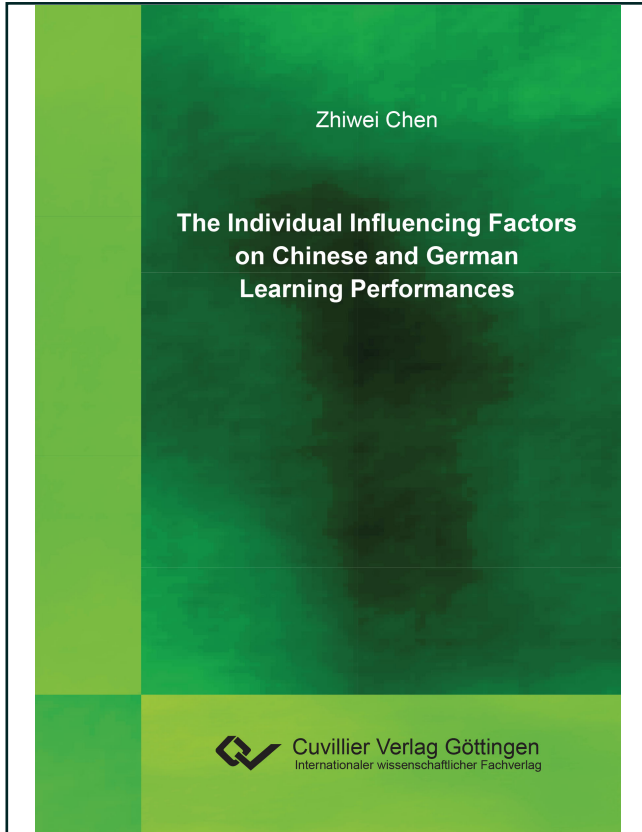




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The Individual Influencing Factors on Chinese and German Learning Performances



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2. The narrative contents by Chinese interviewees and analysis

2.1. The interview with Mr. BC

The narrative contents by Mr. BC

Mr. BC, 58 years old, born in the provincial capital city in the middle of China, He is now a conductor on the train in one railway department in the city. This interview has been made in one morning in October at his home. The main contents are as follows:

C¹: So, you can tell me your story.

BC²: I felt that, from my childhood, that, when a man had not knowledge, that was very terrible. If a man had no knowledge, then he could not move any step in the society, right? At that time, I learnt from my childhood, when I learnt, I did learn hard. But I had not any aim, just learnt as a normal thing, according to the content the teachers taught. There were no, eh, extra learning. I just did homework which the teachers asked to do, and, eh, I learnt a little hard in the class. Working hard in the class, listening to the class carefully and doing the homework hard, but the scores were not very good, as the middle in the class. After the graduation from the primary school, I had not so many ideals. Then, when I came into the middle school, those years were the Cultural Revolution years....There was nothing special about my learning, there was nothing...That was the same when I entered the middle school. That was very normal. Every one around me just learnt in the same environment, and there was no ideal to get into a university. It was ok for my study...I just felt that when a man had no culture, then that was very terrible. Then the situation and environment in the middle school were just so-so. How was it? In the late period of the political movements, I was not much motivated for learning, and I just wanted to dawdled the days. After middle school, it was certain that we should go down to the countryside, no matter how well you had learnt. There was no way but only went down to the countryside. So it was called the movement of “going onto the mountains and going down to the countryside” which were in response to government’s police. In the countryside, I had not learnt much, from the primary school, to the middle school, and then to the countryside, I felt that I had not learnt much. Then,

¹ The speaker “C” in the book refers to the interviewer and author.

² The speakers with name abbreviation as capital other than “C” here is of the name of interviewee Mr. BC.



when I went down to the countryside, I just wanted to be a worker, a normal worker. Eh, working in the farming group for about two years, after that, the College Entrance Examination began, then I took part in that, but I had not got any chance to get in the university, and then I was enrolled in a professional secondary school, a train driver school. Then, I had just got some aims in the school, but then I just learnt the professional things, which were not good as the cultural knowledge. After two years of the learning of professional knowledge, I graduated and then I was allocated to the railway and a worker in the railway station. Then, I had little chance to learn, but what I learnt, was just the professional things about my job. I had learnt much about the professional knowledge, but very little about the cultural knowledge, as I had not very great wish. Some classmates of mine had pursued for something, but the highest degree my classmates had got was the school which taught the students through radio or TV. (Note: that was not an official form of university, but after the graduation, the students could have got the degree higher than the senior middle school students. Nowadays, this form of school was seldom in the Chinese society). There were no friends or classmates of mine who had been admitted by universities. Until now, I learnt from time to time to enrich myself. But I had not much ideals, as I was just a normal worker. When I remembered the past years, I still wanted to learn, and still wanted to climb to the highest degree of learning. Of course, the higher degree a man could get, the better he was. When a man could have a higher degree, then the thinking and the views about things were different with others. But the chance for the person to pursue the higher degree was very little. And the person who had got high education was very good, and the thinking could be much higher than the normal ones. I felt that now, my thinking was different with the person who had a higher degree. As my colleague in my station, he was a bachelor, so he could answer questions and write better than us. Then we just reviewed his writing and answers and even copied his answers. He had just the thinking, and had much knowledge in his brain, but for us, we had not much knowledge, so we could not write something important or useful. So after all learning was good. Now I felt the importance of learning, so I just wanted to learn something gradually. It is never too old to learn, so just learn something gradually. I always admired the person who had a high degree. I thought they were better than me. When one said he had just got higher education, no matter the bachelor, the graduate student, or the doctor student, I always respected them from my heart. Just in our department, as a conductor, we always looked upon the students, as they had just the higher degree. They could have different thinking and the way they answered questions was not the same as us the illiterate. They were the owner of



the country. They could...everything they did, was much higher than others. So when they had a higher degree, they could protect the environment, and not throw rubbish everywhere, they could do the things very well. So when the carriage is full of students, as me a conductor, then the environment in the carriage is rather good, than the farmers or the works, who throw rubbish everywhere, and they are very dirty. I still want to learn more. It is not difficult for the students who have a higher degree in technical things and jobs, as they could just finish a task or a topic easily. But without the degree, they had nothing in their head, so they could not finish things freely and in fluently. Around me, there are few people who had got a high degree, but the students with poor scores are much more, because we had just experienced the political movements years, and then, the degree was not been valued much, so that was very terrible. Now, the country still needs to rely on the people who have a higher degree. The armies who enroll soldiers still require them to finish the learning in senior middle school, not as the past which just required the person to be health, no matter he had degree or not. Nowadays, the body healthy is one factor, and the degree is a more important factor of being admitted in army. No matter what a man wants to do, he has to have a higher degree. Even when a person wants to be a monk in a temple, he has to get a degree. The normal ones, who have seen the film of "Shaolin Temple" and then wants to learn Kung Fu in a temple, there is just one in my department, who wanted to get into the temple, then after three days, the abbot said no to him and refused him to get in, so at last he came back, because he had no degree, no culture. As to the culture, from the childhood, the kindergarten, the primary school, the students should learn very hard. Then they could get into a junior middle school very easily. Then they got into a good senior middle school. Then they were admitted by a university, and worked hard in it, at the same time, the environment was very good. They should not waste the four years in a university, but to learn by heart and carefully. Actually, a man should not relax and waste any time. As for us, we had wasted plenty of time, so... you see, when I learn in the school, the political movement began, after the graduation from the middle school, it was time for us to go down countryside. So the environment is different as the one of our period. Now it is not allowed of not learning. As for now, you should learn in the whole environment. After learning, the higher degree you have got, then the return from the society could be more. The people with higher degree could have more chance in looking for a job. So, I just admire the high degree ones, and just want to learn. As to the knowledge which I had missed and not learnt, I would just learn, and the more I learnt, the better. Eh, after all, the people around me who have higher degree are much more proud, they could find a



better job than us. To be an officer, as the officer in my department, has to get a higher degree. The person who wanted to be a head of the train crew should be trained in Southeast University. After one year of learning, he could just be the head of the train crew. Everyone should learn, and when someone does not want to learn, that is very terrible. A man should learn step by step. And after the first learning, he should review the things from time to time and remember them firmly. For example, the Indian Institute of Technology, which is the biggest in the world and has 1 billion \$ each year, and all of other universities in India, have only 30 million \$. So the students in the Indian Institute of Technology just study very hard, everyday they just study as a mad from morning to night. They just learn and never relax in their lives. There is no one to dawdle. After the graduation, much of the students are chosen by the American companies. There is no difficult in job finding and money earning for them. The students who study there could enjoy the excellent environment, so that is not the same as our period, as we just copied the answers from others in each exam and dawdled. The excellent students could just remember everything by heart, and then they could learn very well, so it is just down-to-earth attitude in learning. So I advice the students nowadays should learn very hard, and learn the things by heart which they should learn well. Then, they could answer the questions and give a topic influentially. So, as to learning, now I realize that is a little late for me, but if I realize it much earlier, then I will not be just like this situation of my life, must be better than now. Now, it is very difficult for me to write something or to express my thinking. Although it is hard, but I should still learn something. From now on, I should learn hard, and advice the posterity to learn as hard as possible. There is no way but to learn. The man who is illiterate is a stupid one. Only the man, who improves his learning, is the clever one. The realizing of learning is very important. But to me, just as I had missed the best time of learning, so I could only learn gradually. And I learnt much social knowledge and social science.

C: Then, what is your opinion on lifelong learning?

BC: Lifelong learning. A man, who lives in the world, should learn in the whole life. He has to learn for lifelong. I'd like to learn for the whole life. When I have time, I would like to read a book, even that is a magazine, but it contents the knowledge of social science. Lifelong learning, we should learn from our childhood, that was the cultural lessons. In the kindergarten, we had learnt to sing, to dance, which were all the beginning of learning. For the cultural learning that was the beginning, and for the lifelong learning, it is about the social science, the communication with others, and dealing with different things in the daily life. In the department, how we communicate with our leaders, and how we deal with the tasks which we have be as-



signed, that all belong to lifelong learning. When we learn such a lot, and learn the things which we ought to learn, then we could feel comfortable in being a man in the whole society. If we just would not learn anything, then we would not know anything or do anything. Just like a fool. So it is never too old to learn. When we are free, we could learn little by little, and write something like our experience of learning or dairies down. Everyday we learn and write, and learn the things by heart. When we do not learn something, and just sit day by day and dawdle, then, after a time, the person will become a fool. That is really. A man does not learn could not get in touch with the new things and ideas. Just as the news and the regulations from the country should be learnt and paid attention by us, and if we do not learn them, we would not know anything, then we will miss lots of things and chances around us. So we should learn from the best ones in the society. The ones who could sell vegetables well or work very good are all learn very hard in the daily life. We should learn not only the cultural knowledge, but also the other things in the society. So we should pay attention to the lifelong learning. But the most important factor which improve the quality of lifelong learning is just oneself. Just take use of each minute to read and just remember the content of the books. There is much knowledge in the books and it is impossible that everything is to be taught by teachers. It is not ok to watch TV too much. So we just learn in the daily life by reading books. The books, which one likes, should buy them home and read, or borrow them from others or from libraries. That is all ok. But when we could not learn, then, there is no way to learn, but when we are breathing, we should just learn. We should not only learn by ourselves, but also persuade others to learn. Just learn the advantages of others and offset the disadvantages of ourselves. Learn the good experience from others.

C: What is your next plan of lifelong learning?

BC: Now, for me, that is impossible to go into a school and sit in the classroom. I just want to learn some poems and math questions. And then, after each day's learning, just write an experience dairy for the whole day. The learning should go into the society, and travel around the society and have a look at it to draw the learning experience of others. I have just started learning, but I decide to learn better and better, and to summarize the learning experience. I believe that there is no end of learning, but when we learn, we can just enrich our live. That is enough!

C: Thank you very much for your time!



The analysis of the narrative contents of Mr. BC

(1) *When I came into the middle school, those years were the Cultural Revolution years. Every one around me just learnt in the same environment, and there was no ideal to get into a university.*

(1) The political movement has influenced the interviewee a lot. From the historical background, most youth did not get controlled by schools and teachers, but just did what they wanted (Yang, 2006). The narrator here has also declared such a fact that the environment has influenced the others, as when there were some students who did not learn. The others would follow such examples. In that environment, no one wanted to learn hard, so did he. All of them had no clear aim or ideal for the period after the middle school, in turn they would not learn well or hard by themselves.

(2) *In the late period of the political movement, I was not much motivated for learning, and I just wanted to dawdled the days...After middle school...we should go down to the countryside, no matter how well you had learnt...only went down to the countryside*

(2) The social effect had influenced him very deeply and in his heart he did not have the interest in learning, and maybe he could represent the days of the whole youth at his age, as he used “we” here. That was a disaster for the youth of the period and the result shows that the knowledge level of that age was relative low than the students nowadays.

This is no difference between the students who got the good scores or the normal ones, but the destination had been already decided by the society, which means the endeavor by individuals was useless for personal future. So there would be no one want to change it and just “dawdle the days” under the policy. What they could do and learn in the countryside was unknown, but that was absolutely terrible that all the youth of the society learn the same thing at the same time, which would not very much useful for the future of the country. So that would destroy the industry and commercial activities in the late years of the whole country. And the education experience of the youth of that era also was delayed by the movement.

He has also expressed his helpless under that kind of circumstance, as he used “only” and said “no matter how well you had learnt”, which means that he, and even the same ages, did not have much more hope about their future, but just waited for the equal arranged work and place for them, without any choice by their own. Therefore, he could not have any power or motivation on his learning.

(3) In the countryside, I had not learnt much...I just wanted to be a worker, the College Entrance Examination began... but I had not got any chance to get in the university...was enrolled in a professional secondary school, a train driver school.

(3) There were not many attentions or importance for a youth to learn knowledge in that era in China, so he just got a profession ideal as to be a worker. And that was the popular thought at that time, and the youth could earn money and improve the social status by working. So the learning aim at that time was wholly for the work and job position after school. He knew that he was not able to be enrolled in the university, as he had little cultural education in his daily life; therefore, the word “just” shows he had no choice, but worked in the society as soon as possible.

There were too few people could hold the chance to learn in a university. And the one who could just be enrolled in a secondary school was regarded as lucky. And the most important thing for them was the person who could get into a professional school, then after the graduation, he or she could get a job which related to the major which he or she had learnt in the professional school. So when the person came into a professional school, then he would not feel worried about his job and salary, but there was another problem that the purpose of getting into a professional school was just for a chance or a position of work, but not purely for the knowledge.

(4) I had just got some aims in the school...learnt the professional things...not good as the cultural knowledge...what I learnt, was just the professional things about my job...very little about the cultural knowledge

(4) He had aims, but he did not talk about it clearly, and the aim was just emerged after his enrollment in the professional secondary school, but never during the experience in the countryside, which means that he could find his own aim and thing about his own future in this period, in school. He could learn something useful for his job later, but have little chance in the learning of cultural things, which he felt a little pity, as he said “not good as”, so from his feeling, he wished also to learn something about the culture and admired the ones who could learn the cultural knowledge in the schools and universities. .

In China, during the working period, the worker could just work, even if they could learn, they just learnt the professional knowledge related to their work. So things which are not related to the work are forbidden to do in the working hours, even learning or reading. In this way, a worker could only get touch with the professional knowledge of the machines and circumstance which they work in everyday, but never have the chance with learning other knowledge or cultural things.



(5) I was allocated to the railway and a worker in the railway station...I had little chance to learn...Until now, I learnt from time to time to enrich myself. But I had not much ideals, as I was just a normal worker.

(5) “Little chance” implicates that he still hoped to hold a chance to learn something, but the work and the social views have constrained him to have much higher education, as the society consider the workers should do one self’s work hard and should not have much thinking of the others, as learning during working period, which should be seen as dereliction of duty.

He used the word “allocated” to describe his work choice, which means the work position for the whole generation as him was not decided by individuals, but by the local government and anyone should obey the order from the officers. This situation has reduced the motivation and enthusiasm in learning for higher social status, as all have been arranged and determined, the only thing the ordinary ones could do was to obey and follow the order from supervisors and leaders.

He also mentioned he has “learnt from time to time to enrich himself”, but the learning time is just nowadays, and he felt hopeless, because he thought himself as just a “normal” worker, so we could find two clues, as firstly, he get aware of the importance of learning in the modern society and he wanted to irreparable his fault on his deficiency of learning in his early years, and secondly, he felt the learning activity could not help him with his promotion or improvement of his social status. So from his narration, we could find that he felt his learning was too late now.

(6) The highest degree my classmates had got was the school which taught the students though radio...no friends or classmates of mine who had been admitted by universities.

(6) The learning experiences of his friends could show that the generation has not got good educated, and the environment of the learning at school at that time was not good for learning, so it is not surprised that he could not get good education and has not a ideal for the future. This kind of influences from his friends has affected him to follow and to be the same person as his friends and classmates.

There is also a detail that some of his friends could get knowledge under that circumstance with radio, and that was the popular learning method during the time they were working in the countryside, so many of the students who really had the enthusiasm with learning could always have the method to learn, but from this situation, we could also find that the learning condition for that generation was too terrible.

(7) I still wanted to learn, and still wanted to climb to the highest degree of learning... Of course, the higher degree a man could get, the better he was...When a man could have a higher degree, then the thinking and the views about things were different with others...But the chance for the person to pursue the higher degree was very little.

(7) He used “still” to express he has also the wish to learn, and now, he has his own aim, as “the highest degree of learning”, but he did not mention what the “highest degree” is actually is. This is the third time he has mentioned the importance of learning. But the opinion of learning was just staying at the original level, as he thought that people who have learnt knowledge could be different with the others, but he did not mention what the differences were. So the ideas he has were just the vague ones. Actually he might be not aware what was the “better” life was for a knowledgeable person. At this stage, all of his learning motivation was always affected by the social development and influences.

He has also the ideal of learning, which is in accordance with his saying about the importance of learning he has believed as before. But he was also a bit pessimistic as he did not believe that there will be many persons will have the chance of obtaining higher degree education, as he used “very little” to describe this matter according to his own learning experience. When there is no hope of educational chance, there will be few persons carrying out learning. But this is only the situation for the normal ones in China, and the situation for the higher level of social classes has not been mentioned here.

(8) The person who had got high education was very good, and the thinking could be much higher than the normal ones.... As my colleague in my station, he was a bachelor, so he could answer questions and write better than us...He had just the thinking, and had much knowledge in his brain, but for us, we had not much knowledge

(8) This is the fourth time he has mentioned the importance of learning, but the meaning of learning was just repeated without any clarification or definition. He maybe really paid great value on the behavior of learning, but he could not express his feeling and thinking on this point, just because his knowledge level or language expressions have limited his expressions.

And this time he did not just tell the theory, but cited an example around him. So there was compare between the learning period and the working period, as when he was learning as school, he did not know the importance of learning, and just wasted the time as his friends did, but on the working position, he has finally known the



importance of learning, and the example was around him, to drive him to think about the advantages of learning, and he could just get enlightenment from his colleague and friends now than the past years. So the environment for a man's thinking of learning is very important.

The concentrated reflection of importance and meaning of learning were "answer questions and write better...thinking", which are the most basic things in the daily life. So the narrator had compared himself with his colleague, and he felt that he had many shortages, which were all caused by his lack of knowledge. He also said the ones with higher education could "think better than the normal ones", so he expressed his honor and respect to the educated ones very much, as he divided the knowledgeable into the higher group, other than the normal group. This is also the attitude of the citizens in the whole nation to the knowledgeable ones.

The language and words, which are simply and repeated, show that the narrator has not much knowledge and not well educated in school.

(9) Now I felt the importance of learning, so I just wanted to learn something gradually... It is never too old to learn, so just learn something gradually...

(9) From his real experience he realized that he would still want to learn. He repeated the man who has a better degree or more learning experience than him over and over again, that shows that he felt very self-abased when he compared himself with the intellectuals. So he has the real need of learning. His repeating words "learn something gradually" show he has the determination of learning, but the speed and tempo of learning will not be too quick, because of his age. After realizing all the importance and meanings of learning which are embodied by the examples and colleagues around him, he finally knows what he should do to make up his missing time in the youth. The saying "it is never too old to learn" is a famous Chinese proverb and used by many Chinese people when they want to encourage themselves to learn with an age, so the narrator also knows that it will be not easy for him to learn at his age, but the motivation of his learning roots in his experiences and feeling in the reality.

(10) I always admired the person who had a high degree. I thought they were better than me....Just in our department, as a conductor, we always looked upon the students, as they had just the higher degree...when the carriage is full of students, as me a conductor, then the environment in the carriage is rather good, than the farmers...who throw rubbish everywhere, and they are very dirty.

(10) He expressed his admiration to the intellectual persons again, and he also looked down himself as he was not comparable with the knowledgeable ones. From this point, he was a little self-abased with his low level of knowledge and education. Students would be looked upon as the social elite and respected by most of the members in the society. So this will encourage more and more students to learn hard and strive to the top of the degree.

He has just compared the situation between the intellectual ones and the illiterate ones. And from this stage we could see that the situation is that the intellectual ones could have more considerate privileges than the others. That is to say, when all of the dwellers in the country could have more knowledge and been well educated, then the society could be more harmonious and comfortable to live in, so his wish to learn also is rooted in this thought.

There is also a kind of discrimination, that the society discriminate or look down the illiterate ones, or the normal educated ones look down the lower educated ones, and this kind of discrimination sometimes does not associate with the social status, but only with the knowledge level and learning experiences. The narrator felt that he could not equal with the intellectual ones as he has little knowledge in his brain, but on the contrary, he looked down farmers with much less knowledge, as the personal quality of the illiterate ones is much lower than anyone else. According to this kind of thinking, the whole society still respects much for the intellectual ones, which could motivate the youth to learn harder.

The feature of his narration is he could always connect the life or working experiences to express his opinions, but with little literate words or completed sentence to do that. So much of knowledge he has learn is mostly from the society and working, which is also a kind of lifelong learning or informal learning outside schools. So his learning place is in the society and his working station.

(11) When they had a higher degree, they could protect the environment, and not throw rubbish everywhere, they could do the things very well...It is not difficult for the students who have a higher degree in technical things and jobs... the country still needs to rely on the people who have a higher degree.... the degree is a more important factor of being admitted in army.

(11) The use of knowledge here in his mind has been embodied with not only the considerate contractor, but also the utilitarian use, as “jobs”, and the examples are many about the specific and concrete little things in the daily life, so the understanding of lifelong learning here is a little narrow and limited, but it could be seen as the true feeling based on his life experiences in the daily life. He could consider



the public affairs, not only the private benefit from the learning, which should be an improvement.

Learning is not only for the life of oneself, but also for the construction of the whole society, so he could find the importance of learning to the country, and even the army and national defense. From his social experience we could see that he really knows the importance of learning. In this paragraph of narration, he has also mentioned the nation should pay attention on the learning and education of the normal ones, as the country “should rely on the people who have a higher degree”, so it can be seen as an suggestion to the nation for more support on learning behaviors. He has mentioned a word “technical” with expression of the academic degree, which means that he thought the learning on technique will be much more useful, or maybe he holds the opinion that the learning in the universities is mostly on technique, and this kind of thinking could be seen as a popular thought among Chinese people with little knowledge about the education in universities.

As to the utilization of learning for the country, he could only think about the admission in the “army”, and knowledge is one of the most important factors in being enrolled into the army to defense the country.

(12) No matter what a man wants to do, he has to have a higher degree... Even when a person wants to be a monk in a temple, he has to get a degree.

(12) He has summarized just this sentence to express his feeling of learning in the life world. But his mind of learning is still quite limited, as he just considers the results and aims of knowledge learning just equals to a higher degree. But this is the mind of the whole society, and most people admire the ones with higher degree, no matter what or how he learns. He used “has to” to express the necessity and urgency of learning.

The narrator has also cited such an extreme example, which nowadays in China is true. So the need for the knowledge, or more exactly, the degree, is very urgent and exuberant. But there is a doubt that if the country needs knowledge or just the academic degree, because the narrator just mentioned “degree” for many times, without mentioning knowledge. Therefore, many normal citizens look more up on the higher degree or just a paper with certification or a period of learning experience in university, but care less about what students learn or how they learn in the universities. Sometimes, the results as certifications are much more important and necessary than the knowledge itself.

(13) They should not waste the four years in a university, but to learn by heart and carefully. Actually, a man should not relax and waste any time. As for us, we had

wasted plenty of time...when I learn in the school, the political movement began; after the graduation, it was time for us to go down countryside.

(13) He has just warned the others not to waste time as him, because he has passed the school years without careful learning. But that was the special period for all the members of the generation, as the Cultural Revolution broke up. So when he looked back the years he has passed, maybe he just felt regret for the years he has wasted. But that was neither his fault nor the whole generation, but the social environment should be blamed for the tragic of the learning situation of the whole generation. And maybe he also noticed that the school phenomenon nowadays that some students in the universities and schools waste their time most on the useless or trivial things and do not realize that the school years are very precious for them. So he has just the original thinking that the social environment has been improved and stabilized, and the students should learn hard in this environment better than his generation.

This is also his life experience and obviously he felt regret about his early years which have been passed ordinarily without learning enough knowledge for a better life nowadays. So the people who have some working or life experiences in the life world could have more feeling of the importance and urgency of learning, and just so, they could learn only with more motivation and efficiency.

(14) As to the knowledge which I had missed and not learnt, I would just learn, and the more I learnt, the better.

(14) He realized that he has missed many chances of learning, and he just wanted to make up these efforts and regret. So he has the demanding of continuing learning. And this is the sixth time he has mentioned the importance of learning for him, and still not made it clear what is the “better” mean to him. But he has just the ideal that he could have a better life after his learning. The learning content may be focused on the “knowledge which he had missed and not learnt”, so he felt not only the professional knowledge or skills are important and necessary to him, but also the ordinary and basic knowledge which will make his life better in the future.

(15) To be an officer, as the officer in my department, has to get a higher degree... For example, the Indian Institute of Technology...There is no difficult in job finding and money earning for them

(15) The information about Indian Institute of Technology known by him has surprised me a lot, which means he has cared about the information in the world much, and the source of information maybe from newspaper or television, but it shows he



has always been getting new information in the daily life, so this is also a kind of lifelong learning.

From his experience he knew that to get a higher position in the society, he and his relatives should have much more knowledge and degree, and this is the second time he had mentioned the utilization of learning in the society. The job hunting and money earning seems to be very important for him, so this would be one of the motivations for his learning, and should be regarded as a kind of social motivation for learning.

The normal ones in China nowadays always equals the higher degree with better opportunities of getting a better job and earning great sum of money. The knowledge learning does not relate only to the academic knowledge or experiment in the laboratory, but more about the social pursuing and demanding for much higher social status or degrees.

(16) So I advice the students nowadays should learn very hard, and learn the things by heart which they should learn well.

(16) This is the second time he made such a suggestion to the “students nowadays”. He could suggest the students nowadays like that, and for him, he would do better than he wished, so he has a strong demand of learn hard and carefully.

He has also advised the learning method and principle as “learning by heart”, so this is the mature learning attitude and method which could memory the learnt knowledge much better than only reciting or repeating knowledge. From this we could see that he knows the best way of learning, not from schools, but from his social experiences. Until now he has the real feeling of learning.

(17) now I realize that is a little late for me, but if I realize it much earlier, then I will not be just like this situation of my life, must be better than now... Now, it is very difficult for me to write something or to express my thinking.

(17) With so many experiences he finally knows the importance of learning, and he regrets of the waste time. So if there is a chance for him to learn now, then he will certainly learn hard. So he expressed his regret on the wasted time. He has known the disadvantage of poor learning in the early years, and the result of not learning is “difficult to write something or to express” his thinking, and this is coincident with his narration, which has not much essential content and some of them are just the simple words and sentences without specific meanings. But he also knows that this is a little late for his to learn.



After so many years of social life experiences in the reality, he has understood all the necessity and importance of learning, but he is also aware that he could not have the good chance and enough time to learn until now.

(18) Although it is hard, but I should still learn something. From now on, I should learn hard, and advice the posterity to learn as hard as possible... And I learnt much social knowledge and social science.

(18) This can be seen as a type of wish on lifelong learning, and what is more important that he has the thinking and ideal to persuade and educate his offspring to learn hard at their school time. So this can be seen as the reason for the reason of beginning the lifelong learning thinking of the next generation with the help of parents.

He thought that the social experiences and knowledge could be seen as a part of the learning content in his life, and from his tone, he felt a little pride about his life experiences in the society, and this kind of knowledge and experiences could not be obtained by the youth or graduates from universities, therefore, he would regard that is one of the advantages he has.

(19) A man, who lives in the world, should learn in the whole life. He has to learn for lifelong...Lifelong learning, we should learn from our childhood... When I have time, I would like to read a book, even that is a magazine,

(19) He realized lifelong learning as a theory that all the human beings should learn during the whole life. And this is the most explanation of the interviewees. But all the explanations just refer to the overall and general meaning they understand, without any definitive or specific words on this concept. This situation means almost all the narrators could understand the concept from their own experiences and the literal meaning, but not from the scientific or theoretical level, so the popularization of this notion will be a long way to go in China.

He considered that reading a book or a magazine belongs to the area of lifelong learning, which means he is aware that the lifelong learning should begin as early as possible. So he defined lifelong learning as from the cradle to the grave. If he has just this thought, he would affect his offspring to learn from their childhood and this will be a virtuous circle for the development of learning environment in the whole country. And actually it is, as most of the Chinese parents have much more hopes on their children, who are highly anticipated in the learning results and performance, but the aim of learning by the children is more for wealth and social status, other than knowledgeable in the scientific fields.