When it became cold, rainy or snowy, they sat on the stairways or windowstills in the entrance/stair hall. This group consisted of four to nine members and naturally gathered on Saturday afternoons from 12:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Most of them were in their thirties and forties. Unlike the participants of the Networker and Cosmopolitan groups who were from different areas of China, the majority of the Marginalised came from Canton or Zhejiang provinces located in Southeast China.

### *3.4.3 Researcher and the researched*

As a participant in the field, I clearly played a significant role in every facet of the data collection process. My simultaneous roles as a researcher, a mother and a first-generation migrant in the field, in addition to my movement between different spaces, had a key impact on the data collection. As a researcher in the

setting, I controlled the subject matter and chose the interesting scenarios to follow. As a sociolinguist, I was interested in the effect of society on language and focused on the relationship between the participants' spoken interaction and their social positions. As a researcher from an educational institution, I sensed the discursive relation of power with my participants where they asked for my opinions on their children's future educational choices. As a mother whose daughter goes to Chinese complementary school regularly, I could be 'non-threatening' when engaged in conversation on topics which are of interest to parents generally. This is particularly evident where they tried to involve me in discussions of topics such as their children's Chinese learning process and issues with heritage culture affiliation. As a first-generation migrant I went from being an 'outsider' researcher to an 'insider' who shared the same experiences and cultural background as the participants. As a junior female PhD researcher, I also experienced the discursive relation of power during my interview with my male participants who had PhDs and who were senior managers in international enterprises. I sensed this discursive power relation influenced the way I phrased the questions, the way they interpreted my questions and the way they answered them. All these positions have continuously regulated and shaped the whole research process.

During the period of the fieldwork, the participants and I were positioned by one another and we also adopted positions. As a native Mandarin speaker, fluent in English and German, and a first-generation migrant parent myself, I was fortunate to gain quick access to one of the biggest Mandarin-speaking, Chinese complementary schools in a major city. I was able to adopt the position of a researcher and a parent, and I approached the school and my participants as one of them, collecting naturally occurring data. My activity and presence in the school buildings and on campus did not attract much attention, since many of the parents assumed I was a parent of a child at the school. After acknowledging my research background, I told them that I was a parent of a 6-year-old child who attended a Chinese complementary school, in order to share some commonalities and to be accepted. I was very fortunate to have the full cooperation of the school management and my participants. I was not only able to be present during their interactions at the school, but was also invited to their after-school gatherings, their homes, and other off-site activities. Such opportunities allowed me to collect naturally occurring data and build trustful relationships with many of the participants, which paved an open path for later interviews to take place.

Although I was satisfied with my general approach to the school and my participants, I felt I faced two major challenges during the period of my fieldwork. Firstly, while I was quickly accepted by the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, my own academic, linguistic and social backgrounds seemed to be obstacles to building quick and open connections with the Marginalised. Perhaps my image of being a well-educated woman, born in the capital city of

China, speaking ‘legitimated’/prestige Mandarin, English and German limited their trust in me, since it appeared that we did not share much in common in our life and migrant trajectories. To tackle this challenge, I tried to spend a good amount of time in the field with them, observing their interactions, exchanging small talk, and being friendly, caring and approachable. After a period of time, I was able to break through their reserve, capture their interactions, and later conduct interviews.

The other difficulty that arose during my fieldwork was interviewing the male participants. During my interviews with them, I came to realise that the male participants often positioned me at a lower position of power. This is perhaps due to our differences in terms of education (both my male participants had doctoral degrees), occupation (both were senior managers), age (both were older), and gender. It is important to mention that age and gender both play significant roles in East Asian social hierarchies (Sung 2001; Zhang 2016). As a junior female researcher with lower social status, I found myself often having to answer their lengthy questions during the interviews, including issues about my migrant trajectory and my research. Thus, I adopted a relatively open attitude towards their questions while at the same time, not revealing too much personal information. This enabled me to conduct fruitful interviews with both of them and gain their cooperation. However, it is important to note that I felt more distance during my interviews with the male participants in comparison to those with the female participants. This was perhaps due to the partly similar social roles I shared with my female participants – being mothers with domestic responsibilities in the family. Thus, I was aware that my gender was very likely to influence the outcomes of the interviews with my male participants.

## **3.5 Data collection design**

### *3.5.1 Method of data collection: Participant observation*

I conducted the fieldwork by using the key method of an ethnographic approach: participant observation. This refers to ‘a way of collecting data in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the common and uncommon activities of the people being studied’ (Dewalt and Dewalt 2010, pp. 2) and emphasises the researcher’s actual involvement in the field rather than just observing (Cameron 2001). Therefore, participant observation both highlights issues of participating in and observing ethnographic studies with a focus on the researcher’s interactive experience in the field and the uniqueness of the collected data, hoping to explore the rules and norms behind the behaviours of the researched (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2010). In this sense, the

researcher spends time in the field, interacts with the people, records their conversations, takes part in their activities, and talks to them about what they do and why. Thus, during the fieldwork phase of this study, I was both a regular participant and a permanent observer. This enabled me to record the parental spoken interactions, conduct various phases of interviews and assemble fieldnotes, while exploring the complexity and interrelatedness of the fieldwork process.

### 3.5.2 *Data collection tools*

#### 3.5.2.1 Overview

One of the key characteristics of ethnography is its flexible use of methodological approaches according to the situations and the methods themselves, and possible and ethical sources of information, in order to ensure the quality of the research (Denzin 1978; Denzin and Lincoln 2003). In this study, I used three different methods to collect the data: audio-recording of parental spoken interactions of each group; fieldnotes during each visit to the field; and interviews with key members of every participant group. This triangulation of data collection methods is not intended to support a classical argument regarding the validity and reliability of the data in this study (see earlier discussion in section 3.3.2), but rather aims to provide substantial, complex, and in-depth partial knowledge based on the accounts of ‘authenticity’ and ‘trustworthiness’ (Walter, Holloway and Wheeler 2005), making my own subjective interpretation and knowledge visible throughout this study. Based on the nature of my fieldwork setting, the majority of my observation data were parental spoken interactions complemented by fieldnotes on activities.

All the three groups engaged in naturally occurring spoken interactions. Unlike focus group studies in which the researcher proposes guides, questions and arrangement, following ethnographic linguists, I took a natural role of an observer during the observations and engaged minimally in conversations. Deborah Cameron (2001) defines this way of studying spoken interaction as taking an ethnographic approach to the communication of a group. During the observation, I recorded the data of which languages were used. A range of languages were evident in participants’ linguistic repertoires, primarily Mandarin Chinese, but there was also English, German, and sometimes code switching, as well as occasionally other varieties of Chinese. Semi-structured in-depth one-to-one interviews were later conducted mostly in Mandarin, with some instances of code switching in order to explore the key participants’ life and migrant trajectories. Most of my fieldnotes were written in English with various lengths. The table below gives an overview of the data sets:

Table 3: An Overview of the Data Sets

Data type	Spoken Interactions	Fieldnotes	Interviews
Length	About 20 hours	19 pieces	About 12 hours
Languages	Mandarin, English, German	English and Mandarin	Mandarin
Formats	Audio records	Written	Audio records

Source: author

### 3.5.2.2 Audio records of spoken interaction

The total length of hours of the spoken interaction recordings is about 20 hours. The data was collected in the language in which it occurred and transcribed in its original versions<sup>9</sup>. During each period of observation, each interaction group contained a different number of participants. However, as mentioned in an earlier section in this chapter, key participants regularly appeared at the settings. Although the topics covered by the three interaction groups varied, I noticed some significant overlaps in topics among the three groups as well as a diversity of approaches to these common topics.

It is important to mention that despite its lengthy and time-consuming nature, I was able to transcribe all the recorded group spoken interactions in order to be more conscious of the linguistic structure and spoken content embedded within the conversations. I transcribed all the group interactions by using turn-taking conventions, numbering the turns, using indicating symbols (see appendix 1) as well as standard spelling/orthography and punctuation, in order to make the transcripts easier to read (Cameron 2001) at the analysis stage. The details of the spoken interactions were accordingly transcribed with a focus on the characteristics and functions of the social interactions in relation to matters of social capital discussed in Chapter 2. Due to the on-going and intertwined nature of data transcription and data analysis, the process of transcribing was also an opportunity for me to begin to make sense of the data. As Cameron (2001) comments, transcribing is the onset of the very early stage of data analysis and interpretation. At the end of the data transcription stage, I roughly extracted the key topics and functions of the spoken interactions. It is important to note that I did not code the data in a conventional sense, but rather immersed myself in the data as a whole.

<sup>9</sup> Mostly in standard Mandarin orthography, sometimes in English and German alphabets.

After the transcription, I faced the task of translating the original linguistic versions into English since the presentation of this book follows a conventional English publication process. As the study progressed, I was aware of ‘the challenge of translation’ in multilingual research (Holmes et al. 2013), for instance, the doubled workloads it might cause and the loss of subtle meanings and nuances (Halai 2007). Seeing the translation as a transformative, adoptive, interpretive process (Temple 2009), rather than a simple technical exercise, I was able to translate the extracts that I found to be the most relevant in relation to my research questions. I chose the extracts to be presented in the book and firstly had them double checked by two trilingual (Mandarin, German, English) sociolinguists who earned their PhDs from my institute in London. The double-checked versions were later sent to a professional translator in China and feedback was received and considered. Finally, an English sociolinguist proofread the final transcript of the translations. Thus, I felt that I was the ‘social agent’ (Wolf 2011) who adopted and interpreted the knowledge of the texts with my own mission of research interests, theoretical stance and political ideology, creating new knowledge during the process of translation. This is, for instance, particularly exemplified in the form in which extracts from the data are presented in the analysis chapters. I make use of simplified Mandarin scripts alongside English translations, as well as the English and German alphabets in order to index the ‘important political, social and cultural differences’ (Copland and Creese 2015) in the Mandarin-speaking school. At the same time, I hope to keep a decent rate of transparency for the multilingual data and achieve a faithful representation of the data I collected (Ganassin and Holmes 2013; Holmes et al. 2016). During the different stages of transcribing, translating, data analysis, and writing up, I constantly listened and re-listened to the audio-records, and went through the transcripts and translations over and over in order to draw out the themes of the conversations and explore their meanings.

### 3.5.2.3 Fieldnotes

Throughout this research, fieldnotes were taken during the periods of both participant observation and interviews in order to reflect ‘the ethnographer’s changing sense of what might possibly be made interesting or important to future readers’ and ‘the ethnographer’s sense of what is interesting or important to the people he is observing’ (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995, pp.11). During the fieldwork period, the writing of fieldnotes was two-phased: first, I took rough headnotes for things, events or situations which struck me the most during my visits at the school; second, based on the headnotes made and my fresh memory of the day, more reflective, polished, and coherent texts of fieldnotes were typed up on the train back to the city where I live after conducting

each fieldwork. A similar example can be found in Copland's distinction between her roughly made 'observational notes' in the field and her later polished fieldnotes (Copland and Creese 2015), which she defines as the difference between data collection and analysis. In the same vein, I approached the writing of fieldnotes, particularly the second stage, as a thinking, interpreting, negotiating and reflecting process. In this study, fieldnotes were mainly used as a supplement to other sources of data in order to provide unique accounts of the researched. This was particularly important in relation to events and situations that audio records and interviews could not document. The total number of fieldnotes are 19 pieces and their lengths vary from a paragraph to an A4 typed sheet.

#### 3.5.2.4 The interviews

I did not approach the interviews as a mere technique for collecting information, instead, I understood the interviews as both socially constructed events which consisted of 'broader social, institutional, and representational contours' (Gubrium and Hostein 2002) and interactional events that were jointly co-constructed by the interviewers and interviewees (Garton and Copland 2010). Gubrium and Holstein (2002) emphasise that the value of interviews 'both lies in their meanings and in how meanings are constructed' (pp. 15). Thus, I was concerned not only with what data could be collected in the interviews but also how the interviews were 'accomplished' (Bryman 2012) through the interactions between the participants of interviewer and interviewees (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). As a result, I approached the interviews as a form of social interaction, through which I considered what, how, and why the interview data emerged as well as its convergence and divergence from the data of fieldnotes and spoken interactions.

Instead of tightly structured interviews with standard planned and ordered interview questions, I conducted semi-structured interviews with an 'interview guide' which I had designed to orientate the discussion to topics that I intended to focus on during the interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews was thought to be the most appropriate for the current research due to its exploratory nature investigating human experiences. Less structured interviews are believed to allow complex human viewpoints to be heard, encourage 'emic and emergent understandings', and 'tap both content and emotional levels' (Tracy 2013, pp.139). It is important to note that unlike interview questions, the 'interview guide' was meant to stimulate discussions and encourage interesting emerging topics (ibid). Before the interview phase began, I conducted a trial interview session with a friend who shares similar life situations to most of my participants: first-generation Chinese migrant parent with children experiencing Chinese complementary schooling. In the trial interview, I was able to try

the topics that had attracted my attention during the period of the parental interaction observation. After this trial interview, I made some alterations on the topics I intended to ask my participants and was more prepared to experience the everchanging nature of semi-structured interviews

I intended to carry out two rounds of interviews with the key participants. The first-round interview focused on documenting basic information about their personal background, such as, their migration experiences and biographical information. The aim of this phase of interviews was to produce opportunities for the participants to give fuller accounts of their life trajectories. Although I was occasionally able to obtain some of this information from their spoken interaction data, the interviews allowed me to gain far more personal and in-depth knowledge about my key participants' migrant histories, family backgrounds and personal narratives. In particular, participants had the chance to reveal their feelings, emotions, opinions, and doubts, which did not often take place during my participant observations. Through the process of the first-round interviews, I was able to work with the participants directly and establish a good basis for the second-round interviews. I decided to use these second interviews to explore the issues which had emerged from the group spoken interactions, my field-notes and first-round interviews.

As discussed earlier, interviews are interactional events, which involve not only the interviewees' social and cultural backgrounds but also those of the interviewers'. During the period of interviews, I was aware that my own subjectivities, identity and social roles might impact the interview process and co-construct the final interview data (Ellis and Berger 2003). At the time the interviews took place, I had spent 10 Saturdays with most of the participants for my group interaction observations. I had had occasions to share my own narratives with them, to get to know them, and to let them become familiar with me. It was possible for me to develop a rapport because we shared similar experiences of being a first-generation Chinese migrant to Germany, experienced problems concerning social isolation, language and local culture, and had concerns over our children's Chinese language proficiency and their affiliation to the values of their cultural heritage. However, given the existence of the discursive power-relation in every relationship, I continued to attempt to reduce the researcher/researched distance in the interviews. For instance, during the early phase of my interactions with the participants, I positioned myself as a newcomer in Germany who was interested in adopting a new life in the host country. This self-positioning encouraged my participants to be more open with me, and at the same time, to play the role of being an expert in this topic. This is exemplified in a few situations in my interview data and reflects Miller and Glassner's (1997) comment that interviews empower marginalised groups to speak about their lives and minimise power differences.

In total, I interviewed 12 participants, 2 men and 8 women. The first-round interviews lasted between 20 and 90 minutes and the second-round interviews

lasted between 20 and 60 minutes. After these two rounds of interviews, I conducted another two follow-up interviews with two key participants. I explained to the participants how I would protect their confidentiality and requested their permission to record the interviews. I also encouraged the participants to ask me questions if they wished and reminded them that they could drop out of the interviews or study at any time. The first-round interviews were loosely structured around the participants' life trajectories and their migration stories while the second-round interviews were loosely structured around the issues which emerged from the observation of the spoken interactions and my fieldnotes. Following Hollway and Jefferson (1997), conducting the interviews in a narrative interview style, my aim was to capture the meaning of the participants' life trajectories, particularly their migrant trajectories, and the significances of their interactions at Hua Hua School for them. I encouraged the participants to choose a comfortable place for them to be interviewed. Interviews took place in various spatial and situational places, such as a coffee shop, a breakfast restaurant, a children's playground, on the stairs of the school entrance hall and at a participant's home. This arrangement of locating my research activity in the place and time of the natural setting enabled the participants to be more open to the topic. I developed interview guides consisting of four to six issues, which I asked participants to talk about. At the end of the first-round interview, I explained that I would work on the data and contact them during the following four or five weeks for a second interview.

The study up to this point had given the participants opportunities to tell their narratives, life trajectories and migration stories. I sensed the second interview was the right time to focus on their experiences of networking, socialising and friendship in Germany as these topics related to significant issues which emerged from my fieldnotes, spoken interaction data and the first-round interview.

Following this preparation, I interviewed nine of my key participants for a second time. At the start of some of the second interviews, I played some of the audio-recordings of the group interactions and encouraged the participants to discuss the issues which emerged from their spoken interaction recordings. In some other interviews, I posed my questions by tracking my participants' memories of certain situations. It was hoped that the interviews would provide a different perspective on important situations or topics that occurred both in the spoken interactions and fieldnotes in a supplementary manner.

Over the 10 months of the empirical study, the data was mainly generated in the above-demonstrated three research methods. While exploring the themes and contents of the group spoken interactions, the fieldnotes and interviews were meant to support the spoken interaction data in a supplementary manner, adding additional layers of enlightenment and various forms of knowledge to the research questions. In the next section, I will present my approach to data analysis and its relatedness to each of my data collection tools.

## 3.6 Data analysis

### 3.6.1 Poststructuralist perspectives

Poststructuralism hypothesises the notion of discourse. According to Michel Foucault (1980), truth is a 'regime of truth' and discourse is 'a system of representation'. He argues that the 'legitimated truth' is driven and used by power to dominate society and discourse is the process of legitimating the truth, which eventually results in the statement of knowledge (Foucault 1972, 1980). Foucault's theory of discourse, as Hall (2001) comments, is: 'the rules and practices that produced meaningful statements and regulated discourse in different historical periods' (pp. 72). To be more specific, Brewis (2001) describes discourse as 'a set of ideas, theories, symbols, institutions and practices which underpin and reproduce specific ways of knowing and behaving in the world' (pp.287). In sociolinguistics, 'discourses are systematic ways of making sense of the world by inscribing and shaping power relations within all texts, including spoken interaction' (Baxter 2003, pp. 7).

The notion that knowledge and truth are discursively constructed has always been the centre of the focus in the domain of poststructuralism. Carter (2013) describes poststructuralism as a philosophical and theoretical movement 'towards an analysis of *sociality* and *subjectivity* that is rooted in language', in which 'causes and effects, or how its objects of analysis are historically and culturally produced' are the focuses (pp.584). This view highlights the poststructuralist emphasis on the 'process' of knowledge rather than the 'objects' of knowledge. Sociolinguist Judith Baxter (2003) points out the focus of poststructuralism as '*language* as a 'site' for the construction and contestation of social meanings' and offers insights into the nature of post-structuralism as 'complexity, plurality, ambiguity, connection, recognition, intertextuality, deconstruction and transformation' (pp. 1). Following Foucault's idea of discourse, I see myself operating in a poststructuralist paradigm where the world is discursively constructed. By adopting a poststructuralist framework, I am interested in the discursive discourses or truth about social capital whereby social interaction and social relationships lie at the centre of the notion. I intend to explore how 'social capital' is brought into being through people forging social relationships with each other and how the social interactions enable individuals to be agentic through the lens of social capital.

### 3.6.2 Approach

During the data analysis, my approach to discourse analysis was informed by poststructuralism with an attempt to explore the discursive meanings of informal spoken social interactions that emerged in a Chinese complementary school among my first-generation migrant parental participants in relation to the phenomenon of social capital. I treated the data as discourse, investigating its construction of particular discourses and particular views of the world indexed in that data, as Halperin (1995) comments, ‘not in terms of what it *says*, but in terms of what it *does* and how it *works*’ (pp.30). For instance, my focus was on how the participants portrayed their relationship with the local Chinese community and German host society, how they presented their relationships with each other within the host community, and what discourses of social capital were indexed in the data. Through this I was hoping to generate my understanding of the discourse of social capital that emerged in my fieldwork setting. Following Baxter (2003), I viewed the research itself as a constitutive process as well as making the connection between ‘what is being analysed’ and ‘how it is being analysed’ in the act of ‘*self-reflexivity*’<sup>10</sup> (pp. 6). In the following, I briefly present my process of my analysis.

### 3.6.3 Analysing the data

During the different stages of transcribing, data analysis and writing up, I constantly listened and re-listened to the audio-recordings and went through the transcripts of participants’ spoken interactions in order to make sense of their talk and explore their meanings in relation to my research questions. After each visit to the school, I immediately processed the data from the group observations, fieldnotes and/or interviews during my return journey on the train and noted down what struck me the most without being concerned with the reasons at that moment. As the fieldwork developed, this process gradually enabled me to construct my thoughts on the data.

Once the transcriptions of the group interaction data were completed, I read through them carefully while listening to the original audio recording and considering the points that I had previously noted as relevant in step one. During this process, I was able to create a list of the groups’ main interaction topics which I categorised according to my research questions. I noticed clear overlaps between some of the topics. However, some significant differences among the three participant groups regarding topics and approaches to similar topics also became evident. I firstly went through the transcripts of Networkers’ spoken interactions and colour-underlined the last sentence of every talk before a

<sup>10</sup> Italics in original text

topic change. I then read the transcripts again and designated a name to each of the topics by using labels, such as ‘friendship,’ ‘cultural activities,’ or ‘health issues.’ More careful consideration of the labelling was made later in order to present the meanings of topics that were most relevant to the study. At this stage, I noticed that some topics repeatedly came up during this group’s interactions which related to my research questions. I then physically cut them with scissors so that all the interactions on the same topic could be put together. Finally, I listed the topics in order from most to least frequent. At this point, some conversations were connected to more than one topic. For instance, while some conversations covered both ‘friendship’ and ‘cultural activities’, others covered ‘information exchange’ and ‘emotional support’. I chose to put copies of the same conversation under multiple labels, trying to be open to the later analysis process.

Once the complete body of interaction data of the Networkers had been processed, I went through the data of the Cosmopolitans and the Marginalised following the same procedure. At this stage, I had three blocks of labelled spoken interactions of my three participant groups with the most frequent topics on the top to the least on the bottom. I then presented extracts of each group following its own frequency order, hoping to gain some insights into the varying frequencies of different topics in each group’s interactions.

I read the data again thoroughly and considered adding subthemes to each broad topic among the three groups in order to be more specific with the data and able to present the different group approaches under broad common themes. For example, under the main theme of the construction of parenthood, some of the following subthemes are labelled: ‘monitoring the children’, ‘enhancing their children’s educational chances’, and ‘taking collective parenting’.

At this point, three characteristics of the spoken data struck me. First, the main topics covered by the three interaction groups varied. Second, I noticed some distinct overlaps of some topics among the three groups. Finally, each group took different approaches to these common topics. I therefore worked on the names for the themes again, particularly for the subthemes, so that I was able to show both the overwhelming similarities of common topics among the three groups and their various approaches towards the shared topics through individual subthemes. For example, under the main theme of ‘engagement with German society’, spoken interactions related to their engagement with local German people were labelled as ‘The local German crowd – the circle of political elites’, ‘The local German crowd - the circle of social elites’, and ‘The local German crowd - the neighbours’. Through this I was hoping to show the shared topic of their engagement with local German people, and at the same time, to reveal their individual group approaches to German circles (see Table 4 below as the example).

Table 4: The Subthemes of Theme III from Three Participants Groups

Groups	The Networkers	The Cosmopolitans	The Marginalised
Name of theme III	Engagement with German society	Engagement with German society	Engagement with German society
subthemes	(a) The local German crowd – the circle of political elite	(a) The local German crowd – the circle of social elites	(a) The local German crowd – the neighbours
subthemes	(b) Welfare and institutional knowledge	(b) Welfare and institutional knowledge: dealing with the system	
subthemes	(c) Local culture experiences – the exotic restaurant	(c) Local cultural experiences – museum, concert, and literature	(b) Local cultural experiences – popular TV programme and Christmas market
subthemes	(d) Interpreting German culture and values	(d) Interpreting and performing German culture	(c) Interpreting German culture and values

Source: author

Alongside the analysis of the interaction data, I began to review the interview transcripts with the research questions in mind. While the first round of interview data enabled me to have a basic sense of my participants' biographical backgrounds, including their families of origin as well as the occupations of their parents, the second phase of interview data provided opportunities for my participants to reflect on their experiences of friendship and group belonging, their life trajectories in Germany, and their engagement with the local Chinese community, including Hua Hua School. As discussed earlier, instead of conceiving the interview data as hard knowledge, I perceived interviewing as a process of knowledge construction (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009) and the interview data as a result of my interactions with my interviewees. Taking a discourse analysis approach, the data which was elicited in the interviews, and then transcribed, analysed and presented in this study is socially constituted and creates a constant process of knowledge construction. I firstly processed

interview data by noting what struck me as significant. By listening to the audio records again and again as well as reading the transcriptions, I identified some relevant interview data following what I had found from the spoken interactions. I then attached the same labels I used for the topics of spoken interactions to the relevant interview data, for instance, ‘friendship and group solidarity’, ‘engagement with German society’, and ‘engagement with Hua Hua School’. Some of the extracts from the interviews were chosen to support later arguments on a supplementary level.

At this stage, I read the fieldnotes thoroughly again, reconsidering which points were relevant to the research questions and supportive to the interaction data. As with the interview data, I used the main themes that I had identified in the interaction data to make notes on the relevant fieldnotes. It is worth mentioning that reviewing both fieldnotes and interview data while working on the interaction data made it possible to move back and forth between the three different data sets. Each data set could add an additional layer to the illumination of the research questions. Whatever I concluded and/or analysed for one data set was subject to revision and reconfirmation with the support of the other two data sets. The main themes which I identified are shown below:

Table 5: The Main Themes Emerged from the Three Parental Spoken Interactions

Themes	the Networkers	the Cosmopolitans	the Marginalised
1	Friendship and group solidarity	The maintenance of shared history of the Culture Revolution	Group belonging and solidarity
2	Engagement with the local Chinese community	Friendship and group solidarity	Alternative engagement with the local Chinese community
3	Engagement with German society	Engagement with the local Chinese community	Engagement with German society
4	The maintenance of Chinese ties and language for their children	Engagement with German society	The maintenance of Chinese languages and rural Chinese values
5	The construction of parenthood	The construction of parenthood	The construction of parenthood
6	Business and job opportunities	Business and job opportunities	

Source: author

Once all the subthemes were settled, I selected one critical extract from the data for each subtheme. I then treated the spoken interaction as discourse and the related indexing of social capital and how the concept was constructed in the data, searching for explanations in the literature of social capital and *Guanxi* which I had reviewed while also being open to new sources to interpret the data. The final step was to fine-tune the theoretical framework of the study in light of the findings and produce a consistent and systematic presentation of the research. This will be presented in the following data chapters.

## 4 The Networkers

### 4.1 Introduction

In the following three chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6), I present fieldnotes, audio-recorded spoken interactions, and interview data from three groups of parents who usually gathered on Saturdays at Hua Hua School. In these chapters, I present the main themes of the data around parental interactions in terms of their social relations. I start with descriptive analysis of the data and demonstrate the ways in which the participants established their social relationships with one another. I then make concluding remarks about how the data can help us to understand the phenomenon in relation to social capital in the conclusions of each of the three chapters. This is followed by a fuller discussion in the light that the parental social interactions shed on the issues of social relations and social capital in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 4, I focus on the group of parents who usually gathered on Saturday mornings in the director's office. Before coming to Germany, most of the members of this group and/or their partners worked at top universities in metropolitan cities in China, such as Beijing and Shanghai. The majority were brought up in comfortable urban settings and received first-class educations in China. Many came to Germany to pursue their postgraduate education (PhD and/or M.A./M.Sc.) degrees.

Within the data of this group, it is noticeable that many of the group members were similarly comfortable in terms of material possessions and standards of living, and they demonstrated a level of remarkable involvement with various influential individuals within the BCity-based Chinese community and German host society, suggesting their significant engagement with local high society. While the frequent indications of their living standards and material possessions seem to stress their high social status, the emphasis on their significant involvements in high society also suggest the active role they played in the complementary school, the Chinese community in BCity, and the German host society at large. Therefore, I have given this group the name of the Networkers, stressing the active roles they took in different communities.

The members of the Networkers were able to form harmonious and close group relations based on their deep involvement with one another, both during their Saturdays at the school and at other times outside of the school. Thus, the participants were able to take advantage of the rich resources inherent in their parental connections to build friendships, provide emotional support, gain ac-

cess to business, and extend their social connections in both the Chinese community and German host society, which demonstrated their engagement in generating social capital and building *Guanxi* (see 4.4 in Chapter 4).

In the following sections, I first briefly explore the key participants' personal backgrounds, focusing on their family, education and emigration. Second, I present the way in which the Networkers formed the group at the school, demonstrate their harmonious interaction patterns and close group relations and describe their high social status at the school. Then, I discuss the themes of their interactions and the impacts of the interactions on the members of the group. By doing so, I intend to draw attention to the impacts of group interactions on its members. Finally, I give a brief commentary on how social capital and *Guanxi* could apply to the data.

## 4.2 Overview of the participants

Firstly, I will briefly introduce the main participants and hope to offer some insights into the participants' personal backgrounds. There were five core members: River, Shang, Lucy, Mercy, Mandy and Xue, who usually met at the director's office on Saturday mornings during my observations. A number of peripheral members attended less regularly. Table 6 below shows some brief details of the key participants of the Networkers.

### 4.2.1 *Members of Networker group*

Table 6: Brief Details of the Key Participants of the Networker Group<sup>11</sup>

NOC = Number of children; HEQIC = Highest education qualification in China;

HEQIG = Highest education qualification in Germany; OCI = Occupation in China;

POIG = Previous occupation in Germany; COIG = Current occupation in Germany;

<sup>11</sup> All the participant names are pseudonyms. Due to the limited time and resources of this study, not all key participants were interviewed and the table represents the information of the participants gathered through interviews and participant observations.

YOA = Year of arrival in Germany; AOA = Age of arrival

Name	Gender	Age	NOC	HEQIC	HEQIG	POCI	COIG	Languages	YOA	AOA
Xue	Male	Late forties	2	Masters	PhD	University lecturer	Senior manager	Guizhou dialect, Mandarin	1989	Late-twenties
Mercy	Female	Mid thirties	2	HSQ <sup>13</sup>	Masters	High school student	Master's student	Hokien, Mandarin	1990	Late-teens
Lucy	Female	Early fifties	2	Bachelor	German Diploma	Senior Nurse	Restaurant owner	Mandarin Shanghainese	1989	Early-thirties
Shang	Female	Late forties	1	Bachelor	German Diploma <sup>12</sup>	Re-searcher & Lecturer	Restaurant and tax consultant	Mandarin Shang-hai-	1989	Late-twenties
River	Female	Late forties	2	Diploma	None	University administrator	Restaurant owner	Mandarin German	1986	Mid-twenties

Source: author

<sup>12</sup> Before the introduction of Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Germany, the standard degree in German universities was called a Diploma and usually took four to six years.

<sup>13</sup> HSQ = High school qualification

### 4.2.2 *Vignettes*

The data suggest that the Networkers were either from skilled working-class or educated middle-class family backgrounds. It is important to note that the concept of social class was erased in China for decades, so here I use the concept in its most accepted Western notion, which I discussed in Chapter 2. For instance, Xue was from a skilled working-class family. His father was a skilled worker in a military-owned factory and his mother was a nurse. Both of Lucy's parents served in Chinese military in a smaller city near Shanghai and both retired to Shanghai. Shang came from a more prosperous academic family background in Shanghai, which enabled her to attend one of the most renowned universities, and she worked as a researcher after graduation in the most developed city in China, Shanghai, where she was born and raised. During the time of the fieldwork, both of Shang's parents were retired in the States, where her siblings were also resident.

In terms of family life, the Networkers had married in China shortly before they came to Germany. The exception to this was Mercy, who came to Germany at the age of 17, married a successful BCity Chinese businessman, and was continuing her Master's studies at a university in BCity during the time of the fieldwork. Most of their children were born in Germany, except for Xue's oldest daughter, who came to Germany at the age of one. During the time of the fieldwork, Xue's daughter was attending a distinguished university in Germany, Lucy's son was actively preparing to study medicine, while Shang and River's children were still attending high schools.

As discussed in Chapter 1, after the Chinese economic reform in 1980, a rise in the recruitment of Chinese students took place at German universities. Four out of five participants in this group came to Germany during this period with Mercy arriving later in 2000. Whilst Xue came to Germany to pursue his PhD studies, River, Shang and Lucy followed their PhD-candidate husbands to Germany. Mercy took a different migrant path by coming to Germany with her parents in her late teens.

After arriving in Germany, Xue was the only one who was able to continue his career in the same field as his PhD by working as a senior manager at the headquarters of a global company in BCity. But River, Shang and Lucy experienced dramatic changes in their professional lives. They had all worked in higher education in China, but during the first couple of years in Germany, they took different temporary jobs in order to support their husbands finishing their PhDs. Lucy was able to continue her MSc studies after her children were old enough to attend kindergarten and worked as a nurse in a clinic for a period of time. Later, all three participants moved into the restaurant business. In addition, Shang also owns a small-sized tax consulting company. At the time that this fieldwork was being conducted, River and her husband had just sold their

restaurant to a relative, whereas Lucy and Shang continued to run their businesses successfully. According to the data, it seems that Lucy's restaurant has gained quite a local reputation.

The above vignettes describe the Networkers' good educational backgrounds, their decent professional positions in China, and their life trajectories after arriving in Germany, outlining the core Networkers' U-shaped upward migrant trajectories. The downward slope of the U-shaped migrant trajectories is defined as 'de-skilling', referring to a common phenomenon of downward trajectory that many migrants face after their arrival in the new country (Block 2006). The data suggest such migrant 'de-skilling' was not an exception for the members of the Networkers during the initial period after their arrival in Germany. However, the vignettes also briefly illustrate the upward curve of the U-shape, presenting images of the participants as currently well-established in terms of their private family life and professional/business achievements.

#### *4.2.3 Material possessions and high social status*

As discussed in Chapter 2 (see section 2.2.1), in order to understand the phenomenon of social capital, it is important to give an account of social class as it relates to the individuals or particular social group in question. This often revolves around some core indications of socio-economic backgrounds. Following the view that individuals' social class depends not solely on their economic status but also their status of education and privilege (Weber 1978), in this section, I focus on the Networkers' comfortable financial situations and their high social status. The following data illustrate a picture in which the participants' financial comfort and the social responsibilities they undertook are closely related.

Firstly, most of the participants of this group were financially comfortable and displayed economic privileges. During the fieldwork, I observed that all the participants of this group came to the school in luxury cars. All the members were in possession of their own houses in BCity, most of which were located in exclusive areas. For instance, fieldnotes report that Lucy owned a spacious, 300-square-metre house located in a beautiful suburb of BCity. Fieldnote data also indicate that Xue was in possession of an apartment in his home city in China and an elegant house in BCity, and that Shang, River, and Mercy were also owners of their houses.

Secondly, the participants often displayed their high social status and significant social positions by referring to their involvement in important social events. While their interactions sometimes revolved around their leisure-time activities - including gardening, attending film festivals, caring for their pets,

and going on exclusive holidays, suggesting their financial comfort and cultural taste - more often they spoke about community activities, such as engaging in community activities, organising local social events, holding parties and helping the community schools, indicating the significant roles the members of this group play in the Chinese community in BCity. In the following interview extract, Lucy revealed the reason for her active engagement in various gatherings, through which she seemed to present herself as a communicator and organiser of her social circle:

Extract 4.1: ‘...I always like to get all the people together...’

K=the researcher, L=Lucy

(1) L: 而且我这个特喜欢聚  
and I particularly like gatherings

(2) K: 哦  
uhm

(3) L: 不管逢年过节, 我总喜欢让大家聚到一块, 我觉得就是感情的一种纽带

Whether it's New Year or other festivals, I always like to get all the people together, I think it is an emotional bond.

In extract 4.1, Lucy firstly starts with the claim that she likes gatherings in her utterance ‘particularly’ (turn 1). She then positions herself as the organiser who is capable and takes responsibility for social events and gatherings in any situation through her comment ‘no matter for New Year’s or other festivals, I always like to get all the people together’ (turn 3). At this point, it appears that Lucy stresses her networker role in social gatherings.

Interaction and fieldnote data also suggest that the members of the group were actively engaged in different community events and social activities. For instance, whilst Xue took a lively role in managing and helping the complementary school, such as with teacher recruitment, school celebration events and the school’s international networking and strategic plan, Lucy took part in various Chinese community societies and was busy with hosting different society gatherings. Such full engagements suggest that the members of the group were willing and able to take on important roles in their social circles, indicating the high social status and positions they occupied within both their own ethnic community and the host society.

Moreover, the participants displayed their exclusive social positions and high status through narrating their extensive and elite social connections. The following illustrates Lucy’s extensive circle of friends:

Extract 4.2: ‘... all are platforms’

K=the researcher, L=Lucy

(1) K: 你这个朋友圈子最主要是从哪些地方结识的?

your circle of friends, where have you met most of (them)

(2) L: 那就说各个侨团里面可以认识啊

for instance, in each Overseas Chinese society

(3) K: 哦

oh

(4) L: 中文学校也是个平台啊

Chinese school is also a platform

(5) K: 哦

oh

(6) L: 妇女会也是个大平台啊,你说还有和统会,还有每年使馆搞活动,都是平台呀

the Women's Society is a huge platform too, so is the Peaceful Reunification, the activities held by the Chinese Embassy every year, all are platforms

Instead of getting into further details of her friends' circumstances, Lucy portrays a picture of extensive social connections through her various engagements with different organisations and societies by name-dropping some exclusive organisations within Chinese society (turn 2, 4, 6). Name-dropping is often interpreted as a rhetorical means of discursive legitimation (Jay 1990), and here it enables Lucy to present herself as a key contributor to different elite social groups and societies and to re-emphasise her active social positions and high social status. This is also suggested in Xue's interview, in which he indicates that some of his friends occupy important positions at senior levels in various organisations and worldwide companies, and that they still maintain close friendships and contacts with one another.

Presenting their extensive social connections appeared to be a key activity for the participants of this group in order to: negotiate their positions in different social groups; enable them to secure their networking roles; retain their membership in high society; and preserve their high social status in the Chinese migrant community as well as in the host community.

The members of the Networkers came to Germany at the same time to pursue their higher education or to support their partners' further study. Most of them shared similar professional family and educational backgrounds as well as U-shaped migrant trajectories. It seems that the majority of the group had potentially bright futures regarding their professional and private lives before moving to Germany. After moving, the first few years in Germany appeared to coincide with the lowermost point of their life trajectories, consistent with the phenomenon of migrant 'de-skilling' (Block 2006). However, after they or their partners received their degrees and endured a period of struggle, they were eventually able to establish a life with rich material possessions and

extensive social connections, which often appeared to involve a continuous accumulation of material wealth and social resources, as well as a prominent display of their broad social connections in Germany. This presents an image of an elite ‘transnational’ migrant group which was engaged in life in the host country with prominent locals, while maintaining good contacts with their own community group and with China (Block 2006). This group of ‘transnational’ migrants is differentiated from those of ‘expatriates’ who choose to live abroad and are able to return home when they want, who ‘live a quasi-tourist existence, which prevents them from acquiring local social and cultural capital’ and of ‘classic immigrants’ who settle in host societies and have few connections to their home countries (ibid, pp.38). In Chapter 2, I discussed Bourdieu’s understanding of the construction of different social spaces and his notion of social class. Drawing on Bourdieu, social class is not only indicated by material status and educational qualifications but also individuals’ status in social practices. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the Networkers’ socio-economic background in the wider contemporary society, it is helpful to consider Block’s (2014) constellation of social class, in which he points to the key dimensions of a modern approach to social class, such as property, wealth, occupation, place of residence, education, social networking, consumption patterns, spatial relations, mobility, and life chances. The data above suggest a strong display of wealth, education, and social networking with elite groups in Germany, indicating comfortable lifestyles, high educational qualifications, and the social circles the networkers were engaged with, all of which are indicators of the Networkers’ educated middle/upper-middle class social status. Further indications of other dimensions of the constellation of educated middle/upper-middle social class are evident in the data in the following sections of this chapter.

### **4.3 An overview of group relations**

In 4.2, I introduced the main participants of the Networkers, their education, family, migrant backgrounds, comfortable lifestyles, the social responsibilities some of them carry, and the high social status they occupy in Germany. In the following section, I analyse the group interaction patterns, explore their close and harmonious group relations based on their regular gatherings on Saturday mornings, and reveal the high status they occupy at Hua Hua School.

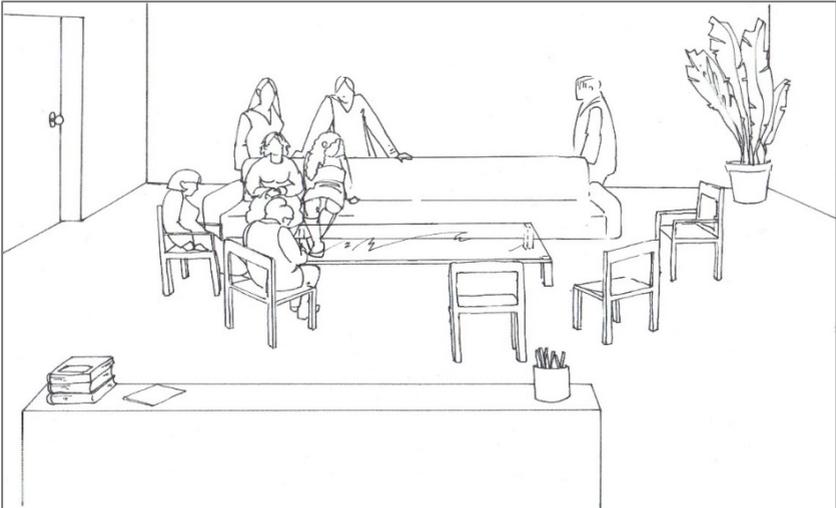
### 4.3.1 Forming the Networker group on Saturday mornings

#### 4.3.1.1 Forming the group

Every Saturday morning, the members of the Networkers gathered at the school director's office. The key participants of this group were Lucy, River, Shang, Xue and Mercy, who normally arrived as early as 8:45a.m. Instead of running the household and spending time at home, they all chose to accompany their children to Hua Hua School and to stay there during the period of their children's half-day Chinese lessons in order to meet up with other group members, offer help to the school, read, chat or do university homework.

The core members tended to sit on the sofas and chairs and to occupy the same spaces each time I observed them. While Lucy, Shang, River, and Mercy sat close together and faced each other in an oval, the others were somewhat behind them or alongside them. When peripheral members joined the group, some tended to sit wherever they could find room, some brought in chairs from the neighbouring classrooms, while some chose to stand. This seating arrangement allowed the participants to talk to each other easily as they were facing each other, which also seemed to suggest that the core members occupied and owned the space of the office room more than some of the peripheral members. The following is an illustration of the seating arrangement for the group during a quiet day.

Illustration 1: An Illustration of the Seating Arrangement for the Networkers



### 4.3.2 *The interaction patterns and group relations*

#### 4.3.2.1 Harmonious and close relationships

A striking characteristic of the Networker group was their harmonious and close relationships. Fieldnotes indicate that the members supported each other and did things for each other: for instance, ‘today, again River and Lucy made tea for others’ (fieldnote a.3), or ‘the participants were very engaged in their conversations, like always’ (fieldnote a.10). Topics from the interaction data included shopping together, meeting up for dinner, joining events together, spending holiday time together, travelling together, baby-sitting each other’s children and being very familiar with each other’s family members, showing that the participants had close relationships outside the school.

#### 4.3.2.2 The high status of the group in the school

The observation data indicate that the members of the Networker group enjoyed a high status at the school. Fieldnotes show that the key participants always occupied the director Mr. Hoo’s office, used his coffee machine and kettle, and were offered lifts by him when they wanted to go shopping. Mr Hoo also participated in the group. Topics which arose from the group interactions, such as running school events, evaluating school teachers, and gossiping about school managers, seem to indicate that the group members had a strong sense of ownership of the school. The interaction also shows a substantial number of jokes and teasing between the key participants, the school manager and the director, which reveals a close relationship between the three parties. See extract 4.3 below as an example:

Extract 4.3 ‘Mr. Hoo is so good looking’

L = Lucy, H= Hoo (the director), R=River

(1) L: 哟, 老胡这么帅

see, Mr. Hoo, so good-looking (laughter)

(2) H: 你不要看歪喽

You should not say such a joke, ok

(3) L: 我们大姐今天不在

Never mind, our older sister [referring to the director's wife] is not here today

(4) H: 她说不定马上来, 不一定哦

She might come in any minute, any possible time

(5) L: 坐着, 跟你聊天

Sit down and chat with you

(6) R: 跟你在一起总是会开这种玩笑

You always make such jokes

(7) L: 不是,你说老胡帅吧,寻开心嘛

Say, Mr. Hoo is good looking, right, just having fun (laughter)

(8) R: 俏皮话

Silly (giggling)

In this extract, we can see how the participants have a friendly relationship with the director of the school. Firstly, this is demonstrated in turn 1, when Lucy teases the director about how good-looking he is. Secondly, Lucy calls the director's wife 'our older sister' (turn 3) which is suggested as a general indication of a pseudo-family tie, referring to a close intimate friendship (Lin 1989). Instead of a formal greeting to the director, the casual and relaxed speech style suggests a good friendly and open relationship between the director, Lucy, and River, and shows the sense of ease the group members have in this setting, indicating their ownership of the space and privileged status at the school.

Thus far, I have introduced the key participants of the Networkers, presented a general picture of how the members formed the group, and explored the characteristics of the group. In the next section, I will introduce the main themes arising from the observations based on the data.

## 4.4 The main themes

### 4.4.1 *Friendship and group solidarity*

The first main theme of the Networkers' interactions is associated with the matters of friendship and group solidarity. It consists of four subthemes: (a) looking after each other in daily life; (b) building a sense of Chinese cultural/educated self; (c) sharing feelings and private topics; and (d) cultivating friendships – the nature of the group relationship.

#### 4.4.1.1 Looking after each other

One significant way for the Networkers to experience friendship and group solidarity was through looking after each other in daily life. The data suggest the group members supported each other when one of them needed help. The following extract 4.4 from the interaction data exemplifies one such situation:

Extract 4.4: 'she has only us – her friends to rely on'

S = Snow, L = Lucy, R = River, Sh = Shang.

(1) S: 我们这个美女真行,第二天就给我送鱼汤,然后问你我吃红烧鱼,(还是)吃鱼汤,我说吃红烧鱼不是简单吗,汤汤水水不好弄啊。结果人家不光是这红烧鱼拿了,鱼汤拿了,还带炒了一盆虾

Our pretty lady is awesome, the second day (after the operation), (she) brought me fish soup, then (she) asked me: would you like braised fish in brown sauce or fish soup, I said braised fish in brown sauce, (as) it is easier to prepare than the soup, in the end, she not only brought the braised fish in brown sauce, but also the fish soup and a dish of fried prawns.

(2) L: 她那手术,她一个人,还让她那几岁孩子给她做饭,因为她是德国老公非常搞得,在离婚嘛,非常闹,她那个老公非常闹,离了吧,她那个老公不付小孩生活费

(During) her operation, she was alone, (she) even let her small child cook for her, because her German husband has been very difficult, (they are) divorcing now, very complicated, her husband was very difficult (during the divorce), after divorce, her husband refuses to pay child support

(3) R: 诶哟,这么混蛋呀,这么混蛋

Ugh, such a bastard, Such a bastard

(4) Sh: 哑嘴,听听也可怜

tsk, just to listen to this makes me feel sad for her

(5) L: 诶哟,我说这么辛苦,是吧,在这一点亲戚都没有的,我说不就靠大家朋友拉一把吗

Ugh, I think (it) is so hard (for her), right, (she has) no relatives here at all, she has only us - her friends - to rely on, right

Extract 4.4 exemplifies how the participants take care of each other during their daily lives. For example, Lucy cooks for Snow after her operation (turn 1). In turns 2, 3, 4, the participants give Snow support over her divorce. Lucy's statement (turn 5) seems to suggest that Lucy believes the group members are friends and ready to help when the others need it. It is noticeable that her use of 'us - her friends' implies the solidarity between the group members, which bond them together as friends. This coincides with Snow's use of 'our pretty lady' (turn 1), in which the use of 'our' suggests the building of inner-group solidarity through looking after each other and providing emotional support.

#### 4.4.1.2 Building a sense of Chinese cultural/educated self

the less-educated Chinese others

One way for the Networkers to experience their group identity and solidarity was to construct an educated Chinese self in opposition to those less-educated Chinese migrants living in Germany.

Extract 4.5: 'we were more worried about our children's Chinese...some people

were concerned with their children's German'

X = Xue

和我一起从中国来做同样的奖学金项目的人，我们更担心我们孩子的中文，就知道他们会在中文上有困难。有些人担心他们孩子的德文。我们，我和朋友们，我们知道，一旦他们（孩子们）开始上学，孩子们的德文会很不错。我们就不担心他们德语的问题，就是担心他们的中文。

people who came over with me from China under the same PhD scholarship programme, we were more worried about our children's Chinese, cause, we knew they would have difficulties with Chinese. Some people were concerned with their children's German. We, my friends and I, we knew that, once they (the children) went to school, the children would be good at German, we were not concerned with their German language, but their Chinese.

In Extract 4.5, Xue expresses his and his friends' early concerns over their children's Chinese language skills. Xue begins with an immediate account of the status of the group as 'people who came over with me from China under the same PhD scholarship programme' which seems to stress the crucial highly-educated nature of the group. He then positions himself as a member of the group through the constant use of 'we', referring to their inner group closeness. He further elaborates 'we' as 'my friends and I', emphasising the friendship nature of the group. In this extract, Xue suggests the contrast between 'we', the members of the group, representing people with privileged educational backgrounds who were concerned about their children's Chinese learning, and 'some people' who were concerned about their children's German skills after schooling. Such contrast seems to indicate the idea that migrant children with well-educated family backgrounds perform better in German in school than those without. Thus, Xue seems to draw a clear line between his well-educated social circle and the rest of the 'uneducated' Chinese migrants in Germany. There is a noticeable contrast between the single implication of 'uneducated' Chinese migrant parents and the overt emphasis on the well-educated PhD parental migrant group in the extract. It seems to be an example of 'Othering' the uneducated Chinese group through limited representations (Coupland 1999).

the Chinese living in China and the simple German culture

Apart from identifying their differences from the 'uneducated' Chinese in Germany, another way for the group to experience their friendship and group solidarity was to build a sense of Chinese cultural self through their interactions, suggesting their shared values based on Chinese culture in opposition to the German host society.

In Extract 4.6, the members of the group seemed to build a sense of group solidarity by differentiating their norms of hospitality from the norms of those Chinese living in China and the norms of the Germans.

Extract 4.6: ‘in China...the hosts...we, people here...Germans...’

L= Lucy, R= River

(1) L: 不仅不睡觉, 还消费, 他说这个消费在国内不要你掏钱的, 来了以后, 作为东道主 的他 有一些 (钱), 但是费用多大啊, 我们这里的人就不忌讳这个话题了, 你说吧, 但是呢 国内的热情好客在德国你是体会不到的, 德国人也热情好客, 每年我们到德国 人那, 你看, 德国人饮料都放在桌上, 你自己喝的, 吃的最简单不过了, 但是简单是 简单的, 你也能吃得饱, 一锅的 Eintopfsuppe, 什么面包, Käse, Schinken 什么东西 啊, 多多的, 满满的, 吃是够吃了, 你让中国人炒菜, 炒死你啊

not only skipping sleep (late night out), but also the expenses, they say that at home (in China) you don't have to pay (as a guest), once you arrive there, as the hosts, they have some (money and they would pay), but the expense is huge, we people (who live) here don't mind talking about it (and ask the guests to share the bill), don't we, but for the hospitality at home (in China), you can't experience it in Germany, Germans are also friendly and hospitable, every year when we are at Germans', you see, Germans put soft drinks on the tables, which you can drink and the food is quite simple, although it is simple, you can eat your fill as well, a pan of Eintopfsuppe (a special German soup), some bread, Käse (cheese), Schinken (ham), and so on, (the food is) plenty, full, (and) enough to eat, if you let Chinese fry food, you will cook to death

(2) R: 他们简单, 简单, 他们就做一下汤

they are simple, simple, they just cook some soup

(3) L: 他们还更简单, 都是 party service 送过来的, 我们请顿饭辛苦死了, 一个星期前 就开始准备, 你说上次我们年三十吃饭, 我准备了多长时间啊,

they are even simpler, all are delivered by the party service, (when) we invite people for dinner, it is very hard-work, start to prepare a week ago, say, the last time we had dinner on New Year's Eve, so much time I spent on preparing

(4) R: 我想是的哦, 很丰富

I thought so, (there) was plenty (food)

The above extract came towards the end of a group discussion on the norms of hospitality back in China. Lucy states that back in China the hosts always pay for all the expenses to show their hospitality, which she considers not appropriate for the Chinese community in Germany by stating ‘we, people who live here don't mind talking about the expense (and asking the guests to share the bill)’ (turn 1), through which Lucy highlights the different scenario of hospitality for the Chinese in Germany. It is noticeable that Lucy identifies the group of Chinese residing in Germany by using the pronoun ‘we’ and the adverb ‘here’ in contrast to ‘they’ in her previous sentences referring to the Chinese who live in China, suggesting the distance she lays between the Chinese back in China and the Chinese community in Germany. Thus, she constructs a sense of belonging to the Chinese community in Germany rather than to the Chinese living in China.

Lucy then focuses on the German norms of hospitality by describing the simple but sufficient amount of drinks and food offered at German parties. This

is later used as a contrast to Chinese hospitality, which seems to involve a noticeably broad indication of Chinese people in the latter case. While her repeated use of ‘the Germans’ (turn 1) seems to pave a way for the later comparison with Chinese, Lucy’s recurring utterances of ‘simple’ (turn 1) and River’s repetitions of the word (turn 2) for describing the food at German parties in contrast to the word ‘plenty’ (turn 4) for portraying the food available at Chinese parties imply noticeably different food and party cultures in the two communities.

Within the same extract, the members of the group identify themselves as the oppositional community to the host Germans, while at the same time, they distance themselves from those Chinese who live in China. In the two extracts, Lucy and River portray three different subject communities, the host German society, the Chinese based in China, and the Chinese who live in Germany, through two parallel comparisons, namely the Chinese in Germany versus the Chinese in China, and the Chinese versus the Germans. This seems to be an example of migrants flexibly moving between various sociocultural contexts and revealing their often-changing feelings towards various subject communities. This ‘negotiation of difference’ (Papastergiadis 2000) entails a third subject community and forges a sense of ‘third place’ (Hall 1996) belonging.

Such construction of third place identity seems to resonate with Block’s (2006) example of ‘transnational as migrant subject position’ in that he defines the key element of being transnational as ‘...fitting into one’s new environment whilst maintaining contact with ‘home’... (pp.40) or ‘cultural cosmopolitanism’ which ‘...encompasses the possibility of dialogue with traditions and discourses of others with the aim of expanding horizons of one’s own framework of meaning and prejudice (Held 2002).

#### 4.4.1.3 Sharing of feelings and understandings

Another significant way for the Networker group members to experience friendship and group solidarity was by encouraging the sharing of feelings within the group. The significance of the sharing feature in the reciprocity of friendship involves ‘a sharing of trust, a sharing of understanding, and a sharing of support’ (Carr 2013, pp.15). The following extract 4.7 is an example of the ‘exchanged vulnerable talking’ (Coates 1996), which reveals a sharing of emotional hardship between the participants about not being able to leave their restaurant business in BCity and visit their parents and homeland often.

Extract 4.7: ‘Germany is a big prison, you’ve built your own rooms in it’

G = Gu, L = Lucy, My = Mandy, R = River, S = Shang

(1) My: 宫殿啊, 10年没回去过, 10年呀

(Germany is like) a palace, (we) hadn’t been back for ten years, ten years

(2) Sh: 买个监狱自己坐坐

(We've) bought a prison for ourselves

(3) My: 这就是监狱

This is indeed a prison

(4) G: 德国啊还是个大监狱, 然后你们再自己盖个单间, 盖个单间, 哈哈再把自己圈进去

Germany is still a huge prison, and then you build your own cell, build your own cell, hahaha then you put yourself in

(5) Sh: 盖个小监狱, 是啊, 这饭店真的是监狱

(You've) built a small prison, yes, the restaurant (business) is indeed like a prison (in a huge prison)

Extract 4.7 is a conversation about sharing the Networkers' understanding of feelings about living in Germany, taking care of their restaurant businesses, and not being able to visit their homeland and parents regularly, especially during the initial period spent establishing their business. Mandy uses the metaphor of a 'palace' to present Germany and the restaurant business (turn 1). It is a common Chinese understanding that the situation of an emperor living in a palace might sometimes be comparable to existing under house arrest. The 'palace' metaphor is used here to demonstrate the dilemma of living and running a business in Germany, whilst not being able to visit family in China, thus expressing a feeling of helplessness and sadness. The use of 'palace' here seems to have a double meaning: the outsider cannot come inside, and the insider cannot go outside.

The engagement of the group members with the co-construction of the metaphors of Germany and their restaurant business as 'a palace', 'a prison' and 'a huge prison' implies that the participants shared the same difficult feelings and emotions of being in a dilemma over their current lives in Germany against their past in China. Similar to many migrant studies which have captured the emotional pain of migrants separated from their family of origin (Schmalzbauer 2005; Derby 2010; Abrego 2014), extract 7 is an example of the Networkers sharing their emotional hardship regarding their frustration of being caught in a situation in which they could not visit their parents and hometowns regularly.

#### 4.4.1.4. Cultivating friendship – the nature of the group relationship

The above-discussed subthemes suggest a dynamic of close friendship within the members of the group formed at the Chinese complementary school setting based on solid group trust. It is noticeable that such close friendships were not only formed on Saturdays at Hua Hua School, but were also cultivated outside

the school setting. The data suggest that the members of this group also formed and maintained close interactions and close contacts beyond the school setting through regularly calling each other, coordinating event gatherings and helping each other. For instance, interactions and fieldnotes both indicate that the participants often visited each other's restaurants, gathered for lunch or dinner, went shopping together, and spent holidays together.

Thus far, while the data seem to illustrate a cooperative, helpful and bounded intra- group social relations through the moments of sharing feelings and understandings, as well as looking after and supporting each other, the data also suggest a construction of a strong migrant subject community, based on the members' understanding of Chinese culture and their collective migrant identity, through which the participants not only differentiated themselves from the host community, but also from those Chinese people who lived in China.

#### *4.4.2 Engagement with the local Chinese community*

The second main theme relates to the Networkers' engagement with the local Chinese community. In this section, I present the most significant subthemes that are closely related to their social relations and status: (a) engagement with Hua Hua School; (b) organising and participating in community gathering; (c) gossiping about community members.

##### 4.4.2.1 Engagement with Hua Hua School

The members' engagement with the Chinese complementary school seemed to be largely connected with their passionate support for the school. The fieldwork data suggest that the members of the Networkers were consistently involved with school activities, events and administration. The following extract illustrates a situation in which a group member volunteered to teach a class when the teacher became ill.

Extract 4.8: 'mornings...I can definitely teach'

G = Gu, Py= Yoyo a peripheral participant

(1) G: 我得找人啊关键是

I must look for someone (a substitute teacher), it is vital

(2) Py: 我给你代

I can substitute for you

(3) G: 你真真假代

you really (want to) substitute, or not?

(4) Py: 哈哈,你教几年级你先告诉我

hahaha, you tell me first which grade to teach

(5) G: 你真代你上午你来代,下午我再找个人,下午老师好找。

(If) you are serious, you could come (and teach) the morning classes, (regarding) the afternoon classes, I could look for another person, it is easier to find a teacher for the afternoon classes

(6) Py: 上午,上午我送我儿子来我是可以代课的

mornings, in the morning, I take my son to the school here, so I can teach

The interaction above illustrates a situation in which the school manager mentions to the group members the need to replace a teacher who is on a temporary leave. Yoyo immediately offers her help. Fieldnotes also record other examples of group members' engagements with Hua Hua School. For instance, Xue, Lucy and other members helped with the school's 40<sup>th</sup> - year anniversary, the members collected tuition fees for the school at the beginning of the term or some of the participants helped the school to prepare Christmas gifts for the children. These actions seem to indicate the depth of the engagement of the Networkers with the Chinese complementary school and suggest the participants' willingness to help the school grow.

#### 4.4.2.2 Organising and participating in community gathering

Not only were the members involved in the Chinese school affairs, but they were also actively engaged with the local Chinese community. One way in which the members were able to keep such an intense level of involvement was through the regular coordination of and participation in their own ethnic community gatherings. The data suggest that the members often organised gatherings during their Saturday interactions at Hua Hua School. The following extract demonstrates one such example:

Extract 4.9: 'come with others who have big cars'

L = Lucy, Sn = Snow.

(1) L: 什么时候到我那去,可以跟他们几个大车一块,是吧

When (will you) come to my place, (you) can come with others who have big cars, right?

(2) S: 我前一阵去他们家那吃,吃,吃火锅呢

Not too long ago, I went to their home, to have, have, have hot pot

(3) L: Fanny 啊

Fanny's (home)?

(4) S: 啊

Yeah

(5) L: 那到了 Fannie, 不就到我们家那地方了吗?

Once you get to Fannie's place, then you've basically reached our place

The above extract is from a conversation which contains information about two private gatherings with community members: an upcoming gathering at Lucy's home to which she also intends to invite Snow (turn 1) and a dinner gathering which Snow attended at a community member's (a group member of the Cosmopolitans) home (turn 2). Both seem to indicate that the participants used the chances of seeing each other at the school to organise and participate in closed-circle community gatherings. Fieldnotes also include records of the Networkers' gathering with other community members: 'Today, Lucy, Shang and River talked about the Chinese New Year celebration at Lucy's restaurant. Then, Shang and River both seemed to enjoy the party and food' (Fieldnote a.5), and 'This morning, twelve people were at the head teacher's office and they were organising a visit with other community members to a Chinese medicine conference, which will take place in BCity' (Fieldnote a.1).

In the interview data below, Lucy highlights her engagement with various local BCity-based Chinese communities.

Extract 4.10: '...I spend the rest of it engaging with the community'

L = Lucy

L: 首先在这儿, 当经济有了保障以后, 我为什么做了那么多社团工作, 就是因为, 我觉得我有这个精力, 我在这没什么事情可做, 我有足够的精力参加去社团的工作。那除掉孩子的, 这个, 这个, 哦, 除掉孩子的一些, 一些时间, 给孩子的时间我就是, 多余的时间我就是到外面的社团上

firstly here, when the finance is secured, (the reason) why I have done so much work for the (Chinese) community, is that I feel that I have the energy, I have nothing else to do, I have enough energy to participate in (Chinese) community work. Except for (the time for) the children, then, then, except for some, some time for the children. I then, I spend the rest of the time engaging in the (Chinese) community.

The above data imply that Lucy is actively involved in working for the local Chinese community. Apart from the time with her children, Lucy's claim that she devotes the rest of the time to the Chinese community seems to indicate the importance of the work for her, suggesting her determination in contributing to the Chinese community in BCity.

#### 4.4.2.3 Gossiping - talking about community members and happenings

Another way in which the members of the Networkers were engaged with the Chinese community was through gossiping about other influential members and/or happenings in the local Chinese community when they met on Saturdays. Coates (1989, 1996) point out that gossip is often linked to cooperative

talks and aims to maintain close social relationships and group solidarity. The following extract is one example of the Networkers' gossiping:

Extract 4.11: 'when will her new branch open'

Px = Phonix, Sh = Shang, L = Lucy, R = River

(1) Px: 我这她不来了, 她没拿呀, 大皮箱, 她人住在那边, 那我, 不

she (a mutual community friend) does not live with me anymore, but she has not taken the big suitcase yet (since) she lives all the way over there, then I, can't...

(2) Sh: 她新店什么时候开也不知道,

(we) also don't know when her new branch will open

(3) L: 关键可能是玉华这段时间身体不好, 也没精力管, 你说是吧

The point might be that (Yuhua)<sup>14</sup> does not feel well and has no energy to manage it, right?

(4) Sh: 嗯

Right

In extract 4.11, Shang, Lucy, River and Phonix gossip about a mutually known prominent community member, Yuhua, who owns a chain of Chinese restaurants. The interaction suggests a reasonable amount of personal (turn 1, 3) and professional knowledge of Yuhua (turn 2). The fieldwork data also seem to confirm that the participants of this group often updated their community knowledge through similar gossip on Saturdays, for example:

Extract 4.12

'Today, the group gossiped a lot about a mutual acquaintance, a parent of a child at the Chinese complementary school, and updated each other on that parent's current life situation'. And, 'This morning, the participants spent lots of time gossiping about a former teacher of Hua Hua School, particularly about the teacher's current life situation'. (Fieldnote a.8)

The above data suggest the group members often talked about their mutual friends and associates, particularly about the current life situations of these people. This kind of 'good gossip', through which the Networkers showed their intensive engagement with other community members, is considered to be an indication of showing care and interest in other people's lives, and of forging closeness among the group members (Tannen 2017).

As discussed in Chapter 1, complementary schools often offer community spaces for their own ethnic group/s in the host society alongside the educational and/or religious functions for the children. This initial argument seems to resurface in the data presented in this section showing participants' engagement with the local Chinese community. It seems that the Networkers were able to construct close, collaborative, helpful, and extensive social relations

14 Pseudonym

with one another to support the school, extend and intensify their relationships with each other and other community members, and participate in community events through their interactions that took place at the school. Moreover, their active engagement with the school and the local Chinese community seemed to advance the Networkers' roles and positions both at the school and within the Chinese community in BCity. For some of them, it might well be important to display their social positions and to retain their status both at the school and in the community. This was overtly displayed during the interactions of the Cosmopolitans, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

#### 4.4.3 *Engagement with German society*

Another key theme arising from the data is the Networkers' engagement with German society. The theme consists of the following four sub-themes: (a) the local German circle; (b) welfare and institutional knowledge; (c) local cultural experiences; and (d) the interpretation of German culture and values.

##### 4.4.3.1 The local German crowd – the circle of political elites

The data from the Networker group suggest that the participants had close connections with local Germans, in particular those who occupied important social positions. For instance, fieldnotes suggest that Xue often socialised with successful entrepreneurs. From time to time, important German locals, such as mayors/former mayors attended their social gatherings. The following extract is one example:

Extract 4.13: 'he is the former mayor'

L = Lucy, R = River.

(1) L: 那个市长,碰到我,他说,ja,下次过年我一定来,不是我请他了吗,他不是说他那个星期正好不在办公室,那个星期他正好 Urlaub,不在吗

the mayor met me and said, yes, next year I must come over (for Lucy's party), I invited him, but he said that he was not in his office that week, he was on holiday that week, wasn't here

(2) R: 不是那个德国人吗,带了太太的

isn't that the German who was with his wife

(3) L: 他是老市长, Bürgermeister

He is the former mayor, mayor (in German)

The above extract is from an interaction in which the participants recall Lucy's party. The conversation takes place after the participants' remarks about

Lucy's lavish party. Lucy then recounts the mayor's conversation about coming to her next party (turn 1), implying her close social connections to the mayor. River's misidentification of the other German at the party as the mayor (turn 2) offers Lucy an opportunity to explain that person is the former mayor (turn 3), through which Lucy seems to display her close social relations with influential local German politicians. At the same time, River's comment (turn 2) reveals her presence at the party, suggesting other group members' involvement with Lucy's German circle. Such socialising with business entrepreneurs and influential local politicians indicates the high social status of the German circle with which the Networkers associated.

#### 4.4.3.2 Welfare and institutional knowledge – updating legal regulations

Another way for this group of migrants to be engaged with German society was to give and to obtain advice about welfare and institutional knowledge of the host society. Such knowledge shared within this group covers various areas, from daily issues, such as updating local mobile contracts, renewing bank credit cards and transferring money, to legal matters, i.e. customs and tax regulations, as well as topics related to the German school system, the German education ideology, and different medical practices in Germany. The extract below is an example of the group members exchanging information about the legal regulation of the maximum amount of cash they can carry through German customs.

Extract 4.14: 'you can only bring less than ten thousand cash'

Pt = a peripheral participant Teffy, Pe = a peripheral participant Ellen,

M = Mercy, Sh = Shang, H = Hoo

(1) Pt: 现在你去中国钱不能多带了,带一万还是多少

now when you go to China, you cannot bring so much cash, bring ten thousand, or something

(2) Pe: 带一万

10,000.

(3) M: 八千吧

about 8,000

(4) Sh: 九千多

more than 9,000

(5) H: 他就最多一万,不超过一万

at most 10,000, no more than 10,000.

The extract is a part of a narrative of a community member carrying too much cash when leaving for China and having trouble with German customs law. In order to comply with the German customs regulations, the members discuss and update each other on the legal information about the maximum amount of cash that an individual can carry when leaving Germany. These interactions allow the participants to share and exchange German institutional knowledge in order to face and solve the problems and challenges they encounter while living in Germany; at the same time, such interactions might also enable the participants to present their local and legal knowledge to one another, sustaining their membership of the networker group.

#### 4.4.3.3 Local cultural experiences

The data also show that the participants engaged with German society by sharing their experiences of local German cultural events and places at the Chinese complementary school. For instance, the participants shared their experiences of visiting trendy BCity restaurants and popular local bars. They also encouraged each other to go to BCity cultural events, such as exhibitions and film festivals. The following is one of the examples:

Extract 4.15: 'we went to the 'Dar Restaurant''<sup>15</sup>

X = Xue, L = Lucy, G = Guo, R = River, H = Hu

(1) X: 昨天你知道什么, 昨天我们去哪了吗, 昨天去了个 Dar Restaurant<sup>16</sup>

Yesterday, you know what, where we went yesterday, yesterday (we) went to the 'Dar Restaurant'

(2) L: Was bedeutet Dar Restaurant, wo ist es denn?

What does the 'Dar restaurant' mean, where is it?

(3) X: 听说了吗

Have you heard about it?

(4) G: 没听说过

(I) have not heard about it

(5) R: 不是中国 (的饭店)

(It is) not a Chinese restaurant

<sup>15</sup> Pseudonym

<sup>16</sup> Dar restaurant has a concept of dining with non-visual sense and has a completely dark dining room. The average price for one person during weekdays is about 100 Euros including one alcoholic drink. However, the price is 20% higher during weekends. The concept has always been a trendy topic in the local BCity area.

(6) X: 叫黑暗的餐馆.就是他那边灯都不点的

It is called the Dar Restaurant, where the lights are off

(7) H: 知道了,是在东 Berbrun 那边,那个.

I see, it is located in East BCity, that one.

In the extract, Xue shares his experience of visiting a trendy restaurant in BCity with the group. It is notable that Xue enters the office that morning and immediately starts to recount his experience of visiting a trendy local restaurant (turn 1). It seems that Xue's anecdote wins immediate attention from the rest of the group, as each of them enthusiastically contributed to the conversation (turns 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). Finally, the interaction ends with two other members of the group confirming their knowledge of the restaurant through highlighting the restaurant's unique business concept and its location, showing agreement with Xue. While this talk constructs a scenario in which the members of the Networkers exchange and share their local cultural experiences, it also serves as a platform for the participants to demonstrate their unique dining taste in front of other group members.

#### 4.4.3.4 The interpretation of German culture and values

Additionally, the participants' engagement with the host society seems to be revealed through their understandings and interpretations of German culture, which is suggested from the observational data. For instance, they shared their interpretations of different local German cultures and values during their interactions. Topics ranged from German party culture, food culture and local drinking culture to German attitudes towards material possessions and German parental approaches to their children's education. The extract below is an example of the participants' shared understanding of local German drinking culture:

Extract 4.16 'I feel they like to go out'

M = Mercy, S = Snow

(1) S: 我觉得他们挺爱出去的,晚上也,这喝酒去,那喝酒去

I think they (Germans) like to go out, even in the evenings, drink here, and drink there...

(2) M: 哎,那些是,就是说,怎么说呢,那是几个熟人的约定,他一般老是到一个那酒馆啊,但是约定了每个星期一次两次的

yeah, that is, so to speak, how to say, it is a get-together organised by several acquaintances, they always go to the same pub but it is scheduled regularly once or twice a week

(3) S: 噢对对对对

oh, yeah, yeah, yeah

In this extract, Mercy and Snow are discussing the local German drinking culture. Snow begins by claiming that Germans like to go out (turn 1). Mercy agrees with Snow and further describes the tradition of acquaintances getting together for drinks (turn 2). Snow confirms Mercy through repeated minimal responses ‘yeah, yeah, yeah’ (turn 3). This brief extract, in which the participants share and negotiate their understanding of local drinking culture, gives some indication of the efforts the members have made to understand the norms of social life in the host society.

The above findings of Networkers’ engagement with the German host society during their interactions at the Chinese complementary school bear similarities to Zhou and Kim’s (2006) study, in which the community networks built at Chinese complementary school settings in Los Angeles enable Chinese migrants to exchange valuable information about the American host society.

On the one hand, the above data in this section suggest the members of the Networkers deliberately shared useful institutional knowledge, legal regulations and the experiences of their explorations of local cultural events, in order to support each other to face and understand situations which occurred in their daily life in Germany. On the other hand, their interactions also sometimes give the impression of an intentional display of knowledge and social status.

#### *4.4.4 The maintenance of Mandarin language and Chinese ties for their children*

The fourth main theme arising from the data is the maintenance of Chinese ties and the Mandarin language, which consists of two subthemes: (a) the maintenance of the Mandarin language for their children; and (b) fostering the emotional bond with China and Chinese ties for their children.

##### 4.4.4.1 The maintenance of Mandarin language for their children

For many participants of this group, it was vital that their children were able to build a basic foundation and to have access to the Mandarin language by attending the Chinese complementary school. The following extract is one example:

Extract 4.17: ‘as long as he likes to come to the school’

Sh = Shang, R = River, L = Lucy, Pz = a peripheral participant, Zoe.

(1) Sh: 他说他上课听懂的, 读书也能读几个字, 那我说来就来

he (Sh's son) said he can follow the lesson (in Hua Hua School), he can also read some characters, then I said, let's just go (to Chinese school)

(2) R: 比不来好, 多多少少会几个字, 比在家好

better than not coming? (to school), at least (they can) learn some words, better than being at home

(3) L: 看电视台上的东西吧, 他愿意认字。他现在能认电视上的汉字

watching TV, he would like to learn new words, he could learn new Chinese words from watching TV now

(4) Pz: 只要他喜欢

as long as he likes (to come to the school)

In the above extract, Shang implies that the school offers a space for her son to maintain the Mandarin language by revealing the child's ability to follow the lessons at Hua Hua School (turn 1). River's response '(coming to the school) is better than not coming to (the school), at least (they) can learn some new words...' (turn 2), further suggests a very similar opinion about maintaining basic knowledge of Mandarin for their children through the school. Later, the peripheral participant's response 'as long as he likes to come over' (turn 4) once more seems to confirm the significant meaning of joining the school. The extract thus illustrates a scene in which the participants were emphasising the importance of attending the Chinese complementary school to maintain access to Mandarin for their children.

#### 4.4.4.2 Emotional bonds with China and Chinese ties for their children

The data also suggest that the participants not only seemed to express a similar attitude towards maintaining a basis of the Mandarin language for their children through the Chinese complementary school, but also indicated that the purpose of maintaining the language was to preserve emotional bonds and regular contacts with China. In the following extract taken from the interaction data, the participants presented such an opinion:

Extract 4.18 'When they go back to China'

X = Xue, G = Guo.

(1) X: 孩子并不是说让他学多么好多么快, 但是是希望孩子把学习中的这个这个时间给拖长一点, 他拖的时间越长, 他中国文化就多点 这样的话他也就行了。然后呢他也愿意回去, 就是说回去看看亲戚朋友啊这些, 他能说说中文, 那亲戚朋友鼓励鼓励那他就高兴了

for the children, it is not how well and fast they shall learn (at the school), but (we) hope the children can learn (Chinese) for a long period, the longer the period is, the more Chinese culture they will know, and it's enough (for them). Then they would be willing to go back

(to China), that is when they go back to visit relatives and friends, they can speak Chinese there, then relatives and friends will encourage them, (they) will be very happy

(2) G: 我们呢大部分的家长并没有要求孩子在中文上一定要多成什么作家啊, 再继续发展那 就是说他个人要努力了, 他想在中文上回国做什么额, 这个他个人肯定还要付出, 当然了 有了这个基础他很容易在国

most of our parents do not expect the children to become writers in the Chinese language, further progress will depend on his/her individual efforts, (if) he/she wants to return to China and do something in Chinese, that, he/she needs for sure to put in more effort personally, once the foundation is there, it is easy for him/her to (do something) in China.

Both Xue's statement, 'for the children, it is not how well and fast they shall learn (at the school)' (turn 1), and Guo's statement, 'most of our parents do not want the children to become writers in the Chinese language' (turn 2), clearly collaborate with other participants' attitudes, revealed in the previous extract, that a basic foundation of Mandarin language should be achieved through attending the Chinese school. Moreover, Xue points out that the reason it is important for the children to attend the school for a maximum possible length of time is to be familiar with Chinese culture and ties and to build up their emotional bonds with China (turn 1). The two conditional structures contributed by Xue and Guo: 'then they would be willing to go back (to China)' (turn 1) and 'if they want to go back to China' (turn 2) imply that being familiar with Chinese culture and ties is to 'build a foundation' (turn 2) for the imagined future possibility of returning to China. In this extract, the participants appeared to associate the children's attendance at the Chinese complementary school and the Mandarin language they learned there with Chinese ties rooted in modern China and Chinese culture.

In the following interview, when asked the reason for sending her children to Hua Hua School, Lucy considered the possibility for her son to return to China in the future:

Extract 4.19: 'as far as there is a chance'

K = the researcher, L = Lucy

(1) K: 他将来要是回中国你会鼓励他回去吗

If he would like to return to China in the future, would you encourage him?

(2) L: 鼓励他回去工作, 只能说有这个机会回, 就说他能不能抓着一个好的机会不知道

(I'll) encourage him to return (to China) to work, only, say, if there is a chance to return, say, (I) don't know if he can grasp a good chance.

(3) K: 如果要是工作很好的话那你会鼓励他

If there is a chance for a good job, will you encourage him to go back?

(4) L: 那当然拉, 其实这并不是一件坏的事, 我也是想把孩子弄大了以后我也就两边跑跑好了

Of course, actually, it is not a bad thing at all, I think when the children are grown up, I would like to spend time in both countries.

Following a discussion about the benefits her son received from three summer trips to China organised by the Chinese complementary school, when asked if she would encourage her son to go to China in the future, Lucy is very forthcoming about her vision for her son being able to pursue his possible professional success in China (turn 2, 4). This suggests that the participants of this group have prepared their children for future transnational success by drawing upon the resources of the Chinese complementary school.

It seems that as first-generation transnational migrants, the Networkers were also keen to maintain transnational identities (Block 2006) for their German born/raised children by sending them to Hua Hua School, and thus forging contact with the Mandarin language and Chinese culture. Like many of the recent studies indicating that complementary schools create spaces for the maintenance, transmission, and development of heritage language, culture, and identity (Creese et al. 2006; Li Wei and Wu 2010), the data of this study suggest that Hua Hua School offered a space for the Networkers to prepare their children for future professional success in the imagined community of modern China, based on the access to the Mandarin language and Chinese cultural ties provided at the school setting.

#### *4.4.5 The navigation of parenthood*

The fifth main theme arising from the data is the navigation of parenthood, which consists of three subthemes: (a) engaging with their children's development and growth; (b) enhancing their children's education chances; (c) monitoring their children. During the period of fieldwork, overt interactions related to parenthood took place among the participants. The following three subthemes illustrate the ways in which the participants exchanged and shared experiences of parenting:

##### 4.4.5.1 Engaging with their children's growth and development

###### Sharing experiences and giving advice

Interactions, fieldnotes and interview data all show a good deal of sharing experiences, exchanging information and giving advice regarding the participants' children's growth and development. One way for the participants to be engaged with their children's development was through sharing the experiences of their children's adolescent development with each other. The following extract 4.21 is an example from the interaction data.

Extract 4.20: 'she has her own idea'

L = Lucy, R = River

(1) L: 像我这个女儿,你想到哪去儿

take my daughter for instance, where do you want to go (with her)

(2) R: 她自己有这个思想了

she has her own idea

(3) L: kannst du vergessen, 现在稍微大点的有自己的主意了, 穿这个夹克, 她就是不穿, 她宁愿 放弃出门

you can forget it, now she is a bit older, she has her own idea, (if I ask her) to wear this jacket, she will not wear it, she'd rather give up going out

(4) L: 所以我说, 小孩子的时候管个温饱, 大孩子的思想教育呢还太复杂, 不是随你意的

so I say, when children are young, we only need to be responsible for their food and clothing, when they are older, it is complicated to guide them in the right direction, it is not always as what you wish

Following a discussion of their children's development, in the above extract, Lucy openly recounts an anecdote of her daughter's adolescent progress (turn 1, 3). She then gives advice on the complications of the teen period to the rest of the group (turn 4). The extract presents a scene in which the members of the group showed their engagement with their children's growth. The interaction below presents a situation in which Lucy and Shang advised River, after an argument with her teenage son:

Extract 4.21: 'you are also responsible'

L = Lucy, R = River, Sh = Shang

(1) L: 你要耐心和他讲

you need to talk to him with patience

(2) R: 后来我想想呢我这个方法也太简单了, 粗暴了

later, I thought about it, my approach was too simple and harsh

(3) L: 太极端了

too extreme

(4) R: 对

right

(5) Sh:...我说你也是这个脾气, 你也是有责任

I say your temper is bad, you are also responsible (for his behaviours)

(6) R: 是是, 我有时侯不高兴, 我拿着鞋底就砸, 我是有责任的

yes, yes, sometimes when I was not happy (with him), I would throw shoes (at him), it is my fault

(7) L: 所以我说了, 家长也有责任,

so, I said, as parents we are also responsible (for what the children do wrong)

(8) Sh: 它影响孩子

(your temper) it has an impact on the child

In the above extract 4.22, both Shang and Lucy frankly claim that River's short temper towards her son had impacted her son's adolescent development and advise River to be more patient with her child (turn 1, 3). River appears to regret her behaviour and openly accepts the advice from her friend by showing her feeling of remorse for the somewhat violent encounters with her teenage son which she reveals in the interaction (turn 2, 6). The extract suggests that while the members of the group gave advice about parenthood to each other, they were also willing to listen to and learn from one another. It thus depicts a picture in which the participants collaborated with each other in coping with their teenage children's rebellious development.

#### 4.4.5.2 Spending more time with their children

Another way for the group members to be engaged with their children's growth and development was through encouraging each other to spend more time with their children.

Extract 4.22: 'children need attention'

L = Lucy, R = River, Sh = Shang.

(1) L: 星期三下午休息, 所以 Moon 呢也不至于, 每次作业赶在最后一天做, 所以 Moon 现作业好就在这一点

(I take) Wednesday afternoons off, so Moon does not leave her homework to the last minute, now Moon does her homework better

(2) R: 小孩是要陪的

children need attention

(3) L: 要要

sure, sure

(4) R: 我是觉得孩子要时间陪的, 我整天不在, 孩子 都不会去做

I think children need our attention, when I am not at home the whole day, my children do not do (what they are supposed to do) ...

(5) L: 你陪他吃饭也好, 兴趣也好

no matter if you spend time with them while they eat or do their hobbies

(6) Sh: 对对对, 他上电脑阿, 看电视啊少

right, right, right, s/he would play less on the computer and watches less TV

The conversation starts with the topic of Lucy and Shang changing their business schedules, which leads to a disclosure of them having some extra afternoons off work, and thus spending more time at home with their children. Keeping their children company and investing more time in their children are the shared parenting ideas behind this extract.

In the above extracts, I have presented some of the participants' interactions related to their engagement in the development of their adolescent children. In the following paragraphs, I focus on their interactions related to improving their children's educational chances.

#### 4.4.5.3 Enhancing their children's educational chances

Fieldnotes report that the participants spent a considerable amount of time in exchanging information about schools, teachers, hobby clubs and universities. The data also suggest that a good deal of talk related to their children's educational chances took place. The following extract illustrates a situation in which the participants shared information and gave advice in order to help each other's children to gain better educational access.

Extract 4.23: 'he can take a training course'

L = Lucy, M = Mercy, R = River, Sh = Shang

(1) Sh: 就是进去的时候难

it is only hard to get accepted (by the universities)

(2) M: 对啊, 进去就难

that is right, hard to get in

(3) Sh: 要 1.0/1.1 . 1.0 anmeldung 就能进去了, 1.1 的话要 warten list 排队

one needs either 1.0 or 1.1. 1.0 can be accepted once you register for it, 1.1 will be put on the waiting list

(4) L: 所以我就害怕嘛

that is why I am worried

(5) M: 你可以去做 Ausbildung 啊, 他想学 medicine 的话, 这样对你来说也有好处, 有经验

you can take training courses, if he wants to study medicine, it is also good for you (him) in terms of experience

(6) Sh: 等于有点经验

it is like gaining some experience

(7) R: 对呀

that is right

(8) M: 而且对以后也有好处。

and it is good for the future

(9) R: 等, 等一个 Semester 加个 0.5 分吧, 再等一个, 好像是 0.5, 还是一分, 一个 Punkt 我知道, 还要等, 等他就给你加分

wait, wait for one semester, (one can) get 0.5 point for it, wait for another semester, it is another 0.5, or 1 point, 1 point, I know, (he) needs to wait, wait, so that he can get some extra points

The topic is about Lucy's son gaining a place to study medicine at a German university. Having agreed that it is hard to get a place for this subject, the participants give different advice to Lucy in order to increase the chances of her son securing a place as a medical student. For instance, Shang explains the detailed requirements in order to be accepted (turn 3). When Lucy expresses concern over her son's results (turn 4), Mercy suggests that Lucy's son join a medical internship training programme (turn 5). River then elaborates that extra points would be added to the exam result after participating in such a training programme (turn 9). This extract presents an example of a situation in which the participants constructed information in order to gain better chances for their children's educational success. A number of studies reveal that complementary schools often serve as spaces where parents have access to valuable knowledge about mainstream school systems and are able to exchange crucial information to facilitate their children's educational success (see Zhou and Kim 2006). However, Abbas's (2007) work on class and parenting among the Asian community in the UK shows how middle-class parental networks enable access to information and resources and thus bolster the trajectories of their children, while working-class migrant parents are largely excluded from this process and miss out on the opportunities that would help their children to be upwardly mobile. This seems to resemble the case of the middle/upper-middle class Networkers in this study, as the data suggest that the Networkers were able to access information and resources which were fostered through their interactions at the school in order to secure better chances for their children's education.

#### 4.4.5.4 Monitoring the children

Fieldwork data suggest that one of the ways in which the Networkers constructed their parenthood was to monitor their children. The parents were able to exchange information and help each other to monitor the children during their time at the school. The following is one example:

Extract 4.24: ‘when did your little girl come back home last night’

L = Lucy, R = River

(1) L: 你们小丫头昨天晚上几点, 今天早上几点钟回来的?

When did your little girl come home last night, (I mean) this morning, at what time?

(2) R: 我看是差 10 分钟到 12 点

I had a look (at the clock), (it) was ten to twelve

(3) L: 这么早啊? 他们没开始吧? 11 点开始啊, 昨天她是不是到 Hansplace 参加那个 party 去了

so early? They had not started (that much earlier)? they didn’t start until 11pm, didn’t she go to Hansplace<sup>17</sup> for that party yesterday?

(4) R: 她讲去吃饭去了

She said she went out for dinner

Extract 4.24 is a conversation between Lucy and River, through which Lucy makes the attempt to monitor her son, Haka. As revealed earlier, Lucy and River are old friends and familiar with each other’s family members, which is also suggested by Lucy’s use of ‘your little girl’ (turn 1), referring to River’s daughter. At the time of the fieldwork, Lucy’s son, Haka, and River’s daughter, Min, attended the same high school. In the interaction, Lucy is quite concerned about her son’s late return from his high school goodbye party and is curious if River’s daughter also came back home late, as Lucy assumed that River’s daughter went to the same party. Lucy proposes the topic (turn 1), which suggests her intention to bring this concern with her to the school. River makes it clear that her daughter, Min, went out for dinner instead of going to the party and came back home at 11:50 p.m. (turn 2). The extract suggests that these two female friends monitored their children’s behaviour through their interactions at the Chinese complementary school.

The data presented in this section clearly illustrates how the Networkers shared their parenting experiences, gave educational advice and monitored each other’s children during their interactions at the Chinese complementary school. It is particularly noticeable that the shared experiences in changing their business schedules and spending more time with their children imply the participants’ financial independence, whilst their efforts and the possibilities for their children’s educational success seem to be related to the participants’ well-established social status and rich resources owned in the host country.

17 pseudonym

#### 4.4.6 *Business and job opportunities*

The final theme arising from the data is business and job opportunities. In this group, some participants used interactions to gain business and job resources, whereas others focused on articulating chances for personal or/and community development. For instance, Lucy, Shang, River and Wendy frequently shared business purchase experiences and made recommendations to each other on wholesalers, purchasing procedures and purchasing time. The following field-note is one example:

Extract 4.25: the wholesalers

‘Today, Lucy, Shang, River and Wendy’s long discussion on wholesalers has caught my attention. Shang recounted the bad experiences she had with one particular wholesaler’s delivery service and warned both Lucy and Wendy to keep their eyes on their wholesaler’s delivery services (fieldnote a.9)’.

The extract above implies that the participants shared their business experiences and warned each other to watch out for bad business deals during their interactions at the Chinese complementary school.

In addition, some of the participants introduced new business opportunities or customers and offered new job opportunities to others. The following two extracts are instances of this:

Extract 4.26: Tax consulting

‘Today, while the talk between Lucy, River, Gu and a peripheral participant took place, Mandy introduced a customer to Shang for taxation consulting. Shang asked Many to pass her number to Mandy’s acquaintance’ (fieldnote a.2)

In the following extract, Lucy and Snow discuss the possibility of Lucy and Gu helping Snow to be a temporary tour guide for exclusive Chinese visitors:

Extract 4.27: ‘can Gu help?’

S = Snow, L = Lucy

(1) S: 你不是早就不接团了吗

I thought you had quit being a tour guide a long time ago

(2) L: 像这种人家找到我的, 柏林的不远的, 我还能, 太远的我也不接了

like such cases, when the tour is not far from BCity, I still can do it, when it is too far away, I cannot

(3) S: 我这边同行的 4 个团都是在这个期间, 都是这几个星期的

my four tours are all in this period, all in these couple of weeks

(4) L: 都赶到一了, 都赶着这几个星期, Gu 能帮你上吗

all (tours) at the same time, in these couple of weeks, can Gu help you

(5) S: 我没跟他做过这个, 他上团不知道啊

I have not worked tours with him, he guides tours too, I do not know it

(6) L: 他上, 他怎么不上, 他多能侃哪

he does, why wouldn't he, he is so chatty

In the above extract, Snow is desperately looking for a tour guide for her exclusive Chinese visitors, so Lucy immediately offers to help with the tour of BCity and recommends Gu for the tours far from BCity.

So far, I have briefly introduced group interactions regarding business and job opportunities and provided a few extracts as examples, hoping to present a general picture of their business connections with one another. Similar to a number of Leung's studies on the significance of ethnic networks in supporting the development of Chinese migrant business in Germany (Leung 2001, 2003, 2005a, 2005b), in this study, it is particularly noticeable that topics related to business often emerged during the parental interactions on Saturdays. The interactions covered various areas, for instance, from sharing business experiences and introducing customers to one another, to helping each other when needed. This seems indicative of an intensive business engagement with one another within the group, leading to the cultivation of a steady amount of business and employment resources that the group had at its disposal.

Thus far, I have presented six themes that emerged during the interactions of the Networkers at Hua Hua School. These themes are compelling in the consideration of the generation of social capital and the cultivation of Guanxi in a Chinese complementary school setting. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate the themes which arose from the talk of the Cosmopolitans and discuss the similarities and differences between the two parental groups.

## 5 The Cosmopolitans

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present fieldnotes, audio-recorded spoken interaction and interview data of the group of parents who usually gathered on Saturday afternoons in the director's office of Hua Hua school. Similarly to the Networkers, before coming to Germany, most of the members of this group lived in metropolitan cities in China, such as Beijing and Shanghai. The majority of them were brought up in comfortable urban families and received outstanding education in China. Many have 'intellectual elite' (Block 2006) family backgrounds in which elite educational qualifications were highly valued and they were able to pursue higher education opportunities in the United States or Germany.

Their reasons for coming to Germany differed from one another. Some came to Germany for business and study reasons, whilst some built up lives in the country. However, most of them seemed to resonate with what Block (2006) identifies as elite transnationals. In other words, they were elite 'cosmopolitans' with strong 'intercultural competence' who immersed themselves in the host environment, while maintaining their home culture. It is noticeable that many of the Cosmopolitans had strong cosmopolitan backgrounds, whilst some of them had simultaneous strong socioeconomic and political connections to a third nation, such as the United States and Canada.

It is particularly noticeable within the data that many members of the group were similarly well-off in terms of their current standards of living and levels of material comfort and they overwhelmingly presented their highbrow taste on numerous occasions, stressing the significance of cultural sophistication for the members of this group. The overt references to the standards of living, material possessions and sophisticated taste suggest the members of this group had followed a path to a privileged and high social status in the host society, the local Chinese community and the Hua Hua School. Thus, I have given the name of Cosmopolitans to this group, indicating their high standard of living, rich material possessions and sophisticated cultural engagements.

Similarly to the Networkers, the members of the Cosmopolitans were capable of creating a harmonious and close group relationship both during their gatherings on Saturdays at Hua Hua School and other occasions outside the school. It is noticeable within the data that with the support of their material and cultural possessions and extensive connections to highbrow society, the members of this group appeared to be able to reap benefits from the rich resources residing within their connections with one another. This is reminiscent

not only of both Putnam's (1990, 2000) 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital, but also Bourdieu's (1986) notion on the accumulation of social capital depending on the volume of other types of capitals and the size of the network.

In the following sections, I first briefly explore the key participants' personal backgrounds, focusing on their family, education and emigration. Second, I depict the scene of the Cosmopolitans' forming of the group at the school, demonstrate their harmonious interaction patterns and close group relations and describe their high social status at the school. Then, I discuss the themes of their interactions and reveal the similarities between the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers. Finally, I use the concepts of social capital and Guanxi as lenses for theorising the data.

## 5.2 Overview of the participants

First, I will briefly introduce the main participants and hope to offer some insights into the participants' personal backgrounds. During the period of my fieldwork, there were core members in this group: Snow, Fanny, Hoo, Ying, Kong, Gu, Wendy, Ling and Inger. These participants usually gathered at the director's office on Saturday afternoons along with a number of peripheral members who attended less regularly. Table 7 below shows some brief details of the key participants of the Cosmopolitans.

### 5.2.1 *The members of the Cosmopolitan group*

Table 7: Brief Details of the Key Participants of the Cosmopolitan Group<sup>18</sup>

NOC = Number of children; HEQIC = Highest education qualification in China;

HEQIG = Highest educational qualification in Germany; OCI = Occupation in China;

COIG = Current occupation in Germany;

YOA = Year of arrival in Germany; AOA = Age of arrival

<sup>18</sup> pseudonym

Inger	Ling	Wendy	Ying	Kong	Hoo	Gu	Fanny	Snow	Name
Female	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Gender
				Early fifties	Mid sixties	Late forties	Early forties	Early forties	Age
			2	2		1	2	1	NOC
Bachelor			Bachelor	N/A	N/A	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	HEQIC
Masters			Masters	N/A	German Diploma	German Diploma	Masters	None	HEQIG OR
			Researcher	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	Researcher	Athlete	OCI
			Company owner	Restaurant owner, director of Hua School, chairman of various local Chinese organisations			Company owner	Company owner	COIG
Mandarin German & English	Hokien, Mandarin German	Mandarin German	Mandarin German	Mandarin English, German	Languages				
			2003	2003			2003	2009	YOA
			Early forties	Early forties			Early forties	mid thirties	AOA

Source: author

### 5.2.2 *Vignettes*

Unlike the members of the Networkers, many of whom came to Germany via university study programmes or joined their partners after the Chinese economic reforms in 1980, the members of the Cosmopolitan group came to Germany for a range of reasons. For example, Fanny and her husband, Kong, were first generation migrants in the United States and migrated to Germany for business purposes in 2003. Both of them had intellectual elite family backgrounds and both were born and grew up in the capital city of China, Beijing. Kong attended a distinguished university in Beijing in 1978 where he passed the first university entrance examination after the Cultural Revolution<sup>19</sup>. Fanny also entered a top university in China in 1979. Before the couple moved to the States, they held positions in an outstanding public research institute in Beijing. The couple went to the States to continue to pursue their higher education in 1988 and 1989, and settled there for a decade before they moved to BCity. During the time of the fieldwork, the couple's 18-year-old daughter was studying at a top university in England, whilst they lived in BCity with their 14-year-old son who attended an American school. The couple ran their own trading company<sup>20</sup>

Another participant, Snow<sup>21</sup>, was also born and raised in an academic family in Beijing, and used to be a successful gymnast in China. She married a German diplomat in Beijing. After 15 years of married life and having a daughter, the marriage ended in divorce. After her divorce, Snow moved to Germany with her 11-year-old daughter in 2008. At the time of the fieldwork, she ran her own company and engaged with German/Chinese cultural exchange programmes.

Wendy, who grew up in a decent urban area in China, came to Germany to pursue her Masters in the 90s. She later married her German husband who was a senior engineer in an international aviation company and earned a comfortable income. At the time of the fieldwork, Wendy was a full-time housewife, focusing on bringing up their two teenage children and taking care of domestic work.

Gu was born and grew up in Beijing and came to Germany in the late 80s right after his graduation from a university in Beijing. He was able to attend university in Germany soon after his arrival in the country. At the time of the field work, Gu was the manager of Hua Hua School.

19 During the period of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), universities in China were repressed and banned.

20 Fanny and Kong moved back to the States a year after the fieldwork and now commute between their business in BCity, Germany, and their home in Atlanta, U.S.

21 Snow sometimes participated in some interactions of the Networkers (see Chapter 4).

Hoo was from a diplomatic family and his uncle used to be an ambassador of Dland<sup>22</sup> in West Europe. Hoo followed his uncle to Dland as a young student in the late 70s and later moved to Germany during his adulthood. It is worth noting that Hoo was one of the few pioneers among the three parental groups who came to Europe before China's Open Door Policy. This might be due to his diplomatic family background and his age group. During the time of the fieldwork, Hoo and his wife ran a well-known local Chinese restaurant. While Hoo was engaged in various Chinese societal networks and took great responsibilities in different community positions, he was also the director of Hua Hua School.

The above vignettes briefly illustrate the core participants' comfortable and wealthy upbringings and the promising professional futures they once had back in China as well as the decent education they had experienced worldwide, shedding light on the participants' migrant trajectories. In the following section, I focus on the participants' rich material possessions and their current high standard of living in Germany.

### *5.2.3 Material possessions and high social status*

During the fieldwork, I observed that many of the participants of this group came to the school in luxury cars. They dressed smartly, often with leather shoes and handbags and cashmere or wool coats and jackets. Frequent topics in their conversations revolved around their leisure-time activities, such as reading literature, fine gardening, film festivals, art exhibitions, pets, exclusive holidays, exotic food tasting, special cooking experiences and natural beauty products. This indicated the importance of cultural sophistication for this group and the comfortable financial circumstances which enabled them to pursue such activities.

One way for the participants of this group to display their high social status was through presenting their solid financial situation and sophisticated taste. Many of the members were in possession of different properties outside Germany and were owners of their own houses or apartments in the major city where they lived, most of which were located in exclusive areas. For instance, interview data reveal that while Fanny and Kong owned an apartment not far from Lucy's (a main participant of the Networkers, see Chapter 4) house, the couple also owned a spacious house in Atlanta, in the States.

During my interview with Snow, I had a chance to visit her home in BCity, Extract 5.1 presents the fieldnote taken during the interview:

Extract 5.1: 'Snow's apartment'

22 pseudonym

Snow took me to her apartment for a second interview and traditional Chinese tea. The apartment building is located in a quiet street with boutique coffee shops and restaurants. Her unit is located in the back yard of a front building with a transparent glass lift taking us up to the third floor, in which we were able to see the beautiful view of the green and well-kept courtyard garden. It is a high-ceiling 'Altbau' building with beautiful spacious windows down to the gleaming wood floors. The apartment has two large living rooms and three bedrooms. Snow explained to me that one living room aims to reflect a contemporary German interior design, the other living room follows a traditional Beijing royal style interior design. All the ancient-styled Chinese furniture was shipped from Beijing to BCity. Snow also told me that three pieces were antiques from the Qing Dynasty (fieldnote c.6).

In Extract 5.1, the location of Snow's apartment and the well-designed lift with a 270 - degree view of the meticulously planned courtyard, suggest that the apartment is part of an exclusive neighbourhood. The romantic 'Altbau', the high ceilings, the interior designs and the beautiful furniture all reflect the owner's upper-middle class taste (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bourdieu 1984). In particular, the contrasting interior designs of the contemporary German style and the ancient royal Beijing style imply the desire of the owner to express a thorough understanding of the taste and culture of Western postmodernism and Ancient China. It also aims to show the owner's privileged cross-cultural knowledge, her close relation to Germany and her proud Beijing roots. Such data illustrate a picture of Snow's comfortable material possessions and highbrow interior design taste in which financial comfort and sophistication are closely related, and through which she seems to demonstrate her high social position and sophisticated taste.

Another way for the Cosmopolitans to present their high social status was through displaying their linguistic capital (Bourdieu 1991). It is particularly noticeable that during the fieldwork there was frequent code-switching between three standard linguistic forms, English, German and Mandarin, all of which occupy high status in modern society. Extract 5.2 presents a short piece of such code-switching:

Extract 5.2: 'Zimt, 肉桂, cinnamon'

L=Ling, F=Fanny, Y=Ying, Kg=Kong, I=Inger

(1) L: 不是, 它这个是叫那个什么吧, 叫 Zimt, 什么, Zimt, Zimt

no, is it called, called Zimt, what is it, Zimt (cinnamon in German),

(2) F: 那个什么, 肉桂

what is it, Rougui (cinnamon in Mandarin)

(3) L: 啊, 是肉桂, zimt

ja, it is Rougui, Zimt

(4) I: aha

aha

(5) Y: 肉桂是另外一种

Rougui is something different

(6) F: 一样的吧,它都是

he same, isn't it, it is called

(7) Kg: 就是那个,英文叫 cinnamon

that is what is called cinnamon in English

(8) I: richtig

right (German)

In Extract 5.2, the participants switch between three languages – standard German (Hochdeutsch), English and Mandarin (普通话-Putonghua) – to describe a spice, indicating their language skills and linguistic flexibility. Moreover, noting the broad context of the interaction, there is code-switching between three different standard linguistic forms in the extract: Mandarin (普通话-Putonghua) as the lingua franca of China – the participants' country of origin – and of the Chinese complementary school, 'Hochdeutsch' as the standard linguistic form of Germany where the school is located and the participants currently reside, as well as English as the lingua franca recognised worldwide.

Although research shows code-switching is a common phenomenon among bilinguals, the fluent code-switching between various standard languages shared with status in this group seems to be a way in which the participants displayed their prestige in terms of the linguistic capital (Bourdieu 1991) they possess. Following Rampton, Harris and Leung's (1997) scheme of language expertise, language inheritance and language affiliation<sup>23</sup>, through the use of high status, non-heritage languages to which they demonstrated an affiliation, the participants showed their language expertise and educational backgrounds. Such data suggest that they tended to associate themselves with educated middle-class/upper-middle class social groups in order to retain their core membership of the group and access to the resources residing within it. Thus, the participants were able to occupy high status positions in the host society as well as in their own ethnic community and to perform their social, cultural and economic superiorities. Similar studies about the negotiation of the social place among elite multilingual students in higher education can be found in, for example, Vandrlick's (2014) and Preece's (2019) studies.

23 'The term language expertise refers to how proficient a person is in a language; language affiliation refers to the attachment or identification they feel for a language, whether or not they nominally belong to the social group customarily associated with it and language inheritance refers to the ways in which individuals can be born into a language tradition which is prominent within the family and/or community setting, regardless of whether or not they claim expertise or affiliation to that language' (Leung, Harris and Rampton 1997, pp.10).

Another example of the way the Cosmopolitans maintained their high social status was to emphasise their ‘linguistic expertise’ in standard Mandarin. Apart from the majority of the interactions being conducted in Mandarin, there were also a number of situations in which pronunciation and spelling were carefully discussed and corrected. The following is one of the examples:

Extract 5.3: ‘ban li zi’

N = Nancy, F = Fanny, Kg = Kong, I = Iger, Px = a peripheral participant, Xio

(1) N: 尝尝吧, 这个, 板梨子

have a try, this is, ban li zi (chestnut) (li is in a rising tone)

(2) F: 板梨

ban li (li is in a rising tone)

(3) Kg: 板梨

banli (li is in a rising tone)

(4) F: 板栗, 栗

banli, li (li is in a falling tone)

(5) I: 板梨

banli (li is in a rising tone)

(6) Px: 板栗

banli (li is in a falling tone)

(7) Kg: 栗子, 板栗

lizi, banli (both li are in falling tone)

(8) N: 哈哈, 吃吧...

hahaha, just eat...

The above extract describes a situation in which the participants try to correct Nancy’s wrong rising tone<sup>24</sup> on the Mandarin character ‘栗 li’ (turn 1). Nancy offers Xio a chestnut but uses the wrong tone to pronounce the character ‘栗 li’ (line 5). Fanny, Kong and Xio imitate Nancy’s rising tone repeatedly (turn 6, 7, 9), through which they try to stress the wrong use and pronounce the correct falling tone for the syllable ‘栗 li’ (turn 8, 10, 11). This exchange is one of many examples of their persistence in maintaining the standard tones of Mandarin Chinese during their interactions.

The above example is one of a few which suggest an overwhelming display of the participants’ language expertise, language affiliation and language

24 One of the features of Mandarin language is that tones are used to determine meanings (Ross and Ma 2006).

inheritance in relation to Mandarin (Rampton, Harris, and Leung 1997). Such data imply that the membership of this group required the use of standard Mandarin, through which the Cosmopolitans were able to forge exclusive in-group interactions. Although the use of a prestigious linguistic code commonly takes place in institutional settings, it is worth noting the overt attention given to standard Mandarin within this friendship group.

Following the notion of language as symbolic resource which is linked to power and can be used to influence others (Heller 1992, 1995), it is noteworthy that the participants exhibited their high linguistic status and symbolic domination through the demonstration of their language expertise, since Mandarin conveys linguistic power as the main 'lingua franca' at the complementary school setting (Mau, Francis and Archer 2009), which is strongly promoted and imposed by Hua Hua School.

Apart from the use of certain languages, the high social status of the Cosmopolitans was also portrayed through their descriptions of their circle of friends. The following two extracts are examples:

Extract 5.4 'we all have overseas higher education backgrounds'

K = The researcher, F = Fanny

(1) K: 和我讲讲你德国的朋友圈吧

tell me about your circle of friends in Germany

(2) F: 以前上班,有几个好朋友,他们知道我们碰到些困难啊,他们都知道我们是美国来的,都挺热心的,而且大家都是留学生背景,大家都是聊得挺好的,有时间就在一起玩...刘医生是一帮人,他们就是主要是在公司做事啊,再有一些呢,就有自己的生意,也是自己做的,房地产也好啊,有口碑的贸易公司,或是比较成功的饭店...

In the morning class<sup>25</sup>, (I) have a couple of good friends, they knew that we had some difficulties, they all knew that we were from the United States, (so they were) very warm-hearted, and (we) all have studied overseas, (so) we all get along very well, whenever we have time we would gather together... Dr Liu is one of that group of friends, they mainly work in companies, and some other (friends), they have their own business, manage business themselves, (for instance), in real estate, or reputable trading companies, or run relatively successful restaurants...

In Extract 5.4, I ask Fanny to describe her circle of friends in Germany (turn 1). She points out that she has a couple of good friends from the morning group – some peripheral members of the Networkers. Fanny then stresses that the reason for them getting along is because they all share the same experience of completing their higher education outside of China, which suggests that Fanny identifies herself and her friendship circle as one of those Chinese cultural elites who are privileged to attend university in well-developed Western countries. While Fanny's later accounts of her friends' professional situations, such

25 Morning class here refers to the parents gathered in the morning during their children's Chinese class.

as pointing out one friend's doctoral degree and stating that some own well-established businesses, imply a high social status and successful careers in her group of friends, her overt emphasis on formal elite educational experiences seems to represent the link between educated middle/upper- middle class and their preferences for elite/formal education (Bourdieu 1984; Savage et al. 2013).

Interestingly, the following interview with Snow also reveals similar but bolder statements about the cultural elitism of her circle of friends in BCity:

Extract 5.5 'first, they do not need earn money, second, they all rather like culture and art'

K = The researcher, S = Snow

(1) K: 和我讲讲你德国的朋友圈吧

tell me about your circle of friends in Germany

(2) S: 有的朋友你像我周边的这什么外国人呵, 那么我们每个星期好像这种聚会, 是已经列入到一种生活中, 一种文化生活你知道吧, 然后呢, 我也有跟这个中国朋友, 比如说我一, 就是她是也是一个博士. 这几个人呢我觉得都是, 第一, 不用她们去挣钱呵, 第二呢, 那个, 都比较喜欢文化和艺术这一类嘛, 但是呢你你也看不出就是说她们的生活会有多奢侈或者怎么样的哈, 她们, 我觉得她们就可能享受一种这, 在文化中去寻找一种精神, 精神享受

some friends, like those foreigners around to me, then we, such as the get-together every week, it has already become a part of life, a sort of cultural life, you know, then I have Chinese friends, for instance, one of (them), who is also a PhD...these people, I think, first they do not need to earn money, second, they rather like culture and art. You might not tell how luxurious their lives would be, hah, they, I think they just enjoy this, looking for enlightenment in art and culture, spiritual enjoyment.

In the above extract, Snow explains that her close circle of friends in Germany consists of 'foreigners' who enthusiastically participate in cultural and art events and who are financially and materially comfortable. The statements that 'they don't need to earn money' and 'you can't immediately tell how luxurious their lives are' are dismissive of those who pursue material values. This suggests that the essential part of Snow's friends' life is not material success, but also involves sophisticated aesthetic senses. The emphasis on cultural participation seems to be revealed by her repeated use of 'culture', 'art', 'culture related' and 'culture and art'.

Cultural participation and taste seemed to be a significant matter for many of the Cosmopolitans. Cultural activities, such as interior design, reading group, cooking, film festivals and art exhibitions, were further revealed in various data sets. Portraying their circle of friends as people who were comfortable in material possessions and capable of cultural sophistication appeared to be a way in which the members of this group presented their own wealthy lifestyles and sophisticated cultural tastes. The participants seemed to display their high-brow cultural positions and social status based on their associations with a similar group of people. Such explicit display of cultural sophistication seems

to reveal the class-based nature of taste and resonates with the assertion that cultural participations are not ‘innocent’ activities and have a political demeanour (Bourdieu 1984).

Although the members of this group came to Germany for various reasons at different time periods, most of them shared similar prosperous family and education backgrounds as well as an upwards migrant trajectory. It seems that the majority of the group had promising futures regarding their professional and private lives before they moved to Germany, and they were able to continue their dreams and lifestyles in the host country. Following Block’s (2014) model of the multi-dimensions of social class, there seems to be a strong display of property, wealth, places of residence and networking in the data. However, there is also an explicit presentation of culture, linguistic expertise and taste among the group members. This seems to confirm Bourdieu’s (1984) assertion of the significance of cultural taste within social class and the conclusion that social class is multi-dimensional and profoundly concerned with culture and taste (Savage et al. 2013). This often appears to involve a continuous accumulation of material wealth and social resources, and a strong display of their cultural capital and sophisticated taste (Bourdieu, 1984) in Germany, suggesting the members of the Cosmopolitans possessed a high level of socioeconomic wealth, enjoyed their culturally elitist social circles and belonged to the educated middle/upper-middle social class.

### **5.3 An overview of group relations**

In the previous section, I introduced the main participants of the Cosmopolitan group in terms of their education, family and migrant backgrounds, their wealthy lifestyles, their presentations of sophistication in taste and culture, as well as their high social status in German society. In the following section, I analyse the group’s interaction patterns, explore their close and harmonious group relations based on their regular gatherings on Saturday afternoons, and also reveal the high status they occupied at Hua Hua School.

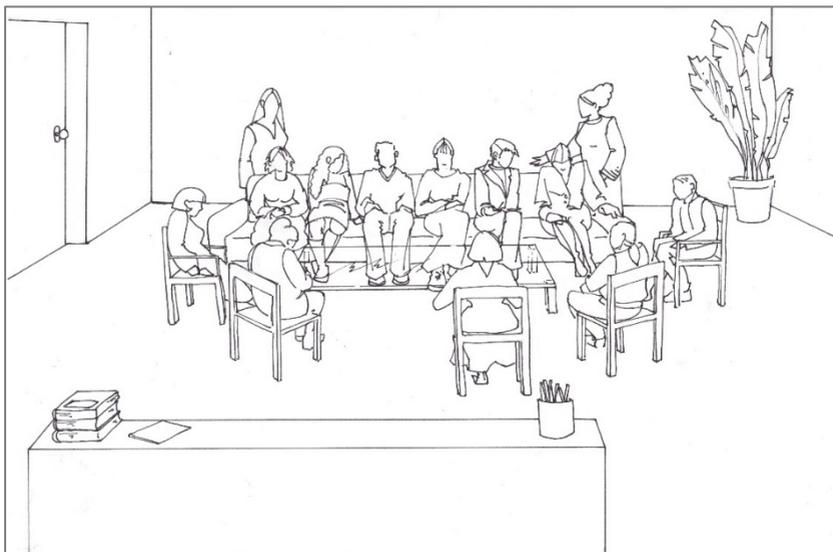
#### *5.3.1 Forming the Cosmopolitan group on Saturday afternoons*

##### **5.3.1.1 Forming the group**

Every Saturday afternoon, members of the Cosmopolitan group gathered at the head director’s office. Apart from the time period, the layout of the office, the space the members occupied and the seating arrangement for the core and peripheral members were similar to the Networkers.

Whereas the key participants, Snow, Fanny, Hoo, Kong, Ying, Gu, Wendy, Ling and Inger sat on the sofas and chairs, facing one another and forming an oval circle, the peripheral members stood behind them or at the side, which seems to suggest that the core members occupied and owned the space of the office room more than some of the peripheral members. Usually, five to eight members gathered at the office on Saturday afternoons. Sometimes however, the group reached a maximum number of 13 to 16.

Illustration 2: An Illustration of the Seating Arrangements for the Cosmopolitans



### 5.3.2 *The interaction patterns and group relations*

Similarly to the Networkers, the practices of the members of the Cosmopolitans exhibited the same features of collaborative interactions and a strong sense of sharing and serving each other, which seemed to indicate harmonious group relations.

### 5.3.2.1 Sharing and serving

#### Sharing food, drinks and serving each other

One of the significant phenomena arising from the data of this group is that its members often shared food and drinks with each other, as well as serving one another within the group practice. Often on Saturdays, the Cosmopolitans brought home-made food and served tea or drinks for one another. The following are examples from the fieldnotes:

#### Extract 5.6 sharing and serving

‘After the lunch break, when I arrived at the office, I saw that Wendy was serving tea for the members at the office’ (fieldnote b.3)

‘Today, Fanny has brought a pot of home-made stewed beef and Chinese pancakes for the group. Sitting around the director’s office desk, the group had a spontaneous lunch together and was very pleased with the food. Wendy and Ling took the rest of the food back home’ (fieldnote b.7)

The above extract illustrates situations in which the members of the group displayed great willingness in serving other members of the group and sharing food and drinks, suggesting caring and harmonious group relations.

### 5.3.2.2 Collaborative talking style

Like the Networker group, the interaction patterns of the Cosmopolitans were mostly collaborative, signified by frequent minimal responses, mitigated utterances, repetition and rephrasing, as well as jokes and laughter (Coates 1996; Holmes 2000). Extract 5.7 is an example of the collaborative nature of the group’s talk being indicated by jokes and laughter:

#### Extract 5.7 ‘Hahaha, right, right, (you) should teach her the word toilet’

F = Fanny, I = Inger, Pv = a peripheral participant, Vivian

(1) F: 然后上学去了, 没上过幼儿园, 英文就一个 ok, byebye, 上学去了

then (she was sent) to school (preschool), without having been to a kindergarden (in the States), the only English words (she spoke were), ok, Byebye, (then) she went to school

(2) I: 厕所应该会说吧

she could say toilet, right

(3) Pv: 哈哈哈, 对, 对, 应该教厕所

Hahaha, right, right, (you) should teach her the word toilet

(4) I: 你得教她呀

you should teach her (the word)

(5) F: 大笑

laughter

(6) I: 我儿子那时候上学, 只要讲一厕所就行了, (大笑)

when my son first went to school, he just needed to know the word toilet, laughter

In Extract 5.7, Fanny tells the rest of the group an anecdote about her daughter's first visit to preschool in the States, which took place at a time when her daughter did not have any basic knowledge of English. Inger proceeds to develop Fanny's story of the young daughter's poor English skills at the time of entering the preschool via a humorous question about whether Fanny's daughter could say the word toilet (turn 2). The issue of language difficulties, which most migrant children face at an early age in the host country's education system, is foregrounded here. Instead of developing the talk in a serious tone, the general laughter and the humorous comments from the rest of the group about teaching the child the word 'toilet' (turn 3), function as playful and collaborative responses with the purpose of developing a shared floor for the group's common understanding of the issue. Fanny's response takes the form of laughter (turn 4) and functions as an encouragement for Inger to tell the others about her son's experience of entering a German kindergarten without any knowledge of German except for the word 'toilet' (turn 5).

### 5.3.2.3 Close group relations

#### Saturday gatherings at Hua Hua school

One way to perceive the group's close relationship is to look at their regular Saturday gatherings. In the following extract, Ying and Fanny construct the group members' duty of being present for their Saturday gatherings:

Extract 5.8 'ask for leave'

Y=Ying, F=Fanny

(1) Y: 这小海他们俩儿呢上星期就没来, 这周还不来啊

little Fei, they both didn't come here last week, this week either

(2) F: 这周有事

they have something to do this week

(3) Y: 那, 上周呢

then, what about last week

(4) F: 没说, 啊, 上周有事, '没请假'

(the) didn't say, ah, they had something to do last week and didn't 'ask for leave'

(5) Y: 这周还有事儿

they are busy this week too

(6) F: 这周还有事儿, 还也不来

they are busy this week too and can't come here either

(7) Y: 但这周‘请假了’, 是吧

but this week (they) ‘asked for leave’, right

(8) F: 给我‘请假了’

(they) did ‘ask me for leave’

(9) Y: 哈哈

hahaha

In the above extract, Ying’s question (turn 1) about why two main participants did not show up for two recent Saturday gatherings seems to indicate that the members expect to see each other at a regular Saturday base. Fanny’s response (turn 2) shows she was aware of the absence, suggesting a close contact between the group members. As the interaction goes further, the humorous tones evident when discussing members being asked for ‘a leave of absence’ seem to form the members’ group duty of being present for their gathering on Saturdays, which indicates close and solid group relations among the Cosmopolitans.

### 5.3.3 *High social status at the school*

While presenting a harmonious and close group relationship, the participants of this group also appeared to occupy a high social status at the school. It is particularly noticeable in the data that the group displayed a degree of ownership of space in the school. Similarly to the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans performed their ownership of the director’s office and parked their cars in the school administrators’ parking area, as well as hosting visitors, peripheral members at the director’s office. Such ownership of certain physical locations at the school seems to be an example of ‘physically realized social space’ in which ‘the ability to dominate appropriate space’ depends on various forms capital processed by the members of the Cosmopolitans (Bourdieu 1991/2018, pp. 109-110).<sup>26</sup>

Thus far, I have introduced the key participants of the Cosmopolitans, presented a general picture of the members’ social and migrant backgrounds, as well as pinpointed their cultural elite social status. I have also described how

<sup>26</sup> translated and published in 2018 based on Bourdieu’s 1991 essay ‘*Social space, symbolic space and appropriated physical space*’

the Cosmopolitans formed the group, and explored the interaction patterns and group relationship. In the next section, I introduce the main themes arising from the observations.

## 5.4 The six main themes

### 5.4.1 *Maintenance of the shared history in China*

I have chosen the maintenance of the shared history in China as the first main theme in this chapter, as this theme only arises from the data collected within the Cosmopolitan group, and it represents the shared past and family backgrounds of the participants. It consists of the following two subthemes: (1) the tale of the Cultural Revolution; and (2) the tale of hardship.

#### 5.4.1.1 The tale of the Cultural Revolution

The Cultural Revolution was a historical and political movement launched in China in 1966 and lasting till 1976. During the period of the Cultural Revolution, the following five groups of people were considered opponents of the Revolution and were re-educated, beaten, humiliated and persecuted: landlords, rich farmers, counter-revolutionaries, bad influencers and rightists. Above all, teachers and educated intellectuals were seen as the opponents of the revolution and were victimised. Students were called to form large groups of Red Guards to violate the revolution's opponents, and to beat and humiliate the campus authorities (Walder 2009; Song 2011).

Although most of the group members were pupils in primary schools at the time of the Cultural Revolution, and thus were younger than students in the Red Guards, they were strongly affected. This was due to their cultural elite family backgrounds and their frontline urban citizenship, which made them and their families targets of the political and social movement. It is therefore not surprising to find a good amount of Cultural Revolution tale-telling in the data. The following is an example:

Extract 5.9 'you must all be affected'

I = Inger, F = Fanny, H = Hoo

(1) I: 你爸, 那文化大革命, 学生斗没斗他

you father, in the Cultural Revolution, the students attacked him, didn't they

(2) F: 我爸曾经试过黑帮

my father was treated as one of the black categories

(3) I: 斗没斗

did they attack him

(4) F: 没斗过, 但是后面白衣用黑字写上黑帮, 然后到后门去挫媒, 我就在侧面看, 对, 侧面 然后我们家邻居, 记得特清楚邻居就把我, 那时候小嘛, 不懂吗, 就把我叫回来了

did not attack (him), but the word 'black categories' was written in black on the back of the white cloth he wore, then he had to go to the back door and make coal balls into pieces, I was watching him from the side, right, from the side, then our neighbour, I remember it clearly, that the neighbour, for (I was) too young to understand the situation, (the neighbour) called me back home then

(5) I: 那你哥哥姐姐肯定知道

then your elder brother and sister must know it well

(6) F: 我爸大学的校长被打死...

the vice-chancellor of my father's university was beaten to death...

(7) F: 我还看过呢 那讲台就在这 我们就在那底下看到那 就打人

I have seen it, the teacher's desk was right there, we saw the beating right next to the desk

(8) I: 那大班的孩子了 肯定是

they must be children from senior classes, must be

(9) F: 高中的

high school

(10) I: 就是啊 高中初中没有分开

that's right, high school and middle school were not separated before

(11) F: 打

beating

(12) I: 中学原来没有分

middle and high school were not separated

(13) F: 原来我爸这个学校, 一直很好 北京兰山中, 很有名, 老海呀什么这些都是这个学校

before my father's school had always been very good, Beijing NaSa<sup>27</sup> school, it was very famous, Lao<sup>28</sup> (famous Chinese author who also committed to suicide during the Cultural Revolution) and such were from this school

(14) H: 兰山中, 你们都会受牵连的

27 pseudonym  
28 pseudonym

(the director) of NaSa school, you would all be affected

(15) F: 我没有, 我小吗, 我姐姐就遭人家吐吐沫什么的

I was not, I was too young, but my elder sister was spat on by others

In this extract, while Fanny portrays her own experiences of the Cultural Revolution (turns 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15), Inger and Hoo support her by offering background information in regard to the anecdotes and giving credibility to Fanny's stories (turns 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14), which shows participants' shared knowledge and understanding of the misfortunes of cultural elites during the Cultural Revolution. In this way, the members co-construct the tale of the Cultural Revolution, indicating their first-hand knowledge of the political movement, their shared experiences of the historical period and their sympathy for one another's misfortune as family members of the cultural elite during the time. This serves to maintain a mutual sense of identity as descendants of the old Chinese cultural elite, through which the Cosmopolitans forged a bond which could not be shared with the host Germans, nor with other groups of Chinese migrants.

The tales and words the members uttered about the Cultural Revolution may bear their complicated emotional and social bonds with the political social movement since most of their youth was spent in that historical period. The following is one of the examples in which the participants appeared to express their emotional links to the Cultural Revolution:

Extract 5.10 'our revolutionary call and action might be spied on'

Y=Ying, F = Fanny, W = Wendy

(1)Y: 我们邮件的往来, 范大总统-革命分子, 魏红糖-红色分子

(these are) our email exchanges, president Fei-the revolutionist, Wei, brown sugar - the reds

(2) F: 我通知说诸位吧, 介于本公司人员复杂, 我们的革命号召和行动有被偷窥的可能 现将邮箱地址变更如下

I informed everyone of the following: due to the complexity of the company's staff, our revolutionary call and action might be spied on, so now the email address is changed as follows

(3) W: 我在家里, 看我们的 email, 我笑死了, 我老公说你给我解释解释, 这是什么意思

I was at home, checking our emails, I laughed myself to death, my husband said, can you explain it to me, what it means

(4) F: 没法解释, 这有代沟

cannot explain, there is a generation gap

In this extract, Fanny and two other peripheral participants tell the group an anecdote about their internet chat room interactions. First Ying reveals that based on a phonetic wordplay of their real names, the members named themselves after popular political slogans of the Cultural Revolution during their internet chat room interactions (turn 1), suggesting a political sense of humour. Fanny then continues the joke through comparing their chat room interactions to a secret revolutionary mission (turn 2), which was used as a classic political propaganda tool during the Cultural Revolution. Following Ying's and Fanny's statements, Wendy describes her own reaction as 'when I saw our chat at home, I laughed myself to death' (turn 4), and thereby confirms that she shares the same humour and understands the wordplay. The way in which Wendy describes her German husband in this interaction positions him as a non-group member who does not follow their political humour (turn 4). The flexible word-play of political slogans of the Cultural Revolution used for fun in their online chat seems to present the participants' 'linguistic affiliations' and 'expertise' in relation to a 'sociolect' (Rampton, Harris and Leung 1997) of a political period in China through which most of the Cosmopolitans spent their early adolescence. Through this word play, the participants show strong affective connections to that period.

#### 5.4.1.2 The tale of hardship

Another way of presenting their shared history of China was through relating their stories of hardship. The following extract recounts a tale of hardship they experienced during the period of the post-Cultural Revolution period:

Extract 5. 11: 'I thought I was dreaming of watching the stars'

F =Fanny, Kg = Kong

(1) F: 我们那地叫什么来着

what is the name of our place

(2) Kg: 兴

Xing<sup>29</sup>

(3) F: 对, 那地方穷的不比延安强, 那冬天冷的

right, that place was so poor, not better than Yanan, it was so cold in winter

(4) Kg: 那是板房, 冬天风大的, 半夜醒了房顶没了, 我还以为我在做梦呢, 看星星

that was a board house<sup>30</sup> (where I lived), the wind was so strong in winter, that the roof was gone when (I) woke up in the middle of night, I thought I was dreaming of watching the stars

29 pseudonym

30 prefabricated simple house

(5) all: 哈哈哈哈哈

Hahahaha

(6) F: 没有几个月我就病了

less than a few months, I got sick

In Extract 5.11, Fanny and Kong share their experience of hardship in a different town at the beginning of the 80s, in particular, the poverty of the town and the coldness of the winter (turn 3). Kong makes fun of his experience and sarcastically brings humour into it by telling the story of the blown-away roof (turn 4) and the ‘dreaming of watching the stars’ (turn 5). The laughter that follows from the rest of the group (turn 6) suggest a shared understanding of this joking exaggeration.

Despite China’s recent economic boom and the rise of its political power worldwide, it is still necessary to point out that the majority of China suffered general poverty before the economic boom started in the late 1980s, particularly in rural areas (Christiansen 1993). Thus, bearing hardship has been a rural virtue in China (Griffiths and Zeuthen 2014). At the time of the Cultural Revolution and the period which followed it, frontline cities where most of the Cosmopolitans grew up were relatively better off than many other cities and rural areas. In the extract above, the participants recounted their experience of extreme poverty in remote rural areas where they were sent to work in factories or fields. This experience was closely related to the political movement of ‘sent-down’ youth at the time of the Culture Revolution when urban young people and students were removed from their homes to live and work in remote towns to bear hardship (Rene 2013). Since then, experiencing hardship in extremely poor rural areas has been a topic for certain generations of urban Chinese people who were deeply involved in the ‘sent-down’ movement.

The above extracts suggest that the members of the Cosmopolitan group may often have shared their common experiences of the Cultural Revolution and the hardship during the post-Cultural Revolution period. In their interactions, the persistence in the sense of political humour and the representation of their linguistic affiliation and expertise regarding particular political propaganda slogans of the Cultural Revolution imply the sense of humour was only shared based on the members’ personal experiences and conscious memories of the social political movement in China, which had special social impacts on members of cultural elites and their families. The comparison of the group members’ engagement with the humour based on their shared personal, social and political experiences to the non-group member’s (Wendy’s German husband) clueless reaction is suggestive of an in-group joke based on a common understanding of the Cultural Revolution, through which the members reproduce and reinforce their in-group membership.

### 5.4.2 *Friendship and group solidarity*

Like the Networkers presented in Chapter 4, another main theme of the Cosmopolitan group's interactions is also related to the dynamics of group belonging, solidarity and trust, as well as the nature of their relationships. This theme consists of four subthemes: (a) looking after each other and family members; (b) building a sense of a privileged Chinese self; (c) sharing feelings and private topics; and (d) cultivating friendships – the nature of the group relationship.

#### 5.4.2.1 Caring for each other and family members

Similarly to the Networkers, one significant way for the members of the Cosmopolitan group to show their friendship and group solidarity was to look after each other and each other's family members. The fieldnotes cite frequent situations where the members helped each other with daily matters. For instance, Gu helped one of the participants to collect her rent when the participant was on a short leave from BCity where Hua Hua School is located. In addition, group members often brought things from China to Germany for one another. It is also clear that group members took care of the each other's well-being and that of their families. For example, they often asked about Snow's health condition<sup>31</sup> and reminded her to have regular check-ups with the doctor, as well as showing great interests in Fanny's daughter's well-being at her university in England. In addition, it is particularly noticeable in the fieldnotes that the group displayed great care towards each other's parents. For instance, Fanny invited the parents of one of the group's members who were visiting from China to her home for dinner, and when Kong brought his visiting elderly parents to the director's office, the other members greeted them warmly and offered drinks and food to the elderly couple.

The above data suggest that as well as displaying great care for each other, the members of this group also appeared to show care towards their significant family members during their regular interactions both at the school and outside the school, indicating their close friendships and solid group relations.

#### 5.4.2.2 Building a sense of a privileged Chinese self

##### The jealous working-class Germans

Another way for the group to experience their friendship and group solidarity is to build a sense of a privileged Chinese self in opposition to the working-

<sup>31</sup> During some period of the fieldwork, Snow had a major operation. See this incident mentioned in Chapter 4.

class German society through various interactions, indicating their sense of belonging to the social elite Chinese migrant group. It is noteworthy that from time to time the group distanced themselves from the host German society, as is illustrated in the following extract:

Extract 5.12: 'I only take advantage of our China's economic power'

S = Snow, F = Fanny

(1) S: 他们还羡慕我还有什么什么工作, 我说“嗨, 我也就是现在仗着我们中国强大, 是不是

they are jealous about my career, I said, 'I only take advantage of our China's (economic) power, is that right'

(2) F: 对, 对, 对

right, right, right

(3) S: 否则的话, 你干什么啊, 你要不跟中国项目有关系的, 他们自己都失业, 都到处找不着工作呢, 真的很难

otherwise, what can you do, if you are not doing projects related to China, they themselves would lose their jobs, and can't find jobs anywhere, it's very difficult

In the above extract, Snow and Fanny are discussing the generally limited job opportunities for Chinese migrants in Germany. It begins with Snow's statement about her chances of doing business in Germany related to the immense economic power of China. In turn 1, Snow's use of the pronoun 'they' refers to people who she claims are jealous of her business success. Snow then states that her success is due to China's huge economic power (turn 1). Here she uses 'our' to refer to 'China', indicating her group solidarity with the other participants of the group taking part in the interaction (turn 1). In turn 3, her use of 'they, themselves' suggests a clearer indication of local Germans who could not find jobs. The pronouns 'they, themselves' and 'our' seem to indicate the distance between local working-class/unemployed Germans and successful Chinese migrants, representing these two groups as oppositional communities. Such in-group and out-group identification suggested by the use of personal pronouns is consistent with the analysis of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation through formal structure use of pronouns (Van Dijk 2011). Whereas the plural first person possessive pronoun 'our' (turn 1) includes the speaker and the participants who take part in the conversation, the plural third person pronoun excludes the speaker and the participants in the conversation. In addition, the way in which Snow contrasts other people's jealousy and German people's unemployment (turn 1, 3), with her business success implies that the German locals she refers to may be in a less privileged position and less financially secure than successful Chinese migrants like herself and the rest of the Cosmopolitans. This is an example of 'the ideological square' (Van Dijk 2011, pp. 396) in which the emphasis draw on 'Our good

things' and 'Their bad things' and less attentions is given to 'Our bad things' and 'Their good things' (ibid). In the extract, this strategy of in-group and out-group ideology through positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is accomplished by Snow's overt negative emphasis on the inability and jealousy of the local Germans.

### The rude new rich Chinese

Second, there were frequent examples of group members distancing themselves not only from the working-class host German societies, but also from other Chinese groups through an overt 'Othering' (Coupland 1999).

Extract 5.13: 'one day they will know how ignorant they are'

G = Gu, S = Snow, N = Nancy

(1) G: 早晚有一天他们会觉得他们多无知

sooner or later, they will know how ignorant they are

(2) N: 还是, 还是没进步到那个程度, 还是, 还是刚刚富裕起来, 只能这样说

still, still not progressed to that level, still, still just rich, that's all (I) can say

(3) S: 对, 这是暴发户的那种心理

exactly, this is the thought of the new rich

(4) G: 就是暴发户的心理, 他们自己觉得好像挺牛的, 实际上人家看他其实是怪物一样

it is the mind of the new rich, they think of themselves highly, actually, others see them as a monster

(5) G: 来求得别人的承认, 认可, 我觉得你自己, 我自己的水平摆在那, 没必要要求别人  
人 认 可  
对吧

to ask for other people's recognition, approval I think, your own and my own level is there, no need for other people's approval, right

(6) S: 对呀, 咱们那儿出来的团长什么的, 那个他就得把着那个傲劲了, 就不给你打招呼, 不给你问好, 就起码的礼貌都没有

that's right, the head of the group, he would have to display his arrogance, with no greeting to you, no hello to you, even no basic manners

In this extract 5.13, Snow, Gu and Nancy comment on the rude behaviour of visiting Chinese tourists, such as not greeting others and ignoring people (turn 6). The participants distance themselves from those Chinese visitors through repeated use of 'they' (turn 1, 4, 6), which appears to function as an overt way of 'Othering' rich Chinese tourists as compared to well-established Chinese

individuals who reside in Germany. According to Snow, the rudeness and ignorance of the rich Chinese visitors reflects the poor manners of ‘the new rich’ (turn 3). Gu immediately confirms Snow’s opinion through repeating the utterance ‘the new rich’ (turn 4) and further supports Snow by providing more detail on the negative characteristics of ‘the new rich’ (turn 4).

During the interaction, it is particularly noticeable that the participants differentiate themselves from the other Chinese group by using the metaphor of ‘the new rich’. This seems to indicate that they view these Chinese as newcomers unsuited to a better social position. While presenting the rich Chinese visitors as ‘the new rich’, the members of the group appear to identify their own accomplishment of a better socioeconomic class and demonstrate their attitude of the old elites seeing ‘the new rich’ as outsiders in the old elite cultural worlds.

The above extracts suggest that the Cosmopolitans positioned themselves as a group of the privileged Chinese self, i.e. an oppositional community in contrast to both the working-class of the host society and the new rich Chinese visitors. In line with Coupland’s (1999) analysis of ‘Othering’, through such comparisons the Cosmopolitans were able to represent themselves as well-off cultural elites and exclude those of ‘the new rich’ Chinese and the jealous Germans. Their claims about the lack of economic success of the working-class host society and the downplaying of the Chinese new rich both imply that culture and economy played a significant role in this group. Very similarly to the Networkers, these extracts seem to be examples of the Cosmopolitans’ flexible moves, between and frequently changing feelings towards, different subject communities. Through these moves, the Cosmopolitans were able to negotiate differences (Papastergiadis 2000) and forge their ‘third place’ subjectivity (Hall 1996) as old cultural elites of the Chinese migrant community. Their group was therefore different to local working-class Germans and rude Chinese visitors. However, it appears that in comparing themselves to different oppositional sociocultural communities, the Cosmopolitans were bold about their cultural elite self-positioning and their financial success. This concurs with previous discussions regarding the groups’ higher socioeconomic and cultural status and positions presented at the beginning of this chapter.

#### 5.4.2.3 Sharing feelings and private topics

Like the Networker group in the previous chapter, another way for the members of this group to illustrate their close friendship and group solidarity was through frequently sharing their feelings and private topics. The fieldnotes describe how the members shared private topics such as health problems, ageing problems, marital issues and family relationship matters. In the following interview extract, Fanny reveals the importance of such emotional sharing with other members of the group for her:

Extract 5.14 '(these friends) are a very important part of life'

K = Interviewer, F = Fanny

(1) K: 所以说, 这些朋友挺重要

so, these friends are quite important

(2) F: 有, 绝对有... 尤其是在异国他乡, 在中国还有一个远亲不如近邻, 所以就是说, 相当重要的一个生活中的一部分, 比如像我在这, 我不可能有什么事都一个电话打回家去, 找我父母, 找我姐姐, 找我哥哥, 那是不可能, 比如说我和先生有什么事了, 找朋友, 那么做为什么也好, 把一个事情说出来, 把它说通就好了, 好朋友开解开解你, 一句话就完了, 真的是很重要

yes, of course (important), especially in a foreign country, in China, the old saying is, that a close neighbour is better than a distant relative, so, (the friends) are a very important part of life, like I am here, I can't call home whenever something happens, talking to my parents, to my sister (or) to my brother, it is impossible, for instance, when something happens between my husband and me., (I) talk to friends, no matter for what, once speak it out, talk through it (with friends) and good friends comfort you, (everything is) settled with just few sentences, (it's) really very important.

The interview question presented in the extract solely concerns the importance of friendship with the members of the group. Fanny consequently confirms the interview question through utterances, such as, 'yes', 'of course' and 'for sure' at the beginning of her sentences (turn 2). Without being asked for examples related to the matter of emotional support, Fanny voluntarily speaks about the sharing of her marital problems with her friends in the group in order to support her claim of the importance of the friendships (turn 2). Through this she appears to emphasise the importance of sharing feelings and private topics in order to sustain the participants' friendship and solidarity. This seems to be consistent with Coates's (1996, 1997) studies showing that sharing personal experiences is one of the key features of female friendships.

#### 5.4.2.4 The nature of the friendship

The above-discussed subthemes all show that there was a solid sense of belonging and trust in the group and that the participants were close friends. Such close friendship was maintained not only during their gatherings on Saturdays in the school setting, but also outside the school setting. Like the Networkers, the data suggest that the members of this group also formed and maintained close interactions and close contact beyond the school setting through regularly calling each other, organising gatherings and participating in their group activities. The fieldnotes and interaction data indicate that the participants regularly gathered for lunch or dinner, sometimes including all family members. They often met for clothes shopping as well as for special parties or events.

So far, all the subthemes seem to demonstrate close friendship and firm group solidarity formed through the Cosmopolitans' intensive interactions

both inside and outside the Chinese complementary school setting. While the data feature cooperative, helpful and bounded intra-group social relations formed through looking after each other and their family members, helping one another when needed and sharing details of their private lives, it also suggests a strong exclusion of lower socioeconomic and cultural groups through the members' overt references to their sense of the privileged Chinese self. This suggests the participants of this group positioned themselves as a part of the more superior social group in comparison to the working-class Germans and the New Rich Chinese.

### 5.4.3 *Engagement with the local Chinese community*

The third main theme relates to the Cosmopolitans' engagement with the local Chinese community. In this section, I concentrate on the key subthemes that are most significantly related to their social relations and status: (a) engagement with Hua Hua School; (b) Organising and participating in community gatherings and events; and (c) gossiping about the predominant community members.

#### 5.4.3.1 Engagement with Hua Hua School

This section illustrates the ways in which the participants were involved with the school. This appears to revolve around active engagement and enthusiastic emotional support. The fieldwork data suggest that the members were continuously involved with the school, for example through collecting tuition fees, writing articles for the school newspaper, organising and helping with the school summer trip, maintaining the school facilities and taking over classes for absent teachers. The following interview demonstrates Fanny's support of Hua Hua School:

Extract 5.15: 'the Chinese school needs all of us'

K= the researcher, F = Fanny

(1) K: 为什么会邀请你呢

why were you invited (to the Embassy event)

(2) F: 因为我们主要在中文学校帮它忙嘛, 每次收学费啊给它帮忙...他们也是免费的, 想想, 其实不容易这些人... 所以所以, 中文学校就靠大家在这, 靠理解, 我觉得, 靠理解, 你要不理解的话, 不接受她们的话, 就觉得好像很轻易的一件事, 就到学校里, 你们收学费的, 其实你们真是不知道这些人什么都不图

because we mainly (provide) help in the Chinese school, every time we help to collect tuition fees, they (the director and school manager) are (working) for free, just think (about it), it is indeed not easy for these people, so, so, the Chinese school needs all of us, needs (our) understanding, I think, needs (our) understanding, if you do not understand, do not accept them,

it seems an easy thing to do, coming to the school and thinking you guys are collecting money for it, actually, you don't know these people, (the director and manager) are expecting nothing in return.

In the above interview extract, Fanny explains that the reason for her invitation to a community event held by the Chinese Embassy in BCity is that she regularly helps Hua Hua School (turn 2), suggesting that part of her involvement with the local Chinese community results from the engagement with the Chinese school. She goes on to explain why she is always at the school to help through expressing her deep compassion and understanding of those who run the school for free (turn 2). Fanny appears to identify two groups of people involved with the school: 'we' (turn 2), referring to the parents who were helping, and 'they' (turn 2), referring to the school management who were working for free. She then unifies the two groups through the utterances 'all of us' (turn 2), indicating the shared responsibility of both parties. By referring to herself as part of 'all of us' who were needed by the school, she highlights her close engagement with the school. Noticeably, while Fanny emphasises her sympathy and compassion towards the school and the people who run it, she also implies a closely intertwined connection between their engagement with the school and the local Chinese community.

#### 5.4.3.2 Organising and participating in community gatherings and events

Another significant way for the members to engage with the local Chinese community was through participating in and organising high-status BCity Chinese community events, which usually took place in various concert halls, classic restaurants, prominent community members' private houses or other meeting places. There was a considerable involvement in the Chinese community cultural activities in which the members of the group took the role of host, organiser and evaluator, such as, submitting articles for local Chinese community newspapers, hosting literature events and evaluating community films and novels. It is particularly noticeable that during the group interactions, the participants seemed to provide overt references to their intensive engagement in exclusive community activities, such as the events held by the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese culture centre in BCity. The following extract presents such an example:

Extract 5.16: 'the Mayor's culture event'

'Today, when I entered the office, Fanny and Snow were chatting with other members of the group about the cultural event hosted by the ambassador of the Chinese Embassy they went to on last Saturday' (fieldnote b.14).

In Extract 5.16, the references to the event, the organiser and the new ambassador seem to function as ‘name-dropping’ (Jay 1990), which appears to serve the following two purposes: firstly, name-dropping functions as an effort to make oneself appear to be more important; secondly, it appears to accelerate the building of rapport with the people around. Thus, it seems plausible that on the one hand, the members of the group were actively engaged with the Chinese community’s high-status events, and on the other hand, they took advantage of such experiences in order to present important self-images to one another and position themselves within the high level of social hierarchy, thus sustaining their group membership.

#### 5.4.3.3 Gossiping about predominant community members

Another significant way for the members of the Cosmopolitan group to display their engagement with the local Chinese community was through gossiping about Chinese community elites. Jones (1980) claims that gossip carries the social function of the maintenance of unities, morals and values of social groups. The data of this group show that the participants often gossiped about prominent community individuals, such as local Chinese business elites, famous BCity-based Chinese artists, well-known writers and well-established BCity-based Chinese academics, through which the Cosmopolitans appeared to demonstrate their close social connections with local BCity elites. Extract 5.17 is one of the examples:

Extract 5.17 ‘she has got the best prize’

Ko = Kong, F = Fanny, I = Inger

(1) F: 她就是李雅啊, 她还得奖了呢, 你刚怎么不说啊

she is Lia, she has also won awards, why didn’t you say it

(2) I: 哎, 她就是李雅, 我告诉他了, 怎么没说, 我介绍说是画家, 李霞

ah, she is Lia, I told him (Hong), of course I did, I introduced her by saying, the painter, Lia<sup>32</sup>

(3) Ko: 得什么奖

what kind of prize

(4) F: 你没说, 你什么都没说, 你就说 (后面几个字没听清) 就完了, 她是第一名呢  
you didn’t say, you said nothing, you just said (the last few words were unclear) and you were done, she has won the first prize

The above extract describes a situation in which Fanny, Kong and Inger gossip about a famous BCity-based Chinese artist who they met at the school office. The artist was a friend of Inger’s who had been introduced to the rest of the

32 pseudonym

group, and who had left the director's office right before the extract took place. Although Fanny didn't recognise the artist immediately, she still appears to be familiar with the artist's accomplishments as she recalls the name and the artist's achievement (turn 1). Thus, Fanny seems to display her knowledge and awareness in the high-status community circle as well as her taste in art. Inger mirrors Fanny's name-dropping by repeating the painter's name and positively identifying the famous artist (turn 2), showing her close relationship with the artist in front of the rest of the group members.

While, the above extracts indicate the group members' intensive engagement with the Chinese complementary school, highlighting the active roles played by the Cosmopolitans and the dominant status they occupy at the school, the data also appear to reveal their close relationships with the elite Chinese circle in BCity, indicating the significant social positions the participants occupied in the BCity Chinese community. It appears that through their Saturday interactions, in which they exchanged experiences of leading community events and gossiped about other community high achievers, the Chinese complementary school not only provided a space for the members of this group to engage with the school management, but also with the predominant local Chinese community.

It is particularly noticeable that the data suggest an intertwined connection between the Cosmopolitans' active roles at the school and significant involvement with the local BCity Chinese community. It seems that through their close involvement with the prevalent BCity Chinese circle, the Cosmopolitans were able to build their rapport with one another and sustain their membership of the group.

#### *5.4.4 Engagement with local German society*

The Cosmopolitans were deeply involved with the local German society in various ways. Their engagement with local German society consists of four subthemes: (a) the local German crowd; (b) welfare and institutional knowledge; (c) local cultural experiences; and (d) the interpretation of German culture and values.

##### *5.4.4.1 The local German crowd – the circle of social elites*

All fieldnotes, interaction and interview data suggest that interactions between the members of this group and the local German community took place in both their private and professional lives. The group members had close contacts with local Germans in their professional lives. The fieldnotes show that the participants often shared their experiences of attending work-related German

events, seminars and conferences. It also records the Cosmopolitans' numerous business contacts with important German business people, such as Snow's constant business connections with local German government involving the Minister of Culture and Fanny's frequent contacts with leading German IT companies, where she mingled with the senior management of famous German international companies (fieldnote b.10).

In their private lives, the main participants Nancy, Inger, Ling and Snow were all married or had been previously married to Germans who were mostly well-established in their careers. The fieldnotes also report that the members were often familiar with each other's German sponsors. During their interactions, it is particularly noticeable that the Cosmopolitans repeatedly demonstrated their close relationship to some distinguished local Germans. The following extract is taken from a conversation between Fanny and Snow, in which Snow told an anecdote about her attempt at matchmaking involving one of her well-established single German friends and a peripheral group member:

Extract 5.18: 'he used to be a politician in the BCity government'

S = Snow

S: 就刚才我说那个人, 就那个, 就原来他是市政府的, 你知道嘛, 个子高高的, 也挺...也挺的, 因为他每年的那个柏林电影节, 他都是那个, 就是明星下来, 他...首先他去迎接, 他那, 那个特, 那个, 婷婷迷的一塌糊涂, 我以前给婷婷介绍的, 因为这个男的呢我认识他很了, 他老婆呢我也特别熟

just the person I have talked about, that one, he used to be in the BCity government, you know, tall, very, very good-looking, because every year, he, in BCity film festival, he is the one, when the stars come down, he, he is the first one to welcome the stars (on behalf of the BCity government), he is, is, is the one whom Tingting<sup>33</sup> was so obsessed about, I introduced him to Tingting before, cos I have known him for a very long time, I am also very familiar with his ex-wife.

In the above extract, Snow seems to reveal her close contact with a German friend who occupies a high status in the host BCity society by declaring the German friend's occupation in BCity government and his role in BCity film festival, through which Snow seems to display her close connections within the circle of German cultural elitists. The data also presents a picture in which Snow implies her effort in establishing a connection between her elite German friend and a peripheral member of the group.

#### 5.4.4.2 Welfare and institutional knowledge – dealing with the system

The data seems to indicate that one way for the members of this group to engage with German society was to obtain and share their knowledge of German institutions and the welfare system. Such topics cover any subject from grocery

33 pseudonym

shopping tips, exchanging experiences of opticians and purchasing train tickets, to legal issues, such as employee contracts, customs and tax regulations, German commerce law and migrant working policy, to social welfare knowledge regarding the German medical system, retirement regulations and pension issues, as well as religion. The following extract presents an example of participants sharing information about immigration working law and medical care.

Extract 5.19: ‘in the contract, it must be clear about the reason’

F = Fanny, S = Snow, Pj = Peripheral member Jo

(1) F: 你比如说像我们要是找一个工人,也不是说工人,就找一个  
for instance, if we want to find a worker, not necessarily a worker, find an

(2) PJ: 办公室人员  
office worker

(3) F: 对,办公室人员,按说我们应该是,尤其是我要给他办身份,那他会觉得,你为什么  
不找德国的,你为什么不找欧盟的

right, an office worker, according to the law we shall, especially I need to apply for legal  
documents for him/(her), then will he (immigration officer) think, why don't you find a Ger-  
man, or why don't you find a person from the EU

(4) S: 就是说移民局的人会问你  
that is the immigration officer will ask you (why)

(5) F: 对,他/她的合同上一定要写的清清楚楚,因为我和中国的生意关系,在语言  
上能和中国交流的...但你要是写不写这些,他未必给你这个身份

right, it, in his/her contract, it must be clearly written, because of my business relations with  
China, (I need someone) who is able to communicate with Chinese, but if you do not write  
it down, he will probably not give you the legal permission

In this interaction, Fanny and Snow try to support a peripheral member's business by sharing information about preparing contracts for migrant workers, since Jo was in the process of hiring some migrant employees. This is one of the examples where the Cosmopolitans shared legal and institutional knowledge and gave advice about dealing with the system in the host country. The following extract presents a similar situation in which the participants try to gain access to the best medical care in a playful tone.

Extract 5.20: ‘the crying baby gets the milk’

F = Fanny, I = Inger, S = Snow

(1) F: 尤其是这边是,我的感觉哈,在德国是会叫的孩子有奶吃  
especially here, it's my feeling is, in Germany, it's the crying baby gets the milk

(2) I: 啊

ah

(3) F: 会叫的孩子有奶吃

the crying baby gets the milk

(4) S: 哈

haha

(5) F: 你比如说, 我去医生那, 我告诉他

for example, when I went (to the doctor), I told him/her

(6) S: 对对 没错

right, right, exactly

(7) F: 就是不是方父母嘛, 我妈是胃癌

Just cursing the parents, my mom has stomach cancer

(8) S: 嗯

mhm

(9) F: 我们家家族性的

it is hereditary in my family

(10) S: 嗯嗯 对对

mhm, right, right

(11) F: 那个乳房癌, 乱七八糟你这么一填, 对吧

then fill in the form with whatever, for instance, breast cancer, right

(12) S: 他马上就查你了

he/she will check up on you right away

(13) F: 马上就查, 我这全是 no, no, no, no, no, 全是 no

check up right away, but I was ticking all with no, no, no, no, all are no

(14) S: 全不搭理你了

all (of the doctors will) leave you there

In this extract, the Fanny, Inger and Snow speak about the possibility of having a thorough medical check-up. Fanny's use of the metaphor 'the crying baby gets the milk' (turn 1) suggests that complaining to the doctor guarantees a thorough medical check-up in Germany. Tips, such as giving fake family histories of cancer, are shared in order to receive a more meticulous cancer check-up than one would normally be entitled to (turn 5, 7, 9, 11). The laughter, minimal responses, the repetition and the co-construction of meaning (turn 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14) portray a picture of a cooperative interaction (Coates, 1996) in

a sassy and playful tone, through which the participants are able to learn information on how to gain access to the best medical care in Germany.

#### 5.4.4.3 Local cultural experiences – museum, concert and literature

The third way for the Cosmopolitans to engage with the local BCity society was through their sophisticated experiences of German culture. Like some of the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans appeared to participate in many of the cultural activities available in BCity. During the group interactions, the members shared stories of their local cultural experiences, such as exotic food shopping, watching non-mainstream films, learning Spanish and German, attending concerts, visiting galleries, cooking food and reading books together. The following is an extract from the interview with Snow in which she describes her cultural engagement with her European friends:<sup>34</sup>

Extract 5.21: ‘we go to museums, concerts and cinemas together’

K = the researcher, S = Snow

(1) K: 那她们对你, 比如说对你现在来说, 就这些朋友对你现在的生活有一些, 什么样作用

so they for you, for example, for your now, what effect do these friends have on your life now

(2) S: 我, 首先我觉得就是, 让我对比比如说意大利的文化呀, 或者是这个风土人情啊, 我觉得就也挺愿意去了解嘛, 是吧

I, firstly I think, for example, Italian culture, or the local customs, I feel I'd like to know these, right

(3) K: 嗯

mhm

(4) S: 大家从饮食开始, 因为我们大家每次都是这样, 我们十点半或十一点聚会, 额...去谁家谁就给做饭, 然后吃完饭, 大家学习, 呵呵, 就那个德国人给我们, 给我们上德语课昂, 会找一些文章来读, 就是说呢大家是在读德语的这个主要的课题下呢, 也了解了一下对方的那个, 对方的风土人情, 就潜移默化的嘛, 你, 你肯定今天在他们家吃这个饭啊, 你就会, 反正大家一聊, 就我觉得的挺好的这种...

we start with food, because that's what we do each time, we get together at 10:30 a.m. or 11:00 a.m., uh, no matter whose home we are at we cook for the host, then after the meal, we learn together, haha, it's that German (friend) that gives us, gives us the German lessons, (he) finds some articles to read, that is to say while reading German, we also learn about each other's local customs, it's a slow learning process, you, you have dinner together at the host's house, you will (learn other culture), anyway, during the chat, I think it's a good way

34 In her interview, Snow stated that many of her friends are local Europeans, including Germans, Spanish, and English.

(5) K: 她们还会和你一起做什么

what else do they do with you together

(6) S: 啊我们一起, 我们一起去博物馆啊、我们一起去听音乐会啊, 电影啊, 什么的  
ah, we together, we go to museums together, we go to concerts together, also cinema and so on

To answer my question about the role Snow's friends play in her life in Germany, Snow pinpoints her friends' European cultural influence on her (turn 2). Interestingly, she then describes their routine of gathering, which includes local cultural experiences such as cooking food together, reading German literature, chatting about culture (turn 4), going to museums, visiting concerts and watching films (turn 6), through which Snow seems to reveal her sophisticated circle of friends and her fine taste in local cultural experiences.

#### 5.4.4.4 Interpreting and performing German culture

##### Interpreting local German culture, values and politics

Similarly to the Networkers, the members of this group often interpreted local German culture, values and traditions. In particular, they frequently shared opinions about German political current affairs and social developments. For instance, the following extract demonstrates how some members interpreted a significant political incident in recent German history:

Extract 5.22 'the president resigned'

W = Wendy, G = Gu, H = Hoo, F = Fanny, I = Inger, Kg = Kong, Pb = a peripheral participant, Bob

(1) W: 我昨天晚上听收音机, 说, 就说那个叫什么检查, 就是那个检察院开始要查他了, 这是早晨, 到了晚上我女儿回家说, 总统下台了

I was listening to the radio yesterday morning, (it) said, said that the prosecutor, the prosecutor began to investigate him, it was in the morning, in the evening my daughter came home and said the president resigned

(2) H: 肯定要辞的, 中午就辞了

resigning is a must, resigned at noon

(3) F: 哦中午就辞了

resigned at noon

(4) G: 十一, 十一二点他发的

11:00 am, between 11:00 and 12:00 o'clock, he announced

(5) I: 嗯, 那就对了, 我一直开始我就说, 他必须得辞

oh, it is correct, from the very beginning I have said that he must resign

(6) H: 是啊, 他早上就

right, in the morning he has already

(7) Kg: 他就

he is

(8) G: 他就矫情, 他就矫情, 他就是说

he is so corny, he's corny, he's like

(9) Pb: 对, 对没错, 他就矫情 (笑)

right, that is correct, he is corny (laughter)

(10)H: 因为, 因为, 你要知道从法律上来讲, 没人能辞他的职, 没人, 没有, 他只能自己辞

cause, cause, you know according to the law, no one can fire him, no one, none, he can only resign himself

(11)W: 后来到最后是说, 把那个豁免的那个给他

in the end, it was said that he got the immunity

(12)Kg: 他就是为了取消那个豁免权, 要起诉他嘛因为

he (the prosecutor) did it just to get rid of that immunity, because they wanted to prosecute him

(13)G: 就是说检察院, 他那个区里头的检察院曾经在那的, 申请把他那个豁免权取消, 然后去正式调查他, 他得去议会递交申请, 他那申请往上一递交, 已经递交了昨天, 那么现在就是说议会就得批准, 因为这没有理由不批准啊, 他这已经, 大家都已经在这

it was that the prosecutor's office, the prosecutor's office of the district he lived in was there before, (it) applied to cancel his immunity, then investigated him officially, it (the prosecutor's office) had to submit the application to the parliament, once the application was submitted, which was submitted yesterday, now the parliament must approve the application, cause, there is no reason for not approving the application, it has already, everyone has been here

(14)F: 它都已经有了证据了

it has already had evidence

(15)H: 这一批准他, 实际上他就等于, 那个 CDU, CSU 那些党派就等于没法再庇护他了, 实际上人家就是说, 他让那检察院申请交上就实际上就准备让他辞职了, 人也没办法

once the application was approved, it is in fact that, CDU, CSU, the two parties could no longer shelter him, in fact it is said that, the reason for letting the prosecutor's office submit the application was in fact to prepare for his resignation, no one can do anything about it any more

In this extract, the members discuss the resignation of the German president, Christian Wulff, following a presumed corruption scandal. The interaction begins with Wendy mentioning the resignation (turn 1), followed by Hu and Gu's confirmation (turn 2, 4). Fanny wishes to know more about the developments at the time of the declaration, and therein shows her awareness of the political incident (turn 3). Thus, the first part of the interaction (turn 1-4) performs the function of introducing the news as the topic and drawing attention to the political scandal, suggesting the members' interest and involvement in the host society's politics. From turn 5, the interaction shifts from this presentation to an evaluation and analysis of the incident. This begins with the participants saying that the president must resign (turn 5, 6, 7), is followed by their disapproval of the delayed resignation (turn 8, 9), and ends with the revelation of the reason for the president's delay in the process (turn 10, 11, 12, 13), with an emphasis on the president's isolated political situation (turn 14, 15). Therefore, the second part of the interaction (turn 5-15) functions as an evaluation and review of the news through which the participants analyse the legal and political forces behind the scandal as well as the legal strategy of the prosecution.

The extract seems to suggest the participants' interests in current political affairs, their sensitivities towards mainstream societal political issues, as well as their analytical capabilities in regard to German politics. In summary, on the one hand, the interaction is suggestive of the intensity of the participants' engagement with the German legal and political system. On the other hand, it also implies that the participants position themselves as part of German society and thus are entitled to make pronouncements about German politicians.

### Performing local German tradition

The members' engagement with the host society was also presented through performing local German traditions. For example, the following extract is about adopting and performing German Christmas traditions:

Extract 5.23 'it's Christmas present time soon, it is time to go shopping soon'

H = Hoo, I = Inger, N = Nancy, F = Fanny

(1) H: 又快要圣诞节礼物的时候了, 又快到买的时间了

it's Christmas present time soon, it is time to go shopping soon

(2) I: 对呀, 现在好多人开始满街买礼物了

that's right, now there are many people out shopping, starting to buy presents

(3) N: 对呀

that's right,

(4) F: 对对对, 现在马上圣诞节了

right, right, right, it's Christmas soon

(5) L: 就是孩子比较麻烦, 孩子越大越麻烦, 都是电器的东西,

it's just that children are difficult, the older they get the more difficult they are, all about electronic devices

(6) F: 朋友多, iPod 什么的

many friends around (them get), iPod or something

(7) L: 而且买来买去的, 都是这些东西, 你说小孩子, 现在关键在这儿呢, 小孩子有 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 个 Wunsch, 这个愿望, 要得到, 要这么多礼物, 你送一个, 送两个.

and whatever you buy, it's all are these things, you say children, the point is, children have 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 wishes, all these wishes, (they) want to have, have so many gifts, you send one gift, then two gifts.

In extract 5.23, the upcoming Christmas season and the season's tradition of sending Christmas gifts is discussed. The development of the interaction suggests that following and performing Christmas traditions is quite important for the members of the group. The talk shows no indication of 'Othering' (Coupland, 1999) and no attempt to attach a German 'label' to Christmas, which suggests that the participants take the festival's traditions for granted. Instead of talking about the most important German festival and its tradition as outsiders, the participants fully adopt an insider's view of Christmas. This standpoint is firstly suggested by Hoo's statement about the Christmas season and present time, functioning as a reminder for himself and the rest of the group to buy Christmas presents (turn 1), and secondly by Ling's direct use of a children's Christmas wish list in a German traditional manner.<sup>35</sup> This is reformulated in Mandarin in turn 6: 'each child has 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 wishes' (小孩子有 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 这个愿望). It is finally demonstrated by Inger, Nancy and Fanny's confirmation of Hoo's initial reminder through their minimal responses and utterances in turns 2, 3 and 4. The extract shows that Christmas is important to them and their children in particular, suggesting this group of Chinese migrants has extensively adopted traditions of the host society during their time in Germany.

In the above extracts, the Cosmopolitans seem to present their elite circle of German friends and associates, their sufficient knowledge of the host society's welfare and legal system and their sophisticated experiences of German culture, as well as their entitlement in the realm of German traditions and politics. This is suggestive of their familiarity with German cultural and social matters and their solid social status in the host society. The data suggest that the Cosmopolitans were extensively engaged with the host German society. These engagements enabled the members to maintain and sustain powerful resources through their elite German circle, exchanging legal information and

35 It indicates German tradition of children having a 'Wunschzettel zu Weihnachten' (Christmas wish list).

gaining cultural capital, which in turn allowed them to access greater social and economic capital. In particular, there is an unconcealed display of host culture and political experience among the members of the group, which seems to support a theory of the class-based nature of taste.

#### 5.4.5 *The navigation of parenthood*

Similarly to the Networkers, the members of the Cosmopolitan group spent a substantial amount of time communicating about parental issues, such as sharing anecdotes about their children and giving parenting advice. This theme includes the following two subthemes: (a) engaging with their children's growth and development; and (b) improving their children's educational chances.

##### 5.4.5.1 Engaging with their children's growth and development

At the time of the fieldwork most of the Cosmopolitans' children were adolescents. As a result, the parents' engagement with their children mainly revolved around the matter of youth development. The participants often shared their experiences of their children's adolescent development and gave each other advice. For instance, the fieldnotes record discussions about the rules of expense for their teen children, anecdotes of sharing private youth topics with their children and encouragement of their children's friendships. The following extract presents an interaction between Fanny and Ling:

Extract 5.24: 'moms shouldn't get involved in it'

F = Fanny, L = Ling

(1) F: 人家找了一个男朋友在美国, 还比她小, 这管不了

she has found a boyfriend in the United States, and also younger than her, it is out of my hands

(2) L: 这管不了

it is out of our hands

(3) F: 因为人家很正经的说, 很好, 很正儿八经, 然后

because she is serious about it, very, serious about it, then

(4) L: 妈妈掺不了手

moms couldn't get involved in it

(5) F: 掺不了手, 我只能提醒

couldn't get involved in it, I can only give some advice

(6) L: 就是

that is right

(7) F: 哎, 大了

sigh, grown up

(8) L: 大了还管不了呢, 我这不大也管不了, 真是的

not able to control the older ones, mine is not older but (I'm) still not able to control her, dear

In this extract, both participants' statements concern the young love of their adolescent children. Fanny's initial statement about her adolescent daughter's long-distance younger boyfriend explores her concern over the difficulties the daughter's relationship might face (turn 1). However, she ends the sentence with the utterance '(I'm) unable to control' (turn 1), thereby showing her reluctant acceptance of her daughter's relationship and revealing her way of dealing with the children's development.

Ling aligns herself with Fanny through her repetition of Fanny's utterances 'unable to control' (turn 2). Ling's later statement that 'moms shouldn't get involved in it' (turn 4) shows that Ling has a similarly relatively liberal attitude towards their children's love interests. They then reinforce their similar parental approaches through Fanny's repetition of the utterances 'shouldn't get involved in it' (turn 5) and Ling's minimal response 'that's right' (turn 6). The last two lines may reveal the participants' genuine concern for their children's development and the utterances 'sigh' (turn 7) and 'dear' (turn 8) might mask their anxieties about not being involved in all parts of their children's lives.

The above extract seems to depict a picture in which the participants not only shared their parental experiences of dealing with their late teenage children's love issues but also the participants' understandings for each other in terms of the difficulties they face towards their children's on-going, developing independence.

#### 5.4.5.2 Spending time with their children

Slightly different from the data of the members of the Networker group who advised one another to spend more time with their children, data of the Cosmopolitans suggest the members accompanied their children for various leisure activities. For instance, the fieldnotes show that while Ling went to a popular rock concert with her teenage daughter, Fanny spent extensive time with her daughter during the Christmas holidays when they went shopping for clothes, as well as to the cinema and to classic concerts.

So far, I have briefly presented some data relating to the participants' engagement in constructing their parenthood during their group interactions at the Chinese complementary school. In common with the members of the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans were engaged in their children's development and growth through sharing experiences with one another and giving advice to each

other. In particular, their liberal view towards their children's young love suggested that they had a Western approach towards dealing with such issues compared to the traditional Chinese values, in which parental approval was vital for young couples. The activities that they shared with their children, such as visiting classic concerts and going to museums, not only implied their high socioeconomic status and cultural sophistication but also appeared to show their effort in participating in their children's activities and cultivating the children's cultural tastes.

#### 5.4.6 *Business and job opportunities*

Similarly to the Networkers, the theme of business and job opportunities arose during the interactions of the Cosmopolitans. Firstly, as actively engaged as the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans were deeply involved with one another's business and career development. For example, fieldnotes recorded that during their visits to the school, Snow and Gu constantly discussed their shared projects, Fanny supported Snow with her office administration tasks, and Snow, Nancy and Ling delivered a great deal of business information to the group. The following extract is one example of Snow and Gu's new project together:

Extract 5.25: 'new state-funded project'

'Today, during my interview with Snow, Gu came to discuss a new project related to a Beijing-BCity culture exchange programme, which is founded by both capital city governments' (Fieldnote b.13).

The above extract seems to reveal that both Gu and Snow were involved in a cross-culture project funded by BCity and Beijing governments respectively and they had been invited to submit the project soon. This is one of the examples of the participants work together for their business.

Secondly, the participants of this group also support each other's family members regarding professional and business matters. For instance, one interview with Fanny was briefly interrupted, since Inger wanted to issue a quick dinner invitation to Fanny. After Inger left, I ask Fanny if they are having dinner together as they always do, but Fanny's answer reveals a different reason for Inger's invitation:

Extract 5.26: 'I helped her oldest son for a business matter'

F: 我帮了她大儿子做了一件生意, 因为我公司楼上之前不是, 主要是有租那个楼顶, 跟我们那个房主说了说然后让他们去谈吧, 应该是谈成了, 至于说什么时候实施呀, 我就不知道, 她也是来说感激一下吧

I helped her oldest son with a business matter, cause, the upstairs of my company building used to, mainly the top floor was on let, I mentioned (Inger's son wanted to rent it) to the owner of the building and let them negotiate, they should get the deal, as for when to implement, I don't know, she came to show her appreciation

The brief extract above describes an incident in which Fanny makes business contact for Inger's son in order to help him rent business space. On this occasion, it appears that the deal has been successfully closed; hence Inger wants to invite Fanny for dinner to show her gratitude. This example is indicative of the connection, noted by Bian (2001), between Chinese people's social eating culture and their construction of Guanxi capital, in which business deals are sealed and personal favours are exchanged.

More examples of deep business connections between the Cosmopolitans and their family members are recorded in the fieldnotes, which are profoundly attached to their weekly interactions at the school, often intertwined with other activities among them. For instance, during one lunch gathering at the director's office, Zoe (a peripheral member) brought up a question of a business contract and other members coached her about the contract details. Numerous similar examples are recorded in the interaction data and fieldnotes. The following is an extract from an interview conducted with Ling:

Extract 5.27: 'she is always there to help me, really, you have no idea'

L = Ling, K = the researcher

(1) L: 她老帮我忙, 真的, 你都不知道

she is always there to help me, really, you have no idea

(2) K: 讲讲, 都干嘛了

tell (me), what has (she) done

(3) L: 太多, 但是她永远都是支持的...

too much (to tell), but she is always there to support...

In Extract 5.27, Ling briefly sketches the extraordinary help and endless support she has received from Fanny for her business in Germany. When I ask her to tell me more about it (turn 2), she claims that Fanny has provided so much help it is impossible to go into detail (turn 3), suggesting the profound and endless help offered by Fanny for Ling's career.

In this section, I have briefly introduced some interactions of this group regarding their business developments and job opportunities and presented a few extracts of various situations where the participants were involved with each other's businesses, offered information and supported one another. Similarly to the members of the Networkers, their support for each other covered various areas and fields of business, from initial state-funded projects to introducing new customers and helping to rent offices, demonstrating their business interactions with one another as well as the various and rich business resources the group owns. These seem to be examples of the exchanging between social capital and economic capital whereby the social interactions within a particular

group enhance the possibility of individuals' economic gains. In addition, extracts 5.28 and 5.29 seem to demonstrate Fanny's reputation as a means of access to various resources and a kind helper, which is consistent with Lin's (1998, 2001a) assertion that the generation of Guanxi capital lies in one's reputation as a bridge to resources and a generous favour giver.

In this chapter, I have introduced the main participants of the Cosmopolitan group, all of whom were raised in major cities in China, and who mostly shared similar superior family and educational backgrounds. In the next chapter, I will present the data of the Marginalised, analyse the themes which emerged from their interactions, and consider the social marginalisation within the interactions between different parent groups in Hua Hua School.

## 6 The Marginalised

### 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present fieldnotes, audio-recorded spoken interaction and interview data of the group of parents who usually gathered on Saturday afternoons either in the school car park or, if the weather was bad, in the hallway of the school building A. This group is largely different from the two groups discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, in terms of their regions of origin back in China, their family and educational backgrounds, their life and migrant trajectories and their current living situations in Germany, in particular, their use of the limited available resources (if any) inherent in the parental interactions enabled by the Chinese complementary school.

The members were all born in peasant families in poor rural areas in China, had limited educational opportunities both in their country of origin and in Germany, and had a low standard of living as well as few material possessions. This resulted in their having a marginalised and low social status in the complementary school, in the BCity migrant Chinese community and in the German host society. I have named this group the Marginalised, since members kept a low profile in the school setting and often appeared to be invisible to other groups of parents and the school management, as a result of their marginalised and low social status in the school. To a large extent, this was a marginalised group of individuals who lived on the fringes of both German and Chinese society. Many contributed to the ‘underground economy’ (Block 2006), working in restaurant/take away businesses, and they were invisible in many areas of mainstream life.

However, similarly to the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, the data suggest that the members of the Marginalised group were able to create a friendly and harmonious group relationship during their Saturday visits to Hua Hua School. The participants engaged with each other and their children on similar matters shared by the other two groups, which suggests a certain amount of use of the resources linked to the inter-group connections, resembling Putnam’s notion of bonding social capital (see Chapter 2).

Nevertheless, unlike the other two groups, it is particularly noticeable that the participants of the Marginalised group possessed limited material and tangible resources and had few social contacts in the host German society. As a result, they were only capable of limited use of the poorer resources inherent in their inter-group connection, which seems to reflect Bourdieu’s (1986) claim that the accumulation of social capital reproduces social inequality, since the volume of social capital depends on the volume of the economic and cultural

capital possessed by that person and the size of that individual's social network (see Chapter 2).

Although the group appeared to enjoy friendly and harmonious group relations when they met on Saturdays, within the Marginalised group data it is noted that the members of this group did not keep close connections outside the school territory and rarely interacted with the other two groups at the school setting, indicating that they were somewhat socially excluded and isolated.

In the following sections, I first briefly explore the key participants' personal backgrounds, focusing on their family, education and migrant paths. Secondly, I depict the scene of the participants forming the group at the school, demonstrate their harmonious interaction patterns and loose group relations, as well as point out their low status at the school. Then, I draw close attention on the themes of their interactions and reveal the similarities and differences of the themes between the Marginalised and the other two groups. Finally, I use social capital and Guanxi theory as lenses for theorising the data.

## 6.2 Overview of the participants

First, I will briefly introduce the main participants and hope to offer some insights into the participants' personal backgrounds. There were six main participants, Tinie, Cancan, Carol, Qinqin, Hanna and Sus, along with a number of peripheral members whose attendance was less regular. Table 8 below shows some brief details of the key participants of the Marginalised.

### 6.2.1 *The members of the Marginalised*

Table 8: Brief Details of the Key Participants of the Marginalised

NOC = Number of children; HEQIC = Highest education qualification in China;

HEQIG = Highest education qualification in Germany; OCI = Occupation in China;

POIG = Previous occupation in Germany; COIG = Current occupation in Germany;

YOA = Year of arrival in Germany; AOA = Age of arrival

Name	Gender	Age	NOC	HEQIC	HEQIG OR HEQIA	POIG	COIG	Languages	YOA	AOA
Sus										
Hanna	Female	Early thirties	3	None	Primary school	Middle school junior	waitress	Mandarin Qing-tianese	Unknown	14
Qinqin	Female	Mid thirties	2	None	Bachelor degree	Accountant	Full-time house wife	Mandarin Basic German	2005	28
Carol	Female	mid thirties	5	None	High school graduate	High school student	Waitress, Now full-time	Mandarin Qingtianese	2000	16
Cancan	Female	Late thirties	2	None	Middle school	Middle school Junior	Waitress, Now full-time	Mandarin Cantonese German	2000	16
Tinie	Female	Late thirties	4	Middle school	Attended first high school year	Middle school Junior	Waitress, Now full-time	Mandarin Qingtianese	1999	15

Source: author

### 6.2.2 Vignettes

Unlike the previous two groups, most of the Marginalised took quite different migrant paths to Germany. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the early settlement of

Chinese in Germany can be traced back to the late 19th century with the majority of them coming from rural areas of both Canton and Zhejiang provinces in China. Most members of this group were born in rural, peasant families from these two provinces and they moved to Germany with their parents or relatives, who were descendants of the early Chinese settlers in Germany or had connections to their settlements.

Three out of four main participants in this group came to Germany through organised relative or village ties<sup>36</sup> during their adolescence around the years of 1999 to 2000. This represents a typical path of ‘chain migrations’ in which family and social ties play a significant role in the whole migration process (Block 2006). After arriving in Germany, the young people’s lives changed severely. Cancan, Hanna and Carol had to immediately discontinue their education and worked as waitresses in their relatives’ restaurants for a living. Tinie and Sus tried to simultaneously attend school and work in their aunts’ restaurant. However, a year later they dropped out of school and worked as full-time waitresses. Such migrant trajectories resonate with traditional ‘labour migrations’ (Block 2006) of people who normally occupy particular cheap labour domains in the host society (Castles and Miller 2009). In the strict sense, some of the Marginalised were in fact child labour during their early years in Germany. This does not represent a typical migrant de-skilling since the participants were in their adolescent years and had not built up much for their adult lives. However, their migrant paths did not offer them the chance to pursue further linguistic and formal education, which is probably the most significant factor in their current humble situations. Most of the Marginalised appeared to be doomed to a socioeconomic limbo existence in Germany.

Cancan, Carol, Hanna and Tinie were later married to Chinese migrants who worked in the Chinese restaurant business, came from the same region, and shared similarly poor family and educational backgrounds, as well as migrant trajectories, with the participants. At the time of the fieldwork, all main participants had children aged from 3 to 10 years old and were full-time housewives financially reliant on their husbands’ limited incomes and social welfare. Tinie, who had four daughters, was facing a divorce and living with her children entirely on government aid.

Qinqin’s story was quite different to the rest of the group. She was from a northern city in China, had a Bachelor’s university degree in accounting from a university and had worked as an accountant in Beijing before she came to BCity. She later married a successful elite business man in Beijing and moved to Germany with her husband for a better standard of living and studying environment for their future children. During the period of the fieldwork, whilst Qinqin and her two German-born children were living in BCity, her husband

<sup>36</sup> During the interviews, issues of undocumented migrant paths arose.

was commuting monthly between them in Germany and his business in Beijing, China. Qinqin's story seems to be a typical account of a wealthy Chinese 'transnational' migrant family – a popular phenomenon among successful Chinese business people, who often send their families abroad to settle permanently whilst they commute between their business empires in China and families overseas. This is similar to some of the South Korean 'wild geese' transnational families revealed in Park and Lo's (2012) study, which shows that in middle and upper-middle class Korean families, while the fathers are engaged with business in Seoul, the mothers and children are based in English-speaking countries.

Apart from Qinqin, the above vignettes seem to present a picture of a group of 'marginalized labour migrants' (Block, 2006), in which members shared similar trajectories regarding their poor family and educational backgrounds, their tough migrant paths to Germany, their struggles with life in the host country and their immovable life trajectories in Germany.

### 6.2.3 *Material possessions and low social status/social isolation*

Except for Qinqin, who grew up in a professional family in a mid-sized Chinese city, the rest of the group members all came from poor, rural, peasant families in China with little school education and hoped to come to Germany for a more prosperous life (interview data c3, c6).

One way to understand the social status the group occupied is to look at their material possessions. During the fieldwork, I observed that all the participants of this group came to the school with their children either on foot or by public transport, except for Qinqin, who drove a luxury SUV to the school. Unlike the members of the other two groups, who were all owners of their own houses, many of which were located in exclusive areas in BCity, the majority of this group lived in rented apartments in areas with higher densities of Chinese residents from their own provinces except for Qinqin who lived in her own villa in an exclusive German neighborhood. Interview data also indicate that both Carol and Tinie had been receiving child support from the government.

The above data seem to suggest that life had withheld economic success from the lives of most of the members. The following interview extract depicts a picture in which Tinie and her four young daughters have a low living standard:

Extract 6.1: 'neighbours would complain the noise'

K = the researcher; T = Tannie

(1) T: 和她们有时会在 *spiel platz* 见面, 不能来家里, 来家里小孩太多, 邻居会 嫌闹

sometimes we would meet at a playground, (they) can't come to my home, if they came to my home, there would be too many children, neighbours would complain about the noise

(2) K: 你们几间睡房啊

how many bedrooms are there

(3) T: 两间

two

(4) K: 住的开吗

is that enough

(5) T: 住的开, 大的姐妹三个, 一间睡房, 我和小的一间, 住的很好, 很开的, 就是家里不能再来小孩, 邻居会觉得太吵

it is enough, three elder sisters share one bedroom, the little one and I share one, very comfortable and enough space, just no more children to visit us, or neighbours will complain about the noise

The above extract records a situation in which Tinie and her daughters only met with friends in a playground since there was not sufficient room for children to visit them at home. Although Tinie stresses that the flat is enough for them, her description of how they share the bedrooms presents a difficult living situation at home. Her comments about neighbours' complaints serve as an indication for the poor living standard Tinie and her children are experiencing.

Another way to look at the group's low social status is to listen to their migrant trajectories. In the following interview extract, Carol illustrates an under-skilled migrant-working trajectory shared by most of the group members, which suggests that their social status, along with their economic status, had not changed much since moving to Germany.

Extract 6.2 'we, Chinese all work in restaurants'

K = the researcher; C = Carol, the interviewee

(1) K: 你以前工作吗

have you worked before (in Germany)

(2) C: 工作的

(I) have worked

(3) K: 做什么的

what (did you) do

(4) C: 啊, 在饭店做, 我们中国人都在饭店做, 德文没有这么好, 是不是啊

ah, (I have) worked in a (Chinese) restaurant, we, Chinese, all work in (Chinese) restaurants. (our) German is not so good, right

The interview questions are about whether Carol has ever worked and if so, what kind of jobs has she done in Germany. Carol responds and gives a further explanation of her reason for working in the Chinese canteen business (turn 4): ‘we, Chinese, all work in (Chinese) restaurants. (our) German language is not so good’. Through her use of ‘all’, she suggests that she identifies Chinese migrants as one unified group, who only have the chance to work in the service areas of Chinese restaurants. She also positions herself with other unskilled Chinese restaurant workers through her use of ‘we’. Such an assumption reflects her limited social life circle within the large Chinese community in BCity. Her understanding of the Chinese people’s poor position in Germany and the picture of her imagined Chinese community, focusing on Chinese migrants related to restaurant workers imply her social isolation and low social status. The semi-skilled and unskilled jobs in the Chinese restaurant business, such as dishwashing, waitressing and home delivery, offered her neither many choices for potential career trajectories, nor opportunities to speak German. Thus, not surprisingly, group members like her had very limited access to German society and to the high-brow Chinese community.

Being in a limbo situation with limited access to linguistic and social resource of the host community are also documented in other sociolinguistic studies. For instance, Block (2006) portrays ‘Javier’, a Latino migrant labour in London, who had to sacrifice his chance of studying English in order to earn a minimal wage to survive in London where he had no English language resources and was socially and financially marginalised.

The third way to understand the Marginalised’s isolated social positions and low social status is to look at their involvements with others. Compared with the other two groups, the Marginalised seemed to possess a circle of friends with a much lower social status, who mostly used to work as waitresses in the same restaurant and/or were from the same hometown in China. The following interview extract illustrates Tinie’s circle of friends:

Extract 6.3 ‘really good friends, not many, those (friends) are all my previous co-workers’

K = the researcher; T = Tinie,

(1) K: 讲讲你的朋友吧

tell me something about your friends

(2) T: 朋友呢, 我从小到大也不怎么爱交朋友, 就想说有的人聊得来, 聊聊而已, 较特别好朋友呢, 也不多, 都是那些以前在做工一起的老工友啊, 什么的, 因为后来有她们啦, 我也没有带她们来这里走走, 那里走走

friends, I haven’t been good at making friends since I was a child, if there is someone who I can talk to, (we) chat, as for really good friends, (I do) not (have) many, those (friends) are all my previous co-workers (in the same Chinese restaurant), and so on, cos later I have them (her daughters), I haven’t taken them to visit those people a lot

In extract 6.3, when asked about her circle of friends in Germany, Tinie sets the tone with a claim of having few friends since she was young, which suggests her lack of contact with others, indicating that social isolation may be a feature of Tinie's life in Germany. According to Tinie, her good friends are only a few of her former co-workers who used to work in the same Chinese restaurant and, since the birth of her children, she rarely visits these friends. This is very different from the members of the other two groups, who constantly displayed their intensive and close friendships with socially elite groups. It appears that Tinie only had loose relationships with friends who shared the same very low social status and isolated positions. A similar scenario was suggested in an interview with Carol, in which she defined her circle of friends as those who came from the same hometown in China and whom she had met through their work in a Chinese restaurant in BCity.

Such data suggest many of the Marginalised had a low social status and position, as did their circles of friends in Germany. The condition of living as marginalised labour migrants curtailed the Marginalised's engagement with both the host society and the community of their own national group. This represents an image of isolated migrant *maginados*<sup>37</sup> (Block 2006) with low educational backgrounds, whose agency to engage in life in the host society is extremely limited. Compared to the previous two groups, it seems that the majority of this group lived more as marginalised expatriates than elite transnationals and that they were in limbo in terms of their poor financial situation and their limited engagements with wider society, implying that they had limited economic, cultural and social capital in Bourdieu's terms. Ultimately, the data indicates the difficult and restrictive situation the participants were set into both in their country of origin and the host region, and the humble social position and status the members of the group occupied in their present lives in Germany.

### **6.3 An overview of the group**

In section 6.2, I introduced the family, educational and migrant backgrounds of the Marginalised and their difficult financial and social living situations in Germany. In the following section, I analyse their group interaction patterns, explore their harmonious and loose relationships with each other and examine their low social status at Hua Hua School.

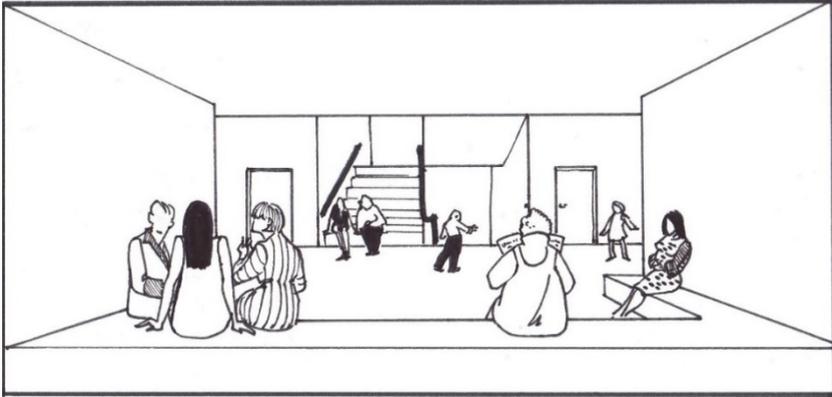
37 Original text in Spanish

### 6.3.1 Forming the group on Saturday mornings

On Saturday mornings when the weather was warm, the Marginalised were likely to gather in the area of the school's VIP car park<sup>38</sup>. During winter and/or when the weather was bad, the participants chose to stay inside the hallway of school building A (see illustration 3).

The key participants of the group arrived during the time frame between 8:30 and 9:20 a.m. They chose to accompany their children to the school and to stay there during their children's half-day Chinese lessons, often waiting with their other children, who did not have lessons. Compared to the other two groups, the constant presence of children constituted a special feature of this group.

Illustration 3: An Illustration of the Seating Arrangement for the Marginalised in the Hallway



Some of the core members tended to sit on the benches on the side of the pathway to school building A, while some stood or walked around the area. During each of my visits, they occupied different spaces and chose to sit, stand and lean on objects from time to time. When peripheral members joined the group, they chose to be mobile at the setting and often the participation of peripheral members would cause the group conversation to divide into smaller talk groups occupying various corners of the car park or hallway. Such a mobile arrangement of occupying the whole space made conversation between the participants difficult from time to time. The seating arrangements also seemed to suggest that the core members did not feel that they could fully occupy the space and were not in a position to offer hospitality to the peripheral members of the group.

<sup>38</sup> The VIP car park is only for VIP members and school management.

### 6.3.2 *The interaction patterns and group relations*

Based on observational data, I demonstrate this group's interaction patterns and then show that members of the Marginalised had a relatively harmonious but loose relationship. I finally point out that, in general, the group did not have much status at the school setting.

#### 6.3.2.1 Harmonious and loose relationships

Similarly to the other two groups, these members also formed a harmonious group relationship. However, they did not appear to have strong and close friendships with each other, setting them apart from the other two groups. One of the two striking interaction patterns, which suggest a harmonious group relationship, is the way they shared food with each other's children. For example, 'it is my first day to observe this group, it is striking that Tinie always shared her children's candy and snacks with other children' (fieldnote c.1). Sharing food seems to have been a common interactional pattern among all three participant groups. This typical phenomenon of Chinese social interactions is often mentioned in Chinese *Guanxi* studies (Bian 2001), in which dinner and food sharing are portrayed as a social must among all different social groups. It is noticeable the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans often shared well-prepared, exotic and homemade dishes with one another, while the Marginalised usually brought sweets and crisps for each other's children. This difference, on the one hand, might be a result of the closeness of the interpersonal relationships of the first two groups where more effort and energy were investigated into group socialisations in order to pursue membership. On the other hand, the various types of food involved among the three participant groups seem to be related to their different class status (Bourdieu 1984), as the preparation of exotic and fine dishes needs time and financial means, while sweets and crisps are easy and cheap to get.

The other prominent pattern is that the group members engaged in a collaborative talking style, which, as Coates (1996) points out, includes circulating the same topics, minimal responses and laughter. The following is one example of laughter that arose in an interaction between Tinie and Qinqin:

Extract 6.4: 'hahahaha'

K = The researcher, T = Tinie, Q = Qinqin

(1) K: 啊啊啊, 她是你哥哥的媳妇儿

aha, she is your brother's wife

(2) T: 我老公哥哥的嫂子

my husband's older brother's sister-in-law

(3) K: 啊

ah...

(4) (小孩吵闹声)

(children shouting and screaming in the background)

(5) T: 啊, 我说错了, 我老公的嫂子, 呵呵呵呵

ah, I said (it) wrong, my husband's sister-in-law (laughter)

(6) Q: 哈哈哈哈哈

(laughter)

(7) K: 啊, 那还又拐了一下

ahh, it is rather different...

(8) Q: 老公哥哥的嫂子你也要叫嫂子, 大笑

You also call (your) husband's brother's sister-in-law: sister-in-law, hahaha (laughter)

(9) T & Q: 哈哈, 大笑

hahaha, (laughter)

(10) T: 我说错了, 说错了, 大笑

I said it wrong, (I) said it wrong (laughter)

In the extract 6.4, Tinie tries to explain to me her relationship with another participant of the group. Since the relationship is quite complicated to explain, Tinie makes a mistake and uses the wrong term. Thus, Qin starts to tease Tinie and both of them laughed a lot. From turn 5 on, every sentence ends with laughter. Coates (2007) identifies such laughter as 'turn final laughter' which functions as a signal for a collaborative talking style and suggests the creation of intimacy and solidarity. The two typical interaction patterns above suggest that the members of the group shared intimacy, group solidarity and created a collaborative talking style, which enabled a harmonious group relationship.

### 6.3.2.2 Linguistic and regional variances

Secondly, instead of code-switching between Mandarin and German (like the other two groups), this group engaged in a different code-switching pattern at the school setting: switching between Mandarin and their home-town dialects: Cantonese and Qingtianese. Fieldnotes show that such code-switching repeatedly took place during each of my visits to the setting. For instance: 'after having finished chatting with Cancan and Qinqin in Mandarin, Tinie and Zoe started to talk to another participant in Qingtianese, while Qinqin turned to her child and Cancan kept silent' (fieldnote c.11), and 'I walked into the hallway and saw Cancan was talking to a parent in Cantonese while Qinqin and Tinie

were sitting there and teasing children' (fieldnote c.2). Despite their very limited German language skills, which discouraged them from code-switching to German, switching between Mandarin and their home languages enabled the participants to form sub-groups based on local Chinese dialects. On the one hand, this created solidarity among the participants from the same regions and dialects within the Marginalised. On the other hand, it excluded those who did not share the same dialect. The following interaction data in Mandarin also illustrate the different linguistic and regional cultural positions adopted among the Marginalised:

Extract 6.5: 'we make salty ones, we, Cantonese, like salty ones very much'

T = Tinie, C = Cancan, S = Sus

(1) T: 这个是我们青田人的甜膏, 过年吃的, 尝尝

This is our Qingtianese sweet cake, for Chinese New Year, have a try

(2) T: 好吃吗, 甜, 怎么样了

is it delicious, sweet enough

(3) C: 好吃, 不甜

delicious, (and) not sweet

(4) T: 但是不要太甜了

but (it) shouldn't be too sweet

(5) S: 太甜了, 给它那个味道盖着

(when it is) too sweet, (the sweetness) would mask the taste (of the cake)

(6) C: 我们做咸的, 我们广东人很喜欢咸的

we make salty ones, we, Cantonese, like salty ones very much

In Extract 6.5, Tinie offers some members of the group her homemade Qingtian style sweet cake, setting the tone with a claim about the uniqueness of the cake (turn 1). Through the use of 'our Qingtianese cake', Tinie clearly positions herself as part of the Qingtian cultural group. After Cancan tries it, Tinie asks if the cake is sweet enough (turn 2). Cancan thinks the cake is delicious as it is not sweet (turn 3). To support her statement about disliking sweet cakes, Cancan states bluntly (turn 6): 'we make salty ones, we, Cantonese, like the salty ones very much'. By the same token, Cancan's simple statement seems to draw a border between Cantonese and Qingtianese cultural norms, illustrated in Cancan's repeated use of 'we', through which she positions herself with other Cantonese in opposition to Tinie's Qingtian group.

Unlike the members of the other two groups who mostly used Mandarin as the only Chinese linguistic code during their interactions at the school and rarely mentioned their regional differences, the members of the Marginalised

group often switched between their home Chinese linguistic forms and Mandarin. They also often emphasised their regional cultural differences, which indicates that they drew a certain distance with each other due to their linguistic and/or regional variances.

### *6.3.3 Low social status at the school*

While presenting a harmonious and relatively loose group relationship, the participants of this group also appeared to occupy a low social status at the school. It is particularly noticeable in the data that the group seemed to lack ownership of space in the school. In contrast with the other two groups, who performed their ownership of the director's office, the Marginalised often had to share the school car park and the hallway with other parties, such as visitors, other parents, solicitors, missionaries and some school pupils. Moreover, while some members of the other two groups had permission to park in the school VIP car park, the members of this group normally stayed there to wait for their children. These seem to be examples of the Marginalised's inability to occupy appropriate 'physically realized social space' at Hua Hua School, which is arguably due to the low socioeconomic means possessed by the members (Bourdieu 1991/2018). Further argument about their low social status at the school will be presented in the second part of this chapter in the subtheme related to their engagement with Hua Hua School.

Thus far, I have introduced the key participants of the Marginalised, presented a general picture of how the members formed the group and explored the characteristics of the group. In the next section, I will introduce the main themes arising from the observations.

## **6.4 The five themes**

### *6.4.1 Group belonging and solidarity*

In common with the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, one of the main themes of the Marginalised is also related to the basic dynamics of group belonging, solidarity and trust. In this section, I concentrate on the key subthemes that are most significantly related to the group's social relations and the members' social positions: (a) sharing feelings and private topics; (b) building a sense of Chinese self; and (c) the nature of the friendships.

#### 6.4.1.1 Sharing feelings and private topics

Similarly to the other two groups, one significant way for the members of this group to show their group belonging, trust and solidarity was to share feelings and private topics. Within this group, discussions about being a full-time mother and housewife frequently took place. For example, ‘today, when I interviewed Tinie, Cancan and another woman were talking about the difficulties that full-time moms face (fieldnote c.3)’. The following extract illustrates how the members’ personal feelings were exchanged within the group interaction:

Extract 6.6 ‘no other way (to deal with it)’

S = Sus, C = Cancan, T = Tinie, Pb = Peripheral participant, Bina,

(1) Pb: 也是全职带孩子

(she) is also a full-time mom

(2) C: 她也是在家里带孩子

she also stays at home taking care of the children

(3) S: 没办法

no other way (to deal with it)

(4) C: 哎, 没办法

sigh, no other way (to deal with it)

(5) T: 没有一点儿办法

not any other way (to deal with it)

(6) C: 我老公, 人家也没带, 作业也要我自己

my husband, he does not do anything, I even need to help (the children) with homework.

This interaction takes place when Qinqin has left to pick up her children. Bina is a peripheral participant, who does not know Qinqin well and asks if Qinqin is also a full-time, stay-at-home mother like the others in the group (turn 1). Cancan confirms Bina’s assumption (turn 2). Sus then enters the conversation by revealing her feelings of helplessness about being a full-time, stay-at-home mother, as illustrated in her utterance of ‘no other way (to deal with it)’ (turn 3). Cancan immediately mirrors Sus’s sentiment by repeating Sus’s words ‘no other way (to deal with it)’ and sighs in interjection ‘sigh’ (line 4). Tinie then explores more deeply the feeling of being helpless by adding the word ‘any’ to both Sus’s and Cancan’s sentences (turn 5). Cancan moves the talk further by pointing out that her husband does not help at all (turn 6).

Most of the members’ husbands needed to work in the Chinese canteen business six days per week to support their families and a few of the members could not afford childcare. Under these circumstances, the participants seemed

to construct a strong in-group feeling through ‘exchanged vulnerable talking’ in this extract (Coates, 1996, pp. 88). They shared their mutual feelings of helplessness about being full-time housewives with little support. Within this short extract, the rephrasing (turn 5) of ‘not any other way (to deal with it)’ and repetition (turn 4) of ‘no other way’ demonstrate some significant features of cooperative talk (Coates 1996), through which, according to Coates, female friends build emotional ties with each other (Coates 1996, 1997). It must be noted that cooperative talk is not just practised by female friends. Nonetheless, it is an important way for women to develop group solidarity. This is illustrated here when, during the initial process of sharing feelings, the participants of the group appeared to establish a fundamental sense of group belonging, solidarity and trust.

#### 6.4.1.2 Building the sense of a marginalised Chinese self

##### The ‘foreigners’

Some participants displayed a strong identification with the group by positioning mainstream Germans as the others and themselves in an oppositional community. The following two interview extracts with Carol illustrate the way in which group solidarity was constructed through the Chinese migrants and mainstream Germans being positioned in oppositional societies.

##### Extract 6.7 ‘we are foreigners’

K = researcher, Cl = Carol

(1) K: 刚才说你学德文的最大的目的,一个是能融入社会,一个是对孩子,有一些教育上的问题是不是

you just said the main purposes for you to learn German, one is to integrate into the society here, the other one is for the children, there are some educational issues, right

(2) Cl: 是啊

yes

(3) Cl: 然后,我们是外国人,可能在语言方面就是有些东西跟人家比不上

then, we are foreigners, maybe in terms of the language, (we) cannot be as good as the others (German pupils at the school)

(4) K: 恩

mhm

In extract 6.7, Carol is asked to confirm whether her motivation for learning German is to become integrated and to help the children with their schoolwork (turn 1). Carol confirms this (turn 2) and goes on to give further explanations

of her children's needs for help with their schoolwork, by which she lays emphasis on their lack of German language skills (turn 3). In turn 3, the use of 'we' and 'the others' suggests that Carol aligns herself and her family with other Chinese migrants as the oppositional community in relation to the host German society. Moreover, the use of 'foreigners' positions the less privileged Chinese migrants, to which Carol expresses a strong sense of belonging, as outsiders in the German community in terms of cultural and linguistic familiarity with the host country. Only 35 seconds later, Carol uses the word 'foreigners' again to indicate a totally different social group, as seen in the following interview extract:

Extract 6.8: 'foreigners sometimes seem nice'

K = interviewer; C = Carol

(1) K: 那你来了以后, 你觉得跟你当初想象的生活一样吗

So when you came (to Germany), do you think your life (in Germany) is as you had imagined it at that time (when you were in China)

(2) C1: 额, 区别是有的, 而且特别是有感觉到就是说, 外国人有时候感觉表面上 nett 骨子有那种歧视, 怎么都改变不了

mmm, there is a difference, and especially (I) feel that, foreigners sometimes seem nice (in German) on the surface, but underneath (they) discriminate, (they) cannot change (that attitude)

In the above extract, after I ask Carol if her life in Germany is the same as how she had imagined it would be before she came to the country (turn 1), she points out the difference and explains the discrimination she feels (turn 2). Instead of referring to the Chinese minority as 'foreigners', in this extract her use of the word 'foreigners' (turn 2) indicates the Germans, through which she 'Others'ed (Ashcroft 2003), the German hosts from the Chinese migrant minority and draws attention to the distance between them. Thus, she stresses a clear separation of these two communities and establishes her sense of belonging to her own marginalised ethnic group.

The flexible use of the word 'foreigners' in the above two interview extracts with Carol is noteworthy for two reasons: first of all, for understanding her subject position as a member of the disadvantaged Chinese minority migrant group and, secondly, for recognising that Germans were positioned as the socially more distanced and privileged group.

### The marginalised Chinese

Within the data, it is noticeable that the participants used various phrases from time to time to imply their sense of belonging to the Chinese migrant group, in

particular, to a marginalised group within the Chinese community in Germany<sup>39</sup>. There are multiple examples of words, such as ‘we’, ‘Chinese’ and ‘we, Chinese’ in the data that suggest the group members had constructed a clear group identity on behalf of the vulnerable Chinese migrant group. The following examples highlight this tendency:

Extract 6.9 ‘a common issue for us Chinese, a very common issue’

K = interviewer; Cn = Cancan

(1) Cn: 我爸爸原来在德国

my father used to live in Germany

(2) K: 偶

oh

(3) Cn: 对, 原来在德国, 因为这边居留很难拿下来, 跑到去那边调了, 你知道了

yeah, (he) used to be in Germany, since it was so hard to get the residence permit here, (he then) went there (Spain), you know

(4) K: 哦

Oh

(5) Cn: 这是我们华人普遍的, 他太普遍的问题了

this is a common issue for us Chinese, a very common issue

By sharing her father’s migrant narratives with me, Cancan raises the sensitive migrant topic of obtaining legal residency status in Germany. Cancan’s use of ‘us Chinese’ positions herself as one of the Chinese who struggle with their legal status and implies a shared identity with the rest of the Chinese migrants who have fought for the right to live in Germany. For many members of this group, their sense of group belonging often presented a shared identity with their imagined Chinese migrant community, namely, the working-class/underclass Chinese migrants who shared the same poor social positions in Germany. The repetitive use of the words ‘a common issue’ (turn 5) suggests that Cancan assumes that all Chinese had the same problem, which mirrors her imagined less-privileged Chinese community. This is quite different from the other two groups, who seem to identify themselves as part of the socially more privileged Chinese group.<sup>40</sup>

The above three extracts reveal how the members of the Marginalised built a sense of Chinese self within the broader German host society through their constructing of otherness, defining of ‘us’ and ‘others’, their imagined marginalised Chinese community, privileged host Germans and the blended use of the

39 see the argument regarding their imagined Chinese community in section 6.2, part c, extract 6.1

40 see the discussion about their imagined Chinese community in section 6.2, part c, extract 6.1.

word ‘foreigners’. It seems that their construction of otherness through particular pronouns establishes distance from the host society (Van Dijk1984) and enables the Marginalised to create a sense of Chinese self as less linguistically skilled, struggling for living rights and marginalised.

#### 6.4.1.3 The nature of friendship

Although the aforementioned subthemes all show that there was a basic sense of group belonging, solidarity and trust among the members of this group, the data suggest that, unlike the members of the Networkers and Cosmopolitans, the Marginalised did not form or maintain close friendships with one another beyond the school setting.

No connections beyond the school setting

Except for those who were close family members, interaction and interview data show that the participants of this group did not have many connections outside the school setting.

Extract 6.10: ‘no contacts’

Interview with Qinqin

K = the researcher; Q = Qinqin

(1) K: 那你周六回去了之后,还会和其他妈妈联系吗,打个电话什么的

so after you get back (home) on Saturdays, do you still keep in touch with other moms, for instance, making a phone call or something

(2) Q: 其她妈妈,没有联系,也没有留过电话号码

with the other moms, no contacts, never exchanged phone number neither

The above extract implies that Qinqin had little contact with the other members of the ‘car-park’ group. In interviews, other members gave similar responses when questioned about their social life outside the school setting.

Separate friends and social circles

The fieldnotes and interaction data do not contain any instance in which the members talked about their social activities with other members of the Marginalised, nor did they talk about activities with mutual friends. This was strikingly different from the other two groups, as their members often discussed their outside school gatherings with mutual friends and acquaintances during their group interactions. Interviews with the Marginalised reveal that the participants neither established close friendships nor shared the same circle of

friends outside the school, both of which suggest that they did not come across each other beyond the school setting. For instance, Tinie states that her friends are still those who come from the same hometown in China and who used to work in the same Chinese restaurant. Qinqin claims that she met most of her friends in her German language school and one close friend is a teacher in Hua Hua School. Carol defines her friends as those who come from the same hometown in China and they met through their work at Chinese restaurant.

The above data suggest that despite not establishing or maintaining close friendships with one another beyond the school setting, the Marginalised were able to create a different nature of friendship at the school setting through their harmonious group interactions and cooperative engagement, as well as sharing mutual feelings with each other. This was essentially driven by their shared marginalised Chinese migrant identity, suggesting the members of this group positioned themselves as part of marginalised ethnic minority community who battled for their survival in the host society in contrast to the more established local host Germans.

#### *6.4.2 Alternative engagement with the local Chinese community mediate through their children*

Unlike the other two groups, many of whom possessed various links to the local Chinese community in BCity, with which they were actively engaged, the Marginalised's engagement with the local Chinese community was simply mediated through their children. Two phenomena in particular can be observed from the data, indicating the group's alternative ways of being involved with the local Chinese community: (a) passive involvement with Hua Hua School; and (b) engagement with the local Chinese community through their children.

##### 6.4.2.1 Passive involvement with Hua Hua School

Unlike the members of the other two groups, who regularly participated, organised, and helped at Hua Hua School, the members of this group took the opposite path in their engagement with the school. The following extracts illustrate the ways in which the participants were involved with the school. This appears to revolve around being passive recipients and being silenced.

Extract 6.11: 'Xmas gifts packing'

'When I walked into the head teacher's office this morning, I saw Lucy, Shang and several other members were packing up some cups, pens and notebooks. I observed them and figured out that they were wrapping Christmas gifts for the children at the school. During the gift-wrapping, they discussed the colour of cups for boys and the colour for girls, and what front page of notebooks were for girls and what were for boys, as well as making a decision on what colour of pens should they have. Lucy also gave me a gift package and claimed it should

be a memory of the school for me. The whole gift-wrapping took the participants nearly the whole morning and finished right before the morning classes was over so that the children from the morning session would get their Christmas gifts before they left the school.’ (field-note c.7)

Extract 6.11 presents a picture of the Networkers’ active engagement with the school, through which the participants were enthused and inspired about wrapping Christmas gifts on behalf of the school, demonstrated by their process of decision-making and the fact that they gave a gift to a school visitor (the researcher). Through such processes, it appears that the participants assumed responsibility for decisions related to the event and acted as hosts, which was quite different from my observation of the Marginalised related to the same event that very afternoon.

Extract 6.12: ‘what is this’

T = Tinie, C = Cancan, H = Hanna, S = Sus

(1) C: 去哪里了

where did you go

(2) T: 去给小朋友送糖

giving sweets to the children

(3) C: 做圣诞老人

playing Santa Claus

(4) T: 这是什么

what is this

(5) S: 这是学校发的, 每人都有

this is from the school, everyone gets one

(6) H: 是圣诞礼物

Christmas gift

(7) S: 对

yes

Extract 6.12 follows a protracted event of Christmas gift wrapping that took place in the morning among the Networkers (see extract 6.20). The interaction can be divided into two parts: firstly, Tinie’s action of sharing sweets with the children (turn 1–3) and secondly, the talk about the Christmas gifts from the school among the group (turn 4–7). The first part of the extract suggests that Tinie was indeed engaged with the Christmas season at the school through reaching out to the children and giving them sweets, which is indicative of her

willing engagement with Hua Hua School and the host culture. However, unlike the engagement of the other two groups, Tinie's independent action was not proposed by the school and was mediated through the children, revealing the little space available for her involvement at the school. In the second part, regarding Christmas gifts from the school, Tinie and Cancan both had no previous information or knowledge about the gifts (turn 4, 6), indicating the group was neither engaged nor involved with the event until they received the gifts. This seems to present a picture of this group as low-status submissive receivers at the school. The topic is changed after four brief utterances among the participants of this group (turn 4-7), which suggests the school event does not bear any specific meaning for the members. Thus, the contrast between the Net-workers' engagement with the Christmas gifts for nearly the whole morning and the Marginalised's short discussion on the topic is extremely striking.

Extracts 6.11 and 6.12 suggest a significant contrast between the two groups occupying the director's office and the Marginalised, who gathered at the car park and in the hallway. The former took the role of actively engaging with and being responsible for the school, through which they performed their ownership of the school and high status at the school (discussed in Chapter 4 and 5), whilst the latter was only marginally involved with the school and was often even excluded from school events and activities, and knowledge about them, which indicates their low status at the school. The following fieldnotes recount an episode when Tinie went to the director's office to pay her children's fee:

Extract 6.13: passing by

'I was sitting on the couch when Tinie came into the office to pay the fee. She was unusually silent and reserved with her head nodding down to avoid any eye contact. She quietly gave her daughters' names, handed in the money to Shang and left immediately' (fieldnote c. 6).

Extract 6.13 portrays a picture in which Tinie was uncomfortable about being at the director's office. She was shy, quiet and slightly anxious, which implies her unease about being there and suggests that she entered a space which she could neither access nor wished to occupy. Such a picture seems to show the 'self-sense of space' (Bourdieu 1984) and the 'out-of-place-ness' (Preece 2016) for the members of the Marginalised group, indicating this group of parents were often forced to be the passive members in the school setting. In the following interview Qinqin presents how she regards herself at Hua Hua School.

Extract 6.14: 'does the school need me, hahaha'

K=the researcher; Q=Qinqin

(1) K: 你有没有想过有时帮助一下学校

have you ever thought about helping the school sometimes

(2) Q: 学校需要我吗, 哈哈

does the school need me, hahaha

(2-second pause)

(3) Q: 如果它需要我帮忙, 或者参与一下, 我可以

if it needs my help or participation, I can

When I ask Qinqin if she had ever thought about helping with and participating in some of the school events, her reply appears playful through the self-mocking tone ‘does the school need me?’ and the laughter ‘hahaha’ (turn 2). Through these comments, Qinqin paints a fun picture of herself in relation to the school and presents her doubt about whether the school ever needed her help. The two-second pause suggests that she was considering her response. She then confirms her possible help or participation with the school (turn 3), perhaps to avoid upsetting the interviewer and to support her ‘front stage’ performance, that is defined as when an individual acts out a role of a character where the words, actions and other parts of the character are predefined and the aim of the performance is to meet the audience’s expectations (Goffman 1971). In this case the aim seems to be to comply with conventional norms of what it is to be good parents who care about their schools. However, her ‘back-stage’ presentation (ibid)<sup>41</sup> of self-mockery (turn 2) seems to reinforce her insignificant position and ‘self-exclusion’ (Bourdieu 1984) at the school.

#### 6.4.2.2 Engagement with the local Chinese community through their children

Another alternative way for the group members to be involved with the local Chinese community was through their children’s engagement with the community. Fieldnotes data show that the children regularly participated in traditional Chinese dance and martial arts programmes, community celebrations (playing Chinese instruments, for instance), significant events and large-scale community gatherings with the support and encouragement of their parents. The following interaction illustrates an example of the Marginalised’ engagement with such community activities in which their children were involved:

Extract 6.15 ‘we did’

Q = Qinqin, S=Sus, Pn = a peripheral participant, Noan

(1) Q: 你们又去中秋节上跳舞了吗

Did you (plural) go dancing at the Mid-Autumn festival again

(2) Pn: 去了

41 This refers to performance hidden from public view and with no attentions to meet the audience’s expectations (Goffman, 1971).

we did

(3) S: 你女儿什么时候再去跳

when will your daughter go for a dance (performance) again

(4) Pn: 12月

(in) December

(5) S: 我们也去跳

we will also go for a dance (performance)

The exchange in extract 6.15 takes place when the members of the group are watching a self-made video showing their children's dance performance at a community celebration. Although the talk revolves around whose children had performed dance and when the children would dance at the next community event, the participants use plural pronouns for most of the time, such as '你们' (*you*) (plural form in Chinese) in turn 1, '我们' (*we*) in turn 2, and '我们' (*we*) in line 5, implying the involvement of both the participants and their children in the performance of the community festival. The extract presents a picture in which the participants were engaged with the local Chinese community by supporting and encouraging their children to participate in community events.

In contrast to the other two groups, most members of this group neither occupied any important position in the local Chinese community nor had high status in the Chinese complementary school. Under such circumstances, the children had become one of few resources. Through their children they were able to participate in their local community events and be passively involved in the school. The notion of migrants' children as language and cultural brokers for their migrant parents is well researched in various sociolinguistic studies (Hall and Sham 2007; Katz 2014; Orellana 2009; Orellana et al. 2001). Many of these studies often stress the role migrant children play in terms of linguistic and cultural mediation for their families in interactions with various host country institutions. This mediation role is also salient in this study (see forthcoming theme 6.4.3). However, it is noticeable that the data of this theme appear to reveal the Marginalised's children's role as institutional broker for their parents to engage with the local Chinese complementary school as well as the BCity mainstream Chinese community. This seems to be due to the low social and economic status that the Marginalised occupied, and their restricted opportunities for accumulating social capital through their own interactions with others.

### 6.4.3 Engagement with German society

The following theme is the group members' engagement with German society. The theme consists of three sub-themes: (a) the local German crowd; (b) local cultural experiences; and (c) interpreting German culture and values.

#### 6.4.3.1 The local German crowd – the neighbours

One significant way to understand the group's engagement with German society is to identify the relationships between the members and local Germans. Similar to their engagement with the local Chinese community being mediated through their children, the data suggest that the members of this group interacted with Germans mainly through their children. The following is one of the examples:

Extract 6.16 'Germans, they like to have junk food'

T = Tinnie, Cn = Cancan, H = Hanna

(1) T: 长大了, 他们也要吃一点零食, 没有零食也是很无聊的吗

when they are older, they also need some snack, it is boring if there is no snack

(2) Cn: 德国人他们就爱吃零食。什么薯片哪, 糖呀, 什么什么的, 都满屋子都是的我隔壁那个阿婆她就买。买的很大包, 买一大包薯片呀, 我老公问她说: '哎, 你买那么多干吗'她说, 等我女儿去她家给我女儿吃, (笑)给我气死了

Germans, they like to eat snacks, crisps, sweets, et cetera, all over the room. the granny next door, she likes to buy, buy a big bag of crisps, my husband asked her: why do you buy so much, she said, when my daughter goes to her home (she will) give them to my daughter to eat, (hahaha) I was speechless

(3) H: 笑

hahaha

(4) Cn: 太多了不行, 我说太多了, 把他们都气死了(笑)

it's too much, I said, too much, they were all speechless, hahaha

In extract 6.16, Cancan remarks upon different attitudes between her and her German neighbours about junk food for children. Whereas the extract seems to propose that Cancan's children are actively engaged with and often invited to their German neighbours' homes, it also appears that the couple's connections to their next-door neighbours are often mediated by their daughters. This creates an impression of the children as agents who help the members of the Marginalised to interact with the German locals. However, the fact of their association with Germans residing in the same neighbourhood and often offering the children junk food seems to reveal the basic lifestyles the Marginalised's German circles lead. This lifestyle is very different from the that of the

German circles of the other two groups, which appears to be composed of mainly preminent and sophisticated local Germans.

#### 6.4.3.2 Local cultural experiences – popular TV programmes and Christmas market

Like the other two groups, the data indicate that the Marginalised often shared their experiences about local German events and places. However, it appears that the cultural events they attended are quite different to the previous two groups. For instance, in their interactions, the participants sometimes shared their experiences about visiting local outdoor markets and watching popular TV programmes. The following field note shows an example of Carol talking about her visit to the local Christmas market with her children:

##### Extract 6.17 ‘Weihnachtsmarkt’

‘while Tinie, Cancan and C were comparing the similarities between German Christmas tradition and Chinese new year tradition, Carol showed some photos she took of her children in a German Christmas market and told Zoe that she and the children enjoyed the food and fun music at the market’ (fieldnote c.8).

Furthermore, the interaction below records a scene in which the participants of the Marginalised talked about a popular German TV show which has an English name: Germany’s Next Top Model:

##### Extract 6.18: ‘isn’t it ‘top mode’

Cn = Cancan, Cl = Carol, T = Tinie, S = Sus

(1) Cl: 反正有个节目, 那里面好, 那里面节目叫什么, 我也给忘了, 就是那什么孩子都是 16 岁

anyway, there is a show, which is a good one, what is the name of the show, I have forgotten it, it is that what children are all 16 years old

(2) Cn: 噢那什么什么 model, 是不是那个

oh, that mhm something, something ‘model’, isn’t it

(3) Cl: Top 什么

‘top’ something

(4) S: top mode 是不是

isn’t it ‘top mode’

(5) Cl: 哦, 对对对, 就是选美

oh, right, right, right, it is a beauty pageant

In extract 6.18, Carol proposes a new topic of a popular German TV programme. Since she has forgotten the name of the programme, Carol points out

that the participants of the programme are all aged 16 (turn 1). Cancan immediately understands what programme it is and tries to offer the second half of the name, suggesting that Cancan is familiar with the programme and is engaged in the conversation by offering her help with the name (turn 2). Carol then tries to offer the first part of the name (turn 3). Sus makes her contribution to the talk by telling the group the whole name. However, she fails to pronounce it correctly, indicating her limited knowledge of English (turn 4). Carol then confirms Sus's wrong pronunciation and claims it is a beauty pageant programme (turn 5), although it is actually a reality TV show about models.

In this extract, the participants worked together to figure out a name of a popular German TV show, through which the participants exposed their possibly limited knowledge of English and some misunderstandings of the TV programme, suggesting that they were attempting but struggling to understand fully the popular mainstream culture. Overall, the data give a strong impression of the contrasting local cultural experiences engaged in by the Marginalised and by the other previously discussed groups. Instead of visiting smart restaurants and trendy BCity bars, participating in German literature and fine food cooking groups or attending high-brow openings and events, the members of the Marginalised chose to visit the Christmas market and watch popular TV shows.

#### 6.4.3.3 Interpreting German culture and values

In common with the other two groups, the data also suggest that the Marginalised were engaged with German society through interpreting its culture and values. The Marginalised often discussed and shared their understanding of the host values through contrasting them to traditional Chinese ones. Their interactions on this matter covered various topics, from Christmas traditions, Halloween celebrations and junk food culture, to attitudes towards small children and relationships between German parents and children. Among all these interactions, much as in the case of other themes, the members perceived German culture and values through topics relevant to their children. The following is one such example:

Extract 6.19: 'open (free spirited)'

T = Tinie, Cn = Cancan, Cl = Carol

(1) Cl: 没办法人家都说了, 只要你, 孩子一落地, 就是负担

no any other way, people say, once the child is born, it is a burden

(2) Cn: 是阿

that's right

(3) Cl: 有一点噢, 我们这个呢, 是要向外国人学习, 这个能做他们的那种思想, OK, 他们比较 就是

there is one thing, we, we need to learn from the foreigners, learning from their attitude, ok, they are relatively

(4) T: 开放

open (free-spirited)

(5) Cl: 对开放, 而且比较冷淡的那种, 中国人就是说, 就是说嘴巴上说不管你不管你, 内心上 就是说, 就就是很牵挂很厉害的噢

right, open, and are relatively indifferent, for Chinese that is to say, that is to say, (Chinese parents) say caring nothing about you (the children), but deep in the heart of (Chinese parents, they) worry and care (about their children) so much

In Extract 6.19, the children again mediate the Marginalised's talk about German culture and values. The participants share their understandings of the host values about relationships between parents and children in German families. Carol sets the tone with a claim about taking complete responsibility for their children from the time they were born, implying that she has traditional Chinese ideas about family relationships (turn 1). Cancan immediately shows her agreement (turn 2), which seems to indicate that she has similar beliefs about parent-child relationships. Carol then begins to reveal the contrasting German family values by suggesting they learn from them; then their co-constructed utterances 'free-spirit' (turn 4, 5) and Carol's rephrase 'rather indifferent' (turn 5) seems to reveal the participants' similar interpretations of German values of family relationships.

In summary, in this chapter, I have thus far shown the Marginalised's engagement with the host German society by capturing their involvement with their local German neighbours, their experiences of German popular culture and tradition – such as visiting local out-door markets and watching popular TV shows – and their interpretations of German values and culture. While the participants were able to share their engagement with the host society through a collaborative talking style, suggesting a friendly and cooperative group social relationship among the members, it is particularly noticeable that their experiences with the host society were largely mediated by their children. For instance, their path to local German circles (see 6.4.3 (a)), their local German cultural experiences (see extract 6.17 in 6.4.3 (b)), and their interpretations of German values and culture (see 6.4.3 (c)) all involved their children. Similar to many recent studies mentioned earlier in section 6.4.2, it seems that the children were both salient cultural and institutional brokers for the members of the Marginalised regarding their engagement with the host German society, including aspects such as their interactions with local Germans, their experiences of the host culture and their evaluation of German culture. Such data is reminiscent of Hall and Sham's (2007) study of children as language brokers for

Chinese migrant families in the UK, revealing the significant role children play for other family members in various social and economic activities.

Finally, the Marginalised also appeared to reveal their associations with their German neighbours of low socioeconomic status and their experiences of popular local German culture events, implying the low-profile and poor social and cultural positions the Marginalised occupied in BCity.

#### *6.4.4 The maintenance of various Chinese linguistic forms and rural Chinese values*

The fourth main theme arising from this group's data involves the maintenance of traditional rural Chinese values. This theme consists of two subthemes: (a) maintaining the Mandarin language for their children: and (b) sustaining home languages and traditional rural Chinese values.

##### 6.4.4.1 Maintaining the Mandarin language for their children

Very similarly to the Networkers, the first subtheme of this section seems to verify the Marginalised's maintenance of Mandarin language for their children at the school. For instance, the participants normally spoke to members from their own hometowns in their native home languages, but switched to Mandarin when they talked to their children and members from other areas of China. The following fieldnotes illustrate one such example:

Extract 6.20: 'Qingtianese and Mandarin'

'During my chat with Qinqin, Tinie and Carol immediately switched to their hometown language – Qingtianese. They kept speaking in Qingtianese till Cancan joined the conversation. During Tinie and Carol's interactions, they always switched to Mandarin when they were interrupted by their children' (fieldnote c. 4).

This effort to foster the Mandarin language for the children is explained by the following interview with Carol:

Extract 6.21: 'I hope they, they have a such job...'

K = the researcher; CI = Carol

(1) K: 你们将来回去了, 那将来他们怎么办

when you both go back (to China) in the future, what about them (the children)

(2) CI: 我就觉得, 他们, 我最希望他们是, 我本人的想法是, 我为什么让他们学中文呢, 但是他们中文又学不了精髓, 但是我又希望他们是, 打个比方说这边有份工作是国内, 就是 德国和中国, 就是中外, 就是中的合资的这种

I think, they, I really hope that they will, my own thought is, why do I let them learn Chinese (Mandarin), although they can't learn the essence of Chinese, but, I hope that they will, for

example, if there is a job at home (China), just like German and Chinese, that is Chinese foreign, that is like Chinese-German joint venture

(3) K: 嗯

mhm

(4) Cl: 我希望他们, 他们有这样一分工作, 一中国的情况中国的市场比较了解, 德国又不会脱节, 就是如果他们有这样的条件, 那我就是比较放心了

I hope they, they have a such job, (they) are familiar with China's situation, Chinese market but are still not disconnected with Germany, if they have an opportunity like that, I will be relieved

Before extract 6.21, Carol told me in the interview that she would like to go back to China when she and her husband got older. I then ask her what her children would do when they return to China (turn 1). Carol is very forthcoming about her imagined future possibility for her children to pursue their professional success in a Chinese market-related international cooperation (turn 2, 4) and gives this as the reason for her children to learn Mandarin (turn 2). Like the Networkers, the Marginalised hoped to increase the chances of their children's future professional success through learning the Mandarin language. This suggests that the members of this group took advantage of the resources available in the school setting in order to increase the chances for their children to achieve a bright future. This seems to resonate with Block's (2006) assertion that labour migrants anticipate a better future for their children while they themselves are stuck in the host society.

The extracts above suggest that the Chinese complementary school offered a place for the Marginalised to send their children to learn the standard linguistic form of Chinese and to form their future linguistic capital. This is very similar to the discussion among the Networkers presented in Chapter 4.

#### 6.4.4.2 Sustaining home languages and traditional Chinese values among the parental participants

In contrast to the maintenance of standard Mandarin and high-brow Chinese culture among the Cosmopolitans, the data suggests that the Marginalised repeatedly maintained their dialects and traditional rural Chinese values at the school setting. Fieldnotes record that, from time to time, the participants communicated with each other in their various home languages, sometimes for a longer period of time. Additionally, during the interactions of this group, the members often spent considerable time in fostering traditional rural Chinese values.

Extract 6.24: 'when (I) get old, will you feed me food or take care of me'

T = Tinie, Q = Qinqin

(1) T: 挺好玩的啊,小孩子哦,等她会讲话的时候,你问她啊,以后老了呢,你给不给我吃饭 或者什么的,她说给

I is funny, the children, when they can talk, you ask her, when (I) get old, will you feed me food or something, she said she will

(2) Q: 哈哈哈哈哈

hahah

(3) T: 我说靠你靠住啊还是靠不住,她说靠的住,硬的还是软的,她说硬的

I said: can I trust you, ah, she said: (you can) trust me, (I said): solid or soft (promise or just words), she said: solid

(4) Q & C: 哈哈哈哈哈

hahaha

(5) C: 硬的,硬的,呵呵呵

solid, solid, hahaha

(6) All: 哈哈哈哈哈

hahaha

(7) T: 我想那个老二,小小的问她,我说靠你靠的住啊还是靠不住,靠的住

my second child, when she was little, I asked her, I said: can I rely on you or not (the child's answer is) you can rely on me

(8) Q: 靠的住

(you can) rely on (her support)

(9) T: 哎,靠的住,软的还是硬的,靠的很硬的

yeah, (I can) rely on her, soft or solid, very solid

(10) All: 哈哈哈哈哈

hahaha

(11) Q: 很硬的靠山,哈哈

very solid support, hahaha

In extract 6.24, through their 'cooperative talk' signalled by the laughter, rephrasing and repetition (Coates, 1996), the participants showed strong support and understanding towards the traditional norms of rural Chinese family values of intergenerational support, which was rarely a topic in the other two groups. While the Marginalised used the school setting to maintaining their own linguistic practice and rural cultural norms, these actions seemed to curtail their further interactions with other parents, such as the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, who mostly speak Mandarin, often chat about popular and/or high-brow Chinese values, and engage in prestigious cultural activities.

### 6.4.5 *The navigation of parenthood*

The theme of the navigation of parenthood which emerged from the interactions of this group consists of four subthemes: (a) taking collective responsibility; (b) monitoring their children; (c) engaging with their children's development and growth; and (d) enhancing their children's educational chances. Similarly to the other two groups, topics about parenting also highly mediated the Marginalised's interactions. However, while the other two groups simply reported their experiences of and views on parenting, with the Marginalised I had the opportunity to observe a great deal of collective parenting within their interactions. The following four extracts depict a scene in which the Marginalised both discussed parenting with each other and cooperatively parented each other's children.

#### 6.4.5.1 Taking collective responsibility for their children

The field data show that a considerable amount of collective parenting took place during the interactions of the Marginalised, through which the participants took responsibilities for each other's children. For instance, 'Qinqin's 4-year old daughter started to cry when she couldn't find her mom, Cancan was trying to comfort her by telling her that Qinqin would be back very soon', or 'Sus's child fell over, Tinie immediately tried to calm him down, as Sus was too far away from them' (fieldnote c.9). The following interaction is another example of direct parenting:

Extract 6.25 'are you stupid, do not take them up (on the tree)'

Q = Qinqin, T = Tinie, S = Sus, Ca = Cancan

(1) Q: 她们上去了

They went up there (up high on a tall tree)

(2) T: 没事, 上去没事, 千千给我小心

No worries, no worries for them to go up, (talking to the children) just be careful Qianqian

(3) S: 大的, 我的天哪, 叫她们下来

The eldest one, my God! ask them to come down (from the tree)

(4) Ca: 你傻的, 别带她们上去吗

are you stupid, do not take them up (on the tree)

The interaction extract 6.25 describes a situation in which Tinie's three children are trying to climb up to the top of a tree, which causes concern for the rest of the group members. While Tinie is chatting with Cancan, Qinqin notices

that Tinie's three children are playing dangerously and immediately warned Tinie (turn 1). Although Tinie does not see any immediate danger (turn 2), Sus gives Tinie direct advice, illustrated in her use of the imperative 'ask them to come down' (turn 3), through which Sus shows her deep concern about the safety of Tinie's children. Without being asked, Cancan elects to reprimand Tinie's oldest child for taking her siblings up the tree (turn 4), through which she assumed a role of guardian for the children.

Extract 6.25 describes an incident in which the members of the group took collective responsibility for their children's safety at the school setting by advising and warning other group members as well as directly interacting with one another's children, which suggests that this group assumed responsibility for one another's children and carried out such a mission through collective parenting.

#### 6.4.5.2 Monitoring and guiding the children through collective parenting.

Fieldnotes and interaction data revealed that interactions often took place among the adults and the children who were present at the setting, where members of the group often and spontaneously engaged in collective parenting by guiding and monitoring each other's children's behaviours. The following interaction provides one such example:

Extract 6.26: 'can't you throw that away yourself'

T = Tinie, S = Sus, C = Sus's child

(1) T: 你自己不会扔啊, 还把一点点垃圾, 送给你老娘

can't you throw that away by yourself, that little piece of rubbish, you should still give (it) to your mom

(2) S: 对呀, 去自己扔了

that is right, throw it by yourself

(3) T: 哈哈

haha, haha (laughter)

(4) T: 垃圾送给你老娘, 好吃的自己吞, 哈哈

give your mom the rubbish, save the yummy food for yourself, ha, ha, ha (laughter)

(5) S: 你自己就扔掉, 就可以了嘛,

you could throw it away by yourself, that would be fine

(6) C: 好

okay

(7) S: 就乖了

sweet kid

(8) C: 唱歌

(the child starts to sing)

In Extract 6.26, Tinie monitors and guides Sus's child. When Tinie sees that a child is passing her rubbish to her mother, Sus, she points out that the child should throw the rubbish into the bin herself (turn 1). Tinie's tone in telling the child is quite direct and forceful: 'can't you through it away yourself' (turn 1). Sus immediately agrees with Tinie through her use of the minimal response 'that's right' (turn 2) and her repetition and rephrasing of Tinie's utterance 'you could throw it away yourself' (turn 5). This extract suggests that through collective parenting, the participants were able to monitor both their own and each other's children and influence their behaviour through their interactions.

#### 6.4.5.3 Engaging in their children's development and growth

The data also show that the Marginalised demonstrated their interest in their children's development and growth by interacting with and directly praising each other's children as well as sharing anecdotes about their children's emotional maturity.

#### Sharing anecdotes and experiences

Extract 6.27 'when she eats, she must save one portion for her sister'

T = Tinie, Q = Qinqin

(1) T: 哎, 挺大方的嘛

mmm, very generous

(2) Q: 嗯, 在家里吃东西, 她吃东西必须给她姐姐也拿一份, 嗯

yeah, when she eats at home, she must save one portion for her sister

(3) T: 啊

aha

(4) Q: 她上邻居家吃饭或干嘛, 那她吃饭啦, 必须要喊妈妈过来一起吃

When she went to the neighbours for a meal or something, when she had her meal, (she) had to ask mom to come to enjoy the food together

The interaction starts with Tinie asking Qin's daughter for a sweet. The child gives one to Tinie right away. Tinie is impressed by the child's generous nature and praises the child immediately (turn 1). Qinqin then further describes her child's personality by relaying two anecdotes about her (turn 2, 4). The extract

suggests that the participants were able to support each other's children's emotional development through collective parenting, such as praising and encouraging each other's children, and that they were also engaged in each other's children development through sharing anecdotes about the children. The latter activity particularly shares a great similarity with the interactions relevant to parenting which took place within the previously discussed groups.

#### 6.4.5.4 Enhancing their children's education

One prominent way for the group to enrich their children's education was to share experiences with one another about helping their children to learn. Extract 6.8 provides one example of this phenomenon.

Extract 6.28 'discipline'

Cl = Carol, Cn = Cancan, T = Tinie, Q = Qinqin

(1) Cl: 像这里的小孩,他不会养成这个习惯,早上起来他还,还特地去看书,  
children here will not develop the habit of reading books when they wake up in the morning

(2) Q: 对,对,对  
right, right, right

(3) Cl: 基本上都是我们晚上睡觉之前,我们基本上安排他早点睡,然后看书...  
in general, before we go to sleep, we let them go to bed earlier, then (let them) read books...

(4) Cn: 就是早上清醒一点,但是晚上看书就是质量好一点  
in the mornings, the (children's minds) are clearer, but in the evenings, the quality of reading is better

(5) T: 晚上,我觉得早上精力是好的  
evenings (are better?), I feel that energy in the morning is good

(6) Cn: 上次晚上看了,好像刻在脑子里一样,但是早上应该也更好  
last time, (they) read in the evening, it seems to be engraved in the mind, but in the mornings it should be better

(7) T: 习惯  
habit

(8) Cn: 就是习惯  
it is habit

In extract 6.28, the participants are discussing the best time for their children to read books. The interaction starts with Carol telling the story of her children's regular reading time and the reason why it has to be in the evenings (turn 1, 3). Cancan reflects on Carol's experience of having her children read

in the evenings, by stating ‘in the morning, the heads are clear, but evenings, the quality of reading is better’ (turn 4). Tinie then counters Cancan’s reflection on Carol’s experience, expressing her support for reading in the mornings (turn 5).

However, in turn 5, both the repetition of Cancan’s word ‘evenings’ at the beginning of Tinie’s reply as well as the use of ‘I feel’ soften the disagreement. Cancan insists on the veracity of her account by recalling her children’s evening reading experience in the first half of her response in turn 6, but also supports Tinie’s idea about morning reading in the second half of turn 6. Eventually they both reach a consensus that ‘discipline’ (turn 6, 7) counts the most. The extract 6.8 suggests that the members of this group discussed parenting in order to help their children learn through sharing and exchanging their children’s experiences in learning, hoping to enrich their children’s success in education.

In sum, unlike the other two groups, the extracts above show a high level of direct monitoring, instructing and advising each other’s children within the school setting through collective parenting, suggesting that the participants take collective responsibility for their children. This might be due to the younger age of the Marginalised’s children and the shared responsibilities they forged as a group. However, similarly to the other two groups, the data also suggest a significant engagement with their children’s growth and development and a frequent exchange of parental experiences through discussing parenting among the adults in order to enhance their children’s education.

Thus far, I have introduced the main participants of the Marginalised who mostly had poor family and educational backgrounds, and were raised in rural areas in China. Before they moved to Germany, the majority of the participants were attending middle school or high school. Many of them came to Germany with relatives or through their home village ties in pursuit of a more prosperous life. I then paid attention to the Marginalised’s current underprivileged social status, limited material possessions – in particular their marginalised social positions and restricted access to resources at the Chinese complementary school.

In the following chapter, I will move to a more substantial discussion about the social relations and interactions of the three parental groups which were presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 in relation to various concepts of social capital and Guanxi theory. I will further reveal the similarities and differences between the three groups. Finally, I will consider the social exclusion of the Marginalised, while suggesting the human agency of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans at the school setting.

## 7 A site of safe space, the reproduction of social order and Guanxi

### 7.1 Introduction

Over the last three chapters, I have presented diverse data samples collected during my investigation of parental interactions at Hua Hua School and cited some general examples of different types of interactions of the three parental groups, namely, the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans and the Marginalised. In this chapter, I draw together the main findings that emerged during the course of my research. I also discuss some of the discursive meanings of parental interactions according to the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study (Chapter 2) and relate my understanding of different practices of parental interactions in the school setting to the various notions of social capital and *Guanxi*.

I first interpret parental interactions at the school in relation to Putnam's (1993b, 1995, 2000) notion of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. I argue that the Chinese complementary school serves as a safe site for the first-generation immigrant parents in relation to bonding and bridging social capital. In so doing, the school facilitates their 'civic' engagement in both their own ethnic community and the German host society. I also draw attention to disparities of accessibility and opportunity with regard to social capital among the Networkers, the Cosmopolitans and the Marginalised.

I then consider further understandings of the parental interactions at the school based on Coleman's (1987, 1988) concept of 'family' and 'community' social capital. Drawing on 'obligations and expectations', 'information channels' and 'social norms' of social capital with a focus on information exchange and parental and community support in the field of education, I argue that the Chinese complementary school provides a space for different parental groups to support their children's academic success.

Thirdly, I draw on Bourdieu's (1986) notion of class natured social capital and social reproduction pointing out that the Chinese complementary school is a site of social reproduction where social status plays a significant role in accessing resources (social capital) from participants' existing daily social networks and accumulating new social capital through their interactions with each other. I thus argue that while Hua Hua School provides a safe environment to its privileged parents whose comfortable social status enables them to benefit from resources that emerge during their interactions, it offers insufficient support and fewer resources to its socioeconomically disadvantaged parents.

Alongside this, I apply the concept of Guanxi as a Chinese form of social capital to the discussions and explore its relatedness to the parental social practices at the site of the Chinese complementary school. My aim is to draw the notions of social capital and Guanxi together in this study in order to gain a more finely-grained understanding of social capital in the Chinese complementary school setting.

## **7.2 The most significant findings**

### *7.2.1 A safe site for group solidarity, friendship and trust*

One of the key findings to emerge from the study is that the site of the complementary school offered a safe space within Germany, the host community, in which first-generation Chinese migrant parents were able to establish group relationships and friendships based on trust and shared interests. This seems to be a living example of how some elements of social capital are manifested in paths with overt emphasis on the ‘connections among individuals’ and ‘social trust among individuals fostered by their connections’ (Putnam 1995, pp.19; see Chapter 2). The data suggest that the parental interactions in the Chinese complementary school setting in this study reflect harmonious group relations. Many parental interactions gave the impression of close and bonded social group relationships and friendships. In particular, all three groups used the school as a site where they forged a strong sense of group solidarity and identity. These aspects were clearly documented in this study through discussions about the following: sharing feelings and private topics, looking after each other and each other’s family members, building a sense of Chinese self and establishing friendships<sup>42</sup>. By creating a Chinese identity through conversations, some of the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers were able to explore their experiences and feelings about being part of a privileged Chinese class. They differentiated themselves from the working-class host community and the newly rich Chinese living in China. At the same time, although the Marginalised interacted socially with their German counterparts in the same neighbourhood, they created a shared sense of marginalised immigrant identity by representing themselves as a lower socioeconomic ethnic group in Germany in comparison to the overall host society. These moments of sharing ethnic group identity and belonging encouraged the participants to build their sense of trust among the members of their respective groups, since indications of in-group help and emotional support emerged during their interactions. Such data supports some parts of the conceptualisation of bonding social capital, such as

<sup>42</sup> See extracts in sections 4.4.1, 5.4.2, 6.4.1

bolstering exclusive identity and reinforcing homogeneous groups (Putnam 2000). Substantial attention has been paid to the bonding of collective ethnic group identity and solidarity in relation to the host society in recent studies of immigration, including research on complementary schooling. For instance, Hall et al.'s (2002) study of complementary schools in both Oslo and Leeds suggests that such schools provide space for ethnic group and community solidarity in relation to the Norwegian and English host societies; Yölek's (2000) study of Turkish complementary schools in Germany highlights the construction of collective ethnic group solidarity and identity within the classrooms. However, there appear to be few investigations into how bonding social capital advantages certain people more than others within a homogeneous ethnic national group in Putnam's original approach to bonding social capital. In the case of this study, the data appear to call special attention to the reinforcement of individual class-based ethnic identity and homogeneous groups within a particular migrant group: the first-generation Chinese migrant parents at a Chinese complementary school. Such findings point to the intra-ethnic group differences regarding the generation of bonding social capital.

In this study, trust was often achieved not only by sharing feelings and talking about personal topics, such as health matters, marital problems and family issues, but also by looking after and supporting each other and each other's families. These elements were markedly demonstrated during the interactions of the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers<sup>43</sup> and suggested that close emotional bonds and friendships were formed among the members of these two parental groups. Within the Marginalised group data, it is noticeable that the participants of this group did not establish or maintain close friendships with one another beyond the school, but were able to create a friendly, supportive and harmonious group relationship<sup>44</sup>. This raises the significance of the element of trust which is overtly stressed in Coleman's (1987, 1988) and Putnam's (1993a, 1993b, 1995, 2000) notion of social capital and in the studies of Guanxi (Lin 2001a; Lin 2001b; Smart 1993; Yang 1994; Yang 2001a; Yang 2001b), in which trust is identified as one of the fundamental features and which is formed during the process of emotional and material exchanges (see Chapter 2).

However, it is worth paying attention to the various levels of trust and different natures of the three group relationships, as the types of emotional closeness and group relationships played a significant role in their interactions, their opportunities to access existing group resources and their chances of articulating the resources within the respective groups. For instance, all three parental groups seemed to demonstrate different levels of 'bounded solidarity', trust and 'obligation and expectation', which are together referred to as one form of

43 See extracts in 4.4.1 (a), (c), 5.4.2 (a), (c)

44 See extracts in 6.4.1

social capital (Coleman 1988; see discussion in Chapter 2), enabling the members of each group to support and help each other to various extents. In particular, it is important to note that while the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans shared a high level of trust, bounded solidarity and responsibilities, the Marginalised were only able to experience them at a more moderate level. It is possible that both the nature of their group relations and the amount of resources they possessed may have contributed to the differences. This seems to be evidenced, firstly, by the contrast between the solid friendships created among the members of the Networker and Cosmopolitan groups and the relatively loose contacts kept within the Marginalised, and secondly, by the differences in socioeconomic possessions held by members of the three groups, as discussed earlier. This appears to be a way to explore the self-interested nature of social capital (Bourdieu 1986), in which the pursuit of interests lies at the centre of group membership. In the case of the Marginalised, the members shared similar low socioeconomic trajectories, which did not appear to secure any benefits for group membership (Porters 1998). On the other hand, with the possession of high socioeconomic resources, the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were able deliberately to construct their group membership in order to pursue the benefits of the rich resources brought by other group members.

Despite the differences in levels of trust and group closeness between the three groups, the data seem generally to indicate that the friendships, group belonging and solidarity and emotional support were formed during the parental social interactions at the Chinese complementary school and they appeared to be crucial for the well-being of the first-generation migrant parents, particularly for those who had higher social status with decent economic resources and social connections. While this study suggests that complementary schools offer a space for the construction of ‘community identity’<sup>45</sup> and ‘group solidarity’ among the first-generation migrant parents, due to the varying nature of the three parental-group relations, the data seem to demonstrate that stronger friendships, emotional bonds and closeness were accomplished through the social interactions among the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans. This then implies that complementary schooling is a site where different social classes come together and suggests that greater attention needs to be drawn to the socioeconomic differences between the parental groups.

### *7.2.2 Engagement with the local Chinese community*

In the previous section (7.2.1), I focused on the parental interactions facilitating group solidarity, a sense of belonging and friendships, keeping in mind that

<sup>45</sup> Here I am borrowing Creese et al’s (2006) notion of community identity: ‘...a desire to be affiliated to a heritage/community identity’ and a wish ‘to express differences from dominant cultures, languages and histories’ (Creese et al. 2006, pp.32)

the nature of group relations varies among the three groups. Following this discussion, I aim to explore in this section the enactment of the notion of bonding social capital in greater detail, based on the data I collected during the parental interactions with a focus on the parents' engagement with their local ethnic Chinese community.

Engagement with the Chinese community is a significant theme through the interactions of all three parental groups<sup>46</sup>. The parental interactions at the school seem to demonstrate such an ongoing negotiation and re/production of a homogeneous ethnic group identity through their overt engagement with the local Chinese community, suggesting that Hua Hua School as a site maintains and reinforces the parental participants' ethnic group identities as Chinese.

For the members of the Networker and the Cosmopolitan groups, this is particularly apparent in their engagement with the Chinese complementary school, as well as their coordination of and participation in local Chinese community events. The data suggest that while Hua Hua School offered more opportunities for the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers to be engaged and involved with school affairs – through activities such as actively participating in school events, organising school trips, helping school administration and providing teaching support – it was also a site for these two groups to reveal their close relationships with leading members of the Chinese community. Such intensive interactions with the complementary school and the local exclusive Chinese community developed a strong elite Chinese ethnic group identity. In addition, the interactions also enabled the members to extend and intensify the relationships between the two groups. Through these, the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were able to draw upon their rich intra-group resources in order to sustain an upward social trajectory and a privileged status within the Chinese community. Such scenarios seem to present the core spirit of Guanxi theory which emphasises resources exchange for upward trajectories and life success. In this case, the Chinese complementary school not only maintained heritage and ethnic group identities as most literature on complementary schooling<sup>47</sup> suggests, but also seemed to demonstrate overt evidence of reinforcing exclusive resources and elite Chinese identity among the members of the two groups.

The site of the Chinese complementary school also enables the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans to engage in worthy occupations, show their values as human beings, and contribute to what Coleman (1990) and Putnam (1993b) refer to as the 'public good' (see Chapter 2) of the Chinese migrant community. At the same time, the members of these two groups were able to take great advantage of the resources that arose during their participation and contribution to the school and their own ethnic community. This seems to be another finding that supports the argument that actively participating in public affairs

<sup>46</sup> See discussion in sections 4.4.2, 5.4.3, 6.4.2.

<sup>47</sup> See studies in Chapter 2, and in the earlier section of this chapter

provides possible space for the generation of social capital (Putnam 1993b, pp.88). For example, data such as group networking with the Chinese community and with the school director and managers provides examples of the extension of participants' social space and accumulation of resources through their public engagement.

For the members of the Marginalised group, the data appear to show an inward-looking group identity for its group members. This was partly discussed in an earlier section of this chapter (7.2.1), in which I presented the matters of group belonging and identity fostered among the Marginalised during their group interactions. However, it seems that the school did not create a space where the members of the Marginalised group felt able to contribute their skills and talents in the same way as the other two more socially elite groups. The data do not suggest that the Marginalised actively interacted and participated in the school and community affairs. Instead, they appeared to take a less active approach toward the Chinese complementary school and to their local Chinese community. For example, whereas some of the data seem to present a passive and marginalised involvement with Hua Hua School, other recorded conversations suggest that the Marginalised's engagement with the local Chinese community was mostly connected to the people from their region of origin and/or largely mediated by their children. Numerous studies have discussed children as brokers of immigrant families' connections with the host society, accessing resources for their parents and family members. Katz (2014) investigates how children of immigrants facilitate the connections of their families to health-care providers and related resources in the United States and points out the importance of the children's role in brokering in linguistic, cultural and media resources. Elsewhere, Dorner, Orellana and Li-Grining's (2007) study also illustrates how children of Mexican immigrants in Chicago interpret the language and cultural practices of the host Chicago society for their families. However, in this study, it is significant that the children were capable of sustaining resources for their parents to participate in their own ethnic community. This would certainly appear to be true in the case of the Marginalised and was perhaps connected with the low number of other resources that the members were able to access. Children as the brokers of resources seem to be underrepresented in the interactions of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans. This is possibly due to the fact that the members of these two groups were more resourceful and capable of interacting with and participating in their own ethnic community events, while at the same time accessing resources for themselves and their children. Thus, the data demonstrate a concern over the significant differences in the socioeconomic backgrounds of immigrant families and the demands placed on their children to act as brokers, not only with the host community but also with their own ethnic national community.

While the data of this study suggest explicit evidence of Putnam's (1995) notion of 'bonding social capital' – defined as 'inward-looking and tending to

reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups' (pp. 22), which bolsters reciprocity and group solidarity and solidifies 'in-group bonding' – it also pinpoints a difference in the generation of bonding social capital between the Marginalised and the members of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans. Although all participants were first-generation migrants from the same national group, it seems apparent that the ability of the three parental groups to reinforce a close exclusive identity with the local Chinese ethnic community and with one another at the Chinese complementary school may vary. In particular, it appears to be problematic for the Marginalised to reinforce a close exclusive identity with their local Chinese community and with other parents at the school. Thus, it is significant to note that while the Chinese complementary school enabled particular groups of parents to strengthen their in-group bond with the local Chinese community as well as to negotiate and generate bonding social capital, other groups of parents, such as the Marginalised, were left out. This may first seem to replicate Putnam's assertion that while bonding social capital creates 'in-group loyalty,' it may create 'strong out-group antagonism' (Putnam 1995, pp. 23), which suggests that interpersonal bonds within one parent group could constrain the intra-parental group interactions in this study. However, the differences between the three groups seem to indicate that the ability of the participants to interact with the school and the local Chinese community in order to generate bonding social capital was often regulated by their socioeconomic positions. This points to the key limitation of the traditional conceptualisation of bonding social capital, in which the erasure of socioeconomic backgrounds constrains understandings of the negotiation of resource articulation among migrants within the same national migrant group<sup>48</sup>. This appears to revolve around the significance of social class within the territory of home contexts in migrant communities (Block 2016). In the case of this study, the data point to a dramatic intra-ethnic group difference regarding the engagement with their own national group in the host country, and make more sense of the idea that migrant individuals' socioeconomic status limits or promotes their access to resources which emerge within their own migrant community. While the more socially elite migrant groups were able to obtain more bonding social capital and to be more engaged in their interactions with their local migrant community and Chinese complementary schools, less privileged social groups were often not capable of such active engagement.

### *7.2.3 Engagement with German society*

The data collected in this study demonstrate a significant body of conversation about the participants' engagement with the host German society. For all three

<sup>48</sup> It is not always necessarily among migrants within a particular ethnic group in German society

groups, it seems that such talk was explicitly related to their local German friends and acquaintances, their experiences of German culture and their interpretations of German values and traditions, through which the first-generation migrant parents were able to share their local German contacts with one another and exchange experiences about the host culture. This sheds the light on Putnam's (1995) description of bridging social capital as 'outward looking and encompass[ing] people across diverse social cleavages,' which enables linkage to 'external assets' and 'information diffusion' (pp. 22).

However, based on the collected data, it is important to mention that the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans represented quite different approaches to their engagement with the host society than the Marginalised. Significantly, the former two groups repeatedly demonstrated their exclusive contacts and close relationships with Cosmopolitan persons, exchanged complicated legal and societal knowledge, exhibited their sophisticated local German cultural experiences and showed their entitlement to German traditions and values (see extracts in 4.4.3, 5.4.4, 6.4.3), through which they presented a shared sense of identity with the mainstream host society and elite Germans. All these imply that their interactions at the Chinese complementary school became an opportunity for the members to explore and reinforce their close social contacts with the local German elite, and at the same time to sustain their membership of the more socially elite groups at Hua Hua School. Thus, they were able to maintain and enhance their access to exclusive resources, continually developing upward trajectories in terms of social mobility. While such instances point to the core elements of the building of Guanxi in which close personal relationships with certain people are critical for personal and business success (Crombie 2011), the overt display of close connections with host elites seems to confirm Fan's (2010) assertion that, for Chinese people, close interpersonal relationships, are not only important for individual success but they also 'define' them (cited in Crombie 2011). In addition, this data also suggest strong demonstrations of resistance to 'declassing', which refers to 'the loss of the economic power and prestige and status which previously marked one's class position' (Block 2016, pp. 8), considered to be a common phenomenon in migration (Block, 2006, 2014, 2016).<sup>49</sup>

In contrast, the Marginalised did not appear to have developed much sense of belonging in the host Germany society. For instance, their experiences with the host society appear to be largely mediated by their children. Specifically, through their children's activities, the members of the Marginalised were able to socialise with their local German neighbours, visit Christmas markets and attend other child-friendly, traditional German activities (see extracts in 6.4.3). These echo recent studies (Orellana 2003; Orellana 2009; Bauer 2016; Laz-

<sup>49</sup> The definition of declassing and reclassing is discussed in Chapter 2; see Block (2006)

arevic 2017) which have found examples of children being linguistic and cultural brokers for migrant families in their host society. Accordingly, in the case of this study, it seems that the children's cultural brokering/mediation took place as a 'by-product' (Guo 2014) of their daily activities with the parents, through which the Marginalised were achieving neighborhood socialisation and experiences of traditional German cultural activities. It seems that there is more visible children's cultural mediation within the group of the Marginalised than the other two socially elite groups. This phenomenon might be explained by the different social and economic situations of the three groups, as studies suggest that child brokering tends to take place when the migrant parents not only have low host linguistic capability (Orellana 2003, 2009) but also possess fewer economic resources, lower job status, and are residents of a less economically advantaged community (e.g. Jones, Trickett and Birman 2012).

The data suggest that the Marginalised did not show a strong desire to participate in German cultural events themselves. Perhaps this was a way of distancing themselves from the mainstream, expressing their less privileged social position and showing no ownership of space in the German host society, which did not inspire them to have greater aspirations within the host community or to develop closer relationships with the host society. It is worth mentioning that the Marginalised' experiences of limited cultural activities and interactions with local Germans from the same poor neighbourhood did not seem to enable a great deal of bridging social capital, since their encounters with Germans of similarly low social status did not allow them access to better resources. The limited engagement of the Marginalised with the host society appeared to provide little 'information diffusion' (Putnam 1995) or a limited/no 'information channel' (Coleman 1988), which was made evident by their lack of social cultural knowledge of the host society. For instance, unlike the other two groups, there was little evidence of sharing local and institutional knowledge among the Marginalised. Thus, it makes sense that the experiences the Marginalised exchanged and shared at Hua Hua School did not enable extra linkage or offer access to the host society with exclusive resources. The Chinese complementary school seemed to replicate the established social order (Bourdieu 1987, 1988) among the Chinese migrant community rather than opening up other positions where the Marginalised could have more powerful voices with which to speak. The powerless social positions they shared and adopted during their exchanges with the host society further reinforced the development of their sense of a homogeneous, marginalised immigrant group of low social status in the host country.

In terms of bridging social capital, the contrast between the Marginalised and the other two socially elite groups seems to resonate with the concept that based on material possessions (economic capital), inequality emerges during cultural activity (cultural capital) and through individuals' social relations with certain people (social capital) (Bourdieu 1984). In the case of this study, the

unequal accumulation of bridging social capital occurred during the parents' different cultural engagement with the host German society and through their connections to similar local German groups. This, first, points to the class-based nature of social capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1986), in which socioeconomic status plays a significant role in gaining membership of a particular group. Certain social groups have fewer chances to encounter other social circles due to their economic and social differences. Second, it identifies the intra-ethnic group differences due to social class difference in regard to their engagement with the host German society. Finally, the data seem to show some elements of the convertibility of economic and cultural capital into social capital (see discussion in Chapter 2).

In sections 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3, I have focused on how the interactions of the three parental groups can develop our understanding of Guanxi and social capital. In the next section, I present another significant finding that emerged in the study.

#### *7.2.4 Construction of parenthood*

Another important finding of this study is that during parental interactions, there was overt evidence of the members of all three groups cultivating resources for their children's development, in particular for their school success and personality development. The data show frequent instances of conversations regarding parenthood. Conversations about their children mostly dominated the interactions of all three parental groups. For each group, such talk was illustrated by sharing experiences of their involvement in their children's development and growth, enhancing their children's educational options and monitoring their children. However, for the members of the Marginalised group, there was also a significant number of interactions related to collective parenting (see extracts in 4.4.5, 5.4.6, 6.4.5). Such dynamic ongoing interactions suggest the members of each group forged an individual group community and took collective responsibility for one another's children in the same parental group through sharing experiences, exchanging information, consulting, instructing and monitoring each other's children. This points to Coleman's (1988) idea of community social capital, as it relates to 'closure' in supporting youth development, in that the members of the same parental group are familiar with each other and their children, which enables the members to monitor each other's children, encourage good behaviour and contribute positively to their children's future.

On the one hand, the data seem to reveal that all members of the three groups were paying great attention to their children's schoolwork, and each group demonstrated close group relations with one another by supporting their children's development. This exemplifies Coleman's (1987, 1988) notions of

family and community social capital, which emphasises the time and attention that parents give to their children, community connections to support each other's children and parental and community engagement with the children as the most significant factors in children's academic development. On the other hand, the data suggest that Hua Hua School did not offer an equal playing field for different parental groups. For example, even though a significant amount of information related to the theme of parenthood was being shared and exchanged, the 'information flow' among the Marginalised appeared to be relatively constrained, as a large part of it was based on their own experiences of parenting rather than outside knowledge and information (see discussion in 6.4.5). For the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, there seemed to be a sizeable amount of 'information flow' or 'information diffusion' about extensive education, upbringing advice and school and university choices, through which they were able to gain outside knowledge about good tutoring and better schooling, thereby improving their children's educational opportunities (see discussions in 4.4.5, 5.4.5). This supports Coleman's (1988) idea of 'information channel' as an important form of social capital, through which the members of these two groups were able to generate family and community social capital and facilitate an upward trajectory for their children in German society. Despite the overall enthusiastic engagement with their children, the contrast between the more socially elite groups and the Marginalised group calls attention to the limitations of the notion of family and community social capital in supporting children's academic success. Although, in this sense, parental attention and 'closure' social relation might offer powerful support for children's development, the data highlight the apparent disregard of parental social, economic and cultural backgrounds in the conceptualisation of family and community social capital.

Another noticeable example of the influence of more socially elite groups at the Hua Hua School is that the members occupied much more social space and were heavily involved with their children's Chinese schooling (see discussions in 4.3.2 (b), 4.4.2; 5.3.3, 5.4.3(a)), through which they were able to have more interactions with the Chinese complementary school and shape what happened in the school. Conversely, the Marginalised had significantly fewer opportunities and less space to influence the practice of the school despite their great will and efforts in engaging with their children's academic development (see discussions in 6.6.6, 6.4.2 (a)). In the understanding of family social capital, there is an overt emphasis on parental support in and interaction with children's schooling (Coleman 1988; Coleman and Hoffer 1987). Numerous recent studies also suggest that parental involvement in school is significant for children's academic success, in particular for the children of migrant ethnic minorities. For instance, Kahin and Wallace's (2017) work on Somali parents

and schooling in Britain explores the ways in which Somali parents can optimise their children's educational success, emphasising the significance of migrant parental involvement in children's school achievement in Britain.

However, the data of this study suggest that while Hua Hua School provided a space for particular parental groups to be involved with their children's schooling, help their children to progress and facilitate their children's upwards trajectories, for other groups of parents, it may not have quite served the same purpose, due to their limited educational backgrounds, linguistic capabilities and social resources as well as their restricted access to resources. Therefore, the ability and opportunity to be involved and interact with their children's schooling among different parental groups in this study varied. While the groups with more access and resources were more capable of interacting with their children's schooling, the less advantaged group had fewer chances. Thus, social capital generated at the Chinese complementary school for their children's development may not just be a matter of parental and community support for the children; it is also closely related to the social status occupied by the parents in Hua Hua School and in the wider society, as well as to their resources and their ability to access resources. In other words, the focus of parental attention on the children and close community relations in Coleman's notion of family and community social capital are vital for the children's future academic success, but these are perhaps not sufficient when the cases involve a significant inequality of status, resources and access. The data seem to challenge current conceptualisations of family and community social capital, which disregard the role of parental social class in their children's upbringing.

#### *7.2.5 Hua Hua School – a microcosm of the reproduction of social order*

One of the key findings of the study is that the Chinese complementary school, like many other societal institutions, acts as a microcosm of the reproduction of social order (Bourdieu 1987, 1990; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). The school appeared to confirm the socioeconomic status of all three parental groups and reproduce the existing social order along socioeconomic lines. On the one hand, Hua Hua School provided an enormous social space for the more elite parents of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, which enabled their social connections and the accumulation of social capital. On the other hand, for the Marginalised, the school offered restrictive resources and was not able to open up the same opportunities for the parents from the lower economic class. This was particularly relevant to the significant attempts at creating and sustaining relations with one another during the interactions of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, as well as with people perceived as having a similar

social status. There were instances during which the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans did allow and welcome people of a similar social status to come into their groups, such as when they served them tea and offered them seats. Such actions could be regarded as reflecting the egocentric nature of group networks, in that the members of the Networker and the Cosmopolitan groups were able to interact with people who possessed similar or more resources and access to resources in order to pursue personal interests.

It is noticeable that while the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans forged very close individual group relations and allowed people with similar a social status to be part of the 'in-group,' the members of the Marginalised were not made to feel welcome by them. This appeared on different occasions when the existence of the Marginalised group was unfamiliar to and/or overlooked by members of the other groups, as well as the rare in-person encounters with the members of the Marginalised at the Chinese complementary school setting, which suggest that the Marginalised were very much part of the 'out-group.'

The difference between the 'in-group' and the 'out-group' shows a significant contrast of inclusion and exclusion between the Marginalised and the other two more socially elite groups, which seems to illustrate the assertion that 'the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible' (Bourdieu 1986, pp. 249). This seems to explain the exclusion of the Marginalised and the close group relations between the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans in this study. It also exposes the self-centered characteristic of group networks and shows that the existence of group participation is for the purpose of creating useful resources for personal interests.

The overt differences between the three parental groups also appear to demonstrate a social class-based parental interaction pattern at the Chinese complementary school. While the members with a high financial status and sophisticated cultural experiences were able to keep and sustain their membership in high social status groups and make use of the resources that emerged from their connections with each other, the Marginalised who had insufficient financial and cultural possessions were unable to interact with the elite Chinese parents at Hua Hua School. This simply seems to exemplify the notion of class-based nature of social capital (Bourdieu, see Chapter 2).

Moreover, the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were all involved in running the school and positively contributing to its general welfare and the curriculum; they also influenced its pedagogical methods and informal school activities, in ways which were generally to their own benefit. As a consequence, the needs, interests and identities of those under-class/working-class parents were underrepresented in the school. This seems to be another example of institutions re/producing existing social order (Bourdieu 1977). For Bourdieu, social conflicts, opposing interest groups and power are all part of the production and reproduction of existing societal structures. He claims that

power reduces and/or reproduces social order to benefit those who have power, and social order produces and/or reproduces itself in a particular way through all the institutions that maintain the established social hierarchy system; in turn, this system always favours those powerful positions that are already occupied. The accumulation of all kinds of capital takes place in existing social structures

However, for a moment in time, the school might create situations where access becomes more open to the powerless, and then there might be a redistribution of resources. Unfortunately, only a small fraction of minorities benefits from those countable moments, as the wider society structure is not changed. Preece's study (2009) of the 'moment in time' factor is located in the context of the Widening Participation Movement, when British universities tried to increase access for people who were more disadvantaged and came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Unfortunately, the universities did not change their modes of operation sufficiently to fully support disadvantaged students, and thus the impact of Widening Participation in the social structures of British society is arguable. Similarly, the moment in time situation seems to reasonably explain the situation of the Chinese complementary school. Hua Hua School is open to all the children of Chinese heritage for a low fee, which enables them – regardless of socioeconomic background – to have access to their ethnic language. However, it seems from the data that once the children were involved, the social structures of the powerful and the powerless were not changed. There is obvious evidence of the social exclusion of the powerless in the school setting. Following Bourdieu, that institutions reproduce the existing social order, the Chinese complementary school, like many other societal institutions, is a microcosm of the reproduction of social order. This is clearly presented in the data regarding the parental engagement with the school.

Bourdieu (1977, 1987, 1990) focuses on the decisive nature of social structure and believes social status is not only shaped but also determined by social structures. In this sense, his work does not call much attention to human subjectivities and agency. However, the data of this study suggest some of the parents were quite agentive in the school setting, which sheds light on human agency and social mobility. In particular, the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans seemed to demonstrate strong human agency through their overt efforts and desires to be actively engaged with one another, the school, the local Chinese community and elite Germans through their interactions at the school setting in order to move both their life trajectories and their children's future upwards. On the other hand, the members of the Marginalised group showed much less agency and seemed unable to inhabit social territory at the school setting. This is perhaps due to the fact that there were fewer positions available for them to assume, which in turn reinforces Bourdieu's argument that social structure determines social status. Thus, this research raises the question of

how agentive individuals from different social classes are in a Chinese complementary school setting during the parental accumulation of social capital, in terms of their social mobility, life trajectories and their children's future opportunities.

Additionally, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of capital and social order mostly focuses on French mainstream society. Therefore, class is given full attention and ethnicity is often overlooked in his notion of social capital. The data of this study develop our understanding of the importance of social structure in the accumulation of social capital among migrant communities. This also highlights the intersection of social class with ethnicity, which is usually absent in most early classical theories of social capital. In the following section, I will summarise the 'Chinese' perspective on the data.

### 7.3 A Chinese interpretation

It is noticeable that there was overt evidence of harmonic and caring group relations across all three parental groups in this study (see discussions in 4.3, 5.3, 6.3). The pursuit of human harmony in Confucian philosophy seems persuasive in explaining, in part, the efforts of each within the group membership to welcome one another, to take care of each other and their children, to share food and so on. Such understanding of harmony formed the basis of the building of the modern concept of *Guanxi* in China. *Guanxi* refers to relationship ties presented during social and economic exchanges and built on trust, reciprocity and obligation (see discussion in Chapter 2) through which individuals' upwards mobility and life trajectory are gained. The data in this study suggest a great deal of such building of *Guanxi* which was discussed in earlier sections of this chapter (see sections 7.1, 7.2, 7.3).

In this, the data suggest that the building of *Guanxi* social relationships was overtly present among the members of the Cosmopolitan and the Networker groups, as well as among their social relationships with the local German and Chinese elite communities. This was evident in their close and long-term relationships with each other reciprocal favours and trust built (see discussions in 4, 5). Numerous studies have considered the cultivation of social capital in Chinese contexts. In these studies, social capital is often presented as a form of using and building *Guanxi* networks. For instance, Qi (2013) identifies the norms of *Guanxi* and conceives it as a variant Chinese form of social capital in any Chinese society worldwide.

In this study, I have found it is possible to consider the building of *Guanxi* relationships among my three participant groups as a Chinese form of accumulation of social capital. In particular, the intensive building of *Guanxi* among the two more socially elite groups demonstrates their active engagement in

pursuing social relations, material benefits, social status and other possible resources. These therefore resonate with the essential process of the accumulation of social capital. Within the data, the practice of clear Guanxi building among the Marginalised is less evident. This reflects the earlier discussion on the lack of evidence in the data to indicate that the members of the Marginalised group were accumulating social capital at the Chinese complementary school setting (see discussion in Chapter 6).

## 7.4 Conclusion

So far, I have discussed the key findings of this study related to three important theories of social capital. I have firstly concluded that Hua Hua School serves as a safe space for the construction of group solidarity, friendship and trust among the first-generation migrant parents. Then, I have demonstrated that the school offers a place for their engagement with local Chinese community and host German society. I have also pointed out that Hua Hua School reproduces the existing social order along socioeconomic lines. Finally, I have discussed the Chinese cultural context in terms of social relations and have related the building of *Guanxi* to the concept of social capital. In the next chapter, I will give a brief conclusion to the whole study.

## 8 Guanxi and the significant of social capital in the Chinese complementary school

### 8.1 Introduction

The initial inspiration for this study arose from my own experiences of being a first-generation migrant in Germany and a parent of a Chinese complementary school pupil. Like my child's Chinese complementary school, which is located in another major German city, the Hua Hua School setting in BCity was the point of departure for a great many parental social interactions. In particular, these occurred with regard to group belonging and friendship, engagement with the Chinese community and the local German society, the maintenance of Chinese languages and Chinese values, the navigation of parenthood, and – for some of the participants – the establishment of business and job opportunities. The Chinese complementary school seems to serve as a primary Chinese community meeting point for first-generation Chinese migrant parents. I set out in this study to investigate the parental interactions at a Chinese complementary school setting and their impacts on the first-generation migrants' lives in Germany. Thus, my aim is not only to make a contribution to the field of sociolinguistic ethnography but also to use this knowledge to reflect upon institutional practices of Chinese schooling.

In this final chapter, I draw together the main findings that emerged in the course of my research and reflect on experiences related to the study. Specifically, I wish to consider how my own positions, experiences and perceptions shaped the research, and to assess the strengths and limitations of my research. I first return to the research questions that provided the initial impetus for this study and discuss the knowledge I have gained regarding the three questions. I then reflect on the strengths and limitations of my research as a result of issues that I encountered during the course of the research.

### 8.2 Revisiting the Questions for the Study

In this section, I review the following three questions which I have attempted to answer throughout my research, followed by a brief description of the knowledge which has been gained:

1. What is the nature of the social relationships among first-generation Chinese migrants in Germany in the setting of their children's complementary school?
2. In what ways do the parental groups and their interaction in the complementary school setting facilitate their social status in the Chinese migrant community and wider German society?
3. What do the findings suggest about social capital in complementary school settings and its significance for first-generation migrant parents?

Following various notions of social capital, social class and the Chinese concept of Guanxi, as discussed in Chapter 2, in the next sections I consider the significant impacts of the parental interactions that emerged at the Chinese complementary school, Hua Hua School, on the first-generation migrant parents' life in Germany, within the scope of the three research questions.

### *8.2.1 The nature of the social relationships: emotional bonds, group belonging, solidarity and trust*

In this study, I first considered how the parental social interactions and the relationships which formed at Hua Hua School empowered the first-generation migrants. One of the key findings to emerge from the study was that the site of the complementary school offered a safe space within Germany, the host community, in which first-generation Chinese migrant parents were able to establish group relationships, friendships and social networks regardless of their social backgrounds. For instance, in Chapter 4 and 5 I focused on two groups of parents, the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans. Because the members of the former group were overtly engaged with the Chinese complementary school, the local Chinese community and mainstream German society, I labelled them the Networkers to refer to their notable ability to make social contacts and connections. As the latter group was financially well-off and culturally affluent, I named it the Cosmopolitans group, in reference to the members' prosperous current lifestyles.

It appears that the members of these two groups were able to build close friendships and group solidarity through their interactions, which created a great deal of emotional support and mutual trust, and in turn fostered an even stronger sense of group belonging and human bonding. In particular, their comfort in sharing highbrow cultural taste, using the prestige variety of the Chinese language, and recounting personal and family experiences during the period of The Cultural Revolution seemed to indicate a close emotional bond among the members of these two groups.

In addition, there is overt evidence of 'community and family social capital' (Coleman 1988) being generated during the parental interactions at Hua

Hua School, which helped the parents to support their children's development and academic achievements.

Later, in Chapter 6, I focused on a group of parents who had a very low profile at the Chinese complementary school. I referred to this group as the Marginalised, thus indicating their marginalised social status at Hua Hua School, the local Chinese community and wider German society. In common with the other two groups, the members of this group were also able to achieve a relatively close bond with one another by being involved with each other, sharing feelings of being marginalized minorities and maintaining their rural Chinese values. Their interactions at the school allowed them to become involved with their own ethnic community – in particular, their own ethnic linguistic community – and use their shared home languages, which provided important bonding factors that enabled them to foster group belonging and build solidarity. This suggests that bonding with their own group members was perhaps the only significant way for them to negotiate social relationships and positions at the school, while at the same time it was the most important path to locate resources, such as group belonging, emotional comfort and parenting support.

As discussed in this section, while the Chinese complementary school built up a safe space for the first-generation migrant parents to seek emotional bonds, group belonging and build solidarity, it provided a significant membership subject position to the parents. Through these they were able to engage in socialisation in the host country, performing their social roles as community members, responsible parents and caring friends. In the next section, I look at the impacts of such social interactions on the parents' life in Germany.

### *8.2.2 Facilitating social status and life chances*

Later in this study, I explicitly considered in what way the social interactions and relations in the school influence the trajectories of first-generation Chinese migrant parents in relation to socio-economic positioning and status in the Chinese community and German society.

I argued that the social interactions which took place at the Chinese complementary school strengthened some of the first-generation Chinese migrant parents' life chances in Germany, thus reinforcing their upwards migrant paths. Throughout the data, the members of the Networker and the Well-off groups displayed overt engagement with the Chinese complementary school, the local Chinese community and mainstream German society, which enabled them to build extensive social connections both to their own ethnic community and to the host society in BCity. These connections appeared to allow the members of these two groups to access resources unique to elite German and Chinese communities, such as business opportunities, exclusive cultural experiences

and elite educational information, thus becoming more engaged in the society and further improving their life trajectories in Germany.

While for the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans, the social interactions at the school offered opportunities for better economic and social status both in the German host society and the BCity Chinese community and also provided chances for their children's future success, it became clear that for the Marginalised, their social interactions at the school offered a minimal improvement in their lives in Germany. Although their financial situation was potentially better in Germany as compared to their undeveloped countryside hometowns in China, their interactions at the school showed that the Marginalised were still mostly involved with people who were from similar social backgrounds, coming from the undeveloped Chinese countryside, and worked in the Chinese restaurant/take away business as cheap labour in BCity. The Marginalised interacted with people from similar backgrounds not only in the school setting but also in their private lives in Germany. Thus, they had few chances to access resources that existed in a better economic and social circle. Within this scenario, it appeared that the social interactions at the school opened up a space for the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans to access resources that facilitated upward social mobility in Germany, whilst offering few such chances for the Marginalised to improve their lifestyles. Thus, it seems that existing socioeconomic status was reinforced in the school setting in that high social positions were available for middle-class and professional parents to take, while low social positions were open to working-class parents.

### *8.2.3 The significance of social capital in complementary school settings for first-generation migrant parents*

The findings of this study contribute to a better understanding of how social capital is articulated through the parental interactions at Hua Hua School and how such interactions are related to the current conceptualisations of social capital. First of all, as discussed in previous chapters, the data suggest that the school was an important space for all three groups of parents to build up their emotional bonds with their own community and groups, through which they were able to construct a sense of group belonging and solidarity. Such scenarios of emotional bonding resonate with Putnam's (1995) conceptualisation of bonding social capital, which is 'inward-looking and tends to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups' as well as bolstering reciprocity and activating solidarity (p 22; see Chapter 2). Secondly, much of the data of this research show that the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were able to push their upwards trajectories and occupy significant social space in the host country through their intensive social interactions at the school. This seems to demonstrate an active articulation of both bonding and bridging social capital

through which the members of these two groups were able to be a ‘civic person’ (Putnam 1993, 1996, 2000) actively engaged in both the Chinese community and the German host society. Within this scenario, it appears that social class and socioeconomic backgrounds came to the fore. The members who had a better level of education and more financial resources were able to take greater advantage of their social interactions and continue to advance their life trajectories in Germany. This seems to be further suggested throughout this study, in that the participants of the Networker and the Cosmopolitan groups were overtly engaged with other members of their own group and with one other, whereas at the same time, the members of the Marginalised group were excluded from the very school setting. It seems that the participants of each group positioned themselves and each other in relation to social status and perhaps created a rather self-centred group dynamic, in which the members were able to build close relationships with others who possessed similar resources and backgrounds. Drawing together the main themes that emerged during the participants’ interactions at the Chinese complementary school, it was noticeable that the members of the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were able to gain more access to the resources that occurred during their interactions at the school setting and to receive greater benefits, whilst the Marginalised were constrained in terms of both access and resources.

In the following section, I give a brief summary of the differences of each theme that the three parental groups had in common regarding the categories of access, opportunities, resources and constraints. In particular, I highlight the differences in their articulation of social capital at the school. Although all three groups had harmonious group relations, it seemed the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were much more engaged with each other and able to create close friendships, through which they could sustain the access and resources that resulted from their connections with one another. By contrast, it appeared that the members of the Marginalised group did not have close relationships with each other and maintained almost no contact with the other two groups, suggesting poor access and insufficient resources possessed by the Marginalised during their interactions at the Chinese complementary school. Such contrast was, for example, also displayed in the Marginalised’s overt references to a marginalised Chinese identity during their interactions, suggesting their constant negotiation of a low social position and status at the school setting. This was different from the on-going creation of a sophisticated and privileged Chinese self during the interactions of the Networkers’ and the Cosmopolitans, which bonded them together as a well-established social group.

Such scenarios of group contrasts were further illustrated in the data in relation to the participants’ engagement with Hua Hua School and the local Chinese community. While the Networkers and the Cosmopolitans were capable of actively participating in community and school events, occupying significant social space and maintaining Cosmopolitans and social status in the

Chinese community in BCity, the members of the Marginalised group were often passively involved in Chinese school and community events through their children and hardly built up any useful connections to community elites and resources, suggesting their excluded social position and low status in their own ethnic community. Following the same vein, the three parental groups' involvement with the German host society displayed similar distinctive traits. The Networkers and the Cosmopolitans exhibited strong connections to the elite German group and constant experiences of sophisticated high-brow German cultural events, suggesting their exclusive access to elite German society and high social status in the host country. On the other hand, the Marginalised associated with their German neighbours through their children and engaged in popular German cultural events. In addition to low linguistic and material capabilities, the data here suggest that the Marginalised had very limited social opportunities in German society.

Moreover, the social distance between the Marginalised and the members of the other groups at Hua Hua School was noticeably on display. For the Networkers and Cosmopolitans, the interactions at the Chinese complementary school enabled them to maintain the Mandarin language as the legitimate language within the school setting, foster emotional bonds with highly developed modern China and uphold a sophisticated Chinese culture among themselves. This perhaps suggested a rather better-off social status and lifestyle, through which the members were able to present themselves as high-achieving elite migrants in Germany. For the Marginalised, while the interactions at the school seemed to legitimate Mandarin for their children, they also appeared to allow this group of participants to maintain their own linguistic heritage and traditional rural Chinese values among themselves. Very few similarities were shared between the Marginalised and the members of the other two groups in terms of the maintenance of Chinese values. This may be another reason for the explicit social distance among my participant groups, which further constrained the Marginalised and encouraged the reproduction of the existing social status of the three different parental groups.

Thus far, it is plausible that the remarkable differences among three parental groups was caused by their different social circles and the resources that emerged within them. The lack of valuable resources and access to them possibly isolated the Marginalised from the rest of the parents. While occupying significant social spaces and positions, the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers accumulated both bonding and bridging social capital. At the same school setting, the Marginalised were offered lower social positions and were only able to make relatively moderate life progress. This scenario partly echoes Bourdieu's view of the accumulation of social capital as a process of social exclusion and social inequality. Bourdieu's general interests are institutional structures that reproduce the existing social order and determine individual social positions. Using a bottom-up approach, this study has focused on individual

negotiations of social places and positions within institutional structures. It aims to bring out how agentive people can be at the school under its current institutional system. It seems that the first-generation migrant parents' levels of agency at Hua Hua School are shaped and regulated by their social economic backgrounds and their access to resources, both the material and social resources of their networks. The Chinese complementary school seemed to open up the possibility of upwards trajectories for those from higher social economic groups, whilst it constrained groups from lower social backgrounds. In this sense, the data shows that Coleman and Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital may not pay enough attention to individuals' class and socioeconomic backgrounds.

### **8.3 Limitations and further research**

In this section, I reflect on the limitations of the research that I consider to be the most salient for this study. Firstly, I set off to understand the phenomenon of informal practice at a Chinese complementary school in BCity. During the whole period of the research, I did not really look into the practices of the school, since it was not the focus of the study to address educational practice. The study has deconstructed the informal parental practice that developed at the school setting and its articulation of social capital, suggesting the school was an important site of the negotiation of social capital for the migrant community. One significant finding is that the informal parental interactions at the school reinforced intra-social barriers while at the same time being an important site for the first-generation migrant parents by providing a safe space and a bridge into the main community. In such a scenario, an unexpected phenomenon to emerge was that the school did not provide the same advantages to the lower socioeconomic parents as it did to those from more affluent social backgrounds. To address such issues would require a redistribution of resources and the cooperation of the educational institution, which is beyond the scope of this study. However, the school could have been taking steps to be more inclusive, which I may have missed by not interviewing the teachers and the school manager.

In the field of school education, there is a body of literature on involving working-class migrant parents in state schooling. For instance, Kahin and Wallace's (2017) research on Somali migrant parents, mainstream schooling and a Somali community school in Britain suggests how mainstream schools and Somali complementary schools can work together to support the children's school achievement, which is something the Chinese complementary school could also do. Furthermore, Vally Lytra's (2014) investigation on Greek parents' involvement with a Greek complementary school in Switzerland also

points out approaches that a complementary school could take in order to reinforce resourceful parental involvement. Although Lytra's work indicates the way this might be taken forward, further studies could be conducted with a focus on a particular parental group. One potentially fruitful area for further research, therefore, could involve follow-up studies addressing the issues of exclusion and disadvantage for the lower socioeconomic parental group(s) in such a community school setting.

Clearly, I do not claim that the experiences of my participants in this study apply to all the first-generation migrant parents in other Chinese complementary schools. Therefore, there is a need for further studies investigating informal parental interactions in other Chinese complementary school settings in order to understand the differences and similarities in the experiences of the Chinese community in other schools and other European settings.

Another point that needs to be considered in this study is the balance between social structure and human agency. Whereas, Bourdieu views the social world as dominated by structure, we see an overt display of human agency among my participants. Perhaps future research can look at the extent to which complementary schools reproduce the social structure in just the same way as many other mainstream schools do, as recent studies reveal. Is there any evidence that complementary schools are taking steps to address socio-economic disadvantage intra-group? In other words, are more elite members of the group working with those from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their socio-economic status in the host community?

During this study, I have come to realize that it was easier for me to approach the Cosmopolitans and the Networkers although I spent considerable time in the field with the Marginalised in order to build a basic trust with them. I believe this difference in levels of trust was due to the shared social, linguistic, migrant and educational backgrounds I had with members of the first two groups. This is perhaps partly why more data was collected for these two groups. Moreover, the settings of the gatherings of the first two groups encouraged more social interactions because of the layout and comfortable atmosphere of the director's room, while the open spaces of the hallway and playground did not seem to encourage the Marginalised to interact with each other. However, to understand the phenomenon of the Marginalised group, more research needs to be done in terms of establishing a fieldwork relationship with this group to make the members feel more empowered, perhaps.

## **8.4 Contributions**

In this section, I consider the contributions and possible implications of this study. The data suggest that the parental interactions in the school setting were

group-based. While there were overtly cross-group interactions among the members of the Networker and Cosmopolitan groups, the social interactions of the Marginalised remained closely within their own group. In this scenario, the circle of the more socioeconomically advantaged was able to generate more resources and move life along an upward trajectory, whilst the members of the Marginalised often remained at a disadvantage because of their limited interactions with other parents who possessed more material and social resources and access. This is the most unexpected finding of the study, and it points to the need to engage disadvantaged migrant groups to interact with the more advantaged ethnic group as well as with the host society.

Institutions need, therefore to become more involved in finding ways to improve vulnerable migrant groups' access to resources. For instance, schools could consider setting up mentorship schemes to encourage the better-off parents to be more engaged with their less socioeconomically advantaged peers. The Chinese complementary school could increase the opportunities for interactions among parents of different socioeconomic backgrounds, while the local BCity Chinese community could offer chances for Chinese migrants to interact with a wider segment of German society, empowering community members from different backgrounds. For Chinese complementary schools, Kahin and Wallace's aforementioned work on Somali migrant parents and schooling in Britain offers deep insights into the possibilities for children's school achievement and parental involvement among Somali migrant families in Britain, which sheds light on ways for Hua Hua School to consider further inclusion of the parents. It is clear that both the Marginalised and some of the Somali parents shared similar linguistic barriers in their respective host societies and remained economically disadvantaged. Nevertheless, both groups placed high value on their children's education. Practices such as parental mentoring can be interestingly borrowed for involving the Marginalised migrant parents. After all, this study certainly points to the role of the state in implicating strategies for the redistribution of resources to migrants, particularly those who come from lower socioeconomic groups and have fewer social material resources. Encouraging migrants' engagement in civic society (Putnam 1993) perhaps requires participation by different state and local institutions, such as local German governments, educational institutions and local community institutions. In consideration of the current mass immigration and refugee movement in Germany, such an institutional practice of the state could be regarded as most necessary.

This study adds a different cultural perspective to the notion of social capital in the field of sociolinguistics. Here social capital and social relations are often read through the lens of Bourdieu, whose initial focus was French society. This study brings a different cultural aspect to social capital and gives attention to Confucius' influence on our understanding of the notion of social capital within a particular migrant social group under the education context of

a Chinese complementary school. As I have argued in previous chapters, it appears that there is no flat structure of social relations within the Chinese community in BCity. After experiencing the Cultural Revolution and the Communist political system, it seems the root of Confucius' social cultural system and its essential respect of hierarchy remain within the Chinese migrant community in BCity. Such a hierarchical social cultural system appears to have a great deal of impact on the social relationships of the first-generation migrants and their articulation of resources.

Thus, the study brings leading scholars' work of social capital along with Confucian rooted ideas of Guanxi into conversation, combining Bourdieu, Putnam, Coleman with references of the most salient Guanxi scholars, such as Lin and Bian. While it is ambitious to include all this literature, this combination has allowed me to develop a more nuanced understanding of the idea of social capital in sociolinguistics that moves us beyond a reliance on Bourdieu. This work shows how social class cannot be erased from the idea of social capital, and is suggestive of ways in which social structure extends to migrant communities and perhaps something about how Chinese ideas of Guanxi become reworked in migrant settings.

## **8.5 Final conclusion**

In this chapter, I have reviewed the research questions and summarised the overall findings of the study. I then have explicitly reflected on the process of the whole research by revisiting some of the most salient difficulties and challenges I faced as well as what occurred the most significant to me during the study.

In this final section of the whole book, I end where I began. My desire of this study is driven by my own migrant experiences, which began at the age of 15 in Scotland, progressed to England and the United States, and ultimately ended in Germany. During the course of this study, I witnessed my mother's difficult migrant experience in her late fifties without sufficient linguistic and social knowledge of the host country and my brother's relatively elite smooth transitions between London, Los Angeles and Beijing. These close-to-heart experiences affected me greatly at a personal level and built up my determination to conduct the most significant research in my life so far. At the end phase of this study, I have also been a current eyewitness of large-scale refugee movement into Germany. Both my private and social selves have drawn significant attention to the well-being of migrants. My ethnicity, linguistic heritage and geographic location enabled me to focus on one particular group of migrants in Germany, which also partly stemmed from my own experiences of migrating to Germany, where I needed to engage with people that eventually

built up my confidence in the new country, and was partly motivated by my young daughter's enrolment at a Chinese complementary school prior to the research.

Throughout this study, I hope to contribute to the literature in sociolinguistic ethnography, by taking an in-depth analysis of social interactions among first-generation Chinese migrant parents in a Chinese complementary school. I have suggested the ways that the parental social interactions at the Chinese complementary school empowered and constrained different groups of parents, according to their different socioeconomic backgrounds. I hope to contribute to the literature of current study of complementary schooling, through revealing its function for the parents beyond the education of their children. Lastly, I hope to contribute to the literature of migrant studies by adding a small piece of research about the Chinese migrant community to a very large picture of current migrant studies in Germany. I hope that this study gives voice to a minority group that is often under- and misrepresented in German society and popular German media, and that this research offers courage, thoughts and points of departure for future studies.

## Afterward

As I approach the final stages of completing this book, Europe has been hit massively by the coronavirus, and Germany is currently among the worst affected. After the country's Chancellor Angela Merkel's dramatic appeal to the country, calling the coronavirus pandemic German's biggest challenge since WWII, the federal states' measures of shut-downs and a full lockdown have become the focus of every official media report. Meanwhile, some social media platforms are revealing extreme attitudes and hatred against Chinese people on European streets. Reports of Chinese-looking people being insulted while wearing masks in public places and being blamed for the Coronas pandemic have put this national group on the front line of the discussions over the COVID-19 crisis worldwide.

The situation is drastic and my life is deranged. When all the disinfectant, sanitary goods, toilet paper and flour are sold out in German supermarkets, I am worried for my own family's safety and well-being. Lan, a friend, a mother from my daughter's Chinese school, shared some of her sores with me for emergency use, while another mom left me a message via WeChat and asked me if I would like to order some masks from the Chinese school as some had been donated by mainland China.

At the precise moment of finishing the very last sentence of this book above, I received a WeChat message from Atlantic City. It reads: 'Jiayin, are you alright? Please take care in Germany. Fanny'. Yes, this is the same Fanny referred to in Chapter 5...

## Appendix 1 Transcription Conventions

(Phrases or words in single brackets): is an additional comment by myself

## Appendix 2: Interview guide

### I. MIGRANT TRAJECTORY

- 什么时候来德国的? 为什么来德国?  
(When did you come to Germany? What has driven you to Germany?)
- 讲讲你来德国之后的故事, 比如说怎么来的, 刚开始来德国都做了些什么, 之后又做了些什么呢? 按顺序讲讲?  
(Tell me your story since you came to Germany, how did you come here? What did you do in Germany at the beginning, what else did you do after that?)
- 学习德语了吗? 怎么学的? 学了多久? 问什么停止学习了/没有学习德语?  
(Did you learn German? How did you learn it? How long? Why stopped/never learnt?)
- 讲讲你在德国生活的感受?  
(Reflect your life in Germany, what do you think of it?)
- 你来德国前设想的德国生活是怎样的呢?  
(What was your expectations of the life in Germany when you were planning to come to Germany?)

### II. PERSONAL BACKGROUND AND PERSONAL HISTORY IN CHINA

- 讲讲你来德国之前的生活是什么样的  
(Tell me something about the life you had before you came to Germany)
- 上大学了吗? 大学的主修是什么? 在哪里工作? 做什么的? 有孩子吗?  
(Did you go to university? What was your major? Where did you work? What is your profession? Did you have children?)
- 在哪里认识你先生/太太的?  
(Where did you meet your spouse?)
- 讲讲你父母, 和你的原生家庭  
(what about your parents? Tell me something about them and your original family.)
- 讲讲你在国内时的朋友圈子和生活中心  
(Tell me your friends' circle in China and your focus of life at that time.)

### III. LIFE IN GERMANY; AND FRIENDS CIRCLE IN GERMANY

- 讲讲你在德国生活的中心? 你生活的几部分  
(What is your life focus in Germany now?)
- 讲讲你的业余生活? 你的朋友/熟人圈子, 在哪里认识的? 都一起做些什么?  
(Tell me what you do for your leisure time, your friends' and associates' circle, where did you get to know them? What do you normally do with them?)
- 你对在德国生活的期待是什么? 对孩子的期待呢?  
(What are your expectations for life in Germany and expectations for the children?)
- 比较一下你在德国和中国生活的不同? (工作, 文化, 语言, 生活融入, 及社会地位)  
(What is the difference to live in Germany and in China regarding career, culture, language, integration, and social status?)

### IV. HUA HUA SCHOOL

- 讲讲花花学校对你生活的影响, 你对学校有什么养的期待  
(What does Hua Hua School bring to your life? What are your expectations on the school?)
- 你为什么在这等这么久不走呀, 孩子反正在上课  
(Why do you wait for so long, the children are anyway in their classes)
- 你为什么还送孩子来学校, 他们都这么大了, 可以自己来的  
(Why do you need to bring the children to school? Are they old enough to come themselves?)

### Appendix 3: a draft example of Research Diary-1/Fieldnote

*Saturday 29, OCT*

*Sunny but chilly*

*On the train from BCity back to HCity*

On a very early Saturday morning (at 6 a.m.), I set off for my first visiting to H school in BCity. My train arrived in central train station in BCity at about 10 a.m. and I had to take a tube to H School. Once I arrived at H School's tube station, I saw a Chinese woman with her little daughter just got out off a tube and another Chinese mother with her little girl walking right in front of me. It was 10 a.m. on a Saturday morning and the city was silent. There were very few people at the tube station and the street was empty. Without asking where they were heading to, I just followed, about 10 minutes later, I found myself right in front of H school's campus which is a property of a local High school.

I spent the whole morning wandered around the campus, trying to make my first impression of the school. I also caught different groups of parents gathering at different locations in the school. The end of the morning class, I saw many children left school with their parents. Ms. L was sent to welcome me to the school. I met her on the campus where she was with her 12-years old Germany born daughter who just finished her class in H school. L is a parent and a member of the board of parent representatives. She told me that she spent almost every Saturday at H school (H school runs only on Saturday), while she showed me some of the classrooms, teachers and school activities. During the whole introduction time, Ms L greeted and chatted with different teachers and parents. Some, she identified as her friends later. After introduction, she let her daughter wait for her in the car and took me to the director's room. From the observation I made later, the room seemed to me more like a gathering room for the parents than the office for the director. Most of the time, parents occupied the room. Over the day, a couple of teachers came in just for getting a cup of tea or coffee.

When we entered the director's office room, there were seven to eight parents chatting. It is quite obvious that they all knew L. L introduced me to the group and the chat continued as if my existence did not bring any discomfort. I remember the chat was long and warm hearted. By the time L's daughter came to the office to remind her mom for a forthcoming appointment, an hour was gone.

L left, I started to observe the parental interactions. Most of the time, I listened to their conversations, but sometimes I was involved when questions were asked. They were totally ease with my presence and just carried on with their topics.

*I am planning to conduct interviews after my 5/6<sup>th</sup> visit, I think I need to be cautious at the moment since my knowledge of the field is limited and the trust is not built. However, during my observation, I've heard many things they did together outside H school. I can bring these to the future interviews, for example: you said that you were together for dinner/event. Tell me more about it, please. Do you always get together outside the school setting? What do you do when you are together? How are these significant for you and your life in BCity?*

At 3:30 p.m., following some parents and their children, I left for the tube station and was led to a short cut to the station where I got off in the morning. While a couple of parents were taking the same tube, I sat and watched them talking to their children in Mandarin. The train stopped and some of them disappeared in the dark. The time when I arrived in HCity again, it was dark and chilly, I saw my husband and my little daughter were waiting for me on the platform...

This is my first visit to H school in BCity.

*Two potential participants have occurred to me:*

*L: Came to Germany in year 1990 to follow her husband who came to Germany in year 1989. Her Husband used to be a former official in the Ministry of Education in China. Now the couple run a Chinese restaurant in BCity and have a son and a daughter. L is actively engaged with social and political clubs: such as woman clubs, the peaceful reunion of China club and Chinese complementary school in BCity. (I was told by a parent).*

*F: My potential key participant, she is from Beijing and still has very strong Beijing accent although she has been away from China for almost twenty years. She has a son and a daughter, the daughter is studying in England. As a parent of H school, she also helps with the administration works. During the parental interactions, she talks about her educating experiences to her children quite often and it seems to me that she has a good education background and worldwide living experiences.*

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# Institute of Education University of London

Erzeugung von sozialem Kapital in chinesischen Komplementärschulen  
in BCity und LCity

## Forschungsprojekt

Mein Name is Jiayin Li

Ich promoviere am Institute of Education, University of London.

Diese Broschüre erläutert meine Forschung.

Ich hoffe sie wird auch nützlich sein und ich würde mich freuen, jedwede Frage zu beantworten.

### **Warum wird diese Forschung durchgeführt?**

Diese Studie ist Teil meiner Doktorarbeit. Ich möchte die Bedeutung chinesischer Schulen im Leben der Eltern, insbesondere von Erstgeneration Immigranten, untersuchen. Ich möchte erforschen welchen Stellenwert die Schule in Ihrem Leben hat und welche Hoffnungen damit verknüpft sind.

**Wer wird an diesem Projekt teilnehmen?**

Ich möchte primär Eltern, Lehrer und Direktoren interviewen. Die Schüler möchte ich ebenfalls befragen

**Wie wird die Studie durchgeführt werden?**

Während der Untersuchung werde ich in den Schulen anwesend sein. Ich werde beobachten wie sich die Eltern in der Wartezeit untereinander verhalten. Ich möchte mit Ihnen darüber sprechen, wie Sie z. B. aus China hier her gekommen sind und welchen Stellenwert die Schule für Sie hat. Des Weiteren werde ich den Unterricht beobachten und mir Notizen diesbezüglich erstellen.

**Welche Fragen werden gestellt werden?**

Ich möchte Sie zu Ihrem Leben in China, Großbritannien und Deutschland befragen; welche Migrationserfahrungen Sie gemacht haben und welche Rolle die chinesische Schule dabei spielt.

**Was wird passieren, wenn Sie an der Studie teilnehmen?**

Wenn Sie zustimmen, werde ich einige Teile der Befragung aufnehmen und später protokollieren. Es ist nicht mein Ziel richtige oder falsche Antworten zu finden. Ich möchte lediglich in Erfahrung bringen, was die Befragten.

**Können Probleme entstehen, wenn Sie teilnehmen?**

Ich möchte Sie zu Ihrem Leben in China, Großbritannien und Deutschland befragen; welche Migrationserfahrungen Sie gemacht haben und welche Rolle die chinesische Schule dabei spielt.

Sollten Sie Sorgen oder Probleme mit diesem Projekt haben, rufen Sie mich bitte an oder schreiben Sie mir eine E-Mail.

**Wird Ihnen die Teilnahme an dem Projekt helfen?**

Es wird nicht notwendigerweise einen direkten Nutzen für Sie ergeben. Sie helfen mir meine Studien durchzuführen. Allerdings werden meine Studien Ihnen hoffentlich längerfristig helfen können, indem sie Ihnen ein Verständnis über die Bedeutung der Schule in Ihrem Leben und den Statuswert in der britischen und deutschen Gesellschaft erklären.

**Wer wird wissen, dass ich an der Studie teilgenommen habe?**

Es werden nur die Menschen davon erfahren, die Sie darüber informieren und die anderen Eltern in der Schule. Ich werde an niemanden Ihre Daten und Angaben weitergeben.

Die Aufnahmen und Notizen werden an einem sicheren Ort hinterlegt werden und die Namen und Orte werden verändert sein. Niemand wird wissen, wer was gesagt hat.

**Müssen Sie an der Studie teilnehmen?**

Es ist völlig freiwillig. Sie entscheiden ob Sie teilnehmen möchten oder nicht. Selbst wenn Sie sich dazu entschieden haben, bleibt es Ihnen völlig freigestellt Fragen nicht zu kommentieren, bzw. die Studie/das Interview jederzeit abubrechen.

Sie können mir Ihre Teilnahme durch das Ausfüllen des Teilnahmeformulars mitteilen.

Seite 4

**Werden Sie über das Ergebnis der Studie unterrichtet werden?**

Ich werde Ihnen eine kurze Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse zum April 2014 zukommen lassen

**Danke, dass Sie diese Broschüre gelesen haben.**

**Jiayin Li**

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**Institute of Education  
University of London  
伦敦大学教育研究院**

社会资本积累在中文学校 — B市及L市对比研究项目

我叫李佳音，是伦敦大学教育研究院博士生。

这份资料是我的研究项目的简介。如果您有相关任何问题，可以直接向我咨询。

**研究目标**

此项目旨在研究家长们如何在中文学校校园内积累社会资本及中文学校对参与者的社会资本积累的贡献。

## 项目参与者

本研究项目的主要调查对象是家长。同时老师和校长会被采访。在调查的场景内，也会有学生的出现。

## 调查过程

在每一个学校的调查过程包括两部分。第一部分为三到四周即三到四个教学日的观察研究过程，第二部分为一个同等时间段的采访过程。观察研究过程会发生在不同的学校场景中，而采访会在家长等待孩子是进行。采访的数据会被用来分析家长如何积累社会资本及被积累的社会资本对家长的实际重要性。本研究项目的计划截至期 2013 年 3 月。

## 调查问题

第一阶段：观察研究  
社会网络在社会资本积累中的位置。  
中文学校如何为家长的社会资本积累提供空间。  
中文学校中的社会网络是何种类型。  
在中文学校的社会网络中，出现何种形式的社会资本。  
第二阶段：采访研究  
采集家长们的移民历史。  
家长送孩子们去中文学校的动机。  
再中文学校积累出来的社会资本对家长的意义。

**如果你愿意参与此研究项目：**

一部分对话和采访纪录会被录集和笔录。此研究项目的目的在于收集真实数据，不对调查对象进行任何价值判断

我真心希望你能享受参与此项目的过程。你有权利中途退出研究项目。

如果你有任何问题，请与我联系。

我真诚的希望您能参加此研究项目。此项目的直接目的是研究柏林及伦敦的家长如何在中文学校积累社会资本及这些社会资本对他们的意义。此研究的最终目的是为唤起德国社会及英国社会对中国移民社会状态的注意和对中国移民为德，英两国主流社会作出贡献的尊重。

您的参与和调查内容是匿名的，所有的调查数据只会由我本人保管。

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您的参与是建立在自愿的基础上的，再参与的过程中，您有权利拒绝回答任何问题，也有权利在任何时间退出项目。

如果您有兴趣参加项目，请在同意书上签名。

如果您此研究的结果有兴趣，我可以在报告此项目完成时，将结果发给您。

**The project has been reviewed by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee,**

Project No

**Thank you for reading this leaflet.**

**Jiayin Li**

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## Institute of Education University of London

Address: 20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

A study of Chinese schools in BCity and LCity: their roles in parents' live.

### A research project

My name is Jiayin Li

I am a current PhD Student in Institute of Education, University of London.

This leaflet tells you about my research.

I hope the leaflet will also be useful, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you have.

#### **Why is this research being done?**

I am doing this research for my PhD. I am interested in the roles of the Chinese schools in parents' live, particularly parents who are first generation migrants. I am interested in what roles the Chinese school plays in your life, how important the school is to you and your hopes about the school.

**Who will be in the project?**

I would like parents, directors and teachers to be in my project. Children will also be in the project with their parents.

**What will happen during the research?**

In the research, I will spend time in the school. I will observe what happens between parents during their waiting time, what happens in the classes and make some notes. I would like to talk to you about topics such as, how you come from China? How significant the school is to you?

**What questions will be asked?**

I will ask your questions about your life in China, about your life in Germany, about your life in the UK, about your experiences of migration, and about the role of Chinese school in your life.

**What will happen to you if you take part?**

[Details of surveys/interviews, individual/pairs/groups]

If you agree, I will tape record some of the sessions and type them up later. I am not looking for right or wrong answers, only for what everyone really thinks.

**Could there be problems for you if you take part?**

I do not expect you to have any problems if you take part. There may be some topics you do not want to discuss and that is fine.

If you have any problems with my project, please call me or email me immediately.

**Will doing the research help you?**

There will not necessary be any direct benefits for you as helping me do this research, but I hope my research will help you in a long term by improving the understanding on the role of the school in your live and increasing your status in British and German societies.

**Who will know that you have been in the research?**

The people will know are the people you tell and some other parents in the school. I will not give anybody your name.

I will keep tapes and notes in a safe place, and will change all the names in my reports – my participants' names, the names of the schools and the names of the school areas – so that no one knows who said what.

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**Do you have to take part?**

You decide if you want to take part and, even if you say 'yes', you can drop out at any time or say that you don't want to answer some questions.

You can tell me that you will take part by signing the consent form.

**Will you know about the research results?**

I will send you a short report by Apr 2014 if you are interested

**Thank you for reading this leaflet.**

**Jiayin Li**

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**This project is supervised by Dr Sian Preece, Institute of Education, University of London. Email: [s.preece@ioe.ac.uk](mailto:s.preece@ioe.ac.uk)**

## Appendix 7: Consent Form

Jiayin Li  
Department of Children, learning and communication  
Institute of Education  
University of London  
Email: Kittyjyl500@yahoo.co.uk  
UK number: 0044(0)7882565065  
Germany Number: 0049(0)1724555686



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University of London

### Consent form (the parents)

Project: A study of Chinese schools in Berlin and London: their roles in parents' live.

Project time: 04/2010-06/2013

I have read the information leaflet about the research.  (please tick)

I consent to be observed with my child in the class.  (please tick)

I consent to be observed with my child in other settings in the school.  (please tick)

I consent to be observed.  (please tick)

I consent to be interviewed.  (please tick)

I consent Li Jiayin using the data for the purposes of her PhD thesis and for publication in academic literature and conferences.  (please tick)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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# Jiayin Li-Gottwald Chinese Migrant Parents and Complementary Schooling in Germany

A Sociolinguistic Ethnography

How do parents cooperate with each other, what value do they attach to their interaction and how is the degree of cooperation related to social status? The study takes a close look at the social relationships among various groups of Chinese parents at a Chinese Mandarin language school in a metropolitan city in Germany. Taking an ethnographic approach, it captures a vivid picture of the parental social interactions in and outside the Chinese school setting. The study reveals the significance of social interactions, discussing it in relation to the parents' socioeconomic backgrounds and individual migrant trajectories.

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