

Cultures in Cultural Cooperation

**The influence of cultural differences in the cultural cooperation
between Finland and China**

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Master's Thesis

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Arts Management

Spring 2013

for my parents, who created my soul

for China, who shaped my soul

for Finland, who refined my soul



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ABSTRACT

- Thesis
 Written work

Title Cultures in Cultural Cooperation – the influence of cultural differences in the cultural cooperation between Finland and China	Number of pages 76 pages (appendix included)
Author Shuo Tan	Semester Spring 2013
Degree programme Master degree programme in arts management	Programme option
Abstract <p>Finland and China have greatly enhanced their bilateral cooperation in the cultural field since the Shanghai World EXPO 2010. By now, as China becomes more and more culturally open to the world, the future of the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation is believed to be promising as well.</p> <p>This research probes the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation from a cultural perspective, in which not only the Finnish and the Chinese cultures are analysed and compared, but the influence of the cultural differences in the cooperation are also evaluated and studied. Furthermore, feasible solutions to the cultural clashes are summarized with the hope of guiding the western arts managers make practical strategies.</p> <p>It is revealed that Hofstede's four cultural dimensions are detectable in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, although they are not fully in consistence with the theoretical measurement in the scale of difference-making. Besides, five aspects which can be affected by the cultural differences in the course of the cooperation are generalized from the collected cultural issues.</p> <p>In addition to the empirical findings, questions on the national culture dimension theory are also raised as an attempt to stimulate further discussions on how to perceive the East and the West from a broader and deeper view particularly in the realm of arts management.</p>	
Keywords cultural cooperation, cultural differences, cultural dimensions, the Chinese culture, the Finnish culture, cross-cultural management	
Additional information	

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Before the 20th century, China was a universe of its own. It gave much to the rest of the world -- silk and tea, printing and gunpowder -- but was largely indifferent to anything offered in return. Two of its three major religions were home-grown. Its energies were expended less in territorial conquest than in securing its borders and preserving the ideals of its golden yesterdays. (Cotter, 1996)

Up to now, a century has just passed since the dying of China's ancient empire in 1912, and the globe has already shrunk to a "village" thanks to the advancement in technology. However, the Chinese people still adhere to their old culture consciously or unconsciously, and they seem reluctant to give in such effort even when they migrate to another country. In Manhattan's Chinatown alone gathered over 84,000 Chinese ("Neighborhood Profile", 2003) and this is just one example of hundreds of Chinatowns scattered all over the world today.

Yes, this is China – the Middle Kingdom (its literal meaning in the Chinese language), yet just a century ago, it was a land where westerners were detested and slaughtered (Gittings, 2000). Although in the current communist society many of its ancient traditions and values have been changed or eradicated, there is still something remained in the soul of this nation, which has been passed down along its 5,000 years of common history and endured a series of invasions, revolutions, wars, political movements, modernization and reforms in the very recent 150 years. It can neither be acculturated like the westernization in Japan, nor can be conquered like the Britishisation in India. It is just there, being intact, alluring while mystifying the occidentals for centuries.

Modern western sinologists have tried to decode China by various methods. From the early linguistic approach of Bernhard Karlgren, to the influential historical studies of John Fairbank, to the recent philosophical comparative research of Francois Jullien, dazzling facts about China have been revealed, examined, compared and interpreted. Nevertheless, China is still far from culturally comprehensive. So many things take place on that vast land every day challenging the understanding of the West. “Why China...?” question is overflowing the world media and the Google results for this term have hit as high as over 2.4 billion.

In a time of globalization when the EU-China cooperation becomes more frequent and more important (EU-China Summit, 2012), we have no choice but to face the cultural differences and learn to partner with the Chinese people, particularly in the cultural field, where the possibility for cultural clashes remain the highest – after all, a cultural product, unlike other commercial goods, is the direct embodiment of a specific culture.

According to the statistics, “the EU 27 trade in cultural services towards China went from EUR 31 million in 2004 to EUR 49 million in 2007, registering a 58% boost.” (Media Consulting Group, 2009, p. 92) Besides, the EU-China Year of Intercultural Dialogue was held in early 2012, which “offers opportunities for Chinese and EU cultural institutions, organizations and other stakeholders to establish and develop structured and sustainable cooperation during 2012 and beyond.” (European Commission, 2012, para. 1)

The future looks rosy. Whereas, are European arts managers really prepared? Have they understood China accurately before they start to work with their Chinese counterparts? By far, what experience have they gained? What lessons have they learned? What expectations do they have for the future cooperation?

1.2 Aim of the Study

Based on these background facts, the research question is formed, namely “How do the culture differences influence the cultural cooperation between Finland and China?”

Here Finland is chosen as the case study country, for there are three reasons:

Politically, Finland is “among the very first Western countries to recognize the People's Republic of China... [and it] remained among the few Western European countries that have never suspended relations with China.” (“History”, n.d., para. 1 & 4) Hence, a stable diplomatic tie between the two countries is expectable at least in the foreseeable future, which is a key prerequisite for stable cultural cooperation.

Historically, Finland managed to maintain its sovereign independence during the Soviet times, and acceded to EU in 1995 shortly after the end of the Cold War. Since then, Finland has positively integrated with a coordination system “to ensure that Finland can present a coordinated position, in line with its overall EU policy.” (“Handling EU Affairs in Finland”, n.d., para. 2) In a great sense, the Finnish culture is credible to be a window of the Western culture, so the cultural differences between Finland and China shall be representative for East-West studies.

Economically, China has been officially considered as the future market for Finnish cultural exports (“Staying Power”, 2005), so it is to believe that this research will be contributive to Finnish arts managers to make practical strategies.

Hopefully, the study of the cultural differences between Finland and China can provide insights for other EU countries as well. After all, the 27 members, though culturally diverse from each other, originated from the same civilization (ancient Greece and ancient Rome), belong to the same language family (Indo-European), adopt the same religion (Christianity) and share the same values to a large degree, and it is because of

these commonality that Europe is able to unit again in a gap of two thousand years since the collapse of the Roman Empire.

However, it is to remark that this research never intends to draw any definite conclusion, but, if possible, to stimulate further discussions on how to view and treat the cultural differences in the realm of cross-cultural arts management.

1.3 Research Approach

This study applies a qualitative methodology and the approach of qualitative interview is adopted for data collection. Additionally, content analysis as a technique is used for data analysis.

1.3.1 Methodology in Brief

Eight individual interviews were carried out between September and December 2012. The first two were pilot interviews in order to gain some first-hand experience in data collecting.

Among the eight interviewees, seven are from Finland, and one from China who has been working in a Finnish arts organization for over two years. The backgrounds of the interviewees range from the performing arts to architecture to music agency, yet due to the unsatisfying data quality, the two pilot interviews and one formal interview had to be excluded from analyzing.

The five valid interviews were transcribed into English texts for content analysis and Appendix C (Extract of Interview Content Analysis) demonstrates the analyzing process in details.

1.3.2 Scope of the Research

This research specially focuses on the cultural differences between Finland and China as well as the influence in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation. Hence, practical matters such as the process of co-production or the relationship building are not discussed.

Since the target readers of this thesis are the western arts managers who have been or are going to be engaged in the work of EU-China cultural exchange, the Chinese culture here is more thoroughly explored.

One more thing to note is that *China* in this research refers to *the People's Republic of China*. Hence, *the Chinese culture* mentioned hereafter excludes the cultures in other Chinese-speaking countries or regions, such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The whole thesis consists of five chapters.

The first chapter provides the background information of the study, the aim as well as a brief introduction of the research methodology.

Chapter 2 is the theoretical framework made up of three parts. The first part defines the range of the theoretical analysis; the second part outlines Hofstede's national cultural dimension theory; and the last part analyzes the Finnish and the Chinese cultures theoretically in assistance with pertinent literature narratives.

The research methodology, i.e., the qualitative interview and content analysis, is explicated in Chapter 3 with detailed examples.

Chapter 4 presents the two major findings from the data analysis, namely the typical

cultural differences revealed in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation as well as how they influence the cooperation process. Meanwhile, solutions to the cultural clashes are also summarized for practical work.

The last chapter concludes the research findings and suggests the directions for further studies.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 A Path to Cultural Differences

To be in consistence with the research question, i.e., “How do the culture differences influence the cultural cooperation between Finland and China?”, attention of the theoretical analysis needs to be given to *culture difference* – one of the two major concerns of cross-cultural psychology. (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002). Yet, social behavior, which is “often thought to be the most likely area [of cross-cultural psychology] in which to find substantial influence on human characteristics from cultural factors” (Berry et al., 2002, p. 84), is by far the most applicable to the aim of this study, since it is the verified cultural differences between Finland and China that will directly serve the readers who are expected to enhance their East-West understanding and subsequently adjust their behavior in the sociocultural reality.

In the domain of social behavior, the study of societal values has been greatly advanced to date. Early in 1961, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s *value orientation theory* conceptualized five value dimensions, providing means for cultural comparative studies. However, due to the limitation of their data, which were collected only from five ethnic groups within the Southwest U.S.A., the theory lacks the scientific value to measure cultures across nations.

Nevertheless, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s findings paved way for Geert Hofstede, in whose groundbreaking work *Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values (1980)* four dimensions of national cultures variability are explicitly presented. Although the approach, such as dividing cultures by unit of nation and measuring only by surveys, does have its limitations as Hofstede (2002) himself admitted in the reply to his major opponent Brendan McSweeney, the *national culture dimension theory* is still seen as influential and authoritative. As one of the top cited sources in the *Social Science Citation Index* (Fang, 2003; Bing, 2004), the theory is

acknowledged to have “designed the architecture that has characterized much of contemporary cross-cultural quantitative research”. (Bing, 2004, para. 7)

Later in 1991, Hofstede proposed the fifth dimension in his work *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the mind*, where data from China were firstly included. Named after *Confucian dynamism* or *long-term orientation*, this new dimension is distilled from the Chinese traditional values with the extent to “dedicated, motivated, responsible, and educated individuals with a sense of commitment and organizational identity and loyalty.” (Jandt, 2009, p.176) Notwithstanding, the fifth dimension has not yet received the same level of attention as well as debate in the research community, comparing to the previous four. As discovered by Tony Fang (2003), this is because there is a philosophical flaw underlying the concept, where the values at the two ends of *long-term orientation* are actually interrelated with one another in the Chinese culture, let alone that the Confucian values are too strange to westerners. “Given this fatal flaw and other methodological weaknesses, the usefulness of Hofstede’s fifth dimension is doubted”, Fang concluded (2003, p. 347). Furthermore, in *Dimensions do not exist: A reply to Brendan McSweeney* (2002) Hofstede himself used more than once the term of “four or five dimensions” instead of “five dimensions” to refer to his findings, implying his own uncertainty.

Therefore, on one hand, Hofstede’s theory is fairly qualified in terms of the goal set for this research, but on the other, part of his theory has to be abandoned due to its questionable validity.

The following parts of this chapter present Hofstede’s theory in brief as well as the theoretical analysis on the Finnish and Chinese cultures. As noted in Chapter 1, the scenario of China is emphasized in favor of the readers. In addition, some narratives on China from three western classic literatures will be employed as complement for the analysis, for there are three reasons.

Firstly, although the three literature works were finished in different times (1894, 1935 & 1955 respectively), they did reveal something in common in respect to the Chinese culture. More importantly, what described in these books is a China that had not yet been influenced by Mao's Cultural Revolution (a political upheaval whose "damage in effect involved three generations") (Hsü, 1990, p. 703), nor by Deng's Open Door Policy (by which "China's role as a potential superpower was quietly taken for granted") (Gittings, 2005, p.209), from which, therefore, we can see a Chinese society still strongly attached to its ancient past. By combining these revelations with Hofstede's relatively modern theory as well as the contemporary cultural phenomena, we are able to trace the true characteristics of this nation – the hallmark, which is, despite the deep political, economic and social transformation, still being kept as it was in the past thousands of years.

Secondly, these literatures shall be rendered credible, for the three authors are the acclaimed ones to whom China is not eccentric exotica, but a world that they felt belonging to and reflected on in their lives.

The first writer Arthur Smith devoted 54 years of his life in China as missionary (1872-1926), whose *Chinese Characteristics (1894)* is considered as "the most widely read American work on China until Pearl Buck...[and] the first to take up the task of analyzing Chinese society in the light of 'scientific' social and racial theory". (Liu, 2003, para. 1) Then Pearl Buck, the first American woman to win a Nobel for literature and a China-oriented writer, grew up and spent about four decades in her foster country (Buck, 1938). Her autobiography *My Several Worlds (1955)* well depicted her contrasting life between the two cultures. Prompted by Pearl Buck, Yutang Lin, a renowned Chinese scholar with western education background and a Nobel nominee, published his English work *My Country and My People (1935)* in America, which is the first comprehensive work on the Chinese culture in the West written by a native Chinese, as Buck remarked in the preface, "It is, I think, the truest, the most profound,

the most complete, the most important book yet written about China” (Buck in Lin, 1938, p. xvi).

Last but not least, narratives themselves, despite the subjectivity, are valuable cultural resources, and narrative studying is considered as one of the major methods in nowadays cultural research (Lawler, 2008).

Hence, approaching Hofstede by pertinent narratives not only helps in understanding the theory, but also, together with the empirical data collected, verifying the theory to a large extent.

2.2 The National Culture Dimension Theory

The national culture dimension theory was firstly proposed by the Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede in 1980 based on his extensive survey on the IBM international employees in 40 countries (Jandt, 2010). By then, four dimensions are identified, namely *power distance*, *individualism*, *masculinity* and *uncertainty avoidance*, and they are applied as the framework of the theoretical analysis for this research.

2.2.1 Power Distance (PDI)

This dimension refers to a cultural variability, “which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, p. 61). In other words, this is a measure of inequality owing to the hierarchy formed by the power distance. In the countries with high PDI, superiors and subordinates are supposed in unequal status. Power concentrates in a small group of superiors, whom the subordinates tend to depend on and conform with. While, in a society with low PDI, the superiors and the subordinates, though different in ranks of the positions, work on a more equal bases and communicate in a more direct and interactive way.

2.2.2 Individualism-collectivism (IDV)

This dimension is a measure of the feeling of belonging, which correlates with PDI (Hofstede et al., 2010). Generally speaking, high PDI countries appear to be more collective, while low PDI countries more individualistic. People in a collective culture are more personally integrated and their social relationships are more bound, but at the same time, their individuality is restrained and their personal opinions are expected to subject to the will of the group they attach to. Contrarily, an individualistic culture appears remote and independent in terms of the social relations, and people particularly value their own expression, such as “speaking one’s mind is a virtue” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 107).

2.2.3 Masculinity (MAS)

This dimension has something to do with women’s social roles, but in a broader sense – as applied to both men and women – a masculine society is a performance society, where people are more driven by competition, material success and self-achievement, while a feminine society sees the “quality of life is the sign of success and standing out from the crowd is not admirable”. (“What about China”, n.d., para. 8) The difference usually leads to the opposite attitudes towards life and work, such as, whether living in order to work or working in order to live.

2.2.4 Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)

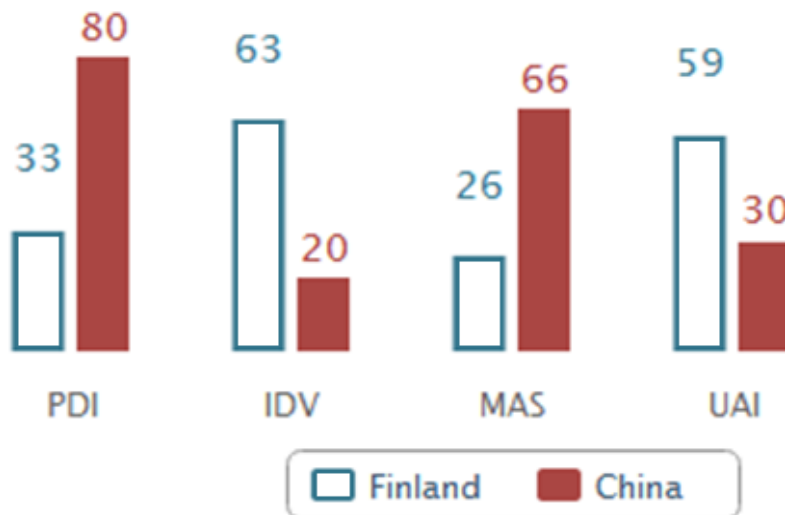
This dimension refers to the tolerance of unpredictability, which is applied for measuring how people feel and behave when dealing with a certain level of uncertainty. Cultures characterized by low UAI have more tolerance in ambiguity and risks, while high UAI countries have stronger needs for accuracy and precision, which are embodied in, for instance, the punctuality, the codes of behaviors, the legitimacy, the exactness in the language, etc.

2.3 Finland-China Analysis by the Cultural Dimension Theory

In this section the characteristics of Finland and China will be compared in consistence with Hofstede's *national cultural dimension theory*. As mentioned above, the analysis on the Chinese culture weights more, since the readers are mainly from the West. Handpicked excerpts from the three literatures will be presented to support the theory, in which the origin of the cultural differences is also reflected to some extent.

The four-dimension variability indexes in relation to Finland and China are illustrated in Chart 2.1. As it is shown, where there is a high index of Finland, there is a low of China, and vice versa. The distinct unlikeness in all the dimensions denotes a deep cultural gap in between. In other words, the possibility for cultural clashes between the two countries remains high.

Chart 2.1 Hofstede's four-dimension indexes of Finland and China



Source: from *The Hofstede Centre*, retrieved from <http://geert-hofstede.com/finland.html>

2.3.1 High Power Distance

Figures in Chart 2.1 show that the biggest dissimilarity between Finland and China is in the dimension of PDI (47 scores of difference), indicating that the most potential

cultural clashes in a joint workplace may come from the working relationship between the leader (superior) and the staffs he/she leads (subordinate). In other words, it reflects the collision of the kind of working style (hierarchical vs. equal) that each side of the staffs is used to respectively.

The narratives below vividly profile the high power distance in China.

1. *No principle would seem to be more firmly established in China than that a father is the superior of his son, who must always do him reverence. Equally well established is the principle that the Emperor is superior to all his subjects, who must always do him reverence. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 123)*

Of all Asiatic peoples, the Chinese are probably most easily governed, when governed on lines to which they are accustomed. Doubtless there are other forms of civilization which are in many or in most respects superior to that of China, but perhaps there are few which would sustain the tension to which Chinese society has for ages been subject. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 225)

2. *...A child learned in the home how to conduct himself towards the different generations of grandparents and parents, elder and younger uncles and aunts, elder and younger cousins and brothers and sisters and servants, and in school he learned how to conduct himself towards teacher and friends and officials and neighbors and acquaintances. Being so taught, the youth was never ill at ease, never uncertain of how to behave or of how to speak to anyone. The essential rules were simple and clarified by the usage of centuries, and so the growing personality was poised and calm...In my early world we were all taught not to sit until our elders sat, not to eat until they had eaten, not to drink tea until their bowls were lifted. If there were not enough chairs we stood, and when an elder spoke to us, however playfully, we answered with the proper title. Did we feel oppressed? I am sure we did not, nor did that*

word occur to us. We knew where we were, and we knew, too, that someday we would be elders. (Buck, 1955, p. 15-16)

3. *Whenever the people are disrespectful to their officials or the young speak against their parents, we exclaim "Fan liao! Fan liao!" meaning that heaven and earth are overturned and the world has come to an end.*

The notion is very deep-rooted in the Chinese mind, and the evil is not confined to the officials, but spreads like the roots of a banyan tree miles off. Like the banyan tree, too, it spreads its cool shade over all who come under it. We Chinese do not fight the banyan tree; we try to come under its shade. We do not impeach officials, like the Americans, or burn down the houses of the rich, like the Bolsheviks. We try to become their doorkeepers and enjoy their official umbrage. (Lin, 1938, p. 188-189)

The narratives of Buck allude to the Chinese hierarchy, which is deeply embedded in one's social relations and considered as an important social norm to be strictly abided by and respected for.

Smith attributed this characteristic to the conservativeness of the Chinese people (Smith, 1894/1986), while Lin pointed out that the distinction of social status preached by Confucianism helped establish a *stratified equality* so as to realize social orders (Lin, 1938). However, this Chinese-recognized *stratified equality* is, undoubtedly, different from the *human equality* grounded in the Christianity (Padgett, 2002) and believed by the West. Under such circumstances, cultural clashes are inevitable.

Notwithstanding, we are at least able to discern the crux of this cultural matter: the Chinese conformity out of reverence is likely to be wrongly understood as a passive or dependent attitude by Finns, while the self-initiative nature of Finns may be seen by Chinese as a disrespectful action in excess of authority that harms social relations.

Hence, how to stimulate the cross-rank communication and collaboration while dismissing the concern about irreverence in the Chinese consciousness needs to be handled tenderly in the Sino-Finnish cooperation.

More discussions on conformity will be provided in the following IDV analysis, for the two dimensions are intertwined as explained in Section 2.2.

2.3.2 High Collectivism

As demonstrated in Chart 2.1, the dissimilarity in IDV between Finland and China is the second largest among the four (43 scores of difference), and the typical cultural clashes within this dimension will be the relationship between the individual and the group he/she belongs to (independent/democratic vs. submissive/authoritarian), as well as the interrelationship among the group members (remote vs. integrated).

The narratives below depict the Chinese collectivism and its possible reasons.

1. *The genesis of Chinese customs being what it is, it is easy to perceive that it is the underlying assumption that whatever is right. Thus a long-established usage is a tyranny. Of the countless individuals who conform to the custom, not one is at all concerned with the origin or the reason of the acts. His business is to conform, and he conforms...To any inquiry as to the reason for any particular act of religious routine, nothing is more common than to receive two answers: the first, that the whole business of communication with the gods has been handed down from the ancients, and must therefore be on the firmest possible basis; the second, that "everybody" does so, and therefore the person in question must conform. In China the machinery moves the cogs and not the cogs the machinery. While this continues to be always and everywhere true, it is also true that the merest shell of conformity is all that is demanded. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 119)*

In China every man, woman, and child is directly responsible to someone else, and of this important fact no one for a moment loses sight. Though one should “go far and fly high” he cannot escape, and this he well knows. Even if he should himself escape, his family cannot escape. The certainty of this does not indeed make a bad man good, but it frequently prevents him from becoming tenfold worse. (Smith, 1894/198, p. 237)

2. *And the Chinese people were quite capable of self-government. Their traditional family system, wherein every individual man, woman and child belonged to a clan and each clan was responsible for all individuals in it, was a sound basis for a new kind of modern democracy...There were no orphanages, for no child was orphaned, since the family as a whole continued responsible for the care of the child who had lost his immediate parents. There were no insane asylums, for the family cared for its insane. As a matter of fact, there were very few insane, for the family system provided individual security without disgrace and thus removed one of the main causes for modern insanity, the lost individual. There needed to be no relief rolls, for again the family as a whole cared for its members who were jobless. Only in times of widespread famine and catastrophe did there have to be outside help, and even then the family stayed together. Business was stable in a large middle class, for the generations carried it on in the same family. Nepotism, it is true, tended to be a problem, since it was natural that a man would try to get jobs for his relatives. Yet I do not see the difference between family nepotism in China and political nepotism in the United States, and of the two, family nepotism in China seems the less dangerous to society because the family still remained morally responsible for each of its members, and the disgrace of any member was a family disgrace. (Buck, 1955, p. 140)*

3. *The best illustration is the so-called Chinese courtesy, a very much misunderstood topic. Chinese courtesy cannot be defined, as Emerson has*

defined it, as "the happy way of doing things". So much depends on who it is you are doing things with. Is he of your family or a friend of your family? The Chinese have just as much good manners toward people outside their families and friends as the Englishmen in the colonies have toward people outside their race...The Chinese are not bad-mannered toward their friends and acquaintances, but beyond that limit the Chinese as a social being is positively hostile toward his neighbor, be he a fellow-passenger in a street car or a neighbor at the theatre-ticket office. (Lin, 1938, p. 183-184)

Accordingly, two conclusions can be drawn from the narratives.

Firstly, the term *collectivism* as defined by Hofstede is actually in its narrow sense, for it is not a reflection of national unification or ethnic identification, but a representation of kinship-based bonds. Therefore, it is no longer surprising that the attitude of Chinese towards an outsider is not the same as that to an insider – whether such border line is defined by blood or by benefits. So here we can deduct that a Finn involved in the cooperation is psychologically closer to his/her Chinese partners, comparing with other Finns who have no cooperative ties. As characterized in Chinese family relationships, such closeness is attached with mutual trust, commitments to obligations, integration, interdependent, etc. While, in spite of all these good aspects that smooth the cooperation, the closeness itself as a derivation of family nepotism can often make null and void the enforcement of disciplines in an organization. In essence, this is a collision between human-based and institutionalized management.

Secondly is the outlook to conformity. As discussed in PDI analysis, the reverence for power can result in submissive behavior. So does collectivism. Though it is hard to define which one contributes more conformity to the Chinese people, two social behaviors can be derived hereby out of this characteristic: one is that low conformity often brings about low openness and low transparency, which may easily arouse confusion in the communication between Finns and Chinese; another result is the lack

of *public participation* [公眾參與] (a term only in use since “relatively recent vintage in China, although the concept itself is not”) (Horsley, 2009, p. 1). Chinese low public participation can be the explanation of many Chinese phenomena. For example, according to the statistics in a report by China Development Research Foundation, the total practitioners in China’s charity organizations are less than 20,000 in 2009 (Tang, 2010) – a drop in the ocean comparing a population of 1.3 billion.

Table 2.1 Party Identification of Asian Americans by Ethnicity (Ramakrishnan & Lee, survey, September, 2012)

	Democrat	Republican	Independent / Non-Partisan
Chinese	29%	9%	58%
Indian	50%	3%	47%
Filipino	24%	27%	45%
Vietnamese	16%	20%	64%
Korean	46%	18%	34%
Japanese	37%	18%	45%
Cambodian	26%	5%	68%
Hmong	52%	7%	41%

Also in a 2009 survey on public-government decision-making by International Association for Public Participation (IAPA), interview data from China display the contrast between the government’s low transparency and the people’s low awareness (2009). Interestingly, similar phenomenon can be even found in Chinese Americans. Table 2.1 shows that totally 58 percent Chinese Americans identify themselves as independent or non-partisan in 2012 presidential election, the highest among all Asian Americans. This rate is in line with another fact that on average, only 45 percent Asian American citizens “can be described as ‘likely voters’” (Ramakrishnan & Lee, survey, September, 2012), comparing with non-Hispanic whites’ over 70 percent (Enten, 2012).

In summary, the cultural differences within IDV dimension will particularly challenge the Finnish arts managers when they try to balance their institutionalized management

against the Chinese-favored human-based or nepotism-derived thinking. Besides, measures on how to promote the interaction of the Chinese staffs concerning the group issues are worth to be considered.

2.3.3 High Masculinity

According to Hofstede's theory, China is a country of high masculinity, while Finland is opposite. This may get proved from comparing the women's social roles in history.

When the 19 Finnish women undertook their duties as parliament member in 1907, Chinese women had not yet been allowed to receive higher education, and when Nanjing University finally opened door for them, it was in 1920 and the number of the admitted was eight ("Nanjing University", n.d.).

Chinese women today have been recognized as confident, independent and a major economic force (the Nielsen company, 2010), yet women's social role is not the topic for arguing in this dimension. As Hofstede underlined, "The fundamental issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (masculine) or liking what you do (feminine)." ("What about China?", n.d., para. 9) And from the following narratives we could see how the three authors discuss the issue from their own perspectives.

1. *...Idleness in China is not conspicuous. Everyone seems to be doing something. There are of course plenty of wealthy persons, albeit a mere microscopic fraction of the whole community, who can abundantly live without doing any work, but their life is not ordinarily of a kind which is externally visible to the foreigner. Wealthy people in China do not commonly retire from business, but devote themselves to it with the same kind and degree of attention as when they were poor...* (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 27-28)

It remains to say a word of the quality of intension in Chinese industry. The

Chinese are Asiatics, and they work as such. It is in vain to attempt to make over this virile race on the model of our own. To us they certainly appear lacking in the heartiness which we esteem so highly. The Anglo-Saxon needs no scriptural hint to enable him to see the importance of doing with his might what his hand finds to do, but the Chinese cannot be made to change his pace, though the combined religions and philosophy of the ages were brought to bear upon him. He has profited by the accumulated experience of millenniums, and, like the gods of Homer, he is never in a hurry.

One cannot help forecasting a time when the white and the yellow races will come into a keener competition than any yet known. When that inevitable day shall have arrived, which of them will have to go to the wall?

Surely if Solomon was right in his economic maxim that the hand of the diligent makes rich, the Chinese ought to be among the most prosperous of the peoples of the earth. And so they doubtless would be, if there were with them a balance of virtues, instead of a conspicuous absence of some of those fundamental qualities which, however they may be enumerated as "constant virtues", are chiefly "constant" in their absence. When, by whatever means, these qualities of honesty and sincerity shall have been restored to their theoretical place in the Chinese moral consciousness, then (and not sooner) will the Chinese reap the full reward of their unmatched Industry. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 33-34).

2. *The longer I lived in our northern city, however, the more deeply impressed I was, not by the rich folk but by the farmers and their families, who lived in the villages outside the city wall. There were the ones who bore the brunt of life, who made the least money and did the most work. They were the most real, the closest to the earth, to birth and death, to laughter and to weeping. To visit*

the farm families became my own search for reality, and among them I found the human being as he most nearly is. (Buck, 1955, p.164)

3. *For the Chinese are a hard-boiled lot. There is no nonsense about them: they do not live in order to die, as the Christians pretend to do, nor do they seek for a Utopia on earth, as many seers of the West do. They just want to order this life on earth, which they know to be full of pain and sorrow, so that they may work peaceably, endure nobly, and live happily. Of the noble virtues of the West, of nobility, ambition, zeal for reform, public spirit, sense for adventure and heroic courage, the Chinese are devoid. They cannot be interested in climbing Mont Blanc or in exploring the North Pole. But they are tremendously interested in this commonplace world, and they have an indomitable patience, an indefatigable industry, a sense of duty, a level-headed common sense, cheerfulness, humor, tolerance, pacificism, and that unequalled genius for finding happiness in hard environments which we call contentment-qualities that make this commonplace life enjoyable to them. And chief of these are pacificism and tolerance, which are the mark of a mellow culture, and which seem to be lacking in modern Europe. (Lin, 1938, p.58)*

This realism and this attached-to-the-earth quality of the Chinese ideal of life has a basis in Confucianism, which, unlike Christianity, is of the earth, earth-born. For Jesus was a romanticist, Confucius a realist; Jesus was a mystic, Confucius a positivist; Jesus was a humanitarian, Confucius a humanist. In these two personalities we see typified the contrast between Hebrew religion and poetry and Chinese realism and common sense. (Lin, 1938, p. 104-105)

From the narratives of both Buck and Lin, we can conclude that the dimension of MAS, like IDV, is also in its narrow sense, for the tagged Chinese virtue – whether industry or

endurance – is actually an embodiment of Chinese psychological orientation towards mundane life.

Hence, here comes the core of the difference, since mundane life is a personal matter. In other words, the Chinese people strive hard for something no more than serving themselves, their families or someone they feel personally connected with. There is always room for better life, that's why they always keep doing so. Of the utmost, it is a reflection of personal-level desire or *private masculinity*. Whereas, it is also the utmost of Hofstede's theory, since his research data are collected from the individual questionnaire survey, which means conceptualizing a cultural dimension beyond the scope of personal perception remains impossible.

It is to believe that, broadly speaking, the characteristic of masculinity does exist in the western culture, too, and much stronger, for it is national level desire or *public masculinity* in the name of humanity. One of the extreme cases is European colonialism. The six-century history, from the late Middle Ages to mid-20th century, glorified the Europeans while bleed the colonized.

To grasp the point, the thoughts of Immanuel Kant would be the best helpful. This German philosopher of the Enlightenment firstly differentiated humanity from personality and treated it as cultural agency, on which he argued:

The predispositions to humanity can be brought under the general title of a self-love which is physical and yet involves comparison (for which reason is required), that is, only in comparison with others does one judge oneself happy or unhappy. Out of this self-love originates the inclination to gain worth in the opinion of others, originally, of course, merely equal worth: not allowing anyone superiority over oneself, bound up with the constant anxiety that others might be striving for ascendancy, but from this arises gradually an unjust desire to acquire superiority for oneself over others. – Upon this,

namely, upon jealousy and rivalry, can be grafted the greatest vices of secret or open hostility to all whom we consider alien to us. These vices, however, do not really issue from nature as their root but are rather inclinations, in the face of the anxious endeavor of others to attain a hateful superiority over us, to procure it for ourselves over them for the sake of security, as preventive measure; for nature itself wanted to use the idea of such a competitiveness (which in itself does not exclude reciprocal love) as only an incentive to culture. Hence the vices that are grafted upon this inclination can also be named vices of culture, and in their extreme degree of malignancy (where they are simply the idea of a maximum of evil that surpasses humanity), e.g. in envy, ingratitude, joy in others' misfortunes, etc., they are called diabolical vices.

(Kant, 1793/2001, p. 75)

The view of humanity as cultural agency grounded Kant's thoughts on anti- imperialism (Muthu, 2003), but in this paper no more contention will be presented, for interrogating Hofstede is beyond the aim of this research. The analysis here is slightly diverted just to remind that cultural differences are far more sophisticated than what we can perceive from the theory. Furthermore, it is necessary to take Hofstede's western stance into account by asking as such:

Has the Finnish understanding of equality really resonated in the Chinese people's heart? Has the Chinese pleasure of daily work really been known by Finns? Has Chinese collectivism only generated the feeling of personal sacrifice to them? Has the individualism of Finns really brought the wishful freedom in a way as it is meant to be? And so forth.

Such questions are worth pondering before one takes further steps towards the study of cultural differences, and to acquire the answers, bipolarized thinking is necessary, for the truth in the West may appear opposite in the East.

When back to the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, it shall be borne in mind that mutual understanding and respect is important to reduce the resistance caused by the MAS difference: Chinese hardworking shall not be seen as pity or ignorance of life quality, nor the Finnish idleness a sign of laziness or irresponsibility. Behind the difference is just the matter of values, and that is it.

The interesting story below may best end the discussion in this section.

Concerning the question of death, Socrates gave a long apologetic speech to defense against the sentence imposed on him (Plato, n.d.), while his matching contemporary Confucius, when being asked, just slightly replied, “Don’t know life – how to know death?”¹ (Lin, 1938, p.102)

2.3.4 Low Uncertainty Avoidance

The Finnish high index of UAI in Chart 2.1 can be referred to Finns’ stronger needs for precision and accuracy, and normally unpredictability results in more stress to Finns than to Chinese. Hofstede did not explore too much in respect to the origin of this difference, though he pointed that language and religion may be associated (Hofstede et al., 2010:232). For better understanding, a small comparison of the Finnish and the Chinese languages is given below, which in a sense reveals the gap between the two cultures in the dimension of UAI.

Hän menee kauppaan ostamaan maitoa. (He goes to shop to buy milk.)

In this five-word Finnish sentence, four of the words are modified only except the subject *hän (He)*. The verb *menee (goes)* is modified in consistence with the present tense and the third person pronoun *Hän (He)*. Its object *kauppaan* specifies the locality (*shop*), the quantity of the locality (*one shop, not two shops*), and the direction

¹ A quote originally from *Lunyu* (Chapter 11, verse 12), translated and cited by Yutang Lin.

of the motion (*to*). The adverbial verb *ostamaan* (*to buy*) also indicates the direction (*to*), whose direct object *maitoa* (*milk*) takes the partitive form to specify its abstract property as a noun.

Yes, categorically clear, and no room for any misunderstanding. However, the same sentence in Chinese is:

他/去/商店/買/牛奶。(He go shop buy milk.)

Or, if directly translated into Finnish, it would become:

Hän mennä kauppa ostaa maito.

None of the five words is modified, or do they really have to be? The meaning seems quite clear, at least to Chinese. Remarkably, Chinese, as a language represented by visual symbols, “almost entirely lacks inflection, so that words typically have only one grammatical form.” (“Chinese grammar”, n.d., para. 1) So, it would be interesting even to imagine how a Finn communicates with a Chinese via interpreters.

Besides the barrier in languages, another phenomenon of this cultural difference is, as Hofstede proposed, the emotional need for laws and regulations, since they are effective means of preventing uncertainty (Hofstede et al., 2009). Hence, here once again, western-preferred of institutionalized management will be challenged due to Chinese weak dependence on codes of behaviors.

The below excerpts describe the low UAI in the Chinese culture.

1. *One of the initial stumbling-block of the student of Chinese is to find a satisfactory expression for identity, as distinguished from resemblance. The whole Chinese system of thinking is based on a line of assumptions different from those to which we are accustomed, and they can ill comprehend the*

mania which seems to possess the Occidental to ascertain everything with unerring exactness. The Chinese does not know how many families there are in his native village, and he does not wish to know. What any human being can want to know this number for is to him an insoluble riddle. It is "a few hundreds," "several hundreds," or "not a few," but a fixed and definite number it never was and never will be. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 55)

Indifference to precision is nowhere more flagrantly manifested than in the superscription of epistles. An ordinary Chinese letter is addressed in bold characters, to "My Father Great Man," "Compassionate Mother Great Man," "Ancestral Uncle Great Man," "Virtuous Younger Brother Great Man," etc., etc., generally with no hint as to the name of the "Great Man" addressed. (Smith, 1894/1986, p. 56)

2. *...Sun Yat-sen² had thought that when the Manchu dynasty³ was overthrown, the people would then inevitably become "new". Like the Nationalists in recent years, however, the Manchus were overthrown too easily and quickly, before anyone had had time to think out exactly how to make the people...*

The same thing had happened after the revolution of 1911, when the rotten defences of the Manchu rulers, even with their three million Bannermen clustered in villages about Peking to protect them, and in every province capital as well, gave way to the revolutionists. What does one do with a vast country and hundreds of millions of people without rulers? No one had a plan, and it was doubtless due to this planlessness that Sun Yat-sen was able to put forth his ideas of a republican form of government. (Buck, 1955, p. 138-139)

² Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), founder of Republic of China

³ Qing dynasty (1644-1912), founded by the Manchus – the 2nd biggest minority ethnic minority group in China

3. *...By the Chinese, reasonableness is placed on a higher level than reason. For while reason is abstract, analytical, idealistic and inclined toward logical extremes, the spirit of reasonableness is always more realistic, more human, in closer touch with reality, and more truly understanding and appreciative of the correct situation.*

For a Westerner it is usually sufficient for a proposition to be logically sound. For a Chinese it is not sufficient that a proposition be logically correct, but it must be at the same time in accord with human nature. In fact, to be "in accord with human nature," to be chinch'ing, is a greater consideration than to be logical. For a theory could be so logical as to be totally devoid of common sense. The Chinese are willing to do anything against reason, but they will not accept anything that is not plausible in the light of human nature.
(Lin, 1938, p. 90-91)

As recounted by Buck, even the founding fathers of China had no clue by the birth of a new country. What else can prove this characteristic more?

Kaiping Peng once summed up three principles to explain Chinese distaste for reasoning, namely the *Principle of Change*, which is to view the world as a dynamic nature instead of static; the *Principle of Contradiction*, which is to think dialectically; and the *Principle of Relationship*, which is to believe that everything is connected and correlated (as cited in Nisbett, 2003). Whether it is proper or not by using "distaste for reasoning", the principles can be thus interpreted that it is not because Chinese like uncertainty, but in their mentality, uncertainty cannot be avoided, since there are changes happening all the time. Besides, they are not serious about extreme presumptions, since the truth and false can be inverted under certain conditions. So, the best way to address uncertainty is, when it occurs, just to accommodate it by seeking alternative solutions.

Regarding this matter, it is hard to say which one is more reasonable, whether the western abiding faith in planning and implementing or the Chinese timely adjustment of the plan in consistence with the changes in the reality of implementation?

To get rid of the problems caused by the outmoded ideology, Soviet Union dismantled in a sudden and then in shock; while China, thanks to the policy of *Socialism with Chinese Characteristics* (Deng, 1984) has proved the world the vitality of Communism to date.

At the end of this chapter, can we hence deduct that it is due to the Finnish people's "inflexibility" that they should make more efforts in diminishing the influence of the cultural differences?

"Both sides need to take a step back," said Mr. Qi firmly in the interview for this research. Serving for Center Stage China as Head Operation Manager in Europe for years and also a Chinese in Finland, Qi has successfully bridged himself between the East and the West with his in-depth look into culture.

The following two chapters articulate the research methodology as well as the findings from the interview data analysis respectively, dismissing part of the questions raised in this chapter, if not all.

3. Research Methodology

For the collection of information, there are two broad research methodologies available, namely the qualitative and the quantitative research (Charoenruk, n.d.). The former, which is more value-laden, normally addresses the question of how social experience is created and given meaning, yet the latter emphasizes the measurement and analysis of casual relationships between variables within a value-free framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

In *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2005), Denzin and Lincoln summarized five points of difference between the two approaches, one of which is how to capture the individual's point of view. In spite of the similar degree of concern with the subjects' perspectives, qualitative researchers believe that they can get closer to the aim through detailed interviewing and observation. However, their approach is regarded as unreliable by the quantitative investigators, who prefer remote and inferential empirical methods to interpretive ones.

Notwithstanding, in this research the qualitative research methodology is adopted, for the research question is a "how" question, and the findings are to be distilled from the subjects' narratives of their own experiences. Hence, the process of interpreting is inevitable.

As for the interpretive approaches used in the qualitative research, multiple choices can be available, which includes semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, etc., but no single methodological practice has privileges over another. Nor is there distinct set of methods or practices that are entirely its own (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In other words, the methods in use largely depend on the purpose of each study.

With regard to the case of this research, interview is likely to be one of the most appropriate means for data collection, since the interviewees' own experience in

cultural differences directly reflect the part of the social world that this research attempts to explore. Besides, by examining, generalizing and contrasting the empirical data against the theory, we may therefore find out the consistency or inconsistency between the theory and the reality.

3.1 The Methodology for Data Collection

In the realm of social research, as defined by DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, three categories of interview are available, namely the structured, the unstructured and the semi-structured interview (as cited in Banistel et. al., 2011).

In the structured interview, “all respondents received the same set of questions asked in the same order or sequence by an interviewer who has been trained to treat every interview situation in a like manner.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 702) Yet such standardized or mechanical way of interviewing is often used in the survey research to produce quantitative data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In addition, it “overlooks or inadequately assesses the emotional dimension” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 703), albeit leading to rational responses is possible.

To a large extent, the structured approach is hard to suffice the need of this research, for the data in demand are in close relation with personal reflection on the culture differences.

Another reason to discard the structured approach is that I did not know personally any of the interviewees beforehand (except for the first pilot interviewee, who was a faculty of Sibelius Academy when being interviewed). In other words, we were totally strangers, and our very first conversations were for the research interview. Therefore, in order to fulfill the data collecting, I had to take social interaction contexts into account instead of a simply question-and-answer. The application of a more humane approach on one

hand helped yield the data, and on the other, facilitate the rapport building within less time than it usually takes.

By contrast, the unstructured and the semi-structured interview, which are normally termed *the qualitative research interviews*, are dealt with a degree of flexibility to generate answers in greater detail. Though according to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), there is no unstructured interview *per se*, for conversations are more or less guided, distinct differences between the two can still be found anyway with the major one on whether to use predefined questions.

Specifically speaking, in the unstructured interview, the interviewer generates questions spontaneously based on the response of the interviewee (Zhang & Wildemuth, n.d.), while in the semi-structured interview, the researcher normally has a list of questions or specific topics to be covered as an interview guide, though they may not be followed exactly, and questions not included in the guide may be asked as well (“Interviewing in qualitative research”, n.d.).

From the above illustrations of the features we can see that, both the unstructured and the semi-structured approaches allow room for adjustment corresponding to the development of the interview, and in this research both were adopted, but for different purposes.

As a novice interviewer, I had to initially conduct two unstructured interviews for cognitive learning, and it was during the two interviews that I learned how to elicit responses within the maximum permissible flexibility. Besides, it was based on the pilot interview conversations that I finally confirmed the five open-ended interview questions which were used later as my interview guide. Hence, the two pilot interviews, albeit highly tentative, helped incubate the final research data which would have been otherwise much less.

After the two pilot interviews, six formal interviews were conducted by the semi-structured approach between October and December 2012, among which five were finally selected as valid samples for analyzing. The criteria of sampling and content selection will be specified within the following sections of this chapter.

3.2 The interviews and the Data

This section explicates the criteria on how to select the sampling data, the interviewees and the interview questions.

3.2.1 The Sample Selection

In all, two pilot interviews and six formal interviews were conducted. However, data from the two pilot interviews (the unstructured interviews) have to be excluded due to the experimental purpose as explained in the previous section. The conversations in the pilot interviews, albeit more or less relevant to the research topic, were basically not primed and proceeded aimlessly. As a consequence, little pertinent data were generated, though I somehow improved my interview skills.

Another reason is concerned with the data quality. The more useful data are certainly those that can keep the readers up to date about the current issues in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, and in this research only such data are selected so as to ensure the reliability and credibility of the findings. However, what narrated by the two pilot interviewees were actually their memories of one-time business trip in China. Needless to say the memories were fairly aged (one happened in 1998 and one in 2005). And it was because of the same reason that one of the six semi-structured interviews was excluded, too.

Therefore, data used for this research come from the rest five semi-structured interviews. Fortunately, the five interviewees, despite the strangeness between us,

responded collaboratively all my questions. More importantly, they are the front runners in the current Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation. What they provided are not only their own perspectives on the culture differences, but also valuable experience in cross-cultural management.

3.2.2 The interviewees

Four of the five interviewees are from Finland (including one Swedish-Finn), and one from China, who has coordinated a joint project on behalf of a Finnish arts organization for more than two years. Arguably, this one fifth Chinese voice, in effect, adds more objectivity into the data as a whole. After all, this is a cross-cultural study, and as Marshall and Batten (2003) proclaimed that the awareness of the cultural differences in respect to the research design, data collection, participant roles etc., is also an ethical manner to cross-cultural researchers.

The professional backgrounds of the five interviewees vary from theatre management to music agency to architecture design. In a sense, what they have revealed in common proves to the extent that the research findings can be referential to the cooperation in other arts fields as well.

3.2.3 The Interview Questions

Five open-ended questions were designed based on the two unstructured interviews, namely:

1. Could you give a general introduction of your past experiences in cooperating with the Chinese?
2. Which cooperation impressed you most? Could you tell more details?
3. What is the main difference do you feel to work with Chinese? Any stories?
4. How did you adjust yourself in the cooperation for a better result?
5. What can be improved for future cooperation? Any solutions?

If assessed by Kvale's nine types of questions useful in the semi-structured interview (1996, p. 133-135), the first question functions as an *introducing question*; the second a *probing question* related to the first one; the third combines a *specifying question* and a *follow-up question*, and the fourth and the fifth are *indirect questions*, inducing the interviewees' own attitudes.

All the five questions were asked in each interview, but normally they appeared in their variations to fit the occasion. The third question in an interview, for instance, was adjusted to "So, in your perspective, where does the main difference lie?" Certainly, other relevant questions besides the five were also asked from time to time in order to smooth the interaction as well as to generate more answers.

3.3 The Methodology for Data Analysis

The explanation of *content analysis*, be it as provided by Berg from his academic point of view, "an objective coding scheme...applied to analyze the notes or data (Berg, 2001, p. 238), or as defined by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), where this approach is commonly used for audit and evaluation practices, "a set of procedures for collecting and organizing information in a standardized format that allows analysts to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written and other recorded material." (1989, p. 6)

The resort to content analysis is concerned with at least three factors, namely the research project's objectivity, data availability and the kinds of analyses required. (GAO, 1989)

With regard to the project's objectivity, if justified against the research question and the aim of the study specified in Chapter 1, the data in demand are actually those which can help:

1. reveal the major culture differences existing in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation,
2. identify the cultural clashes caused by the cultural differences, and,
3. suggest the feasible solutions for the cultural clashes.

In other words, the main findings from the data will be closely referred to the facts instead of the reasons, and this is in tune with the function of content analysis – to answer *what* instead of *why* (GAO, 1989).

As for the factors of data availability and the type of analyses, all the interviews were sound recorded and transcribed, and part of the coded data were analyzed for numerical comparison.

From the above perspectives, content analysis as an analytical tool is appropriate for the data analysis of this research.

In spite of much argument on the use of content analysis whether to be quantitative or qualitative (Berg, 2001), a combination of the two is not rare to be seen in the real research work (Zhang & Wildemuth, n.d.), and it is the case of this study as well (see Section 3.4.2 for detailed explanation).

The approach of content analysis certainly has its own disadvantage, but it seems insignificant in this research. As Berg stated, “The single serious weakness of content analysis may be in locating unobtrusive messages relevant to the particular research questions...[but] if researchers use content analysis to analyze interview data or responses to open-ended questions (on written questionnaires), this weakness is virtually nonexistent.” (Berg, 2001, p.259)

3.4 Content Analysis

This section mainly focuses on the analyzing process, from which the research findings are eventually conceptualized, yet the two pre-analyzing tasks, i.e., content selection and category formulation, need to be explicated firstly.

3.4.1 Content Selection

In this research, the interview transcripts are the content to be analyzed but not necessarily as a whole. For instance, answers of the first interview question have less to do with the research topic comparing with those of the rest four. Hence, the establishment of specific rules for content selection is very necessary. Besides, the application of criteria of selection also guarantees that “other researchers or readers, looking at the same message, would obtain the same or comparable results.” (Berg, 2001, p. 241)

Briefly, three criteria shall be followed for the inclusion or exclusion of the content in this research – namely the content which is:

1. pertinent to cultural differences instead of likeness,
2. pertinent to working cultural differences instead of non-working cultural differences, and,
3. pertinent to fact descriptions instead of subjective assumptions.

Table 3.1 demonstrates the process with sampling content. It is also worth to mention that the above three criteria shall be simultaneously satisfied.

3.4.2 Categorization

Category formulation is the core of content analysis, which directly decides the success or fail of data analyzing (GAO, 1989). The development of categories can be achieved in

three ways – inductive (qualitative), deductive (quantitative) or some combination of the both (as cited in Berg, 2001). Zhang and Wildemuth once summarized the features of qualitative and quantitative analysis of content in four aspects (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.1 Example of content selection

Content included	Content excluded	Reasons of Exclusion
<i>“...if there’s team working there, and, and there are some kind of director or boss for the team, it’s really difficult for the team members to disagree or do something differently than what their bosses say.”</i>	<i>“...but, there is, I think, at one thing that is same is that, in the end, both nationalities, and both people from both countries, appreciate long term commitments.”</i>	Criteria 1 Violation
<i>“Whereas in Finland, this is the field you are given, and you go outside your field, and try to solve problems that are not really yours, then you are rewarded for initiative, you know.”</i>	<i>“For instance, in your play script, words such as “Tibet”, “Dalai Lama”, “Taiwan”, “Xinjiang” and these kinds shall not appear, and also the kind of obscenity content, anyway, all such kinds, or anti-government contents are not allowed.”</i>	Criteria 2 Violation
<i>“We try to make the Muumi story, which we did. We did that, and our Chinese producer said this character is a bad character. This needs to be, needs to be the mode of the black!”</i>	<i>“...because there are so many people and there are so many things without answer, and also I think there are so many people who do, maybe, business in little bit different ways.”</i>	Criteria 3 Violation

It is to remark that “in many circumstances, the relationship between a theoretical perspective and certain messages involves both inductive and deductive approaches. (Berg, 2001:246)” And, this is also applicable to this study. To fully understand the reason why the two approaches are intertwined, the category structure in Table 3.3 designed in response to the sampling content can be hereby referred to.

As we can see, three layers of categories are developed based on the sampling content which are divided in the column of “the Finnish culture” and “the Chinese culture” in

convenience of comparison. The development itself – from the issues in the cooperation (Category 1) to the aspects they influence in (Category 2) then to the reflected culture dimensions (Category 3) – is a theory-laden deductive process, exhausting the data to a quantification level. Whereas, the formation of each category relies upon the condensation of its subordinate level by inductive reasoning, a process that “goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a particular text.” Not to mention that the sampling content was purposely selected and classified in accordance to its “national identity”.

Table 3.2 Qualitative and quantitative content analysis

No.	Approach		Qualitative	Quantitative
	Difference in			
1	Research area		primarily in anthropology, qualitative sociology, and psychology, in order to explore the meanings underlying physical messages	in mass communication as a way to count manifest textual elements
2	Method		inductive, grounding the examination of topics and themes, as well as the inferences drawn from them	deductive, intended to test hypotheses or address questions generated from theories or previous empirical research
3	Data sampling techniques		consist of purposively selected texts which can inform the research questions being investigated	random sampling or other probabilistic approaches, so as to ensure the validity of statistical inference
4	Products		descriptions or typologies, along with expressions from subjects reflecting how they view the social world	produces numbers that can be manipulated with various statistical methods

Source: concluded from *Qualitative Analysis of Content* (Zhang & Wildemuth, n.d.)

Therefore, findings of this research will not only reveal the significance of the

occurrence of the cultural dimensions in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation (see Table 3.4), but also reflect the links between the issues and their influence in the real work practice (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.3 Category structure

Sampling Content		Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
The Finnish culture	The Chinese culture	Issues	Influence	Cultural Dimensions

Table 3.4 Quantification of the cultural dimensions

	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI	Grand total issues
Interview 1					
Interview 2					
Interview 3					
Interview 4					
Interview 5					
Grand Total Issues					

Table 3.5 Cultural differences and their influence

	Influence	Issues	
		Finland	China
1	(aspect 1)	issue 1	issue 1
		issue 2	issue 2
	
2	(aspect 2)	issue 1	issue 1
		issue 2	issue 2
	
3

3.4.3 The Process of Data Coding

Each coded content unit underwent five steps of analyzing. Firstly, representative quotes were selected from the transcript body under the established criteria, and were grouped as content units in accordance to the specific issues they reflect. Secondly, each content unit was further divided into two sentence groups by the national culture it refers to. Thirdly, the divided content unit were aligned and compared, from which the issue was labeled. In the fourth step the labeled issue was categorized into a certain aspect it influences in, and finally the matching cultural dimension was coded accordingly.

For better understanding of the process, the content analysis of Interview 2 is exemplified below.

Step 1 Define sampling content

Based on the content selection criteria listed in Section 3.4.1, the following transcripts are chosen as sampling content for analyzing, and they were divided into four paragraphs based on the certain issues they are related to.

- 1. I guess the working methods are very different...China is kind of very hierarchical ...er, whereas you know, you've been living in Finland, we are kind of flat, you know. In think, in...the biggest difference in China, er, you work in a big organization. If you are given this much space, this is your work here, er, if you go outside of your work, try to solve the problems that are not in your field ... yeah, not expected, not rewarded. Whereas in Finland, this is the field you are given, and you go outside your field, and try to solve problems that are not really yours, then you are rewarded for initiative, you know. So, also that's, I guess, changing more professional, but for foreign artists, that's the biggest thing they don't understand. Maybe in China, that you have, maybe 10 sound engineers on the stage, and there is one plug that needs to be put like this, and Finnish artist says to the person on the stage that*

that needs to be done, and the person on the stage says like, it's a very simple thing, but he can't do it because [not his duty], yeah, exactly. So, this doesn't exist here, and that's the biggest cultural clash, I think. People don't understand the structure ... Western people go there [and] they expect, er, the same, to take...like the people would take initiative. and that's not in... so much in the culture.

- 2. Also in China, the schedule how to do stuff is very short. Er...in a lot of things...planning is very short. So, that's for foreign companies, foreign operators, it's really difficult to get accustomed to... er, two months before the show you might not have the permit or, performance permit work done. That happens all the time.*
- 3. Like, that... for instance, Finnish, like classical music company, like Sublime, for instance, if they do a big tour in Asia, they will set up the Japan gigs like one and a half years before, and all the other gigs. Then China is always the...that gets confirmed last, which is very last minute.*
- 4. And also there are things, like, lot of theatre, concert halls ... they are government owned, so that can create problems sometimes, that actually if there's a government event, they decide to do, like, five days before in a concert hall, everything else is canceled. yeah, this was happened also. So...but that's rare, I mean, that's rare, but still it's been principle and that's possible.*

Step 2 Group the sampling content

Sentences concerning the Finnish culture and the Chinese culture are sorted out and listed respectively as sentence-group couples as shown in Table 3.6.

Step 3, 4 & 5 Data coding

As shown in Table 3.7, based on the analysis and the comparison of the four

sentence-group couples, certain issues between the Finnish and the Chinese cultures were defined (Category 1), which were then inducted into the aspects of influence (Category 2) and labeled the names of the cultural dimensions (Category 3). Notes were also added in case there are underlying implications, which is a means to guarantee the objectivity and the accuracy of the content analysis.

Table 3.6 Group the sampling content

	The Finnish Culture	The Chinese Culture
1	<i>"...we are kind of flat, you know...Whereas in Finland, this is the field you are given, and you go outside your field, and try to solve problems that are not really yours, then you are rewarded for initiative...People don't understand the structure... Western people go there [and] they expect, er, the same, to take...like the people would take initiative."</i>	<i>"China is kind of very hierarchical...If you are given this much space, this is your work here, er, if you go outside of your work, try to solve the problems that are not in your field ... yeah, not expected, not rewarded...10 sound engineers on the stage, and there is one plug that needs to be put like this, and Finnish artist says to the person on the stage that that needs to be done, and the person on the stage says like, it's a very simple thing, but he can't do it because [not his duty], yeah, exactly."</i>
2		<i>"Also in China, the schedule how to do stuff is very short...planning is very short, two months before the show you might not have the permit or, performance permit work done."</i>
3	<i>"...for instance, Finnish, like classical music company, like Sublime, for instance, if they do a big tour in Asia, they will set up the Japan gigs like one and a half years before, and all the other gigs."</i>	<i>"Then China is always the...that gets confirmed last, which is very last minute."</i>
4		<i>"...like, lot of theatre, concert halls ... they are government owned, if there's a government event, they decide to do, like, five days before in a concert hall, everything else is canceled...I mean, that's rare, but still it's been principle and that's possible."</i>

Table 3.7 Data coding

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Notes
	Issue	Influence	Cultural dimensions	
1	solving problems initiatively or within the duty	working style	IDV	It can be referred to Chinese “low public participation” explicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.2
2	Confirm plans early or late	working style	UAI	
3	Confirm plans early or late	working style	UAI	
4	government priority	equality	PDI	Though “decide to do, like, five days before in a concert”, the interviewee does not mean short planning but an emphasis on the power of the government, which can change any schedule despite within such short time.

The following chapter reveals the research findings from three perspectives, namely the cultural dimensions in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, the influence of the cultural differences and the possible solutions for the cultural clashes.

4. Analysis and Results

Findings from the interview data analysis are presented in this chapter. Specifically speaking, the appeared cultural dimensions and their influence in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation are concluded and analyzed. Feasible solutions for the cultural clashes suggested by the interviewees are also summarized with the hope of guiding the practitioners to make practical strategies.

4.1 Cultural Dimensions in the Sino-Finnish Cultural Cooperation

One of the major findings of the research is the occurrence of the cultural dimensions in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation. Table 4.1 numerated the identified issues in accordance to the cultural dimensions they associate with and Chart 4.1 compares the percentage of the occurrence frequency.

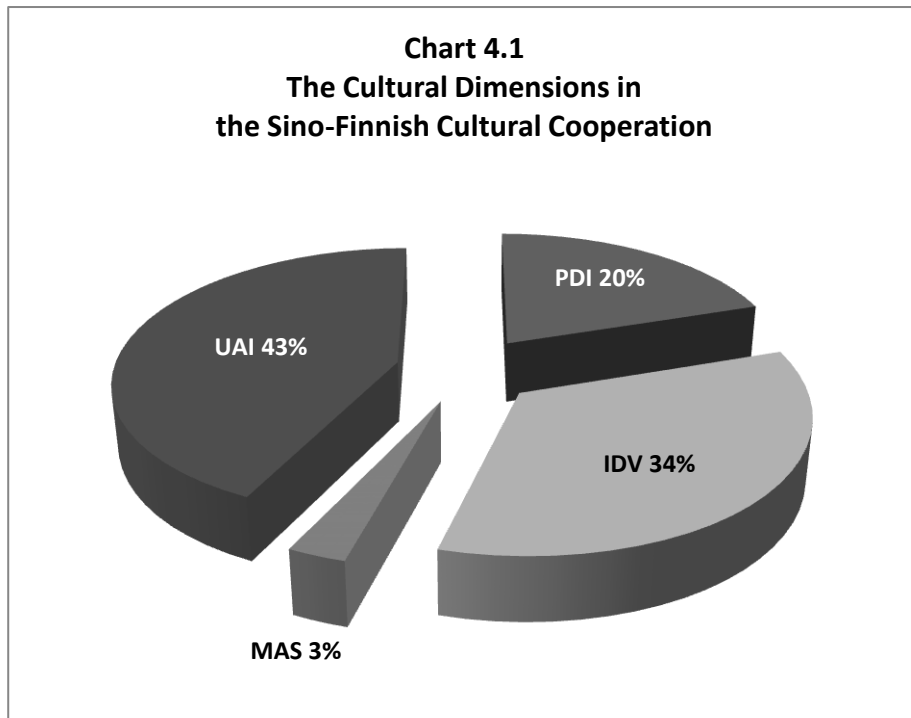
Table 4.1 Cultural dimensions in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation

	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI	Grand total issues
Interview 1	1	0	0	3	4
Interview 2	1	1	0	2	4
Interview 3	1	4	0	4	9
Interview 4	2	4	1	4	11
Interview 5	2	3	0	2	7
Grand total issues	7	12	1	15	35

Totally 35 issues are drawn from the data, the most majority of which can be ascribed to the cultural differences within the dimensions of UAI (43%) and IDV (34%). There are also seven cases (20%) relating to the PDI dimension, while only one out of the 35 issues refers to the difference in MAS.

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that most of the conflicts between the

Chinese and the Finns in the cultural cooperation are due to their different characteristics in the dimensions of certainty-uncertainty as well as individualism-collectivism. The Chinese culture of high power distance can also cause a certain degree of uneasy to the Finns, but the cultural difference between the Finnish femininity and the Chinese masculinity has nearly no impact on a joint workforce.



Interestingly however, the ranking of the four dimensions by difference-making in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation is not in consistence with the conclusion drawn from Hofstede's Finland-China indexes as cited in Chart 2.1.

As shown in Table 4.2, three of the four dimensions revealed in the empirical data rank differently from their original appearance in the theory – particularly the dimension of UAI, which, despite of its given position of the lowest, turns out to be the most influential factor in reality.

Since Hofstede's formula for index calculation is not available here, the reasons behind the inconsistency cannot be investigated further. Nevertheless, the findings at least

suggest that Hofstede’s cultural dimensions can be found evidence in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, but the influence of each dimension, if measured by the fixed indexes given by the theory, may not correctly reflect the truth.

Table 4.2 Ranking of the cultural dimensions by difference-making

	Hofstede’s theory	The Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation
1 st	PDI	UAI
2 nd	IDV	IDV
3 rd	MAS	PDI
4 th	UAI	MAS

Therefore, in the light of the result of the research, can we hereby postulate to the extent that: does the diminished impact of PDI in the cultural cooperation connote that the Chinese are somehow able to address part of its own hierarchical “problems” when working with the Finns? Does the negligible impact of MAS indicate that the Finns and the Chinese actually share common values towards life and work to a large degree? And, is it because the Chinese uncertainty and collectivism cannot be fully grasped without psychological interpretation that that is why they appear more incomprehensible to the Finns who have only sensed the Chinese culture through the business contacts? ... All these questions are worth further studying.

4.2 The Influence of the Cultural Differences

The second major finding of the research is the influence of the cultural differences. As summarized in Table 4.3, the identified 35 issues have categorized into five aspects, namely, *working style*, *power distribution*, *way of communication*, *arts content* as well as *business relationship building*. The occurrence of the issues is also numerated by the absolute frequency, thus the scale of the influence in each aspect can be quantified and compared.

The percentage in Chart 4.2 denotes that the working style is influenced the most by the cultural differences, while the arts content is the least. In some sense, *the influence* here can be referred to *the adverse effect* of the cultural differences, for it is where all the issues come from. In other words, the five aspects are the key points where both sides of Finland and China have to seek compromise in order to achieve the goal of the cooperation.

The followings of this section enumerate the influence of the cultural differences with representative quotes from the interviews, which, in a way, positively responses to the literature narratives provided in Chapter 2.

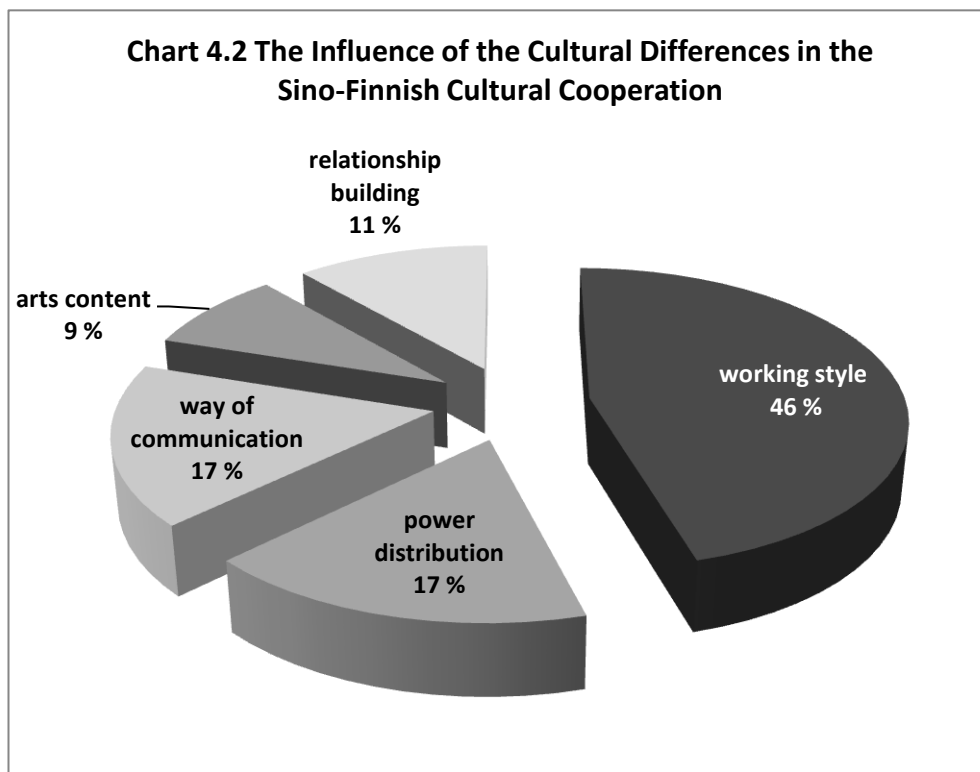


Table 4.3 The influence of the cultural differences in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation

	Influence	Issues		Issue Frequency	Subtotal
		Finland	China		
1	working style	confirm plans early	confirm plans late	4	16
		fixed working process	unfixed working process	3	
		solve problems initiatively	solve problems within the duty	2	
		carefully made contract	casually made contract	2	
		plan long-term	plan short-term	3	
		cope with changes slowly	cope with changes fast	1	
		life-oriented	work-oriented	1	
2	power distribution	no or less government priority	government priority	1	6
		slow decision making process	fast decision making process	1	
		decision making by the team	decision making by the top leader	3	
		absolute equality	relative equality	1	
3	way of communication	transparent communication	hierarchical communication	2	6
		certain reply	uncertain reply	3	
		non-verbal communication preferred	verbal communication preferred	1	
4	arts content	with conflicts and self-expression	no conflicts or self-expression	1	3
		complex protagonist and antagonist	distinctive protagonist and antagonist	1	
		value the creation	value the volume	1	
5	relationship building	accustomed to buy tickets	accustomed to receive tickets for free	1	4
		trust the written paper/contract more	trust the written paper/contract less	1	
		no need to prove identity	need to prove identity	1	
		less important social networking	more important social networking	1	
Grand Total of Issues				35	35

4.2.1 Working style

Most of the issues concerning the working style are categorized under the dimension of UAI with the top three in plan confirming, plan making and working process.

The quotes below exemplify the influence of the UAI difference in this aspect.

“...quite often in China, they...when they want to, to do something, when they want to build something, they don’t...in a point they start building, they don’t know what they are building. And, it’s very different here. Like in Finland, the whole concept would be decided, like very very strictly before you invest to do our design work. So that’s...the challenge for the designer because you have to start to design a hotel, and in a point you do the design work, you don’t know if it’s a modeled hotel, if It’s a family hotel or it’s a design hotel, or what kind of hotel it is. And that affects to the design work. So, it makes extremely difficult for them to make a hotel which they don’t know what it is. And it’s also bad for the client, so that seems to be quite common that the client cannot decide what they are making. They start to do something and then in the process they decide what they do with that, and that’s very different. In here, you would always, always, know very strictly...You have to do a lot of investigations, like what would you do, and then you do, and then you stick with the plan. In China the plan changes all the time, and you have to be able to be...to be flexible, and that’s very much a question of the personal...what kind of person you are, because I mean, if you are very Finnish person, and you are very used to this kind of, like very...like slow working and very well planned everything, then you panic at a point that you have to make everything again many times.”

Notwithstanding, a couple of Finnish interviewees did express their understanding of the difference, as one recounted:

“...like, one of the most difficult things for the Finnish people that haven’t done

anything in China to understand, because they ask, for example, what's the deadline? When do I have to deliver this material? And then, it's really hard for them to understand that there might, not be like strict reply to that, it might be...maybe this big or maybe that big or... so that's like one big culture difference. So, the working culture in China in general is really much more like ...I don't know if 'flexibility' is the right word for it, but it's more like, er, it's more about finding out the right alternative."

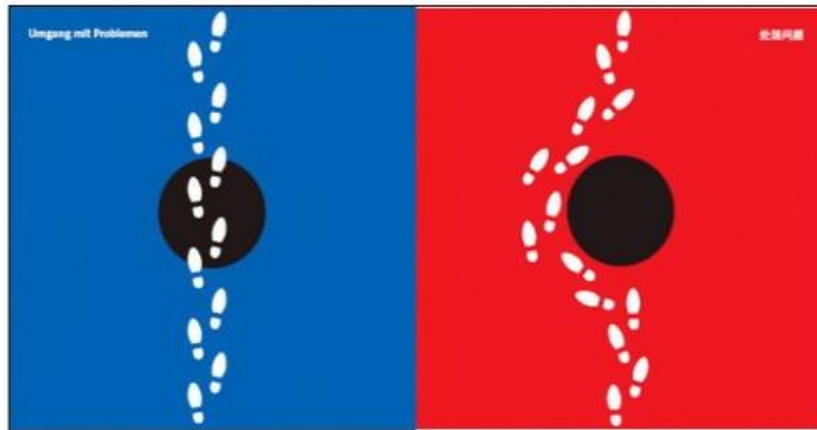
The conclusion of "finding out the right alternative" was later verified by the Chinese interviewee when he referred to the issue of contract making.

"But from the Chinese side, writing [contract] is just for the sake of writing...the real situation...the Chinese recognize real situations, but here [in Finland] values written paper more...Chinese are very practical. They think, well, it doesn't matter you write it down, we can find alternatives afterwards. The real situation to them [the Chinese] is, well, like, even if you write it there, you never know what will happen in the real situation. We can later see and find alternative solutions when the real situation happens. Chinese, I think, are most, most, good at finding alternatives."

Illustration 4.1 stereotypes the above narratives in a humorous way, yet it does visualize the mentality difference between the western and the Chinese people to some extent.

As shown in the left picture, when encountering a problem, westerners tend to face and overcome the difficulty, yet Chinese prefer coping with problems by avoiding it or by alternatives (as shown in the right picture). In effect, both can be the solutions. After all, the goal remains unchanged and can be reached anyway. However, it has to be admitted that such difference does affect the attitude towards uncertainty.

Illustration 4.1



Source: from *Blog of Chun-long Liu*. 總結外國人和中國人的區別（漫畫對比版） [Conclusion of the differences between foreigners and the Chinese people (compared in caricature)]. Retrieved from <http://blog.ifeng.com/article/9023352.html>

4.2.2 Power Distribution

Five of the six issues concerning the power distribution are identified as the cultural difference in PDI, and the most frequent mentioned issue (three times) is in terms of final decision making. As one Finnish interviewee reflected on her experience in the cooperation:

“I think many times it’s very difficult for them [the Chinese staff] to make decision. They always have to ask from somebody else, and then that also means that, if you [the Finns] want to do something, then you have to make sure that you meet the right [Chinese] people. Because if you meet some lower person, they cannot make the decision, so, it’s no point to meet them. So you always kind of like, either you meet the big leader, or you don’t meet anybody, because if you meet some mini leader, it would not create anything because they cannot make the decision anyway.”

Another recounted the similar experience in this aspect:

“...but you have to, like, have at least some kind of, like, er, understanding about the culture. If there’s [Chinese] team working there, and there are some kinds of director or boss for the team, it’s really difficult for the team members to disagree or do something differently than what their bosses say, basically. And this is something, you have to... you have to understand...[in Finland] it’s more about like, er, finding the best solution in a mutual understanding than, like, based on what level you are.”

The Chinese interviewee also referred to the same kind of issue, but from a different point of view:

“So, in Finland...all the things must be equal. They [the Finns] think if both sides of the cooperation don’t have equal status, then there will be lots of problems in the future. This is very reasonable. But China is like this. The Chinese think it’s not the problem of equality, but, maybe it is ‘equality in a certain sense’. They [the Chinese] think like that: since you [the Finns] are more active, then I can make less effort, then we are equal...so how to be equal during the cooperation is...we [the Finns] pursuit absolute equality, like being absolute equal in practice...[but this aim is] impossible to reach!”

The common points of view of the above narratives refer to the hierarchical structures in China’s organizations, where power is highly concentrated in the hands of the top ranks. The words of the two Finnish interviewees convey an impression that they have not only sensed the difference but known how to positively adjust themselves according to the cultural context. Or perhaps, they have to no choices?

As one interviewee admitted:

“I think there is no good or bad per se in culture, or no good or bad per se in working style, just because the environment in both sides, the cultural context, is

different. You are now in Finland and everybody does this way, so you have to do the same. But in China, everybody does that way, so, if you still do this way, then it will not work out any more.”

4.2.3 Way of Communication

The Finns prefer transparent, direct and non-verbal (e.g. email) communication, while the Chinese are more used to the hierarchical, implied and verbal way. Under such circumstances, communication barrier is inevitable.

The following quotes exhibit the cultural difference in the way of communication.

“Another difference also between Finland and China is that, we are very clear on yes or no. Or, we are very transparent, we say what we want and we express the idea straight. China, you don’t say. You might say no, but it’s very difficult to say no.”

“I ask a question, you [Chinese] can give three answers: yes or no or maybe. If you say ‘maybe’, then I say ‘when’, and then you can give an answer – ‘then’ or ‘then’ or ‘never’ or ‘sometimes’.”

Besides the conflicts in “say no” or absolute answers, the Chinese hierarchy itself may generate communication issues within the organizations, as told by the Chinese interviewee:

“For example, in our field, in our [Finnish] company, when we discuss something, all the things are discussed openly together. While in China, things shall firstly be reported to the higher level, then the higher level reports to his higher level, then at last, when the decision comes out, the top level notifies the next lower level, and then the next lower level notifies his lower level.”

One of the consequences of the communication barrier is, as an interviewee complained, “extremely time consuming”, and the Chinese way of “circulation” somehow blocks the Finns from obtaining the that they think they are supposed to know information in time as a collaborator.

4.2.4 Arts Content

Apart from the strict political censorship in China, cultural factors can also affect the arts content. The Chinese appeared “conservatism” in arts or their different way of appreciating arts is mostly attributed to their characteristic of collectivism.

One of the focal issues relates to the role of the artists.

“In our country, the risk that an artist has to take is that, the artist has to try to let the art, use the technique to serve the soul. The technique is there to be able to come through with all the anxiety, all the creativity, all the...The whole story must be touching! It must be touching the audience heart! ... So, for the theatre, for example, the stories in the theatre are always a mirror of the society we live in...And we believe that, if we tell stories about small people who hurt in the society or somehow, and we give them hope by giving the story, the conflict, on stage where you can look at it. You can look at the problems outside...yes, and reflect and you can heal yourself. That’s art – healing! If you take away the conflict from the stage, what do you have left? You have sounds, you have lights, but you don’t have soul! That’s the biggest difference! And I am sure, also in China, there is story about this. We saw White Snake. We had Chinese guest performance here. There is a soul. There is a story. There is a conflict. But the real issue is, that should be told on stage! That’s what the Chinese society is struggling with: what can you tell and what can’t you tell.”

The Chinese people also perceive protagonist and antagonist differently from Finns.

“Well, one thing is that, in China it’s more black and white. ‘Black and white’ means the good person and the bad person. Here we don’t see [that way]. In every good person, there’s something bad, and in every bad person there is something good. So it’s more complex. It’s not good and bad. It’s grey! But sometimes you have sympathy for the good person, and sometimes you also have the sympathy for the bad person in a conflict. It’s not simple, you know, good and bad. It’s depending on who...depending on the dialogue, the conflict...protagonist and antagonist, they both have the...they’re both right. They believe in what they believe in, and that’s the conflict...This is one difference that I have felt...We try to make the Muumi story which we did. We did that, and our Chinese producer said, this character is a bad character. This needs to be, needs to be the mode of the black...We [Chinese] don’t understand the grey. We want it either to be black or white...clear, clear good and bad!”

The above comments are given by the current artistic director of Svenska Theatre, Johan Storgård. As a professional artist, he probably has less tolerance in the “imperfection” in artistic quality than those who do not bear any arts backgrounds. However, there is also the fact – as analyzed in Section 2.3.2 – that the Chinese high collectivism can result in low public awareness and low public participation. Hence, artists or arts are not likely to function as social healers in China. Even if they tried to be, the rigid censorship would call a halt before the art work appears in front of the audience. Ai Weiwei, a dissident in China yet a celebrated contemporary artist in the West, is one of the exceptional examples, whose critical behavior against the Chinese authority can actually be interpreted as defiance to the Chinese traditional culture. What he commented on a Chinese art exhibition resound the words of Storgård to a certain extent:

I am very familiar with the work of most of the artists in the show. Their work is certainly Chinese but, overall, the show casts no critical eye. It is like a restaurant

in Chinatown that sells all the standard dishes, such as kung pao chicken and sweet and sour pork. People will eat it and say it is Chinese, but it is simply a consumerist offering, providing little in the way of a genuine experience of life in China today. (2012, para. 2)

4.2.5 Relationship Building

Personal networking in China's high collective society plays a very important role in business relationship building. By contrast, the Finns opt for written agreements instead of personal ties to warrant the business. This cultural difference often arouses conflict in the contract making process. Remarkably, the difference in UAI can also lead to contract issues, for Chinese like to "keep things open" or "don't fix things", as concluded by some interviewees.

The following quotes describe the issue in business relationship building between the Finns and the Chinese.

"You [Chinese] are usually introduced by somebody, like there is a friend of you, who says like, ok, I know this and this person, and he's doing this and this things, so it's very much the social network. It's very hard to...if you don't know anybody to approach somebody about something that you want to do, if you never met before, and you don't have anybody who knows both of you, it's always very difficult to start that kind of relationship. It's possible as well, but it's different. Like in Finland, you can, I mean, you can always call and you don't necessarily have to know anybody."

For those outside the business ties, trust may not be available unless their identity can be proved in a way or another, as an interviewee said:

"And in architecture as well, it's like, for the Finnish companies, really good to get

visibilities in a Chinese magazine because they can show the magazine. Ok, here in this magazine you can see this project and you can see my name here, so you can be sure that I did it... You have, a kind of, to prove yourself.”

In short, all the above empirical findings suggest that the cultural differences can adversely affect the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, especially in working style, power distribution and business relationship building. Minor influence can also be detected in arts content and way of communication.

The next section summarizes the feasible solutions proposed by the interviewees, as will be seen once again that there is no way to eliminate but fill in the gap by mutual understanding and respect.

4.3 Solutions in Practice

Besides their viewpoints on cultural differences, interviewees also contributed their experience in how to address the influence brought about by the cultural differences. The below solutions can be seen as the summary of their years of practice in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, which in a way adds merits in the research findings.

It is not surprising that most of the solutions are concerned with how to enhance the mutual understanding of the cultural differences. After all, as commented by an interviewee that long-term cooperation is the commitment appreciated by the both nationalities.

As for the solution to the issues in the working style, two interviewees stressed the importance of fully immersing in each other's cultural environment. As quoted below:

“I think, what is the most difficult thing is that, people don’t spend, cannot spend enough time in another country, because I mean, when you spend the time in China or if you spend time in Finland, you start to understand these differences, and then, I mean, then it’s no problem. But to be able to spend enough time there, to understand the background of everything, that’s the difficult part. But I don’t think, like, if you have a possibility to stay in China and visit there often enough, and you keep up your contacts and so on, I don’t think there’s really difficulty... It’s also the question of how they are and how I am...You have to be able to find a way. I know there are people in Finland who complain that ‘it’s impossible to do things in China, everything is impossible...’ Nothing is impossible! Everything is actually quite easy, but just, you have to find, the most difficult thing is, you have to find the right people and then you have to find some time and money to spend time there. And I think that’s the most important thing.”

Or, more specifically:

“I think the arrangement of our company is very good. I work here in Europe, and he works there in China. so perhaps, I as a Chinese can then understand the code of behavior of the Europeans, and he as an European then understands the code of behavior of the Chinese. And the communication between two of us has already been actually very smoothly. So, through our smooth communication, the both sides [of the partners] can have more smooth communication. This may be the more practical solution. Try to find someone from the local culture who can understand you at the same time, and then help you.”

It seems quite essential to find a Chinese local who understands both the East and the West even though not equally well. This is a solution referred more than once by the interviewees to be workable in the problems of communication and business relationship building, since, as one interviewee pointed out, direct communication between a foreign operator and a very local Chinese “would become a mess”.

“Maybe in China it’s a little bit more hard core, but the basic things are kind of the same. Of course, there is, for me, has been easier as well, because I always collaborate with the people who speak good English because of the language thing. So basically the people I collaborate, they had spent time in Europe and US, so in that sense, they maybe have a little bit also knowledge what’s happening here and that makes maybe the whole process a little bit easier.”

Another feasible solution to communication barrier can be the direct contact between the Finns and the Chinese, as one interviewee exemplified his experience in the Shanghai Expo:

“But during the Expo what we did was, we also did professional meetings. We brought over something like 150 Finnish creative industries companies that came to meet local people, local business...We did series events called ‘Snowball’, which is ‘snowball effect’. And that helped a lot of Finnish people coming to China for the first time. They didn’t have much expectation, but then some of the people continued and found it interesting...I guess when people meet, people most perceptions change, you know, to actually meet people.”

One interviewee also expressed his idea on how to compromise in the arts content issue.

“I think we should try to find Chinese stories and make them into operations that look like ours...We should let the Chinese voice speak. Not import from here, but create new Chinese things. That’s what I believe in...If the product is Chinese, then, it is better. It should be China-fied. I think that’s the solution.”

However, concerning the cultural difference in power distance, solutions are quite limited. This is a Chinese characteristic that the Finns have to accommodate, although it can be frustrating sometimes. As one interviewee told:

“If I have Chinese people working for me, they are very much depending on me. People always ask about all the time, like what to do, what to do, what to do, and then you have to, like a kind of, explain, like, explain very carefully what [you] want them to do.”

Notwithstanding, once the Finns accommodate at ease the power distance, or to be specific, follow the manner within his or her hierarchy properly, the result would be rewarding. As one interviewee described the experience:

“You have to know in the dinner table...where you are sitting, who you are sitting next to, where do they place you, why do they place you there, and whose table you are sitting, like all this kind of things, it helps a lot. Or, what you can do if you want to express, that you think that is very well organized, or something you want to say thank you, what is the way to it ... Of course it helps a lot if you know these things, but I think all these things you learn when you are there... in the end of the day, I think the question is to spend time there. “

Table 4.4 Practical solutions to the cultural clashes in the Sino-Finnish Cultural Cooperation

Influenced Aspects	Feasible Solutions
Working style	to spend time in China as much as possible
Power distribution	to accommodate the Chinese manner
Way of communication	to work with the local Chinese who also understand the western culture
Relationship building	to increase direct contact between the Finns and the Chinese people
Arts content	to localize the arts content

Table 4.4 generalizes the possible solutions to the adverse effect of the cultural differences in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation, and certainly more can be added to the list. Even though, the solutions are by no means universal manuals and that is why some Finnish arts managers would rather seek opportunities in other East Asian or

South East Asian countries, particularly in the field of live pop music industry. As one interviewee narrated:

“Especially Indonesia is really, er, there is a huge music scene, which is quite interesting that Indonesia is on average is much poorer still than China, even, and the ticket prices are really low, but in Indonesia you have, like, when in China you have 200 people for a concert, but in Indonesia you have 2,000 people. It’s, er, I don’t know, it’s quite interesting. They have really, er, it’s a musical country.”

Besides the difficulties in adapting the Chinese culture, the Finnish arts organizations may often find themselves confronted by the competitors from other European countries on the China’s market as well.

“I think China is a big country and lots of, like, for instance, European countries have been very active promoting themselves in China, because China is an important future. So, there is a lot of [projects of] British council, Goethe Institute, French, er, they are paying a lot of artists to come to China.”

Therefore, to understand the cultural differences is vital but may not be enough to the Finnish arts managers who intend to try their luck on the land of China, since how to make progress in promoting the cultural exportation with the integration of the Finnish national identity is also a question worth considerations.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion of the Research

This research explored the cultural differences between Finland and China as well as their influence in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation within the realm of cross-cultural psychology. The national cultural dimension theory of Hofstede (2010) is adopted as the supportive theoretical framework, and the qualitative research methodology, i.e., the qualitative interview, is applied for data collection. In addition, content analysis as an analytical tool is used for interview data analysis.

In summary, there are three points to be made.

Firstly, the four cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede have been found evidence from the empirical data, but the scale of the influence of each dimension revealed is not fully in consistence with what has been concluded by the theory. According to Hofstede's calculated indexes of Finland and China, the sequential order of the four dimensions from the maximum to the minimum influential power is rendered as PDI, IDV, MAS and UAI (see Chart 2.1). Yet the empirical data suggest a different order of UAI, IDV, PDI and MAS. Especially the dimension of UAI, which was supposed to be the least influential factor, has been proved to be the most (see Chart 4.1).

Secondly, with regard to the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation process, five aspects are generalized from the 35 identified issues as affectable by the cultural differences, namely, the working style, the power distribution, the way of communication, the arts content and the relationship building (see Chart 4.2). As the empirical evidence shown, the most vulnerable aspect is the working style and the least is the arts content. If comprehended by the theoretical knowledge, most of the issues related to the working style are due to the cultural difference in UAI, which is also a major reason behind the communication issues. Conflicts regarding the power distribution can be best explained

by the PDI difference, and the difference in the dimension of IDV can be understood as the reason for most of the issues regarding relationship building and the arts content.

Thirdly, feasible solutions to the cultural issues are summarized from the data (see Table 4.4). Generally speaking, the most effective solution for the cultural clashes in the working style, the way of communication and the relationship building is to increase the direct contact to the Chinese people or lift the exposure of oneself to the Chinese environment. As for the arts content, it would be better to localize the program so as to meet the preference of the local audience. And for those westerners who work in China for long term, it is practical to adjust to the Chinese characteristic of hierarchy as well as the code of behavior attached. What's more, questions to the current development of the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation are also raised, such as how the Finnish arts managers outperform their counterparts from other EU countries in the cultural cooperation with China.

5.2 Limitations and Further Studies

Certainly the research has its limitations and one of the biggest is the underdeveloped analysis on the Finnish culture. This is, on one hand, a limit of my own, for one and a half years of expatriate life in Finland cannot offer me any confidence to comment on this Nordic country. Needless to say, I have not received any formal training in cultural anthropology. Even if it was the case, I would not be capable of carrying out a fieldwork to conceptualize the Finnish characteristics on my own within such a short period of time. Therefore, all the analysis on the Finnish culture in this research comes from the perspective of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, which is, at least to me, highly stereotyping, mechanical and biased – a feeling like fast food to gastronomists or stick drawing animals to zoologists. Hence I strongly believe that better outcome can be achieved if this research is undertaken by a joint effort between Finland and China, just like the practice in the cultural cooperation.

Another limitation of this research is the cultural perspective itself. Issues in the Sino-Finnish cultural cooperation are speculated through the lens of the cultural differences, yet concurrently, other influential factors, such as the differences in politics and economy, are neglected. In fact, some interviewees had referred the impact of the China's political censorship on arts content as well as the speedy economic growth on the Chinese people's working style. However, due to the limited scope of this research, discussions in these aspects remain exempt.

Notwithstanding, apart from Hofstede's theory there are multiple alternatives within the field of cultural researches. Shinobu Kitayama (2002) once questioned the arithmetic measurement on cultural values. At the meantime, he proposed three new directions for the future study of culture in psychology, in which culture is more regarded as a dynamic system along with the social changes and evolution – be it currently or historically. Yet, this does not mean traditional approaches are obsolete. By now the International Association of Analytical Psychology (IAAP) has held five international academic conferences on the Chinese culture, where Jungian analysis is still applied (“The 5th international conference on analytical psychology”, 2012). Briefly speaking, by combining all these different perspectives, the judgment on the Finnish and the Chinese cultures is likely to be reasoned better.

Researches in the domain of sociocultural linguistics would be no less interesting, either. A small example of the differences between the Finnish and the Chinese languages has been given in Section 2.3.4. However, just take a look at the history, we can find out that the Finnish language as a spoken language was not systematically written down until the 16th century by bishop Mikael Agricola (“Brief history”, 2011). In spite of his efforts, the Finnish language today is still far from being unified spokenly, and the two parallel languages – the spoken and the written – coexist with their own grammatical rules (“Suomen Kieli Ulkomaalaisille”, n.d.). Therefore, if perceived from linguistics, the Finnish culture should appear two faces, which counters each other while accommodating. What are the contradictions within the Finnish culture

and how they subtly influence the cross-cultural cooperation is well worth to be examined.

Above all the mentioned possible improvements, in my opinion, a systematic comparison of the cultural industries between Finland and China would be ideally complementary. After all, the ultimate goal of the study is to benefit the practice of the cross-cultural management in the arts field. Hence, certain knowledge on institutional differences is no less important than the cultural characteristics to most majorities of the practitioners.

5.3 Coda

“Culture is clearly the fullest context of all human activities.” (Malinowski, 1941, p. 182)

“So is cultural exchange.”— if I would like to add.

Over 2,200 years ago when the merchants caravanned upon the 4,000-mile Silk Road, they had promoted not only commodity exchange between the East and the West, but also cultural (“Cultural exchange on the Silk Road”, n.d.). It was following this road that Xuanzang reached India and brought back to China the Buddhist sutras, and it was the same route that Venetian Marco Polo traveled and fulfilled his historical journey. This ancient trade road finally gave way to the silk road by sea with the development in navigation since 15th century (Wild, 1992). Subsequently, the West started to colonize the world.

In my view, the mission shouldered on an arts manager today in the cross-cultural cooperation is in essence the same as that on the Silk Road merchants or the navigating colonizers, i.e., to seek collaboration with men in different cultures. However, unlike the profit-driven or the conquering desire, the arts manager shall be primarily

preoccupied by his or her *big heart* which can provide them with constant courage, persistence, tolerance and faith in promoting arts just as evangelists promote their beliefs.

As the bipolarization of the Occident and the Orient, the term *big heart* can also be interpreted by two ways. Regarding the western one, allow me to borrow the words of Ruth Benedict from her renowned *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946/1972). Albeit on the qualification of cultural researchers, Benedict virtually affirmed a kind of *open attitude* needed for everyone who encounters culture barriers.

Systematic study of national differences requires a certain generosity as well as tough-mindedness. The study of comparative religions has flourished only when men were secure enough in their own convictions to be unusually generous. They might be Jesuit or Arabic savants or unbelievers, but they could not be zealots. The study of comparative cultures too cannot flourish when men are so defensive about their own way of life that it appears to them to be by definition of the sole solution in the world. Such men will never know the added love of their own culture which comes from a knowledge of other ways of life. They cut themselves off from a pleasant and enriching experience. Being so defensive, they have no alternative but to demand that other nations adopt their own particular solutions.
(p. 15-16)

By contrast, *big heart* in the views of the Chinese philosophy may best be annotated as *empty mind*, for the emptiness implies the capacity of differences.

Thirty spokes join in one hub

In its emptiness, there is the function of a vehicle

Mix clay to create a container

In its emptiness, there is the function of a container

Cut open doors and windows to create a room

In its emptiness, there is the function of a room

Therefore, that which exists is used to create benefit

That which is empty is used to create functionality (Lin, 2006, ch. 11)

Till this moment, have you felt clearer or more puzzled over the cultural differences?

Whatever, this research is not in vain. After all, the findings were obtained from the empirical data by means of scientific methodologies.

But on the other hand, this research is in vain, since the so-called differences – whether cultural or non-cultural – in the last analysis depend on how each individual outwardly opens their attitude or inwardly empty their mind.

So, which argument do you support?

If you, as a westerner, agree the former, then how far are you still from accepting the latter?

If you, as a cross-cultural arts manager, wonder how the distance from the latter may influence your work, then why not turn to the first page and read my thesis *Cultures in Cultural Cooperation*?

EPILOGUE

Why This Topic?

By the time I started my life in Finland one and a half years ago (the autumn of 2011), I had barely had any direct contact with the western culture, nor could I distinguish the national cultures among the western countries. This caused me some confusion at the beginning, since the Finnish culture is, after all, far from the same as those English speaking countries that I was more familiar with. Meanwhile, the inner feeling of my Chinese identity had become enormously intensified in Finland, driving me to quest for my Chinese “property” that I actually possess but had not yet been aware of. Therefore, when I was conceiving the topic of this study, *culture* – by then my biggest obsession – naturally came into my mind. Soon I decided to take the opportunity of this research to find out at least part of the answers, not only for myself, but also for those western arts managers who are intrigued by the Chinese culture and the EU-China cultural cooperation.

As a Chinese in Finland, I am finally able to reflect my motherland outside its Communist unison, while observing Finland as a neutral. This offers me confidence especially in the objectivity of this research, for I am prone to neither of the side because of my current position.

Surprisingly, all my previous cultural stereotypes had waned little by little during the course of the writing, and my renewed recognition of the East and the West had fundamentally reshaped my world view, harmonizing the relationship between me and the outside. This is, I believe, the greatest significance besides the academic value of this paper.

Here I am especially grateful to my parents, Jianqun Tan and Changqing Zhong, my

supervisor Dr. Tanja Johansson, my interviewees and Sibelius Academy. I wish to thank also the Finnish library service as well as those who had ever appeared in my life, offering me help and inspirations. It is the combined contributions of them all that finally made the research happen as it is shown.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. Could you give a general introduction of your past experiences in cooperating with the Chinese?

Which cooperation impressed you most? Could you tell more details?

2. What is the main difference do you feel to work with Chinese? Any stories?
3. How did you adjust yourself in the cooperation for a better result?
4. What can be improved for future cooperation? Any solutions?

APPENDIX B

List of Interviewees

Name	Organization	Current Position	Note
Aila Sauramo	Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras	executive director	pilot interviewees
Juhani Poutanen	Sibelius Academy	intendant	
Ossi Luoto	Pluto Finland	general director	formal interviewees
Jani Joenniemi	Cultural Gateway Finland	project manager	
Martta Louekari	World Design Capital	project manager	
Johan Storgård	Svenska Theater	executive director	
Hongjia Qi	Center Stage China	head of operation Europe	

APPENDIX C

Extract of Interview Content Analysis

	Content Unit		Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Notes
	Finland	China	Issue	Influence	Cultural Dimension	
1	<p>“...we are kind of flat, you know...Whereas in Finland, this is the field you are given, and you go outside your field, and try to solve problems that are not really yours, then you are rewarded for initiative...People don’t understand the structure... Western people go there [and] they expect, er, the same, to take...like the people would take initiative.”</p>	<p>“China is kind of very hierarchical...If you are given this much space, this is your work here, er, if you go outside of your work, try to solve the problems that are not in your field ... yeah, not expected, not rewarded...10 sound engineers on the stage, and there is one plug that needs to be put like this, and Finnish artist says to the person on the stage that that needs to be done, and the person on the stage says like, it’s a very simple thing, but he can’t do it because [not his duty], yeah, exactly.”</p>	<p>solve problems initiatively or within the duty</p>	<p>working style</p>	<p>IDV</p>	<p>It can be referred to Chinese “low public participation” explicated in Chapter 2 Section 2.3.2</p>
2		<p>“Also in China, the schedule how to do stuff is very short...planning is very short...two months before the show you might not have the permit or, performance permits work done.”</p>	<p>Confirm plans early or late</p>	<p>Working style</p>	<p>UAI</p>	