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Faculty of Humanities

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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**The Culturally Biased Discourse of Chinese Residents in
Hungary**

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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	6
1.1 Scope of the study.....	6
1.2 Methodology and data collection.....	11
1.3 Hypotheses.....	11
1.4 Structure of the thesis.....	14
2. Literature Review of the Research about Chinese Immigrants in Hungary.....	17
3. Theoretical Framework of the Present Research.....	25
3.1 Culture.....	25
3.1.1 Cultural Dimension Theory, High and Low context cultures, and Trust.....	29
3.1.2 Language, Culture, and Gender.....	40
3.2 Discourse and identity.....	55
4. Methods.....	62
4.1 Participants and setting.....	62
4.2 Instrument and data collection.....	63
4.3 Data analysis process.....	67
5. Results.....	72
5.1 Preliminary analysis of the emerging problems.....	72
5.2 Wall theory.....	93
5.2.1 The Visible Wall.....	94
5.2.1.1 Case Study One: It Is Not A Big Deal in China!.....	94
5.2.1.2 Case Study Two: Why Is Everyone So Quiet Here!.....	99
5.2.2 The Invisible Wall.....	101
5.2.2.1 Case Study Four: You Are On Your Own!.....	103
5.2.2.2 Trust in Chinese Culture.....	105
5.2.2.3 The Breach of The Invisible Wall.....	112
5.3 Chinese Male and Female Experience in Hungary.....	114

5.3.1 Chinese Women vs. Chinese Men in Hungary.....	114
5.3.1.1 Gender differences based on education and employment.....	120
5.3.2 Case Study Four: I Don't Understand Why.....	127
5.3.3 Case Study Five: He'd Better Watch His Language Next Time.....	128
6. Limitations.....	137
7. Conclusions.....	139
7.1 The problems from the preliminary study.....	139
7.2 Wall theory.....	139
7.3 Gender difference among Chinese residents in Hungary.....	141
7.4 Pedagogical implications.....	142
Table of Figures.....	144
Table of Tables.....	145
References.....	147
Appendices.....	165
Appendix A: First Draft of Interview Questions.....	165
Appendix B: Sample Interview.....	167
Appendix C: Map of Chinatown in Budapest, Hungary.....	178
Appendix D: Final Version of Interview Questions.....	179
Appendix E: A list of codes assigned in ATLAS.ti.....	181
Appendix F: The Signature Brochure of ethnic Petition.....	184
Appendix G: The Minorities Section on the Hungarian Voter's Registration Form.....	185
Appendix H: Group One Result from Atlas.ti.....	186
Appendix I: Group Two Result from Atlas.ti.....	189
Appendix J: Group Three Result from Atlas.ti.....	192
Appendix K: Group Four Result from Atlas.ti.....	195

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope of the study

In late November 2018, Italian luxury fashion brand, Dolce & Gabbana, posted a series of promotional videos across its social media platforms, including its Chinese Sina Weibo social media account, “featuring a Chinese model in D&G’s latest designs struggling to eat Italian dishes – pizza, cannoli, and spaghetti – with a pair of chopsticks, which critics said stereotyped Chinese culture and women” (Yan & Avagnina, 2018, para. 6). The brand had infused elements of Chinese culture and imagery in its designs, and the released videos were intended to pay tribute to the upcoming Chinese New Year. Unfortunately, Dolce & Gabbana tragically failed to present an appropriate representation of Chinese culture unaccentuated by prejudiced undertones, and the promotional videos were met with an immediate backlash following unprecedented criticism from Chinese online users.

This inaccurate and irresponsible depiction of Chinese culture soon led to a crisis for the brand in China. Several high-profile Chinese actors, who served as celebrity ambassadors for the brand, announced that they would no longer be working with Dolce & Gabbana. The company was also forced to cancel its highly anticipated fashion show in Shanghai, and retailers across the country pulled the brand’s products from their shelves and websites (Yan & Avagnina, 2018). These united efforts to boycott Dolce & Gabbana demonstrated that Chinese culture is a collectivist culture based on Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. Even though the founders of Dolce & Gabbana apologised for their ill-advised promotional videos on Chinese social media, the incident has nonetheless affected their sales dramatically in China.

More and more international companies have entered the Chinese market in recent years. However, many international brands have encountered *shuǐ tǔ bù fú* (水土不服) due to a lack of knowledge of Chinese culture. *Shuǐ tǔ bù fú* (水土不服) is a Chinese phrase that describes a person who initially experiences difficulties adjusting

to the weather and conditions of life when one moves into a new environment. The dictionary suggests *shuǐ tǔ bù fú* (水土不服) means “be unaccustomed to the situation or type of weather of a new place; be acclimatized” (Hui, 2011, p. 1518). In this context, *shuǐ tǔ bù fú* (水土不服) denotes an international brand that has trouble adjusting and adapting to the local culture.

Following Dolce & Gabbana’s controversial promotional videos, Zara, a Spanish fast fashion brand, provoked heated discussions centred around an advertisement featuring a Chinese female model with freckles on her face. Chinese online users were outraged and claimed that Zara had intentionally portrayed an unattractive Chinese woman. This is a further example of a cultural clash caused by misunderstanding. In fact, women with freckles are not considered unattractive in western cultures as they are in the Chinese culture (Zhu, 2019). Again, the collective reaction from Chinese online users supports Hofstede’s cultural dimension theory that Chinese culture is collectivist.

In general, the depiction of Chinese elements in western brands tends to be superficial and reductive. The perception of Chinese culture has generally been reduced to stereotypical signs and symbols. For example, many western fashion brands have incorporated Chinese elements in product designs, such as dragon and blue-and-white porcelain patterns, yet the profoundness of Chinese culture is not limited to merely iconic signs (Zhu, 2019).

The influence of Chinese culture is not just evident in the modern fashion industry. Travellers from all over the world have explored the profoundness of Chinese culture over the centuries. The most notable cultural exchange occurred on the Silk Road, which served as a link between East and West (Elisseeff, 2001, p. 2). To illustrate, the earliest records of Arab merchants’ business activities with China date back to 851. Explorers from Russia, the UK, Germany, and Sweden explored central Asian through international cooperation in the late 19th century, (Elisseeff, 2001, pp. 11-13). Among Hungarians, Széchenyi Béla (1837–1918), and Hopp Ferenc

(1833–1919) visited China more than once after the 1880s. Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784–1842) was the first Hungarian to study Eastern culture, and he spent two decades in Asia. In this early period, information about China was scarce in Hungary, and many books about China were translated from other languages (Wu, 2016).

The cultural exchange between China and Hungary can be classified into three epochal periods: (a) the early phase (prior to the 1950s); (b) the golden age of translation (1950s–1990s); and (c) the open period (since 1990s) (Wu, 2016, pp. 60-61). In the first half of the 20th century, the Chinese books available in Hungary were translated from English or German due to a lack of translators who could translate directly from Chinese to Hungarian (Salát, 2013, p. 326). However, several Hungarian scholars have become the cultural bond between China and Hungary since Chinese and Hungary have established a diplomatic relationship, following a cultural period that saw the translation of many Chinese classics into Hungarian. This period was the most prolific period. For instance, Barnabás Csongor translated *shuǐ hǔ zhuàn* (水浒传) and *xī yóu jì* (西游记); Endre Galla has translated works by Lu Xun (鲁迅) and Lao She (老舍) (Salát, 2013, pp. 327-328). Since the 1990s, Hungarian sinologists have translated Chinese books from various different fields. For instance, Imre Hamar has translated Buddhist writing into Hungarian; a selection of 20th century's unpublished short stories has been edited by Imre Hamar and Gergely Salát. Many works by contemporary Chinese writers, such as Su Tong (苏童), Yu Hua (余华), Liu Zhenyun (刘震云), and Han Shaogong (韩少功) were translated into Hungarian (Salát, 2013, p. 330).

The cultural exchange between China and Hungary in the 21st century has shifted from the translation of literary works to cooperation in various fields (Wu, 2016). In education, Hungarian - Chinese Bilingual Elementary School and High School (匈中双语学校, Magyar-Kínai Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola) was established in Budapest, Hungary in 2004. It is the only public bilingual school using both Chinese and the host country's native language for teaching in the Central and

Eastern European region (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Hungary, 2017). In addition, a total of five Confucius institutes were established at Hungarian universities: Eötvös Loránd University, University of Szeged, University of Pécs, University of Miskolc, and University of Debrecen (Xinhuaawang, 2019). Following the growing interest in learning Chinese, a comprehensive Chinese and Hungarian dictionary (汉匈词典) has been published by Bartos Huba and Hamar Imre in 2019 (ELTE Confucius Institute, 2019).

In addition to the cultural exchange in education, the Hungarian Ministry of Finance (2019) announced the joint construction project of the Budapest–Belgrade railway line in 2019, which is expected to be completed by 2023 with a technical and financial loan from China. The close cooperation between China and Hungary has attracted more than 250,000 Chinese tourists to Hungary in 2018. In, 2019, the number of Chinese tourists has increased by 11.06 percent as compared to the previous year (Yuan, 2019).

Historically, Chinese immigrants have been migrating to Hungary since the 1990s. Previously, the centre of Chinese activities was around the Four Tigers Market (四虎市场, sì hǔ shì chǎng) in the 8th district until it was closed down in 2014. The customers included Hungarians, Chinese, and other European nationals, who came to the Four Tigers Market and regularly purchased goods from Chinese wholesalers (Wong & Primecz, 2011, p. 66). Nowadays, Chinatown is in the 10th district of Budapest, Hungary has become the centre of Chinese services, including Chinese restaurants, supermarkets, primary schools, clinics, hair salons, KTV, and law firms. The term “Chinatown” does not mean a Chinatown in the American sense, the term “Chinatown” came into use as a brand for business reasons one or two years ago. Though Chinese people do not live in Chinatown, it has become the hub of Chinese services in Budapest, Hungary.

On the one hand, these Chinese-speaking services have indeed minimised the inconvenience for the Chinese living in Hungary. On the other hand, Chinese

immigrants were less motivated to learn the Hungarian language to interact with the locals. Though Chinese-speaking services have reduced the discomfort of living in a foreign country, the intangible intercultural experience related to cultural difference is inescapable for the Chinese immigrants in Hungary. The Chinese-speaking services do not preclude Chinese immigrants from experiencing intercultural conflicts in Hungary. Moreover, this convenience has hindered the cultural exchange between Chinese immigrants and Hungarians. Moreover, among the inadequate empirical research on Chinese immigrants, “the Chinese are often depicted as a community that keeps to itself” (Liu, 2017, p. 33).

The intercultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary has not been thoroughly investigated. Previous studies have identified the cultural differences between China and various western countries (see Hofstede et al, 2010; Fukuyama, 1995), yet solutions to overcome the cultural differences are left unanswered. Although the cultural differences between China and Hungary may be drawn from the comparison of the cultural dimensions index from Hofstede et al’s theory, Fukuyama’s trust framework, and Hall’s high and low context cultures, these comparisons remain abstract and require further illustrations to exemplify the cultural differences. This research presents an empirical study of the cultural differences that Chinese residents have experienced in Hungary, that so far is lacking in the scientific literature. To illustrate, the study first addresses the prevalent problems that Chinese residents have experienced in Hungary. It follows the wall theory, consisting of the visible wall and the invisible wall. The wall theory not only identifies the cultural difference between China and Hungary with regard to the notion of tangible and intangible boundaries, but it may also predict the intercultural conflicts when the boundary of the wall, i.e. the visible wall or the invisible wall is violated. Subsequently, the potential strategies to overcome the wall were proposed to reduce the intercultural conflicts. The study further investigates the gender differences between Chinese males and females in Hungary based on their educational background and employment status. By addressing these aspects, it is hoped to provide people with information about Chinese

residents in Hungary, and the practical knowledge to be aware of the differences between Chinese and Hungarian cultures.

1.2 Methodology and data collection

The methodological approach of the study was devised in the absence of previous scientific research on the cultural differences Chinese immigrants have encountered in Hungary. Therefore, a semi-structured interview consisting of two parts was structured to study the life of Chinese immigrants in Hungary and intercultural conflicts they have experienced. The interview questions were designed to elicit Chinese immigrants' life experiences in Hungary. The first part of the interview starts with a brief research introduction, and it follows interview questions eliciting responses of daily life, personal opinions, and social life. The second part includes a written task concerning the participants' intercultural conflicts (see Appendix A for draft interview questions). The interviews were conducted in Mandarin, and a total number of 26 Chinese residents were interviewed. The interview data has been translated and transcribed in English. A transcribed interview (see Appendix B) varies from 5,000 to 8,000 words.

1.3 Hypotheses

The following three hypotheses attempt to elaborate on the cultural differences and integration obstacles Chinese immigrants have encountered in Hungary.

First hypothesis: The emerging problems that Chinese residents have experienced correspond to the results when comparing the cultural dimensions index of China and Hungary using Hofstede et al's cultural dimensions theory.

Second hypothesis: *The wall theory* entails the distinction between the *visible wall* and *invisible wall* in Chinese and Hungarian culture.

Third hypothesis: The Chinese male and female experience in Hungary differ depending on their educational background and employment status.

The first hypothesis explores the prominent problems that Chinese have experienced in Hungary. It is possible to predict the potential discrepancies between Chinese and Hungarian culture using Hofstede et al's cultural dimensions theory, yet an empirical study of the cultural differences could provide an insightful understanding of the cultural differences between China and Hungary.

The second hypothesis investigates the cultural difference that poses an obstacle for Chinese immigrants integrating into Hungarian society. The *wall theory* entails the presence of a *visible wall* and an *invisible wall* in Western and Chinese culture respectively. On the one hand, a *visible wall* refers to physical, spatial, and tangible boundaries. For example, a fence, wall, personal space, and boundaries in public space. On the other hand, an *invisible wall* implies the abstract, nebulous, and intangible boundaries in thinking which restrict people from expressing thoughts and ideas. A *visible wall* is a ubiquitous concept in Western culture, whereas the boundaries of the *visible wall* are obscure in Chinese culture. In contrast, the *invisible wall* is not prevalent in Western culture, yet the *invisible wall* is a predominant concept in Chinese culture which alienates people in thinking.

Ironically, China is probably the most enthusiastic wall-building civilization in the world. A *sì hé yuàn* (四合院) is a typical traditional residence building in Beijing which is surrounded by walls. Another example of the wall is the Forbidden City (故宫, *gù gōng*), which is surrounded by a wall 9.9 metres high. The wall spreads 753 metres from south to west, and 961 metres from north to west (Zheng, 1981, p. 4). Also, the Great Wall (长城, *cháng chéng*) exemplifies a wall's role in military defence in ancient China. The remains of the Great Wall extends 21196.18 kilometres (National Cultural Heritage Administration, 2016). In the Chinese language, 城 (*chéng*) means both wall and city (Hui, 2011, p. 214). In ancient China, a wall 城 (*chéng*) surrounding where people live was first built as a defence force against the outsiders, a city (市, *shì*) was later developed inside the outer defence wall (Shang, 2015, p. 65).

In fact, the aforementioned actual walls obstruct the interactions and alienate people. The Great Wall was built to keep Huns and other non-Chinese away (Evans, 2006, p. 7). The tangible forms of isolation may entail government policies too. For instance, the Closing-door (闭关锁国, bì guān suǒ guó) policy of the Qing Dynasty shut China's connection with the world (Chang, 2001, p. 50). Therefore, the Closing-door policy (闭关锁国, bì guān suǒ guó), together with the Great Wall (长城, cháng chéng), (四合院, sì hé yuàn), and (故宫, gù gōng) are actual walls to alienate people in Chinese society. In other words, these walls are the concrete forms of the invisible walls of the wall theory.

It seems that the presence of visible walls is prominent in Chinese society; however, it should be noted that the *visible wall* in wall theory refers to Chinese perceptions of the visible boundaries which emerge in social interactions. The terms in this research that are related to the wall theory, the visible and invisible wall are used metaphorically.

Table 1

The Hypothesised Presence of the Visible and Invisible Wall in China and Hungary

	China	Hungary
The visible wall	no	yes
The invisible wall	yes	no

Note. The presence of the visible wall and invisible wall in Chinese and Hungarian culture is hypothesised.

The different notions of a *visible wall* and an *invisible wall* in Chinese and Hungarian culture has resulted in various intercultural conflicts. Coming from a culture which has a fuzzy notion about physical, spatial boundaries, a Chinese immigrant has encountered conflicts deriving from the rigid notion of the *visible wall* in Hungary without knowing the cause of the conflict. Moreover, Chinese immigrants

are likely to set up invisible walls because they have been influenced by the notion of invisible walls in China culture.

The third hypothesis studies the Chinese male and female experience in Hungary based on their educational background and employment status. The LIWC (Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count) has been used to provide quantitative analysis about the linguistic differences between Chinese male and female narratives. In addition, the discourse of intercultural conflicts regarding gender difference has been discussed further.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

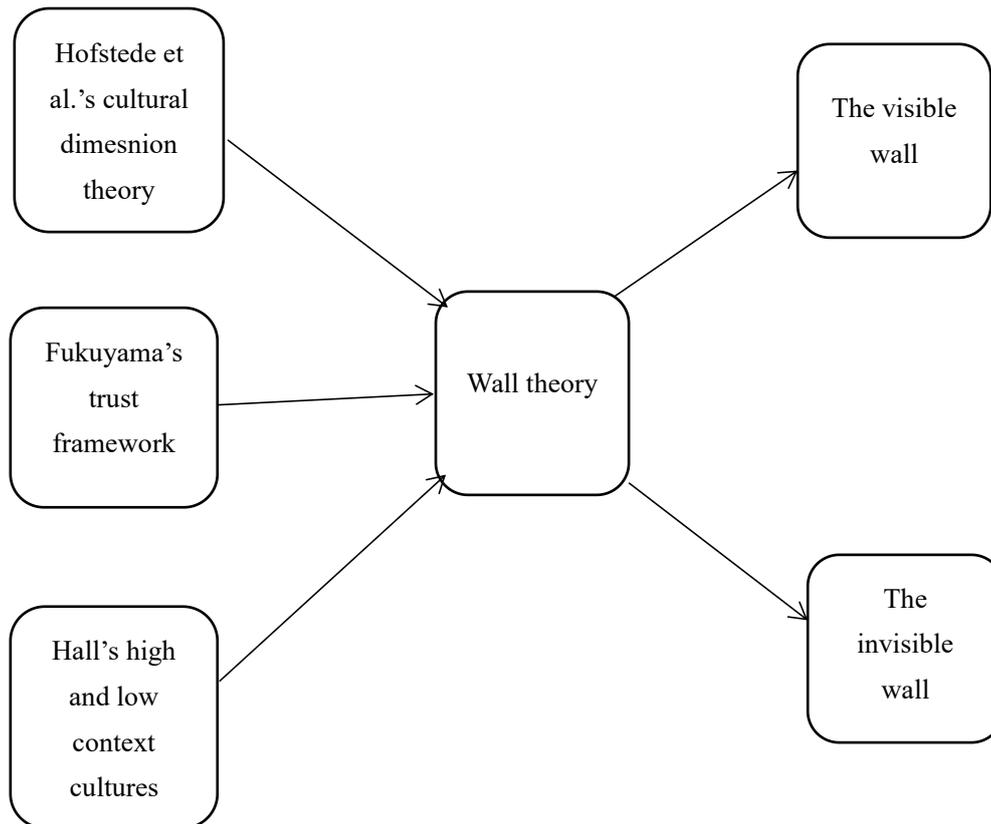
The thesis consists of seven parts. Chapter one introduces the topic under investigation and provides a brief overview of the methodology, hypotheses, and structure of the research. The previous empirical research concerning Chinese immigrants has been illustrated in Chapter two. Chapter three presents the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter four elaborates further on the research method, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter five starts with a preliminary analysis of emerging problems that Chinese immigrants have experienced in Hungary; furthermore, the results concerning culture have substantiated Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimension theory.

Drawing from Fukuyama's framework of trust and Hall's framework of proxemics high and low-context culture, the *wall theory* has been proposed in Chapter five, which compares the notion of a *visible wall* (tangible boundaries) and an *invisible wall* (intangible boundaries) in Hungarian and Chinese society. The *wall theory* derives from empirical data and attempts to conceptualise the cultural difference between China and Hungary. It identifies the different perceptions towards tangible boundaries and intangible boundaries in Chinese and Hungarian culture, thus predicting the cause of potential intercultural conflicts when these two cultures have contact. The *wall theory* is proposed as a complementary concept to contribute to the

current knowledge of cultural dimensions besides the six cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede et al (2010). Figure 1 illustrate the conceptual framework of the wall theory.

Figure 1

The Conceptual Framework of The Wall Theory



Following the wall theory, the linguistic features of Chinese male and female speech were examined using the LIWC. The results corroborate previous studies in gender linguistics that females talk more about emotions and feelings; additionally, this research investigates the gender differences within two variables: educational background (tertiary level vs. secondary level), and employment status (employed vs. inactive). Both quantitative and qualitative data had suggested that the language wall is a common problem for both males and females. Moreover, the language wall correlates with educational background regardless of gender. Namely, Chinese

immigrants with a higher educational background are more likely to encounter more language wall, although this does not suggest they have insufficient language skills. In fact, their more frequent experience of language wall is due to their active interactions with the locals. In contrast, Chinese residents with an inadequate Hungarian language skill experience less language wall because they tend to interact with other Chinese immigrants.

The significance of cultural proficiency has been emphasised among Chinese immigrants. Though many Chinese immigrants in Hungary speak fluent Hungarian, they lack the cultural knowledge to understand the unique nuances in Hungarian. Hence, insufficient cultural knowledge is likely to instigate misunderstandings and conflicts.

Following the discussions in Chapter five, Chapter six reflects on the limitations of the research. For instance, the limited sample size and validity of the hypothesis have been addressed. Future research directions concerning this topic were proposed. Conclusions in Chapter seven summarise the main findings of this research, and it follows pedagogical implications collected from interviewees' experiences of living in Hungary.

2. Literature Review of the Research about Chinese Immigrants in Hungary

There were three waves of immigration from China to Hungary since the late 1980s. The first wave of Chinese immigrants was in the early 1990s in the retail industry. The second wave occurred between 1995-2005 when many Chinese came to Hungary for opportunities in the wholesale business. The most recent wave of Chinese immigrants came after the 2010s. Chinese immigrants have obtained resident permits by investing in the Hungarian residence bond program. Also, a large number of Chinese immigrants have moved to Hungary through family ties. Most of the Chinese immigrants have nuclear or extended family members in Hungary. It is not uncommon that people from the same village in China have immigrated to Europe; thus, their relatives are scattered around in different European cities. Although the Chinese immigrants live outside of China, they have close contact with family members and their culture of origin.

Nyíri (2005) investigated the Chinese presence in Hungary from their history to recreation and leisure. Starting from 1987, the Chinese have made their way to the Soviet Far East and Siberia to Hungary for economic opportunities. From 1989, the same Chinese traders came to Hungary through the Soviet Union. Regardless of their backgrounds in China, the Chinese immigrants started their own businesses such as restaurants, wholesale, and import and export firms as soon as they settled in Hungary (Nie & Linda, 1993). The Chinese immigrants did not stay in one place; instead, they moved from one place to another for business opportunities. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many more Chinese moved from Russia to Hungary. Altogether, a large number of Chinese have immigrated to Hungary between 1989 and 1991 from various provinces in China (Nyíri, 2007).

A few factors influenced the substantial increase in migration to Eastern Europe in 1989. Firstly, the Chinese, who had planned to migrate, were eager to secure an alternative due to economic reforms in China in the 1990s. Secondly, the low economic performance between 1989 to 1991 had affected workers from

state-owned companies to the private sector. Thirdly, many Chinese people were attracted by the success stories of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Fourthly, it was less restrictive for the Chinese to go to Hungary due to the visa agreement between China and Hungary which was in effect from 1989 to 1992. When Hungary introduced strict visa requirements for Chinese immigrants in 1992, many Chinese immigrants moved to the Czech Republic, Romania, and other Eastern European countries (Nyíri, 2007).

For many Chinese immigrants who had come to Hungary in the 1990s, Hungary was not the final destination. Nearly 60 percent of the Chinese immigrants claimed they had migrated to Hungary for a better living, whereas 30 percent of them hoped to move to another country, and only 10 percent of them came to Hungary to trade and had no intention of settling in Hungary (Nie & Linda, 1993). Hungary was initially a stepping stone before they moved to Western European countries and North America. Nyíri (2005) also pointed out that the Chinese in Hungary have little interest in becoming Hungarian citizens. One possible hindrance for Chinese immigrants to acquire Hungarian citizenship is the unitary system of Chinese nationality which only recognises single nationality (Hu, 2020, p. 163). Three interviewees have expressed their concern at losing Chinese nationality if they become Hungarian citizens. Consequently, few Chinese residents are willing to settle in Hungary for the long-term.

The estimated number of Chinese entering Hungary increased from a few dozen to around 40,000 from 1989 to 1991 (Nyíri, 2007). By 1993, the number of Chinese immigrants in Hungary was between 3,000 to 10,000 (Nie & Linda, 1993). There are 12,000 Chinese who obtained a resident's permit in Hungary in the mid-2000s (Nyíri, 2007). According to the data in 2016, the Chinese population in Hungary was 15,454 (Vukovich, 2018).

Among Chinese immigrants, gender ratio indicated that 35 percent of immigrants were female, and 65 percent of the Chinese immigrants were male (Nyíri,

2007). Most of the incoming Chinese immigrants were single in their 20s and 30s. The motivations for a Chinese female to migrate to Hungary varied. Most Chinese women came with their partners or followed after their partners after the men had settled into a stable life in Hungary. It was considered risky to move to a new country with one's entire family without knowing future prospects (Nie & Linda, 1993). However, many women migrated on their own due to family pressure or bad marriages. The gender separation is not salient in business, as Chinese men and women share the work in the markets. Typically, Chinese women deal with finance and wholesale, and men manage the supplies from China (Nyíri, 2007).

Most Chinese immigrants in Hungary are *huaqiao* (华侨), who hold Chinese citizenship. According to Kriszt and Hidasi (2009), Chinese living abroad can be categorised into four groups that sometimes overlap: *qiáoxiāng* (侨乡), guest-workers, *huáqiáo* (华侨), and *huárén* (华人). *Qiáoxiāng* (侨乡) is a monoculture ethnic group with high mobility, "An ethnic group is defined by shared history, ancestry, geography, language, and physical characteristics" (Lindsey, R. B., Nuri-Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, D. B., 2018, p. 13). Thus, a *qiáoxiāng* (侨乡) is formed based on common cultural heritage and language and other salient features which identify one ethnic group from another. Guest workers come back to China when the employment contract with the receiving country terminates. *Huáqiáo* (华侨) are Chinese who still hold Chinese citizenship and have strong ties to China. *Huaren* (华人) are Chinese who have obtained foreign citizenship. Most of the Chinese immigrants in Hungary are *huáqiáo* (华侨), and they belong to *qiáoxiāng* (侨乡) because many of them come from the same region in China. A shared cultural background becomes an essential part to form a *qiáoxiāng* (侨乡) outside of China.

Many Chinese immigrants in Hungary are from the same region in China, yet there is a diverse background regarding Chinese immigrants' origin. Most Chinese immigrants come from Beijing (北京), Harbin(哈尔滨), Liaoning (辽宁), Shanghai (上海), and Zhejiang (浙江) (Nie & Linda, 1993). Chinese immigrants who come

from the same region in China refer to each other as *lǎo xiāng* (老乡). *Lǎo xiāng* (老乡) entails a nostalgic sentiment with the homeland. Four criteria in the *lǎo xiāng* (老乡) phenomenon demonstrate the bond with people from the same geographical region: (a) mutual regional recognition; (b) similar language or culture; (c) societal support to belong; (d) shared regional cultural consensus. Among the four criteria, a shared regional consensus is essential for regarding another immigrant as *lǎo xiāng* (老乡) (Jiang, 2013).

Chinese tend to associate with a person from the same region. For instance, when a Chinese person is being asked about where he or she comes from, the response is likely to be drawn from a larger provincial scale rather than being narrowed down to a village. This indicates the region-centred mindset among Chinese immigrants who distinguish themselves based on their native place of origin (Jiang, 2013). Native origin place is a strong bond among Chinese in Hungary. For example, native place functions as a tie for migrants from the Wenzhou (温州) area to expand their business and build connections (Nyíri, 2007).

Hence, Chinese immigrants in Hungary associate themselves with two identities. The first identity is Chinese which is a shared national identity, and the second identity is based on the native place in China. The shared regional dialect bonds Chinese immigrants from the same region. The regional identity has been distinguished among Chinese in order to build relationships (Jiang, 2013). Furthermore, there is a subtle division among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Primarily among less-educated southern Chinese who work in the market and better-educated northern Chinese who work in wholesale or import-export business (Nyíri, 2007).

The notion of *lǎo xiāng* (老乡), therefore, has become an emotional bond when Chinese immigrants are in a culturally unfamiliar environment. *Lǎo xiāng* (老乡) has created a social circle where Chinese immigrants establish relationships and maintain their regional identity. For example, an association “*Qīngtián tóng xiāng huì*” (青田

同乡会) was founded for Chinese who came from *Qīngtián* (青田), China. Similar associations based on members' place of origin are 瑞安同乡会(*Ruì ān tóng xiāng huì*), 福清同乡会(*Fú qīng tóng xiāng huì*), 福建同乡会(*Fú jiàn tóng xiāng huì*).

Based on their native origin, Chinese immigrants have established several organisations to promote Chinese culture in the host country and maintain a political connection with mainland China. For example, the HCA (Hungarian Chinese Association, 匈牙利华人联合会, Magyarországi Kínaiak Egyesülete) organised a demonstration when NATO bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999 in an act of solidarity. The incident was strongly condemned by the Chinese government and instigated protests in China as well (Zhou, 1999). The celebration of the Spring Festival is organised in Hungary each year to express sentiment towards the motherland and present an image of China in the host society (Nyíri, 2007).

Apart from the establishment of HCA, Chinese migrants from Zhejiang (浙江), Beijing (北京), Shanghai (上海), and the northern part of China have founded local organisations in Hungary (Nyíri, 2005). The organisations are the liaisons with the corresponding regions in China in order to gain economic or political benefits. Homeland politics are essential to Chinese immigrants in Hungary because most Chinese immigrants rely on capital and goods from China. Thus, having a good relationship with mainland politics is beneficial to their transnational business. For example, many Chinese immigrants who came to Hungary were previously employed by Chinese export companies. They had been sent to Hungary to expand the market in Eastern European countries. The company had a local branch office in Hungary to receive a stable goods supply and financial support from China (Nyíri, 2007).

In addition to the close cooperation with business in China, the exchange of business information among Chinese immigrants was another factor in business success in Hungary. However, in the early 1990s, Chinese immigrants had limited access to information due to the limitations of technology and language skills. Consequently, information about business trends and immigration regulations were

communicated among the Chinese immigrants primarily in person (Nie & Linda, 1993). Nevertheless, inadequate technology resources did not affect the fast development of wholesale business, and Hungary soon became a wholesale centre which attracted distributors from across central Eastern European countries with low-priced products in the early 1990s (Nyíri, 2007).

The peak of the retail business started at the beginning of the 1990s, yet the booming market sales did not last long because the market was full. Nevertheless, Hungary remained a profitable place until the mid-1990s (Nyíri, 2007). As of now in 2019, the Chinese market has changed significantly. Price and scarcity were the competitive advantages in the 1990s, however, the demand for inexpensive goods has declined with the development of the Hungarian economy and living standards. Chinese business people started to focus more on quality goods. For example, customised products from Chinese factories became popular. Trade fairs were another alternative for acquiring the latest business information and trends. Furthermore, Chinese immigrants expanded their business to South America and the African market through family and friends' network to maximise profits and minimise risks. A global business network allowed them to mobilise goods flexibly according to the season and market demands. For example, if products experienced low sales or customs issues in one country, the products could be sent to another country (Nyíri, 2007). Also, many Chinese companies made efforts to attract Hungarian customers to increase sales. For example, a few Chinese companies actively organised and sponsored sports events to gain more exposure to Hungarian society.

Not only has the market changed, but the communication methods have also become faster and more convenient. For example, *wēixìn* (微信, WeChat) is a popular Chinese social network application which has changed the ways Chinese immigrants acquire information. There are many groups on *wēixìn* (微信, WeChat) based on professions or interests. For example, Chinese buyers in Hungary form a group on *wēixìn* (微信, WeChat) to exchange information about price, logistics, taxes, etc.

Many Chinese businesses in Hungary advertise their services through its wēixìn (微信, WeChat) page to Chinese immigrants in Hungary; wēixìn (微信, WeChat) has become a platform for Chinese immigrants to share and find information about Chinese-speaking services in Hungary.

Many Chinese-speaking services can be found in Budapest Chinatown (布达佩斯唐人街, bù dá pèi sī táng rén jiē) located in the 10th district of Budapest, which has authentic Chinese restaurants, barbecues, and late-night karaoke. Previously, these services were scattered in the city, or located in the vicinity of the Four Tigers Market (四虎市场, sì hǔ shì chǎng). Nowadays, Budapest Chinatown has become a centre for Chinese shops and services. The map (see Appendix C) highlights 14 Chinese restaurants (中餐馆, zhōng cān guǎn), hair salons (美发, měi fà), foot massage parlours (足疗, zú liáo), manicure salons (美甲, měi jiǎ), Chinese supermarkets (中国超市, zhōng guó chāo shì), pastry shops (甜品店, tián pǐn diàn), glasses shop (眼镜店, yǎn jìng diàn), and KTV. Also, The Asian centre in the 15th district in Budapest is another hub where many Asian (Chinese and Vietnamese) shops can be found. These clusters of Chinese businesses in 10th and 15th district in Budapest are not classic Chinatowns because Chinese people do not reside there. Chinese residents in Budapest primarily go there to work. The growing number of Chinese services mainly cater to Chinese immigrants in Hungary, and they benefit from the convenience of these services. On the other hand, these Chinese speaking services have, inadvertently, reduced the social interactions between Chinese residents and Hungarians.

In fact, the isolation from the host society is a prevalent phenomenon among Chinese immigrants living in Central and Eastern Europe (Liu, 2017). Liu (2017) conducted a survey study of the isolation of Chinese immigrants in Bulgaria, Croatia, and Hungary. Her results suggested the following causes for the isolation phenomenon:

The first is that the Chinese do not need to come out of their community and interact regularly with the locals. The second is that the Chinese do not want

to come out of their isolation, and third, the Chinese cannot engage meaningfully with the locals” (Liu, 2017, p. 43).

Liu has adopted the survey to inquire and compare the isolation phenomenon in three Eastern European countries. Her research has contributed to the understanding of the reasons for seemingly isolated Chinese immigrants in Bulgaria, Croatia, and Hungary. Moreover, Liu noted that Chinese immigrants in Hungary are least likely to adopt an isolation strategy because of their need to engage in social interactions with the locals (2017, p. 31); Building on Liu’s conclusion that Chinese immigrants in Hungary are more prone to interact with the locals, a closer examination of the intercultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary may uncover insightful perspectives on this insufficiently researched topic.

Different research methods have been applied among the previous studies regarding the Chinese immigrants in Hungary. For instance, Nyíri (2007) primarily utilized ethnographic data to elucidate the history and present of Chinese immigrants in Eastern Europe. Vukovich (2018) provided statistical data on Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Liu (2017) used a survey to explore the reasons behind isolation phenomenon among Chinese immigrants in Bulgaria, Croatia, and Hungary. However, the survey approach itself is unable to present an in-depth elaboration on the life experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Hence, a qualitative approach to investigate the life of Chinese immigrants may further contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the Chinese community in Hungary.

3. Theoretical Framework of the Present Research

Although previous studies have studied the presence of Chinese immigrants in Hungary, no available data has been devoted solely to the intercultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. In addition, the fascination with unveiling the cultural differences between China and Hungary has inspired this research. To capture the intercultural experiences of Chinese immigrants, it is important to draw from both intercultural studies, as well as relevant disciplines on culture and discourse. Hence, Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimension theory guides the theoretical framework of this study because the cultural dimension theory allows researchers to compare the cultural differences of two countries based on their cultural index (see 3.1.1). A qualitative study of cultural differences is likely to provide insightful findings. Additionally, relevant theories concerning trust, identity, discourse, acculturation, and cultural proficiency were considered to present a comprehensive analysis of the intercultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. It is hoped that with this multidisciplinary approach, it will be possible to illustrate the nuances of cultural differences that Chinese residents have encountered in Hungary.

3.1 Culture

The word *culture* was initially derived from “cultivation”, as in agriculture. The meaning was extended to represent the refinement of mind and taste in the French language in the 18th century (Jahoda, 2012). According to Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952, p. 9), the origin of the modern meaning of the word *culture* in the English language can be dated back to 1871 when Edward Tylor proposed the definition of culture, “Culture or civilisation ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, and any other capacities acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1958, p. 1). This definition has given rise to various definitions of culture.

Kroeber and Kluckhohn categorised seven features regarding the definitions of culture: descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural genetic, and

incomplete definitions. Among the seven features, normative definitions emphasise rules, ideas, values, and behaviour. Psychological definitions perceive culture as a problem-solving device. Genetic definitions illustrate culture as ideas, symbols, or artefacts (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952, p. 40). Their definition of culture has both included tangible objects and intangible concepts, such as thoughts and emotions, and these categories have elucidated a comprehensive understanding of culture.

The recent development of definitions of culture has taken social settings into consideration. Matsumoto (2007) has elucidated human culture to mean:

A unique meaning and information system, shared by a group and transmitted across generations, that allows the group to meet basic needs of survival, coordinate socially to achieve a viable existence, transmit social behaviour, pursue happiness and well-being, and derive meaning from life. (p. 1293)

Matsumoto suggested culture as human interactions within members of a group. Similarly, Hofstede et al. (2010) perceived culture as social behaviours of a group which have been developed by members in social interactions. Additionally, culture is a collective phenomenon shared and learned by its members, “It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 6); in his view, culture not only is a social phenomenon but also entails salient characteristics of a group.

In Chinese, the definition of culture (文, wén) entails “a genuinely historical phenomenon, changing with times and therefore remaining continuously meaningful in subsequent ages and to different social orders” (Kern, 2001, p. 43). The concept of wén (文, culture), therefore, has been constructed by incorporating new meanings derived from the contexts to its original generic definition (Kern, 2001, p. 44). For instance, wén huà (文化) is associated with being knowledgeable, educated, or refined nowadays. The meanings of several words have been developed on the basis of the meaning of wén (文, culture). For instance, a person who is méi yǒu wén huà (没有文

化) implies that one has not received much education. If a person has read many books and received a good education, then he or she is perceived as wén huà shuǐ píng gāo (文化水平高). Not only has the term wén huà (文化, culture) entered into everyday social life, it also entails social process reflecting human civilisation. Many terms related to social activities have included wén huà (文化, culture). For instance, wén huà huó dòng (文化活动, cultural activities), wén huà xiāo fèi (文化消费, cultural consumption), and wén huà jiāo liú (文化交流, cultural exchange) (He & Zhang, 2006). Therefore, culture in a Chinese context tends to be associated with knowledge and refinement.

A different view on culture illustrates the relationship between human and nature in a Chinese context. Li (2016) contends: “culture is a process of humanisation, both the humanisation of the world and the man itself (civilisation)” (p. 15). On the one hand, nature exists regardless of humans’ existence. On the other hand, nature has been humanised from a human’s perspective. Therefore, “culture is a man-made state that starts from nature and transcends it” (Li, 2016, p. 16). To illustrate, the raw stones are natural objects, yet the carved, polished stones are embodied with cultural meanings (Li, 2016, p. 17). Li presented the concept of culture by illustrating the relationship between human and nature. According to Li (2016), culture is derived from nature, which embodies cultural significance by humanisation. Therefore, the definition of culture in the Chinese context and Western context have both accentuated the involvement of humanity in the definition of culture.

Though various definitions of culture were proposed over the last 150 years, scholars have yet to agree on a definition of culture. However, an alternative approach to defining culture focuses on the internal and external features in culture. Jahoda (2012) identified three groups of definitions of culture drawn from the culture studies: (a) culture as external; (b) culture as internal, or (c) both internal and external; groups of several definitions. In line with Jahoda’s classification, Cole and Parker (2011) note that culture is a dynamic external environment which has been shaped by previous

generations. Culture is first internalised through shared feeling, common sense, behaviours, which later externalise as symbols, icons, and institutions. For instance, language, art, or other physical forms have been derived from culture which has become the medium for human interactions. The shared cultural knowledge has affective, cognitive, and behavioural implications once it has been activated (Hong, 2009). A more elaborate account of culture entails “all shared characteristics of human description, including age, gender, geography, ancestry, language, history, sexual orientation, faith, and physical ability, as well as occupation and affiliation” (Lindsey et al., 2018, p. 13).

In search of the appropriate definition of culture, Jahoda further scrutinised the studies with definitions of culture that fall under three classifications, and he suggested researchers should “use the term without seeking to define it ” (Jahoda, 2012, p. 300).

In spite of the definition of culture remaining debatable, the themes of culture definition may be categorised into seven categories: structure/pattern, function, process, product, refinement, power or ideology, and group membership (Faulkner, Baldwin, Lindsley, & Hecht, 2006, pp. 29-31). The sources of culture definitions in Faulkner et al.’s research represents culture definitions across disciplines after Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s work in 1952. They applied “purposive sampling” and “snowball sampling” (Faulkner et al., 2006, p. 28) so as to include a broader variety of definitions within each category. To illustrate, structure/pattern of culture focuses on the systematic relationships of elements; function emphasises the pragmatic aspect of culture; process views culture as constructed along with the social movement; the artefacts represent the tangible forms of culture; refinement refers to the elevation of intelligence, morality of humankind by culture; power or ideology stresses on the power accumulated from groups; group-membership entails culture with regard to the attachment or membership to a place or a group (Faulkner et al., 2006, pp. 29-31).

These seven categories have summarised the themes of the definition of

culture following Kroeber and Kluckhohn's work. However, not every theme correspond to the aforementioned definitions of culture proposed by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (Faulkner et al., 2006, p. 62). Given the wide-ranging definitions of culture, Faulkner et al. (2006) suggested it is more important to acknowledge and understand the diversity of the definition of culture than to assign a single definition to it.

3.1.1 Cultural Dimension Theory, High and Low context cultures, and Trust

Among the definitions of culture, membership of a group is a salient feature defining culture (Matsumoto, 2007; Hofstede et al., 2010; Lindsey et al., 2018; Faulkner et al., 2006). It is suggested that the iconic cultural attributes of a group account for the distinction of in-group and out-group members (Hofstede et al., 2010). In order to delineate the broad variations of culture among different groups. Hofstede et al. (2010) proposed six cultural dimensions which represent differences regarding particular cultures: power distance, individual vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term vs. short-term orientation, and indulgence and restraint.

Power distance refers to the "extent to which the less powerful members of the institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 61). The power distance suggests inequalities in a society where some people are more powerful than others. Few societies have truly achieved the ideal equal status through legal regulations. Power distance also implies the dependence relationships, for example, it is relatively easy to approach the boss in a small-power-distance workplace, whereas employees in a large-power-distance situation tend to have a greater dependence on the boss (Hofstede et al., 2010). Thus, the power distance suggests the hierarchy in different societies. A hierarchical society implies a greater power distance, whereas a nonhierarchical society values equality among members.

Language is an indicator which highlights the power distance in different cultures. Hofstede et al. (2010) highlight that there “seems to be a relationship between language and present-day mental software regarding power distance” (p. 82). The Romance-speaking countries, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Romania score medium to high in power distance. Germanic countries such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, and Sweden score low in power distance. Therefore, it is viable that the early structure in society has gradually become the optimal mental perception of a political or social system (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Individualism refers to a concept where “the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 92). The connection among people is relatively loose in individualistic societies. *Collectivism* is a cultural concept where “societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime, continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 92). The group interest overrides personal interest in collective societies; moreover, members abide by the rules in collective societies to maintain harmony.

Furthermore, *collectivism and individualism* correlate with the *power distance* dimension. Countries with high power distance scores have low scores in individualism, while countries with low power distance scores are more individualistic. Individualistic culture countries tend to be wealthier and have low power distance whereas most collectivist culture countries are developing countries. The state of an individualistic or collectivist society can be affected by economic development. For example, a fast-growing economy society is likely to shift to an individualistic culture (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Masculinity and femininity emphasise the differences within “socio-culturally determined roles” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 137). A masculine society is “when emotional gender roles are distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and

focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 140). In a feminine society, “Emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 140). The gender roles of women and men are less polarised in a feminine society; however, males and females are expected to adhere to their gender roles in a masculine society.

The gender roles are learned through socialisation in a society. Males and females learn behaviour patterns respectively which have become the social norms. For example, most women want male dominance in male-dominated societies (Hofstede et al., 2010). A survey of masculinity and femininity in Asian countries conducted by Wacoal indicated ambition, decisiveness, and liveliness were perceived as male traits in a masculine society, whereas caring and gentleness are primary female characteristics (as cited in Hofstede et al., 2010).

The ways people view gender roles in societies are the reflections of the values they subscribe to. “Culture is heavy with values, and values imply judgment” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 158). For example, a society with a high masculinity score has little tolerance towards homosexuality, whereas a strong feminine society is more likely to accept it (Hofstede et al., 2010).

The fourth dimension is *uncertainty avoidance* which entails “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 191). Expressive emotions, hand gestures, and raising voices are common in a high uncertainty avoidance culture, whereas feelings and emotions are likely to be concealed than shown in a weak uncertainty avoidance culture (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 196).

The degree of uncertainty avoidance culture varies among different cultures. A strong uncertainty avoidance culture considers “what is different is dangerous” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 201), whereas the weak uncertainty avoidance culture perceives “what is different is curious” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 201). The uncertainty

in a high uncertainty avoidance culture is perceived as a threat in contrast to the tolerance of uncertainty in a low uncertainty avoidance culture (Hofstede et al., 2010). The uncertainty avoidance index reflects a society's attitude's towards unorthodox behaviours, beliefs, etc.

The evidence of such a phenomenon in languages suggested an effort to reduce ambiguity in high uncertainty avoidance culture. For example, French has various ways to address *you*, such as *tu*, *vous* in order to “avoid ambiguity” (Coveney, 2003, p. 164; McWhorter, 2014); The second person pronouns in Hungarian are often accompanied by case markers and function as prepositions (e.g. *téged*, *beléd*, *rád*, *hozzád*, *nálad*) (Spencer & Stump, 2013, p. 1217). In contrast, languages used in low uncertainty tolerance cultures have fewer grammatical markers to express *you*. Countries which used to be part of the Roman Empire score high on uncertainty avoidance whereas Chinese-speaking countries score low on uncertainty avoidance. This suggests the concept of “government by law” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 232) in Roman-speaking countries, in comparison to the “government of man” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 232) in Chinese-speaking countries (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Indeed, the government of man has been considered a salient feature in Chinese-speaking countries. The ancient Chinese society has been considered a society ruled by man (Miao, 2010; Wang, 2010; Zhang, 2011). However, the implementation of law in Qin dynasty (221–206 BC) was an early attempt to the path of government by law (法治, *fǎ zhì*). However, in Chinese society, the poorly implemented law and authoritarian rule led to the fall of the Qin dynasty. From the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD), rule of man (人治, *rén zhì*) has become the primary approach, derived from Confucianism, to governing the country. In the meantime, legalism was introduced to complement the rule by man (人治, *rén zhì*) by enforcing the law in Chinese ancient society (Miao, 2010, pp. 19-20). The comprehensive implementation of the rule of law in Chinese modern society has taken place since 1978, which aims to establish a new system and reform an old system (Wang, 2010, p.

41). However, the modern implementation of the rule of law has inevitably encountered resistance from the ingrained belief of rule by man in Chinese traditional culture (Zhang, 2011). As pointed out by John K. Fairbank and Edwin O. Reischauer:

The main fact influencing China's modern transformation was that China's centre of gravity lay deep within. Her long history as the ancient centre of East Asia civilization had given her people an inborn sense of superiority to all outsiders. The inertia and persistence of traditional patterns and both material and intellectual self-sufficiency all made China comparatively resistant and unresponsive to the challenge of the West. (as cited in Zhang, 2011, p. 390)

The fact that the traditional Chinese culture resists the implementation of rule by law indicates its preference for uncertainty. Furthermore, the concept of rule by man implies that Chinese culture is more receptive to uncertainties as opposed to rigid regulations imposed by law. Therefore, the discussion about the rule by law and rule by man in a Chinese context boils down to the receptiveness of ambiguity and uncertainty in Chinese culture.

Whilst China scores low in uncertainty avoidance, it ranks high in long-term orientation deriving partly from Confucian teaching (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 238). *Long-term orientation* "stands for the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards – in particular, perseverance and thrift" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 239); short-term orientation is the "fostering of virtues related to past and present; in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of 'face,' and fulfilling social obligations" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 239). The short-term orientation cultures value the promptness in problem-solving solutions whereas long-term orientation cultures focus on the future implication of a solution (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Different working cultures are salient features among long-term orientation and short-term orientation cultures. Hard work and self-discipline are perceived as valuable traits in a long-term orientation culture whereas freedom and individual

rights are fundamental in a short-term orientation working culture (Hofstede et al., 2010).

The last cultural dimension is *indulgence versus restraint*. An indulgent culture tends to “allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 281). A restraint culture “reflects a conviction that such gratification needs to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 281).

Not only do the six cultural dimensions define various cultures, but these cultural dimensions have also demonstrated a patent correlation with national wealth. For example, wealthy countries have an individualistic culture and less power distance. Additionally, long-term and short-term orientation suggests the growth of wealth among different countries. The economy of Asian countries has benefited from a long-term orientation approach (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the cultural dimensions illustrate the similarity of cultural values among societies of similar cultural heritage. For example, China (20), Hong Kong (25), and Taiwan (17) share similar scores on the individualism index; additionally, the similarity of particular cultural values can be observed among countries with different cultural heritages. Both China (24) and Hungary (31) score low on the indulgence index. However, the rest of the cultural value index has suggested that Chinese and Hungarian cultures differ significantly despite the similarities in the indulgence index (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Figure 2

The Cultural Dimension Index between China and Hungary Based on Hofstede et al.'s (2010) study

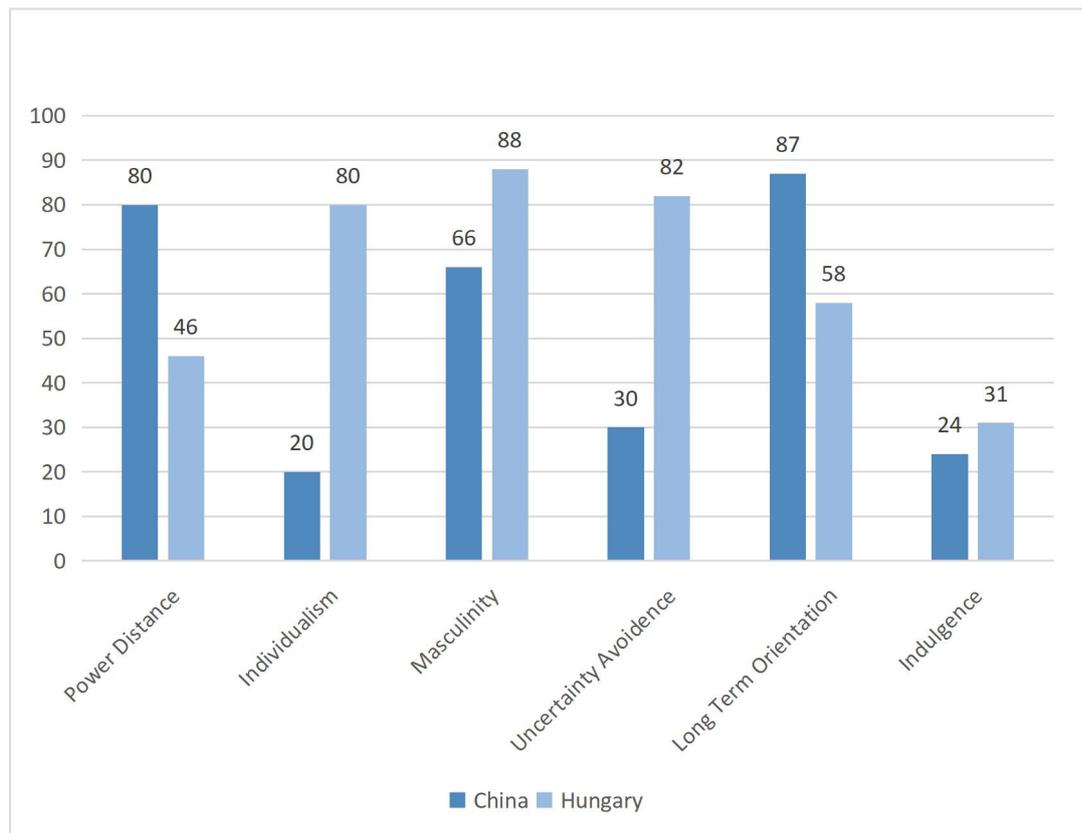


Figure 2 shows China ranks high on power distance and long-term orientation compared to Hungary. The high score in power distance indicates an unequal relationship between subordinates and superiors in Chinese culture. Long-term orientation indicates the Chinese are prone to a practical approach for the long-term interest. In contrast to Hungarian culture, China scores low in individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence vs. restraint index. The low score in individualism suggests that China is a more collective culture. The low score on uncertainty avoidance suggests that Chinese culture is more receptive to unknown situations. This tendency to uncertainty has been supported by the peculiar features of the Chinese language. Chinese is a highly contextual language. A speaker is less inclined to explicitly express their intention through words, but the listener is expected to decode the intentions or meanings behind the words; thus, the uncertainty in communication implies the relatively high level of tolerance towards uncertainty in Chinese culture, which is reflected in the Chinese language.

According to the culture dimensions index, China ranks higher in power

distance and long-term orientation whereas Hungary scores higher in individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence versus restraint. On the one hand, China has a higher power distance and tends to be more long-term thinking. On the other hand, Hungarian society is an individualistic and high uncertainty avoidance culture. Although both cultures share commonalities, such as the indulgence dimension, China and Hungary differ significantly in five other cultural dimensions. These cultural differences between the two cultures may lead to intercultural conflicts when people from two cultures meet. The differences in power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation may be the primary causes of intercultural conflicts between Chinese and Hungarians.

Whilst it is tempting to draw tentative conclusions about the potential causes of intercultural conflicts Chinese residents have experienced based on the comparison between Chinese and Hungary using Hofstede et al.'s six cultural dimensions, empirical evidence may further validate whether a qualitative analysis of cultural differences Chinese residents have encountered correspond to the index comparison between China and Hungary using Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimension theory.

As mentioned earlier, Hofstede et al. (2010) not only compare cultures across countries but also uncover the linguistic evidence associated with a particular cultural dimension. For instance, Romance-speaking countries rank high in power distance whereas Germanic countries rank low in power distance. People from high uncertainty avoidance cultures are more likely to use explicit linguistic forms to avoid ambiguity. These findings transcend the understanding of the connection between language and culture.

The features of the language were applied to delineate two prominent features across cultures. For instance, Hall described the distinct features of high and low-context cultures as *social orientation, commitment, responsibility, confrontation, communication, dealing with new situations* (as cited in Kim, Pan, & Park, 1998). *Social orientation* denotes that a high-context culture makes a distinction between an

insider and outsider, and the ties among people in a low-context culture are not as strong as in a high-context culture. *Commitment* entails the active involvement in a high-context culture has contributed to higher commitment in contrast to lower commitment level in a low-context culture.

Responsibility in a high-context culture has been assigned to authority, which is responsible for the actions of the subordinates. On the other hand, a low-context culture is inclined to diffuse the responsibility from authority (Hall, 1976). People in a high-context culture tend to avoid direct *confrontation* to maintain harmony and alliance among people, even at the cost of repressing oneself (Kim et al., 1998). Moreover, “The criticism is more subtle and verbal because of what is not being said and carries more meaning than what is said” (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 1990, p. 134). In contrast, direct and open confrontation is ubiquitous in low-context culture society (Hall, 1976).

Communication in high and low-context culture varies substantially. Messages are likely to be conveyed tacitly in a high-context culture communication. Thus, context should be taken into consideration to decipher the meaning. On the contrary, messages in low-context cultures contain explicit information through grammar codes. In a high-context culture, the interlocutor is expected to understand the meaning even if the speaker is vague and unspecific. However, the speaker is expected to be specific and precise in a low-context culture. When dealing with new situations, people in a low-context culture demonstrate remarkable creativity (Hall, 1976). People in a high-context culture “can be creative within their old system but have to move to the bottom of the context scale when dealing with anything new” (Kim et al., 1998, p. 512).

Hall’s concept of high and low-context cultures has been empirically validated among Chinese, Korean, and American cultures. Kim et al. (1998) developed a survey based on Hall’s view of high and low-context cultures. The results suggested that Chinese and Korean participants exhibited characteristics of a high-context culture.

They are more “socially oriented, more confrontation-avoiding, and have trouble dealing with new situations” (Kim et al., 1998, p. 507). American participants, on the other hand, possess the attributes of a low-context culture (Kim et al., 1998).

Furthermore, the concept of high and low context culture also indicates the trust in a society. Elahee and Minor investigated the negotiation behaviours of people from different cultures. Their results suggest that people from low-context cultures are more explicit in business negotiations, and they tend to “repose more trust” (Elahee & Minor, 2015, p. 104) on another party involved in a business negotiation (Elahee & Minor, 2015). This claim is supported by another study comparing the influence of culture on people’s trust behaviours. In the experiment, 40 pairs of Chinese and 40 pairs of American undergraduate students were assigned to perform a brainstorming task and a negotiation task within their group. The data suggests Chinese pairs (high-context culture) perceive a lower level of trust than American pairs (low context culture) (Zhang, 2007, pp. 1-2).

According to Fukuyama, “Trust is the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 26). The trust is established when members comply with the rules of a group. A high level of trust in a society allows organizations to expand and reduce costs because people abide by the ethical rule. In contrast, a society with low trust requires rules and regulations to function as trust (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 27).

The working culture in a high-trust society and low-trust society differs significantly. “A high-trust society can organise its workplace on a more flexible and group-oriented basis, with more responsibility delegated to lower levels of the organisation. Low-trust societies...must fence in and isolate their workers with a series of bureaucratic rules” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 31). The working culture in a low-trust society shares common features with familial cultures, such as China and Italy. As a result, the low trust in societies has restrained enterprises from expanding because the

family structured business model overrides the professional management approach (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 111). In sum, Fukuyama not only identified the absence of trust in familial societies, he also emphasized the role of trust in economic growth. However, he has yet to offer answers to develop and attain trust in a low trust society.

It seems the there is a correlation among Hofstede et al's cultural dimensions theory, Hall's high and low context culture, and Fukuyama's trust framework. A high context culture shares the features with low uncertainty avoidance culture and low trust culture, whereas a low context culture tends to be high uncertainty avoidance and high trust.

Table 2

The Possible Interrelationship among Three Frameworks

Hall's high and low context culture	Fukuyama's trust framework	Hofstede et al's cultural dimensions theory
High context culture	Low trust	Low uncertainty avoidance
Low context culture	High trust	High uncertainty avoidance

However, it should be noted that Table 2 only shows the tentative conceptualisation of the interrelationship of these three frameworks. Further empirical study on language and culture is required to support the claim.

In sum, Hofstede et al's cultural dimensions theory is considered to be appropriate to compare the cultural index between China and Hungary; on the one hand, the results from the comparison suggested the differences in power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, which imply the potential causes of intercultural conflicts that may derive from the discrepancies of two cultures.

3.1.2 Language, Culture, and Gender

The research in language and culture has expanded speech act realisation, conversation analysis, and frame analysis in the 80s and 90s. The speech act realisation research explores how requests and apologies are expressed in different cultures (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989). Hong (1996) studied the Chinese request strategies in three different power relations where participants were asked to make a request in three scenarios. Her study suggests social power relations and distance affect the degree of politeness. Namely, the degree of politeness is higher when an addresser has lower social status, whereas the degree of politeness is lower when the addresser has higher social status (Hong, 1996, pp. 129-135). Conversation analysis investigates the intention of the speakers. Although perceptions, memories, and cultural beliefs can be inferred from speakers, the cultural and historical backgrounds should be taken into consideration in conversation analysis (Moerman, 2010).

Recent research in language and culture has explored the dynamics of language in multicultural contexts. Canagarajah (1993) applied a critical ethnography approach to investigate the concept of code-switching in a secondary English class in Sri Lanka. The code-switching patterns indicate formal teaching has been conducted in English whereas Tamil is being used for interpersonal interactions; in addition, the Tamil language is not threatened by the presence of English. Namely, a multicultural society does not endanger the local culture; on the contrary, it allows people from different cultural backgrounds to negotiate and communicate views, identities, and beliefs.

The growing interest in linguistic anthropology has focused on beliefs, behaviour, and identity in a culture. Culture is perceived as a shared system of thoughts, behaviour, and perceptions. Even though a person moves to another culture, they retain the cultural heritage of their place of origin. One way to maintain a person's cultural heritage is by keeping their mother tongue. However, it remains

unknown to what extent linguistic signs reflect people's perceptions and beliefs (Kramersch, 2014).

One possible explanation of the relationship between language and thoughts is demonstrated by language relativity, which explores how language shapes the way we think. The strong version of language relativity suggests speakers are restricted by grammar and lexical structures. A more moderate version suggests that language reflects social reality. Linguistic signs have been viewed as semiotic codes of culture, thoughts, and society. The social reality is constructed through languages within a group; consequently, different languages constitute different realities (Kramersch, 2014).

Following the research in language relativity, Boroditsky (2001) compared the concept of time in English and Mandarin speakers. Mandarin speakers think about time vertically whereas English speakers think about time horizontally. This implies a person's cognitive process has been shaped by his or her native language. The native language influence also restricts one's view of the world, just as Mandarin and English speakers conceptualise time differently (Boroditsky, 2001).

However, Boroditsky's claim faced criticisms because there was no significant difference with regard to the reaction time of the experiment as the different reaction times between English and Mandarin speakers is within milliseconds (McWhorter, 2014). Boroditsky proposed an interesting perspective to conceptualise how one's native language can shape a person's thinking. However, her data seems insufficient to support the claim that English and Mandarin speakers perceive time differently or language shapes thinking in a broader sense.

The role of language in shaping thinking has not been identified or defined adequately, but language may purposefully transfer cultural nuances. For example, many Chinese products have borrowed westernised names to present a better public image. One Chinese fast food chain restaurant *xiāng cūn jī* (乡村基) shares a similar phonetic feature with the American fast food restaurant *kěn dé jī* (肯德基, KFC). The

Chinese fast food restaurant aims to benefit from and transfer KFC's positive public image to its brand by using a similar name; it hopes that the Chinese customers associate *xiāng cūn jī* (乡村基) with the appealing American fast food brand KFC.

The association of language may be cultural, political, or emotional, and its impact should not be overlooked. For example, the debate surrounding abortion is summarised as a discussion between pro-life or pro-choice. As a result, the argument has been framed in favour of people who oppose abortion, i.e., pro-life, because the term pro-life immediately demonises people who support abortion rights. Language does not change meaning itself, but it can be utilised to provoke emotions in political discourse (Kramersch, 2014).

Therefore, McWhorter (2014) further recommended cognitive linguistic researchers to consider the cultural background of a language instead of focusing solely on the notion that language influence people to think in a particular way. As he stated, "Language is a part of culture, and to speak, to express yourself, is what it is to *be*" (McWhorter, 2014, p. 31). Hence, the way a person utilises language reveals their cultural attributes and heritage.

In light of McWhorter's perspective on language and culture, the current research on Chinese residents attempts to illustrate the cultural aspects of intercultural conflicts which emerge from empirical data, and whether gender is a salient feature in intercultural conflicts.

The earliest classification of gender was found among the anatomically modern humans of Upper Palaeolithic between 90,000 and 10,000 years BP. Gender was distinguished as "a socially charged symbolic form of sexual personae, carrying with it a host of socially prescribed rules of 'proper' behaviour, privilege, power and status" (Dobres, 2004, p. 212). Further evidence has confirmed the gender division in labour division about 12,000 years ago. However, scholars have yet to uncover how gender was constructed and sustained in that period (Dobres, 2004).

Around 4000 BCE, gender was institutionalised to prestige and power (Dobres, 2004). “The shift from hunting and gathering to agriculture had gradually ended a system of considerable equality between men and women” (Stearns, 2000, p. 11). Initially, the birth rate was low, and both men and women shared the same load of work. The birth rate gradually increased because human labour became crucial in agricultural activities. Therefore, pregnancy and childcare redefined the role of women as caregivers, thus contributing to the emergence of patriarchy. The rise of patriarchal societies reinforced the image of male dominance and female inferiority in societies. Such perception further resulted in a polarised view of men and women in society (Stearns, 2000).

According to West and Zimmerman (1987), gender is not what a person is, but what a person does or how they interact with others. In the 1960s and 1970s, gender had been introduced as an achieved status formed by psychological, cultural, and social means, as opposed to the biological notion of sex. If a person is a female biologically, her gender is female by default. In addition, gender is a social norm which is appropriated to one's sex category. Gender classification is derived from the sex categories, which have subsequently influenced the representation of gender in culture; thus, when we perform gender identities in the form of attributes, we also reinforce the perception of being male and female in society (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

The concept of gender has been formulated by people's perception of men and women. For example, women are perceived as submissive, whereas men are seen as dominant. Also, gender perceptions have created a social context where men are stronger, and women are weaker. As Eckert (1989) pointed out, “Femininity is a culturally defined form of mitigation or denial of power, whereas masculinity is the affirmation of power” (p. 257). These notions slowly became social norms and attached to female and male respectively. Subsequently, men and women are inclined to perform gender identities as prescribed by these two polarised concepts (West &

Zimmerman, 1987).

The contrasting roles of male and female have been represented in languages. R. Lakoff and R. T. Lakoff (2004) have highlighted the discrepancies of language usage in men's and women's speech. Women use words which can be found exclusively in women's speech, and women use much more precise and polite speech forms than men. For example, women use colour terms such as beige, mauve; they also use more "meaningless" words like "goodness," "oh dear" in comparison to "damn" or "shit" in men's speech. Tag questions are another feature in the female language. In addition, hedges such as "I guess," "I think" and the use of "so" are more common in women's speech (R. Lakoff & R. T. Lakoff, 2004). These are the salient features that distinguish women's speech from men's speech.

Furthermore, language reflects the culture in a society which holds different expectations regarding men and women's language and behaviour. Men's speech style has been perceived as proper and standard whereas women's speech is perceived as vague and unclear. Men focus on factual information whereas women prefer politeness over straightforwardness. Women use hedges and tag questions to show politeness, yet these features are considered ambiguous and irrelevant. Women's language appears to be more polite because people have a higher expectation towards women than men (R. Lakoff & R. T. Lakoff, 2004).

Lakoff's hypothesis, regarding whether the female register would be more frequent in women's speech than in men's speech, and whether status would affect the use of the female register, has been tested by Crosby and Nyquist. They found that the female register encompasses the female role in society. Both men's and women's languages contain female register features. However, women use the female register more frequently than men. Also, they noted that the lower status of women is not reflected in women's speech (Crosby & Nyquist, 1977).

Lakoff's work has provided a fresh perspective on female speech in the 1970s, yet her analysis process has come under scrutiny because the data was gathered from

the author's own experience. Also, the data analysis process was based on a subjective presumption that women's language was different from men's language, and the social context has been neglected in the analysis. Moreover, Lakoff's research reinforces the dichotomy of a binary distinction concerning gender and language in society (Bing & Bergvall, 1996). Nevertheless, Lakoff's work has addressed the nuance in women's language, yet additional empirical research is necessary to decode the linguistic difference between women's and men's speech.

In contrast to the binary concept of gender in previous studies, the concept of indexicality has been proposed to suggest "a process by which particular ways of using language point towards, or indicate, culturally recognisable identities" (Jones, 2016, pp. 213-214). Therefore, gender is constructed through language to signal a specific identity.

Drawing on major trends in gender and language research, Cameron identified the two approaches in gender and language studies: modern feminist approach and postmodern feminist approach. (Cameron, 2005, p. 484). According to Cameron, the modern feminist approach perceives the concept of gender is derived from sex, although it is different from the sex. This approach focuses on delineating the linguistic differences between women's and men's speech. In contrast, the postmodern feminist approach challenges the distinction between sex and gender. The formulation of gender identities is perceived as an ongoing process. Research considers the potential factors affecting the construction of gender identities, such as similarities and differences between in-group and out-group members. The postmodern feminist approach considers that masculinities and femininities are identified in particular contexts based on the community of practise (CoP). CoP refers to when both men and women engage in the same activity, and women's and men's linguistic features are closely related to the activities they engage in (Cameron, 2005, p. 484). "The constraints and possibilities available to women and men are localized, context-dependent, and as such always a matter for local investigation" (Cameron,

2005, p. 489). Thus, the postmodern feminist approach transcends the studies of women's and men's speech to explore the discourse and contexts behind women's and men's linguistic differences.

The postmodern feminist approach provides a holistic view of linguistic differences of women's and men's language based on contexts. However, the grammar features of some language have overtly marked masculinity and femininity in spite of the influence of context. "The sexes are represented in some way in all language systems" (Stahlberg, Braun, Irmen, & Sczesny, 2007, p. 163). The grammatical gender markings have contributed and reinforced the beliefs about men and women in grammatical gender languages whereas genderless languages denote sex differences in lexical meanings. Nouns are assigned with masculine and feminine gender in grammatical gender languages, such as German and Spanish. The English language does not contain grammatical gender markings, but the dependent forms of personal pronouns identify males and females. Genderless languages (e.g., Chinese, Turkish) contain no marked gender differences in their grammatical system (Stahlberg et al., 2007).

Although Chinese has no gender markings regarding masculine and feminine, the binary concept of male and female is ingrained in Chinese culture. To illustrate, the male is associated with positive connotations whereas the female entails the opposite of male associations. Du (1995) noted that the gender classification in Chinese culture originated from *Zhōuyì* (周易, *Book of Changes*), known as *Yìjīng* (易经), and *Shàngshū* (尚书, *Book of Documents*, also known as *Shūjīng* 书经) (as cited in Nyitray, 2004, p. 274). By the time of the Western Zhou dynasty (cca. 1045–771 BCE), *The Book of Changes* introduced binary concepts such as "inner and outer, principal and subordinate, noble and humble, and ruler and minister" (Nyitray, 2004, p. 274).

The contrasting concepts have laid the foundation of *yīn* (阴) and *yáng* (阳) regarding gender classification in Chinese culture. The concepts of *yīn* (阴) and *yáng*

(阳) entails *máo dùn* (矛盾, contradiction and opposition), *xiāng yī* (相依, interdependence), *hù shě* (互舍, mutual inclusion), *jiāo gǎn* (交感, interaction or resonance), *hù bù* (互补, complementary or mutual support) and *zhuǎn huà* (转化, change and transformation) (Wang, 2013, pp. 216-219).

Later in Eastern Zhou (770–221 BCE), *yīn* (阴) and *yáng* (阳) were added in relation to *qián* (乾, Heaven) and *kūn* (坤, Earth). The concept of *yīn* (阴) and *yáng* (阳) was further broadened and formulated to define human hierarchy, where “men were linked to the dominant forces of Heaven, the sun and the ruler, and women were the subordinate partners: Earth, moon, and minister of the state” (Nyitray, 2004, p. 274). This binary association became the defining feature for men and women in Chinese culture (Nyitray, 2004; Raphals, 1998, p. 157).

Similarly, the binary gender association is represented in politics. Dong Zhongshu (董仲舒) incorporated *yīn* (阴) and *yáng* (阳) with rulership, “This association of the ruler with *yáng* and the ruled with *yīn* confirmed the necessary dominance of *yáng* – associated with strength, growth, light and life – in all of the now-gendered hierarchies that proliferated” (Nyitray, 2004, p. 275). The concept of *yáng* (阳) as a dominant power has inadvertently defined *yīn* (阴) as subordinate. This association later transferred to the gender in Chinese culture, where the male is associated with *yáng* (阳), and the female is associated with *yīn* (阴). In addition, *yīn* (阴) was associated with negativity and emotionality, whereas *yáng* (阳) indicated positivity and rationality (Nyitray, 2004). This illustrates *yīn yáng* (阴阳) as the contrasting form, namely, *máo dùn* (矛盾, contradiction and opposition). In fact, the differences between *yīn yáng* (阴阳) allow the transformation from *yīn* (阴) to *yáng* (阳) and vice versa. As Wang pointed out:

Any given two sides are connected and related, but they are also opposed in some way, like light and dark, male and female, and forceful and yielding. It is the tension and difference between the two sides that allows for the dynamic energy that comes through their interaction. (Wang, 2013, pp.

216-217).

Whilst the concept of *yīn yáng* (阴阳) has influenced the perception of males and females in Chinese culture, they have not been applied to define biological sex and gender in the Chinese language. To illustrate, the biological sex has been translated to *xìng* (性), and gender is referred to as *xìng shǔ* (性属) or *shè huì xìng bié* (社会性别) (Wang, 2005). Additionally, a person's biological *xìng bié* (性别, sex) subsequently decides one's *dì wèi* (地位, status), *jué sè* (角色, role) and *shǔ xìng* (属性, attributes) in Chinese culture. These four elements are interconnected; the activation of one element subsequently verifies the other three associations. Namely, a person's status and role in society were assigned to them based on their sex (Lin, 1997).

Subsequently, the sex categories and attributes have reflected the unequal status of Chinese women and men in society. Therefore, "Culture can even, in a direct and obvious way, require expression through grammar as well as words" (McWhorter, 2014, p. 60). To illustrate, the ancient saying *nán zūn nǚ bēi* (男尊女卑) means men are superior, and women are inferior. In ancient times, women were taught the roles they could have in their life: *xiào fù* (孝妇, good daughter-in-law), *xián qī* (贤妻, good wife), and *liáng mǔ* (良母, good mother). These were the three ultimate goals women could achieve in life. Besides being a good mother, a woman should show filial obedience to her parents-in-law; she also needed to support her husband and put her husband's interest above everything. Women were invisible in patriarchal society except in these three assigned roles (Lin, 1997).

Furthermore, the role of the Chinese woman has been significantly influenced by Confucianism. Women were rarely mentioned in Confucius' work, and the limited depiction of women suggested women were suppressed and neglected in Confucius' ideology. Moreover, women's needs and desires were overlooked in Confucius' ideological system. Confucius stated, "only the *women* and the *petty persons* are difficult to support" (唯女子与小人难养也, *wéi nǚ zǐ yú xiǎo rén nán yǎng yě*),

where he compared women to petty persons because both were financially unstable, and neither had political power in society. His ideology on women served to maintain the moral and ritual in traditional Chinese society (Zhang & Da, 2016).

Some scholars interpreted it as “it is hard to deal with women and petty persons. If you get too close with them, they will be rude to you; but if you try to distance yourself, they will hate you”. Regarding the term “*nǚ zǐ*” (女子, women), some scholars suggested the term only refers to concubines, not women in general. Nevertheless, this portrayal of women reflected Confucius’ negative opinion of women (Zhang, 2012). The dictionary suggests 小人(*xiǎo rén*) has three definitions: (a) person of low position, humble person; (b) I, me; (c) base/mean person, villain, vile character (Hui, 2011, p. 1791). 小人(*xiǎo rén*) has been translated into villains, yet a more common translation of 小人(*xiǎo rén*) is a petty person (see Ames & Rosemont, 2010; Slingerland, 2003). The opposite term of 小人(*xiǎo rén*) is 君子(*jūn zǐ*) which is translated as a man of noble character/virtue; gentleman (Hui, 2011, p. 870). Nevertheless, it is the moral character that defines whether a person is a 小人(*xiǎo rén*) or 君子(*jūn zǐ*) instead of his or her social status in Confucius’ work (Fan, 2016).

Confucius’ attitude towards women is not in line with the perception of women nowadays, yet it reflects women’s status in society in ancient China. The patriarchy system deprived women of political power and other rights. In addition, Confucius’ view on women was influenced by *Zhou li* (周礼), which preached women should stay at home and take care of the household whereas men deal with public affairs (Zhang, 2012).

Nevertheless, the Confucian tradition affected the perception of Chinese women throughout Chinese history. In addition to the traditional roles for women mentioned earlier, the ideal female qualities were drawn from men's expectations of a women: gentle, submissive, mild, selfless; as a result, women have been conditioned to meet the standards created by men, which further increase the impact of

patriarchalism in society (Liu, 2008).

Moreover, the linguistic structure has become a tool to define and restrict women's presence and power in society. Gender identity has been constructed and reflected in Chinese. The inferior status of Chinese women has been denoted in Chinese writing. For example, the Chinese written form of female visually represents a person kneeling with hands folded: 女. Also, etymological evidence suggests other Chinese characters using this semantic stem to reinforce the ideology of gender inequality and the presence of the patriarchal influence. The character for marriage (嫁, jià) consists of a female (女) with a home (家, jiā). When a female gets married, she becomes a *fù* (妇, married woman) visually depicting female (女) with a broom (sào bǎ, 扫把) (Fan, 1996). In the Chinese language, the characters which have *nǚ* (女) is associate with women. Among the 70 most frequent used words having *nǚ* (女) as a part of the character, more than 10 words suggest unhealthy feeling or obnoxious behaviours, such as 嫉(jì, envy, be jealous/envious; hate, detest, indignantly resent) (Hui, 2011, p. 738), 妨(fáng, hinder, hamper, impede, obstruct) (Hui, 2011, p. 457), and 嫌(xián, grudge, ill-will, resentment enmity; dislike, complain) (Hui, 2011, p. 1757) (Wu & Yao, 2002, p. 40). Furthermore, many Chinese terms referring to women are derogatory. For example, according to an ancient saying, women's hearts and moods shift quickly (女人善变, *nǚ rén shàn biàn*). Women are not encouraged to express their opinions; when they do, their opinions are considered inferior as in the term *fū rén zhī jiàn* (妇人之见, women's opinion) (Fan, 1996).

In fact, the written form of the Chinese language also reflects gender inequalities and reinforces gender inequality status. Indo-European languages have the linguistic marking in feminine and masculine forms, but masculine forms were used as the generic ones. If the male form represents the standard in the linguistic and cultural context, then, the association of women subsequently takes on opposing perspectives cognitively and socially (Fan, 1996).

Linguistic gender includes grammatical gender and natural gender.

Grammatical gender is a structural and formal phenomenon, and natural gender refers to semantic or content phenomena. English or Chinese have covert gender on the surface structure of language whereas other languages have gender classifications, such as feminine, neuter, and masculine. In Chinese, gender has been identified from three aspects: linguistic gender, covert categories, and markedness (Farris, 1988).

Whorf (1956) defined a covert category of gender where linguistic marking is prominent in particular sentences whereas an overt category is when a formal gender marking is covert. Farris builds on Whorf's idea and proposes that gender in Chinese is a covert category with a few overt surface markings. That is, Chinese is organised around the universal principles of femaleness or maleness. However, the unmarked forms are treated as standard forms. The masculine is usually unmarked, and general references are derived from the unmarked forms (Greenberg, 2010). For example, the general reference for *yī shēng* (医生, doctor) is drawn from the notion that most doctors are male; thus, it more common to associate *yī shēng* (医生, doctor) with men (Farris, 1988). Wu and Yao noted that the term such as *yī shēng* (医生, doctor) is an inclusive term which includes both male and female doctors. The profession may be undertaken by both genders, yet the term implies males are the default gender of a profession. If a woman has the same profession as a man, a profession which is primarily dominated by men, her title is often added with female gender markers *nǚ* (女) (Wu & Yao, 2002, p. 39). Whilst *nǚ yī shēng* (女医生) is in use, *nán yī shēng* (男医生) is not so widely used.

The linguistic gender inequality is pervasive among occupational terms and pejorative terms. Terms referring to women usually imply women's age and marital status, whereas men's marital status is unmarked. For example, *xiǎo jiě* (小姐, Miss) refers to unmarried women, but the equivalent *xiān shēng* (先生, Mr.) does not connote marital information. Among the occupational terms, many common nouns covertly connote masculine features whereas the feminine features need to be overtly added; for instance, a female doctor is *nǚ yī shēng* (女医生) with *nǚ* (女) added to

indicate the gender of the doctor. Additionally, many pejorative terms referring to women have no masculine equivalent terms (Farris, 1988). For instance, a woman who gossips is a *cháng shé fù* (长舌妇), yet there is no equivalent term to describe men who gossip. *mǔ lǎo hǔ* (母老虎, tigress; female tiger; shrew; termagant; vixen; virago; harpy) (Hui, 2011, p. 1128), *mǔ yè chā* (母夜叉, female devil; fierce and ugly woman; tartar; harpy; vixen) (Hui, 2011, p. 1128), and *pō fù* (泼妇, like a shrew shouting abuse in the street) (Hui, 2011, p. 1236) are only used to describe women, and there are no equivalent terms to describe men (Wu & Yao, 2002, p. 40).

The underlying assumptions about women and men have invariably affected the linguistic and cultural codes. However, a change in linguistic behaviour does not immediately bring about social change. Nevertheless, The exposure of the falseness in linguistic signs may help to redefine the language usages (Fan, 1996).

Although Chinese women were under disadvantageous circumstances, they have challenged female stereotypes through the feminist movement. There were two waves of the female liberation movement in Chinese culture. The first wave was in the early 20-century, and the second wave occurred between the late 1970s and early 1980s. The traditional social roles were challenged and the newly formed female roles disrupt the existing rules (Lin, 1997). However, the movement did not liberate women from the designated family role. Women are still expected to take care of the family even though they have a professional career, whereas Chinese men rarely face the dilemma of choosing between family and career (Li & Huang, 2014). Chinese culture has disciplined Chinese women through these implicit norms. The pursuit and realisation of self-worth by women has been ignored, and they are compelled to meet social expectations. Many women perceive themselves as incapable and are more likely to be unhappy and depressed (Liu, 2008).

Li and Huang (2014) pointed out three major obstacles that Chinese women face when fulfilling their personal potential. First, their rights have not been enforced in practice as written in law; second, women have been restricted by the family role

and the social role; third, women's inner freedom is fragile and often questioned by self-imposed restrictions.

Firstly, there is an immense discrepancy between written law and reality concerning equality among Chinese women and men. Women's rights in education, labour, politics, and marriage have not been implemented equally as those of men in society. For instance, the illiteracy ratio among Chinese men and women has been decreasing since 1949. However, the illiterate female ratio was much higher than the illiterate male ratio because more male students had been enrolled in elementary school, high school, and universities (Li & Huang, 2014). Moreover, women's rights have been inadequately implemented in professional settings and politics. Apart from unequal pay, female workers are more likely to experience sexism and discrimination at work; in politics, the level of political participation remains low compared to men and women rarely hold high positions (Li & Huang, 2014).

Secondly, Chinese women have been struggling between the family role and social role. Traditionally, women were obliged to follow a set of virtues. For example, the ancient term *sān cóng sì dé* (三从四德, the three obedience and the four virtues) served as a tool to control women (Chen, 2010, p. 205). *Sān cóng* (三从) defined that a woman should obey her father before marriage and be submissive to her husband after marriage. If her husband passed away, she should devote her life to her son (在家从父, 适人从夫, 夫死从子); *sì dé* (四德) referred to female virtue: *fù dé* (妇德, female virtue), *fù yán* (妇言, female language), *fù róng* (妇容, female look), and *fù gōng* (妇功, female work) (Li, 2014). Thus, Chinese women were controlled in their thinking, appearance, and language by a systematic education dedicated to suppressing women (Liu, 2008).

Chinese women in modern Chinese society face the same struggle. On the one hand, Chinese women are restricted by the traditional values; on the other hand, even though they have gained economic independence, Chinese women are still measured by traditional values (Liu, 2008). For instance, a woman should show tenderness and

submissiveness. She is not encouraged to show she is smarter than her husband (Lin, 1997).

Thirdly, the final obstacle women face is their self-induced restrictions. Women themselves have restricted their potential due to low self-confidence. Therefore, women should establish their own independence. Also, women and men need to work together to balance the gender roles in society (Li & Huang, 2014).

Whilst Li and Huang's research has identified the obstacles that the Chinese have experienced in China, the current study enquires about the difficulties that Chinese women have experienced in Hungary. It would be interesting to assess whether Chinese female residents have experienced similar obstacles in Hungarian society. For instance, whether the traditional Chinese values have restricted Chinese women's self-fulfilment in Hungary, and whether the Chinese impose limitations on themselves.

The methods applied in gender and language research in the Chinese context differ from a modern feminist approach and postmodern feminist approach in western gender studies. The aforementioned studies of gender and language in a Chinese context have emphasised the influence and background of traditional Chinese culture with regard to Chinese women's experience. Indeed, the cultural factor is essential to understand the concept of gender in Chinese culture, and a closer examination of Chinese women's language, irrespective of ingrained gender concept in Chinese culture, may shed new light on the role of Chinese women in modern society.

The cultural experience of Chinese women in Hungary has not been explored in previous studies. This study attempts to illustrate the life of Chinese immigrants from a gender perspective. The qualitative approach was inspired by studies of Chinese women from other disciplines in order to gain a better knowledge of the gender differences (see Kwok, White, & Roydhouse, 2011; Tiwari & Yuen, 2010).

3.2 Discourse and identity

The term *discourse analysis* was first introduced by Harris in 1952. He investigated the relationship of culture, discourse, social situation, and language in a hair tonic advertisement. Harris proposed that discourse can be elucidated beyond the words and sentences. He also suggested that the relationship between language and culture should be studied in discourse (as cited in Huang, 2001).

Discourse analysis focuses less on the grammatical role and structure, as opposed to descriptive linguistics' primary interest in the roles of grammar and structure. Therefore, descriptive linguistics has failed to analyse language beyond the sentence level. Moreover, the relationship between language and culture has been overlooked in descriptive linguistics (Harris, 2014, pp. 37-38). In contrast, discourse analysis provides insights into the structure of the text and the function of each element within the structure and focuses on more than one sentence, and it illustrates how discourse can be constructed according to different situations (Harris, 2014. p. 40), as defined by Reisigl & Wodak:

A cluster of context-dependent practices that are situated within specific fields of social action; socially constituted and socially constitutive; related to macro-topics; linked to the argument about validity claims such as truth and normative validity, involving several social actors who have different points of view. (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 27)

Various methods were developed in discourse analysis. One approach may focus on the content of language (see Bax, 2010), whereas another approach examines the grammatical structure and its implications (see Hunston & Francis, 2000) Gee, 2011). Gee (2011) integrated the meaning of language with grammatical markers in his approach to discourse analysis. Three aspects of language regarding saying (informing), doing (action), and being (identity) were identified. To illustrate, language enables people to give and receive information and perform activities.

Different social identities are demonstrated through language, thus, a discourse is “a characteristic way of saying, doing and being” (Gee, 2011, p. 30). People use language to construct a particular identity depending on the circumstance. However, discourse analysis requires more than language to identify *who* (identity) and *what* (practice). The way one speaks, acts, thinks, values, and interacts construct one’s identity (Gee, 2011).

In order to construct a discourse from data, Gee illustrated seven aspects to consider when conceptualising a discourse: significance in language, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections, sign systems, and knowledge (Gee, 2011).

Significance in language refers to how language is being utilised to entail the importance of things. *Practices* are activities that have been structured through language; on the one hand, languages entail the cultural institutionalised background of a practice, while on the other hand, practices convey the meaning of linguistic elements through social activities. Language enables people to construct *identities* which are different from others. Language has been used to build *relationships*, and the language style reflects the relationship with other people (Gee, 2011).

The *politics* of language entails the vision for social good which is implicitly expressed. *Connections* reflect the relevance which has been formed through language. Language connects entities which are not related; also, language can break connections among connected things. *Sign systems* include language variants such as technical language, for instance, the language of doctors or lawyers. In addition, equations, graphs, images, and non-linguistic elements belong to sign systems which represent human knowledge (Gee, 2011).

Whilst the seven aspects are essential to provide a holistic view of a discourse, the study of identities and practises in a discourse requires additional tools to uncover a person’s identity in a discourse. Gee (2011) suggested social languages, Discourses, Conversations, and intertextuality to examine how identities are constructed and

recognised in a discourse. To illustrate, social languages entail different varieties of languages to demonstrate identities and enact actions. Discourses look into the non-linguistic factors in the identity building process. Gee used Discourse to suggest “...ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of social recognizable identity” (Gee, 2011, p. 29). To decode a Discourse requires a researcher to uncover a subject’s socially situated identity and action. In addition, it is necessary to look into how a Discourse is performed, recognised, and coordinated.

Gee used Discourses with a capital letter to refer to “language *plus* ‘other stuff’” (Gee, 2011, p. 34) in contrast to discourse suggesting “language-in-use” (Gee, 2011, p. 34). Likewise, Conversations with a capital letter suggest the different viewpoints involved in a conversation. Conversations in discourse analysis explore the relationship between language and motifs, themes which emerge from social issues. The themes and motifs influence how language is interpreted; consequently, a person’s stance is reflected through the language and its embedded social meanings. Intertextuality refers to words or texts pertaining to “words other people have said or written” (Gee, 2011, p. 29). In sum, social languages, Conversations, and intertextuality explore the identity constructions and representations in discourse analysis. However, a discourse analysis of identity in a discourse requires a thorough overview of identity theory.

An identity consists of an identity standard, an input, a comparator and an output. To illustrate, the defining meaning of an identity is the identity standard which contains various dimensions; an identity entails a range of meanings, such as denotative, connotative, emotional, and unspecified meanings. The inputs refer to the perceptive inputs to identities, “perceptions are meanings in the situation that are relevant to the identity” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 66). However, the perception changes when the perception is incongruent with the identity standard; the comparator

compares the pertinent meanings of the identity with the prescribed identity standard. The discrepant output emerges when the input (perception) does not match the identity standard. The output illustrates the behaviour patterns prompted by the perception which subsequently change the symbols of the environment, and the change in the output leads to the meaning change in the identities (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Research in identity theory is comprised of two major trends, “One emphasises the social structure source of identity and the relations among identities, and the other focuses on the internal, cognitive identity process” (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p. 288). The first trend perceives that identity has been derived from social structures. The second trend identifies the incongruousness of intrinsic recognition of self and one’s behaviour. Both trends have acknowledged that identity is manifested through human behaviour (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p. 288). Additionally, identity has been investigated at three levels: role identity, social identity, and person identity (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 127). Table 3 shows the features of person, role, and social identities.

Table 3

Defining Features of Person, Role, and Social Identities

Features	Personal Identity	Role Identity	Social Identity
Bases	Individual self-concept	Expectations tied to social positions	Social group
Definition	Meanings that define the person as a unique individual	Meanings tied to a role	Meanings tied to a social group

Cognitive Representation of Identity Identity standard	Identity Standard	Prototype	
Activation of Identity Saliency	Saliency	Accessibility and fit	
Behaviour Independent of others	Complementary to others	Similar to others	
Self-Reference Me	Me as role	We	
Verification outcome	Authenticity	Self-efficacy	Self-worth

Note. Adopted from Burke, P. J., & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Role identities have emerged from a social structural premise, and the notion of role identity is connected to social position and roles. A social position entails the categorisations based on one's occupation, preference, etc. A social position corresponds to general or specific expectations. In addition, expectation emphasises the result of one's behaviour and entails a broad range of behaviour patterns in social interactions (Burke & Stets, 2009, pp. 113-114). "A role is the set of expectations tied to a social position that guide people's attitudes and behaviour" (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 114).

A role identity, on the other hand, refers to an assigned role which has been internalised and devised by a person. To illustrate, one's identity has been constructed under the influence of others' opinions. However, one can contemplate the uniqueness of one's role introspectively; one's role has not only reinforced one's role identity, it also further strengthens the identities ascribed by the social structures (Burke & Stets,

2009, pp. 114-118).

Social identities stem from the social groups, which categorise people as in-group and out-group members based on similarities and differences. The social identity reveals one's perception of being a member of a group, which entails emotional and evaluative significance (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel, 1981; Burke & Stets, 2009, pp. 118-119). For example, a group prototype contains quintessential features that emerge from in-group members, which subsequently distinguish in-group members from out-group members. However, not every in-group member shares identical features with the prototype because the attributes of prototypes have been purposefully exaggerated and idealised to differentiate in-group members and out-group members. Consequently, the prototype leads to *depersonalisation* which in-group members are apt to identify with the group identity instead of personal traits. Therefore, the notion of *we* and *them* emerge from the distinction between in-group and out-group members (Burke & Stets, 2009, pp. 118-119).

Moreover, one's perception and categorisation of in-group members and out-group members is associated with one's identity within the ethnic group and the new society they acculturate into (Berry, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). An in-group member is likely to receive a favourable attitude in contrast to an out-group member. The attitudes based on in-group and out-group categorisations are problematic when the categorisations are associated with stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (Ward, Furnham, & Bochner, 2005). Moreover, immigrants are less likely to identify with the host society if they have experienced discrimination (Mainous, 1989).

Social identity theory defines the positive and negative identity association based on in-group and out-group categorisations. The in-group favouritism further promotes prejudice towards out-groups, and the favouritism may enhance the self-esteem of in-group members (Ward et al., 2005). In addition to the group categorisation, several variables could affect immigrants' social identity in the host society, such as age, gender, class, and education, group characteristics, motivation,

the social context in the host country, and attitudes towards immigrants.

People join groups to elevate their self recognition and reduce uncertainty. Their self identity is affirmed and approved in a group; also, in-group members tend to hold favourable opinions towards other in-group members. Furthermore, joining a group minimises uncertainty because in-group members follow the expected behaviours indicated by the prototypes of a group (Hogg, 2006).

Within the scope of social identity theory, person identity “involves seeing oneself as a unique and distinct individual, different from others” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 124). The person identity has become group orientated in a social identity theory which implies the group’s attributes exceed an individual’s characteristics. However, a person’s identity in identity theory implies one’s intrinsic cultural attributes which set an individual apart, and the core of the person identity is one’s self recognition (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 125). The concept of self stems from the characteristics of one’s identity and interaction with others. The self is reflected through the mind, which identifies self as an object. “This ability to recognise the self as an object allows the mind/self to think about and act on the self in the same way that the self can think about and act on any other part of the environment” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 19).

To summarise, Burke & Stets’ identity theory has complemented the theoretical background of identity in Gee’s approach to discourse analysis. To illustrate, Gee’s approach first provides an overview of a discourse by examining seven aspects of a given text; the inquiry tools such as social languages, Conversations, and intertextuality study the identity building and verification through language. Therefore, the combined application of these two frameworks may present an insightful perspective of identity emerged in a discourse.

4. Methods

4.1 Participants and setting

The participants in this study are Chinese immigrants in Budapest, Hungary. The snowball sampling technique has been adopted to interview Chinese immigrants in Hungary. The participants consist of three components: (a) earlier Chinese immigrants who migrated in the 1990s; (b) Chinese immigrants after 2010s; (c) Chinese students. The earlier Chinese immigrants migrated to Hungary for business opportunities in the 1990s (see also Nyíri, 2005; Nie & Linda, 1993; Kriszt & Hidasi, 2009). Additionally, more than 15,000 Chinese have relocated to Hungary through residence bond programs since 2013 (Lajtai-Szabó, 2018). Furthermore, the number of Chinese students has increased in recent years. In 2019, there were 2,200 Chinese students studying in Hungary (Shenzhouxueren, 2019).

Table 4

The Components of the Participants

	1990s	2010s	Students
Female	8	3	2
Male	7	2	3

Note. The column 1990s entails the participants that migrated in the 1990s. The 2010s column indicates participants that came to Hungary in the 2010s. Students refers to Chinese students currently studying in Hungary.

Among the two controlled variables – participants' age, and the time they have spent in Hungary – a total of 13 male and 13 female participants' ages vary in four groups: 18-29 years old, 30-44 years old, 45-55 years old, 56+ years. The second variable has been divided into three groups: 1-5 years, 6-15 years, 15+ years.

Table 5

Participants' Gender and Age Information

	18-29 (years)	30-44 (years)	45-55 (years)	56+ (years)
Female	4	2	3	4
Male	3	4	3	3

Note. 56 (years) refers to participants whose ages were 56 and above.

Table 6

Participants' Time Spent in Hungary

	1-5 (years)	6-15 (years)	16+ (years)
Female	4	5	4
Male	3	5	5

Note. 15 (years) refers to participants who have lived in Hungary for 15 years or more.

4.2 Instrument and data collection

The research intends to study and illustrate and understand the cultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Studies related to Chinese immigrants' lives overseas have applied qualitative methods to explore the inherent complicated human experiences. For example, Lim and Wieling (2004) conducted in-depth interviews to investigate how immigrant Chinese women negotiate values and perception of self. The qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the complexities of immigrant Chinese women's experience and perceptions. Similarly, Wang and Shan (2007) studied the learning experience of Chinese postgraduate students in Australian universities using a qualitative approach. Interviews were conducted to study the cultural challenges Chinese students experienced and their

coping strategies. Many other studies concerning Chinese experiences overseas have also applied a qualitative approach (see Fan, Zhu, & Nyland, 2012; Kwon, 2013; Teik-Cheok Loy, 2012; Yuan, 2011; Zheng, 2010). Hence, the qualitative approach was considered appropriate for the purpose of the current study to explore the cultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary.

The semi-structured interview questions were designed to inquire about Chinese immigrants' life experiences in Hungary. It consists of questions related to their daily life, social life, and personal opinions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted because of their flexibility for participants to elaborate and emphasize "areas of particular interest and expertise that they felt they had, as well as to enable certain response to be questioned in greater depth, and in particular to bring out and resolve contradictions" (Horton, Macve, & Struyven, 2004, p. 340). Thus, the flexible structure of the interview is intended to allow participants to reflect their life and express their opinions without being restricted to an interview structure. It also allows the researcher to build rapport with participants, so they feel more at ease to engage in interviews.

Four pilot interviews were conducted after the completion of the first draft of the instrument. Afterwards, the interview instrument was revised based on the feedback of the four pilot interviews. Several flaws in the instrument were identified. First, the order of the questions was not arranged properly. The original interview questions follow the sequence of daily life, social life, and personal opinion; the sequence of the interview questions was reorganised. Questions concerning personal opinions were moved to follow daily life questions. Additionally, the questions concerning everyday life were revised to a casual conversational style about participants' life on workdays and off-work days.

To many Chinese people, the mention of an interview may stress interviewees because it sounds formal, "I learned not to use the word interview but to designate these events as conversations-which actually they were" (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 29). The

interviews for this research were conducted in a relaxed and casual manner. In this study, the description of the written task in the second part proved to be problematic because the participants felt uncomfortable when they were asked to reveal their experience of discrimination or racism. The word choice of *racism* had a heavy weight on them, and some participants felt embarrassed to talk about conflicts. Therefore, the description of the written task was modified to inquire about participants' unpleasant experiences in Hungary. Though the second part was initially designed to be in written form, it was changed to a speaking task based on feedback from pilot interviews.

The final version of the interview instrument (see Appendix D) begins with a brief introduction of the research. The interview starts with questions about the participants' age, the time they have spent in Hungary and their Hungarian language skills which precedes the questions concerning the participants' daily life, personal opinions, and social life. Next, participants describe any unpleasant experience they may have experienced in Hungary. It should be noted the purpose of this study is to address the problems that Chinese immigrants have experienced so as to devise potential solutions. Thus, the inquiring about an unpleasant experience that Chinese immigrants have experienced was not intentionally designed to elicit their unpleasant experience. To illustrate, the interview instrument consists of two parts: interview questions and a speaking task. There are 13 questions and all questions are devoted to inquiring about participants' daily life, personal opinions, and social life. Also, the speaking task is brief in comparison to the interview questions. On average, the transcription of interview question accounts for approximately 85 percent of an entire transcribed interview data, whereas the unpleasant experience (speaking task) only makes up ten percent of a transcribed interview data, which follows five percent of the suggestions that participants offered to Chinese immigrants.

The permission to record the interview was requested in Mandarin Chinese before the interview. The length of interviews varied from one hour to two hours. The

interview data collection started in July 2017, and the last interview finished in early September 2017. The interview process encountered various problems. For example, it was not easy to make appointments with interviewees because many of them were working. Moreover, many Chinese immigrants were reluctant to share their life experiences in Hungary. One participant who had agreed to be interviewed revealed that some Chinese immigrants might not want others to know too much about their life back in China or in Hungary. In this research, though there were Chinese immigrants who were reluctant to be interviewed, many Chinese immigrants were glad to help and they wanted to be heard.

Many westerns researchers have experienced difficulties in approaching Chinese immigrants overseas. Liu (2017) noted that the local researchers experienced “difficulties of breaking down the cultural barriers. Efforts to prove they were not affiliated with the government were often met with suspicion” (Liu, 2017, p. 30). Even when a western researcher speaks fluent Mandarin, they are still considered to be a foreigner by the Chinese (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 28). Rodrigues added, “My experience of two years in China had made me aware of my strong identity as a foreigner among Chinese, a barrier that was many times insurmountable” (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 28). In her fieldwork interviewing Chinese immigrants in Lisbon, Portugal, Rodrigues gained trust from interviewees by establishing relationships with them; yet many times she was told “You’re not Chinese. You do not understand” (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 30). It seems the participant assumed that the researcher cannot understand merely based on her being a foreigner.

Researchers of Chinese origin have encountered a similar problem. In Liu’s fieldwork to research the isolation of Chinese immigrants in Eastern European countries, participants suspected that Liu was sent by Chinese government, or she was working for local government to spy on the Chinese immigrants even though she is of Chinese descent and speaks fluent Mandarin (Liu, 2017, p. 36). This cultural barrier also corroborates the hypothesis regarding the presence of an invisible wall

(low trust) in Chinese culture.

My Chinese identity is an advantage to approaching Chinese residents in Hungary; however, I have encountered other problems. For example, face to face communication was stressful when approaching participants. Conversely, participants felt more relaxed if they had been provided with a written paper, including an introduction to the researcher, the purpose of the research, contact information, and monetary reward for participation. Hence, they felt they were given time to think and were not stressed to answer immediately. This approach was more effective than approaching the Chinese immigrants directly. Male participants were quicker to accept being interviewed than female participants. Though monetary reward was offered for their participation, none of the participants accepted it.

4.3 Data analysis process

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) has been used in qualitative research since the 1980s (Paulus & Lester, 2016). Among much qualitative software (e.g. QSR NVIVO, MAXQDA) in language-based analysis, ATLAS.ti not only allows researchers to organise and analyze qualitative data with easiness, but it also presents visualisations of conceptual frameworks from codes and emergent themes (Konopásek, 2007; Paulus & Lester, 2016). Researchers, therefore, are equipped with a powerful tool to analyse qualitative data and keep track of the researchers' analytic thinking process "in a transparent, reflexive, rigorous, and systematic way" (Paulus & Lester, 2016, p. 405). Thus, ATLAS.ti assists researchers to manage an extensive data set, yet it relies on researchers to perform the analytic process (Konopásek, 2007). The software assists researchers to organize data, and perform qualitative analysis.

Research in conversation analysis and discourse analysis benefit from computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) (see Lester, 2014; Lester & Paulus, 2011). Many researchers have applied qualitative analysis software,

yet few have elaborated on the specific features and functions of the qualitative software that was utilized in their research (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2014). In an elaborated account of the feasibility of applying ATLAS.ti in discourse analysis, Paulus and Lester (2016) illustrated nine ways to analyse data in discourse analysis:

(1) managing data through document families and quotations, (2) engaging in teamwork through memos and merging, (3) transcribing and synchronizing the transcript with the media file, (4) conducting initial searches of the data to narrow the analytic focus, (5) engaging in ‘unmotivated looking’ through creating quotations, (6) narrowing the analytic focus through codes and outputs, (7) engaging in close, line by line analysis through memoing, (8) maintaining a focus on discursive action through hyperlinking and network views, and (9) exploring relationships with the query tool. (Paulus & Lester, 2016, p. 409)

Given the various functions which can be utilised in qualitative research, ATLAS.ti, therefore, is considered to be appropriate for the current research to categorise and code emergent themes from the interview data; this research, however, did not utilise every aforementioned way to analyze data. ATLAS.ti has been primarily used to code interview data, comparing codes based on different variables, analysing emergent themes, and exploring correlations of emergent themes. Below is a list of terminologies in the ATLAS.ti qualitative software (Paulus & Lester, 2016, p. 409).

Table 7

Selected Key ATLAS.ti Terminologies

Term	Definition
Hermeneutic unit (HU)	The main project file
Primary documents	Data files or data sources (e.g. transcripts, files, field

(PD)	notes, etc)
Families and filters	A group of related concepts being used for analysis (document families, code families, memo families) that allows you to limit the amount of information that is seen on the screen to enable better focus on your analysis
Quotation	A segment of the data that is of interest to the analyst
Code	A label used to mark, identify, or classify single words, phrases, or longer segments of the data. A code can be a priori, in vivo, or developed as the data is being analyzed (open-coding)
Output	A report of the analysis that can be extracted from the software into a text file, spreadsheet or other file formats
Query tool	A way to retrieve quotations, codes, or combination of codes that help to answer the research question

Note. Adopted from Paulus, T. M., & Lester, J. N. (2016). ATLAS. ti for conversation and discourse analysis studies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 19(4), 405-428.

In the current research, a hermeneutic unit was created and 26 interview transcripts were uploaded as primary documents in ATLAS.ti. Each transcript was carefully reviewed and labelled with codes. Zhang and Wildemuth noted, “categories and a coding scheme can be derived from three sources: the data, previous related studies, and theories” (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2016, p. 311). The lack of previous studies or theories is, therefore, inadequate to guide the coding process of this research. Subsequently, the codes of this research were primarily identified from the interview data. Furthermore, a constant comparative method has been applied to generate consistent codes throughout the data (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2016, p. 311;

Glaser & Strauss, 2017). The assigned codes entail concepts, actions, or meanings that have surfaced from the interview data (Stuckey, 2015, p. 8). In addition, the code manager tool in ATLAS.ti allows researchers to view the frequency that each code appears in all the transcripts, and its code retrieve function can locate a code's corresponding texts in the transcripts.

A total of 50 codes were assigned to the interview data (see Appendix E for a list of codes). To illustrate, there are 17 occurrences in interview data concerning things Chinese immigrants consider similar in China. For example, some participants have noticed that the Hungarian and Chinese are similar in the way they treat the elderly and young people. In addition, personal connections are essential in both Hungarian and Chinese society. In contrast, there are 93 occurrences of items that Chinese immigrants have observed different from China in interview data, which implies that the two societies differ in many aspects and commonalities are rare.

Next, the study compares the experience of Chinese females and males in Hungary using a quantitative and qualitative approach. Firstly, the LIWC has been utilised to assess the linguistic features of Chinese females and males in Hungary. The LIWC has been validated by its analysis on attentional focus, emotionality, social relationships, thinking style, etc. The macrolevel analysis in the LIWC focuses on variables in analytic, clout, authentic, and tone. Analytic identifies the following thinking patterns: formal, logical, and hierarchical. People with low analytical thinking patterns focus on temporal experiences whereas people with high analytical thinking skills perform better in universities (Pennebaker, Chung, Frazee, Lavergne, & Beaver, 2014). Clout entails social status, confidence, and leadership. Authenticity indicates people are more personal, humble, and honest in their narratives. Tone evaluates the positive and negative dimensions in a narrative (Newman, Pennebaker, Berry, & Richards, 2003). Thus, the interview transcripts were divided into two groups: male and female, which were assessed and compared using the LIWC.

After assessing the linguistic features of Chinese women and men, ATLAS.ti

was applied to compare the codes that had been assigned to the transcripts from a gender perspective. The transcripts were compared based on two criteria: educational background and employment status. Educational background entails secondary level and tertiary level education. Employment status includes three statuses: employed, unemployed, and inactive. Next, the interview transcripts of females' narrative were compared with males' in four categories: secondary level, tertiary level, employed, and inactive. The results from ATLAS.ti show the code occurrences of each category when comparing the women's narrative with the men's narrative so as to provide further insight into the experience of Chinese women and men in Hungary.

Following the quantitative comparison of Chinese females and male's experience using the LIWC and ATLAS.ti, discourse analysis has been applied to complement the quantitative analysis from a gender perspective. As mentioned earlier, the second part of the interview instrument inquires about the unpleasant experience participants have experienced in Hungary. Two intercultural incidents were selected and analysed using Gee's approach to discourse analysis. The incidents were chosen based on similar bases. For instance, both female and male participants speak fairly good Hungarian, and they both felt they were discriminated against in the incidents. Next, the texts were first conceptualised using Gee's seven inquiry aspects in discourse analysis: significance in language, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections, sign systems, and knowledge. Additionally, social languages, Discourses, Conversations, and intertextuality were investigated to explore the identity construction in the case studies. The detailed steps of analysis are not listed in the discussion, but the analysis follows Gee's concept of discourse analysis "saying, doing, and being".

5. Results

5.1 Preliminary analysis of the emerging problems

The following section illustrates four major themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview: study-related problems, working cultures, language barriers, and identities. These four themes derive from the codes assigned to transcripts. For instance, identities were mentioned 133 times, and a language barrier has been mentioned 84 times by participants. These frequently mentioned themes are presented to illustrate the challenges and differences participants experienced in Hungary, in relation to the cultural dimensions index discrepancies between China and Hungary. The interview excerpts have been italicised and presented; also, participant's age and gender have been provided in brackets following each interview excerpt. Furthermore, Chinese terms are arranged following this format: *pinyin* (Chinese character, English translation). Alternatively, a few English translations come before or after the Chinese terms.

Study-related problems

Previous research on Chinese students' learning experience abroad examined the study experience, academic performance, psychological adjustment, difficulty coping, social situation, and reflection. The Chinese students' learning experience overseas entails learning style, academic convention, communication with teachers and students (Henze & Zhu, 2012). The learning style of Chinese students is characterised as role learning, silent learning, and passive learning (Sit, 2013). Turner (2006) investigated the learning orientation of Chinese students in the UK. The findings suggested that Chinese students experienced frustration and marginalization due to the differences in the academic convention.

The ineffective communication between Chinese students and their peers and teachers has exacerbated the academic stress among Chinese students abroad. A study in the communication of Chinese students with New Zealand peers in class showed

that Chinese students are inclined to maintain a harmonious atmosphere in communication, whereas their New Zealand peers neglect the role of harmony in personal interactions (Holmes, 2008). Similarly, Chinese students in Hungary have observed their Hungarian classmates openly disagree with teachers in class. This is uncommon for Chinese students who are accustomed to a harmonious atmosphere in class. A study about suppression and harmony suggested that the Chinese people are more likely to suppress their emotions to maintain a harmonious relationship with other people whereas Westerners may or may not suppress their emotions (Wei, Su, Carrera, Lin, & Yi, 2013). As a matter of fact, the concept of harmony in Western cultures does not entirely preclude disagreements; instead, opposing views are acceptable and managed in a friendly manner.

Participants who currently study at Hungarian universities revealed they had trouble adjusting to the teacher-student relationship. Chinese students noticed the relationship between supervisors and students in Hungary is different from that of the teacher-student relationship in China. Supervisors in China keep close contact with students and make plans for the study, whereas the communication between supervisor and students is much less frequent in Hungary. Chinese students also noticed that European peers have a clear notion regarding the motivation to study, whereas Chinese students are less certain about their choice of study. In Hungary, Chinese students have to make their own study plan, which is a challenge for Chinese students who are accustomed to a passive learning strategy.

Similarly, the inadequate language proficiency, indirectness, passiveness, and lack of initiatives and autonomy among Chinese students have resulted in a problematic teacher-student relationship among Chinese students in the United States (Yan & Berliner, 2009). Similar problems were identified among Chinese doctoral students who encountered difficulties in communication, peer network, faculty-student connection, and professional development (Li & Collins, 2014).

In Hungary, Chinese students not only experienced challenges in study, they

also encountered problems in their social life. The social norms in Hungary are different from those in China. For example, Hungarian students value personal space and individualism, whereas Chinese students are used to sharing space with others. Chinese students noted Hungarian students are reluctant to have contact with foreigners. One participant mentioned she felt lonely because she was away from family and friends. This finding is consonant with previous research on loneliness among international students who experience personal loneliness, social loneliness, and cultural loneliness.

Personal loneliness refers to the lack of emotional connection with close ones; social loneliness refers to the emotional exclusion caused by disconnecting from a network, and cultural loneliness derives from the absence of one's familiar cultural and linguistic environment (Weiss, 1973; Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland, & Ramia, 2008). However, stress can be alleviated through expanding social circles or seeking professional help (Sawir et al., 2008).

The academic challenges and psychological stress have negatively affected the academic performance of Chinese students abroad. However, the outcome could be more positive if the Chinese students were quicker to adapt to the changes. Therefore, it is highly recommended that Chinese students acquaint themselves with the scientific terminologies relating to their field. Moreover, English language proficiency is another decisive factor for academic success. Additionally, Chinese students should be more proactive about learning the local culture to facilitate integration and reduce cross-cultural stress (Yan & Berliner, 2009).

Working cultures

Many Chinese businesses have been set up since the Chinese immigrated to Hungary in the 1990s. However, the different working cultures between China and Hungary have resulted in intercultural conflicts in business settings. For instance, Hungarian workers perceive life and work as two different spheres, but Chinese workers have an obscure notion about this boundary. Therefore, Chinese workers

contact their Hungarian colleagues after working hours or during holidays. It is common for the Chinese to discuss work even after working hours. However, Hungarian workers believe they should not be reached for work in their free time. Thus, Chinese workers accommodate to their Hungarian colleagues' working style.

The boundary of life and work is indistinct in Chinese working culture. One participant noted "I start to work from 7am to 5pm, seven days a week, I only take days off when it is their national holiday because there are no customers on those days. Most Chinese in the market follow these working hours." (39, male). In contrast, the Hungarian working culture is more relaxed. Hungarian workers are reluctant to work extra hours after work, and many of them cannot comprehend why the Chinese work so hard, even if the Chinese immigrants are already financially affluent. In fact, the Chinese work hard to attain long-term familial improvement (Harrell, 1985). This tendency to work for long-term financial goals corresponds to the long-term orientation illustrated in Hofstede's cultural dimension theory.

The Chinese companies operating in Hungary maintain the Chinese working culture, Lockett (1988) highlighted Chinese working culture emphasises age, hierarchy, face, relationship, and group orientation. These features are consistent with Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. China has greater power distance in comparison to Hungary, whereas Hungarian society is more individualistic than Chinese society.

To cope with the cultural difference in the working environment, many Chinese companies have adopted implicit double standards for their Chinese employees and Hungarians employees. On the one hand, Chinese companies have adjusted to Hungarian working culture. "My Hungarian workers have two cell phones, one for work, and one for family, and if they are on vacation, you cannot reach them." (42, male). On the other hand, Chinese employees are expected to work extra hours or to be accessible when necessary.

While working together, Chinese co-workers observed Hungarians are reluctant to experiment with new ideas. "I was working with Hungarians, and I have

noticed the different reactions to new proposals. For example, Hungarians are negative when there is a proposal even though the proposal could be more efficient than the older one; in contrast, we Chinese are more open-minded to a new proposal, we do not reject it immediately, we give it a try and see whether it works. So I do not understand why Hungarians reject something that they have never even tried” (33, male). The reason that Hungarian workers tend to reject a new proposal is because it has not been implemented before, so they assume the new proposal would not solve the issue. Hungarians assess the proposal based on previous experience whether it has been practised before, whereas their Chinese counterparts do not directly decline the proposal, instead they evaluate whether the proposal is plausible. It is not a coincidence that Hungary ranks much higher than China in Hofstede et al.’s uncertainty avoidance index. The working style of Hungarians again confirms that Hungarians tend to avoid unpredictable situations. Hence, it seems that countries with a high uncertainty avoidance tendency are less receptive to new ideas than countries with low uncertainty avoidance tendency. Therefore, it may take more time for a high uncertainty avoidance culture to adopt a new idea because much more effort is needed to ensure certainty.

In addition, Hungarian workers are straightforward in expressing their opinions, whereas this practice is perceived as a disruption of harmony of a group in Chinese culture. The Chinese workers are disinclined to openly reject or criticise. The concept of harmony is derived from Confucianism, which values “harmonious social relations, moral standards, and ethical behaviour in social life” (Murphy & Wang, 2006, p. 9). The harmony notion operates on two domains: people and nature. Having harmonious interpersonal relationships is central to the notion of harmony in Chinese culture (Li, 2006; Hung, 2004). Hence, Chinese workers are more inclined to maintain harmonious relationships in a group. This further supports the view that Hungarian workers are more individualistic whereas the Chinese are more collectivistic in work.

In sum, the cultural differences Chinese companies have experienced in

Hungary show consistency with Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimension framework regarding power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, short-term, and long-term orientation. Many Chinese companies have embraced the Hungarian working culture in working with Hungarian employees, yet the Chinese working culture is maintained among Chinese colleagues.

The language barrier

Many Chinese have immigrated to Hungary without any previous knowledge of Hungary. Some of them had never even heard of Hungary and they had assumed Hungarians could speak English. Not many Chinese immigrants who came to Hungary in the early 1990s can speak fluent Hungarian. They were less pressured to learn Hungarian because they lived separately from the local population and they could still operate their businesses without speaking good Hungarian. Some of them can only speak and comprehend quite well but cannot read and write in Hungarian. However, the Chinese who immigrated to Hungary after the 2010s lack Hungarian language skills. Nevertheless, Chinese immigrants agreed upon the importance of Hungarian language skills if one lives in Hungary. Furthermore, language proficiency is positively correlated to better employment opportunities and earnings among immigrants (Dustmann & Fabbri, 2003).

Moreover, Chinese students from mainland China revealed they had come across language barriers in the course of their studies, as well. The lack of language proficiency hinders Chinese students' communication in academic settings (Li & Collins, 2014). For example, Chinese students studying in Hungary who are not accustomed to active class discussion and presentation feel extremely stressed to express their opinion publicly or deliver a presentation. Chinese students perceived public presentation as problematic due to the language barrier (Li & Collins, 2014).

In addition, the language barrier is one of the major causes of socialisation problems. Chinese students feel alienated in academic settings and social life due to an inadequate language proficiency. If one can only speak basic Hungarian, one

cannot have an in-depth conversation about thoughts and ideas with Hungarians. *“I do not speak the language, and when I talk with other students, I feel there are no common topics to talk about.” (27, female).*

Participants who do not speak Hungarian are frequently frustrated in daily life. *“I am sick, but I do not know how to explain myself in the pharmacy; the language barrier stops me from going to the pharmacy.” (29, female).* The language barrier has subsequently discouraged Chinese immigrants from interacting with Hungarians; Chinese immigrants turn to deal with Chinese. For example, Chinese landlords rent their apartments to Chinese tenants. In addition, the convenience of Chinatown in Budapest has become a discouraging factor for Chinese immigrants to overcome the language barrier. One can arrange everything without speaking a word of Hungarian in Chinatown, Budapest. Adelman (1988) pointed out that social support from immigrants of the same origin develops into a bubble which prevents immigrants from developing cultural learning skills or socialising with people of different ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, the support immigrants have received from one’s ethnic group could have a negative effect on their integration into the host society. This adverse impact is salient among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Consequently, the Chinese-speaking friendly services inadvertently demotivated the Chinese from improving their language skills and cultural knowledge.

In fact, several participants in this research speak Hungarian at an advanced level; however, one participant pointed out:

Even though I speak fluent Hungarian, I cannot feel the language. For example, I cannot recognise the jokes in a conversation, and I cannot tell whether a person is reliable from the way he speaks, but my Hungarian colleagues have such instinct as a native speaker. I can tell if a person speaks Chinese, but I have not had such a native instinct with Hungarian language yet. (62, male).

Brumfit defined fluency as language production in natural processes (as cited

in Chambers, 1997). For example, a pause in speech differs between second-language learners and native speakers because second-language learners produce short word groups and tend to pause where a native speaker would not pause (Chambers, 1997). Also, previous research on language proficiency focused on language learning in a classroom setting. However, the proficiency defined in a classroom setting is not applicable to an immigrant's context. Immigrants are oblivious to the implicit cultural reference in intercultural interactions.

Thus, Chinese immigrants have realised they cannot fully understand Hungarian though they speak fluent Hungarian. *“It is not like when I talk with someone in Chinese. I can infer where one comes from, one's education level from the way one talks. I do not have such intrinsic judgment when I speak Hungarian.”* (62, male). Therefore, having language proficiency does not suggest immigrants have the competence to fully understand a conversation. However, language proficiency is a requisite to understand the nuances of a language. A basic language skill allows immigrants to interact with locals, yet immigrants need cultural proficiency in their acculturation process. Hence, one needs to overcome not only the language barrier but also the cultural barrier.

The language barrier has also incurred additional expense and low efficiency for Chinese companies in Hungary. Chinese employers need to hire interpreters to communicate with their Hungarian employees. This has resulted in low efficiency and additional cost in business.

In short, the language barrier remains a prevalent issue among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. For example, an inadequate language proficiency is negatively correlated to academic performance among Chinese students in Hungary; the language barrier has hindered the Chinese students' social interaction with peers and teachers. Furthermore, the language barrier has discouraged Chinese immigrants from participating in Hungarian society. Chinese immigrants are compelled to interact within Chinese circles to avoid the language barrier. Moreover, they lack the

knowledge of cultural nuances that have been embedded in linguistic codes to better integrate into local society. However, further studies are necessary to advance the current knowledge regarding the assessment and acquisition of cultural proficiency for immigrants.

Identities

The notion of *I* and *me* in the Chinese language are denoted by pronoun *wǒ* (我); however, classical Chinese has a variety of first person pronouns, such as 吾 (*wú*), 予 (*yǔ*), 余 (*yú*), 台 (*tái*), 朕 (*zhèn*) (Zhu, 2011, p. 34). The possessive form of the pronoun is formed by adding a particle *de* (的), such as *wǒ de* (我的, *my/mine*), *nǐ de* (你的, *your/yours*), *tā de* (她/他的, *her/ hers*), etc. The second-person singular pronouns have two forms: *nǐ* (你, *you*), and *nín* (您); *nín* (您, *you*) is used on formal occasions (Hamamura & Xu, 2015).

Table 8

Chinese Personal Pronouns

	Singular	Plural
First-person pronouns	<i>wǒ</i> (我)	<i>wǒ men</i> (我们)
Second -person pronouns	<i>nǐ</i> (你), <i>nín</i> (您)	<i>nǐ men</i> (你们)
Third-person pronouns	<i>tā</i> (他), <i>tā</i> (她)	<i>tā men</i> (他们), <i>tā men</i> (她们)
Impersonal pronouns	<i>tā</i> (它)	<i>tā men</i> (它们)

Note. Adopted from Hamamura, T., & Xu, Y. (2015). Changes in Chinese culture as examined through changes in personal pronoun usage. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 46*(7), 930-941.

The plural pronouns have added *mén* (们) to the singular pronouns. For example, *mén* (们) in *wǒ mén* (我们), *nǐ mén* (你们), *tā mén* (他们). Similarly, the possessive form of plural forms adds *de* (的) to the plural pronouns; the plural pronoun forms function as subject and object. That is, *wǒ mén* (我们) in Chinese refers to *we* and *us* in English depending on the context (Hamamura & Xu, 2015).

There is a prominent intrinsic Chinese identity among Chinese immigrants living in Hungary. That is, the notion between *wǒ mén* (我们, we) and *tā mén* (他们, they). This distinction between *we* (Chinese) and *they* (foreigners) does not change whether a Chinese lives in China or abroad. To illustrate, westerners are referred to as foreigners in China, and this recognition towards non-Chinese does not change when a Chinese person moves abroad. Therefore, Chinese immigrants still view themselves as in-group members and non-Chinese (Hungarians) as out-group members.

Chinese immigrants in Hungary have developed and maintained a collective Chinese identity. Brewer and Gardner (1996) have pointed out the two levels of social selves. One level of social self is motivated by the interpersonal relationships with others, another level of self derives from the membership within a collective group. These two social selves evolve into interpersonal and collective identities. Interpersonal identities are based on personal relationships with others, whereas collective identities do not require personal relationships among group members.

The interpersonal identity of Chinese immigrants has been formed in relation to the host country's members. That is, Chinese immigrants view themselves as foreigners in Hungary. Also, the collective identity within the interpersonal identity of the Chinese in Hungary is reflected by the use of the pronoun *wǒ mén* (我们, we) when Chinese refer to themselves. "The individual defines him- or herself partly in terms of salient group membership. Identification is the perception of oneness with or belongingness to a group, involving direct or vicarious experience of its successes and failures" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 34).

Furthermore, the pronoun *we* has been applied to convey two concepts:

inclusion and exclusion. The inclusive *we* indicates the speaker and hearer whereas the exclusive *we* only refers to the speaker and the speaker's group to denote power and distance of the speaker from the hearer (Íñigo-Mora, 2004). The exclusive use of *we* among Chinese immigrants suggests that the Chinese immigrants distinguish themselves from Hungarians. A community is formed based on *what we are* and *what we are not* (Wardhaugh, 2010). When the Chinese immigrants in Hungary identify themselves as *wǒ mén* (我们, we), they also delineate who are not Chinese: Hungarians. In the Chinese language, *zán mén* (咱们, we) is another term used to refer to the first person plural. The difference between *wǒ mén* (我们, we) and *zán mén* (咱们, we) is *wǒ mén* (我们, we) only includes the speaker whereas *zán mén* (咱们, we) includes both the speaker and the listener; namely, the use of *wǒ mén* (我们, we) is exclusive while the term *zán mén* (咱们, we) is inclusive (Wu, 2014, p. 95). This nuance in the Chinese language has further substantiated that China is a high-context culture. Chinese “makes greater distinction between insider and outsider than low-context cultures do” (Hall, 1976, p. 113).

In contrast to *wǒ mén* (我们, we), *tā mén* (他们, they) has frequently been used by the Chinese when referring to Hungarians. In addition, several other terms were mentioned by Chinese immigrants when talking about their perception of Hungarians: *xiōng yá lì rén* (匈牙利人, Hungarian), *lǎowài* (老外, foreigner), and *wài guó rén* (外国人, foreigner). The term *tā mén* (他们, they) is used in contexts where the Chinese immigrants express their views on the differences between Hungarians and Chinese. *Xiōng yá lì rén* (匈牙利人, Hungarian) has been mentioned primarily in two situations. First, it is used by the Chinese immigrants to refer to Hungarians, but there is no exclusion as in *tā mén* (他们, they/them); second, the Chinese immigrants use the term *xiōng yá lì rén* (匈牙利人, Hungarian) to distinguish *xiōng yá lì rén* (匈牙利人, Hungarian) from other European nationalities. The motivations of the term *lǎo wài* (老外) varies. To illustrate, *lǎo wài* (老外) is considered a neutral term used by young Chinese; it is used as a nickname for foreigner. However, the term has a negative effect on foreigners though the negative

effect was not intended by the speaker (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 59).

According to Zhang and Chen (2008), foreigners do not appreciate the term even though the structure *lao* + surname is a formal and respectful way to address another person. On the other hand, *lǎo wài* discloses a condescending attitude from the speaker because the term *lǎo wài* (老外) implies that someone is an outsider, layman, non-professional (*wài háng*, 外行). Moreover, when being called *lǎo wài* (老外), foreigners may feel that they are excluded from Chinese society because of the differentiation between insider and outsider (*nèi wài yǒu bié*, 内外有别) in Chinese culture (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 59). This differentiation is salient regarding the motivation of how Chinese people address Chinese and foreigners. In Chinese, using formal ways to address another Chinese person is considered distant and impersonal whereas the informal ways to address another person are more intimate and personal. Hence, Chinese people use *lǎo wài* (老外) to show respect for foreigners, but it also implies the invisible boundary between the Chinese and foreigners (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 63). Rodrigues (2013) noted that a *laowai* is always perceived by Chinese as a *laowai* regardless of whether they are fluent in Chinese (as cited in Liu, 2017, p. 36).

Zhang and Chen studied Chinese university students' motivation to use the term *lǎo wài* (老外) and how foreign students in China perceived the term. Chinese students perceive *lǎo wài* (老外) as a laid back and friendly way to address foreigners in China, while the foreign students perceive the term negatively, and *lǎo wài* (老外) is considered a derogatory term by foreigners (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 65).

In fact, *lǎo wài* (老外) suggests Chinese people's ambivalence of foreigners (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 23; Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 65). On the one hand, the use of the term connotes the friendliness and appreciation from Chinese people; on the other hand, the term conveys a sense of exclusion. It is a love and hate relationship that Chinese people respect and despise, appreciate and fear foreigners at the same time (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 65). The reasons behind the Chinese people's ambivalent feeling are two-fold:

The *laowai* are seen as beneficial for investment, scientific knowledge, and information about the economy and global capitalism they have brought and may bring to China, but they are perceived as a latent destabilizing threat to the integrity and unity of the nation. (Zhang & Chen, 2008, p. 27)

The exclusion of *lǎo wài* (老外) is noticeable when Chinese people interact with foreigners. On her field work in China, Rodrigues and her Chinese friend were approached by a train ticket dealer at a train station, the ticket dealer told Rodrigues' Chinese friend, "If you want, you can come with me, but only you. We don't sell to *laowai*" (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 23); hence, there is a salient distinction between in-group member and out-group member because the ticket seller was willing to sell a ticket to another Chinese, but not to a *lǎo wài*. Chinese people perceive foreigners as different from them in lifestyle, worldview, and moralities (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 23). The absence of commonalities between the Chinese people and foreigners contribute to the reserved, distant attitude of Chinese people.

Wài guó rén (外国人, foreigner) refers to non-Chinese nationals. *Wài* (外, outside) is the opposite of *nèi* (内, inside), *guó* (国) means country, and *rén* (人) refers to people. Thus, the term *wài guó rén* (外国人, foreigner) denotes people who come from outside of China (Yu, 2001). In interview transcripts, *lǎo wài* is the least mentioned term to refer to Hungarians; *wài guó rén* (外国人, foreigner) and *xiōng yá lì rén* (匈牙利人, Hungarian) were used sparsely by Chinese residents in Hungary. *tā mén* (他们, they/them) were frequently used by Chinese immigrants to refer to Hungarians:

Hungarians, in my impression, they are not so serious about work. They will do if they want to do it, if they do not want to do it, they will quit. They do not value the chance to work. If you do not give them vacation, they will quit. I do not think they are as hardworking as us.

The frequent use of *tā mén* (他们, they/them) may have resulted from the identity of the researcher. I was born and raised in China, and naturally, participants

took me as an in-group member when I interviewed them. There were no questions about my identity because participants perceived me to be one of them. However, many of them asked me which province did I come from. Hence, when Chinese residents refer to Hungarians as *tā mén* (他们, they/them), they differentiate themselves from Hungarians, but include me in their perception of Hungarians, because Chinese immigrants perceive that I share the common values, beliefs, and moralities with them.

The distinction of *wǒ mén* (我们, we) and *tā mén* (他们, they) has also implied the salience of Chinese identity among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. When I conducted my interviews in Chinatown in Budapest, a petition aimed to pass legislation recognising the Chinese as an ethnic group in Hungary caught my attention. The organisers are required to acquire 3,000 signatures from Chinese residents in Hungary before submitting the proposal to the Hungarian parliament. The signature brochure (see Appendix F) had been distributed to various Chinese shops.

There are three columns on the signature form. The first column states “it is a drifting life no matter where you go if there is no place that the heart can rest” (心若没有栖息的地方，到哪里都是流浪). One can fill in personal information and signature on the right-side column. The middle column is the letter to call for signatures from Chinese residents. This is the summary of the open letter:

The Chinese came to Hungary in the 1990s, and most of us are successful through 30 years of hard work. We have settled here, and our children go to Hungarian schools and work in Hungarian companies. And now we desire to integrate to mainstream Hungarian society.

In doing so, we have set up a committee to prepare the proposal, and we have acquired the permission from the Hungarian government to collect signatures. According to Hungarian law: all groups of people who have lived in the territory of the Republic of Hungary for at least one century, who represent a numerical ethnicity in the country's population, whose members

are Hungarian citizens, who are distinguished from the rest of the population by their own language, culture, and tradition, who demonstrate a sense of belonging together that is aimed at preserving all of these and at expressing and protecting the interests of their historical communities. (Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, Chapter 1, Section 1, Subsection (2))

We have talked to various Chinese associations about this proposal, and we all agree this proposal will benefit the Chinese community in Hungary for generations to come.

This proposal shows the effort of Chinese immigrants to acquire Hungarian identity as an additional identity. The multiple identities one has can be categorised as voluntary identities (roles) and obligatory identities (roles). Voluntary identities are chosen freely by an individual. Being able to choose one's identity is beneficial to the well-being of an individual. Also, the freedom to choose one's identity implies the individual has autonomy of his or her life, which increases one's self-esteem; in contrast, obligatory identities are less likely to be adopted voluntarily (Thoits, 2003). Therefore, this proposal encourages Chinese immigrants to acquire the Hungarian identity as a voluntary identity.

However, the response from Chinese immigrants has been ambivalent regarding this proposal. On the one hand, some Chinese immigrants argue Chinese immigrants will be perceived as a part of Hungarian society if the Chinese are legally recognised as an ethnic group in Hungary. On the other hand, some Chinese immigrants strongly oppose the proposal because they consider this proposal to be a betrayal of the Chinese identity. They are also concerned that the proposal might have an adverse impact on the Chinese image in Hungarian society. The two opposing views suggest that many Chinese perceived Hungarian as a voluntary identity which will be beneficial to Chinese immigrants in Hungary. However, other Chinese immigrants perceive a Chinese identity as an obligatory identity; thus, becoming an

ethnic group in Hungary is perceived as a violation of their obligatory identity, namely, the Chinese identity. Additionally, many Chinese immigrants remain neutral to this proposal, while some are concerned that the proposal may disrupt the harmony of Chinese immigrants in Hungary by creating an adverse image.

The proposal has demonstrated the commitment from a part of the Chinese community to become a legally recognised ethnic group in addition to Hungary's 13 other ethnic groups (see Appendix G). The proposal focuses on the prospects for future generations of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. This futuristic inclination is consistent with Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimensions: long-term orientation (China) versus a more short-term orientation (Hungary).

Drawing from the interview data, Chinese immigrants have experienced cultural differences related to study and work. For instance, the language barrier appears to be a primary obstacle emerging from the communication between Chinese immigrants and Hungarians. Four participants indicated the anxiety of being Asian in Hungary. One participant said, *“I feel Hungarians are unfriendly; maybe they do not like foreigners in general.”* (29, female). Also, Chinese immigrants have demonstrated a salient Chinese identity; however, they are flexible enough to adjust to the Hungarian culture, as one participant mentioned:

I adapt to the Hungarian customs when I deal with Hungarians. You cannot use Chinese customs when you are dealing with Hungarians, can you? It will be challenging for you, and you cannot find common ground. However, when you come back to the Chinese social circle, I follow the way the Chinese do things. (43. male)

Chinese immigrants in Hungary have made proactive changes to better integrate into the local society; they have become an indispensable part of the host country economically, socially, and politically. As one interviewee mentioned, *“I have never heard my Hungarian friends expressing their negative feelings towards Chinese in Hungary.”* The Chinese immigrants have actively contributed to the local economy

and the local labour market, and it has presented a positive image of Chinese immigrants being contributors to the local economy.

Chinese immigrants have adopted a practical approach to identify themselves in Hungarian society: the coexistence of the participant's Chinese identity and Hungarian identity. Furthermore, the Chinese and Hungarian identities are located at two separate domains, and these two identities are not interdependent. This special dichotomy is partially created by the laws. As mentioned earlier, China does not recognise dual citizenship; thus, Chinese residents are legally forced to keep their Chinese identity, while living in Hungarian society makes it necessary to develop a Hungarian identity as well. Consequently, Chinese immigrants intend to maintain their Chinese identity even though many have developed a Hungarian identity.

Many Chinese immigrants have expressed their receptiveness to integrating into Hungarian society, but many Chinese immigrants prefer to be recognised ethnically as Chinese in Hungarian society. Moreover, the Chinese identity is an obligatory identity and the Hungarian identity is a voluntary identity for Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Not every Chinese immigrant has successfully constructed a Hungarian identity. Many Chinese immigrants have experienced substantial obstacles, and they can only identify with a Chinese identity. Thus, the inclination to preserve their Chinese identity is conspicuous among first-generation Chinese immigrants.

Chinese immigrants in Hungary cannot integrate to foreigner life because many of us came here without Hungarian language knowledge. We cannot do other jobs because we are not qualified. Chinese immigrants can only open a shop or a restaurant. We run our own business and live here; after all, I am a foreigner in Hungary. As Chinese, we were born in China, and we are influenced by Chinese culture. We can learn many things since we have been living here, but we cannot change entirely. (62, male).

The lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge has hindered the prospect of integration among first-generation Chinese immigrants in Hungary. The sentiment

towards Chinese culture has subsequently affected their choice to stay or leave the host country. The saying *luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) and *luò yè shēng gēn* (落叶生根) reflect the two concepts of root derived from Confucianism. *Luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) and *luò yè shēng gēn* (落叶生根) are two metaphors using falling leaves as the source domain, and the target domain is senior Chinese immigrants who have lived abroad for many years. Metaphorically, *luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) illustrates the leaves fall onto the ground and return to its root which alludes one should return to where one was born despite how far one has moved. *Luò yè shēng gēn* (落叶生根) suggests the leaves fall onto the ground and grow their own roots, which signifies immigrants settle down in the host society and regard the host society as a new home.

Luò yè guī gēn (落叶归根) entails the filial piety in Confucian ideology. It signifies that if a Chinese person passes away abroad, their relatives bring the remains back to the hometown. Though many Chinese have left their hometown for better opportunities, they never intended to leave their hometown forever because they want to return to their roots in China (Wang, 2007). The sentiment to return to one's root was strong among the early Chinese immigrants to America from the 1850s. Chinese immigrants were not eligible to obtain citizenship, and they experienced discrimination from mainstream society. The unwelcoming social climate forced them to choose *luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根), and the anticipation of a return to their hometown in China had supported them to endure the arduous time in America (Wang, 2007).

However, *luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) has become less appealing to Chinese immigrants in America. The early Chinese immigrants came to America without other family members, yet the new Chinese immigrants who came after World War II brought their family along with them. Though the western culture reshaped their perceptions towards themselves, the early Chinese immigrants who came to America were marginalised because they could not find the balance in two cultures. In contrast, the new Chinese immigrants were more inclined to settle in the host country *luò yè*

shēng gēn (落叶生根). Furthermore, the tendency to return to one's hometown *luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) has gradually shifted to *luò yè shēng gēn* (落叶生根, grow the roots in the host country) among second-generation Chinese immigrants in America (Wang, 2007). A similar inclination has been found among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. *Luò yè guī gēn* (落叶归根) is a preferred option for elderly Chinese immigrants in Hungary because many of them have families and relatives in China. However, the second generation of Chinese immigrants tend to settle in Hungary, namely, *luò yè shēng gēn* (落叶生根).

Chinese immigrants voluntarily adapt to the culture and identify with the host society; on the other hand, the distinctive Chinese cultural heritage has distanced them from being assimilated into Hungarian society. To illustrate, Chinese immigrants exhibit and negotiate between Chinese and Hungarian identities. The activation of an identity is determined by the cultural context. That is, an immigrant's Chinese identity is verified within the Chinese context, and one's Hungarian identity is activated in the Hungarian context.

The Chinese immigrants refer to themselves in relation to Hungarians. On the one hand, Chinese immigrants perceive themselves as foreigners. On the other hand, the Chinese view Hungarians as foreigners when referring to Hungarians, even though the Chinese immigrants are the foreigners in Hungary. When it comes to other nationals who work in the retail market, the Chinese refer to them based on their nationalities, such as *yuè nán rén* (越南人, Vietnamese), *tú ěr qí rén* (土耳其人, Turkish). *rén* means people or person in Chinese.

This geographical approach to defining a person's identity is applicable to Chinese immigrants that come from China. As mentioned previously, Chinese is the shared national identity among Chinese immigrants in Hungary, yet the second level of one's identity is region/province/city-based. For instance, Chinese who come from Shanghai are likely to be referred to as *Shànghǎi rén* (上海人). This pattern (*place+rén*) not only indicates a person's place of origin but also indicates the culture

that separates one from another. Another example of this categorisation within a Chinese context is *běn dì rén* (本地人, locals) and *wài dì rén* (外地人, outsiders), which is commonly used to differentiate the locals from migrant workers from other provinces. (Rodrigues, 2013, p. 27). The distinction between *běn dì rén* (本地人, locals) and *wài dì rén* (外地人, outsiders) is derived from the household registration system, i.e. the Hù kǒu (户口) system in China.

The implementation of the hù kǒu (户口) system in 1958 was intended to control population mobility. Each Chinese person was registered either as *nóng cūn hù kǒu* (农村户口) or *chéng shì hù kǒu* (城市户口). According to Chan:

The hukou system was not merely a means of limiting rural-urban population and labour mobility, as it is commonly depicted, but also a system of social control aimed at excluding the rural population from access to state-provided goods, welfare, and entitlements. (Chan, 2010, p. 358)

Consequently, the hù kǒu (户口) system has created two societies in China. The Chinese people with urban hù kǒu (城市户口) who work in industrial sectors in contrast to Chinese people with rural hù kǒu (农村户口) who are restricted to agricultural activities (Chan, 2010, p. 358). However, the Chinese rural population has been migrating to urban cities since the development of the export industry since 1980. The migrant workers are called *nóng mín* (农民工) (Chan, 2010, p. 359), *nóng mín* (*nóng mín*) is translated to mean peasant in Chinese. The migrant workers work in industrial cities though they still hold rural hù kǒu (农村户口). However, working in industrial sectors does not automatically grant a migrant worker the same social welfare benefits that a local has (Chan, 2010, p. 360). Subsequently, these migrant workers are perceived as *wài dì rén* (外地人) by the locals because migrants workers are not originally from the urban area and they do not have urban hù kǒu (城市户口). A study investigating people's place identity suggests that people that live in urban cities with urban hù kǒu (城市户口) demonstrate a stronger place identity than people who only work in urban cities with rural hù kǒu (农村户口). Place identity is “a

component of personal identity, a process by which, through interaction with places, people describe themselves in terms of belonging to a specific place” (Hernández, Hidalgo, Salazar-Laplace, & Hess, 2007, p. 310). However, the discrepancy is correlated to the openness of the cities. The more open a city is, the less discrepancy regarding the place identity between *běn dì rén* (本地人, locals) and *wài dì rén* (外地人) (Huang, Zhou, Zhuang, Wang, & Tian, 2016, p. 466).

It should be noted that the distinction between the locals and the outsiders is not the singular phenomenon in Chinese society. However, studies on the place identity of natives and non-natives show different results. A study of the place identity and place attachment between the natives and non-natives in the Canary Islands suggest natives of the islands shows a salient place identity and more emotional attachments than non-natives (Hernández et al., 2007, p. 317). In contrast, another study of place identity in Israeli cities suggests that whether a person was born in the city does not influence one’s place identity, rather, the city size affect a person’s place identity. It was found that a person’s place identity is stronger in large cities than in small and medium-sized cities (Casakin, Hernández, & Ruiz, 2015, p. 224)

The place identity is a prominent feature of Chinese immigrants within a Chinese context and a transnational context. A Chinese person’s identity is categorised by his or her home city in a Chinese context, and the distinction between insiders and outsiders is an ingrained concept to define in-group members and out-group members. However, a Chinese person’s national identity becomes the singular identity in a transnational context. And this choice to identify themselves as Chinese instead of one’s regional identity implies that Chinese people’s togetherness forms a group identity overseas. This, again, corroborates Hofstede’s cultural dimensions theory that China is a collectivistic culture. The Chinese identity is a salient feature on a transnational level as a unified identity to form solidarity among overseas Chinese. However, the divided identity recognition within the Chinese context suggests Chinese people have deep-rooted notions about insiders and outsiders even among Chinese people.

Therefore, it is no coincidence that many interviewees asked me which province I came from.

In sum, the preliminary study of the emergent themes that Chinese immigrants have experienced are study-related problems, working cultures, language barriers, and identities. These are the recurrent issues that a Chinese person may encounter if they live in Hungary. By addressing these issues, it is hoped to provide an informative view of the potential problems for Chinese residents in Hungary, thus, inspiring solutions to these problems.

5.2 Wall theory

The index from Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimension shows Hungarian society is a more individualistic, indulgent culture, and more likely to avoid uncertainty than Chinese society (Hofstede et al., 2010). To illustrate, Chinese employees tend to passively accept the implicit rule which implies a larger power distance in Chinese culture than Hungarian culture. The Hungarian indulgent lifestyle contrasts the hectic, hardworking Chinese working culture. The explicit written laws reflect the psychological assurance needed in uncertain situations in Hungarian society. Hungarians are less likely to try new ideas because it represents the uncertain or unknown situations Hungarian prefer to avoid.

When Chinese immigrants come to Hungary, there is direct contact between two different cultures. Therefore, the intercultural conflicts are foreseeable based on the cultural index from Hofstede et al.'s study. This research attempts to identify the discourse and cause of conflicts when Chinese and Hungarian culture come into direct contact. The wall theory, therefore, is proposed to delineate the cultural difference between China and Hungary. Consisting of the visible wall and the invisible wall, the wall theory is derived from interviews with different interviewees. The theory was developed after applying ATLAS.ti to analyse, synthesise, and conceptualise the different notions of tangible and intangible boundaries in Chinese and Hungarian

culture.

5.2.1 The Visible Wall

Hall highlighted the complexities of culture, “Beneath the clearly perceived, highly explicit surface culture, there lies a whole other world, which when understood will ultimately radically change our view of human nature.” (Hall, 1976, p. 15). The intercultural contact between Chinese immigrants and Hungarians suggests one major difference between the two cultures: the notion of space, which entails personal space, physical space, or any other tangible boundaries.

Many intercultural conflicts Chinese immigrants have encountered are derived from inadequate awareness of space. In Chinese culture, the boundary of space is obscure. It is not uncommon for the Chinese to stand closely next to each other on public transportation, in contrast to the space people keep between themselves on public transportation in Northern European countries. These are two extreme examples regarding space in western and Chinese culture. However, these two examples illustrate that space is perceived and respected in western culture, whereas space has less importance in Chinese culture. Therefore, when the Chinese interact with westerners, the Chinese may unintentionally violate others’ space without knowing the cultural significance of space in western culture.

5.2.1.1 Case Study One: It Is Not A Big Deal in China!

I was watching 17th World Aquatics Championships with my friends. There were many people in the stadium. We were every excited to see Chinese team there. I was talking with my friends behind to me while we were queuing to enter the stadium. I did not realised that my bag had accidentally hit the person in front of me when I turned my back talking to my friends. Apparently, the person was upset and asked me to watch my bag. He was not angry but I could tell he was annoyed. In China, this is not really a big deal if someone

unintentional invaded another person's space. (28, male).

In Chinese culture, the boundary of physical space is nebulous, and the physical contact is considered acceptable when the space is limited. However, this notion of physical space in Chinese culture is not congruent with the notion of personal space in western culture. This case also illustrates the effect of the harmony concept on the social behaviour of Chinese people. Namely, a Chinese person is less likely to claim their space if invaded in order to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships with in-group members or outsiders. The concept of harmony aligns with the feature of a collectivistic culture where group interest is valued. In contrast, a person who comes from an individualistic culture is prone to defend their space. This incident corroborates the view that China is a collectivistic culture and Hungary is an individualistic culture based on Hofstede et al's study.

Most Chinese immigrants in Hungary have not noticed the different concept of physical space in daily encounters. Some cultural norms which are acceptable in China have turned out to be inappropriate in western culture. Their ignorance of the visible wall has resulted in many unpleasant intercultural conflicts. Though some Chinese immigrants speculated that the conflicts resulted from cultural differences between China and Hungary, they have not discovered what constituted the cause of the intercultural conflicts. Had Chinese immigrants been informed of the cultural difference of the *visible wall* notion in western culture, many intercultural conflicts could have been avoided.

The *visible wall* refers to physical, spatial, and boundaries. They are salient features in Hungarian culture, whereas it has been perceived as insignificant and unimportant in Chinese culture. Therefore, the notion of the *visible wall* is helpful for westerners living in China because the tangible boundaries in Chinese culture are obscure. The conflicts derived from the visible wall difference have again supported the concept that western culture values individual rights in private space, whereas the Asian collective culture perceives space as a shared entity. Also, the discrepancy of

physical space in Chinese and Hungarian culture suggests distance is perceived differently across cultures.

Humans detect distance through distance receptors and immediate receptors. The distance receptors refer to the eyes, ears, and nose which detect the distance between objects. The immediate receptors examine the surrounding environment through the skin, membranes, and muscles (Hall, 1990). Additionally, “the interrelated observations and theories of man’s use of space is a specialised elaboration of culture” (Hall, 1990, p. 1). Furthermore, the biological behavioural features in the past and psychological attributes at present define proxemics.

Proxemics has three microlevel features: fixed feature, semi-fixed feature, and informal feature (Hall, 1990). Fixed feature space represents the “material manifestation as well as the hidden, internalised designs that govern behaviour as man moves around on this earth” (Hall, 1990, p. 103). Semi-fixed feature space retains the salient feature of particular fixed space. However, people, mood, and demand affect the flexibility of semi-fixed feature space. Informal space is the most dynamic feature of proxemics as it emerges from human encounters. Furthermore, four informal distances were identified within the close and far phase: intimate, personal, social, and public distance (Hall, 1990).

The intimate distance at a close phase involves physical contact through sight, olfaction, heat, sound, smell, and breath. Intimate distance at a far phase implies six to eighteen inches distance. Personal distance was proposed by Hediger with reference to “the distance consistency separating the members of non-contact species” (as cited in Hall, 1990, p. 119). Personal distance at a close phase refers to one and a half to two and a half feet distance. Despite the fact that personal space entails less physical contact, it reveals relationships or feelings based on the distance people position themselves to others. Personal distance at a far phase is between two and a half to four feet, ranging from easily accessible to the end of physical contact (Hall, 1990).

Social distance at a close phase varies from four to seven feet, and this

distance is noticeable among people who work together; a far phase of social distance (seven to twelve feet) implies more formality than a close social distance. Public distance at a close phase (twelve to twenty-five feet) allows one to take defensive action. Public distance at a far phase (twenty feet or more) signifies the distance around important public figures (Hall, 1990).

The four informal distances have demonstrated the features of proxemics in American culture. However, the categories of distance in American culture do not hold true in every culture. Americans tend to emphasise more on time schedule rather than space. A conversation between two persons naturally defines an exclusive private space and the violation of the boundary is marked only by physically entering the door in America culture (Hall, 1990).

However, the concept of distance shows salient variations in Asian culture. Ramsey (1984) claimed that Asians (e.g., Chinese, Japanese) maintain greater distance in interactions. Beaulieu (2004) measured the distance and orientation of participants from 31 countries in interviews. The research was carried out in a room with a chair originally placed next to the entrance door, and participants were instructed to move the chair at their will. The experiment suggested Anglo Saxons tend to occupy more space than Asians, Caucasians, Mediterranean, and Latinos. This result substantiates Ramsey's claim concerning the greater personal distance among Asians in interactions. In contrast, Axtell (1998) asserted that the Chinese speaker is prone to keep a closer distance with their interlocutor due to limited personal space. This view is in line with the results from current research concerning the presence of a *visible wall* in Chinese culture.

Chinese perceive distance at two levels: proxemics and haptics. Haptics has been defined as "sensing and manipulation through touch" (Srinivasan, 1995, p. 1). It is rare to see touch, hug, or kiss when Chinese greet each other (Axtell, 1998). The Chinese maintain considerable personal distance when it involves close physical contact. However, the salient feature in haptics does not stem from the notion of

personal space; instead, haptics such as a touch or hug function as an affective device (Yang, 2007). “To the Chinese, physical intimacy and love are private matters never exhibited in public. Even in handshaking, the traditional Chinese way was to clap one’s own hands in greeting” (Sung, 1985, p. 260).

The notion of distance is complex in Chinese culture. The close physical contact signifies a salient boundary with regard to personal or social distance, and the boundary lies in whether the distance is prompted by emotions or feelings. The Chinese are likely to avoid intimate physical contact which conveys emotions through kissing or hugging in public, but a close distance is acceptable when the space is limited. In other words, physical contact is common and acceptable if it is caused by reduced public space. However, physical contact is likely to cause embarrassment if it entails feelings or emotions in social interactions.

Though the Chinese tend to avoid the emotionally-charged physical contact, they are oblivious to the physical distance in public space. The tangible boundaries are neglected by Chinese immigrants due to lack of knowledge of the *visible wall* in Hungarian culture. Furthermore, the visible wall includes not only visible boundaries but also refers to time and property ownership. In western culture, it is common to schedule meetings with friends, colleagues, doctors, teachers, etc. However, such arrangements are less common in casual social encounters in China:

When Hungarians have some gatherings, they are not like the Chinese that come to someone's door and do not need to knock, and simply walk in and start a conversation. Hungarians are not like this; they will make an appointment first, even among good friends, or neighbours. You cannot push the door open and rush inside someone’s house in Hungary. This is something different than in China. (46, male)

This difference again shows that China has a low uncertainty avoidance culture, whereas Hungary has a high uncertainty avoidance culture. Another explanation is that perhaps Chinese people suppress their discomfort when they have

an uninvited guest to avoid disrupting the harmonious interpersonal relationships.

The notion of the physical boundaries implies Chinese and Hungarian cultures view the visible wall differently, yet another constituent of the visible wall in wall theory is the notion of sound in Chinese and Hungarian culture. It seems Chinese and Hungarian cultures perceive sound in public spaces differently.

5.2.1.2 Case Study Two: Why Is Everyone So Quiet Here!

Hungarians do not talk in public, they are silent. I feel pressured as if I should not speak in public places as well. Last semester, I needed to take 40 minutes bus to go to school. when I was with my friends on the bus, we would talk. As we spoke, everyone was looking at us with disapproving looks. So I asked a Hungarian friends why did people look at me on the bus while I was talking to my friends, they said it is very impolite to talk in public, so Hungarians do not talk on the bus. Another time I went to a Japanese restaurant with a friend. The atmosphere in the restaurant was so nice. There was dimming yellow light when you enter, and the table was decorated with flowers, wine, etc. We sat there, but there was nobody talking. When I enter, I had to lower my voice. I sat and I felt so uncomfortable. I liked the design, the set up, and the food, but when I look around, there were couples, they sat and ate quietly, they do not talk at all. No sound. I was talking to my friend, and we both tried to lower down our voice, it was a uncomfortable dinner. When I get out, I said finally and felt so relieved. Hungarians do not speak on the bus or in public places. I really do not like this and I have a hard time to cope with this.

Whilst Hungarians are quiet in public settings, many Chinese residents are not accustomed to the silence. Talking loudly in a public space is considered as an intrusion of others' personal space in Hungarian culture, and such behaviour is often frowned upon by Hungarians. In contrast, Chinese people are oblivious to the nuance

of sound in western cultures. Also, the phonological features of the Chinese language sounds “terse and abrupt” (Malikhao, 2017, p. 82). As a matter of fact, many Chinese do not realise that their voice sounds high when they speak. Xu (2012) pointed out the need for talking loudly to others implies that Chinese people lack analytical thinking abilities, thus, a person’s authority and credibility is perceived to be established only through talking loudly. The loudness comes from the void in the mind and uneasiness in heart and it exposes the void in their spiritual world and deficiency in analytical and logical reasoning (Xu, 2012, pp. 117- 120).

Another explanation for the Chinese talking loud in public is that Chinese people have an affinity for 热闹 (rè nào). 热闹 (rè nào) is defined as (a) lively, bustling with noise and excitement; full of activity; (b) liven up; have a jolly time; (3) thrilling sight; excitement(Hui, 2011, p. 1349). Many Chinese festival traditions bustle with noise and excitement, such as 闹元宵(nào yuán xiāo), 闹花灯(nào huā dēng). To illustrate, the lively and vibrant sound makes an essential part of the celebration of the Lantern Festival (元宵, yuán xiāo) where people solve the riddles on festive lanterns and participate in festive activities, such as playing fireworks, walking on stilts (Wei, 2011, pp. 27-28). Chinese people perceive the bustling sound as joyous celebrations and an expression of happiness (Jiang, 2015). Therefore, the loud scene that westerners may find overwhelming, is in fact, the Chinese people’s way to express happiness.

Growing up with a culture which has an obscure boundary of sound, many Chinese people overseas continue to speak loudly as if they were in China without knowing their behaviour violates others’ right to enjoy tranquillity in western culture (Xu, 2013, p. 61). The sound is a subtle visible boundary that Chinese people may have overlooked, and this visible boundary is marked by the volume of the sound instead of physical distance. Additionally, Chinese people do not consider talking loudly violates others’ personal space in contrast to the negative perception of being loud in public in Hungarian culture. As a result, the intercultural conflicts may occur

deriving from the fuzzy boundary of sound in Chinese culture.

The intercultural incidents have derived from the different views on the visible boundaries in two cultures. As a result, a Chinese person living in Hungary has the false impression that Hungarians are unapproachable and distant due to the rigid rules of personal space in Hungarian culture. The sound of a person's volume in public space is perceived differently in Chinese and Hungarian culture. Whilst Chinese residents speak in their normal volume in public space, it is considered as inappropriate behaviour and an intrusion of others' space. Furthermore, the *visible wall* is not limited to tangible physical boundaries. The written rules agreements appertain to the notion of a *visible wall*. The Chinese tend to overlook the importance of written rules or agreements in western society which may cause legal issues.

Similarly, the obscure boundary of space is problematic for westerners living in China. However, intercultural conflicts could easily have been reduced had the Chinese immigrants or westerners known of the *wall theory*. The second part of wall theory illustrates the notion of an *invisible wall* in Chinese and Hungarian culture. That is, the presence of intangible boundaries is evident in Chinese culture, whereas it is less prominent in Hungarian culture. The difference in intangible boundaries has resulted in confusion when Chinese immigrants interact with Hungarians.

5.2.2 The Invisible Wall

The *invisible wall* refers to walls which are not perceptible, but which exist in mind and thoughts. Essentially, the *invisible wall* entails the absence of trust in Chinese society. The intangible boundary in Chinese culture has hindered people from communicating freely. In contrast, it is common to express one's opinions in western culture. They have recalled the straightforwardness when they interacted with Hungarians:

They (Hungarians) are direct and straightforward. One does not need to build up barriers nor set up traps. If they do not like something, they will

express it. We, Chinese, on the other hand, even if a Chinese person does not like you, he or she will not say it, but this person will probably do some things behind your back. (46, male).

Chinese are less direct and explicit in communication, which is partly owing to the fact that Chinese is a high-context language. In addition, Chinese people are less likely to make explicit statements for fear of disrupting the harmonious interpersonal relationship if the statements are negative. It also shows that Chinese culture is more tolerant of uncertainty. However, this uncertainty tolerance in Chinese culture also suggests the potential inefficient communication in thinking because it requires less effort for certainty in a low uncertainty avoidance culture. The presence of the boundary in thinking is a conspicuous feature in Chinese culture, and the communication is withdrawn and distant among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. In contrast, it is much less stressful for Chinese immigrants to interact with Hungarians because Hungary is a high uncertainty avoidance culture; subsequently, the communications are explicit and straightforward to ensure certainty in social interactions. One interviewee commented on working with Hungarian colleagues:

You do not need to overwork your brain with Hungarian, If they are not happy with something you did, they will tell you directly. In China, the employees are afraid to talk if you are the boss, and in China. As a boss, you want to figure out if your employees listen to you or not, whether some listen to you on the appearance but they might do something against you behind your back. you will not find this phenomenon here. Here in Hungary, if your employees are not comfortable with you, they will tell you directly, they are not afraid that you might do something to harm them, they know their rights. Thus, there is not need to set up blockers to divide people or some other means to punish someone. I like this very much.

The above incident also supports Hofstede's cultural dimension theory where China has a higher power distance. Consequently, Chinese employees are less

inclined to communicate candidly with their Chinese employers.

5.2.2.1 Case Study Four: You Are On Your Own!

It was the worst experience ever. I booked a car from a Chinese rental company several months before my family flew to Europe. And on the day of their arrival, the driver picked us up but told us the car was not available for my trip. I was angry that they had not informed me earlier. I had all my travel planned with my family, but they told me the car was not available. The Chinese owner agreed to find another car for me from his friends; luckily, he found one. We went on our trip, and when we got back to return the car, the owner said there was a problem: the windscreen wipers were broken. And he wanted to charge me 400 Euros for that. My father had noticed the windscreen wipers were making noise when we first used the car, so it was not our problem, but I could not prove it.

I think there is a lack of trust among the Chinese in Hungary, especially among the older Chinese immigrants. For them, as long as they can take advantage of other Chinese, they avail themselves of the available resources. I remember the first driver who picked us up said ‘we have been living in Hungary for quite a long time, and we know the hidden rules here, but the new Chinese immigrants do not know about this. We cannot teach them or tutor them; we have paid a great deal of price for it. How can we tell my experience without any benefits?’ (34, female).

The *invisible wall* alienates the Chinese in thinking, and the ubiquitous presence of the *invisible wall* has become the implicit cultural norm in Chinese culture. Not only do Chinese immigrants appear to be a closed community in Hungary, but communication among Chinese immigrants themselves also tend to be reserved. The *invisible wall* in Chinese culture is consistent with Hall’s description of high and low-context culture. The listener is expected to understand the meaning without being

explicitly denoted by the speaker in a high-context culture. People are more involved with each other in high-context culture societies whereas low-context culture societies tend to be more individualistic (Hall, 1976).

In Hungary, Chinese immigrants perceive Hungarians are more straightforward in communication. Chinese immigrants appreciate the low-context Hungarian culture where the social interactions are uncomplicated and clear, “*There are two levels of safety for immigrants: one is physical safety, another one is psychological safety that you do not need to mask or fake yourself; it is safe to interact with people without over-thinking beforehand.*” (46, male).

Thus, confusions arise when the salient invisible wall in Chinese culture encounters the less noticeable invisible wall in Hungarian culture. The Chinese immigrants have not noticed the less conspicuous presence of the *invisible wall* in Hungarian culture even though they have lived in Hungary for years. Chinese immigrants are ambivalent about whether the boundaries in an *invisible wall* exist in Hungarian culture. The effect of the invisible wall in Chinese culture has discouraged Chinese immigrants from expressing themselves, yet they have not realised the notion of an *invisible wall* is less prominent in Hungarian culture. Essentially, the notion of an invisible wall in Chinese culture has implied a trust deficit among Chinese, this hypothesis is also supported by Fukuyama’s view that there is a deficit of trust among people who are not related (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 29); thus, one is compelled to guard against others to survive in Chinese society:

I worked in Beijing for one year, so I knew a tiny little bit of what society entails regarding dealing with relationships with other people and the mistrust from bosses to employees; the lack of trust is a widespread phenomenon in Chinese society. (46, male).

In a familial culture, there is no basis to trust others if people are not related; the family connections are perceived as the highest social bonds above all other social loyalties in Chinese societies such as Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan.

Consequently, “There is a deficit of trust among people not related to one another” (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 29). This low trust phenomenon also corresponds with the difficulties that western researchers have experienced when they interviewed Chinese immigrants (see Liu, 2017; Rodrigues, 2013). The insufficiency of trust among Chinese who are not related supports the hypothesis of the presence of the *invisible wall* among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. That is, the Chinese are less inclined to trust people outside of their family.

5.2.2.2 *Trust in Chinese Culture*

Although China is a low trust society (see Fukuyama, 1995), Chinese use different strategies to prevent a breach of trust in Chinese society. The preventive measures to ensure trust were overlooked in Fukuyama’s trust framework. Three trust strategies were developed to minimise the loss in case trust is compromised in social interactions. First, trust is granted based on a personal relationship. Having a personal relationship implies the two parties know each other and can depend on each other. *Rén qíng* (人情) is the measurement of trust in personal relationships which initiates, establishes, maintains, and terminates relationships. *Rén qíng* (人情) is a form of exchange, yet it is different from the western concept of fair and equal exchange. *Rén qíng* (人情) in Chinese culture is connected to *qiàn* (欠, owe), which connotes the giver should not expect the receiver to pay back the *rén qíng* (人情). Nevertheless, the receiver of *rén qíng* (人情) is obliged to return the *rén qíng* (人情) on appropriate occasions (Xue, 2008).

Once a person accepts the *rén qíng* (人情), he or she is in debt. In addition, the amount *rén qíng* (人情) to be returned should exceed the *rén qíng* (人情) one has received. For example, if A does a favour for B, B should not return the equivalent amount of favour B has received; instead, B has to return a bigger *rén qíng* (人情). Thus, A owes *rén qíng* (人情) to B because B has returned *rén qíng* (人情) which is more valuable than A’s original *rén qíng* (人情). The *rén qíng* (人情) game becomes a

continuous circle, which means the relationship will never end. However, if the returned *rén qíng* (人情) is comparable to the *rén qíng* (人情) one has received, it means the receiver does not owe anything to the giver, i.e., the relationship terminates (Xue, 2008).

Second, *fáng* (防, vigilance) is a common strategy to minimise the risk of trusting a person with no personal relationship. Confucianism noted *xìn* (信, trust) should not be *máng xìn* (盲信, blind trust), and one should take precautions. The weight of *rén qíng* (人情) in *fáng* (防, take precautions) is less than the *rén qíng* (人情) based on a personal relationship. Nevertheless, it has the equivalent effect when one is the giver of *rén qíng* (人情), and the receiver owes *rén qíng* (人情) debt. However, the critical difference is the *rén qíng* (人情) receiver has no personal relationship with the giver of *rén qíng* (人情); therefore, the receiver of *rén qíng* (人情) is no longer liable nor restricted to a personal relationship with the giver. In this case, the giver of the *rén qíng* (人情) takes precautions to avoid losses. There are three methods of taking precautions: (a) supervision; (b) intervention of a third party; (c) signing a contract (Xue, 2008).

Supervision refers to the giver of *rén qíng* (人情) assigning a third party that he or she trusts to monitor the trust of the *rén qíng* (人情) receiver, which implies the distrust towards the receiver at the beginning. The third party that the *rén qíng* (人情) giver selects corresponds to the first strategy because the chosen third party knows both the *rén qíng* (人情) giver and receiver; he or she serves as a restriction to guarantee the receiver will not violate the trust. Though the violation of trust means more benefits for the *rén qíng* (人情) receiver, it risks losing the relationship with the third party.

Signing a contract is another way to take precautions. However, a contract serves as an indicator of personal relationship in Chinese culture (Xue, 2008). In most cases, the contract is signed among people who do not know each other personally; moreover, signing the contract is not sufficient to take precautions against people that

the *rén qíng* (人情) giver does not know. The restriction does not come from the contract itself, but from the social pressure, namely, the disciplining pressure from relationship networks (Cheng & Rosett, 1991). The essence of taking precaution *fáng* (防) is discipline, which relies heavily on social relationship networks. This also reflects that the trust level and *rén qíng* are low, and it further confirms that the trust among Chinese is associated with relationships, *rén qíng* (人情), and the return of *rén qíng* (人情) (Xue, 2008).

The third approach to trust is to *invite* a person with no previous relationship into another person's inner social network. Hence, he or she becomes a member of the group and is subsequently trusted by other members of the network. It is easier to discipline one's behaviour using the network relationship when one is within the network. Subsequently, a person is expected to abide by the rules in a relationship network. Trust among Chinese is built on the exchange of *rén qíng* (人情), and social network relationships discipline people's behaviour in case of trust violation. These features of trust differ from trust in western culture. Table 9 is a comparison of trust in Chinese and Western culture (Xue, 2008).

Table 9

The Comparison of Trust in Chinese and Western Culture

	China	Western
System	Close	Open
Restrain	<i>Rén qíng</i>	Contract
Basis	Relationship	Law
Operation	Return more favor	Equal exchange
Scale	Individual level	Group level

Note. Adopted from Xue, T. (2008). 中国人的信任逻辑. [The logic of Chinese trust] *伦理学研究*, (4), 70-77.

Trust in Chinese culture is associated with personal relationships, which affects one's behaviour. First, different personal relationships subsequently determine one's interaction patterns. Additionally, one's characteristics are influenced by their relationship with other people. For instance, whether one is loyal to another person depends on the personal relationship one has with another person. Second, people depend on personal relationships to gain insight into a person's trustworthiness. Third, the evaluation of a person is correlated with the personal relationship. That is, one gives a more accurate evaluation to another person if both parties have a personal relationship. Furthermore, the personal relationship in Chinese culture does not only abide with the emotions, it is also interfered by moral obligations (Xue, 2008).

In western societies, the personal relationship is initiated through intimacy and similarities between two parties. Moreover, one's personal characteristics are independent of the premise of the relationship (Xue, 2008). One's behaviour is restricted by contract in western societies instead of personal relationship. A contract serves as a form of personal relationship to maintain trust among members in western society. However, a contract in Chinese culture does not correspond to the concept of a contract in western culture (Xue, 2008). A personal relationship is the primary source to attain trust in Chinese society. Trust in Chinese culture is connected to one's role in society. One has multiple roles at the same time, such as being a father, a son, a brother, a husband, an employee, and the multiple roles simultaneously define one's corresponding obligations and trustworthiness to other people (Xue, 2008). Therefore, a personal relationship is an indicator of trust in Chinese culture. That is, a closer personal relationship enables people to communicate more lucidly whereas a distant personal relationship implies a salient presence of an *invisible wall* (low trust) which hinders the communication process.

The presence of a personal relationship and a contract regarding trust are two conflicting concepts in Chinese culture. On the one hand, if one follows the contract, it suggests a distant relationship among people involved. On the other hand, if one only depends on the personal relationship to establish trust, then the disciplinary

effect of a contract is subsequently violated. Traditionally, the trust derived from personal relationships is an optimal approach to establish and maintain trust in a closed traditional society. However, it has become risky to establish trust through personal relationships in a fast-changing society. Therefore, the discrepancy of trust in Chinese traditional society and modern China may have contributed to the trust deficit in Chinese society nowadays (Xue, 2008).

However, there are three strategies to cope with the low trust society: (a) maintaining a personal relationship through *rén qíng* (人情); (b) *fáng* (防, vigilance), i.e. taking precautions; (c) inviting a person to an inner network. Therefore, Chinese culture is less likely to avoid uncertainties because these precautionary measures are taken to ensure trust in social interactions.

The breach of trust arises when the three aforementioned measures are violated. To illustrate, the car owner's obligation to the participant was directed by his personal relationship with the participant. However, the personal relationship failed to constrain the car owner's action, nor was there any written contract to discipline the car owner's behaviour.

Therefore, the traditional concept of trust in Chinese culture encounters challenges when personal relationship and contract both purport to guarantee trust in society. The trust is correlated to the level of personal relationships; one level of personal relationship does not involve trust whereas another level of personal relationship entails the practice of *rén qíng* (人情), i.e. trust. In reality, many social encounters do not involve the exchange of *rén qíng* (人情) to establish a personal relationship. Therefore, the breach of trust is more likely to occur due to the fact that the disciplinary effect of a personal relationship is absent.

It seems personal relationships become less effective for ensuring trust in modern Chinese society, yet the need to ensure trust is still present. A possible approach is to implement laws and regulations to ensure trust. This approach corresponds to the second strategy: *fáng* (防, vigilance). The social credit system in China (社会信用体

系) is an example of implementing precautionary measures to ensure trust in society. People who have violated trust are not allowed to take aeroplanes and trains (xinyongzhongguo, 2019). It has been utilised to monitor the trust behaviour of citizens (Chen & Cheung, 2017; Dai, 2018; Ramadan, 2018). The vision of this credit system is to “foster trustworthiness in society, enhance market efficiency, strengthen social governance and build a harmonious society within the social state ” (Chen & Cheung, 2017, p. 6). Therefore, the implementation of a social credit system is a modernized measure to cope with the invisible wall (low trust) in Chinese society.

Drawing from Hofstede et al’s cultural dimensions theory, it may be possible to incorporate the cultural dimensions features of China and Hungary with wall theory. As mentioned earlier, China is a low uncertainty avoidance, high power distance, long-term orientation, and collectivism culture in comparison to Hungary’s high uncertainty avoidance culture, low power distance, short-term orientation, individualism culture. Both cultures rank low on the indulgence index and high on the masculinity index, and Hungary ranks slightly higher in masculinity than China. Thus, it seems possible to infer that a culture with a salient visible wall could possibly share the cultural dimensions features, such as high uncertainty avoidance culture, low power distance, short-term orientation, individualism, whereas a culture that has an invisible wall is likely to be low uncertainty avoidance, high power distance, long-term orientation, and collectivism culture. In a similar vein, the invisible wall is associated with a high context, and low trust culture, whereas the visible wall is connected to low context, and high trust culture (see Table 10).

Table 10

The Possible Interrelationships among Different Frameworks

	China	Hungary
Wall theory	The invisible wall	The visible wall

Hall's high and low context cultures	High context culture	Low context culture
Fukuyama's trust framework	Low trust culture	High trust culture
Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory	Low uncertainty avoidance	High uncertainty avoidance
	High power distance	Low power distance
	Long-term orientation	Short-term orientation
	Collectivism	Individualism

Note. Further empirical studies are needed to support whether Hungary is low context and high trust culture.

Table 10 suggests the potential relationships among wall theory, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, Hall's high and low context cultures, and Fukuyama's trust framework. The table may be applied to infer the cultural features of a culture. For example, a high context culture may possibly possess the features of the invisible wall, low trust, low uncertainty avoidance, high power distance, long-term orientation, and collectivism. However, the premise of the table stems from a tentative inference of the data available and the current research only focuses on China and Hungary. Thus, the validation of the relations among different theories listed in the table requires a large-scale and comprehensive investigation of the characteristics of various cultures.

While the wall theory is derived from the case studies of China and Hungary, it may be possible to apply the wall theory across cultures. However, the delineation of the visible wall and the invisible wall is required to identify whether a culture has salient tangible boundaries or intangible boundaries.

The wall theory is derived from the different notions of tangible and intangible boundaries in Chinese and Hungarian culture. The visible wall entails physical and

spatial boundaries whereas the invisible wall refers to the intangible barriers in thinking. Based on the intercultural conflicts that the Chinese have experienced in Hungary, it appears that the visible wall is a salient feature in Hungarian culture, whereas Chinese culture has a nebulous approach to tangible boundaries. Therefore, it is crucial to be aware of the presence of the visible wall and invisible wall in a culture. For instance, a person comes from a culture with obscure tangible boundaries should be mindful if she or he lives in a society which has distinct physical, spatial boundaries. To overcome the boundaries in an invisible wall as in Chinese culture, three strategies have been mentioned: (a) maintaining a personal relationship through *rén qíng* (人情); (b) *fǎng* (防, vigilance), i.e. taking precautions; (c) inviting a person to an inner network. The invisible wall in Chinese culture is salient which is correlated to the lack of trust in society. The above mentioned strategies aim to ensure trust in social interactions, and the breach of trust is likely to occur when these precautionary measures are violated.

5.2.2.3 The Breach of The Invisible Wall

As mentioned above, Chinese people are less inclined to express themselves explicitly due to the presence of the invisible wall (low trust culture); yet the invisible wall does not entirely refer to the trust deficit in a society. Instead, the invisible wall also entails intangible notions, concepts, and ideologies, which are perceived as inappropriate if they are being commented on disrespectfully. The invisible wall is breached when an intangible concept in Chinese culture is being misinterpreted. To illustrate, the promotional videos from Dolce & Gabbana failed to represent Chinese culture appropriately, and the Asian model advertisement for Zara breached the concept of beauty in Chinese culture. Possibly, the breach of the invisible walls are unintentional, yet it still causes backlash for international companies such as Dolce & Gabbana and Zara. In fact, the difficult part is to identify the invisible walls for non-Chinese or people who are unfamiliar with Chinese culture.

The invisible walls in Chinese culture may not hold true in another culture; however, the intercultural conflicts arise when the invisible walls are overlooked. A recent incident of a controversial cartoon depicting the five yellow stars on a Chinese flag being replaced by the coronavirus has sparked anger among the Chinese. The Chinese embassy in Denmark noted that the cartoon is “an insult to China”(BBC, 2020, para. 1), whereas Danish Prime Minister stated, “we have freedom of expression in Denmark - also to draw” (BBC, 2020, para. 6). While the freedom of speech is considered a fundamental right, it has inadvertently breached an intangible wall in Chinese culture, i.e. the Chinese identity. Chinese culture has constructed a collective national identity. Furthermore, it seems that the national identity has been personalized and is held in high regard.

Though these incidents did not target any Chinese individuals, the collective trait of Chinese culture transfers the inaccurate depiction or comments from a collective national identity to individuals. Namely, 我 (wǒ, I) is a part of 我们(wǒ mén, we). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Dolce & Gabbana, Zara, and the Danish cartoon controversies have instigated unanimous reactions from government officials to Chinese individuals.

A similar incident has happened in Hungary. Hungarian short-track skater Csaba Burján was banned for a year after he made an offensive comment about China on his social media. His Chinese coach perceived the comment as a racist comment and decided to resign (Kaszás, 2020). Whilst the Hungarian media reported the incident was resulted from racist comment from the athlete, the actual response from his coach did not mention racism but a specific term: 辱华 (rǔ huá) (Sina, 2019). The term 辱华 (rǔ huá) has been translated as “insulting China” (Wang, 2018). The word 辱 (rǔ) means “bring disgrace/humiliation humiliate and insult” (Hui, 2011, p. 1373). 华(huá) is a word representing China. This is another cultural nuance because Hungarian can understand racism(种族歧视, zhǒng zú qí shì), yet there is no equivalent Hungarian word for 辱华(rǔ huá). Racist comments may be more personal,

whereas 辱华(rǔ huá) comments entail insulting comments about China. The athlete may not have intended to insult China, however, the comment breached the invisible wall in Chinese culture.

There is a discrepancy to the understanding of racism(种族歧视, zhǒng zú qí shì) and 辱华(rǔ huá) in China and western cultures. For example, western media reports the incident of Dolce & Gabbana, Zara, and the Danish cartoon controversies as racism incidents, whereas the Chinese media uses the word 辱华(rǔ huá) instead of racism(种族歧视, zhǒng zú qí shì) in their news narrative. That is, western media perceive the cause of the conflicts is racism, whereas the actual reason is that Chinese feel that their country is insulted.

To comprehend and identify the invisible walls in Chinese culture is challenging. It seems that the invisible boundaries that exist in Chinese culture are not present in Western cultures, which consequently leads to intercultural conflicts once the intangible wall is breached. Much effort is required to further compare and pinpoint the invisible walls in Chinese culture.

5.3 Chinese Male and Female Experience in Hungary

5.3.1 Chinese Women vs. Chinese Men in Hungary

The following discussion illustrates a quantitative analysis of the linguistic features of Chinese males and females' narrative of their life in Hungary. The LIWC has been applied to assess the gender differences on a micro and macro level. In addition, a quantitative comparison of Chinese males and females' narrative based on education background and employment status further highlights the gender differences among Chinese immigrants in Hungary.

Language not only conveys emotions; it also reflects social relationships. Tausczik and Pennebaker (2010) asserted words uncover thoughts and feelings. For example, the use of pronouns indicates the speaker's focus on the subject, and verb

tenses imply the temporal focus of the speaker's attention. Therefore, intention and priorities can be inferred through the usage of pronouns and verb tenses. Additionally, pronouns suggest the quality of a close relationship. Simmons, Chambless, and Gordon argued that second-person pronouns indicate negative quality in relationships (as cited in Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010).

Also, tenses in language were applied to provoke emotions. Gunsch, Brownlow, Haynes, and Mabe noted the past tense is used in negative campaigns against competitors, whereas present and future tense are used in positive advertisements (as cited in Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). In addition, positive or negative words were used to evaluate experience. For example, Holmes, Alpers, Ismailji, Classen, Wales, Cheasty, and Koopman (2007) concluded that the frequent use of positive or negative words may increase or decrease painful feelings among women who have experienced domestic violence.

Furthermore, grammatical features provide insights into people's thinking patterns. For example, people use particular words (e.g., but, however) to make distinctions. Conjunctions are often used to create a coherent narrative (Graesser, McNamara, Louwerse, & Cai, 2004). Prepositions (e.g., to, with) suggest a speaker provides further information on the topic. Words (e.g., think, know) suggest that the speaker contemplates what had happened in the past and its implications on the present. Tentative words (e.g., maybe, perhaps) suggest uncertainty when people are ambivalent about a topic (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010).

The LIWC contains various dictionaries, which were used to identify categories of the words from the source material. The dictionaries consist of words of different categories. For example, words related to positive emotions, negative emotions, anxiety, anger, sadness in the source material are categorised as affect words. Therefore, the LIWC first compares a text against its categories in its dictionaries and calculates the percentage of each category of those words in the text. The following tables show the categories of words in LIWC dictionaries.

Table 11

Categories in a Microlevel Analysis in LIWC

Function words	Personal pronouns (I, we, you, she, he, they)
Affect	Positive emotions, negative emotions, anxiety, anger, sadness
Social	Family friends, female, male
Cognitive process	Insight, cause, discrepancies, tentative, certainty, differentiation
Perceptual processes	See, hear, feel
Biological processes	Body, health, sexual, ingest
Drives	Affiliation, achievement, power, reward, risk
Relative	Motion, space, time

Note. Adopted from the LIWC dictionaries.

Next, the LIWC has been applied to analyse the linguistic features of Chinese males and females' narrative of their life in Hungary. First, the LIWC evaluates the generic features of the narrative, such as analytic, clout, authentic, and the tone of the data. The output from the LIWC shows the percentage of the words that fit into corresponding categories from the interview transcripts. Second, function words, affect, social, cognitive process, perceptual process, biological process, drives, personal concerns were further examined by the LIWC. The features of Chinese males and females' narratives is discussed on a macrolevel and microlevel results from the LIWC.

Table 12

Macrolevel Assessment Result from LIWC

	Analytic	Clout	Authentic	Tone
Female	15.72	66.25	65.03	55.69
Male	19.33	64.47	58.90	56.05

Table 13

Microlevel Assessment Result from LIWC

	Function	Affect	Social	Cogproc	Percept	Bio	Drives	Relative
Female	61.23	3.91	14.16	15.14	2.17	1.53	7.54	11.93
Male	60.77	3.44	13.55	15.41	1.89	1.10	6.95	11.19

The numbers suggest the percentage of the words of each category in Chinese women’s and men’s interview transcripts. For instance, females’ narrative scores 15.72 in analytic, which means that 15.72 percent of the words from female interview transcripts are related to the analytic category. Table 12 and Table 13 show Chinese male and female experiences differ on a macrolevel, i.e. analytic, clout, authentic, tone; but they have more in common on a microlevel. Male participants score higher in analytic and clout dimension, but there is a lack of authenticity in the males’ narratives. Female participants score higher in an authentic dimension, but they score lower in analytic in their narrative.

The micro level assessment of the data does not suggest substantial variations. Female participants score slightly higher than males in function words, affect, social, perceptual processes, biological processes, drives, and relative, whereas males’ score is higher in cognitive processes. The results suggest that Chinese females engage more in social interactions than Chinese males in Hungarian society. However, it does not show significant differences regarding the Chinese male and females’ experience

of life in Hungary.

Nevertheless, the result from the macro level and micro level assessment suggests Chinese females have demonstrated a higher level of leadership, confidence, drive and social involvement than Chinese males in Hungarian society. Chinese females are more motivated and driven than Chinese males in terms of achievement, power, reward, and risk.

The environment could have contributed to the higher performance in leadership, confidence, drive and social involvement of Chinese females. Chinese female immigrants are not being restricted by the social-cultural standards in Hungary. This freedom has led to active involvement in social and economic activities in Hungary. In addition, the higher level of leadership, confidence, social involvement of Chinese women is connected to economic independence, which has subsequently redefined women's role in society. In contrast, the result from Chinese male participants shows the motivating effect of a new cultural environment has on male participants' personal development.

Furthermore, the active engagement of Chinese females in Hungarian society is indicated by the pronoun usage in their narratives. Chung and Pennebaker (2007) provided empirical evidence connecting personal pronouns to social processes, such as biological activity, depression, deception, status, demographics, and culture. Weintraub pointed out that the use of first-person pronouns is related to negative feelings. The first-person singular reflects the attention focus is on the speaker themselves, but too many uses of the first-person pronoun indicates depression (as cited in Chung & Pennebaker, 2007). Also, people use first-person singular pronouns when they tell the truth. Newman et al. (2003) suggested women use more first-person pronouns than men because women are more self-focused. Table 14 shows the result of the personal pronouns used by Chinese females and males from the LIWC.

Table 14

Personal Pronouns Result from LIWC

	I	We	You	She/He	They
Female	5.40	1.40	3.17	1.12	2.85
Male	4.35	1.01	3.20	0.76	3.39

Note. The numbers show the frequencies of pronouns of the interviews compared in the LIWC dictionaries.

Table 14 shows female participants score higher in the use of *I* and *we*, whereas men score higher in the use of *they*. The Chinese female participants' narrative is more authentic and self-focused whereas Chinese males' narrative is other-focused because of the less frequent use of *I*, *we*, and more prevalent use of *they*. It supports the previous findings that the use of a first-person pronoun suggests a more authentic narrative.

In addition, the use of first-person pronouns also entails action and evaluation of the action. According to Mead, one's perception and behaviour have been affected by the concept of self, namely, *me* and *I*. To illustrate, *I* refers to the medium which brings about actions; *me* suggests a person withdraws from the concept of *I* and reflects oneself in the eyes of others; *me* distinguishes oneself from others, yet it maintains itself to be an indispensable part of the group; therefore, *I* and *me* represent the two stages of self, where *I* triggers the action and *me* reflects and evaluates the action (As cited in Burke & Stets, 2009). However, in Chinese, *I* and *me* are both translated to wo (我), which is the only form to refer to oneself; hence, the use of wo (我) may be delineated through contexts instead of the form itself as in English.

The table shows both males and females use third-person plural *they* more frequently than the third-person singular *she/he*. Whilst *she/he* may involve the speaker in a particular setting, *they* is used in a broader range. This tendency shows both female and male express their opinions more on others than their own personal life.

In Chinese, the written form of third-person singular depends on whether the person being referred to is male or female, i.e. *tā* (他, he) and *tā* (她, she). However, the pronunciation remains the same for both male and female third-person singular. In a similar vein, the gender of the third-person plural is salient in written form, i.e. *tā mén* (他们, they), *tā mén* (她们, they), and these two pronouns share the same pronunciation. Consequently, it is problematic to identify whether a speaker refers to a male and female when using third-person singular or plural in speech. In most cases, the context of a conversation may help to identify whether a speaker refers to male or female third-person pronouns.

5.3.1.1 Gender differences based on education and employment

The following discussion compares the Chinese females and males' experience in two controlled variables using ATLAS.ti. The codes were assigned to each interview transcript in the ATLAS.ti program. The comparison focuses on the frequency of codes among females and males' narrative based on their educational background and employment status.

Education level has been categorised into two groups: secondary level and tertiary level. Secondary level education refers to lower secondary education and upper secondary education designed to build the foundation of various subjects and prepare for tertiary education ("Secondary education," n.d.). Tertiary education "builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in a specialised field of education. It aims at a high level of complexity and specialisation. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education" ("Tertiary education," n.d.). Table 15 shows the education background of the Chinese male and female participants.

Table 15

Education Background of Chinese Male and Female Participants

	Female	Male
Secondary level	3	2
Tertiary level	10	11

Note. Tertiary level among female participants include three bachelors, three masters, and four PhD students; male participants include six bachelors, two masters and three PhD students.

Employment status has been categorised into three categories: employed, unemployed, and inactive. Inactive status involves “family care, early retirees, students, long-term sickness, and those on maternity leave or government training schemes” (Bartley, Sacker, & Clarke, 2004, p. 501). As shown in Table 16, the number of inactive Chinese female participants is slightly higher than Chinese male inactive participants. The data shows students and early retirees comprise the four male and four female participants with an inactive status. Three additional female participants’ employment status were identified as inactive due to family care and maternity leave (Bartley, Sacker, & Clarke, 2004).

Table 16

Employment Status of Chinese Male and Female Participants

	Female	Male
Employed	6	8
Unemployed	0	1
Inactive	7	4

Note. Employed status comprises participants who are employed and self-employed in Hungary.

Next, each interview data has been categorised according to the categories of educational background and employment status (see Table 17) in ATLAS.ti. ATLAS.ti

generates the codes' output based on participants' educational background and employment status. The output shows the assigned codes on the left column and codes' frequency from the interview data on the right column.

Table 17

Chinese Males and Females Group Categories Compared in ATLAS.ti

Group number	Categories
Group one	Secondary level (male vs. female)
Group two	Tertiary level (male vs. female)
Group three	Employed (male vs. female)
Group four	Inactive (male vs. female)

Note. The interviews were categorised into four groups to assess the gender difference provided with variant factors such as educational background and employment status.

The quantitative study of the research is conducted by examining the allocation of occurrences of codes which entail the commonalities and differences among Chinese males and females' experience in Hungary. The selected codes and the frequency of codes are presented in the following discussion; a full list of codes and frequency can be found in the Appendices.

Table 18

The Code Frequency of Participants with Secondary Level Education Background

Codes	Secondary level	
	Female	Male
Active integration	6	0
Identity awareness	13	31

Language-related issue	9	11
Things differ from China	11	6
Unpleasant social experience	6	0

Note. The full list of frequency of codes is available in Appendix H.

Group one compares male and female participants with secondary education. The result from ATLAS.ti (see Appendix H) suggests both males and females have experienced language barriers and identity awareness. The word *wài guó rén* (外国人, foreigner) has frequently been mentioned in the interview data. Identity awareness is marked by the concept of *wài guó rén* (外国人, foreigner) perceived by the Chinese. Chinese males are more likely to distinguish themselves from non-Chinese. Females have more social interactions with Hungarians and are more motivated to integrate into local society, whereas males perceive integration as more challenging and problematic. The result also suggests females tend to be more observant, and they are more willing to share their experience whereas males are more withdrawn.

Table 19

The Code Frequency of Participants with Tertiary Level Education Background

Codes	Tertiary level	
	Female	Male
Active integration	6	19
Identity awareness	29	60
Language-related issue	22	42
Things differ from China	41	35
Unpleasant social experience	9	12

Note. The full list of frequency of codes is available in Appendix I.

Group two (see Appendix I) illustrates the code frequency of male and female with a tertiary education background. Both males and females have mentioned their active integration efforts. However, males have engaged in more active integration activities than females. Males with a secondary education have not mentioned active integration experiences, whereas the occurrence of active integration has increased among males with a tertiary education background. Additionally, males and females have encountered a language barrier and identity awareness, but males have experienced more instances related to language and identity than females.

The comparison of group one and group two shows the gender variations among participants of different educational background. The result of females with secondary education shares commonalities with females who received tertiary education. To illustrate, females are more likely to reveal their feelings and opinions; also, the active integration experience is consistent among females with different educational backgrounds. The data suggests females with a tertiary educational background have experienced language barriers and socialisation problems more frequently than females with a secondary education.

On the other hand, the males' result indicates language barrier and identity awareness are the major emergent themes. Furthermore, the language barrier correlates with one's educational background. The occurrence of the language barrier depends on one's educational background among males and females. That is, the higher the educational level one has, the more situations involving a language barrier one encounters.

Table 20

The Code Frequency of Participants with Employed Status

Codes	Employed status	
	Female	Male

Active integration	9	12
Identity awareness	12	53
Language-related issue	14	29
Things differ from China	17	31
Unpleasant social experience	10	9

Note. The full list of frequency of codes is available in Appendix J.

The result from group three (see Appendix J) suggests males and females with employed status share several common features. Both male and female participants have addressed the language barrier, identity awareness, aptitude for integration, and social life-related problems. However, male participants with employed status have emphasised language-related issues more frequently than females. Moreover, Chinese males with employed status have demonstrated a salient Chinese identity.

Table 21

The Code Frequency of Participants with Unemployed Status

Codes	Unemployed status	
	Female	Male
Active integration	3	7
Identity awareness	30	10
Language-related issue	17	15
Things differ from China	35	9
Unpleasant social experience	5	3

Note. The full list of frequency of codes is available in Appendix K.

Group four (see Appendix K) examines the gender difference among

participants whose employment status is inactive. The language barrier is an issue for both males and females. Females have shown a strong self-identity. In contrast, self-identity recognition decreased dramatically among males with inactive employment status. The males' self-identity recognition has occurred more frequently than female participants with secondary education, tertiary background, and employed status. However, the identity awareness of females with inactive status has surpassed males. It is unclear what has contributed to the sudden decline of identity awareness among Chinese males with inactive employment status.

The data from *ATLAS.ti* has provided insights into gender differences between Chinese immigrants with differing employment status and educational backgrounds. The common issue Chinese males and females have encountered is the language barrier, which correlates with educational background, namely: the Chinese with a higher education background are more inclined to encounter language barriers. However, it does not imply that their language skills are insufficient. In fact, the language barrier originates from interactions with local Hungarians. On the one hand, Chinese with tertiary education have engaged in business, education and other activities, which involve frequent interactions with Hungarians, thus making the language barrier a salient issue in social interactions. On the other hand, the social circle of Chinese with secondary education is primarily limited within the Chinese community, which entails less active social interactions with Hungarians.

However, the language barrier encountered by more educated Chinese residents may imply they have experienced resistance from Hungarian society when they attempt to overcome the language barrier. As pointed out by Thomsen, Green, and Sidanius (2008), immigrants who make effort to assimilate into a host society experience hostility because the assimilation “blurs the existing boundaries between groups” (p. 1455). Hence, one possible reason that the educated Chinese residents have experienced more occurrences related to a language barrier may be due to the host society's preference to maintain the status quo and resistance to the violation of

in-group conformity from out-group members.

Though the quantitative comparison has suggested the language barrier is the major obstacle for both male and female, the output from ATLAS.ti lacks elaboration on the discourse of gender differences. The following section illustrates the discourse of intercultural conflicts from Chinese females and males' life experiences in Hungary. Participants were requested to describe an unpleasant incident they had experienced in Hungary. All female participants revealed their unpleasant experience, whereas two male participants indicated they had not had any unpleasant experience. This result also corresponds to the result from the LIWC that females used more first-person pronouns than males.

In addition, three out of thirteen female participants had verbal conflicts with Hungarians. Males, on the other hand, revealed less about their personal feelings in critical incidents; two out of thirteen male participants were involved in physical fights with Hungarians. Chinese female immigrants actively adjust to a new culture, but Chinese male immigrants take a non-proactive approach to integration. The following case studies illustrate Chinese females and males' coping strategies to intercultural conflicts. The incidents were selected on the same basis of informants' educational background and employment status.

5.3.2 Case Study Four: *I Don't Understand Why*

I remember I was buying clothes at a shop, and I realised I did not have my card with me. My friend had my wallet, but she was at another shop. So, I told the cashier I needed to go to the other shop to take the card from my friend. There was a woman in the line who started to swear at me, saying that I was wasting her time. I did not understand why it had anything to do with wasting her time. It was not like the queue stopped because of me. I was so angry. I questioned her, but she kept swearing at me. I went to find my friend and get my card; when I came back, she was gone. This experience was really

unpleasant for me. There are some Hungarians who discriminate towards Chinese. I was not sure, but it felt like racism. The woman assumed that I was a Chinese, that I could not figure out something, so she swore at me. (36, female).

In this incident, the female participant identifies herself as Chinese,” *I was not sure, but it felt like racism. The woman assumed that I was a Chinese, that I could not figure out something, so she swore at me.*” The participant perceived herself as being unfairly treated by the Hungarian woman. Moreover, the participant perceived that the verbal attack was motivated by racism. In fact, the incident may not be motivated by racism as perceived by the participant because Hungarians can be rude to each other as well, yet the participant’s subjective perception of being discriminated has caused her identity shift.

This critical incident implies that the Chinese female participant is self-reflective and emotionally sensitive which shows consistency with the result from quantitative data. For example, the frequent use of the pronoun *I*, indicating the speaker is self-focused. This incident had an adverse psychological effect on the participant. It also reveals the participant’s vulnerability in dealing with an unpleasant situation.

5.3.3 Case Study Five: He’d Better Watch His Language Next Time

If Hungarians do not like to fight physically, they like to fight verbally. This has happened while I was driving, and it has happened at least four or five times. Sometimes, when I was new to a place, I was not sure whether I should make a turn, so I hesitated. In other situations, I had many cars in front of my car, I thought I could pass the green light, but I got stuck in the middle of the pedestrian crossing. At this moment, Hungarian drivers started to say things; I could see their lips moving even though I could not hear it. I could not stand this. Once I did not make a right turn, and the Hungarian driver

behind me started to say something in the car, I parked my car in the front and walked to his car. I talked to him in Hungarian, but I did not say any swearing word. The reason why I got mad was because I did not like that he assumed that I cannot speak Hungarian, and I did not understand any Hungarian, so he could say whatever he wanted.

I think this is a form of discrimination; they think that I look Asian, I probably do not know Hungarian, so they swear as they please because they assume I do not understand Hungarian. So, I walked to his car, using Hungarian, told him to watch his mouth. I did not say one swearing word, and I was firm. I came across this situation four or five times, and all of them fled away like hell. They were in shock, "How could this Asian understand Hungarian? How can he speak Hungarian so well? Why is he so mad about me swearing?" (42, male).

There was a subtle identity shift in this critical incident: the shift from Chinese-Hungarian-Chinese. The verbal attack from a Hungarian driver activated the Chinese identity. *"Hungarian drivers started to say things; I could see their lips moving even though I could not hear it. I could not stand this."* When he approached the driver, the identity switched to Hungarian. *"I parked my car in the front and walked to his car. I talked to him in Hungarian, but I did not say any swearing word...and I did not understand any Hungarian, so he could say whatever he wanted."* By using Hungarian, the participant viewed himself as a Hungarian and demanded to be treated as a Hungarian. After the incident, the Chinese identity resurfaced. *"I think this is a form of discrimination; they think that I look Asian, I probably do not know Hungarian, so they swear as they please because they assume I do not understand Hungarian."*

The two critical incidents were similar situations where both female and male participants felt verbally assaulted. The Chinese female perceived herself as a foreigner when she questioned the woman, whereas the Chinese male viewed himself

as a Hungarian when he confronted the driver. The male participant has demonstrated the identity shift in the intercultural conflict. The identity shift suggests the embodied meaning in identity has been changed. Burke suggested four premises of identity change: (a) changes in the situation; (b) identity conflicts; (c) identity standard and behaviour conflicts; (d) negotiation and the presence of others (as cited in Burke & Stets, 2009).

First, the changes in the situation interfere with the meaning embodied in an identity which leads to “a discrepancy between the identity-standard meanings and the self-relevant meaning in the situation” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 180). Identity shift occurs when one’s original identity has been denied by the situation; Moreover, the development of a context may give rise to identity change. The identity change within a person contributes to the redefinition of group identities in a society (Burke & Stets, 2009).

The second identity change entails identity conflict induced by the simultaneous activation of multiple interrelated identities. “Role conflicts and status inconsistency are examples of situations that may be interpreted as identity conflicts” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 183). However, the inconsistency of conflicting roles gradually can be reduced, which enables the activation of both identities. The adjustment of conflicting identities depends on the commitment, salience, and connection within the identities one possesses. To illustrate, a stronger identity maintains more ties with other weak identities, and a strong identity is less inclined to be changed. Similarly, the salience of an identity is positively correlated to the verification of the identity. In addition, the identity change is more problematic when an identity is closely associated with other multiple identities, and the adjustment of multiple identities leads to the alignment of identities and meanings (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Third, the conflicts between one’s behaviour and identity standard result in identity change. Ideally, one’s behaviours are consistent with one’s identity; however,

the change of situation may interfere with one's behaviour and identity. Moreover, the accumulation of small changes in one's behaviour has an impact on the congruence of one's future behaviour and identity (Burke & Stets, 2009). The fourth identity change suggests shared circumstances contribute to the verification of an individual's identity and other members' identities:

Taking the role of the other is thus a mechanism by which identities adapt to the social situation in interacting with others and facilitate the creation of mutual verification context in which each identity in verifying itself also verifies the identities of the others in the situation. (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 186)

The identity shift of the Chinese male participant in the critical incident shares the common features of identity change prompted by situations. The critical conflict has activated the participant's Chinese and Hungarian identity simultaneously. For instance, the behaviour of the Hungarian driver activated the male participant's Hungarian identity.

Identity verification occurs when one's perception is congruent with his or her identity standard. Swann proposed three approaches to activate one's identity. First, signs and symbols were utilised to indicate one's identity, and the visual perception of one's appearance allows one to assess the identity standards. Second, selective affiliation suggests one's identity verification is associated with being selective with people and situations which makes it easier to verify one's preferential identities. Third, interpersonal prompts refer to interpersonal strategies which reinforce one's identity by influencing others to behave within one's identity premise (as cited in Burke & Stets, 2009). Therefore, a verified identity suggests that the identity standard and perceptions have reached a congruity. In addition, identity verification is a continuous process where the perception incessantly seeks agreement with identity standards (Burke & Stets, 2009).

The activation of an identity is associated with the prominence of the identity;

therefore, an identity with a higher level of salience is more likely to be activated than other inconspicuous identities; namely, the salient identity overrides the verification of other identities. Furthermore, the verification of an identity signifies the agreement between one's identity and the circumstance (Burke & Stets, 2009). The verification of the male participant's Chinese identity in the critical discourse has suggested his Chinese identity is more prominent than his Hungarian identity whereas the female participant's identity remains exclusively Chinese.

Furthermore, the male participant's identity verification from Chinese to Hungarian to Chinese has suggested that the male participant possesses multiple identities. Different identities within a person operate through an internal and external framework. The internal framework emphasises the function and activation of multiple identities within a person, whereas the external framework connects one's identities to the social structure, and it entails people demonstrating various identities within the same social setting (Burke & Stets, 2009). There are three major inclinations of people possessing multiple identities in societies: "(1) persons may have multiple role identities within a single group, (2) persons may have the same role identities but in different groups, (3) persons may have different role identities within intersecting groups" (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 140).

First, the verification of one's multiple roles within a single group has internal and external implications. To illustrate, the co-occurrences of identities reinforce the individual's intrinsic perception and dedication to the identity. The verification of a shared identity in a group strengthens one's bond with members (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Second, people adopt the same role identity in different groups. The meaning and commitment embedded in one's identity are consistent in different groups. In addition, the interactions with members of different groups indicate a noticeable identity that aligns with one's behaviour (Burke & Stets, 2009).

The third multiple identities approach postulates that "the different identities

that a person has in different groups become simultaneously activated if and when the different groups come into contact or overlap in some way” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 143). When the activated identities imply unbalanced meaning and commitment to different identities, the verification of multiple identities causes role conflicts. In the intercultural conflict, the male participant’s multiple identities (Chinese and Hungarian) were activated when he encountered a member from another group (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Among the two activated identities, the Chinese identity is an obligatory identity observed from both the male and female participants in critical incidents. However, the male participant has actively adopted the Hungarian identity as a voluntary identity, and this voluntary identity has enabled him to perceive himself as a member of the Hungarian society though the male participant’s Hungarian identity is newly constructed.

Generally, the formation of an identity is primarily through social learning, direct socialization, and reflected appraisals. To illustrate, social learning entails people building identities through observation of appropriate social practices (Burke & Stets, 2009, pp. 193-194). The social learning of an identity includes anticipatory socialisation, modelling, and social customs. Anticipatory socialisation suggests a person has been familiarised with different roles in society before performing an identity. Modelling entails “people observe others in similar positions or in complementary positions. They see and learn from these observations about what to do, what not to do ... as well as how to do things that must be done” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 194). In addition, the observation and reflection about an identity have become the social norms of an identity, which guide the practices of the identity in society (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Direct socialisation refers to when the person adjusts or adopt identities when his or her role changes, which includes “both formal and informal instruction about what is expected for fulfilling a new position one has taken on” (Burke & Stets, 2009,

p. 194). The formal identity contact refers to education or training before adopting a new identity. The education preparation enables one to acquire the requisite knowledge to perform the anticipated identity of a position.

The reflected appraisal is “how that person thinks others define his or her” (Burke & Stets, 2009, p. 194), the expectation and opinions from others, therefore, shape one’s identity. The feedback from other people has affected the construction and definition of one’s identity because people accommodate their identities to match others’ expectations (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Thus, the presence of the Hungarian identity of the Chinese male participant is likely to be attained through social learning. That is, the Chinese male participant has constructed a Hungarian identity through observation and emulation of appropriate behaviours in Hungarian society. Furthermore, the reflected appraisals may have contributed to the co-existence of Chinese and Hungarian identities for the male participant. That is, the Chinese identity may have been derived from how the locals think of Chinese residents. If a Chinese person is perceived as Chinese instead of Hungarian by the locals, he or she is more prone to maintain and demonstrate attributes of Chinese identity. If, hypothetically, the locals perceive a Chinese resident as Hungarian, the Chinese identity may become a less prominent identity within that person because the reflected appraisal switches to a Hungarian identity, thus, one’s behaviours adjust to exhibit Hungarian identity accordingly.

After the identity has been formulated, the effect of identity on individuals is conspicuous, particularly when an interaction involves an individual demonstrating a particular identity. The first type of effect involves two persons negotiating the meaning of the identity to be compatible in the situation. The second type suggests the mismatch of two identities where neither identity is activated. The third type shows the minimum influence of two identities because they belong to two separate domains (Burke & Stets, 2009).

On a broader level, Chinese immigrants’ identity status in Hungary suggests a

salient distinction between Chinese and Hungarian identity. Most Chinese immigrants perceive themselves as *kè rén* (客人, guest) in Hungary, “*We are the guest here, not host.*” (28, male). It indicates that the Chinese immigrants hold a deep respect for the host country. However, the notion of being a *kè rén* (客人, guest) implies Chinese immigrants are disinclined to engage in local society; namely, the Chinese immigrants who perceive themselves as *kè rén* (客人, guest) are reluctant to integrate into Hungarian society as if a guest is less obliged to conform to the host’s customs. Only when one feels as a *zhǔ rén* (主人, host) in a place does one undertake the responsibilities as a member of the society.

However, the distinction between Chinese and Hungarian identity on a group level does not imply the two identities are mutually exclusive within a group or a person. The Chinese male participant from the critical incident has suggested the plausibility of exhibiting two identities without one identity interfering with another. The participant perceived himself as *zhǔ rén* (主人, host). It also indicates a higher degree of integration as he had identified himself as a member of Hungarian society. In contrast, the female participant in the critical incident lacked such a stance as she dealt with the conflict as an outsider. Both male and female participants suspected racism had induced the conflicts after the activation of the Chinese identity. Interestingly, other participants mentioned that Chinese immigrants may have overreacted to racism, discrimination, and prejudice in Hungary.

For example, some Chinese immigrants claimed they had experienced rude service at restaurants. They assumed they had received bad service because they were Chinese. However, this was not the case. Hungarians and other nationals have also experienced similar situations. Therefore, it is not fair to associate the incident with racism. In China, if they have a bad experience in a restaurant, they certainly would not associate the bad service with racism. (43, male).

In China, Chinese are the majority, yet Chinese immigrants have become the

minority in Hungary. The racism argument would be an improbable argument if a Chinese person had experienced a similar incident in China. However, the Chinese identity has become the defining feature that differentiates Chinese immigrants from Hungarians. Moreover, many Chinese immigrants are unaware of the Hungarian culture. Thus, it becomes irrational to account for such an unpleasant experience with racism.

To sum up, the quantitative and qualitative analysis of gender differences of Chinese male and female immigrants in Hungary support previous studies. That is, the females' narrative is authentic and emotional whereas the males' narrative is withdrawn. The comparison based on participants' educational background and employment status indicates language is the primary obstacle. The higher education one has, the more language barrier one encounters. It implies Chinese with a higher educational background are more involved in Hungarian society. In addition, the identity shift of Chinese male participants has provided an interesting perspective on immigrants' identity and integration into the host society. It also suggests that the Chinese male participant is more versatile with identity than the female participant in this particular intercultural conflict.

6. Limitations

The research attempts to present the cultural differences Chinese immigrants have experienced in Hungary. The *wall theory* in Chinese and Hungarian culture has been presented: (a) the salient presence of the *invisible wall* in Chinese culture and *the visible wall* in Hungarian culture; (b) the obscure notion of the *visible wall* in Chinese culture and *invisible wall* in Hungarian culture. However, this study purports to suggest whether the *wall theory* is applicable to the broader cultural context, such as Chinese and Western culture.

Further research concerning the variations and scales of the *visible* and *invisible wall* in Chinese and western culture are encouraged. That is, some western countries may have a higher level of *an invisible wall* or lower level of a *visible wall* depending on the perception of tangible and intangible boundaries. Therefore, an elaborate account on the scale of a *visible wall* and an *invisible wall* in different countries could shed new light on the understanding of *wall theory*.

This research is limited to the fact that the participants are from Budapest, Hungary, whereas many Chinese immigrants live in various cities in Hungary. Hence, a more representative sample of Chinese residents living in various Hungarian cities may present a more holistic perspective of Chinese immigrants' life in Hungary.

Moreover, the snowball sampling approach in this research has its limitations as well. For instance, the participants rely on subjective judgement to refer another Chinese person to participate in this research. A Chinese immigrant who is socially active is more likely to be referred by others than a Chinese immigrant who has a relatively isolated social circle in Hungary. Moreover, the data analysis process using ATLAS.ti has its limitation because the codes were categorised based on the researcher's subjective judgement.

The data from the LIWC suggests Chinese females in Hungary are more driven than Chinese males. It would be interesting to compare the females' motivation

in China and Hungary. The comparison of motivation between Chinese women in Hungary and Chinese women in China could provide a new insight into the effect of cultural environment on Chinese females' motivation.

A special question is the case of Chinese living as a member of a Hungarian family. He or she might have deeper and closer experiences regarding cultural understanding than those who live in Chinese-only families. Another special concern is second-generation Chinese immigrants who have received their education in Hungarian schools. Their mental and intellectual integration was immensely influenced by the Hungarian school-experience. Whether the younger generation encounters similar cultural differences as the first-generation Chinese immigrants is another intriguing topic.

This research discussed the multiple identities observed among Chinese immigrants: Chinese and Hungarian identity. Additionally, the Chinese immigrants have another identity which is based on their place of origin in China. Different situations could attribute to the activation of each identity, but the current research aims to uncover the relationship and functionality among different identities within a person.

7. Conclusions

This study has investigated the experience of Chinese residents in Hungary over three aspects. Firstly, the preliminary discussion has identified the prevalent problems that Chinese residents encountered in Hungary. Secondly, the wall theory was proposed to conceptualise the cultural difference between China and Hungarian culture. The intercultural conflicts occur when the visible boundaries or the invisible boundaries are breached. Also, the measures to reduce the intercultural conflicts related to wall theory are discussed. Thirdly, the experiences of Chinese residents were investigated using a quantitative and qualitative approach from a gender perspective.

7.1 The problems from the preliminary study

The results from the preliminary study suggest study-related problems, working cultures, language barriers, and identities are four major issues that Chinese residents have experienced in Hungary. To illustrate, Chinese students have trouble adjusting to studying in Hungary, i.e. academic challenges and psychological stress. The differences in working cultures between Chinese and Hungarian workers are consistent with Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimension framework regarding power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, short-term and long-term orientation. The language barrier is the primary obstacle for Chinese residents in Hungary. It affects Chinese students' academic performance and social life, and it also adds extra cost to the operation of Chinese companies in Hungary. Identity awareness is a salient feature among Chinese immigrants in Hungary. The data suggests a Chinese person's identity is categorised by his or her hometown in the Chinese context, whereas his or her national identity overrides the regional identity in transnational contexts.

7.2 Wall theory

Drawing from Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, Hall's high and low

context cultures, and Fukuyama's trust framework, the *wall theory* has been proposed to account for the cause of intercultural conflicts the Chinese participants have experienced in Hungary. The *wall theory* consists of a *visible wall* and an *invisible wall*. A *visible wall* refers to the physical, spatial, and tangible boundaries. For example, a wall, personal space, public space, sound volume, etc. A *visible wall* is a salient feature in Hungarian society, whereas the boundaries of the *visible wall* in Chinese culture are inconspicuous.

In contrast, an *invisible wall* is the abstract and intangible boundaries which obstruct unrestricted communication of thoughts and ideas. It is a salient feature in Chinese culture in contrast to its less prominent presence in Hungarian culture. The different perception towards the *visible wall* and the *invisible wall* may result in intercultural conflicts.

In addition, the existence of the invisible wall in Chinese culture indicates the trust deficit in Chinese society. Although China is a low trust culture, there are systematic measures to ensure trust in Chinese society: (a) maintaining a personal relationship through *rén qíng* (人情); (b) *fáng* (防, vigilance), i.e. taking precautions; (c) inviting a person to an inner network. The trust in Chinese society is primarily formulated through a personal relationship, one may also take precautionary strategies or include someone in an inner social network to ensure trust.

Furthermore, the breach of the invisible walls may result from the oblivion of such invisible boundaries in Chinese culture. An invisible wall existing in Chinese culture may not have the equivalent invisible wall in Western culture. Also, the notion of the invisible wall is not entirely limited to trust, it may also entail some nuanced concepts, ideologies in Chinese culture which may not share the same concepts in Western cultures. Thus, more research is encouraged to identify the "invisible walls" in Chinese culture, to provide Westerners with informative and insightful knowledge about Chinese culture.

7.3 Gender difference among Chinese residents in Hungary

Traditionally, Chinese women were portrayed as a *xián qī liáng mǔ* (贤妻良母, good wife and mother). The role of Chinese women has slowly changed over time, but it has still not liberated Chinese women from traditional roles.

One interesting finding from the LIWC suggests that they are more driven, confident, and entrepreneurial compared to Chinese men in Hungary. The gender difference, based on educational background and employment status, shows both Chinese males and females have encountered a language barrier and identity awareness. Interestingly, the higher one's education, the more occurrences of a language barrier one experiences. The identity awareness among Chinese men with inactive employment status scored the lowest, whereas Chinese women with inactive employment status demonstrated a strong identity awareness.

Additionally, the female participants felt comfortable in revealing their feelings and emotional responses to the critical incidents, whereas the male participants revealed less emotion regarding the incidents. Women's unpleasant incidents are socially involved while men's unpleasant experiences are more self-involved. Furthermore, the male participant in the critical incident has demonstrated an identity shift between Chinese identity and Hungarian identity.

In summary, this study has provided an elaborated account of the intercultural experience of Chinese immigrants in Hungary. Firstly, the four emergent issues that Chinese residents have experienced are identified. Secondly, the *wall theory* has addressed the major differences which have contributed to intercultural conflicts among the Chinese in Hungary. To illustrate, the *wall theory* represents the nuances of two cultures. It has demonstrated the different notions of tangible and intangible boundaries in Chinese and Hungarian culture. For example, Chinese who have little knowledge about the *visible wall* may experience conflicts with Hungarians. A Hungarian travelling in China may encounter confusions over the obscure notion of a

visible wall in Chinese culture. Thirdly, the result from the quantitative and qualitative comparison of Chinese males and females' experience in Hungary has corroborated previous studies on females' linguistic features. In addition, the identity shift in a critical discourse has suggested a new perspective on the relationship of multiple identities and integration of immigrants.

Research studies into Chinese immigrants in Hungary are scarce, this study attempts to provide an in-depth view of Chinese immigrants' life in Hungary. The cultural knowledge of an ethnic group has become pivotal because a misinterpretation of a culture may cause intercultural conflicts. Dolce & Gabanna's inaccurate depiction of Chinese culture led to the backlash of the brand's image in China. However, such incidents could have been avoided had Dolce & Gabanna consulted Chinese natives regarding the nuances of Chinese culture portrayed in the videos. This is one of many cultural incidents which have occurred in the intercultural context. Nevertheless, cultural-bias incidents could be reduced if people are better-informed about the nuances of cultural differences.

7.4 Pedagogical implications

At the end of each interview, the informant offered advice for Chinese immigrants based on their personal experience in Hungary. Language and life adjustment are the two major aspects of advice that were given by participants.

First, one needs to learn Hungarian. Nearly every informant has mentioned the importance of learning Hungarian. If one plans to stay in Hungary, one should learn the language because English is not sufficient in daily life. One should also learn more about Hungarian culture and history.

Make some local friends and get to know their way of thinking.

Be aware of the law and obey the law. If one Chinese person does anything wrong, it gives all Chinese immigrants living in Hungary a bad reputation.

Come to Hungary and stay for a period before finally deciding to settle permanently, because the information people read online about Hungary is different from real life in Hungary. So, make a conscious decision!

Do not have too many expectations about living in Hungary. The Chinese who have never been abroad before often imagine that living abroad is much better in every aspect, but it turns out life abroad is not what they had expected.

If you want to start your life in Hungary, you need to adapt to life here and try to embrace the new culture.

Table of Figures

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of The Wall Theory

Figure 2: The Cultural Dimension Index between China and Hungary Based on Hofstede et al.'s (2010) study

Table of Tables

Table 1: The Hypothesised Presence of the Visible and Invisible Wall in China and Hungary

Table 2: The Possible Interrelationship among Three frameworks

Table 3: Defining Features of Person, Role, and Social Identities

Table 4: The Components of the Participants

Table 5: Participants' Gender and Age Information

Table 6: Participants' Time Spent in Hungary

Table 7: Selected Key ATLAS.ti Terminologies

Table 8: Chinese Personal Pronouns

Table 9: The Comparison of Trust in Chinese and Western Culture

Table 10: The Possible Interrelationships among Different Frameworks

Table 11: Categories in a Microlevel Analysis in LIWC

Table 12: *Macrolevel Assessment Result from LIWC*

Table 13: Microlevel Assessment Result from LIWC

Table 14: Personal Pronouns Result from LIWC

Table 15: Education Background of Chinese Male and Female Participants

Table 16: Employment Status of Chinese Male and Female Participants

Table 17: Chinese Males and Females Group Categories Compared in ATLAS.ti

Table 18: The Code Frequency of Participants with Secondary Level Education Background

Table 19: The Code Frequency of Participants with Tertiary Level Education Background

Table 20: The Code Frequency of Participants with Employed Status

Table 21: The Code Frequency of Participants with Unemployed Status

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Appendices

Appendix A: First Draft of Interview Questions

Introduction:

Most Chinese in Hungary claim they would like to integrate into Hungarian society. However, Hungarians perceive the Chinese as a closed community. They know little about the Chinese community, yet they're curious. This research consists of two parts. Part one is the interview questions. Part two describes situations the Chinese have experienced in Hungary. The purpose of this research is to reflect on their life in Hungary and provide a voice from the Chinese and to promote the understanding of Chinese community in Hungary. In addition, this research intends to provide cultural information for those Chinese who will work or study abroad in the future.

Part 1:

Background information

When were you born?

How long have you been in Hungary?

Do you speak Hungarian?

Daily Life

1. Please tell me in detail how you spend your workdays.

a. Is this typical of your workday?

b. If not, please tell me a typical working day of yours.

2. Now you have told me your typical working day, what about your weekend days?

What does a typical weekend day look like?

Social Life

3. When you hear Hungarian culture, what comes to your mind?
4. What do you do during Hungarian holidays, such as Christmas or Easter?
5. What is your experience with the public service (post office, tax office, hospital, etc.) in Hungary?
6. What is your experience with law regulations (traffic, tax, law, etc.) in Hungary?
7. What do you think of Guanxi in Hungarian society?

Personal Opinion:

8. What did you know about Hungary before you came to Hungary?
9. What do you find strange or unfamiliar while you are living in Hungary?
10. What is the (cultural) difference that you find most difficult to adjust?
11. As a Chinese living in Hungary, what does “integration” mean to you?
12. How likely are you to resettle in China one day? How does this fact influence your integration in Hungary?

Part 2:

Writing task instruction:

Please write a short essay in 5 or 10 minutes about your personal experience, describing an intercultural conflict scenario with westerners. A scenario where you followed your Chinese way, yet experienced misunderstanding, stereotyping, prejudice, racism, verbal/physical attack, etc. Please focus on what happened? What was the conflict? How did you react and feel? For you, what has changed after the incident? (your attitude, behavior, perception)

Appendix B: Sample Interview

Interviewee: XG

Interviewer: MG

Date and time: August 12, 2017, 13:30

Location: Budapest, Hungary

Audio file duration: 40 minutes

Additional notes: questions in parentheses are follow-up questions by the interviewer

Part one:

Introduction:

Most Chinese in Hungary claim they would like to integrate into Hungarian society. However, Hungarians perceive the Chinese as a closed community. They know little about the Chinese community, yet they're curious. This research consists of two parts. Part one is the interview questions and part two describes situations you have experienced in Hungary. The purpose of this research is to reflect your life in Hungary and to provide a voice from the Chinese and to promote understanding of the Chinese community in Hungary. In addition, this research intends to provide cultural information for those Chinese who will work or study abroad in the future.

MG: When were you born?

XG: 1988

MG: How long have you been in Hungary?

XG: Six years.

MG: Do you speak Hungarian?

XG: I can speak a little bit. I came here in 2011, and I learned Hungarian for a year. (Do you think language is important?) absolutely, (Why?) You should at least know their language if you live in a foreign country, and communication would be easier. I think the Hungarian language is more important than English because Hungarians would be more friendly if you communicate in their language; otherwise, they think that you are a tourist, maybe they think you do not like their country that much, but if you do speak their language, they would be very nice.

MG: How did you spend your day yesterday?

XG: Yesterday, normally, I get up, have breakfast, go to work for a day, and off work from 5pm, go home, make something to eat, watch a movie, this is more or less like my yesterday, normally are like this, (Is this a typical work day?) Yes, work days, mornings are the same, after work, maybe different. For example, I might go to swimming, training, go shopping, and after that, I go back home around 8 or 9pm. Normally, I work in the office, sometimes, I might be in the building doing some related work.

MG: What about weekends?

XG: Sometimes, I will go to the countryside because I have family there, but normally, I just rest or do some housework, this is not fixed though. Sometimes, I might stay at home, sometimes, I go shopping, go for a walk.

MG: Before you came to Hungary, how much did you know about this country?

XG: Before I came here, I did not know much about Hungary. I'd heard about the blue Danube river, the poet Petofi.

MG: What are the unfamiliar things when you first came to Hungary?

I do not really think that much. I was alone in China when I came here, and I do not see that much difference. The air is better than in China, less people, but I do not find that it is hard to adjust here. Maybe, the way I see it is that this is the way it is in a foreign country, so there will be some differences. I do not really think about this. If I come across something I do not understand, I thought maybe this is how it works here. (what about now?) I came here first to study, and after school, I start to work. It is like maybe in a Chinese city that you finish school and work. I adjust to it. I am always alone.

MG: What are the cultural differences that you think are different from China, but you can still accept?

XG: I came here to study first, and I go to class in the morning. I feel Hungarians are not rushing. I saw people chatting in the cafe when I went to class, but maybe after class, I can still see them in the cafe shop. So, I feel their pace of life is really slow. (what about life since you married a Hungarian). These are small things that I am not sure if you call this cultural difference. For example, eating. Chinese people have everything ready, and eat together, but Hungarians are different. They have steps, first step soup, and then main dish, after that you have dessert. For me, I prefer to have everything ready and have soup whenever I need, but for them, they drink soup first, this is also true in a restaurant, soup first, and then the waiter will remove the soup and put on different soup. You cannot go back to drink your soup even if you wanted to because the waiter has already removed it. I mentioned before, I wanted to change my car, for a Chinese, maybe this is for face, to look better, my wife thinks it is not necessary to change a new car because the current car is working, she wants to replace the things in the house even though they are still working, for example, the oven in the kitchen, also some closet and water tub and stove. But for me, I think they are in good condition. Maybe, they are more family oriented, and they want to make the house better. If they have money, they will fix the house first even though it is not a big problem. Or garden. For Chinese, for me, I think that you can still use it, then I

may not be thinking about changing it to a new one. Home is first for them. I saw many beggars on the street, and most of them are alcoholic. If you give them money, they will buy alcohol. Once I met one, and he said he is hungry. I had just bought a pizza, so I gave the pizza to him, but he said no, then I realize that they need money to buy alcohol. This is different from the professional beggars in China, here they are drunkards. They like to drink. (what are the cultural differences that you find hard to accept as a Chinese?) There was one thing. Once my mother told me a story. There was a kid in the local community whose family was poor, and people helped this kid from time to time. Once this kid came to the shop, my mother saw him, and she gave the kid some money. The kid took the money and walked away, and when the kid came back, she saw he had a Coca Cola. My mother could not understand. She had given money to him as she thought he might be hungry and might buy something to eat. A local Hungarian tells my mother that a cola is like water, maybe the kid is thirsty and wants to buy a water, but for me, I think if you are thirsty, you can buy water or go home to drink water. I cannot understand if you are in difficult situation, probably you will go for a lower price, but the kid chooses cola, I cannot understand. For Chinese, what we understand is that if you are in a difficult situation, you will use the money when it is most useful. For them, maybe not. Things like this, I cannot understand in the beginning but over time, I understand. Maybe they are not like Chinese how they present themselves or deal with relationships. For example, bargains. I will not bargain since the price is fixed. The Chinese shopping style, for example, you buy clothes, 1000 , you want to buy it for 900, for a Hungarian, they will not sell, for a Chinese, maybe they can raise the price first to 1500, the customer can lower the price for 500, you can still sell the clothes for 1000. You spent the same money, maybe they are honest, or they lack a business mind. Now I understand. Sometimes, I will go to farmers' markets, and I will buy some chicken to raise in the garden or some rabbits. We have a garden, a place to raise some animals. If you buy one chicken or ten chickens, they will still charge you the same price' they have one price and do not lower the price or bargain. Now I understand them. If you try to

understand why they think that way, then you will understand it as well. Yesterday, I was talking to a friend. I do not understand why Hungary wants to host this swimming game this time because the roads are already very crowded, not like in China, we have big road. Here, even if there not such big events, the traffic jam is very serious. And now you want to host these events. My idea is that maybe they could build up or work on the infrastructure first before they host an international event. The road conditions are not good and very crowded. Many foreigners come here to see the games, and they see the city without good infrastructure. The city is beautiful. But you know we come from China, and in some cases, it is not as good here as in China. For example, city development. But I understand anyhow. Last time, they want to host the Olympics, but the Hungarians veto the proposal, as the citizens prefer to have better welfare. You see in China, 2008, after the Olympics, there are many stadiums not in use now. Some stadiums were deserted right after the Olympic games. This is the case for China.

MG: What do you think of Guanxi in Hungary?

XG: Sorry, I did not understand the question, (for example, guanxi among Chinese, Hungarians, and Chinese and Hungarians?) The relationship among Chinese, Hm, I do not really think the Chinese are very close. Maybe this is the impression we give Hungarians; they have the impression we are closed. I asked a few Hungarians, and they said that the Chinese here have a lower amount of people who speak Hungarian compared to other Asian nationals in Hungary. Maybe on average, Japanese or Korean rate higher concerning their knowledge of the Hungarian language. First, maybe because there is a bigger number of Chinese living here. Second, most of them come here as a family unit. If the parents are here, maybe the wife knows more Hungarian than the husband, they can still get along with their life here. Now, Chinese in the markets, the related service are very convenient, for example, if you want to eat, there are Chinese restaurants, so you do not have to go to a Hungarian restaurant. As long as I know Chinese, I can survive in this area, including finding a lawyer or a travel

agent, so in this case, they do not really rely on the Hungarian language to live here. So, if one family member or two people speak Hungarian, that may be enough, the others can live here with Chinese, no problem. Maybe this is the impression that Hungarians get that many Chinese do not speak Hungarian; therefore, they cannot communicate with Chinese, so they think Chinese are close. (among Chinese?) I think here the Chinese are very united, before, the tax office often checks the tax in the Chinese market, the Chinese close the shop, then later, there are some organizations that represent the Chinese businessman to negotiate with the Hungarian government, together with Chinese embassy, but on the other hand, there might be some regional competition, for example, people from Fujian form an association, and other associations depends on which part of China they come from. Above all, the relationships among the Chinese are good. I do not spend much time in the markets. So, I might not know the specifics. (within Hungarians) Hungarians do not like gypsies, but gypsies are Hungarians as well. You can tell from their face, they have a Hungarian passport, but Hungarians and gypsies do not like each other. Hungarians around me do not like Gypsies, (do they show it very obvious?) They do not show it, but you can see that they do not communicate. For example, if something happened with Gypsies, Hungarians will not even care. Before there was one thing, a company has Hungarian and Gypsies, a Hungarian carpenter, after his work, there might be some used wood that cannot be reused. One gypsy asked to buy this used wood, and when he got home, he told his wife. His wife said, “why do you have connection with Gypsies?” This is not really that much of a big deal; they do not want to have connection with Gypsies. I heard from other people. I do not have connection with them, people do not have a good feeling about them, including Chinese. If some Chinese hires them, it’s for cheap labour, like my mother. If she sees a gypsy in her shop, she will be very careful. (What about Chinese and Hungarian relationship?) For me, I do not know how to put it, if foreigners like Chinese, I like them too. There are some foreigners who do not like Chinese, they are very straightforward, and there are some people who do not really care about this. For example, last time I went to a

wedding, you know how it is when Chinese get married, the cars are luxury. There are many luxury cars, and I saw many foreigners showing their middle fingers as if to say that we are showing off. Maybe they're jealous, but some people congratulate. What I understand is that they are jealous, some people walk on the street and maybe they think that we took the whole lane of the road, but he is not driving, so I do not understand why they show their middle finger, so I think it is more likely that they are jealous of rich people. I remember once there was an employee at our shop who asked my mother why she comes here work so hard since my mother has a house in China already? Maybe for them, they like to be in a comfortable place, three meals a day, and they are happy if there is anything left, or even if nothing it is ok. But the Chinese want more. So, for foreigners, they do not understand why some Chinese come all the way here, work hard, and live in a small place since we have almost everything in China. They do not understand why do we work so hard.

MG: In China, you are the majority, but here, you are in the ethnic. How do you see the difference?

XG: Hm, how can I put it: It is ok, I think. I do not think I am different from them. Maybe when I was little, if I ran into a foreigner on the street, I might stare at him but here, I do not have this feeling. People here will not really stare at you just because you have a different color of skin. Sometimes, now, it is good, maybe because the Chinese have become stronger on the international stage, maybe they do not have other feelings because of the country I come from, but if I am an Arab, wearing the clothes, maybe the Hungarian will stare or even talk behind. Hungarians might be more cautious about them because sometimes, I also observe when people wear the head scarfs. And now the relationship between China and Hungary is good, so I do not feel that I am disadvantaged because I am a ethnic here. But if there is special time, I will surely pay more attention, for example, whether they trick me just because I am a foreigner here, now it is good.

MG: As Chinese living in Hungary, what does integration mean to you?

XG: I think it is very necessary that you integrate here. Because I have not just come here to study; I also want to live here long term. In terms of language or habits, you should look up to them because you are the ethnic. You will not be noticed when you become one of them. For example, in China, you need to fight a bit to get on, here, it is not necessary to do that. After I came here, I have been always thinking if my behavior would make Chinese lose face, so I pay attention, and I only do things that Hungarians do as well, for example, smoking while driving. I saw they throw the cigarette tip on the ground. I know this is not good, but if I do that, they will not consider that I am wrong if I throw a cigarette, but not spit through the window. So, for things like this I will pay attention to what is acceptable for them, so I can navigate. So mainly language and some habits.

MG: How likely are you to go back to China?

XG: I'm not sure, it depends on the kids in the future, and if I would like my children to receive a Chinese education. I don't really think about this now, if necessary, I will not back to China, live for five or ten years, learn the Chinese language and culture. After all, the language is difficult, and the culture is profound. It is necessary. But I haven't thought about it seriously.

MG: What do you do on Hungarian holidays?

XG: Because my wife is Hungarian, so we follow their customs to celebrate the holidays, for example, colored eggs on Easter. Here, we adapt their rules, as the holidays are arranged based on their holiday break. There is no break when it is our holiday, so here we celebrate their way. (Chinese holidays?) Here we celebrate as they do.

MG: What do you think of public transportation here?

XG: I think it is ok, a few years ago, they changed the bus stop board to electronics, and the road condition is not so good. Maybe my habits are very regular, I drive to work, I do not have much contact with public transportation, so maybe I am a bit

close, (What about banks? Post office?) I think they are good, it's just slow, not big of the problem, it's just they are slow.

MG: What do you know about Hungarian law?

XG: Not that much, but I will take a look at the relevant laws. If we want to have children, it is not that I will take advantage of the law, I just want to know what is relevant to me.

Part Two:

MG: Please write down your unpleasant experience in Hungary. Situations that made you feel unhappy or unpleasant.

XG: I remember when I first came here, I did not have my driver's licence yet, and I needed to depend on public transportation to get around. There are different kinds of people on the bus, and when I transfer, I might stop and light a cigarette, maybe for foreigner, it is common to ask for a cigarette even to strangers. Unlike in China, you might feel bad if you ask someone for a cigarette. Maybe for them, they do need a cigarette. Some are very annoying, they can tell that you are a student, young, foreigner, maybe rich, and they will try to ask you for other things. So they will not only ask for a cigarette, they might even ask for your watch if they see you have one, they would really say that, for some, they ask for a cigarette, then they ask for a light, they saw it's a good lighter, and they want to keep the lighter and do not want to give it back. I often come across this situation, or on the bus, some people will talk about you. On the weekends, people go to the pub to drink, maybe they are already very drunk when they are on the bus. Before I drive, I rarely went out on weekends because it is not very safe at night. Once, I almost had a fight with gypsies, I think they were ridiculous. Once I wore pink clothes, and they asked me if I were gay. I said no. But they continued to ask for a cigarette or watch, and they follow me. I told him that I have to go to mind my business, he asked where I was going and wanted to come along. I told him to wait for me there, and when I come back, I will buy him

beer. That day, I was busy, so I needed to use other ways to get rid of them. It was successful, that was the very early time when I came here, and I noticed that those people are like this to all Hungarians, not just me. If you are a single woman, they will probably follow you and try to talk to you as well, most people do not answer them, keep walking, and they will not follow, but me, back then, I was willing to talk to them. They see that I replied, so they kept talking to me. (Any other such experiences?), it is so common to ask for things that maybe this is a bit shameful of them. I understand them, if they do not ask, they get nothing but if they do ask, maybe they will get something. There is a 50 percent chance if you ask 1000 people, at least one of them will give. I feel that asking for things is too much for me to handle; it was on public transportation where you meet all kinds of people. I haven't come across such things for long time, as now I usually go by car, so I do not have contact with such people.

MG: Anything else you would like to say?

XG: Other than this, not really that much. The uncomfortable situation I came across were less often, and now it is more settled with my every day routine. I know who I will meet, so for now, it is ok, but if I go back to taking bus to school, I will likely meet such people more.

MG: Any advice?

XG: Language is very important, include myself, that I should be good in Hungarian because I am in Hungary. I had a friend who studies English, and he went to buy something or deal with something and people were not so enthusiastic about him. Include some new immigrants who told me that he went to a district office to deal with something. He was at the counter, and the official told him that she cannot speak English, but the person next to him one can speak English. This office worker asked this Chinese to take an interpreter with him. The Chinese said to this guy that the

person next to you can speak English. Why would you ask me to take an interpreter with me if you cannot help? You can ask your colleague, or I can go back and wait for another turn. Including me, for Chinese, when we need to do something, we prepare beforehand for things we need. Maybe for them, we already have everything, maybe we do not even speak for a word, I just need to give my stuff to you and tell you what I need, and that's it. But for them, when they get some documents, they will ask you some questions unconsciously, if you cannot speak English, the person next to you can. I want to get things done, so why do you need to ask me to hire an interpreter? So, maybe for foreigners, if you know their language, they will be warmer at service. Once I was traveling in Austria, and there are many Hungarians in Austria or west European countries. Many are in the service industry, and once we were at a restaurant, maybe because I was speaking Hungarian, and it was not so well when I switch to Hungarian, maybe I will use some Hungarian words naturally within English, and the waiter heard me speaking Hungarian. She asked why I speak Hungarian, so I told her I live in Budapest. She became extremely nice, maybe for her, it was so nice to hear their language, especially in a foreign country by a foreigner. Maybe she felt homesick, the service was really good, she recommended what dishes are good. A person has said if you know Chinese, you can make friends with 1.3 billion people; if you do not, you lose 1.3 billion people. If you are newcomers here, English is good as an international language, but if you are staying here, you need to learn the local language, (except language?) except language, try to mind your Chinese habits; after all, you are abroad. For example, are you going to light some fireworks on Chinese holidays here, no, or in a restaurant, the tips, try to integrate them, not make them feel that this is how Chinese behave, like this is the Chinese way.

Appendix C: Map of Chinatown in Budapest, Hungary



Appendix D: Final Version of Interview Questions

Introduction:

Most Chinese in Hungary claim they would like to integrate in Hungarian society. However, Hungarians perceive the Chinese as a closed community. They know little about the Chinese community, yet they're curious. This research consists of two parts. Part one is the interview questions, and Part two describes situations you have experienced in Hungary. The purpose of this research is to reflect on your life in Hungary and to provide a voice from the Chinese and promote an understanding of the Chinese community in Hungary. In addition, this research intends to provide cultural information for those Chinese who will work or study abroad in the future.

Part 1:

Background information

When were you born?

How long have you been living in Hungary?

Do you speak Hungarian?

Daily Life

1. How did you spend yesterday?
2. What about weekends?

Personal Opinion:

3. What did you know about Hungary before you came to Hungary?
4. What were the unfamiliar things that you felt when you first came to Hungary?

5. What are the (cultural) differences that you find most different from China?
6. What do you think of Guanxi in Hungary? (Three perspectives)
7. When you are in China, you are a majority, but in Hungary, you are a ethnic, How do you feel the difference?
8. What does “integration” mean to you?
9. When you live in Hungary, what does Chinese identity mean to you?
10. How likely are you to resettle in China one day?

Social Life

11. What do you do during Hungarian holidays, such as Christmas or Easter?
12. What do you think of public services (post office, tax office, hospital, etc.) in Hungary?
13. How much do you know about the law in Hungary?

Part 2:

Instruction:

Please describe your unpleasant experience in Hungary. Situations that made you feel unhappy or unpleasant.

Last, do you have any tips for Chinese who will come and live here in the future?

Appendix E: A list of codes assigned in ATLAS.ti

Active integration

Anxiety/uncomfortable being Chinese HU

Bad bahavior Chinese

being kind to others

Changes from unfamiliar to familiar

Chinese family ties

Chinese support each other

Chineseness

coming from different parts of China

complains not good

Conflict in thinking

contact with Hungarian society

Country development

Distant Chinese

East West cultural confusion

feel better than locals

Identity awareness

Hard to adujst when in China

How Chinese perceive Hungarians

How Chinese see themselves

HU dislike Gypsies

integration defined

Integration possible problem

interpersonal conflict

Invisible wall

Language related issue

Law issues

Mild racism experienced

More than just language

no invisible wall HU

no visible wall cn

no visible wall hu

Not what I expected

perception of China

Personal space

physical conflicts

Psychological struggle HU

socializing problem

study related problem

Tax issues

Things are in common

Things that differs

Things Chinese do not understand

Tips

Trust deficit

unpleasant experience among Chinese

unpleasant social experience HU

visible and invisible

visible wall hu

why so less believer

Appendix G: The Minorities Section on the Hungarian Voter's Registration Form

BOLGÁR (Bulgarian)	CIGÁNY (Romani)	GÖRÖG (Greek)
HORVÁT (Croats)	LENGYEL (Polish)	NÉMET (German)
ÖRMÉNY (Armenian)	ROMÁN (Romanian)	RUSZIN (Russian)
SZERB (Serb)	SZLOVÁK (Slovak)	SZLOVÉN (Slovene)
	UKRÁN (Ukrainian)	

Appendix H: Group One Result from Atlas.ti

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

CODES	female secondary	male secondary	Totals
Active integration	6	0	6
Anxiety/uncomfortable be	0	0	0
Bad bahavior Chinese	2	0	2
being kind to others	0	0	0
Changes from unfamiliar t	0	0	0
Chinese family ties	1	1	2
Chinese support each oth	0	0	0
Chineseness	2	0	2
Coming from different pa	1	0	1
Complains not good	3	1	4
Conflict in thinking	2	0	2
contact with Hungarian s	0	0	0

Country development	0	2	2
Distant Chinese	1	1	2
East West cultural confu	1	7	8
Feel better than locals	0	0	0
Identity awareness	13	31	44
Hard to adujst when in C	4	0	4
How Chinese perceive Hun	5	0	5
How Chinese see themselv	0	0	0
HU dislike Gypsies	1	1	2
integration defined	3	4	7
Integration possible pro	2	8	10
interpersonal conflict	1	1	2
Invisible wall	1	0	1
Language related issue	9	11	20
Law issues	1	1	2
Mild racism experienced	0	0	0
More than just language	0	0	0
no invisible wall HU	0	0	0
no visible wall cn	0	0	0
no visible wall hu	0	0	0
Not what I expected	2	2	4
perception of China	0	0	0

Personal space	0	1	1
physical conflicts	0	1	1
Psychological struggle H	0	0	0
socializing problem	0	0	0
study related problem	0	0	0
Tax issues	0	5	5
Things are in common	0	3	3
Things that differs	11	6	17
ThingsChinese do not und	0	0	0
Tips	3	4	7
Trust deficit	1	0	1
unpleasant experience am	1	0	1
unpleasant social experi	6	0	6
visible and invisible	0	0	0
visible wall hu	0	0	0
why so less believer	0	0	0

Totals	83	91	174

Appendix I: Group Two Result from Atlas.ti

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

CODES	Tertiary female	Tertiary male	Totals
Active integration	6	19	25
Anxiety/uncomfortable be	2	2	4
Bad bahavior Chinese	1	2	3
being kind to others	2	0	2
Changes from unfamiliar t	1	0	1
Chinese family ties	3	5	8
Chinese support each oth	0	1	1
Chineseness	3	1	4
coming from different pa	0	4	4
complains not good	11	5	16
Conflict in thinking	8	17	25
contact with Hungarian s	0	1	1

Country development	2	1	3
Distant Chinese	8	3	11
East West cultural confu	6	3	9
feel better than locals	0	2	2
Identity awareness	29	60	89
Hard to adujst when in C	1	0	1
How Chinese perceive Hun	28	11	39
How Chinese see themselv	3	13	16
HU dislike Gypsies	1	3	4
integration defined	17	22	39
Integration possible pro	15	20	35
interpersonal conflict	5	1	6
Invisible wall	0	3	3
Language related issue	22	42	64
Law issues	3	3	6
Mild racism experienced	3	6	9
More than just language	0	1	1
no invisible wall HU	0	2	2
no visible wall cn	0	2	2
no visible wall hu	0	0	0
Not what I expected	3	2	5
perception of China	2	0	2

Personal space	7	4	11
physical conflicts	0	3	3
Psychological struggle H	5	0	5
socializing problem	15	1	16
study related problem	3	6	9
Tax issues	1	1	2
Things are in common	7	7	14
Things that differs	41	35	76
ThingsChinese do not und	2	0	2
Tips	11	12	23
Trust deficit	2	4	6
unpleasant experience am	3	8	11
unpleasant social experi	9	12	21
visible and invisible	0	3	3
visible wall hu	0	4	4
why so less believer	0	1	1

Totals	291	358	649

Appendix J: Group Three Result from Atlas.ti

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

CODES	employed female	Employed male	Totals
Active integration	9	12	21
Anxiety/uncomfortable be	0	2	2
Bad bahavior Chinese	3	2	5
being kind to others	2	0	2
Changes from unfamiliar t	0	0	0
Chinese family ties	3	6	9
Chinese support each oth	0	0	0
Chineseness	3	1	4
coming from different pa	1	3	4
complains not good	3	0	3

Conflict in thinking	7	14	21
contact with Hungarian s	0	0	0
Country development	2	3	5
Distant Chinese	4	2	6
East West cultural confu	0	3	3
feel better than locals	0	2	2
Identity awareness	12	53	65
Hard to adujst when in C	3	0	3
How Chinese perceive Hun	19	7	26
How Chinese see themselv	3	8	11
HU dislike Gypsies	1	3	4
integration defined	5	13	18
Integration possible pro	7	18	25
interpersonal conflict	0	1	1
Invisible wall	1	3	4
Language related issue	14	29	43
Law issues	4	0	4
Mild racism experienced	0	4	4
More than just language	0	0	0
no invisible wall HU	0	2	2
no visible wall cn	0	2	2
no visible wall hu	0	0	0

Not what I expected	2	4	6
perception of China	0	0	0
Personal space	1	4	5
physical conflicts	0	2	2
Psychological struggle H	0	0	0
socializing problem	0	0	0
study related problem	0	0	0
Tax issues	1	4	5
Things are in common	2	5	7
Things that differs	17	31	48
ThingsChinese do not und	2	0	2
Tips	9	9	18
Trust deficit	0	3	3
unpleasant experience am	2	4	6
unpleasant social experi	10	9	19
visible and invisible	0	3	3
visible wall hu	0	4	4
why so less believer	0	0	0

Totals	152	275	427

Appendix K: Group Four Result from Atlas.ti

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

CODES	inactive female	inactive male	Totals
Active integration	3	7	10
Anxiety/uncomfortable be	2	0	2
Bad behavior Chinese	0	0	0
being kind to others	0	0	0
Changes from unfamiliar t	1	0	1
Chinese family ties	1	0	1
Chinese support each oth	0	1	1
Chineseness	2	0	2
coming from different pa	0	1	1

complains not good	11	5	16
Conflict in thinking	3	3	6
contact with Hungarian s	0	1	1
Country development	0	0	0
Distant Chinese	5	1	6
East West cultural confu	7	0	7
feel better than locals	0	0	0
Identity awareness	30	10	40
Hard to adujst when in C	2	0	2
How Chinese perceive Hun	14	4	18
How Chinese see themselv	0	5	5
HU dislike Gypsies	1	1	2
integration defined	15	10	25
Integration possible pro	10	4	14
interpersonal conflict	6	0	6
Invisible wall	0	0	0
Language related issue	17	15	32
Law issues	0	3	3
Mild racism experienced	3	2	5
More than just language	0	1	1
no invisible wall HU	0	0	0
no visible wall cn	0	0	0

no visible wall hu	0	0	0
Not what I expected	3	0	3
perception of China	2	0	2
Personal space	6	0	6
physical conflicts	0	1	1
Psychological struggle H	5	0	5
socializing problem	15	1	16
study related problem	3	6	9
Tax issues	0	0	0
Things are in common	5	3	8
Things that differs	35	9	44
ThingsChinese do not und	0	0	0
Tips	5	4	9
Trust deficit	3	1	4
unpleasant experience am	2	4	6
unpleasant social experi	5	3	8
visible and invisible	0	0	0
visible wall hu	0	0	0
why so less believer	0	1	1

Totals	222	107	329

