

## 2. The narrative contents by Chinese interviewees and analysis

### 2.1. The interview with Mr. PH

#### The narrative contents by Mr. PH

Mr. PH, 29 years old, born in the provincial capital city in the middle of China. He is now a teacher in this city. This interview has been made in one morning from 10:00 in August in his working office. The main contents are as follows:

PH<sup>1</sup>: You mean that, eh, I should talk about the learning experience of myself?

C<sup>2</sup>: Yes, I would like to hear something about that, or else what you want to tell me.

PH: Ok, my family was a, eh, a not very rich one. So from my childhood, my mother always tells me that, she said, eh, she said, I should learn very well in the school, and not let her and my father worry about my study. Eh, and only study can change my fate, and if I do not learn hard, I will lead a poor life in my adulthood. So, eh, ah, I just wanted, I decided to learn hard in my school years. But I did not why, but, eh, my scores were all not very good. The teacher of my primary school, eh, he liked me very much, he always told me that, he said, eh, I.... I could be a great man in the future. But, at last, ha-ha, I found he just told the same words to my classmates. So, eh, from then, I, I just, eh, just did not believe some saying from the teachers. But, to myself, I did not really know what to do when, eh, my scores did not grow up when I, eh, worked so hard on it. And from then, I did, eh, I did not know what the thought of my, parents, but they just, eh, they sent me to an art class in the society, and they just, you know, at that time, my family was not so rich to afford, eh, any extra fees for, eh, for the others things except eating and wearing. But, I did not know really, why my parents had, eh, had such great courage, ah, they had just sent me to learn piano and clarinet. And, when I grew up, eh, I got to know that, ah, they had just spent most of, eh, at that time, spent most of their salaries on my learning. And I did not really know when I learnt at my childhood. So, eh, I learnt the art subjects just as I, eh, as I learnt the subjects, eh, at school. But, I found that, ha-ha, I had the talent of music, maybe, eh, then, eh, I just learnt clarinet very fast, or even faster than most of my classmates. Eh, then I ended this learning experience when I came to the, eh,

<sup>1</sup> The speakers with name abbreviation as capital letters other than "C" in this book refer to the interviewees.

<sup>2</sup> The speaker "C" in the book refers to the interviewer and author.

the junior middle school, because our family really, eh, at that time, they could really not afford the fees for my clarinet learning. But, they, eh, to my surprise, they just, eh, spent a lot of money, and they bought me a new clavinet, as you know, a good clavinet cost, eh, at that time, more than, eh, maybe 1000 RMB or so, even, now, it costs more than 3000 RMB. So at that time, for a good clavinet, my parents just spent the salary of their whole two months. (Sigh). I found fortunately, eh, I learnt an instrument when I, eh, I was young. If I did not, maybe, eh, I did not know, or maybe I could not get such a job as a music teacher. But, eh, I had to say that, eh, my school work just was very normal. I could not, eh, I did not know how to change it. So I just, eh, entered the junior and senior middle school. And, eh, in the senior middle school, eh, at first, I felt I could learn well in the class, but, eh, I found I could not catch up with others, eh, during the second year in the school. Eh, just then, ha-ha, there was an art class, eh, that was established just from my grade 2 in the senior middle school. Ah, that was very accidental, that, I heard the head teacher, Mr. Zhou said, that, if the students who did not, eh, at that time, could not have capacity or interests in the subjects, eh, the cultural subjects, they, eh, he said, they could consider, eh, to turn to the art class. Just then, I came back home, eh, and I discussed this matter with my parents. Eh, they did not know how to deal with that. Then, we came to a relative, eh, he was an educational officer in my city. He told us, that, eh, I could not remember the saying clearly, but, eh, he meant that, I could hold that chance, because, eh, maybe I could not have much success on the cultural subjects, so I could turn to the, eh, the music which I liked very much. And the music market, eh, he said, was much more flourished, eh, in a few years, and he was right from the views of nowadays. But, you know, when I chose to learn music, eh, to learn instrument in a professional university, then, my parents should, eh, pay much more money for that. Maybe that would be, eh, twice as the normal university. So, eh, at the beginning, I, how could I say, I really did not want to give any, eh, any financial pressure on my parents, but, eh, at last, my parents persuaded me, they told me that, when, eh, when I graduated from the university, I could, maybe I could earn much more money for what, eh, what I learnt in the university. So they, eh, I felt very moved, eh, that they decided to support me to enter the art class and then, I got to be a student in a university in Henan province. During the four years, eh, in the university, I could say, that, I did not waste any time. Ah, I just spent most of my time on part time job. So, eh, I had just got a little, really a little money for the fees in the university. And, I thought, I could just reduce the pressure, maybe, I could help my parents with earning money at that time. And I just, eh, at that time, I just save every cent in the university. You might not believe that, eh, I had just picked waste bottles, eh, after

school and just sold them, eh, for money. Although the life, for me, maybe, eh, very hard, but I felt I had enriched my life. And, eh, during the four years, I, eh, I just learn much about the knowledge of my major. So, eh, I could just teach other ones music, ha-ha, I had been a teacher at that time. And, eh, I could earn more money as I taught others English. Maybe, eh, from that time, I became a teacher for music and English, ha-ha, I could teach both of them. Eh, then, the university years, eh, passed very, say, very quickly. So I always missed those years, but, ah, I could not return to that time again. Sometimes, eh, I thought, that, eh, that time was maybe the best time during the whole period of my school years. So, just now, I always look forward to go back, eh, back to the university years. And then, eh, I graduated as a bachelor. But you know, at that time, as I just began my, eh, my career, everything went not very well. Really! I could not find, eh, find a proper job for myself. And, when I wanted to be a teacher, eh, in a public school, or even a primary school, but, just then, I had found, eh, that I could not get the chance. Eh, what you did not know that, when you wanted to be a teacher, eh, that was no less difficult than, eh, to be an officer in the government. If you, eh, you did not have much money or, eh, you did not have a relative who could help you, then, eh, you could not get that position. It was true! Even now, you see, the situation was still the same. So, I just waited for other good chance, eh, for me, to get to other educational departments, but, eh, my parents could not wait. They, eh, at that time, they felt not patient about my future, and, so they just told me to find, eh, find a job, even it was not so good, or, eh, even I could not do it for long. But they meant that, I thought, they wanted me to find a job by myself, and, eh, I knew that they did not, eh, want me to just stay at home. Eh, then, I felt very nervous, really. I could not find a good job, so, I just came to a private school, and from then, I just taught in private schools until now. But, eh, I should say that, eh, I had not an official position, or, eh, a stable position in the, eh, the public schools. So, that was still a worry of my parents. But, eh, I could not get the chance, not because, eh, I had not learnt, eh, carefully, but, you know. I had not, eh, such strong background. Eh, so I did not, not even dream to be an official worker or teacher in, eh, even in a small department of government. I, eh, I really would like to be a normal one in the, eh, the society and, passed, eh, the whole life peacefully. The year before last year, eh, I had been English teacher and, eh, music teacher in 4 different private schools, so, I could afford myself. But, eh, last year I had just married, and, ha-ha, I had just had a son this year. So, I must, I had to earn much money for my child. Eh, then, the salaries before were not enough for my wife, my son and myself. My parents, eh, sometimes they could help me with my financial problems. But, I did not think, eh, that was proper to get help, eh, always from them. I should

learn to live by myself. So, I just afforded much more lessons. And until now, eh, I had just opened a private school with, eh with my friends. And he taught, eh, math and Chinese, and I, I just taught them music and, eh, especially instruments and, eh, English. Now I could, eh, earn much more money than, eh, I could get more money than I worked for others. But in this way, I should work much more, eh, for example, I had to, eh, make and put up the advertisement for the school. And from this experience, eh, how could I say, I had learnt much about how to run a school, eh, and I could experience the difficulty of establishing a school. So, eh, I just dared to say, that, when I could not earn much money in this way, eh, I could establish a school, eh, by myself, and then, eh, I could be a boss of myself!...

C: Then, could you tell me that the factor which influenced you the most during the whole course of your learning?

PH: Eh, I think that is my parents. Because, eh, they just told me to work and learn harder and harder. I could, eh, could still remember their saying that, eh, they told me, if you want to be a man, eh, who could be over others, you had to, eh, experience much more difficulties than others. And, eh, when I could not get good scores in my school, eh, they, then they would say that that was my own reason, then, eh, I would have more and more pressure, eh, on learning, and then, eh, I would not have much energy, eh, on others. So, even my cultural subjects were not, eh, not very good, but, I dared to say that, my music knowledge was much better, eh, than most of the classmates in my art class. So I would, eh, would thank my parents, that, eh, they gave me, eh, not only the support for the mental, but, eh, they also supported me about the financial things.

C: Then, could you tell me something about your understanding of lifelong learning?

PH: Lifelong learning? I did not, eh, think that it is eh, useful for the society. Because, nowadays, eh, everyone is wondering how to earn money as much as possible, eh, no one want to know much more, eh, about knowledge or, eh, just spend much money and time on learning. I do not think that is, eh, the necessary thing, or the first thing which the people eh, in China, should consider. So, eh, I would not agree the Chinese to learn something, eh, just through the whole life, and, eh, say, not to create something, and, eh, more clearly, that they do not earn money for the family.

C: So, that is to say that, maybe you will not learn something after your retirement?

PH: No, I will not do that, maybe, eh, I say maybe, that, I will company my wife and, eh, my son to have a trip. Or, I just want to earn much more money when I grow old. So, eh, I maybe just play the stock market then.

C: You play the stock market now?

PH: Yes, I, eh, I have started that before I, eh, I got married. So, I am an professional one the stock market. Ha-ha!

C: Then, from when do you learn how to play the stock market and why you want to learn that?

PH: For money. I just want to earn, eh, more and more money, so my classmates, eh, in the university advised me that, eh, he said that, I could spend a little money in the stock market. Eh, then, I just learn how to play that, eh, by him. And, from then on, I, eh, I really found that, eh, when I got much more knowledge about the stock market, eh, I could get more money from that. And, eh, when I analyzed the data, eh, and the trend of the line in the stock market, eh, I dare to say that, I could earn a great amount of money in a short time. So, I just find that, I have such talent on, eh, play the stock market.

C: So, except that, what else have you learn in these years after school?

PH: Eh, I had applied for a class, eh, which educates parents how to be good, eh, to their children, as my son, eh, he is too young, and sometimes, eh, I found him is too weak. So, eh, I just want to be a good father, eh, so I just want to learn to be a good father, eh, at the beginning.

C: Thank you very much for your time!

### **The analysis of the narrative contents of Mr. PH**

(1) I decided to learn hard in my school years. But I did not know why...my scores were all not very good. The teacher of my primary school...always told me that...I could be a great man in the future. But...he just told the same words to my classmates. So, eh, from then, I...did not believe some saying from the teachers.

(1) Under such instructions and advice, the narrator “decided” to learn hard, which meant he had his own decision on his hard learning consciously, but not voluntarily. During his school years, he found that his “scores were all not very good”, but he could not find out the reason (“did not know why”), so his mood with his learning was not very high then. From the words “not very good” we could find his scores should not be too bad, but he just gave himself too much aims and goals in his learning, which had been compelled and pressured by his family. On the other side, firstly, he felt encouraged when he heard the encouragement from his teacher, but he could not bear the fact that “he just told the same words to my classmates”, so he had found the dual character of his teacher. During this process, the teacher at first

wanted to do such an encouragement to his students, in order to improve their performance in the class and learning, but when he could not use the teaching and encouraging tool properly, the effects would be just the opposite to his wish. The worst result was the narrator felt “did not believe the saying from teachers”, which showed that he felt hurt by the behavior and teaching method from his teacher. When he could not trust teachers, he would not learn well or efficiently with his teachers in school, as he did not have interest with learning with the unbelievable teachers.

His decision on learning was not based on his interest or hobbies, but just on his parents’ education and his willing to be a successful man in the society. The encouragement from his teacher was not used scientifically as he just used the same words to different students. So the students would feel to compel about the saying from the teachers. So the impact and influences of the teachers to students were quite important during the process of learning behavior of the students. This is a kind of school factor which has influenced the students’ learning behaviors during the school years.

(2) I did not really know what to do when, eh, my scores did not grow up when I...worked so hard on it.

(2) This time he fell into such a confused situation because he could not deal with the problem in his learning process as his “scores did not grow up” even when he “worked so hard on it”, so he had no idea about the method or way to improve his behaviors in his learning. He used “so hard” to describe his efforts on his learning, which meant he maybe really has spent much time and energy on his school work, but he got always failure with it. It also showed that his aim in school had not changed, as he always wished to have better scores.

He had no direction when he got failure or felt helpless with his learning. Maybe his problem about his learning was just the methods of learning were not proper for him, but he could not get any help from others at that period.

(3) My family was not so rich to afford...any extra fees for...the others things except eating and wearing. But, I did not know really, why my parents had...such great courage...sent me to learn piano and clarinet...they had just spent most of...their salaries on my learning... they could really not afford the fees for my clarinet learning. But, they...spent a lot of money, and they bought me a new clavinet...spent the salary of their whole two months.

(3) Until now he always focused his narration on the second hand episode, either family or school, but without any individual thinking on his learning or school work,



which meant that he had been influenced by the outer factors much more than his inner thoughts. In this segment, he repeated his parents' behavior as "spent the salary" to "sent him to learn piano and clarinet", which meant that he was deeply impressed by the matter. He had used a comparison to describe the honorable and estimable of his parents' decision on his learning, though just from the material conditions. This shows again that he had not good family background, but his parents still decided to spent "most of their salaries" to afford him with instruments learning, so there should be a clear aim supporting such a kind of behavior, which is the parents believe that the education investment should have the success of their son in return. During this segment, the narrator paused many times, which showed that he felt very excited and grateful when he talked about these scenes.

There is also a detail that he narrator said "I did not know why my parents sent me to" learn instruments, which showed the narrator had no idea about his aim of learning the instruments, but all of the learning content and decision had been made by his parents for him, so he could not have his own choice. This segment also showed the fees and investment on instrument learning in China is very expensive and could not be afforded by normal families.

The parents just wanted to train him to be a successful man, so they could save up for the expense for the learning fees of their son. From this we could see that the parents had too much hope on the learning results of their son's. But this behavior always gave the children much more pressure on their learning behavior as they had to learn hard and get better results for the expense from their parents.

(4) I had the talent of music...I just learnt clarinet very fast, or even faster than most of my classmates... my school work was just very normal...I did not know how to change it...I found I could not catch up with others

(4) He had such a great talent and he could have the fortunate to develop it with the help from his parents.

This was the period of his anxiety and confusion as he could not get much success on his cultural knowledge learning. Maybe for him, the cultural knowledge was not his strength and the music subjects would be proper for him, but under the education system he had to learn the whole contents which were taught at school.

(5) If the students who did not...have capacity or interests in...the cultural subjects, they...could consider...to turn to the art class.

(5) In this segment he just introduced the reason why so many Chinese students were willing to learn art in their university time. Here he mentioned the premise of

choosing art major as “not capacity or interest in the cultural subjects”, so the choice of learning art in the senior middle school did not mean the students really having the interest in art subject, but the choice of art subjects was on the situation that there were no options but only art subjects. That was a good chance for him as he could develop his major and interest in the art class.

(6) I really did not want to give...any financial pressure on my parents, but...my parents persuaded me...when I graduated from the university, I could...earn much more money for what...I learnt in the university...I felt very moved

(6) From this segment we could find that the narrator had much financial pressure from his family, but this was not out of his intention, rather by his parents who wanted to see his success. The word “really” showed that the narrator felt upset and nervous about the financial pressure on his parents for his learning, but the parents “persuaded him”, which meant that the parents were willing to invest such a big sum of money for their son on higher education. As return, the narrator decided to “earn more money” to his parents, so the aim of his learning in his university was mainly for more money and getting rid of the financial pressure from his family. Therefore, we can see that the factor affecting the choice and purpose of his learning were mainly coming from the outer, such as the family background, the financial pressure and the demand of his parents.

The parents just told him the truth why they would invest on his learning, as they would like their son to get more from his major and learning at school and earn more to return them.

(7) I did not waste any time...I just spent most of my time on part time job...got a little money for the fees in the university. And...I could just...help my parents with earning money at that time...I just save every cent in the university.

(7) This segment just described his life in the university, but without any description of his learning situation or condition there, but just about the earning money and undertaking part time job. His value and aim of learning in university had already become for more money, but the focus of his university life was no more on his learning or studying. The words “not wasted any time” meant that he felt that he had used his time properly and efficiently, but the saying of “spent most of my time on part time job” showed that he had little time with his main task as learning in his daily life in university. He felt that he could “help his parents with earning money at that time”, but on the contrary, he could “earn a little money for his fees”, so he misunderstood the meaning and main task for him in his university years. He also mentioned “saved every cent” to show that his life in university was no quite comfortable,



and the money given by his family was not enough for his daily expense. Therefore, we can see that he learning condition was hostile and he did not care much about his learning either. The main reason for such a situation was the family financial problem and his fees for his major in the university.

The importance of his learning at that time was known already by him, as he should bear a burden as the hope of the family and to strive for his own future. So he could have more energy on learning for these aims.

(8) I felt I had enriched my life...I just learn much about the knowledge of my major. So...could just teach other ones music...I had been a teacher at that time.

(8) He did his job or part time job so early as to earn money as early and much as possible to return to the family. So he did not have much time on his learning at that period.

(9) That time was maybe the best time during the whole period of my school years... I just began my...career; everything went not very well...I could not find...a proper job for myself.

(9) The feeling of releasing the burden of the family would be the best thing for him at that time. That was also the main point of his life in the university, but not his learning and the tasks in the class.

The job market in China in recent years was not very ideal for the graduates, as the talents were already saturated, so the requirements for the qualification of the graduations were much higher than ever before. He did not really learn much professional knowledge in the university so that was the result of his behavior in the past years.

(10) I had been English teacher and...music teacher in 4 different private schools...could afford me. But...last year I had just married, and...I had just had a son this year...I had to earn much money for my child.

(10) Until this segment, he has been always talking about the financial crisis for him and his family, so the focus and main task in his life were to earn money as much as possible. He mentioned he had taught in “4 different private schools” which meant he had not a stable job position or steady salary for his life. The jobs in private schools in China always meant part time jobs, which had no guarantee for future, such as pension or housing. He had just the worry when he got a son. He said “had to earn much money for his child” which meant the aim of his rest life was to earn money for his son and his family. Until now, he did not mention such a learning process carefully or officially in his narration, and maybe learning seems to him as

not so important as earning money, which is his main task for his life. Therefore, the family condition and living needs are the motivation for him to work and teach in his life.

The reality had forced him to earn more money to feed the family. So the jobs and work on him were very much and heavy. Then he would have much less time on his learning.

(11) I would not agree the Chinese to learn something...through the whole life...not to create something...they do not earn money for the family... I will not do lifelong learning after my retirement. I will company my wife and, eh, my son to have a trip. Or, I just want to earn much more money when I grow old. So...I maybe just play the stock market then.

(11) The main reason for his disagree on lifelong learning was his considered life-long learning as a behavior of learning without doing or working, but just learning at home day by day. That was a fault, but many people now in China had held the similar opinion.

The main task in his life was earning money, that was partly because his opinion about the society and his current status in the society, but largely because his family education from his childhood which had taught him to earn more and more to relieve the poverty of the family.

(12) I had applied for a class...which educates parents how to be good...to their children...I just want to be a good father...so I just want to learn to be a good father

(12) From this segment, we can say that he attached much importance to the education on his child, so he wanted to learn something good for his life and his family members, although they were out of pragmatic aims. At last he repeated twice "wanted to learn to be a good father" which showed that he had focused on being a good father in this period. For such a goal, he would like to learn, so when he could find a goal for his life, then, he would like to spend his time and energy on learning.

Although he would not learn anymore as he led the social life, he also should learn the knowledge which closely related to his life. So the lifelong learning would be continuing and penetrating the whole life of a normal one.

### **Summary:**

The narrator has been influenced by his family, especially the notion on education and learning from his parents quite a lot, so that when he grows up, he has the similar learning and educational idea with his parents. Because of the poor financial

family situation, his parents just wanted him to learn well in schools in order to change his own fate, which means the learning motivation and aim set to the narrator by his parents are just pragmatic and with strong eager for money and social position. They even threatened him as “if I do not learn hard, I will lead a poor life in my adulthood” which has narrated the narrator future and just regarded the learning as the only and best way for changing the family’s and the narrator’s fate. Under such circumstance, the parents were willing to devote all they had to support the narrator learning and hobbies, however, this is another kind of pressures on the narrator’s free choice and thoughts on learning, which had to obey the parents’ will and wish to strive for more money after graduation.

After the school years, the narrator had not choice but just to find a job and earn money for the family, in order to improve the family financial situation. This behavior and choice had stopped his opportunities for more learning and further learning for professional knowledge or his hobbies, and the only aim of his working is for money. This scene and situation get more severe when he has his family and child; therefore, in this period the main task and working aim become to feed his family and child. However, throughout the whole living process of his life, the most important and principal task and motivation of his learning is for the improvement of family financial situation and condition. In the current period, he holds such an idea about learning as “not agree the Chinese to learn something...through the whole life...not to create something...they do not earn money for the family”, therefore, the learning without pragmatic aim or result, in other words, the learning which could not bring him money then should be regarded as useless behavior and should be eradicated. Therefore, in his mind, the lifelong learning seems also to be a kind of useless and with no effectiveness activity in his life.

## **2.2. The interview with Mr. FCA**

### **The narrative contents by Mr. FCA**

Mr. FCA, 50 years old, born in a city in the western part of China. He is now a guard in a medical school in the city. This interview has been made in one morning from 10:25 in August in the front gate of the school. The main contents are as follows:

FCA: What do you want me to say?

C: What ever you want to talk about. But I hope to hear something about your learning experiences and your attitude to lifelong learning.

FCA: I am illiteracy and I have not accepted any form of education. I, I don't know, know anything about learning.

C: So, can you tell me why you have not got the chance of learning?

FCA: That was a long story. En, from my childhood, my family was very, very poor. I have 3 brothers and 3 sisters.... Form I was born, I remembered, en, remembered at that time we had not enough to resist our hunger. My mother and father were both, ha, they were both illiteracy. So they did not permit us to go school for a long time. They, their thinking was, three or four years of school, en, that was enough for us. So, you know, at that time, our family had not much money, so we should first think about the problem of eating and drinking. My elder brother, en, my biggest elder brother had had learnt in primary school for 3 years and then, he, eh, he dropped out. From then, we, the sisters and brothers, all of us, we did not want to go school and learn for a long time. We just wanted to study for one year or two, and then, we, eh, at that time, we thought, we could help our parents to earn more money for the, eh, for our family, and to have enough to eat and drink.

C: So, you did not have school years at all?

FCA: Yes, I have studied in a primary school for, for about, eh, about 3 years. But I did not, say, not like school at all. The classmates and the teachers around me did not like me at all. (Cough) And I, I did not like them at all, either. (Smile) So I was always, ha-ha, always absent from school at that time. But the head teacher and the school did not notice me or punish me at all. You know, at my era, the schools did not teach students, they just carried out different kinds of political movements or activities. Sometimes when we were sitting in the classroom, and then, the highest order was published by Chairman Mao, and then, we must turn to the order and learn it for days. En, that was the learning situation. So I dare to say, the students of our time, not all, but almost, did not really learn something useful. We spent out time everyday on activities and revolution movements. Even we always denounced our teachers and the head master in our school. Amazing? No, that was the normal form and situation of our times.

C: You can not read at all until now?

FCA: Yes, I can read a few, but I can not read a whole text of 300 or 400 word. Sometimes, eh, it is a shame, I always ask my son about the knowledge on the magazines, newspapers and the textbooks of his.

C: Is this very uncomfortable to your daily life?

FCA: Of course, it is. Sometimes I feel very sad about the feeling of illiteracy. But what can I do with it? If I were a young man as, eh, 15 years old, not now as a 50 old man, I would learn carefully and hard at school and I can learn something what I want.

C: Then what do you want to learn, can you tell me?

FCA: Eh, I am fond of music, and I have a good voice. Ha-ha, the people around me all say that, I can be a good singer if I learn the subject of music. But that is a pity, (Cough) I want to learn Yu Drama (Note: a kind of area drama which is very popular in Henan Province) and maybe I can be admitted to a drama college in Henan. Whenever I watch TV, Ha-ha, I always watch with many interests of the drama programs. I am dreaming of being a drama star in our province.

C: En, so after the short school years what did you do then and which kind of learning did you have from then?

FCA: After the school years?

C: Yes.

FCA: I, then, I returned home and helped my parents with housework. But after a few years the re-education activities which called us for going up mountains and to the countryside in rural areas to learn the agricultural knowledge from farmers began (Note: This is a movement which was proposed by Chairman Mao, who called out the youth at that time to go down to the countryside and learn something about agriculture, because he felt the youth in the city have pampered abuse and did not know anything about the field work), and just then my parents did not want me to stay at home day after day, so, eh, so I just went to the countryside not far from my city, but that was a rural area. And I just learnt a lot of agriculture knowledge at that time there. (Smile) But until now I did not think that was a, eh, a good time for me. We had to, yes, had to work from day to night in the field and, you see, and I could not eat enough each meal in the rural, (Drinking) although I was, eh, was always the man who ate the most in our team. Ha-ha.

C: Then did you have, eh; I mean any kind of learning?

FCA: Learning? That was impossible! For us, eh, for us, the biggest problem was eating and the hardest one was working. We worked day after day, and when we had a little time, we, ha-ha, slept in bed and no one wanted to do anything else, but, eh, we had earned a little. Everyday we had, at that time, we earned points. But everyday we could just earn no more than, eh, let me calculate, no more than 10 points. And each point stood for 5 cents. So at that time, the happiest thing was

eating enough for us. Who cared about learning knowledge? Except the man was mad (Note: this means impossible and irony).

C: Was there really no one who insisted on reading books and learning?

FCA: ....eh, there are, but too few.

C: So how can they learn in the rural area?

FCA: They just borrowed books from each other and exchanged the books which they had.

C: And learn with teacher?

FCA: Of course not! (Smile) They just heard radios and learnt with the teacher in the radio. Eh, one of my team members learnt in this way.....and we all called him bookworm, as he, eh, he just learnt English at that time with radio and, eh, and, (Cough) and read with radio in each morning from, eh, from about 7 o'clock to 8 o'clock and then, then we worked together in the field.

C: So what is he now?

FCA: He is now a teacher in a middle school. Or maybe was promoted to be a director in the school.

C: Then, after the years in the rural area?

FCA: Then, I came back home to the country.

C: And your work?

FCA: My work? Eh, then I was allocated to the meat processing factory and there, eh, I was a porter.

C: Then did you have some other learning experience from then?

FCA: Let me think back. Maybe not....Eh, but I was always educated by the professional works in the factory. And they told me, eh, how to port the thing with less power and the processing of pork in the factory.

C: So all of the learning experiences then were about the job?

FCA: You can say like that.

C: Then, can you tell me, if I want you to define lifelong learning, and what can you think about it right now?

FCA: Lifelong learning? What is it?

C: So you do not just know it at all?



FCA: Yes, I have no idea about it!

C: Then can you tell me what the most important factor on your way to learning is?

FCA: Money. If my family, eh, and I had enough money and, I say, the social status were much better, then I, maybe, I say maybe, my parents would spare more money for us brothers and sisters to enter schools and, (Cough), I, maybe, could have the chance of learning more years in schools. Maybe the situation of my life will be not like this.

C: And your parents? Do you think they are great factors to your learning?

FCA: My parents? No, I don't think they have influenced me a lot. They just offered me little money during, eh, my early school years.

C: Have they educated you then?

FCA: No, absolutely not. You can think about it. Then, at that time, there were seven children in our family. Eh, they, they had to earn more and more money to support the whole family. I remembered that they had not any time with us. My sisters and brothers had little communication with them. (Smile) The daily, eh, daily sentences between my parents and me are, "Eat!", "Full?", "Go out play!" and "Sleep." They governed us little, very little!

C: So, you have told me that you have a son. And what will you educate your son as he is now learning in middle school?

FCA: He? He is, eh, is not a good student also, as me. (Laugh) I always hit him, because he, you know, he always had a bad scores at school.... Last time, the head teacher of his called me and asked me to have a talk with her....To tell you the truth, I, eh...I felt very shameful. She told me my son, eh, my son could not enter a good senior middle school just from his performance now. I, I did not understand why. So I asked. She told me that, eh, my son, the scores of my son was obviously not enough for a good senior middle school and if I wanted him to enter a senior middle school, then the school may be a normal, eh, or a very bad one. Then, at the time I had nothing to say, as I was such illiteracy. I, then, I....I could not do anything to help him.

C: Do you feel regret?

FCA: Yes, of course I feel regret! Eh, if I were working hard at school, or, I, eh, I had more time at school. Eh, well, not to mention it.

C: I am sorry about it.

FCA: Well, it doesn't matter.