A cultural–historical study of Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development within everyday family practices

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Education, Monash University

2013

GENERAL DECLARATION

In accordance with Monash University Doctorate Regulation 17.2 Doctor of Philosophy and Research Master's regulations the following declarations are made:

I hereby declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

This thesis includes three original articles published in peer reviewed journals, two original book chapters published in peer reviewed books, one original article published in peer reviewed conference proceedings and one unpublished manuscript that is currently accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal. The core theme of the thesis is the study of how Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop through their participation in everyday activities in their community, using a cultural–historical perspective. The ideas, development and writing up of all the publications in the thesis were the principal responsibility of myself, the candidate, working within the Monash University Faculty of Education under the supervision of Professor Marilyn Fleer.

In the case of Publications 4 and 6 (in Chapters 6 and 8), co-authored publications, my contribution to the work involved the following:

Publication (in Thesis)	Publication title	Publication status*	Nature and extent of candidate's contribution
Publication 1 (Appendix A)	The Education values of Hong Kong community in Australia: A review of the literature	Published	Sole author
Publication 2 (Chapter 4)	Hong Kong–Australian parents' development of values, expectations and practices for their children's education: A dialectical process	Published	Sole author
Publication 3 (Chapter 5)	Parents' perspectives of the home-school interrelationship: A study of two Hong Kong–Australian families	Published	Sole author
Publication 4 (Chapter 6)	A cultural–historical study of how children from Hong Kong immigrant families develop a learning motive within everyday family practices in Australia	Published	Conception, key ideas, research investigation, development, write-up (80%)
Publication 5 (Chapter 7)	How encouragement in everyday family practices facilitates Hong Kong–Australian children's motive for learning.	Published	Sole author
Publication 6 (Chapter 8)	The development of learning as the leading activity for Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia	Published	Conception, key ideas, research investigation, development, write-up (80%)
Publication 7 (Chapter 9)	A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children's development	Accepted	Sole author

I have renumbered sections of submitted or published papers in order to generate a consistent presentation within the thesis.

Pui Ling (Pauline) Wong

18/7/2013

DEDICATION

To the memory of my late mother

Yeung Kwan

AND

To my family

Husband: Dr. Wing Keung Tam
Sons: Victor and Nicholas Tam

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My completion of this thesis and development as a researcher have been made possible with the kind support of many wonderful people.

I thank Dr. Jill Robbins for welcoming me to the research field of early childhood education and for the brief term of her supervision. My deep gratitude is extended to Professor Marilyn Fleer, my supervisor for most of my candidature, for her unerring faith in my ability. Her contribution in bringing Vygotsky's powerful lenses into the research community of which I am a member has brought enormous benefit to our efforts in early childhood research. Her buoyant enthusiasm and dedication in furthering my knowledge have certainly filled me with enjoyment of and commitment to the field. But it is her readiness to listen and provide feedback as well as her collegial encouragement that have supported me in reaching my destination, submitting this thesis. Thank you Marilyn!

My research participants deserve a hearty vote of thanks, especially since they gave so much of their valuable family time, opening their homes and their lives to me. Thanks too for our delicious meals together! School principals and teachers, the church pastor, enhancement centre staff and my participants' peers also have my gratitude.

Heartfelt thanks go to my colleagues and friends in the Child and Community Development (CCD) research group, Dialectical Logic Learning Space (DLLS) reading group and Monash Research Education Community (MREC) whose conversations and generous sharing of ideas and strategies have given me

inspiration and support, not to mention light-hearted moments. I won't give names, because I would hate to forget anyone – you have all been so wonderful!

Of course institutional support is central to smoothing the research journey. As Associate Dean (Student Research), Professor Ilana Snyder provided timely and continual support for my candidature while I was changing my research direction. Mayur Katariya and more recently David Lau in the Research Office of the Faculty of Education were invaluable in their attentions to my needs as a student – thank you. In help with access to other theses, and formatting and binding of my thesis, I would like to thank Bronwyn Dethick and Debing Wang in the Teaching and Technology Learning Centres – they are great at helping in critical moments! I thank Dr. Jan Pinder, our Learning Skills Adviser, in giving me writing skill advices.

Since my thesis was by publications, I would like to acknowledge the helpful advice provided by the reviewers and editors associated with each publication. They encouraged me to push the boundaries of my topic.

My Church friends and cell group members have sustained me throughout this whole – often emotional – experience. I would especially like to thank Samuel Ho, Benjamin Chan, Freda Liu and Fanny Liu for their care and support.

Special and heartfelt thanks go to my friend, Rosemary Viete for her valuable comments and wonderful editing and proof reading work for my publications and thesis. Her emotional and timely supports are highly appreciated.

Finally, I thank God for His grace and for sending me angels when I most needed help.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS INCLUDED IN THE THESIS

Wong, P. L. (2007). The Education values of Hong Kong community in Australia: A review of the literature. In B. Denman (Ed.), *Proceedings of International Co-operation through Education: 35th ANZCIES Annual Conference (*pp.313–326). Armidale: University of New England and the Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society.

Wong, P. L. (2012a). Hong Kong–Australian parents' development of values, expectations and practices for their children's education: A dialectical process. In P. W. K. Chan (Ed.), *Asia Pacific education: Diversity, challenges and changes* (pp. 68–86). Melbourne, Australia: Monash University Publishing.

Wong, P. L. (2012b). Parents' perspectives of the home-school interrelationship: A study of two Hong Kong–Australian families. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 37*(4), 59–67.

Wong, P. L. & Fleer, M. (2012). A cultural–historical study of how children from Hong Kong immigrant families develop a learning motive within everyday family practices in Australia. *Mind Culture and Activity, 19*(2), 107–126.

Wong, P. L. (2013). How encouragement in everyday family practices facilitates Hong Kong–Australian children's motive for learning. In S. Phillipson, K. Y. L. Ku & S. N. Phillipson (Eds.), *Constructing educational achievement: A sociocultural perspective* (pp. 201–214). London/New York: Routledge.

Wong, P. L. & Fleer, M. (2013). The development of learning as the leading activity for Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia. *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, *4*, 18–34.

Wong, P. L. (Accepted). A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children's development. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*.

AWARDS RECEIVED DURING CANDIDATURE

- Postgraduate Travel Scholarship for Australian and New Zealand Comparative International Education Society (ANZCIES) 2007 Conference

- Best Student Research Award in European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) 2010 Conference

- Monash Research Graduate School (MRGS), Postgraduate Travel Grant 2007 and 2010.

- Faculty of Education, Monash University, Special Award for Conference Attendance in 2010

- Monash Education Research Committee (MERC) Postgraduate Publication Award 2012

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ABSTRACT

The children of the Hong Kong immigrant community in Australia achieve highly in terms of academic results and become highly skilled professionals in comparison with other immigrant groups and the local population. Despite these outstanding achievements, little research has investigated the processes of development of children in this group. While much of the literature on Chinese heritage students suggests that the parental support for and emphasis on learning has helped secure their success, little is known from the children's perspectives about how they acquire the competencies and develop a learning motive for academic success. Stereotypes pervade the debate about the possible effects of high parental demands, yet little is known about the real underlying relationship between these children's achievement and their environmental affordances.

This study investigates the ways parental demands and family practices provide conditions and possibilities for children's learning and development, how children perceive and make sense of these and how they contribute to their own learning and development.

Conducted in Melbourne, Australia, the study adopted an in-depth qualitative case study approach following the cultural–historical paradigm and employing dialectical-interactive methodology. Six parents and seven children participated from three Hong Kong–Australian families. The parents had been raised and had their schooling in Hong Kong and had migrated to Australia between 2 and 15 years prior to the study. The children ranged between 0 and 11 years of age; among them one child was born in Hong Kong and the other six children were born in Melbourne, Australia. One family was sending their children to a government

school, one to an independent Christian school and one to a prestigious private school.

Data were collected for 12 months through video observations of children's participation in their everyday activities at home and in their communities, interviews with parents and children, field notes, and photographs, video clips and relevant documents provided by participants. Analysis of data was carried out at the common sense, situated practice and thematic levels, yielding rich and comprehensive understandings of the processes and mechanisms of these Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development within their everyday family practices.

This thesis is structured in the format of a thesis by publication. The important findings are presented with the associated publications (2 to 7). Overall, the study shows that positive mutual responsiveness is central to the Hong Kong–Australian children's effective learning and development within their family's valued practices. The importance of mutual responsiveness is evident in the relationship between the cultural, societal, historical conditions and the parents' life experiences and interpretations (Publication 2), between the families and their children's schools (Publication 3), between parental demands and practices and the child's motives and competences (Publication 4), between parental encouragement and the child's perceptions and personal sense (Publication 5), between cultural and temporal influences and the leading activity for the children's development (Publication 6) and within and among the individual, the environment and the conditions (Publication 7).

In sum, the study shows how children of Hong Kong Chinese heritage learn and develop in everyday family practices through the complex dialectical process of interaction of parental demands and values, cultural values, and children's desires. They gradually appropriate orientations to learning as they negotiate the parental demands with parental encouragement. This sits in contrast to the picture painted by much of the literature which characterises the learning environment and process of Chinese heritage children as replete with imposition, rigid discipline and uni-directional demands.

The study and its publications have not only contributed understandings of the processes of learning and development of the participant children, but also understandings of socio-cultural theory and research approaches. Vygotsky's 'abstract' concept of child development is applied to real life contemporary issues, helping to more fully explicate mechanisms and processes in child development, and to reveal ones not expressed in Vygotsky's work, of which encouragement is a prominent example. The model presented in the final publication is a development of earlier models and research in the literature. Methodologically, the power of cultural–historical dialectical–interactive methodology using multiple methods has been confirmed in its ability to reveal the details of the processes, mechanisms and interactions between people, institutions and even cultural traditions from various perspectives – including the child's – in a child's learning and development. The model developed from this study can serve as a framework for parents, educators, researchers and policy makers to use in shaping effective pedagogies, tools and policies to facilitate children's optimal development.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Chinese heritage children in Australia have been characterised as high academic achievers (Dooley, 2003; Guo, 2006; Ho, 2000; SBS, 2011a, 2011b; K. Wong, 2000). Their environments are also characterised as being highly structured with stringent parental demands and copious study activities (Mak & Chan, 1995; Matthews 2002; Pe-Pua, Mitchell, Iredale, & Castles, 1996; L. Wong, 1997; P. Wong, 2007). These characterisations have resulted in stereotypes and debate about the possible effects, yet little is known about the real underlying relationship between these children's achievement and their environmental affordances. The current study focuses on a unique component of the Chinese heritage community, Hong Kong–Australian children in their families, and investigates in detail how these children learn and develop through their everyday family practices. This chapter outlines the research problem by introducing the background phenomenon and expressing the researcher's motivation for the research. It outlines the theoretical framework and explicates the purpose, focus, aims, research questions, key terms and design of the study. The significance of the research is indicated, explaining in what ways it is of importance. The publications that form an integral part of the thesis are introduced and the organisation of the thesis is outlined.

1.1 Locating the Research Problem

The literature supporting the points that I have made in the following sections entitled "The background phenomenon" and "Personal motivation for the research" is discussed in Chapter 2, so only the broad concepts related to the problem are referenced in these two sections. Subsections 1.11 to 1.13 below

provide an understanding of the contextual characteristics and problems motivating this research as well as an account of my own motivation, as a member of the Hong Kong–Australian community, for developing the study. The particular theoretical framing of the study is indicated here.

1.1.1 The background phenomenon

According to the most recent Australian census, 74,955 Hong Kong-born people were living in Australia in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2011). Although the Hong Kong immigrant community occupies only around 0.36% of the total Australian population, census statistics from 2006 and 2011 demonstrate that it is a group with high education levels and many of its members are employed in highly skilled professions (Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research [BIMPR], 1995; Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC], 2006, 2013; Zhao, 2000). As a member of the Hong Kong immigrant community living in Melbourne, Australia, I have observed and found from the literature prevalent phenomena relating to the reproduction of values and family practices characterising this community. In regard to the children in this community: (1) Many of them achieve excellent results in public examinations, such as the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examination and the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), a series of nation-wide standardised literacy and numeracy tests; (2) They obtain good university qualifications and join professions such as medicine, law, accountancy and engineering; (3) These children's daily schedules are generally quite full – they are required to do extra homework and practice set by their parents as well as extra-curricular activities; (4) They are required by their parents to attend tuition classes to boost their academic performance and they attend various enhancement activities starting

from an early age; (5) The pattern of involvement in this learning involves tuition classes becoming more intense when the children reach the higher school certificate examination such as the VCE in Victoria, while the amount of enhancement activities increases when they are in primary school and then decreases during their years in secondary school.

In regard to the parents in this community the following characteristics are often cited (Chu, 2003; Ho, 2000; Khoo & Mak, 2003; Pe-Pua et al., 1996; P. Wong, 2007): (1) Many of them are family-oriented, spending most of their outside work hours on issues related to family, such as their children's education and enhancement learning, despite the fact that some of these parents had been career oriented when they were in Hong Kong where they worked long hours and during the weekend for their jobs; (2) The main reason for them to migrate and stay in Australia is the hope of providing a better environment for their children's education and development; (3) They take their children's education and learning as the priority of the family, spending a lot of their time and resources on these; (4) Many of them enrol their children in a private school or a government school renowned for its high academic performance.

1.1.2 Personal motivation for the research

These specific phenomena of the Hong Kong–Australian community have piqued my curiosity. The community is very proud, as am I, that many children from Hong Kong–Australian families have achieved such high educational attainments and successful careers, which have benefitted Australian society and given prestige to the community and their families. My family migrated to Australia in 1993 when Hong Kong was facing political uncertainty arising from the then imminent

handover in 1997, the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty, ending more than 150 years of British colonial rule. However, because of the economic recession in Australia during the 1990s, unfavourable job opportunities and our experiences of discrimination, we moved back to Hong Kong for work, and for our children to learn better Chinese. This we did until 2003, when our dissatisfaction with the Hong Kong education system increased, and we made the decision to send our sons back to Melbourne to continue their studies in a boarding school, looking forward to them enjoying a more balanced and all-rounded Australian education. When my family subsequently relocated back to Melbourne, I was amazed to discover that the children of many of our friends (including the friends we had known since our migration in the 1990s and the friends we newly met after our return) had succeeded in the academic arena and were working in professional fields. I was eager to know how they had been able to raise their children to attain academic and professional success.

When I became better acquainted with the Hong Kong–Australian community, I learned that many Hong Kong–Australian parents were very focussed on their children's academic performance. Their children were driven hard to obtain extremely high marks in their VCE examinations and enter into prestigious universities and faculties. Children underwent private tutoring and young children are sent to attend weekend tutoring schools for scholarships to enter into prestigious schools.

This has puzzled me as it is claimed that the main drive of recent migration of the Hong Kong immigrants to Australia, together with those returning and those staying, is their dislike of the stressful and competitive education styles in Hong

Kong and their quest for a less pressurized, more all-rounded education for their children in Australia. Why, then, do they not let their children enjoy their Australian schooling experiences and still fill their children's lives with numerous academically focussed activities as if they were studying in Hong Kong, such as doing extra homework and attending tutoring classes?

Is structuring children's lives with such activities – a formula that may not be unique to the Hong Kong–Australian families, but is certainly widespread in this community – aimed at raising academically successful children? More importantly for me, how do Hong Kong–Australian children, especially young children, perceive and make sense of the highly structured family environment?

Given my own queries and the fact that the phenomenon is prevalent in the community but debatable in respect of some of its effects, it seemed important to gain a thorough understanding of Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development in their community and how parental values and family practices provide conditions for these.

1.1.3 The research problem

The Hong Kong–Australian community benefits Australian society economically, educationally and culturally (BIMPR, 1995; Zhao, 2000). However, this group is under-researched, particularly regarding the process and mechanisms of child development within everyday family practices (P. Wong, 2007). According to the literature review (see Chapter 2), most studies related to Hong Kong–Australian children have discussed trends in educational experiences and achievements, and researched individual cases of families focusing on the ways social structures,

culture and human capital impact on children's education. The literature sees parents as both helping and hindering their children's healthy development. However, the literature has been largely silent on the ways Hong Kong–Australian children actually learn and develop in their families and through the family practices. It has not investigated children's and parents' interactions with each other, the environmental components and the cultural and historical conditions to identify and explain the processes of development. It is important to understand these processes, components and conditions that optimise development, so that clearer guidelines can be developed for helpful family practices.

1.1.4 Theoretical framework

In order to gain a fuller story about Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development than that told by the images of heavily disciplined, parentally dominated children, this study sought a theoretical orientation and methodology that could provide an understanding of how values, activities, experiences, culture and interactions play parts in the process of children's learning and development. Cultural–historical theory offered such a framework. Seeking to take a more holistic view of the ways Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop in their communities, this study draws on Vygotsky's (1978, 1987, 1994, 1997a, 1997b, 1998) cultural–historical theorisations of child development, Hedegaard's (2008a, 2009) model of children's learning and development through participation in institutional practices and Fleer's (2010) cultural–historical view of child development to form its theoretical framework. Detail of the theory and the related concepts informing this study is discussed in Chapter 2 and in the findings chapters.

1.2 The Purpose, Focus and Aim of the Study

This study seeks to gain a holistic understanding about how children learn and develop in their communities, with reference to Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia. The study is particularly focussed on the ways parents apply particular demands and family practices, and how these influence children's learning and development. It takes into account not only parental and institutional perspectives but also the children's perspectives. With such a focus and the use of a research method that facilitates a complex, nuanced understanding of the temporal, socio–cultural, individual and relational aspects of children's development, it was hoped that new insights could be gained into the phenomenon in a community that has to date received little attention.

The aims of this study are to identify the ways parental demands and associated family practices influence their children's learning and development in the Hong Kong–Australian community and to examine the ways in which the individual, societal, cultural and historical contexts play roles in the formulation and alteration of these demands and practices. This is supported by foregrounding children's perspectives and interactions with their family and surrounding community. To contribute to Hong Kong immigrant and other communities, the study also set out to identify practices and pedagogies that would foster positive development of children within everyday family practices. While the focus of the investigation is on the family practices, it became clear that these would have implications for the children's access to and engagement with institutions and environments valued by the family, which were also studied.

1.3 Research Questions

The overarching research question that guided the study is:

How do Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices?

In order to seek answers to this very broad question, the research focussed on specific aspects of the learning and development process. Each publication in the findings chapters represents one or more of these aspects expressed below as more specific associated research questions.

How do Hong Kong–Australian parents' values, expectations and practices in relation to children's learning and development form and change? (Publication 2)

What are the values and practices of Hong Kong–Australian families and how are they related with those of their children's schools? (Publication 3)

How do Hong Kong–Australian children develop a learning motive within highly structured everyday family practices? (Publication 4)

What meaning and sense do Hong Kong–Australian children make of the everyday family practices aimed at their school and enhancement learning? (Publication 5)

What role does encouragement play in Hong Kong–Australian parents' attempts to create conditions that foster their children's development of an achievement related learning motive? (Publication 5)

Is learning a leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children? And if so when does this occur? (Publication 6)

What are the mechanisms, activities and pedagogy supporting learning as a leading activity in the family environment? (Publication 6)

How can we understand, analyse and facilitate each child's development holistically in our complex, diverse and ever changing society? (Publication 7)

This final question broadens the field of inquiry and is addressed through the proposal and discussion of a model in Publication 7 (Chapter 9). The model draws on the findings from the other publications. Reflecting the order of these questions, the publications (Chapters 4 to 9) begin by looking at conditions and environments for the child's learning and development, through the detailed processes and perspectives related to development, and eventually to a model for understanding and facilitating effective development.

1.4 Key Terms in this Thesis

As this thesis and its publications use certain terms repeatedly and with possibly different meanings from those that are customarily understood, it is useful to define the key terms as they are used in the thesis; the terms are presented as follows.

Hong Kong–Australian

This term refers to parents, families, community who have migrated to Australia from Hong Kong, and to their children, who may have been born in Australia.

Another term used interchangeably is: Hong Kong immigrant (parents/families/community) in Australia.

Dialectical

In the cultural–historical perspective, processes and relationships involved in human development are dialectically related. The term 'dialectical' emphasises the interactive and reciprocal process of change and is characterised by tensions between opposites (e.g., in aspects of the child and his/her environment) that eventually act as a push forward towards a new orientation, way of thinking and behaving, which is generally productive. This term is used as an adjective together with a noun (e.g. relationship, reasoning) and explicated throughout the thesis.

Holistic

In this thesis holistic means comprehensive and detailed. A holistic view resists fragmentation, and where aspects of the whole are examined, they are then discussed in relation to the greater whole. A feature of the holistic nature of the research using a cultural–historical perspective is its examination of cultural, societal, historical, institutional and individual influences, and its requirement that these be seen in interaction with each other.

Cultural–historical

Vygotskian cultural–historical ways of thinking and examining the world are central to the research reported in this thesis. In writing about the study I use the adjective, cultural–historical, in conjunction with various nouns – paradigm, theory, approach and perspective – to indicate respectively, ways of seeing the world, framework for analysing, methods of researching and views. All of these

draw on the understanding that our cultures, histories, societal contexts and social interactions, as well as our individual experiences, shape our lives.

Learning and development

When I write about learning and development in general in this thesis, I refer to the growth of the child in psycho-social terms. 'Learning' and 'development' are used because learning is seen as central to development, which is not simply about physical growth, but about qualitative change. However, the term 'learning' is also used quite specifically to refer to more academic formal learning since this has been the focus of concern in the Hong Kong–Australian community. This is signalled in the text by reference to words such as 'formal' or 'academic'.

Enhancement activities

Enhancement activities in this thesis refer to the kinds of activities parents arrange for their children in addition to school activities, aiming to enhance and develop a range of skills and knowledge. An example of these activities is enhancement learning (such as learning to play an instrument or chess) which is discussed in detail in Publication 5 (Chapter 7). Enhancement centres refer to the institution in which enhancement activities take place.

Institution

Institution in this thesis follows Hedegaard's (2008a, 2009) concept of institution in her model of children's learning and development through participation in institutional practice, and refers to the places and spaces where children engage in their everyday activities, such as family, school, enhancement centres, Chinese school and church. Further details regarding Hedegaard's model appear in Chapter 3 and a fuller definition of institution appears in Publication 7.

1.5 About the Research

1.5.1 Research design

This study adopted an in-depth qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2009) following the cultural–historical paradigm (Vygotsky, 1987, 1997a, 1997b, 1998) and dialectical-interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008). Data were collected through video observations of children's participation in their everyday activities at home and in their communities, interviews of parents and children, field notes, and photographs, video clips and relevant documents provided by participants. As this study involved children, video recordings and in-depth information about the participant families, ethical considerations have been taken cautiously into account throughout the research. Further details are given in Chapter 3.

1.5.2 Participants

The participants of this study were three Hong Kong–Australian families, comprising six parents and seven children. At the commencement of data collection in July, 2009, all parents from the three families were in their late 30s to early 40s, had been raised and had their schooling in Hong Kong and had immigrated to Australia 2, 11 and over 15 years ago. The children were between new born and 11 years of age; among them one child was born in Hong Kong and the other six children were born in Melbourne, Australia. One family was sending their children to a government school, one to an independent Christian school and one to a prestigious private school. Chapter 3 and Publications 2 to 7 give specific details of the families.

1.5.3 Contexts of study: Past and present

The study was conducted in Melbourne, Australia. It captured, through video observations, the children's engagement and social interaction at home, school, Chinese language school, enhancement centres, church, and transitions to and from school as well as enhancement centres during the data collection period. Data about family practices and children's everyday activities in their community of the three participant Hong Kong–Australian families were collected.

Since this study was informed by the cultural–historical paradigm, information about the historical trajectory of the families (parents and children) was important to understand the participant children's learning and development. Therefore, some of the data for this study covered the parents' childhood, growing up and life experiences that had happened at the parents' homes, schools and societies when they were in Hong Kong and Australia, as well as the activities in which the children had participated along with major happenings in the families since the children were born. These useful data related to what had happened beyond the times and places of the actual data collection period (July, 2009 to June, 2010), and were captured through conversations and in-depth interviews with the parents. Overall, 56 field visits, 80 hours of video- and 18 hours of audio-recordings, 90 short video clips, 150 photos and several documents were collected.

This section serves to provide readers a general picture about the research; details of the methodology, research design, methods, data gathering process, ethical considerations and data analysis are provided in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.6 Significance of the Research

The research for this thesis is significant since it offers insights that help clarify some of the problems and debates surrounding family practices used in the Hong Kong–Australian community to promote child development. Moreover, it can also serve as an example of an in-depth case study using Cultural–historical visual methodology focusing on everyday family practices to capture social interactions, identify value systems and ascertain different perspectives. It can thus benefit, as a reference, other researchers in their conduct of similar research in other immigrant communities and contexts, as can also the extended model of child development in Chapter 9.

An important significance of this study is its use of the cultural–historical theory and dialectical-interactive methodology, drawing on video observations and in-depth interviews. This has significantly enhanced the exploratory, explanatory and analytical powers of the research. From this approach, detailed, rich, nuanced and important information could be obtained and complex processes and holistic understandings of the specific phenomena were traced and illustrated. These data have provided many new insights and helped explain some paradoxes about the Hong Kong–Australian as well as Chinese heritage immigrant communities, such as the complex paradox around high parental expectations and parent-dominated practices that are associated with children's academic achievement. This complex paradox, with both positive and negative correlations among parental expectations and practices and children's academic achievement, is suggested in the literature (e.g., Archer & Francis, 2007; SBS, 2011b; for achieving; G. Li, 2005 for under-achieving). It has certainly been reported in related studies that high parental

expectations and parent-dominated practices have caused stress to children (L. Wong, 1997), yet they have also helped develop students' academic-related learning motive with enjoyment (New York Post, 2011, 18 January; P. Wong, 2013).

Another significance of this study is that it sheds light on how family and children's development studies – especially those about immigrant communities – can be brought into a new space. The study examines literature relating to the Hong Kong–Australian community, Chinese heritage immigrant children's educational and learning experiences in English speaking countries, family practices, and children's learning and development, identifying some limitations of this literature. Each publication in the findings chapters has a self-contained review of the relevant literature to address the gaps identified in that literature. Findings of the study offer many useful insights/implications for existing literature, which help unlock some long standing problems. For example, this study identifies the limitations of many studies on immigrant children's educational and career achievement based on cultural and social structural approaches, in that their inquiries did not pay much attention to the individual context, interactions, different perspectives and changes over time, and thus easily fall into homogenisation and the tendency to suggest findings are uniform. The shift to the use of cultural–historical paradigm in this study has illustrated how much more in-depth, comprehensive and meaningful findings can be obtained.

Finally, this study is significant because it has been able to draw from both the key and contemporary concepts stemming from cultural–historical theory (e.g., Fleer, 2010; Hedegaard, 2009; Vygotsky, 1998) and the data to develop a model with the

mechanisms, process and components of influence in children's development. The resultant model is able to provide a rich template for a holistic understanding of the process in a child's development and thus help parents, educators, researchers and policy makers to devise effective pedagogies, tools and policies to facilitate children's optimal development.

1.7 Thesis by Publications

1.7.1 Writing my thesis by publication

This thesis has been completed in the format of a thesis by publication. Writing a thesis by publication is different from writing a traditional thesis; it has limitations in length, scope, format and genre, and its publications are restricted to the criteria dictated by the journals, publishers and the reviewers' comments. It is a complex process involving multiple readers and purposes. During the process, the myriad influences nudge the writer toward an emphasis that may not have been initially planned, but nevertheless this has prompted me to pay attention to the development of coherent threads throughout the account of the research. So it was with this thesis.

While the study began as a case study of three families exploring the parents' educational values and seeing how these were related to the children's educational pathways, the task of writing for books and journals focussed my attention on the contextual phenomenon of highly achieving Hong Kong–Australian children and on gaining a detailed picture of the ways families fostered their children's development in this context. Each publication took a slightly different focus, cumulatively building a comprehensive account of how the parents provide

conditions to foster their children's development, and how the children appropriate the parents' values as they develop a motive for learning.

Given that the data in this study were both extensive and rich, the task of writing publications about the process of development on particular aspects meant that I was able to delve deeply into these aspects. An example is the process of developing a learning motive of one participant child, Vincent, in Chapter 6. Indeed, the feedback from reviewers acted as incentive to provide a focussed and analytically sound account that would also contribute to knowledge. Doing this in seven publications was challenging. Perhaps because of this demanding process of publication and the requirement that the different focal points be coherently related, I developed the need to write my last publication – one presenting a model of child development – which could make conceptual sense of all the findings and at the same time contribute understandings to support families and educators.

Throughout the whole process of writing the various publications I was very conscious that my publications, together, needed to represent as complete a picture as possible of the practices of the three participant families and the related process and complexities of development of the children. Nevertheless, each publication needed to address the emphases of a particular journal or book that might cause the focus to shift. Thus, as I wrote each of these publications, I continuously revisited the other publications to ensure they complemented each other and built up a larger picture.

1.7.2 Sequences of the publications

This thesis has seven publications, including one refereed conference article, two book chapters and four refereed journal articles. Publication 1 is a literature review about the Hong Kong community in Australia. The other six publications (Publications 2 to 7) representing the understandings gained from the study are presented and discussed in this thesis in a sequence that progressively builds a picture of what happens in families and the children's environment to support the participant children's learning and development, culminating in the presentation of a model of child development.

Publication 1 (discussed in Chapter 2 and included in full in Appendix A) is entitled "The education values of the Hong Kong community in Australia: A review of the literature". This very initial publication was written at the beginning of the candidature, aiming to understand the life, culture and the educational features of the Hong Kong–Australian community including their educational values, expectations and needs. Although the focus and direction of the intended study stated in the publication subsequently changed, this publication provides a background and the contextual information for the understanding of the community, the relevant parts of which are included in Chapter 2.

Publication 2 (Chapter 4), "Hong Kong–Australian parents' development of values, expectations and practices for their children's education: A dialectical process", traces the interwoven influences of societal, cultural, historical and individual factors in the shaping and reshaping of parental values, expectations and practices in relation to aspects of the child's learning and development. This publication forms the first findings chapter, as knowing the causal influences for the formation

(and change) of parental values is fundamental for a holistic understanding of the process of children's learning and development.

Publication 3 (Chapter 5) is "Parents' perspectives of the home–school interrelationship: A study of two Hong Kong–Australian families". It looks at the interrelationships between important institutions in the children's life, the family and school. The publication reveals a set of principles that could be mobilized to enhance the understanding of the ways in which other families and schools could form productive relationships to support children's learning and development.

Publication 4 (Chapter 6) is "A cultural–historical study of how children from Hong Kong immigrant families develop a learning motive within everyday family practices in Australia". This publication investigates how one participant family, the Chan family, creates social situations to foster the motive for learning in the children in accordance with the values the parents themselves have developed, while still being responsive to their children's desires, motives and competences. The process of motive development is traced in detail through an account of the Chan son's journey in guitar learning, which reveals the central importance of encouragement in facilitating learning and development.

Publication 5 (Chapter 7): "How encouragement in everyday family practices facilitates Hong Kong–Australian children's motive for learning". This publication extends the understandings of the importance of encouragement and foregrounds the often silenced children's perspectives on what happens for them as they engage in everyday family practices. It reveals the ways encouragement helps forge learning motives in relation to the children's perceptions and personal sense.

Publication 6 (Chapter 8) is called “The development of learning as the leading activity for Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia”. This publication returns to the broader phenomenon of high academic achievement in the Hong Kong community, seeking to find explanations for the phenomenon in the processes of the children’s development within their family practices. It looks closely at the family practices to identify the family pedagogy of the three Hong Kong–Australian families and the role of this pedagogy in fostering learning as a leading activity in the children at an earlier age than reported in other researched communities. This investigation touches on the mechanisms whereby the children appropriated their parental values, and enjoyed and valued learning.

Publication 7 (Chapter 9), “A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children’s development”, is the final publication. It offers a template for the holistic analysis of the processes in a child’s development and guidelines for effective family pedagogy. This final publication presents a model for understanding the process of a child’s development and for facilitating effective development. It is a model which has been developed on the basis of the cultural–historical literature as well as the findings from this study. It represents a synthesis of the insights developed through the study and the various preceding publications. It also constitutes a tool to support the analysis of the process of an individual child’s learning and development in his/her community. The model can be used by families, along with the complementary guidelines, for effective family pedagogy.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is structured with Chapter 1 serving as an introduction about the study and the thesis. Part I consists of two chapters (Chapters 2 and 3) which frame the

study. Chapter 2 presents issues pertinent to the background regarding the Hong Kong immigrant community in Australia (Publication 1) and related literature on parental expectations, family practices and children's educational attainments and development of immigrant communities with a Chinese heritage in English speaking countries. Related family and child development studies using the cultural–historical approach are also reviewed in this chapter. Finally, this chapter introduces the theoretical framework informing the study, where the cultural–historical theory and the main concepts drawn upon for this study are outlined. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and research design used in the study. Part II includes six chapters (Chapters 4 to 9), which present the important findings of the study through a series of publications, (Publications 2 to 7). Chapter 10 concludes the thesis, discussing the contributions and limitations of the study and suggesting future research directions.

PART I

FRAMING THE RESEARCH STUDY

Part I of this thesis consists of Chapters 2 and 3, which frame the research study. Chapter 2 is the literature review about the background of the research context, the related empirical studies, and the theoretical framework that informs the study. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and research design that were adopted for this study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As is well understood, a review of literature is central to research. It informs what has been researched on the topic that it seeks to study, helps identify gaps in previous research, serves to locate the problem (the need for the study), assists in refining the research questions, finding and building a suitable theoretical framework and methodology for the study, guides the analysis of the findings and helps identify the significance of the study (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Snyder, 2012). I have reviewed the relevant literature recursively throughout the research process to achieve these goals.

This thesis is structured in the form of thesis by publication; each publication is self-contained with a literature review on the relevant empirical studies and the relevant concepts from the theories framing the overall research. Appendix G presents summaries of each publication of the findings chapters (Publications 2 to7) which outline the phenomenon in context, relevant insights from literature, the pertinent gaps found in the literature, associated research question(s), theoretical perspective and significance of the inquiry/publication. To avoid repetition, this chapter takes a different direction from the normal style of a literature review chapter in a traditional thesis. Instead of using one or more lengthy chapters to discuss the literature in detail, this chapter simply outlines related empirical studies and the theories and concepts that this study has used, indicates the locations where details can be found in the thesis and supplements the parts that need further elaboration.

Given that this study seeks to understand how Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop in their community in relation to the everyday family practices valued by their parents, it is important to gain a sense of research on: the background of the Hong Kong community in Australia; studies related to Hong Kong and Chinese heritage parental values and family practices in children's education; studies using cultural–historical theory in examining family practices and their particular value for understanding children's development; cultural–historical theory and the concepts used in this study.

2.2 The Hong Kong Community in Australia

A review of literature about the Hong Kong–Australian community found that there is not much literature available specifically about this community, despite the fact that Australian census data show the Hong Kong community has been one of the highest achieving groups both educationally and economically, as well as the largest source of professionals for Australia (DIAC, 2006, 2013; Kee & Skeldon, 1994). The main sources of the available information about this group are from the census data. Some work has been done related to their migration and settlement issues in Australia, but this was mostly written before 1997 (e.g. Inglis & Wu, 1994; Kee & Skeldon, 1994; Kuah, 1996; Mak, 1995; Pe-Pau et al., 1996). There are also a few research theses (e.g. Chu, 2003; Ho, 2000; L. Wong, 1997) about the immigrant style, settlements, issues related to 1997 immigration and the stress and coping of adolescent immigrants of this group. The lack of literature may be due to Hong Kong being subsumed into the Asian/Chinese community (Mak & Chan, 1995) and/ or because it is a model community (BIMPR, 1995; Zhao, 2000) that causes no problems, and therefore does not attract investigation.

At an early stage of my candidature, my research focused principally on the education values of Hong Kong immigrant parents in Australia and their relation to those held by Australian parents and parents from other Chinese communities (China and Taiwan). Publication 1, a conference refereed article entitled "The education values of the Hong Kong community in Australia: A review of the literature" (P. Wong, 2007) was written at this stage to provide a background about the Hong Kong–Australian community in Australia. Despite the fact that the research direction subsequently changed from that specified in the article, the history, profile and educational practices of the community discussed in the article give an understanding of the cultural–historical contexts of the community focussed on this thesis. This publication is attached in Appendix A for more detailed reference about the Hong Kong–Australian community. However, I have included (and edited) relevant excerpts from this publication (P. Wong, 2007, pp. 314-326) in Sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.3 to provide a broad understanding of the background phenomenon.

2.2.1 A brief background of Hong Kong

Hong Kong is situated within the Northeast Asia region on the southeast coast of China adjoining Guangdong province. It was settled by Cantonese around 100 BC (BIMPR, 1995). It is small and lacks natural resources, having a total area of about 1,104 square kilometres covering Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories and 262 outlying islands. It had a population of 7.15 million in mid-2012, 92% of which are of Chinese origin (GovHK, 2013). Because of the Opium Wars, Hong Kong became a dependent territory of the United Kingdom in 1842 (BIMPR, 1995).

This annexation by the British brought unexpected benefits, and as a result Hong Kong has been empowered by westernisation, an independent legal system, the English language and a capitalist economy. With its advantages of having a hybrid culture (Chinese traditional and westernised) and offering a trilingual context (Cantonese, Mandarin and English), Hong Kong has long been playing an important role to connect the West and the East. From its humble beginnings as a fishing village, it has become an international financial, business and trading centre. Hong Kong enjoys the world's 13th highest GDP per capita (The World Factbook, 2012). Its growth is almost a miracle. Apart from its distinct historical and political background, which might have aided this remarkable achievement, its valuable human capital is definitely a main contributor to its success.

Throughout history, the population of Hong Kong has often consisted primarily of migrants (essentially refugees) from mainland China (Skeldon, 1991), who sought to enjoy its substantial measures of social, economic and cultural freedoms and a rise in living standards. However, after the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in December 1984 confirming the handover of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China on 1 July 1997, the fear of the Communist influences, loss of freedoms and decrease in living standards, made many young members of the elite leave Hong Kong during the 1980's and the 1990's (Zhao, 2000). The emigration pressure was amplified by the Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 (Chu, 2003; L. Wong, 1997). The popular destinations were Canada, the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom (BIMPR, 1995; Pe-Pua et al., 1996). As found from studies by Pe-Pau et al. (1996), Ho (2000) and Chu (2003), the lifestyle, space and natural environment, easier migration requirements, good climate, geographical proximity

and good education system have added to the attraction of Australia as a migration destination for Hong Kong families.

2.2.2 History and characteristics of Hong Kong–Australian community

Although Hong Kong has been recorded as a separate birthplace in the Australian Census since 1901, the number of Hong Kong immigrants to Australia remained small before 1973 (BIMPR, 1995). This was perhaps in part due to the "White Australia policy". Matching well with Australian government policy, enacted since the 1980s, of actively targeting business and skilled migrants, Hong Kong became and remained one of the top 10 immigrant source countries for permanent arrivals from 1985-86 until 1998-99 (ABS, 2007). In 1990-91 and 1991-92, the Hong Kong-born settlers had reached the peak of 13,451 (11.1% of total intake) and 12,913 (12% of total intake) and Hong Kong was ranked as the second largest source of immigrants just after the United Kingdom (Pe-Pau et al., 1996). Such migration was motivated by concerns about economic and socio-political wellbeing after the handover, and the desire of migrants to attain a high quality of education for their children (Chu, 2003; Pe-Pau et al., 1996; L. Wong, 1997; Zhao, 2000). In the 2006 Australian census, there were 71,800 Hong Kong-born persons living in Australia, and this group was ranked 15th among all the overseas born populations (ABS, 2007). The Hong Kong-born population had increased by 4.4% in the latest 2011 census. In the last decade there has been a diminishing fear of political threat from the Chinese communist government, as China has become more open and focused on its economic growth. However, there has been an increasing dissatisfaction with the Hong Kong education system (K. Wong, 2000). The dominant goal of most recent Hong Kong emigrants is for their children to have quality education (Khoo & Mak, 2003).

The census data have indicated that since the mid1980s, recent Hong Kong-born immigrants have been relatively young, wealthy, and with good English proficiency among all the overseas immigrants in Australia. They are highly qualified and well educated, having majored in the business and professional categories, and are typically living in the middle class suburbs of the major cities (BIMPR, 1995; DIAC, 2006; Zhao, 2000). Affected by the recession in Australia during the 1980s and 1990s and the adverse socio-economic conditions, many of the Hong Kong household breadwinners faced employment difficulties, including unemployment and underemployment due to lack of local experience, cultural differences, insufficient fluency of English for workplace communication, under-recognition of overseas qualifications and experience, and racial discrimination (Mak, 1995; Pe-Pua et al., 1996; L. Wong, 1997). The latest 2011 Census data show that the percentages of higher qualifications held (HK 62.3% vs total AUS 55.9%) and employment in skilled occupations (HK 58.7% vs total AUS 48.4) of the Hong Kong group are much higher than for the total Australian group. In the 2006 Census data, their median income (HK $425/wk vs total AUS $466/wk vs AUS born $488/wk) was lower than the total Australian group and even much lower than the Australian born. This shows that even with economic growth and an emphasis on equal opportunity among all ethnic groups in Australia, inequality still existed with regard to the Hong Kong–Australian group. However, a comparison of 2006 data with similar data from previous census statistics indicates that conditions have greatly improved. As shown in the 2011 Census data, their median income had by this time become the highest among these groups (HK $603/wk vs total AUS $577/wk vs AUS born $597/wk).

Although the Australian multicultural policy has been contested and has changed its nature over time, it supports and encourages ethnic groups to maintain their cultural heritage (Galligan & Roberts, 2003). With this policy, the Hong Kong immigrants retain their Chinese cultural capital. The daily lives of many Hong Kong families in Australia are influenced by their Chinese cultures (Martin, 1999). They share a heritage of traditional Chinese values brought from Confucian traditions: the importance of the family unit, harmony, and achieving security and prosperity. Such values serve to ensure the family's stability, cohesion and growth (D. Lee, 2001; Mak & Chan, 1995). With the career-family dilemma, they carry forward the traditional Chinese values of sacrificing self to fulfil a better future for the family and render good educational opportunities for their children (Khoo & Mak, 2003). As a result, the "astronaut family and parachute children" (Pe-Pua et al., 1996) settlement strategy has been employed by many of the Hong Kong families, where one of the parents (usually the father) retains their career in Hong Kong, leaving the children and spouse in the host country and frequently flies between these two places to maintain contact with their families. Both Pe-Pua et al. (1996) and Chu (2003) have claimed that the 'astronaut' phenomenon would fit with the contemporary practices of globalization and benefit the growth of transnational economic and cultural networks. With the advantage of the Australian government allowing dual citizenship, the Hong Kong immigrants can enjoy transnational mobility. However, from the late 1990s most of the immigrants from Hong Kong have been originally international students who had studied in Australia and, because they liked the lifestyle and education system of Australia, they decided to migrate to Australia.

2.2.3 Major educational features of the community

Education has all along been highly valued by the Hong Kong–Australian community. Hong Kong parents are willing to invest heavily and make sacrifices so that their children can benefit from good quality education (Mak & Chan, 1995; Chu, 2003; L. Wong, 1997). A high percentage of Hong Kong migrant children are sent to private schools. In Pe-Pua et al.'s (1996) study this figure reached 50%. This is likely to be due to the belief that studying in prestigious private schools can guarantee their children a high standard of academic performance, good discipline and good quality classmates. Some Hong Kong–Australian parents send their children to schools run by churches, as they hope their children will receive certain religious education with good discipline and at a lower cost than in prestigious private schools. Moreover, many Hong Kong–Australian parents want to send their children to study in a government school with high academic achievement. By estimation, over 80% of Hong Kong parents send their children to learn Chinese on weekends in order to preserve their Chinese culture (Martin, 1999). Tuition schools and scholarship classes are in high demand and enhancement lessons in music, dancing, and sports are also popular for Hong Kong families (SBS, 2011b).

Another feature of the Hong Kong group is the very high percentage of entry to higher education. Hong Kong-born domestic students ranked fifth in attending higher education in Australia in 2005 (Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST], 2005). This ranking is based on the total number of students without taking into account the population size of each group; if it were ranked in terms of the percentage of population, Hong Kong students would most likely be the top on the list. Moreover, many Hong Kong-born domestic students enter into highly competitive universities and faculties.

Hong Kong people regard knowledge and qualifications as a form of capital that is both mobile and secure (Kuah, 1996; Mak & Chan, 1995). Most Hong Kong parents believe that a university degree or a good education increases the chances of future success and guarantees material prosperity (Pe-Pau et al., 1996). They desire that their children grow into professionals earning high incomes and social status. Children consider high academic attainment as the primary way to show filial piety and to recompense their parents for their sacrifices in furnishing their education (Mak & Chan, 1995).

The education values of the Hong Kong–Australian community are consistent with Confucius' belief about education. As pointed out in Reagan (2005):

> Confucius believed that a good education would change men for the better, and that this should be available to those capable of benefiting from it. His remark that by nature men are nearly alike; but through experience they grow wide apart supported the efficacy of schooling, and he was famed for his meritocratic outlook. (Reagan, 2005, p. 141)

Although there is criticism that Confucius' idea of education was designed mainly to bring about good government, it served a very pragmatic purpose and permitted social class mobility in that "a man from humble origins could rise to a position of power based on his intellectual skill and talent" (Reagan, 2005, p. 141). Given that values are "an individual's belief to which they attach significant worth and by which they organize their life" (Hill, 1991 p.4, as cited in Bliss, 2005), it is understandable that Hong Kong parents with Confucian values do so much for their children's education, hoping to secure them a prosperous future (Guo, 2006).

As shown by the studies of Pe-Pau et al. (1996), the expectation of education is high for both parents and children in the Hong Kong–Australian community. High academic achievement, good work performance and all round development are expected of children. Though the studied parents indicated that they enjoyed the more relaxed Australian education system, they feared these features might affect their children's academic performance. The study of Pe-Pua et al. (1996) also revealed that with these high expectations, first generation immigrant children are highly stressed, perform well academically but not socially, and do not participate fully in class due to insufficient English proficiency, and a lack of confidence. They suggested that these children's public speaking skills, confidence and social skills needed to be developed. Their findings are supported by Dooley (2003). Moreover, L. Wong's (1997) doctoral study on the stress and coping of Hong Kong Chinese adolescent immigrants confirmed Pe-Pua et al.'s (1996) study and proposed that skill training programs enhancing coping capabilities with study related problems should be conducted in the school setting for the Hong Kong immigrant students. It also suggested that Hong Kong–Australian parents needed to be active in school-parent interactions and set more realistic expectations for the academic performance and learning development of their children.

Publication 1 has provided a useful reference about the way of life, culture, history, and profile of the Hong Kong–Australian community. It has also revealed the educational features of this group, foregrounding the characteristic that the Hong Kong–Australian parents highly value education, having high expectations of their children's education, and using specific strategies and family practices to enhance their children's education. On one hand, this literature has shown that these parental expectations and strategies have contributed to the academic and

economic successes of the Hong Kong–Australian community (Cheng, 1998; Guo, 2006; Ho, 2000; Mak & Chan, 1995; K. Wong, 2000). On the other hand, the literature has also indicated the stress and drawbacks of the high parental expectations and stringent family practices towards children's academic performance and career aspirations (Chu, 2003; Coates, 2006; Pe-Pau et al., 1996; L. Wong, 1997). Moreover, since the review of literature appearing in Publication 1, new research studies are still lacking about the Hong Kong–Australian community especially regarding the ways their children learn and develop.

My research focus shifted from identifying and comparing the parental education values of the Hong Kong–Australian community with those of the Australian and other Chinese communities to the focus on investigating Hong Kong–Australian parents' education values and their children's educational pathways. It thus shifted to the field of sociology of education. My review of the literature followed this shift.

2.3 Studies Related to Hong Kong and Chinese Heritage Parental Values and Family Practices on Children's Education

I extended my review of the literature on studies related to parental education values and expectation, family practices and children's educational experiences to Hong Kong immigrant families in Western countries. Similar findings were noted to those found in Publication 1, including the fact that the Hong Kong community in these countries has also been subsumed under the Asian and/or Chinese communities. Relevant studies related to the Hong Kong community (included as Asian and/or Chinese immigrant communities) in the UK, US and Canada as well as Australia have mainly focused on issues related to the high educational achievement of these groups (Francis & Archer, 2005; S. Lee, 2006; Jun Li, 2001,

2004; Louie, 2001, 2004; Matthews, 1996, 2002; Ng, Lee & Pak, 2007; Nozaki & Inokuchi, 2007; Pearce, 2006; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Emphasising high academic attainment in the Asian/Chinese group has enabled them to achieve upward social mobility and 'success' in their host countries. They are seen to be academically and economically outperforming many counterparts from other ethnic minority groups. Thus they have been praised as the 'Model Minority' (Archer & Francis, 2007; S. Lee, 2006; Jun Li, 2004; Louie, 2001; Pearce, 2006; Petersen, 1971). As Kawai (2005) mentioned, the term 'Model Minority' was constructed by sociologist William Petersen in 1966 to celebrate Japanese and Chinese Americans' success stories as minority groups in the US, and since then Asian Americans have been more broadly portrayed as a model minority (Jun Li, 2001). Studies by Archer and Francis (2007) in the UK, Louie (2001, 2004) in the US, Jun Li (2001, 2004) in Canada and Matthews (1996, 2002) in Australia indicate that the high parental expectations and the particular strategies and practices applied to their children's education have contributed to the Asian/Chinese communities' high academic attainments. These studies have also revealed that Chinese immigrant parents highly value education; they strongly believe that a good education qualification will benefit their children, facilitating prosperous futures, successful careers, high incomes and upward social class mobility. These studies show that the values that the parents hold in relation to their children's education are rather pragmatic or what is described in Francis and Archer (2005) as instrumental, due to their cultural values and the social structures of the host countries.

One common problem found in many studies on the education of Asian/Chinese immigrants is that these studies are focused primarily on the academic, career

and/or economic successes of this group, and rarely investigate the broader picture of how their children interact and respond to parents' expectations, demands and family practices. Another problem for many of these studies is their arguments and findings are rather uniform, in that they tend to present all Asian/Chinese families as similar in their educational practices, strategies and pathways. A further issue is that much of this research refers to a generic ethnic group of 'Asian' or 'Chinese', regarding Asian/Chinese immigrants as a monolithic group. For instance, in Louie (2001) study of Chinese–American parents' aspirations and investment, her participants were immigrant families from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. In fact, intra-ethnic groups like those from these locations have their own distinct historical, socio-economic, political and cultural backgrounds, thus requiring specific inquiries to ascertain findings related to the particular groups.

Some studies about the educational success and 'model minority' of Asian or Chinese immigrants have actually involved the Hong Kong community as the majority of research participants. For instance, in Francis and Archer's (2005) study of British-Chinese pupils' and parents' constructions of the value of education, most of the pupils and all of the parent participants were immigrants from Hong Kong. Therefore the findings of these studies reflect the situations existing in the diaspora of the Hong Kong community, not the entire Asian or Chinese immigrant community. Nevertheless, there is a lack of studies that identify these Hong Kong immigrant groups as the core group, and focus on this group on its own.

There are studies showing the other side of the coin. The strong focus on academic achievement by parents has also been deemed to lead to high levels of stress (Chu, 2003; Dooley, 2003; Pe-Pua et al., 1996; Guo, 2006; Ryan & Louie, 2007; L. Wong, 1997) and possible underachieving behaviours in their children (G. Li, 2005).

As can be seen from the above, when I was engaged in the sociology field and the related literature, I found that there was little literature about the Hong Kong immigrant community in Western countries like Australia, especially on how children from this community develop. On extending my review to the studies on Chinese heritage communities in English-speaking countries I encountered debates about the validity of the generalising claims made in this research, which I have discussed critically in depth in Publication 2, Chapter 4.

The sociological studies of Chinese immigrant groups focus on certain social phenomena only and give a limited account of children's perspectives. Indeed, often cultural and social structural theories have been used to examine the phenomenon, using reified notions of ethnic culture and society to explain patterns of behaviour. This perspective has tended to discount the complexity of the broad and diverse cultural heritage of childrearing practices that have been brought by immigrants from all over the world. However, children's development is complex, multifaceted and deeply reliant on each child's characteristics, his/her engagement in activities associated with significant others and his/her social environment. It has failed to offer an overarching conceptual framework for research that involves varying levels of analysis.

Theory that can help elucidate the processes of development and learning is important so that deeper, more holistic understandings become available of what

happens – and, equally significantly, how it happens and why it happens – as individual children develop. Such an explanatory theoretical framework is offered by cultural–historical theory in the tradition of Vygotsky (1987, 1997a, 1997b, 1998), which I eventually drew on in my study, and which frames all my publications.

2.4 Cultural–historical Research on Children and Family Studies

The theoretical focus of this thesis is Vygotsky's cultural–historical theory, and so a review was conducted of literature on socio-cultural and cultural–historical studies related to children's learning and development in their communities and family practices. I started by reading Rogoff's (1995, 2003) work. Unlike many sociologically framed studies her work positions the child as an active and essential component in his/her learning and development process (Monk, 2010). Her work also foregrounds the cultural nature of human development and family practices. It demonstrates how a multi-layered (three lenses) analysis of children's learning in their communities can yield holistic understandings about how and why a child develops as he/she does. Various studies using the cultural–historical approach have also contributed to better understanding of children's learning and development in their communities and different institutional practices such as revealing how the family and school foster and restrict child development (e.g. Fleer, 2010; Fleer & Hedegaard, 2010; Hedegaard, 1999, 2005, 2009; Hedegaard & Fleer, 2009; Li, 2012; Monk, 2010; Ridgway, 2010). Deep and comprehensive insights into how a child learns and develops and the important role of family and parents (and grandparents) can be found in these.

2.5 Theoretical Framework for Understanding Children's Learning and Development

Cultural–historical theory is able to provide a deep, holistic understanding of processes supporting children's learning and development. The use of this theoretical framing aims to shed new light on current understandings of parental values, family practices and their relations to children's learning and development of the Hong Kong–Australian families. This section provides a brief account of the theory and concepts I have drawn upon to inform the present study. Table 2.1 below indicates these aspects of theory and concepts and the location where details about them can be found. Many of these concepts are discussed at some length in the findings chapters (4 to 9) and their respective publications, so they are not repeated in this chapter. Only those aspects of theory and concepts that need further elaboration are discussed in the following subsections, including the cultural–historical theory, the genetic law of cultural development, the interaction of the ideal and present forms, Hedegaard's model of children's learning and development, motive, leading activity, periodisation, the mechanism for the development of a leading activity and internal position. These specific concepts are briefly introduced in the subsequent subsections (2.5.1 to 2.5.7) of this chapter.

Table 2.1 The theory and concepts drawn upon in this study

Theory/Concept	Detailed in
Cultural–historical theory	Chapter 2, Publication 2
The genetic law of cultural development	Chapter 2, also appears in Publication 7
Dialectical relationship	Publications 2, 4, 7
The social situation of development	Publication 5, Chapters 6, 7
The environment	Publications 5, 7, Chapter 9
The interaction of the ideal and real forms	Chapter 2, Publications 4, 7
Motive	Chapter 2, Publications 4, 5

Development of a learning motive	Publications 4, 5
Process of development	Publication 7
Child's perception and personal sense	Publication 5
Encouragement	Publications 4, 5 & 7
Conflict	Publication 7
Hedegaard's model of children's learning and development	Chapters 2 and 3, Publications 2, 4 and 7
Fleer's cultural–historical view of child development	Publications 2, 7
Chinese concepts of learning	Publications 4 and 5
Leading activity	Chapter 2, Publication 6
Periodisation	Chapter 2, Publication 6
Mechanism for the development of a leading activity	Chapter 2, Publication 6
Internal position	Chapter 2, Publication 7

2.5.1 Cultural–historical theory

Cultural–historical theory (also commonly known in the West as sociocultural theory) was founded by the Russian psychologist, Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934). The essence of Vygotsky's cultural–historical theory is reflected through his preference to refer to his approach as 'cultural', 'historical' and 'instrumental' psychology (Luria, 1979). This suggests the importance of taking into consideration the cultural contexts, the historical development and the mediated nature of all complex psychological functions for studying human development – child development as well as the development of all humankind.

Vygotsky's theory was influenced by the works of Marx, Engels, Hegel and Spinoza. Over 80 years ago, Vygotsky and his Soviet colleagues aimed to develop a revolutionary, unique and holistic form of psychology using dialectical reasoning in a materialistic way to explicate the complex role of cultural and historical processes in human development (Gredler, 2009). They used dialectical materialism for which

> the notion that mind [e.g. thinking] and matter (e.g., speech), are interconnected and are in a constant state of transformation, through a unification of contradictions – e.g., for Vygotsky, both the psychological and material aspects of tools are united in the mediation between person and the world; acting and thinking are bound together (Robbins, 2007, p. 98).

Unlike classical psychology which focused on investigating separate factors and the developed form (products) of the development of individuals, cultural–historical research (non-classical psychology) focused on examining the complex process of development (Veresov, 2010). Moreover, as Fleer (2008b) suggests, where sociological research approaches tend to focus on social contexts and their effects on human development, a cultural–historical approach examines the person in relation to the conditions and possibilities for development through interactions with his/her social and material environment.

Cultural–historical theory has been expanded and elaborated by Vygotsky's colleagues, followers and contemporary scholars. Given the increasing recognition of the power of using cultural–historical theory in research, especially that focussing on children and families, it is crucial to realise that the many concepts in this theory are interrelated. They cannot be treated as separate ideas and understood without understanding Vygotsky's theory of development as a whole (Karpov, 2005). However, in building the theoretical framework, only key and relevant cultural–historical concepts that are central for understanding the inquiries are drawn upon. For example, in my study I was concerned with the examination of the broad process of the social interactions, the interrelationships and the motives that drove the child's learning and development. I was not focused on the

details of the teaching or learning of specific content, so I did not use the concept of zone of proximal development (a popular concept in the cultural–historical theory that many family studies have used as the theoretical framework) in my discussion of the findings. More detailed methodology is needed for investigation and discussion of the zone of proximal development and that could be done in future research or analysis when the focus is placed on the detailed techniques of supporting learning and development. That said, in this research study I have focused on concepts which all relate directly to the learning and development of young children in their communities. The genetic law of cultural development is central to understanding children's psychological development.

2.5.2 The genetic law of cultural development

Vygotsky's (1997b) general genetic law of cultural development, the fundamental law in cultural–historical theory, states that

> every function in the cultural development of the child appears on the stage twice, in two planes, first, the social, then the psychological, first between people as an intermental category, then within the child as an intramental category. (Vygotsky, 1997b, p. 106)

The word 'genetic' refers to 'genesis', being the origin of development. This law informs us that the origin of development begins as a social relation between people before it becomes individual mental function (Vygotsky, 1997b). A key term in this law is 'category,' referring to a collision, contradiction or dramatic event (Veresov, 2004). This indicates that not every social relation will bring development; only the social relation that appears as a category, that is, as an

emotionally coloured collision or contradiction between people, which provokes qualitative changes to the individual's mental function and brings development (Veresov, 2004).

In the process of cultural development, cultural ways of thinking and development are illuminated through social interactions, which then become transformed from being social occurrences to being part of the individual's own intrapsychological (intrapersonal mental) functioning (Minick, 1987). This means that as

> children move toward self-regulation and independence, they appropriate not only conceptual knowledge but also social values of interacting with family [and community] members and the cultural values of using literacy in their daily lives. (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p. 193)

This law has given me a very useful and precise conceptual tool to understand how Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within their family everyday practices. This law is also mentioned in Publication 7 of Chapter 9 when I explain the theoretical constructs of the model for understanding and facilitating child development which I developed from this study.

2.5.3 The interaction of the ideal and present forms

According to Vygotsky (1998, p. 203), "the social environment is the source for the appearance of all specific human properties of the personality gradually acquired by the child or the source of social development of the child which is concluded in the process of actual interaction of 'ideal' and present forms". Vygotsky argues that the "ideal" or final form is

> ideal in the sense that it acts as a model for that which should be achieved at the end of the developmental period; and [is] final in the sense that it represents what the child is supposed to attain at the end of his [sic] development (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 346)

The present or real form Vygotsky refers to as the child's primary or actual situation at that moment.

The ideal form and the present form interact with each other in the child's everyday life. This process of interaction is a form of mediation, where the ideal and the present can work with and through each other to support development. For this interaction to be positive and lead to development, a specific instrument of mediation is helpful. My study found that such an instrument is encouragement. Details regarding the conceptualisation of parental demand as ideal form, children's motive and competence as the present form and encouragement as the interaction of ideal and present forms are discussed in Publication 4.

2.5.4 Hedegaard's model of children's learning and development

Hedegaard's (2008a, 2009) model of children's learning and development is a key theoretical frame that this study builds upon. It has been mentioned and discussed throughout the thesis. I acknowledge there is a more recent version of this model (Hedegaard, 2010, 2012) where 'activity setting' is included to foreground the diversity of children's perspectives on the same setting and the ways their perspectives contribute to individual children's different social situations of development, even in the same family. However, this study adopted her model in the form appearing in her publications in 2008, 2009, and thus did not incorporate

activity settings. My study focused more on institutional practices in relation to children's learning and development, and in particular on family practices. Details of Hedegaard's (2008a, 2009) model are discussed in Chapter 3, Publications 2, 4 and 7.

2.5.5 Motive

Motive is a central concept in this study. In cultural–historical theory, Leontiev (1978) argued that Vygotsky's (1987; 1997a, 1997b) research methodology sought to examine within a given task the concept of motives in a way that went beyond the view of motives being internal and biologically driven. Leontiev (1978) expanded upon this concept of motives to introduce the idea of an object-motive. Stetsenko and Arievitch (2004) have argued that in introducing the concept of an object-motive, Leontiev sought to "convey the idea that human activities are always driven by something objectively existing in the world, rather than by some event and occurrence in the hidden realm of mental processes or human souls" (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004, p. 482). The framing of the concept of motives as an object-motive is helpful for drawing attention to how practices and activities may develop motives for children. Important to the present study is how the learning motive develops from the child's participation in particular activities.

Hedegaard (2009) has also introduced the idea of practice traditions within institutions. The practice traditions found within an institution, such as a school or family, are dialectically related to the personal activities that a person participates in. This relation influences the development of children's motives. In drawing a distinction between practices and activities, it is possible to see a person's perspective. This reading of motives foregrounds the significance of practice

traditions, and through this, makes visible how children develop their motive through participation in everyday activities.

2.5.6 Leading activity and periodisation

The concepts of leading activity, periodisation and mechanism for the development of a leading activity are drawn upon to show how communities influence the ways children learn. These concepts are discussed in detail in Publication 6. Supplementing that explanation, in this section Table 2.2 shows the full spectrum of the leading activities and their corresponding periods in Elkonin's (1971) periodisation, and a diagram (Figure 2.1) illustrates visually the mechanism for the formation of a leading activity for a fuller picture and better understanding of these concepts.

Table 2.2 Elkonin's (1971) periodisation

Period	Leading activity
Infancy	Direct emotional contact
Early childhood	Manipulation of objects
Preschool	Role playing (imaginary play)
Early school	Formal learning
Early adolescence	Intimate personal relations
Late adolescence	Vocational or career oriented activity

A cultural–historical theory of child development emphasises the dynamic, dialectical interactions among children and their social realities. In this understanding of child development, it is important to identify the mechanisms and psychological criteria that help shape a leading activity. In a synthesis of Kravtsova's (2006) ideas and those of other researchers (e.g., Fleer, 2010; Karpov, 2005), Figure 2.1 below shows the mechanism for the formation of a leading

activity. The processes and mechanism represented in this diagram are explained at length in Publication 6 in Chapter 8.

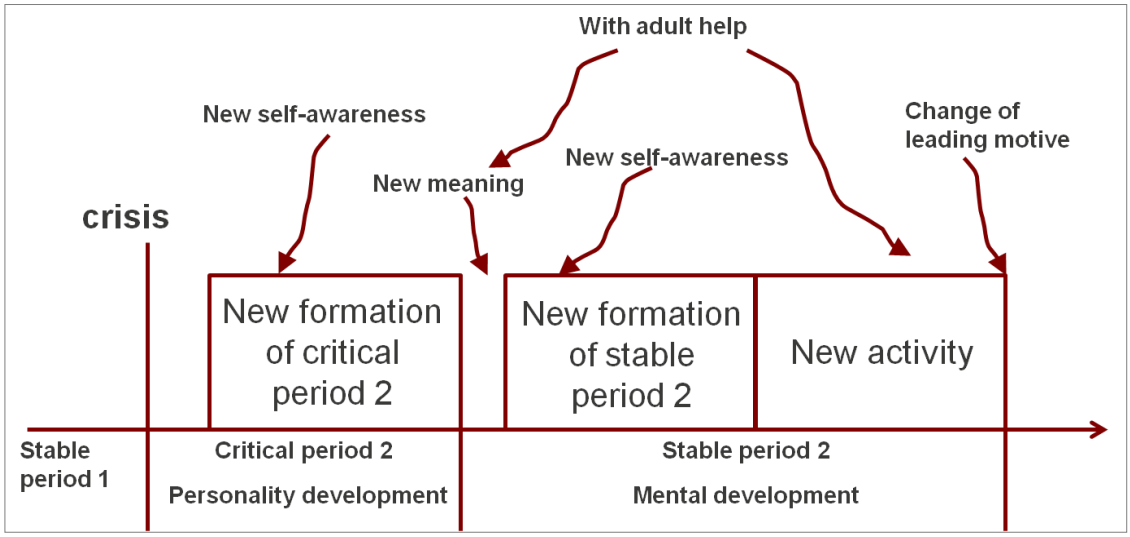


Figure 2.1 Mechanism for the formation of leading activity

2.5.7 Internal position

The concept of the social situation of development is central in understanding a child's development in relation to his/her environment. It is considered as the unity of the internal (the child's individual characteristics) and external (the child's social reality). The concept of internal position serves as an aggregated representation of the child's internal characteristics, so I have used this concept in Publication 7 when discussing the child (the individual dimension). For details please refer to Publication 7. In this section, I supplement relevant information for the concept. Children's positions are conditioned by the demands their social environment placed on them (Bozhovich, 2009). According to Bozhovich (2009) internal positions are developed

> based on how children – as determined by their preceding experience, their opportunities, the needs and impulses that emerged in them in the past – feel about the objective position that they occupy in life at the present moment and the position they want to occupy (pp. 80-81).

Children's attitudes towards the ways they are positioned in their environment are reflected in the internal position they adopt. For example, if the child is expected to go to school (as a social norm) and is helped to anticipate this with positive 'stories' (perhaps from parents) of how the child is 'grown-up' enough to do so, the child may develop a positive idea about him/herself being a schoolboy or schoolgirl, and thus develop the desire to perform that role. This constitutes the internal position of the child, which is affected by the environment. If a child's attitude towards a particular role or demand is to be changed so the child can develop an internal position congruent with the demand, then it is important to realise that "the relationship between external demands and the potential and needs of children themselves are key to determining their subsequent development" (Bozhovich, 2009, p. 80).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explicated the empirical and theoretical literatures reviewed for this study. It has offered information on the background context of the Hong Kong–Australian community that this study researched. It has also provided useful information on how parental values, family practices and children's educational experiences of the Hong Kong immigrant families have been researched and the findings in Australia, UK, US and Canada. This helped me to identify gaps in previous research, and gave me direction to shape my own research and refine my

research inquiry and questions. The chapter has also illustrated how I built up the theoretical framework through recursive reviewing of the literature, and has provided an overview of the main theoretical ideas used, along with indications of where the theory and concepts are discussed in depth in the publications. Further review of relevant methodological literature helped me to build up the methodology and research design for this study, which are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study seeks to investigate the way Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices. As stated in Chapter 2, it is informed by cultural–historical theory, which offers a comprehensive framework to explore children's learning and development. Vygotsky (1997a) emphasises that to study development, we are not simply concerned with the formulation of suitable theoretical frameworks, but we also need to match theory with appropriate methodologies and methods. This chapter discusses the methodological approach and research design that were used for the study. Since the study was guided by a cultural–historical paradigm and took on a dialectical-interactive methodology, the details of this orientation and the justification for adopting them are explained. The research design and methods referring back to the concepts and principles inherent in this orientation are also discussed. It is noted here that since all the publications included in Part II of this thesis are research-based, a description of the methodology and research design was included in each publication for readers to trace how the study was conducted, analysed and interpreted. Nevertheless, as the publications vary in focus, there are differences among them in the selection of details reported. The following section presents a comprehensive understanding of the cultural–historical paradigm and its features that guided the research.

3.2 Cultural–historical Paradigm

Vygotsky puts forward a revolutionary and unique view to study child (and human) development (Fleer, 2010; Hedegaard, 2008a; Newman & Holzman,

1993). Obukhova (2012) sees this as a new paradigm in developmental psychology, adding that this cultural–historical paradigm constitutes a "scientific revolution in the developmental psychology" which "has led to a new understanding of the source, form, course, conditions, specificity and motivational forces of the psychical development of a child" (p. 51). Vygotsky (1997a) views development as engendered in the dynamic interaction between the individual and his/her environment. He applies a holistic framework and dialectical reasoning to explore development where individual biological and psychological growth, social interaction, cultural context, historical development and mediation and the dialectical interrelatedness among these are all considered in the process of development.

The cultural–historical paradigm has been continuously elaborated by Vygotsky's colleagues and followers, such as Alexander Luria, Alexei Leontiev, Daniel Elkonin, Lydia Bozhovich and Alexander Zaporozhets and the contemporary Vygotskian scholars and researchers. While cultural–historical theory has often been discussed in the research literature, the unique world view that it embraces and the wholeness-focussed theoretical-methodological alignment that it emphasises are not commonly mentioned. Such a holistic paradigm sits well within the interpretivist paradigm, which is explained below after an initial discussion of what a research paradigm is and does. Following this, the world view of the cultural–historical paradigm is teased out.

A research paradigm is a world view, a framework guided by a set of beliefs about the world (Guba, 1990). It has been considered as a "perspective based on a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that are held by a community of

researchers" (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 29). It frames the way knowledge is perused and interpreted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and helps researchers to organize their studies into a meaningful and manageable form through its guidance in research design, analysis and interpretation (Macdonald et al., 2002). The choice of paradigm lays down the direction, intention, expectation and motivation for the research. Thus, the first step in designing research is to locate an appropriate paradigm for our inquiries.

At the broad level of philosophical thinking two research paradigms are commonly mentioned: the positivist paradigm and interpretivist paradigm. The positivist paradigm was widely used for research in the fields of education and social science until the early 1980s (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). It is "based on the rationalistic empiricist philosophy that originated with Aristotle" (Mertens, 2005, p.8) and aims to obtain a finding objectively in order to avoid human bias, by testing a theory or describing an experience. It is deductive and confirmatory in nature as it attempts to deduce a set of natural laws with evidence from empirical data or to confirm the hypotheses tested (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). It is often aligned with quantitative methods of data collection and analysis (Macdonald et al., 2002; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Mertens, 2005). Quantitative data are usually analysed using statistical analysis programs, from which the significance and correlations of the variables under investigation can be identified.

Although the use of the positivist paradigm and quantitative methodology in educational research has decreased, much of the research on the educational experiences of Chinese (including Hong Kong) children of immigrant families and studies of Chinese children's learning and development based on traditional

psychology has gathered data through surveys and quantitative methods. Studies based on quantitative methods have increasingly been criticized for not being able to establish a rigorous causal relationship for the problems under inquiry (Nozaki & Inokuchi, 2007; Wu, Palinkas & He, 2010). Other critiques include its tendency to produce discrete, linear, static and homogeneous results, and its frequent failure to explain individual differences within groups, or to capture changes, provide a holistic view or reflect the dynamic character of the process (Fleer, in press a; S. Lee, 1996, 2006; Veresov, in press).

In contrast, the interpretivist paradigm "grew out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and Wilhelm Dilthey's study of interpretive understanding" (Mertens, 2005, p. 12). This paradigm aims to recognize the "meaning-perspectives of the people studied" (Macdonald et al., 2002, p. 138) and to understand human experience and social interaction through subjective reality. It is subjective, personal, and socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; Mertens, 2005) and is commonly aligned with qualitative methods of data collection and analysis (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The interpretive approach is inductive and exploratory; it helps to unlock a certain topic about which little is known. It affords in-depth understandings of participants' perceptions and affective experiences and the sense they make of these (Marton & Booth, 1997); in the case of this study, the perspectives of children, their parents and significant others are involved.

The term paradigm, as a way of thinking about the world, is also used to identify particular theoretical orientations to research and explanation. Such orientations are numerous, including the naturalistic paradigm and the cultural–historical paradigm. The broader interpretivist paradigm, with its focus on the

understanding, inductive reasoning and interpretation of subjective reality as well as the interaction between the individual and the social, is clearly a good match with the cultural historical paradigm. The latter emphasises the dialectical relationships between individuals and their environments and takes firm account of social, cultural and historical contexts in these relationships. It sees these relationships as mutually constructing the pathways and conditions of individuals and their environments. In this sense, the cultural–historical paradigm with its interpretive qualities differs substantially from what Obukhova (2012, p. 52) describes as the prevailing paradigm in Vygotsky's day, the "naturalistic" paradigm in developmental psychology, which was focussed on the natural or biological explanations for human developmental processes. Such a focus on the individual and his/her biology and behaviour has endured in much traditional Western psychology research on development until this day, as argued by Fleer (2010) and Karpov (2005). It is helpful to see Obukhova's observations on how the cultural–historical paradigm differs from the naturalistic paradigm in respect of the ways they view the child or individual (subject) and how they conceive of the course, conditions, source, form, and cause of a child's development. Her comparison is offered below in tabular form (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 The comparison between naturalistic and cultural–historical paradigms in development psychology

	Naturalistic paradigm	Cultural–historical paradigm
Subject of investigation	Separate aspects and processes, such as motivation, intellect, behaviour	A system of mental processes
Course of development	Transition from the individual biological being to the social life, socialisation	A process of transition from the social to individual mental life, individualisation of mental life
Conditions of development	Heredity and environment	Individual biological growth, communication and interaction, initiated by a subject's own activities that appear as answers to needs
Source of development	Inside the individual, within his nature	Outside of the individual, in the culture of society, the environment (relative to the individual's experience)
Form of development	An adaptation to the environment	Obeying socio-historical laws, development takes place through the acquisition of historically created forms and modes of activity
Causes for mental development	Convergence of heredity and environment	The child's learning and education

Adapted from Obukhova (2012, p. 52), please note that the 'naturalistic' paradigm referred to by Obukhova (2012) is equivalent to a scientific/positivist paradigm and is different from the interpretivist paradigm, which, incidentally, is also called a naturalistic paradigm in the qualitative methodology texts.

Table 3.1 reveals the orientation of the cultural–historical paradigm, though not all of its features are evident in this. To elaborate on this, the following section identifies and explains the aspects of the cultural–historical paradigm that make it a powerful framework for gaining a holistic understanding of child development.

3.2.1 The features and emphases of the cultural–historical paradigm

The main features of the cultural–historical paradigm are that it: emphasises the dynamic and interactive nature of development; focuses on processes rather than objects; looks holistically at the unit (the whole) rather than individual elements, and is thus anti-reductionist; seeks to explain how and why development happens as it does; and applies the dialectic and materialistic concepts in understanding human learning and development.

3.2.1.1 Dynamic and interactive

Vygotsky's cultural–historical paradigm "rejects the Cartesian tradition of reductionism (in both nativist and empiricist versions), affirming a relational and even dialectical view of development" (Bidell, 1992, p. 307 as cited in Daniels, 2005, p. 16). It considers all things as relational and interactive in a dynamic way. Daniels (2005) further added that,

> Like Hegel and Marx, in forming an idea of the given subject (e.g. thought & language, Logic, capitalism), Vygotsky begins not from a metaphysical definition, but from an internally contradictory "cell" (e.g. word-meaning, Notion, commodity) and elucidates the dynamics of the object through its own genesis and its interactions with the environment. (p. 17)

Unlike many other paradigms and approaches which consider social process and individual functioning as static concepts of social determination, Vygotsky's cultural–historical paradigm considers their relations as mutually constructed (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996) and focuses on capturing the dynamic interactions between them. Central to this study of Hong Kong Australian children's

development were the ways children and families interact with each other and their community and other institutional contexts, and the mutually responsive aspects of many of these interactions.

3.2.1.2 Genetic (process rather than object)

One of the primary features of the cultural–historical paradigm is genetic analysis, which investigates the origins and history of phenomena, focusing on their interrelatedness (Daniels, 2008; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978, 1987, 1997a, 1997b). Under this paradigm, processes rather than objects are analysed. Consistent with Marxism's view on history as a record of scientific sociology, Vygotsky concurs that for a scientific psychology, human individuals should be understood in terms of the relevant historically developing process (Vygotsky, 1997a). He explains that psychological analysis should always look at the process, from which a dynamic display of the main points making up the processes can be reconstructed, and thus development can be traced from its source (Vygotsky, 1978). He emphasises that

> To study something historically means to study it in the process of change; that is the dialectical method's basic demand. To encompass in research the process of a given thing's development in all its phases and changes – from birth to death – fundamentally means to discover its nature, its essence, for 'it is only in movement that a body shows what it is.' Thus, the historical study of behavior is not an auxiliary aspect of theoretical study, but rather forms its very base. (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 64-65 and 1997b, p. 43)

3.2.1.3 Anti-reductionistic (unit rather than element)

The cultural–historical paradigm focuses on preserving the whole. It holds that analysis into elements can only provide us with fragmented information and this loses the meaning of the whole. It advocates analysis founded on the notion of the unit as it can retain the basic characteristics of the whole (Vygotsky, 1987). In the cultural–historical paradigm a unit is likened to the living cell, the finest division that can still retain all the basic properties of the whole (Daniels, 2008). It is vital and irreducible. With reference to Marx's method regarding capital, Vygotsky (1978, p. 8) elucidates the importance of analysis into units: "Marx analyses a single living 'cell' of capitalist society – for example, the nature of value. Within this cell he discovers the structure of the entire system and all its economic institutions". He added that "Anyone who could discover what a 'psychological' cell is – the mechanism producing even a single response – would thereby find the key to psychology as a whole" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.8). Under a cultural–historical paradigm in research, a unit could be the child's everyday activity over time, as this incorporates a system of mutually shaping/interacting elements, which are identified in the process of analysis along with the changes these undergo. In the current study, the unit of analysis for the study of the children comprised the everyday activities in which they were engaged.

3.2.1.4 Explanatory

Minick (1987) mentions that there were three major phases in the development of Vygotsky's thought; the most obvious change in his conceptual framework during the third phase was with his explanatory principles.

> Vygotsky attempted to explain psychological development in terms of the differentiation and development of social systems of interaction and action in which the individual participates. … He began to develop a system of psychological constructs that would facilitate the analysis of psychological processes in connection with the individual's concrete actions and interactions. (Minick, 1987, p. 18)

John-Steiner and Mahn (1996, p. 192) have stressed that "the power of Vygotsky's ideas [the cultural–historical paradigm] lies in his explanation of the dynamic interdependence of social and individual process". The importance of explanation rather than nominal description is emphasised in this paradigm, so as to reveal the important causal dynamic relations that underlie the phenomena. Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes that with a developmental study of a problem, a phenomenon should be explained on the basis of its origin and its causal dynamic relation, rather than its outer appearance. This emphasis requires cultural–historical researchers to pay attention to the explanation rather than simply giving a description of the relations and processes of human development. Such a focus is adopted in this study, particularly in respect of the dynamic relations between and among contexts such as school and family, individuals such as parents and children, and values and cultures over time.

3.2.1.5 Dialectic and materialistic

As the founder of the cultural–historical paradigm, Vygotsky is distinguished from many other psychologists, theorists and methodologists who have posited a dualistic perspective. He embraced a dialectical world view in both his theories and methodology (Blunden, 1997; Daniels, 2008; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).

Unlike Hegel, who was an idealist, Vygotsky and Marx were materialists. Drawing from Hegel's notion of dialectic logic (albeit idealistic) and attending to Engel's ideas, Vygotsky adopted dialectical reasoning to analyse, describe and explain interrelationships fundamental to human development consistently and materialistically (Blunden, 1997; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Vygotsky, 1997a). He saw any two opposite thoughts as being united with each other in the continuous whole and this whole was expected to transcend the prevailing theoretical understandings (Daniels, 2008). He suggested that investigating human development as materialistically constructed leads to an understanding of development as a process that is "characterized by a unity of material and mental aspects, a unity of the social and the personal" (Vygotsky, 1998, p. 190).

The main distinction between the cultural–historical paradigm and traditional child study paradigms is that dialectics look at phenomena as the unification and qualitative transformation of contradictions into new coherent wholes. In contrast, for traditional paradigms the conceptual unity among objects depends on the commonality of elements (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996) and the diverse ideas are forced into strict classifications/categories (Daniels, 2008). Vygotsky has applied the dialectic and materialistic concept and approach in his theorizing of learning and development. He adopts the dialectical view to unlock the contradictory relations between (and within) individual and social processes in which the individual constructs the social and at the same time is constructed by the social. This dialectic and materialistic vision has been adopted in this study and, through this, insightful explanation and deeper meaning are able to develop.

The cultural–historical paradigm emphasises examining: the dynamic and interactive nature; relevant historically developing processes; the wholeness (the unit rather than the element); explanation on the basis of origin, and the dialectic and materialistic nature in development. These emphases are paramount as they can provide the way to acquire and understand knowledge about our everyday life more realistically, as things in our real world are dynamic, relative and interactive rather than static and isolated.

The main research question of this study is "How do Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices?" To obtain a holistic view of complex influences, I needed to interpretively understand the meanings, perceptions and experiences of both Hong Kong immigrant parents and children from their perspectives, as well as the dynamic interactions and relations of the children with their environments. As discussed above, a paradigm is associated with a specific theory. This study is framed under the cultural–historical theory which informs the cultural–historical paradigm, a unique approach to understanding child development (Vygotsky, 1997a, 1997b, 1998).

The paradigm adopted shapes the methodology employed in the study, in which a specific theory is often connected to particular methods and methodologies (Nozaki & Inokuchi, 2007, Vygotsky, 1997a, 1997b). John-Steiner and Mahn (1996, p. 194) point out that

> Vygotsky approached methodological issues on two interrelated levels: the theoretical and psychological. On the theoretical level he examined complex systems in the process of change, using dialectical logic to understand the interrelationships between components of the systems. On the

psychological level he chose research methods to capture the dynamics of process consistent with his theoretical approach.

Vygotsky's theoretical-methodological approach provides a useful foundation for a holistic approach to examine the dynamic, interactive and dialectical relations in children's development. In Vygotsky's time, he used the experimental-genetic method to conduct research on child development: "according to this method a researcher should create genetic process of development in specially created artificial laboratory conditions" (Obukhova, 2012, p. 55). This method aims to create a system of conditions, capture the process of change and examine the development. However, due to Vygotsky's untimely death, his approach was still abstract and condensed, and some aspects were not sufficiently developed to be applicable to study child development in a concrete way (Blunden, 2008; Karpov, 2005). The experimental-genetic method has been elaborated in detail by his colleagues and followers such as P. Ya. Galperin and till now by researchers in Russia and Europe. Chapter 9 presents a brief review of the holistic approach by contemporary scholars that have been inspired by, and have expanded and elaborated on Vygotsky's cultural–historical paradigm to understand child development. The dialectical-interactive methodology that this study adopted is discussed in detail in the next section.

3.3 Dialectical-Interactive Methodology

Mariane Hedegaard (2008a, 2008b, 2009) has elaborated on and expanded Vygotsky's theoretical-methodological approach and developed a theoretical model and a dialectical-interactive methodology to study children's learning and development through participation in institutional practice. Her model (as shown

in Figure 3.1 below) and methodology have provided us with a concrete and effective tool to research how children develop in their communities holistically and systematically.

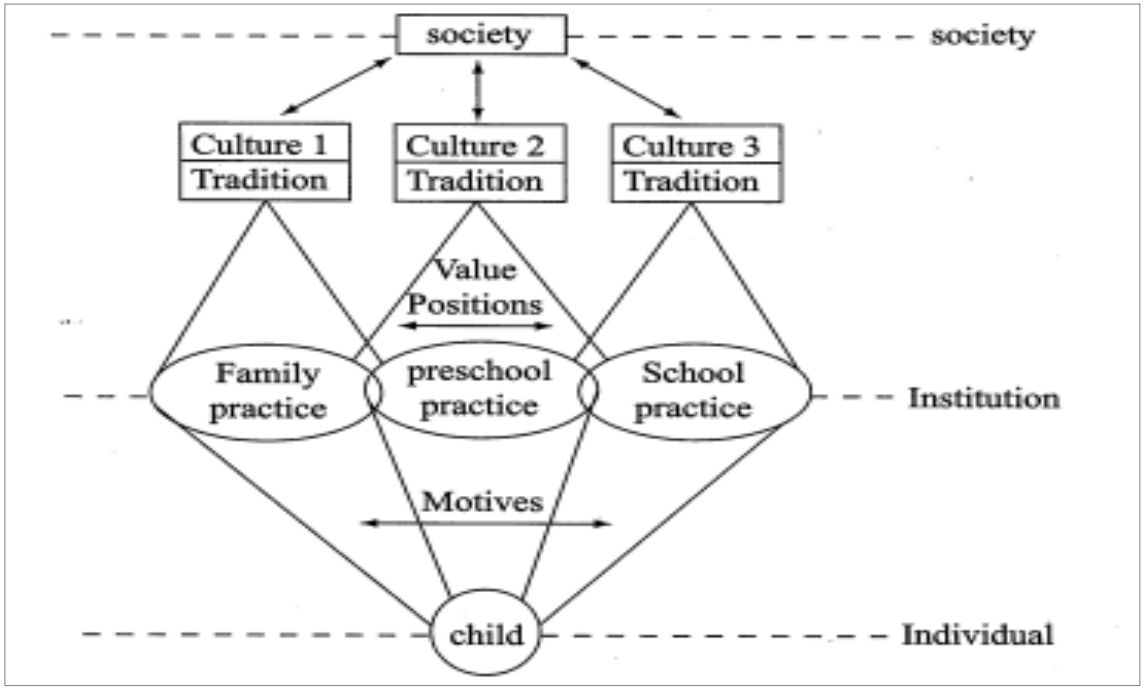


Figure 3.1 Hedegaard's (2008a, p.10) model of children's learning and development through participation in institutional practice

Hedegaard's model is anchored in concrete historical settings and everyday activities in which children participate in different institutions. This allows the researcher to focus on and understand the process of child development and the social situations of the child. The model "focuses on societal conditions, institutional practices and motives and intentions of children in everyday activities" (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008, p. 7). Societal, institutional and individual perspectives are incorporated in the model for interpretation. Her model also requires that the researcher's own role and perspectives be explicitly discussed, and foregrounds the perspectives of the child. Hedegaard and Fleer (2008) argue that "it is important to include the child's perspective in a research methodology as

this will enable researchers to investigate how children contribute to their own developmental conditions" (p. 5). Following the essence of the cultural–historical paradigm, an important aspect of the model is the noticing of the changing relationships between the child and his/her social reality, and the examination of the dialectical relations among the perspectives. This dialectical view is underpinned by the methodology. Different institutional value positions and practices conditioned by society, culture and history, and children's motives and competences are seen as connected. Thus, "conflicts [that] occur in a child's social situation can be seen as a way forward"- the synthesis of the contradictions (Hedegaard, 2008, p.25).

The features of dialectical-interactive methodology pertinent to this study as represented by Hedegaard and Fleer (2008) are:

- Capturing and analysing the social interactions and the different perspectives and the relations between all these perspectives, especially those of the child, so that mutual influences can be identified
- Analysis into units to investigate children's development through activities and participation in institutional practices to form a "wholeness" approach
- Making explicit the role of researcher (both as a researcher and a participant) in the researched activities to both readers and participants
- Visualisation, tracing and analysis of changes, such as societal and institutional change in relation to the child's perspective
- Application of a dialectical view, and a focus on conflicts in children's everyday lives

- Communicating to the participants the research goals and the role of the researcher as a means of strengthening reliability
- Capturing and analysing the perspectives of participants in ways that will produce a rich range of data, which can help attain validity; these include digital videoing and analysis

Bearing in mind the essences and main features of the cultural–historical paradigm and dialectical–interactive methodology, I now turn to the design of the research, including rationales and descriptions of ways of organising the study, and subsequently of gathering and analysing data.

3.4 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative case study research approach which is guided by the cultural–historical paradigm and is informed by the cultural–historical theory and dialectical-interactive methodology. This theoretical-methodological approach provided a comprehensive and systematic guide to unpack the research question. At the beginning of the research, the study sought to examine the dialectical relations between parental education values and children's development. The main research question and the aims of the study have been refined during the research progress. With reference to this initial research question, alongside the theoretical frameworks of Vygotsky (1997a, 1997b, 1998) and Hedegaard (2008a, 2009) and the dialectical-interactive methodology of Hedegaard and Fleer (2008), an initial model (see Chapter 9) and a set of preliminary categories for investigation were identified. These categories included: the conditions (culture and tradition are embedded in these) afforded by the society; parental education values; the practices, demands and goals of the institutions that the child is engaged in (e.g.

family, school, enhancement centres and church); the child's motives and competences; the interactions and conflicts involved, and the possible development. The initial model and identified categories helped design the research protocols for data generation, devise interview questions for the participants, and guide the attention of the researcher and research assistants during observations and initial data analysis.

3.4.1 Qualitative case study research approach

In fitting with the essence of cultural–historical theoretical-methodological orientation a qualitative case study approach was adopted for this study. Johnson and Christensen (2004) describe qualitative research as acting like a "wide-angle and deep-angle" lens, which allows us to examine the breadth and depth of phenomena. It tends toward providing rich, deep, detailed descriptions (Fairbrother, 2007). It enables researchers "to link participants' meanings and actions in a time and place of interest in ways that may offer insightful explanations of complex events" (Macdonald et al., 2002, p. 138). It is used to generate new hypotheses or theories and search for patterns, themes, and holistic features. Hedegaard and Fleer (2008, p.6) added that the qualitative approach "also gives researchers a new way of researching children's motives, projects, intentional actions, and interpretation".

This study adopted a case study approach which is highly suited to investigating children and adults qualitatively in the settings of their everyday lives. According to Creswell (2007), case study research involves the study of a concern/problem investigated through one or more cases within a context. In the case of this study, children's learning and development within everyday family practices were

investigated through three Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia. Yin (2009, p. 18) contends that "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context" and thus encompasses the conditions affecting the phenomenon under study.

The case study approach allowed me to understand the complex social phenomena of the Hong Kong–Australian community and retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events of the participant families (Yin, 2009). Case study research collects detailed data from various sources to explore a case or multiple cases over time. It reports in-depth case description and identification of case-based themes. An inquiry into the ways Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop in everyday practices is well served by case study, given the need to trace activities, interactions and relationships (and patterns of these) in their contexts over time.

3.4.2 An iterative process characterised by reflexivity and recursiveness

Research is an iterative process, particularly with the multiple case study design using the logic of replication (Yin, 2009), in that it seeks to arrive at a decision and desired result by repeating rounds of analysis or a cycle of operations. In qualitative research, and in this study, data were collected through similar cycles of operation. The first family was studied in depth and initial analysis identified optimal methods of data collection and points of focus to be replicated in the work with the other two families. In this respect, Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) contend that data collection and analysis were "not as a repetitive mechanical task", but a reflexive process, which "is key to sparking insight and developing meaning", where the iterative and recursive processes of gathering relevant data

and analysis involve “continuous meaning-making and progressive focusing” (p. 76).

Case studies require various forms of data collection and analysis to ensure that the goal of rich, contextualised understandings can be achieved. What helps yield rich data is the iterative nature of the processes of data generation and analysis. I used video observations and video- or audio-recorded interviews to record what was happening in my case families, not once, but many times over a period of 12 months. On this occasion the focus was always on the children and the activities and in this sense the process is iterative. This permitted me to capture changes in both development and practices and to identify the dialectical interactions.

Because a great deal of data were generated from the three participating families, the analysis of the data was necessarily also an iterative process involving repeated viewings and readings so as to carry out the three levels of analysis within and across the families (see Section 3.6.4). This process of recursive reading involved much reflection and decisions about what seemed to be prominent in the data.

3.4.3 Role of the researcher

The role of the researcher is important in any study. It is shaped by the paradigm and approach on which the research is based. In a positivist paradigm and a developmental research tradition, the role of the researcher has been to be objective, neutral and invisible to avoid the researcher contaminating the data (Fleer, in press a). In contrast, qualitative research is interpretative research, in which researcher is required to interpret complex human behaviours (Creswell,

1994). As such, it is important for the qualitative researcher be able to understand various participants' perspectives (perceptions and personal senses) and the social settings in the ways they construct the world around them, but to avoid over-imposing the researcher's own emphases in the process of data collection and interpretation. In this study, I have identified myself as a Hong Kong immigrant living and socialising with the Hong Kong community in Melbourne, Australia. This has equipped me with the knowledge to better understand my research participants and their contexts. Moreover, a brief account of my personal background, experiences, theoretical and methodological assumptions and biases was made known to participants and in this thesis. At all times, I established and maintained good rapport and trustful relationships with the participants (Grieshaber, 2004).

Hedegaard (2008d) argues that in cultural–historical research with a dialectical interactive approach, the researcher has to position himself/herself as a researcher who is different from the persons being researched, and at the same time participate in the activities as a partner with the researched persons. She adds that researchers' interactions can take several forms such as that of an observer or an active participant, but the most important principle is that researchers have to find a balance in their researcher and partner roles in interaction. As a cultural–historical researcher, I needed to make clear these two roles to all the participants in the study and remind myself to monitor these consciously throughout the research. On the one hand, I needed to act as a professional researcher – to professionally collect, record and analyse data of the family practices and everyday life of the participant children and identify how this influences their learning and development. One of these tasks was to brief and

debrief the two research assistants, who assisted in taking videos during observations, regarding the focus of research activities and the aims in making the videos. On the other hand, I also needed to build a trusting relationship with the child and adult participants in the settings.

In this study, the participant children were curious about my role and very interested in the equipment that I brought. They were puzzled why every time they saw me (and the research assistants) they would be followed by my camera. Some of them (one participant child in particular) would like to play with me while I visited their home. Moreover, many of them would like to have a play on my equipment. For example, they wanted to look at and operate my video camera, my notebook computer and the mouse. I acknowledged the child participant's interest in the activity and attended to him/her for a while and then let the child know that I was also a researcher and I needed to return to my work. For instance, once I played for a while with a participant child who invited me to play a "ball game" and then told him that I needed to continue videoing him regarding what he did at home. For the equipment that they were eager to look at and play with, I would show them how to operate the object and sometimes let them act as "the researcher", taking the video for a short while; I then told them that I needed to have the camera back to do my work. Similarly, with my notebook computer, I would let them help display the photos for interview with the mouse. In the case of the participant parents, they sometimes saw me as the expert or consultant to give advice or opinions to them on their children's learning and development. To maintain the "balance act" (balance between being a researcher and the friend/consultant of the parents: see Fleer, in press b; Hedegaard, 2008d), I would sometimes, when appropriate, tell a bit of what I had experienced related to their

questions, but in the cases that were related to the issues on which I needed to obtain their authentic opinions for the study, I would tell them that I needed to know what they thought on the issues and avoid imposing my own opinions on them.

3.4.4 Selection criteria

Since a qualitative case study approach was adopted, where small samples were chosen to conduct a deep and comprehensive study (Creswell, 2007), the study initially aimed to recruit from the same organisation two immigrant families from Hong Kong who had lived in Melbourne for more than six months. The parents of each family were raised and had had their schooling (primary and secondary education) in Hong Kong with at least one child studying at junior primary school. One family was to have a child or children studying in a private school, with extra tuition and homework, and attendance of enhancement classes. The other family was to send their child or children to a local government school, with no extra tuition, homework and enhancement classes. This plan was aimed at finding families whose parents were accustomed to the Hong Kong society, culture and traditions as well as having a degree of familiarity with the Australian society. The rationale for choosing families with different school choice and academically related arrangements was that they might have distinct values, expectations and practices for their children's education and this would permit an investigation of whether and how these influenced their children's development. In this respect, purposive selection of multiple cases was used. Creswell (2007) argues that this can show different perspectives on the concern under study.

3.4.5 Recruitment process

After careful consideration, I decided to recruit my participant families from the church within which I was a member and a volunteer teaching aid in its children's Sunday school. The reasons for this decision were: (1) It was one of the biggest Chinese churches in Melbourne, serving around 300 Chinese families, the majority of which were Hong Kong immigrant families. The chance of finding suitable participants was high; (2) The consideration of the extensive demands that the research could potentially place on participant families (such as taking videos at home, following them for a period of time). Thus it was important for prospective participants to trust and feel comfortable with the researcher. Being an insider helped establish this; (3) This qualitative study was framed under the cultural–historical paradigm and used dialectical-interactive methodology to investigate the process of development of children within their contexts. It is taken for granted in this framing that there will be a wide range of conditions affecting development and these vary across families. I sought to understand the *process* by which conditions interacted with development rather than to generalise about the effects of particular conditions. Thus, recruiting families from a church community would not skew findings since the religious element was only one among myriad conditions for each of these families, and was acknowledged as such.

The pastor in charge of families with young children in the church helped to identify potential families and gave them written information about my research project. Recruitment advertisements, explanatory statements and consent forms for this study were given to the potential families via the pastor. In the explanatory statement, families were informed about what the study sought to achieve and what their involvement would entail. Potential families interested in the research

were invited to contact the researcher directly via the contact details stated in the advertisement and explanatory statement.

It was discovered during the recruitment process that all potential participant families sent their children to some kind of enhancement classes. Three from a total of 24 potential families (families in the church with a child studying in Grades 1 to 3) who fitted the recruitment criteria agreed to participate. One family with a daughter and a son studying in a local government school and one family with a son studying at an independent religious school were chosen. Neither family used extra tuition at the time they were recruited, but the children from both families attended after school enhancement classes. Even though I had chosen the two families with the most diverse characteristics among the three volunteer families, apart from the difference in the types of school that their children attended, other family practices seemed to be quite similar. To broaden the distinction, I decided to recruit an additional family. The third family would have children studying in an academically oriented and expensive private school. The children would also be receiving extra tuition. The pastor continued helping me to find the third family but was not successful. When I discovered that it was very little chance that I could find this family from the church, I started to recruit this family from other sources.

The third family was eventually recruited through a popular weekend Chinese language school run by another Chinese church. The principal of this weekend Chinese language school, in which Cantonese (the official and everyday language of Hong Kong) was used as the teaching medium and there was a high proportion of students attending private schools during the week, was contacted to obtain permission for recruitment. The teachers who taught Grades 1 to 3 in the weekend

Chinese language school helped to identify students who met the recruitment criteria in their classes. One of the teachers directly informed the potential parents about the research and followed up to see if they were interested in participating, while the other teachers referred the potential parents to talk directly to the researcher. One family of the five potential families whose parents (either the mothers or the fathers) had communicated with the researcher about the detail of the research project agreed to participate.

3.4.6 Participants

Altogether three Hong Kong immigrant families whose parents were brought up and had their schooling in Hong Kong were recruited to participate in the study. The details of the participant families are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Participants of the study

	The Chan Family	**The Lee Family**	**The Cheung Family**
Parents (At late 30s to early 40s)	Father (F) – Ivan Mother (M) – Flora	Father (F) – Tony Mother (M) – Terri	Father (F) – Andrew Mother (M) – Linda
Education	All parents had tertiary qualifications, 5 of them studied these in Australia and 1 studied in Hong Kong		
Immigrated to Australia	11 years ago	2 years ago	Over 15 years ago
Religion	Christian	Christian	Nil
Live	A suburb with growing population from Hong Kong–Australian families	A suburb densely populated with families from China and Hong Kong	A suburb densely populated with Hong Kong–Australian families
Work (days/week)	F: Full time, 5 days M: Full time, 4 days	F: Casual, 3-5 days M: Casual, on leave	F: Full time, 4-5 days M: Home duties
Children (When data start)	Vincent, 9, Year 4 Jessica, 6, Year 1	Steven, 7, Year 2 Simon, newborn	Jenny, 11, Year 6 Betty, 7, Year 2 Micky, 5, Pre-school
Born	Both in Australia	Steven in Hong Kong Simon in Australia	All children in Australia
School	Both in the same local government	Steven in an independent co-	Jenny & Betty in the same private girls

	co-educational school, 5- minute drive or 15- minute walk	educational Christian school, 20-minute drive	school, 30- minute drive; Micky in a private boys school, 5-minute from his sisters' school
Grandparents and extended family	-Paternal parents together with the niece lived nearby -Maternal parents came over at least every 3 to 4 years (alternating with the Chan family going to Hong Kong)	-Maternal and paternal parents alternately came over for 3 months per visit to help out when Simon was born -Maternal sister and her family lived in Melbourne	-Paternal parents lived in Melbourne -Maternal parents came over every year during Chinese new year -maternal sister and her family live in Melbourne
Connection with Hong Kong	The Chan family went to Hong Kong to visit relatives, friends and the maternal parents at least every 3 to 4 years	Both maternal and paternal parents and extended family members in Hong Kong came over to visit the Lee family	The Cheung family went to Hong Kong almost every year to visit extended family members, relatives, friends and maternal parents

(Pseudonyms were used to assure anonymity)

3.5 Data Collection

In research, data are generally considered to be 'collected' by the researcher. Another term for this is often seen as more appropriate in the cultural–historical paradigm, 'data generation'. Given that rich data are needed, the researcher with the collaboration of the participants needs to generate the data in response to the research questions and the theoretical and methodological orientation. In my description and discussion of such data generation, I have used the term 'collection' with this sense of 'generation', since the methodological texts I draw on predominantly use the former term.

The data collection of this study, as typically in case study research, is extensive and drawing on multiple sources of information (Creswell, 2007). Data were gathered with the Chan family started from July, 2009, then when the Lee family

was ready for data collection in early October, and with the Cheung family from mid October, when the family was recruited. As discussed in Section 3.4.4 about the iterative process, gathering data with the Chan family ahead of the other two families for a period of time (and with a short time gap between the Lee family and the Cheung family) allowed the identification of optimal ways to gather data and points of focus through the experiences accumulated, thus supporting the efficiency of the research.

Children's everyday activities are central to this study. I communicated with the mothers to know the family routines and the everyday activities that the children were participating in. Then, I discussed with the families and the related persons (e.g. teachers, principals and person-in-charge) in the institutions with which the participant children engaged though phone calls, emails and/or personal visits to arrange (if possible) field visits and video observations of the children doing activities there. A description of the activities that the participant children participated in during data collection period is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Description of the activities in which the participant children participated during the data collection period

Activity	Description
At home	- basically all the participant children have to do a lot of practice and homework when they are at home, which occupied most of their time. Other activities that children may do at home when they have spare time include: - Family 1: playing computer games, Wii, watching TV, when they have earned "free time", playing scooter, table tennis and toys, reading books and Bible story - Family 2 (elder son): reading books and Bible, playing with toys on his own, playing with his baby brother, sometimes playing football with father in the backyard, watching TV usually the news with father - Family 3: playing in park playground near home, playing toys together with siblings, riding toy car at home and watching TV
At Chinese school: Mandarin, Cantonese	- around 3 hours per lesson on Saturday with two 10-15 minutes breaks in between - learning Chinese language which covers listening, speaking, writing and reading - each grade has structured curriculum - teaching according to text book, workbook and additional exercises - tests and/or examinations, dictations - homework for students to do over the week
Swimming	- half an hour per lesson taught by qualified teachers

	- structured learning programs according to levels - test at the end of each course - if the test is passed the child is promoted to the next level and awarded with a certificate of achievement
Musical: Piano, Violin, Guitar	- half an hour per lesson, one to one teaching - lesson started with student replaying the songs and or techniques that he/she learned in the previous lesson and the teacher assesses and corrects - continues with teaching techniques and songs according to the student's progress - teacher writes down notes on what has been taught and homework for student practice at home during the week - children of Family 3 take the Australian Music Examination Board's grade examination on theory and piano practice and perform in an annual concert organised by the teacher - the violin lesson follows the Suzuki method and mother attends lessons together with her child, additional group lessons once every 2-3 weeks
Other sports: Football, Table tennis, Gymnasium, Roller skating	- 1, 1.5, 2.5 hours per lesson for football and roller skating, gymnasium and table tennis respectively including warm up, games, break - learning different techniques and skills of the sport activities (e.g., for football these include how to stop, hold, pass, kick the ball and shoot goals) - the coaches train the students by telling and showing how to do and then letting the students practise
Church Sunday school	- 45 minutes worship and 45 minutes lesson - Grade 1-6 students worship together in a main room - separate into small classes according to their grades - each student recites previous week's Bible verse to teacher - teacher conducts lesson according to lesson plan
Church Kids Choir	- 45 minutes training and practice on hymns, every first and third Sunday of the month - perform in the adult worship on every fifth Sunday of the month
Private tuition: Mandarin, English	- one hour per lesson, one to one teaching - for Mandarin focuses on listening, speaking, writing and reading - for English, teacher goes through exercise with student, explains the content of the texts and does examples with the student together during the lesson, which covers composition, grammar, comprehension and punctuation - teacher gives homework to student to do over the week
Chess	- after school program at school, 1 hour per session - structured coaching covering major aspects of chess - practice and competitions among peers
Drama	- 1 hour per session - teaching students different aspects of drama, such as scripts, body movement, how to act and singing - games during break - each student is given a role to act for the annual performance
Kumon: Maths	- 2 sessions per week - attends the centre straight after school - when students arrive at the centre, they hand in their completed homework to the staff - the staff give each student a test paper according to their levels to do at the centre - students have to finish the test paper, hand it in to the staff and receive a set of homework to complete at home
Tuition for scholarship	- 3.5 hours per session - teaching school English, Maths and Science but 1 grade in advance - aim at training students to enter and obtain scholarships for top tier government and private schools - homework to do over the week
Boy Brigade	- 1.5 hours per session - assembly, matching, checking uniform - Bible studies, sports and craftwork - learning obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect, and developing true Christian manliness

Data were collected initially by various means for a period of seven months and useful data were obtained for understanding how the children learn and develop in the community. Because of the theoretical orientation, I was driven to obtain historical information about the children's activities in order to trace and reconstruct a fuller picture of the process through which the children learn and develop. Therefore, four months after the completion of the data collection that was planned initially, one to two additional interviews were conducted with the mothers about the activities that each child had participated in, the parent-child interactions, important issues that had happened in family (if any) and the child's responses to these since birth till the time that I started my data collection. The data collection schedule is shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Data collection schedule

2009						2010					
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Chan family											
			Lee family								
				Cheung family							

3.5.1 Methods

Data collection for each family began with an orientation meeting. Video observation and interview were the major methods used for collecting the data in this study. Photos and video clips provided by participants, field notes, and documentary and internet information were also used to gather relevant data. The details of the data collection methods are discussed in this section.

3.5.1.1 Orientation meeting

The purposes of an orientation meeting were for the researcher and the participants to build rapport and establish trust with each other as well as for the participant parents to become familiar with the research project. During this meeting, I introduced myself, through natural conversation, a brief of my background to the family (e.g., how long had I been to Australia, what my work had been in Hong Kong, why I chose to do my PhD and the research topic), explained the aim of my study and went through the explanatory statement and the consent form with the families (mainly parents as the children were present at the beginning of meeting but then they left or came and went in between) though I had already received their consent (either verbal and/or written) for the participation in the research project. I also informed the parents, via a PowerPoint presentation using my netbook computer or the printed copy of the slides, about the theoretical framework and methods of the study, the role of researcher and how they could be involved. I explained to them that the methodology used in this study is interactive, dynamic and that I hoped to capture the everyday life activities of the children and the family, so they could just act like themselves and follow their ways of life and normal routines during my data collection with them. In addition, I also mentioned to the participants that they were always welcome and should feel free to raise their questions and express their concerns. I found doing all this at the beginning of data collection helped gain great support and co-operation from the participants, smoothed the process and helped me gather plenty of valuable data. According to Hedegaard (2008b), in the dialectical-interactive methodology, these acts are also important for attaining validity and reliability in the study.

3.5.1.2 Photos and video clips provided by participants

Each family was given a still camera with video taking function at the end of the orientation meeting or during the subsequent family visit. The children were asked to use the camera to take photos of activities that they liked and disliked, and the parents were asked to take photos or video clips of moments that they believed were important for their children's learning and development. During my subsequent visits, the Chan and the Lee families usually passed the memory cards to me for uploading into my netbook computer the photos and videos that they had taken. They could then continue to use the cameras for further shooting or they returned the cameras and borrowed them again when they found something relevant and wanted to contribute more data. The Cheung children had used the camera that I gave to the family to take a few photos on the day they received it, then the mother had kept the camera and by the time they returned the camera to me no further photos or videos were taken. However, in the middle and late stages of my data collection with the family, the parents provided me some photos and video clips that they had taken using their own camera. These photos and video clips offered useful data. They were used to interview the participants and they helped capture the child's and parent's own perspectives and enrich the data gathered from video observations. This provided complementary data, thus helping to enhance validity in the study (Hedegaard, 2008b).

3.5.1.3 Video observation

This study sought to examine – in depth and in detail – the contexts, social situations, processes, and interactions that shaped the Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development. Videoed records of everyday actions and

interactions were thus thought to be useful for capturing the complex social situations, encoded as they may be in body language, gestures and environmental settings, that are the focus of cultural–historical, dialectical-interactive methodology. Fleer (2008b) argues that

> Video observations are particularly useful to cultural–historical researchers, who seek to examine the dialectical relations between participants, the social setting and the institutional practices, and who need to revisit their material many times in order to make interpretations from a range of perspectives in order to understand the child's social situation for development. (p. 110)

Video recording of observation, particularly in digital formats, thus represents a powerful contemporary technology to effectively study children and families.

In the present study, generally a researcher and a research assistant, each focusing on different participants or views, filmed the daily activities of the children, capturing a holistic view of their everyday life. Transiting between home and school, after school, dining, weekend school and after-school enhancement activities were observed and videoed. The focus of the observations was to capture the naturalistic everyday life and the interactions of the child with his/her family and community members.

This study is concerned with the cultural element in family practices. Video observations can capture the complexity of the dynamics that surround the material conditions and social expectations that make up the cultural nature of a child's development. Fleer (in press b, p. 25) argues that "digital visual tools when

conceptualized from a cultural–historical perspective and applied to the study of child development, will allow researchers to document and analyse a child's intentions and engagement across a variety of activity settings". Different practice traditions create conflicts and demands that create different conditions for children's development which can be captured in motion using digital video observations (Fleer, 2008a,b,c), as they were in this study.

Fleer (2008c) also describes how segments of video data can be reintroduced to participants at a later date to solicit further explanations of the situation from the participants' perspective while they view the video, to generate further discussion and clarify participants' perspectives on their meaning. This accords with recommendations about the value of video observation made by Ratcliff (2003) and Pink (2007). In this study, such new conversations based on the videoed material often led to new insights. Some of these conversations occurred in more formal interview contexts and in viewings of videoed material, while other opportunities for reflection took the form of a 'chat' with the participants initiated by the researcher during observation to allow them to elaborate more on their perspectives.

As this study follows a cultural–historical, dialectical-interactive methodology, the preliminary categories for observational focus included the conditions afforded by the society, parental education values, the practices, demands and goals of the institutions that the child is engaged in (e.g. family, school, enhancement centres and church), the child's motives and competences, the interactions and conflicts involved and the possible development. This means that processes that are relatively invisible need to be identified and understood. Video observation helps

solve the methodological problem of identifying cognitive and affective aspects of changes that are not made explicit in language but might be apparent in body language and behaviour. Videoing helped me to capture the motives, perspectives, perceptions, personal senses and conflicts present in everyday interactions and activities. It allowed me to pay attention to both the verbal and non-verbal meaning, so that I could identify motives, attitudes and changes in the participating children over time.

3.5.1.4 Interviews

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), interviewing complements observation in that it accesses data on what participants think and feel about aspects of their everyday lives. It is purposeful interaction that seeks "people's formulation of their experience and conceptualisations that is being considered" (Hedegaard, 2008 c, p. 49).

Interviews are not simply question-answer interchanges, but involve dialogue, reflection and interpretations by both the researcher and the researched participants (Hviid, 2008). Arskey and Knight (1999) see interviewing as a powerful means by which participants can “articulate their tacit perceptions, feelings and understandings” (p.32).

In this study interviews were conducted with children and parents in two styles, interviews using a stimulated recall approach (Lyle, 2003) and in-depth interviews (Patton, 2002). With the stimulated recall interview, children, parents or the whole family were shown the photos and video clips that they had provided, and video clips that the researcher chose from the video observations; the researcher then

asked them questions or to express issues regarding the videos and photos shown. Playing the visual recordings of the participant activities in different social situations and discussing various aspects of the recorded interactions helped to gain a better understanding of participants' own perspectives.

Parents and children were also interviewed in in-depth style regarding the parents' values, expectations and demands on their children, their own education, learning and development, and the activities that the child liked and disliked. The use of in-depth interviews aimed to build a deep and holistic picture of these from listening to and understanding what the participants thought and felt about their social situations. A sample of the interview schedule for parents is shown in Appendix B and a sample of the interview schedule for the children is shown in Appendix C. The interviews in the study overall ranged from informal conversations (e.g., with children about what they were doing) to in-depth interviews (with parents about their past experiences and present practices). The final interviews for obtaining the historical data regarding the participant children's growing up and family experiences were also conducted using in-depth style with the mothers of each family. The interview schedule was attached in Appendix D. The interview schedules attached in Appendix B to D are indicative of the type of possible questions I wanted to ask the participants. Depending upon conditions and responses of the participants, adjustments were applied.

3.5.1.5 Chat at critical incidents

Chats differ from interviews in that they are informal, unplanned interchanges that occur in response to the need for more information. In my initial plan, the focus of video observations was to capture the naturalistic everyday life of the children, so

in the process the researcher should avoid interrupting the participants. However, when I was in the field to do the video observation, I found it helpful and necessary to initiate a 'chat' with participants when critical incidents occurred to allow them to further elaborate on their perspectives on the issues related to the activities they were doing. These 'chats' were able to gain deeper meanings about the activities and practices the participants were engaged in, and could be used to inform the content in later interviews. I found this an effective way to gather useful data and I termed this method *chat at critical incidents*.

3.5.1.6 Field notes

Field notes are often referred to as the observational record where "detailed, non-judgemental, concrete descriptions of what has been observed" are jotted down (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 98). With the help of video recording of what is observed (video observation), field notes can be kept as simple as possible. In this study field notes were used to supplement information that was not video recorded. For example, in the beginning of the second visit to the Chan family, on the way I (and the research assistant) walked with the Chan parents from their home to pick up their children from school, and the mother had talked to me about the practices of their children's school and how they were different from those of the schools in Hong Kong. This information was very useful but had not been recorded as video observation had not yet started. I marked down the key points on my paper notebook on the spot (brief jottings) and noted the details (full in-depth descriptions) with my insights and initial interpretation about the noted matter after the field visit (Bryman, 2004). Field notes are seen as very useful because they provide important data that other methods such as video observations and interviews might have missed (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

3.5.1.7 Documents

Collecting documents was not initially planned. I decided to gather them as data when the families showed them to me during family visits. I found them relevant to the research questions; moreover they offered useful insights into the practices of the families and institutions that the children engaged in, the social situations and history of the children's life. Documents that related to the participant children's learning and education, such as certificates, awards, drawings, extra homework given by parents, student reports and handbooks from current and previous schools and enhancement activities were collected. I photocopied or photographed the documents as data. Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggested that "knowledge of the history and context surrounding a specific setting comes, in part, from reviewing documents" (p. 107). Video observation and interviews were thus aptly supplemented with gathering and analysing documents "produced in the course of everyday events" and "rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, p. 107).

3.5.1.8 Information from the internet

With the advance of technology, searching the internet for resources has changed the methodologies of social science research. Both individuals and institutions use the internet to share information with the public or internal group. Such sources were useful for my research, providing me a convenient way to collect relevant data. The school profiles, priorities, policies, operations, motto, practices and updated newsletters of the children's schools were available from their individual school websites and from the Australian government's 'My School' website. This information has given me the knowledge and understanding of the schools' values,

practices, perspectives and demands placed on the children and their families. Moreover, one of the families had written various blogs on the internet over a number of years, and these served well as useful sources of historical and contemporary data about family events and images and descriptions of the children throughout their infancy and childhood.

By using the combination of the above discussed data collection methods, the quality of this research study was improved with the complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of different research methods, thus offering holistic and detailed data and helping me to improve the reliability and validity in the study (Hedegaard, 2008b; Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

3.5.2 Data outcomes

Overall, 56 field visits were made: 22, 19 and 15 visits for the Chan, Lee and Cheung families respectively, each visit lasting between 30 minutes and 5.5 hours (details of the duration of each visit see Tables 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7). In total, 80 hours of video footage and 18 hours of audio recording were captured. In addition, over 150 photos, 90 short video clips and various documents related to the children's education were provided as data by the participants. A summary of the data gathered for the Chan, Lee and Cheung families is shown in Tables 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10.

Table 3.5 The duration of each visit of the Chan family

Visit	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Hour	1	5.25	3	1.5	1.5	4.5	1.75	0.75	3.25	0.75
Visit	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**
Hour	0.75	1.5	0.5	3.5	0.75	1	1.5	2	0.5	3
Visit	**21**	**22**								
Hour	3.5	2.5								

Table 3.6 The duration of each visit of the Lee family

Visit	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Hour	1.5	2	4.5	2	1.75	0.5	1	1	1	1
Visit	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	
Hour	0.45	1	3	1	1	3	3.5	2	2.5	

Table 3.7 The duration of each visit of the Cheung family

Visit	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
Hour	2	3	1	2	2	2	1.75	1.5	1	1.5
Visit	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**					
Hour	0.5	1.5	3.5	2	5.5					

Table 3.8 Data outcomes from the Chan family

No. of visits	Setting	Hours of video footage	Hours of audio record	No. of interviews embedded	No. of photos taken by researcher	No. of video clips from family	No. of Photos from family
8	**Home** (e.g. morning, lunch, after school, dinner, weekends, friend visits, dinner with grandparents, interviews with children, parents, family and grandfather)	19.75	5.5	7	40	30	53
8	**Church** (e.g. orientation meeting, children's choir, Sunday school and performances, family lunch, show presentation to the Chan family and talk with mother)	4.75	1.5				
1	**School** (e.g. playing at school playground, son's and daughter's school lessons)	1.25					
3	**Enhancement centres** (e.g. guitar, piano, gym, and swimming lessons and boy brigade)	2.5				10	20
	Transition between home and school or enhancement centres and home	1.5					
1	**Grandparents' house** (e.g. interactions, dinner, interview of grandmother)	3.5		1		5	2
1	**Others** (e.g. family trips, daughter's birthday party at MacDonald's)	1.75				10	20
22		**35**	**7**	**8**	**40**	**55**	**95**

Table 3.9 Data outcomes from Lee family

No. of visit	Setting	Hours of video footage	Hours of audio record	No. of interviews embedded	No. of photos taken by researcher	No. of video clips from family	No. of Photos from family
10	**Home** (orientation meeting, morning, after school, dinner, holiday, weekends, dinner with grandparents, interviews with child, parents, grandparents)	18	2.5	7	28	11	12
2	**Church** (Sunday school, graduation performance, lunch)	1.25					
2	**School** (Assembly, school lessons, performance)	2.25				7	2
4	**Enhancement centres** (Chinese school, football, drama, performance)	3					2
	Transition (between home & school, school & enhancement centres, home & church)	1					
1	**Others** (library, church family camp, restaurant)	0.5					5
19		**26**	**2.5**	**7**	**28**	**18**	**21**

Table 3.10 Data outcomes from the Cheung family

No. of visit	Setting	Hours of video footage	Hours of audio record	No. of interviews embedded	No. of photos taken by researcher	No. of video clips from family	No. of Photos from family
7	**Home** (orientation meeting, morning, lunch, after school, holiday, interviews with children and parents)	9	8.5	5	65		16
1	**School** (youngest son's pre-school)	1.75				5	10
6	**Enhancement centres** (Chinese school; piano, violin & Kumon lessons; graduation; performance)	6.25				7	17
	Transition between home and school or between enhancement activities	1					
1	**Others** (Lunch at restaurant, children playing at park, holiday, birthday)	1				5	13
15		**19**	**8.5**	**5**	**65**	**17**	**56**

3.6 Data Analysis

As revealed in the previous sections, an enormous amount of complexly interrelated data was generated in this study. The data were collected over time for the three families and in this way built up information about multiple aspects of the phenomena (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009). Because there was so much data, and also because of the fact that data were being presented and discussed in publications with particular points of focus, it was important to develop a pragmatic approach to analysing and interpreting the various layers of information (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008).

Before writing any publications or even identifying possible journals, I conducted an initial analysis of the data. Preparation for this began well before data collection with the identification of important concepts from the literature in relation to the research questions and the development of an initial model and a set of preliminary categories representing these concepts and their interactions (see Section 3.4). The analysis then proceeded through the loading and viewing of data, transcription and summaries to the identification and refining of a range of code categories and themes. This gave me a sense of what had been identified, the similarities and differences among the participating families and the promise in the data of themes for further investigation and interpretation. The next steps in analysis and interpretation were guided by the concerns related to individual publications. I sought to represent a range of relevant concepts of cultural–historical theory in the publications. Throughout this process, I identified aspects of the initial model that required changing and newly emerging aspects that needed to be incorporated. Thus, the model for understanding and facilitating children's development was developed and refined (for details of the model see Chapter 9). The overall key features of the data analysis for this study are explicated in Sections 3.6.1 to 3.6.6.

3.6.1 Unit of analysis

As discussed in Section 3.2.1.3, the cultural–historical paradigm analyses by unit rather than by element. A unit is a "vital and irreducible part" that "possesses all the basic characteristics of the whole" (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 46). The unit of analysis of the study was the participant children's everyday activities, as from these activities all the essential components, conditions and processes for understanding the children's development could be found and traced. For example, investigating

the activities that the child participated in allowed me to understand the values and practices of parents and family, the demands of other institutions and semi-institutions, the child's internal positions and responses, and conflicts and new self-awareness associated with the activities. Thus, a whole picture of how the child learned and developed within everyday family practices could be traced and re-constructed.

3.6.2 Initial analysis

Data analysis sought to reveal a holistic picture of the ways the Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop in their community and examine their relation with their families' valued practices. Before writing the publications, I undertook an initial data analysis. The analytic strategy adopted in this multiple case research was to first perform a within-case (within one family) analysis to identify issues and themes within each case, followed by a cross-case (among the three families) analysis to examine common themes that stretched across the cases to assert and interpret the meanings of the case (Yin, 2009). Data analysis began immediately after the first data were collected from the Chan family. It continued and further informed subsequent data collection for the Chan and the other two families; modifications of the themes were made in light of emerging findings and for clarification throughout the study. Categories and themes were identified in the data first through a deductive process, using the initial model as the framework to analyse data to see if and how the collected data fit with the preliminary categories. Heeding the possibility of causing bias and limiting theme and theory development by using the deductive approach as the coding framework was thus decided in advance, an inductive approach was also applied to identify categories and themes that emerged from the data (Burnard et al., 2008).

From the initial analysis I gained the broad picture of the findings and learned where to pay attention to certain categories and themes from the data; this helped me to organise my publications (the presentation of my data). After deciding the focus of each publication, more detailed analysis of the relevant data sets was performed to address the specific inquiry.

3.6.3 An iterative process

Elaborated further from Section 3.4.2, data analysis of the study is an iterative and recursive process. It aims to capture comprehensive findings and in-depth meanings but was time consuming. For, example, loading the videos from tapes into the computer (analogue to digital) and making video clips that were chosen by the researcher from the video observations using Window Movie Maker and the subsequent transcription of some segments of the video observations involved a process in which I first watched the videos several times to get familiar with the data and identify findings that were obvious. Then I wrote a summary to sort out data that fitted the initial categories and to identify additional categories that emerged from the data for each video observation and family. Through this process several themes were developed. Similar procedures were used for the video- and audio-recorded interviews. When I wrote the publications, I identified/decided what the publication was focussed on, then I re-visited all the related data again for the thematic analysis and interpretation.

Video recording was a main method used in this study and digital video analysis is an iterative analysis examining various dimensions of the research question (e.g., social, institutional and personal dimensions) by recursively viewing the video to identify further evidence for newly emerging themes (Erickson, 1992; Fleer, in

press b). This recursive process of multiple viewings of the video for different purposes assists in approaching a greater completeness of analysis (Erickson, 1992).

I also used iterative processes to go through the data and selected themes relevant to what I was attempting to address from publication to publication. To achieve an overall balance of representation, I sought further publications for aspects that had not been presented in the earlier publications, yet needed to be represented.

3.6.4 Data interpretation

Data interpretation is significant to research as it "brings meaning and coherence to the themes, patterns, categories, developing linkages and a story line that makes sense and is engaging to read" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 162). It attaches "significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order" (Patton, 2002, p. 480). Drawing upon the interpretative approach of Hedegaard (2008c), the data of this study involved interpretation at three levels: the common sense level, situated practice level and thematic level.

3.6.4.1 Common-sense interpretation

A common-sense interpretation is the first level of interpretation, for which the researcher notes what seems meaningful and obvious from the data (Hedegaard, 2008c). Common sense interpretations were performed in this study after each field visit to identify patterns that stood out from the collected data when processing the video and audio recordings and all other data collected. The process

comprised downloading the data into the computer, organising the collected data; reviewing and/or completing field notes; viewing the videos, photos and documents collected; listening to the audio recordings; making transcriptions and noticing patterns and key ideas.

3.6.4.2 Situated practices interpretation

A situated practice interpretation of each family was made by applying the framing theoretical concepts to identify categories of significance for the particular family (Hedegaard, 2008c). A summary template (see Appendix E) was designed with reference to the initial model, with a preliminary set of categories, such as: societal, cultural and historical contexts; parental values and demands; family practices, and child's motives and competences. The template was used for interpreting observation and interview data incorporated with other data collected (if any, e.g. field notes, documents) from each visit. An observation summary showing the situated practice interpretation is attached in Appendix F for reference. Summaries for field visits (observation and interview) were written, from which further categories emerging from the data of each family, such as encouragement, were noted. In the process of interpreting the data from each family, the categories were updated by adding, dropping and refining some initial categories. This layer of analysis is similar to what Yin (2009) called a within-case analysis.

3.6.4.3 Thematic interpretation

Thematic interpretation was carried out, in which the conceptual categories that evolved from the situated practice interpretation were further investigated and analysed across the three families in relation to the research question (a cross-case analysis, Yin, 2009). Meaningful themes with evidence from multiple sources were

sought across data sets. This layered analysis, with its iterative elements, yielded rich and comprehensive understandings (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008; Yin, 2009). The concepts discussed in the theoretical framework section and the research questions were used in the analysis to help recognise conceptual and thematic patterns. Findings from all three families were analysed, compared and contrasted to further unlock responses to the research questions.

3.6.5 Analysing data for specific publications

When writing a publication, I revisited my data and re-performed a thematic interpretation in relation to the pertinent theoretical concepts and literature to strengthen the inquiry and check for new themes for the specific publication. This, too, is an iterative or recursive process. In the initial analysis process some themes were identified, which helped me to remember some aspects that might fit the themes of the specific publication. Then I went back to analyse the data and structured the focus and scope of each publication.

Given that each publication had its specific focus because of the (associated) research question it addressed and the particular concerns of the journals or books, the concepts discussed and the data selected as evidence in each publication are specific. Nevertheless, since I had carried out an initial analysis of the whole data set, I was aware of themes and issues that had remained unaddressed in the publications completed early in the process, and tried to seek avenues for the publication of articles concerning these issues. The article on the model (see Chapter 9 and below) attempted to represent the overall findings of the study in their application to research and pedagogy.

3.6.6 The development of the model

The initial form of the model was created based on the cultural–historical literature with its theoretical concepts and methodological approach of studying children's learning and development. It was then applied to inform the research design of this study. The data analysis process occurred alongside the data generation process. The data collection and analysis vis-a-vis the Chan family were completed halfway before the commencement of the process of data gathering with the other two families. The findings and categories that emerged from the Chan family data suggested further possibilities and confirmation of code categories for the other two families. The iterative process of analysis for the three Hong Kong–Australian families was continued and the findings were used to organise and refine the structure for modelling the conceptual relations revealed as being the necessary components and conceptions for effective child development for the Hong Kong–Australian children within their everyday family practices. The conceptual model may be extended to a broader range of communities and further elaborated from such applications. Finally, I formulated a set of principles based on a cultural–historical framework that can be used in tandem with the model to help understand and facilitate children's development. The details of the final form of the model entitled "A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children's development" are presented in Publication 7 of Chapter 9.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations have been taken carefully into account in the research design, execution and presentations of this study. Ethical approval from Monash

University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC, under project number: CF07/4271–2006001033) was obtained before the study began. Written permissions were obtained from the pastor of a local Chinese church in charge of families with young children and the principal of a weekend Chinese school to recruit participants and conduct research on their premises.

Recruitment advertisements, explanatory statements and consent forms for this study were given to the potential families via the pastor and the principal. A briefing about the research and the rights of participants was provided in the plain language explanatory statement. These were gone through with the families during the orientation meeting. Participation was entirely voluntary and participants were free to withdraw at any time, and this was reiterated to families after they had volunteered. In line with my suggestions, the parents discussed the way the project would be conducted with their children and made sure that all family members were happy with what would happen before the parents signed the consent forms on behalf of the family. They continued to monitor the family's comfort levels during the project. Moreover, I asked the children explicitly whether they were comfortable being videoed or talking with me, and proceeded only when they indicated verbally that they were happy to go ahead. The collected data were managed and stored securely in line with the University's regulations.

All efforts were taken to ensure there would be no physical or psychological risks to the participants, researchers and persons indirectly involved. This study involved children, therefore special attention has been paid to protecting them from being harmed. Child participants were treated as active and competent so that their views and agency were respected, and the power differences between

children and researchers were minimized (David, Tonkin, Powell & Anderson, 2005; Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008).

I also took steps to protect the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants. Only my supervisor and I had access to the data. Pseudonyms have been used in all publications and presentations. Permission was sought from and granted by the participants to use the words and images collected from this study for educational purposes (e.g. journal articles and book chapters) including presentations to peers at conferences or to students in lectures.

Despite the fact that all the necessary procedures were applied to ensure my research was ethically conducted, I faced some challenges in the process. These challenges involved issues of privacy and consent, as well as the need to avoid conflict of interest. Regarding the latter, when I decided to recruit my participants through my church, I felt that my volunteer teaching aid job for the primary grade two children at the church Sunday school might cause the problem of conflict of interest. Therefore, I immediately requested to be transferred to classes with older children (Grade 4 or above) so there would be no chance of the participating children feeling confused by my roles or of parents feeling pressured towards consent by my teacher identity.

In respect of privacy, a challenge arose regarding the use of video images. The Hong Kong community is culturally protective of their privacy. Despite their understanding of the explanatory information ensuring use for educational purposes, they still felt uneasy about the possibility that videos could show negative aspects of their lives. For example some time after the research had begun, a daughter in one of the families was concerned that the video images taken

of her family might be placed on the publically accessible sites on the Internet (e.g., YouTube). Her father raised her concerns to me, asking for clarification. I explained that under no circumstances would images appear on such sites, and that only images that would not be embarrassing for the family would be used in presentations in educational environments with restricted audiences, as specified in the explanatory statement. His family's concerns were allayed. In the case of another of the families, I showed them the presentations I was to give using clips from their family. These images showed the progress in the children's development. Not only were the family relieved to see the way the images were chosen, but they were also happy with the 'story' of development shown and said they felt very proud of being able to contribute to educational understandings of development processes.

Another challenge regards the issue of informed consent. This study attempts to obtain a holistic picture of the children's participation in and interaction with their environment, which involved gaining permission from the institutions, consent from indirect participants (such as teachers and grandparents) and consent from the parents of children indirectly involved (such as classmates and friends of child participants) in order to follow and video record of the child participants interacting and participating in different institutions in their everyday life. Since the children had participated in many after school activities, it was a challenge for me to obtain the permissions and consents from all the institutions and people who might be involved. In the case of videos in class and enhancement activities, as suggested by some of the teachers involved, I took the pragmatic course of obtaining parental consent for a small group of children (including the participating child) whom I would then focus on in their class or activity; they

would be grouped and located such that other members of the class would not appear in the video, yet the normal conduct of the class would be preserved.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are dealt with differently within different research traditions, and they use varying terms to denote these concepts, though the concepts and their characteristics are widely shared among traditions. For instance, validity is described differently in the qualitative approach from its concept in the quantitative tradition of research. According to Ratcliffe (1983), the concept of validity in qualitative research is socially constructed and has changed in different contexts. Bryman (2004) sees validity as —"a concern with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of qualitative research" (p. 545). Cresswell (2007) discusses some of the various prominent terms used to describe validity; these refer to the trustworthiness, authenticity, credibility or dependability of data and their interpretations.

In discussing how researchers can ascertain the validity of their qualitative research Cresswell (2007, p. 206) cites a review of qualitative researchers' views on criteria for validity conducted by Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle (2001), who

> organized these criteria into primary and secondary criteria. They found four primary criteria: credibility (Are the results an accurate interpretation of the participants' meaning?); authenticity (Are different voices heard?); criticality (Is there a critical appraisal of all aspects of the research?); and integrity (Are the investigators self-critical?). Secondary criteria related to

> explicitness, vividness, creativity, thoroughness, congruence, and sensitivity.

These qualities or criteria appear again and again in discussions of qualitative research, albeit often using different terms.

Reliability has long been seen as essential to the validity of research. It is primarily a quantitative concept that has been appropriated by qualitative researchers (Cresswell, 2007). The trustworthy quality of research, in some cases, may be dependent on its reliability, the key to which Merriam (1998) sees as consistency. Merriam (1998, p. 218) defines reliability as "the extent to which there is consistency in the findings" and argues that it:

> is enhanced by the investigator explaining the assumptions and theory underlying the study, by triangulating data, and by leaving an audit trail, that is, by describing in detail how the study was conducted and how the findings were derived from the data (p. 218)

To achieve validity and reliability, researchers routinely apply practical techniques, such as triangulation, audit trail, and member checking.

According to Hedegaard and Fleer (2008), to achieve reliability and validity in cultural–historical dialectical-interactive research, it is important to articulate to the participants of the study the role the researcher has – that is, the researcher is not there simply to 'play with the children' (being the over engaged participant) or to be only a 'fly on the wall' (being the disinterested observer). Rather, the researcher has the role of gathering data about a specific area of investigation (see

Section 3.4.3 for role of the researcher). However, to be valid and reliable, all data must be analysed in relation to what position the researcher was taking at the time when the data was being generated (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008). This involves the researcher clearly explicating (to participants and to readers) his or her different intentional orientations and goals and doing the same in respect of the participants from their perspectives. My position as an insider (or to be more specific, a 'semi-insider') to the Hong Kong immigrant community was discussed with parent participants at the time of data collection. As the researcher involved in this collection, I consciously tried to keep an open mind about practices observed and consistently involved the parents in giving explanations to avoid unjustified researcher interpretations. As such, the research design and protocol of this study have followed Hedegaard's (2008b) approach to reliability and validity in the dialectical-interactive methodology. Hedegaard (2008b) notes that in order to attain reliability, the researcher has to elucidate clearly the research goals for the participants so that it is possible to distinguish the researcher's role from the participants' intentions and motives.

A further aspect of this strategy for ensuring explicitness regarding roles and thus optimising validity is the scrutiny of the relationship and interaction between researcher and participants. This is discussed by Fleer (in press a) who extends Hedegaard's view and advocates a respectful and genuine interaction between researchers and participants in settings where children are participants. Fleer (in press a) calls this "ethical validity", where "the actual position that the researcher takes when interacting in the research context is coded with the data, and is discussed in relation to the findings" (p. 14). The way I conducted my research certainly sought to establish such respectful interactions with the children and

adults. I responded to parents' and children's questions and desire for talking or sharing, and valued the children's work and activities. I captured interactions in video so that I could 'see' them clearly (and critically). These helped me to obtain rich and authentic data.

According to Fleer (in press a) another important aspect of validity is tool validity, which concerns choosing the research tool that is not only best for finding responses to the research questions, but also most suitable for the context of the research. Thus, for example, even though videoing was being used, I also asked the children and their parents to use a camera I supplied to record moments, events or objects they saw as significant in their everyday activities. This latter visual tool afforded opportunities for authentic data to be gathered that video observation could not capture, such as bedtime prayer or family holidays.

Not only do tools need to be appropriate to ensure validity of data, but as suggested by Cresswell (2007) and Hedegaard and Fleer (2008), to gain validity, the perspectives of participants (and institutions) have to be captured and analysed in ways that will produce a rich range of data. This depth of data on different aspects of a child's everyday life was achieved in this study by using photos and video clips provided by participants, video observations, interviews, chats at critical incidents, field notes, documents and information from the internet as described previously, and from which it was possible to identify complementary results.

3.9 Limitations within Methodology

The design of this research produced particular limitations that, while legitimate, need to be acknowledged. These concern the scope and generalisability of the study. In respect of scope, limitations arise from both the large amount of the data and the fact that despite this, the data could not possibly represent all activities and interactions for any of the families. In addition, the video observations and interviews were unlikely to have been able to reveal all children's thinking and feeling, though some of this did come through as indicated in Publications 4 to 7. This is a perennial challenge for researchers of child development. Because of the copious amounts of data, not all have been presented. Moreover, the data could not cover every moment of the families' days over a long period of time but only get glimpses. Since I was able to capture a lot of glimpses, however, I was afforded a good insight into the family practices and child development.

In regard to generalisability, the insights from the research were able to be represented in a model as a template for understanding and facilitating child's development for different individuals and families with applying their specific contexts in different communities (details of the model see Chapter 9). As Yin (2009) emphasises, case studies (where the model was devised from) are not generalisable to populations or universes (statistical generalisation) but to theoretical propositions (analytic generation). He added that findings from case study research can provide lessons for others to learn. While such lessons may not be directly applicable to other contexts, they may develop principles that help educators and parents attend to potentially important aspects of the development processes and contexts. As will become clear on reading the relevant publication,

the model offers a means and a starting point for discovering the ways activities and institutions in communities, along with the histories attached to these, interact with children to support their development. The model, in turn, may be further elaborated and changed to represent a wider range of concerns as it is used by others.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has explicated in detail the cultural–historical paradigm and dialectical-interactive methodology that were drawn upon to inform this study. It provides the methodological basis for how the data were generated for a case study of children's learning and development of three Hong Kong–Australian families and were analysed and interpreted to make sense in terms of the paradigm. The principal findings of the study and discussion are presented in Part II (Chapters 4-9) of this thesis.

PART II

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Part II of this thesis presents the principal findings of the study. It consists of Chapters 4 to 9. Each chapter contains a publication and each publication answers one or more associated research questions that investigate certain important aspects and processes related to the participating Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development. Chapter 4 (Publication 2) investigates how Hong Kong–Australian parents' values, expectations and practices can form and change. Chapter 5 (Publication 3) examines the interrelationships between family and school practices. Chapter 6 (Publication 4) explores how Hong Kong–Australian children develop a learning motive through participation in valued family practices. Chapter 7 (Publication 5) looks at the role of encouragement in fostering Hong Kong–Australian children's development of an achievement related motive, and what meaning and sense these children make of the everyday family practices. Chapter 8 (Publication 6) finds out whether and when learning is a leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children and what the mechanisms, activities and pedagogy are that support this in the family environment. Chapter 9 (Publication 7) represents the synthesis of understandings from the research as expressed in Chapters 4 to 8. The model proposed in this chapter responds to the principal research question – How do Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices? As a model it attempts to represent the main influences and processes – and their interrelationships – that are involved in the learning and development of the child–in–community/family. In doing so, it goes beyond the case studies and serves as an analytical tool for investigating and supporting children's learning and development. The model (Figure II.1) is

designed for the extension of theory and constitutes a rich template that is easy to use as a basis for tailored inquiry in other institutions and communities.

Guided by the overarching research question, the chapters presented in this part are closely connected with each other. The focus and findings of each of the chapters can be linked together and visually represented in the model that was developed from the study. The details of the model are presented in Chapter 9, but are summarised below for a better understanding of the linking and flow of the publications as well as the findings chapters.

The study generally has focussed on gaining a much deeper understanding of the process of a child's development. After the engagement with the data and through the process of writing several papers, a final outcome of the study has been an enhanced model of how children's development occurs in Vygotskian cultural–historical terms. This model (see Figure II.1) has revealed the essential components and dimensions of a child's development within family and other institutions, including the three dimensions of conditions, environment and individual. As can be seen from the model the conditions are related to the broader community and the society and can show how parents, significant social others and institutional experiences contribute to the shaping of values and are themselves shaped by their own histories and surroundings. The dimension of environment, which affects the child more directly, consists of the institutions and other influences in the environment in which the child lives, usually family, school, etc. The environment dimension interacts with the dimension of cultural, societal and historical contexts (Conditions), where the institutional values and practices were shaped. Institutions, such as family and school, also interact with and affect

each other, and with (and among) non-institutional aspects such as technology and media. The third dimension shown in the model is the individual child and this dimension shows the processes that move the child forward in his/her development. Chapters 4 to 8 explore certain aspects visually represented in this model, illustrating them with data from the study.

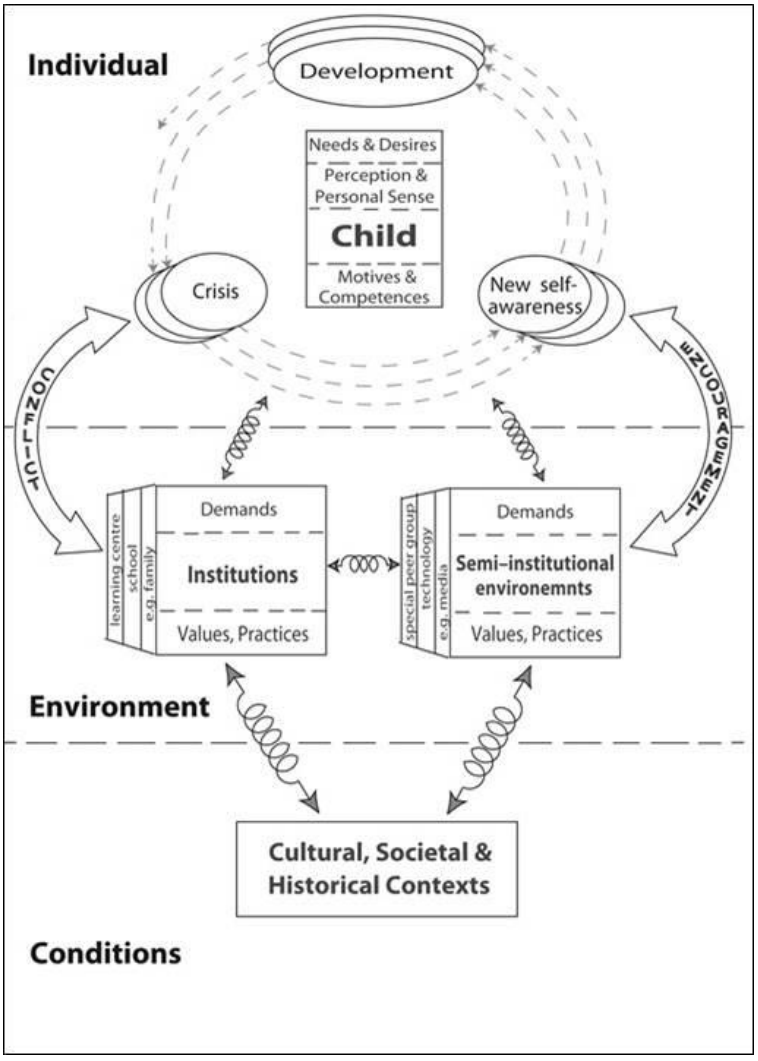


Figure II.1 A model for understanding and facilitating children's development (See Wong, Accepted, in Chapter 9)

The study looks at three Hong Kong–Australian families, focussing on the everyday family practices and activities in which their children participated in their everyday lives across different institutions such as family, school, church and

enhancement centres. Relevant concepts from the cultural–historical paradigm and dialectical interactive methodology (details are introduced in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively) were used to inform and interpret the findings of this study. Because this thesis has been completed in the form of thesis by publication, with constraints on the scope and length of each publication, only selected data are presented. For example, for those publications illustrating processes (the dialectical process of the development of parental values in Chapter 4 and the process of the development of learning motive in Chapter 6), only data and excerpts from one family have been presented to allow a detailed account of the process, revealing how the dialectical process functions. In the publication in Chapter 5, data from two families with similar backgrounds and characteristics were presented aiming to foreground the differences in the family-school relationships. In Chapters 7 to 9, relevant data from the three families were presented in the publications as examples to support the findings.

Because the major contents of this thesis have been or are soon to be published, it is important to link the publications together in a way that can be followed easily. Moreover, as a thesis by publication is an alternative format to the traditional thesis, it is useful to make some remarks regarding the publications and reflect on the process and on the content of each publication. To achieve this, each of the chapters in Part II comprises five sections, which are outlined below.

About the publication and its process

This section provides a brief description about the publication; a reflection on the process related to writing, engaging with reviews and getting published; and an account of learning from the process.

Overview of the publication

This section explains the linking of the publication in each chapter with those in other findings chapters. It discusses the reasons for writing the publication with a focus on how the research was prompted by the phenomenon in context and the research gap. It also presents the aim and focus of the publication. A reference is made to a summary about the publication for quick reference, which is attached in Appendix G. This summary in tabular form, sets out the contextual phenomenon, the points made by relevant literature and relevant theory, the research space, question and design, major findings and the significance of the publication. This section offers a diagrammatic representation of the publication in terms of the model represented in Figure II.1. It also recalls the associated research question(s) that the publication addressed.

Publication content

This section presents the associated book chapter or journal article in its most updated form. For example, if the publication has been published (Publications 2 to 6), its published form (book chapter or journal article as a PDF document) is included. If, however, the publication has been accepted (Publication 7), then the latest revised version (manuscript as a Word document) is what appears in the chapter.

Significance of the publication

This section presents the significance of the publication in relation to the previous literature and or the practical needs of the research community.

Reflection and commentary

This section offers the author's reflection and commentary on the publication. It may supplement the discussion with some points that may have been left out or not discussed in detail because of the limitation of the scope and length of the publication.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTAL VALUES AND FAMILY PRACTICES

4.1 About Publication 2 and its Process

The publication included in this chapter investigates the development of parental values and family practices. It is an invited chapter in an edited book entitled "*Asia Pacific education: Diversity, challenges and changes*" (Chan, 2012). To align with the theme of the book, this publication focussed on the varying individual and socio-cultural influences on Hong Kong–Australian parents' values regarding their children's academic performance and future careers, and emphasised the need to take account of both diversity and change when investigating conditions for children's development. The book chapter, entitled "Hong Kong–Australian parents' development of values, expectations and practices for their children's education: A dialectical process" (P. Wong, 2012a), has gone through rigorous reviews and was published in August 2012.

Although this publication is included as the first chapter in the sequence of the findings chapters, it was the first book chapter but second manuscript written. The journal article for Chapter 6 was written first. I had heard from some senior academics during my candidature that writing a book chapter is different from writing a (research) journal article, and many of them professed finding it easier and feeling greater freedom in writing a book chapter compared with preparing a journal article. Being a 'green' writer, I did not pay much attention and did not notice much difference between writing the two. However, one clear distinction struck me during the writing stage, and that was that writing for publication placed many more restrictions upon me than writing for a traditional thesis. In a

traditional thesis one is allowed more words to explain and more opportunity to be thorough in a presentation of the data (and its analysis), while there are more extensive restrictions in writing for publication imposed by the common focus/theme, word length, aim, scope and genre of the book or journal.

Since this book chapter has gone through tight refereeing and editorial board reviews, going through the detailed review processes for publication of this book chapter and the journal article in Chapter 6 gradually helped me learn some of the differences and techniques of writing for a book chapter and a journal article. For a book chapter, I write to a wider range of readers and need to write in a more explanatory fashion. For a journal, it is expected that the readers are in the same field of expertise (e.g., *Mind, Culture, and Activity* is a journal that focuses on Vygotsky's socio-cultural or cultural–historical theory), so I write to more specifically knowledgeable readers and have no need to explain much about the basic theory. When constructing my manuscript for different types of publications (book chapters and research journal articles), I came to understand that I need not only consider what I want to deliver regarding content, but also have to take into account my potential readers.

4.2 Overview of Publication 2

Studies from various disciplines have recognised that parental values have an important influence on children's development (Chuang & Su, 2009; Jun Li, 2004; S. Phillipson & S. N. Phillipson, 2007; Sethi, Este & Charlebois, 2001; Wu, 2004; Xiao, 2000). The conditions and possibilities for young children's development are predominantly shaped by parental values. Therefore, this first findings chapter begins by examining the parental values of Hong Kong–Australian families

regarding their children's education and upbringing. The publication included in this chapter addressed the gaps found in the literature, which offered oversimplified and homogeneous findings regarding the relationship among the parental values and their children's academic performance and career aspirations within Chinese heritage (including Hong Kong) immigrant communities. It sought to provide a deeper and more holistic understanding on how parental values are formed and changed for the Hong Kong–Australian parents.

The published chapter aimed to trace the dialectical process of the development of parental values, expectations and practices in a Hong Kong–Australian family, the Chan family. It used cultural–historical theory to examine how culture, history, society and individual experience shape and reshape values, and thus the expectations and practices of the Chan parents to foster their children's academic performance and career aspirations. This is important because many of the studies and even parents themselves are unaware of these influences, though they are fundamental for understanding the process of children's learning and development. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

A diagram illustrating the dialectical process of the development of parental values, expectations and practices is shown in Figure 4.1. It notes the interaction between cultural, societal and historical contexts, personal experiences and interpretations and how these help shape the values, expectations and practices of the parents towards their children's education and development. The reciprocal nature of the interaction and contribution between elements is important because it is the dialectical process that creates different conditions for different families.

Although children themselves exert influence on parental demands, the concern in this publication is with the conditions (societal, cultural, and historical) that have shaped the parents' values and orientations. Thus the influence in the figure is represented to act only in one direction (parent to child) as a way of indicating the focus on parent-generated demands.

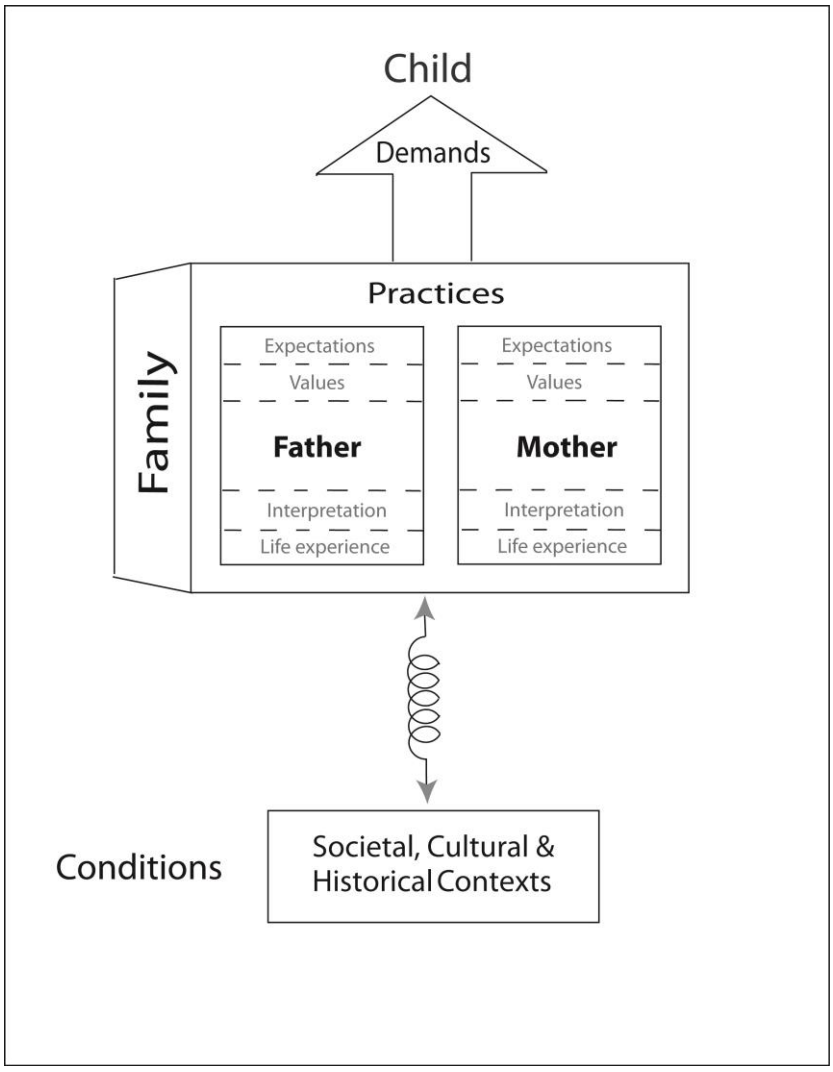


Figure 4.1 Dialectical process of the development of parental values, expectations and practices

The particular research question that this publication investigated is:

How do Hong Kong–Australian parents' values, expectations and practices in relation to children's learning and development form and change?

This publication focussed particularly on academic performance and career aspirations, the two aspects of children's learning and development commonly reported in the literature on Chinese heritage children. For further details please see Publication 2, which ensues.

4.3 Content of Publication 2

Wong, P. L. (2012a). Hong Kong–Australian parents' development of values, expectations and practices for their children's education: A dialectical process. In P. W. K. Chan (Ed.), *Asia Pacific education: Diversity, challenges and changes* (pp. 68–86). Melbourne, Australia: Monash University Publishing.

Published in August, 2012.

In the original print thesis, pages 119–137 included the published book chapter just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

4.4 Significance of Publication 2

As mentioned in the publication, it is significant because it offers a holistic investigation of the interwoven influences of the cultural, historical and societal factors in one family's context, and thus is able to provide a detailed account of Hong Kong immigrant families' parental values, expectations and practices. It illustrates the complex dialectical process of the shaping and reshaping of values occurring in a family over time, and reveals the importance of looking beyond often reified cultural and social structural explanations. Vygotsky's theories and concepts have been described as abstract and unfinished (Blunden, 2008; Karpov, 2005). This study also attests to the usefulness of the cultural–historical approach for supporting the identification and understanding of complex, dynamic and dialectical processes involved in children's development in families and communities.

4.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 2

I would like to make three comments on this publication. First, due to the limitation of the scope and length, it has only presented the big picture of the values, expectations, and resulting demands and practices that the Chan parents placed on their children. The differences in the values and expectations between the father (Ivan) and mother (Flora) and how they negotiated and compromised when determining common family practices and demands have not been discussed in detail in the publication. In fact in most families the father, mother and the significant social others may have differences in values, and thus expectations, demands and practices.

Usually family members can achieve common practices through a process of communication and negotiation. In the case of the Chan parents (as for the other two families in the study), they communicated among themselves and their different roles in the family helped them to come up with a united set of family practices for their children's education and development. For example, Flora took the main and front role of looking after the children's school and enhancement learning, and arranging various enhancement activities for them, monitoring and assisting them in homework and practice. Ivan took the assistant role, communicating, helping and aligning with Flora to carry out the family practices.

However, if two parents (and significant social others) differ markedly in their values and expectations and do not want to compromise to achieve agreement on practice, each of them would simply apply his/her own practices with his/her child, which may cause conflict and adversity in the child's development. In analysing family values, researchers have to pay attention to and take into account the differences between father and mother, as this will provide different conditions and influences for children's learning and development.

Another comment is that this publication has talked about one family only in respect of the development of parental values. In fact, analysis of the study data revealed that the process and influences (societal, cultural, historical, parent's own interpretation and life experience) applied equally well to all the three families, thus shaping the conditions provided for the children in each family. Though the conditions did in fact vary in each family, it showed that the concept of the dialectical process of the development of parental values can be used for investigation and interpretation in the same way for other families. The dialectical

process can be applied to families as well as other institutions to understand how the values are formed and changed.

Finally, it should be noted that this publication discusses one aspect of the dialectical process of the development of the parental values, practices and demands – that of the parents and their prior experiences. The ways the children's desires and demands influence the development of parental values, practices and demands are not included in this publication, but are discussed in Publication 4 in Chapter 6 on the process of development of the child's learning motive.

CHAPTER 5

INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FAMILY AND SCHOOL PRACTICES

5.1 About Publication 3 and its Process

Publication 3, which is included in this chapter, examines the interrelationships between family and school practices. It is a journal article, published in *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* (*AJEC*), Volume 37, Issue 4 in December, 2012. I sought to publish in this journal because of its long history, leading status and broad range of readers in early childhood education in Australia and internationally. *AJEC* is Australasia's foremost scholarly journal and the world's longest-running major journal within the early childhood field. The journal was first published in August 1960, as the *Australian Pre-School Quarterly*. It subsequently changed its name to the *Australian Journal of Early Childhood* in 1975 and to the *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* in 2009, reflecting its commitment to a growing diversity of readers and authors and its focus on addressing international early childhood concerns (Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 2012). This journal was ranked A in the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2010 journal rating list.

Since this was the second journal article that I wrote, having gained the experience of the very rigorous and lengthy review process from my first journal article (details are presented in Chapter 6), I was better equipped both psychologically and intellectually to respond to the reviewers' comments. Although the two reviewers' comments were quite diverse in terms of the details, content and recommendations for improvement, I felt I had clearer eyes, more confidence and competence to judge and respond to the comments. Although a major revision was

requested, I was able to revise systematically and produce an article that was accepted for publication.

5.2 Overview of Publication 3

Parental values and family practices help shape the material and social environment and create the conditions for the learning and development of children. In addition to the conditions that parents and families create, children concurrently learn and develop through their interaction and participation in other institutions in their everyday lives, such as schools, churches and after school learning centres (Hedegaard, 2009). Among the institutions, families and schools provide the two most significant contexts for young children's development. The relation between these two environments plays a part in determining how favourable the conditions of development are for children. Therefore, it is important to identify the interrelationships between family and school and understand how these interrelationships are formed. This publication extended from the publication included in Chapter 4. The previous chapter investigated what was happening for the Chan parents, tracing the dialectical process of development of their values and the family practices. The concept of the dialectical process provides a basis for understanding the formation and alteration of values and practices applicable to other families and institutions. The previous chapter (Publication 2) found that the Chan parents had equally emphasized values on aspects other than just academic performance and career aspirations regarding their children's development, such as becoming multi-faceted, being independent and valuing family cohesiveness. Because of the limitation of the scope and focus of the publication, these values and practices had not been included in the discussion.

Moreover, as many related studies provide a narrowed picture about the values and practices of Chinese and Hong Kong immigrant parents, it is important to investigate their parental values and practices in detail to provide a more conclusive picture and unbiased understanding about Hong Kong–Australian families. Therefore, this chapter starts with a detailed examination of the values and practices of the Chan and the Lee families. This publication (Publication 3) aimed to explore the interrelationships between the practices of family and school of these two Hong Kong–Australian families. It focuses on capturing and analysing the family practices of the Chan and Lee families, the parents of which have similar backgrounds, and their relations with the practices of the children's schools from the parents' perspectives. The similarity between the two families helped to accentuate the differences in their relations with their schools, thus these two families were chosen as the focus and data from the family with parents with a differing background were not used. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

A diagram illustrating the interrelationships between family and school practices is shown in Figure 5.1. It notes the interaction of the values and practices between family and school, which are greatly shaped and reshaped by the cultural, societal and historical contexts and trajectories associated with the individual school and family (details of the process have been discussed in Chapter 4). The diagram shows the interrelationships between family and school that were found in the publication. The diagram illustrates aspects of the environment dimension shown in the model discussed in Part II and Chapter 9. This chapter looks at the two institutions and their interrelationships. Though the child participated in these institutions, the focus of this publication is on the relationships between

institutions (family and school) rather than the dynamic of the mutual impacts of the child and the institutions. Discussion of the child is more prominent in Chapters 6 to 9.

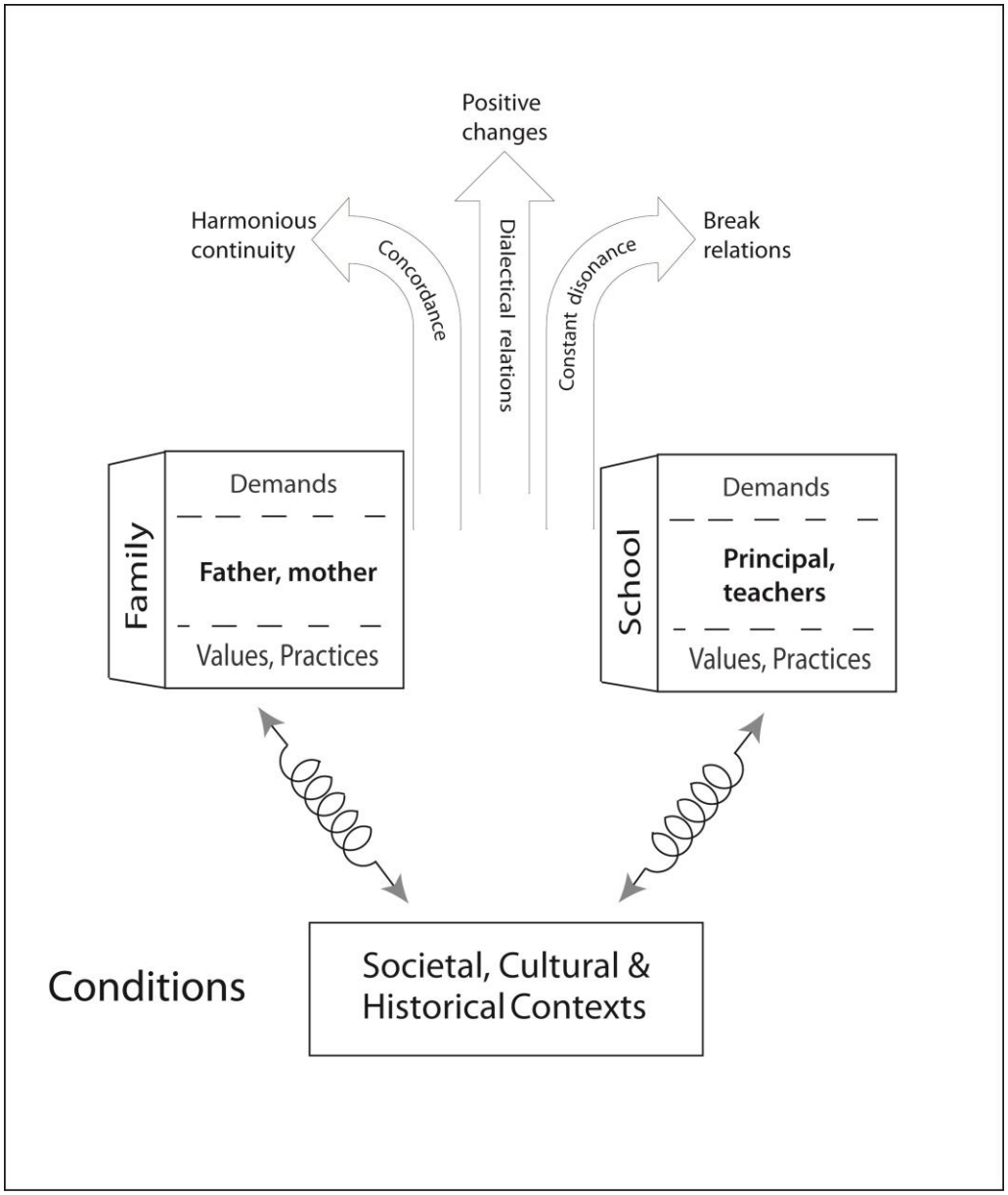


Figure 5.1 Interrelationships between family and school practices

The particular research question that this publication addressed is:

What are the values and practices of Hong Kong–Australian families and how are they related with those of their children's schools?

The sub-questions associated with this question are "What differences and similarities of values and practices among the families are there in these relationships?" and "What facilitates or impedes productive relationships between schools and these families?" Since a review of associated literature indicates that previous studies provide over-simplified and stereotyped parental values and practices for Hong Kong immigrant families (Wong, 2012a), the inclusion of the first sub-question aimed to tease these values and practices out further to see what similarities and differences can exist between two families with similar characteristics. Moreover, it aimed to investigate how these similarities and differences might influence the ways families interact with their children's schools. The reason for the second sub-question is to find out further what helped and what restricted productive home-school relationships for these families so that parents, school principals and teachers can gain useful insights to align or accommodate their ways so as to better support children's learning and development. For the detailed response to these research questions please see Publication 3, which follows.

5.3 Content of Publication 3

Wong, P. L. (2012b). Parents' perspectives of the home-school interrelationship: A study of two Hong Kong–Australian families. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 37*(4), 59–67.

Published in December, 2012.

In the original print thesis, pages 147–155 included the published article just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

5.4 Significance of Publication 3

The significance of this publication can be seen through the progression from an understanding of the socio-cultural construction of families and communities to a focus on the relationships between schools and families. It contributes a set of principles that encapsulate the ways families and schools can develop productive relationships to ensure children develop and learn in an optimal environment.

Consistency in practices, effective communication, mutual understanding and two-way accommodation were found to be central to home-school relationships in this study. These four aspects can serve as focal points for schools and families in their dealings with each other. It notes that family and school need to pay attention to their interrelations, especially the fact that constant dissonance breaks relations. Since up to 13 years in a child's life are spent in school (in Victoria, Australia) and the school creates conditions for the child to develop, it is important to have consistencies between values and practices at school and at home. It has also been evidenced from Hedegaard's (1999, 2005) studies about the Turkish families in Denmark, that when constant dissonance in values and practices between family and school were not rectified, serious problems were caused in the Turkish children's education and development. Moreover, Hedegaard and Fleer (2010) and Edwards (2011) highlight the importance for child development of consistency, mutual understanding and effective communication among institutions, such as family, school and the agencies that provide services to children.

5.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 3

The original intention of this publication was to explore the interrelationships among institutions in which the participant children engaged in their everyday lives to provide a more complete picture of the environmental influences, which would include family, schools, Chinese schools, enhancement centres and church. However, due to the limitation of the scope and length of publication, I could only address and discuss the issue of interrelationships among institutions for children's learning and development from the two most significant institutions, family and school.

The first attempt was to represent the values and practices of schools from the schools' perspectives as well as from the parents' perspectives. I used the schools' and government's websites together with video observations of classes to help ascertain schools' practices. However, in responding to the reviewers' advice, the article was revised to present the issue from the perspectives of the parents of the Chan and Lee families.

Although the publication shifted a little from the original intention of depicting a holistic picture of the interrelationships among institutions beyond family and school in which the Chan and Lee children participated in their everyday lives, this shift in turn helped focus the investigation, deepening the understanding and identifying principles of the ways in which productive (and destructive) home-school relationships are formed to support (impede) children's learning and development.

CHAPTER 6
CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT OF A LEARNING MOTIVE

6.1 About Publication 4 and its Process

The publication included in this chapter explicates the way a child developed a learning motive. It is a journal article co-authored with Professor Marilyn Fleer, published in *Mind, Culture, and Activity* (*MCA*), Volume 19 Issue 2 in April, 2012. *Mind, Culture, and Activity* is "an interdisciplinary, international journal devoted to the study of the human mind in its cultural and historical contexts" (Mind, Culture and Activity, 2012). It is a prestigious and top ranking journal in the field within which I am studying and its acceptance rate is very low. It is ranked A in the ERA 2010 Journal ranking list.

The publication process of this article was stringent and drawn out but it has given me a valuable experience in getting my research published. The article was first reviewed by three anonymous reviewers; each critiqued certain aspects of my manuscript (albeit different ones) wanting explanations and further elaborations on the areas that they were interested in. Taken together, these demands appeared to suggest that many facets of my whole thesis be included in the article. In aiming to have the paper accepted, even knowing that some points were not directly related to the intent of the paper, my co-author and I still addressed them in order to meet the reviewers' requests. Although the second review resulted in a request for minor revision, the work done for that was extensive and the word length increased to more than double the amount of the first submitted manuscript. The outcome for the second revision of the manuscript was that it was granted an acceptance with the condition of cutting down half of the word length (8,000 –

10,000 words). This was finally achieved by closely following the suggestions. The revised manuscript underwent further review before final publication. The whole review process took more than one year and it took a further half year before it was published. This experience illustrated the rigour required in getting published in a prestigious journal.

6.2 Overview of Publication 4

Publication 4 is central to the findings chapters; it connects closely with other publications. The first two findings chapters investigated the influences of the significant social others (parents' values, expectations, life experiences and interpretation), environment (family and school practices) and conditions (societal, cultural, historical context/trajectory) related to the learning and development of the Chan and Lee children. Publication 4 in this chapter extends the consideration of development further by examining the interactions among the child, significant social others, environment and conditions. It is the foundation for the next publication (Publication 5) and has presented in words a preliminary version of the model of child development, which has been summarised in the introduction of Part II and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 9. This publication also addressed the fact that in the literature little is known about how high parental expectations and parent-dominated family practices in Hong Kong immigrant families relate to and foster a child's learning and development.

The aim of the paper is to explore the ways children from a Hong Kong immigrant family in Australia develop through participation in everyday family practices and understand how a child develops a learning motive in an environment that is dominated by parental values and choices. The paper focuses on the family

practices of the Chan family and the process of the Chan son's (Vincent) guitar learning experience, which illustrates the process of Vincent's development of a learning motive that embraces the Chinese concept of learning. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

A diagrammatic representation of the publication illustrating the process of the Chan son's development of a learning motive is shown in Figure 6.1. While Figure 4.1 in Chapter 4 illustrated the conditions and Figure 5.1 in Chapter 5 focussed on the environment, in this chapter, as Figure 6.1 indicates, all three dimensions (the child, environment and conditions) of a child's development are included.

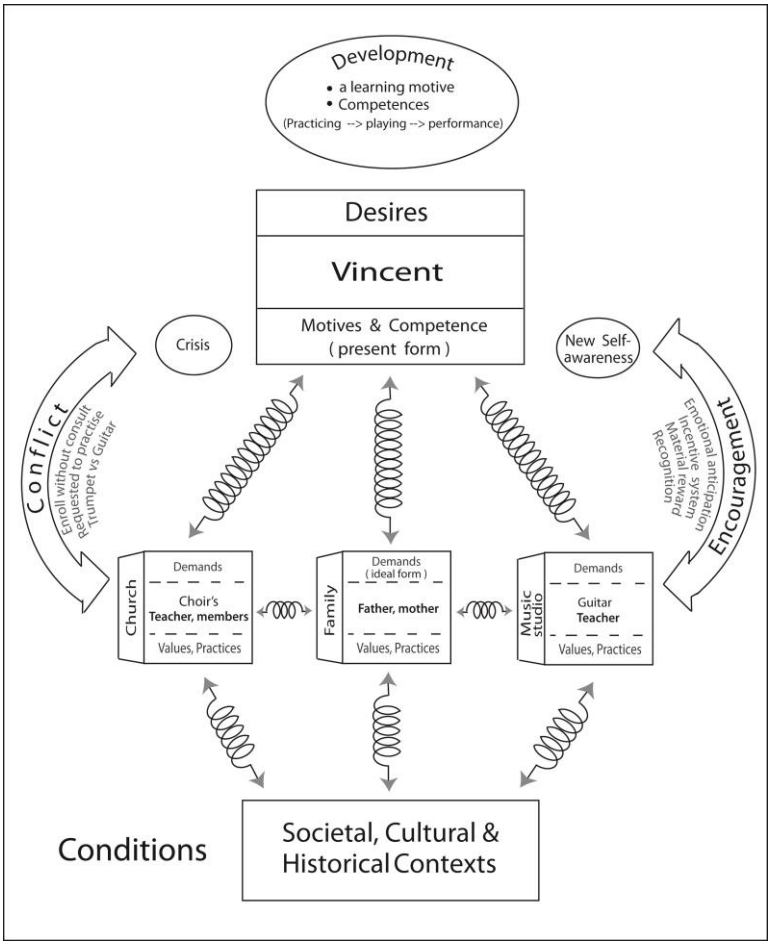


Figure 6.1 The process of Vincent's development of a learning motive

The particular research question that Publication 4 investigated is:

How do Hong Kong- Australian children develop a learning motive within highly structured everyday family practices?

This study sought to understand the process (not the outcome of particular aspects) of child development. As noted from the literature as well as the participant families in this study, learning is the main everyday activity for children in Hong Kong–Australian families. These parents considered learning as the main tool for their children's development (details are discussed in Publication 6 of Chapter 8). According to Hedegaard (2008a), a child's development can be noticed through his/her qualitative change of motives and competences. Therefore, it is important to study how the participant children were able to develop a motive for learning through their engagement and interaction within their everyday activities, which were highly structured by their parents within their everyday family practices. In addition to focusing on the conditions afforded by parents it was crucial to identify the child's perspective in developing his/her own motive so that the agency of the child is evident in interaction with the demands of the parents. This permits a more complex understanding of the process than would a representation of simple imposition of demands by parents. For the detailed response to this research question, please refer to Publication 4 below.

6.3 Content of Publication 4

Wong, P. L. & Fleer, M. (2012). A cultural–historical study of how children from Hong Kong immigrant families develop a learning motive within everyday family practices in Australia. *Mind Culture and Activity, 19*(2), 107–126.

Published in April, 2012.

Monash University

Declaration for Thesis Chapter 6

In the case of Chapter 6, the nature and extent of my contribution to the work was the following:

Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Conception, key ideas, research investigation, data collection, data analysis, development and write up	80

The following co-authors contributed to the work. Co-authors who are students at Monash University must also indicate the extent of their contribution in percentage terms:

Name	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Marilyn Fleer	Conception, support for data analysis and write up	20

Candidate's Signature	[redacted]	Date 20/6/2012

Declaration by co-authors

The undersigned hereby certify that:

(1) the above declaration correctly reflects the nature and extent of the candidate's contribution to this work, and the nature of the contribution of each of the co-authors.
(2) they meet the criteria for authorship in that they have participated in the conception, execution, or interpretation, of at least that part of the publication in their field of expertise;
(3) they take public responsibility for their part of the publication, except for the responsible author who accepts overall responsibility for the publication;
(4) there are no other authors of the publication according to these criteria;
(5) potential conflicts of interest have been disclosed to (a) granting bodies, (b) the editor or publisher of journals or other publications, and (c) the head of the responsible academic unit; and
(6) the original data are stored at the following location(s) and will be held for at least five years from the date indicated below:

Faculty of Education, Building A, Monash University, Peninsula Campus, Franskton

Co-author's Signature	[redacted]	Date 20/6/2012

In the original print thesis, pages 164–183 included the published article just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

6.4 Significance of Publication 4

This publication is significant because it comprehensively explicates the process under inquiry, from the literature review about the phenomenon, through to the theoretical framework, research design and findings and finally the conclusion. This close study provides useful insights and sheds new light on family and child development studies theoretically, methodologically and practically.

Theoretically, it conceptualised parental demands as the ideal form (from the parent's perspective), and the child's motives and competences as the present form (the child's motives and competences in relation to the demand at the time this demand is placed). Encouragement, in turn is conceptualised as the mediation process, the interaction of the ideal and present forms, which helps the present form to reach the ideal form (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2). This conceptualisation following the cultural–historical paradigm takes a step forward, extending the process of interaction beyond Vygotsky's words. Thus it helps to better understand the nuanced, mutually responsive parent-child interactions and child development in a natural family context.

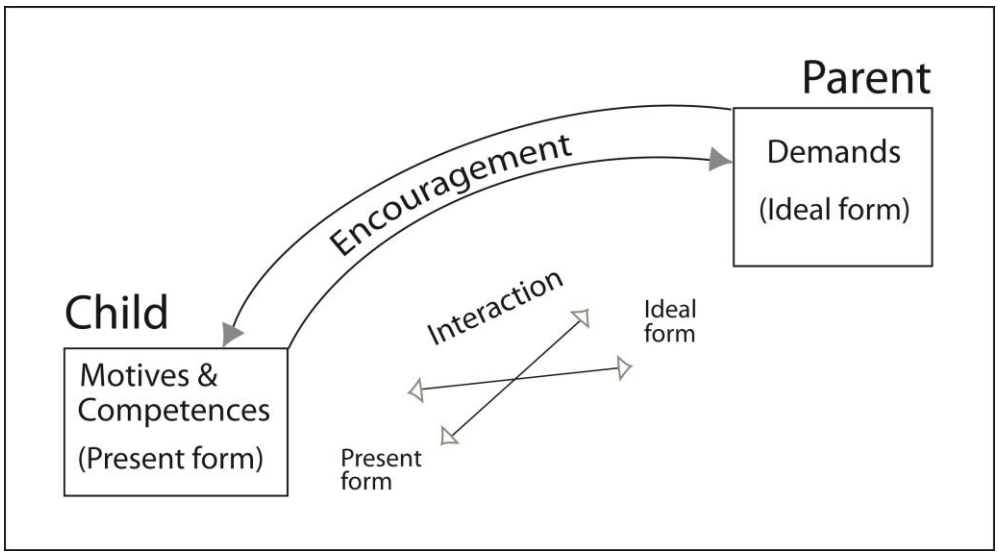


Figure 6.2 Encouragement: a mediation process between parental demands and child's motives and competences

Methodologically, this publication illustrates – and explains – how to capture different perspectives (a child's as well as those of parents), within the complex, dynamic interactions of family practices, and how to conduct, trace and analyse the process of a child's development along cultural historical lines. This can act as an example for others to use in their research efforts. In contrast to the often used quantitative method, which studies the cause and effect of certain factors, the combination of data generation methods adopted in this study provides an alternative, richer way to study child's learning and educational experiences. It also acts as an enhanced approach in comparison to other qualitative approaches where fewer perspectives are represented through fewer data sources. Moreover, the methods used to generate data – such as digital video observation – enabled the children's perspectives, experiences of conflict and change, and the effects of their parents' (and others') responsiveness to the children's desires and feelings to become evident. Together with parents' accounts of their intentions and the shaping of these socially, culturally and historically, a more diverse and clearer set

of data became available to look at the complex interacting elements in a child's development. To my knowledge this has not been available in any accounts to date of Hong Kong–Australian children's development.

Practically, it offers a more holistic elaboration of the way a child from a Hong Kong immigrant family develops a learning motive embracing the Chinese concept of learning through participation in everyday family practices shaped by parental values and facilitated by encouragement in different forms from the parents, the guitar teacher and peers and teachers from the church choir. From this, several guiding principles (such as not only placing demands but at the same time using encouragement, being responsive to children's responses, and being prepared to accommodate their desires) were revealed, which parents, teachers and educators can consider when fostering effective learning and development for their children. The publication also helps to understand in detail the significant factors (causal influences) that contribute to many Hong Kong Chinese heritage children becoming high academic achievers within the Australian community.

6.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 4

One aspect of this publication that should be noted in retrospect is that the forms and processes of encouragement and family practices that the Chan family (as with the other two participant families) used for their children are distinct from those concepts of reinforcement and passive shaping of the child's behaviour that are discussed under behaviouralism. The query of one of the reviewers about encouragement and the responses from many Western English speaking audiences regarding my presentation about the phenomenon and some of the practices of the

Hong Kong–Australian families, suggested that they were relating these to behaviouralism and passive reinforcement.

The findings illustrated that Vincent's guitar learning experience was not simply skill development or reflex action from material rewards, but involved motive formation, qualitative change of motive, family value appropriation and the exercising of child agency. This publication has shed light on the child's agency and interests as well as the mutual responsiveness between Vincent and his parents in the process of learning, rather than what might have appeared as a stimulus and response approach to shaping behaviour. The publication has captured Vincent in the journey from his initial learning to play the guitar, which led to enhancement of skills and competences, to the development of a learning motive that led to qualitative change guiding his overall attitude changes. These in turn imbued his other learning activities and were characterised by the five values of the Chinese concept of learning (persistence, effort, perseverance, conscientiousness and contribution to society). It also signalled how over time the dynamic child-family relation continued to change in relation to the child's perspectives and engagement in the family activity.

Further, the discussion revealed that the Chan family's incentive system, linked with free time, was found to be very effective in encouraging Vincent (and Jessica) to meet the parental demands autonomously and with pleasure. This incentive system granting free time for activities that Vincent desired was very different from a material reward system. Flora also created a beautifully presented everyday task sheet for Vincent as shown in Figure 6.3, helping to remind him to accomplish the tasks. The overall incentive system involved the responsiveness of

parents to their children's desires, which progressed towards mutual responsiveness as Vincent gradually responded to parental demands. This not only encouraged action, but helped to create a motive orientation, serving a "really effective motive" psychologically and this motive helped "the only understandable motive" to gradually become the leading motive (Leontiev, 2009, p. 365), which led to new activity toward meeting the demands with volition. The publication thus traces the details of a dialectical process of responsiveness between adults and children that results in a qualitative change in the child's orientation to learning.

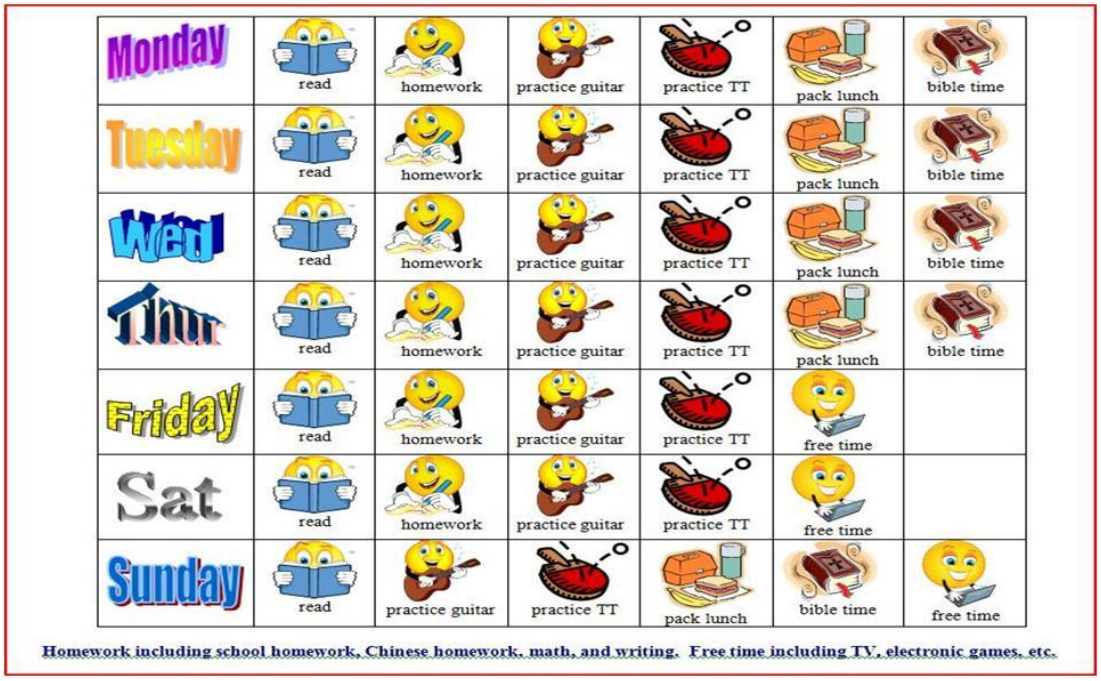


Figure 6.3 Everyday task sheet for Vincent

CHAPTER 7
CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE ON FAMILY PRACTICES AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR CHILDREN'S MOTIVE DEVELOPMENT

7.1 About Publication 5 and its Process

Publication 5 included in this chapter explores the way encouragement as a family practice facilitates children's motive for learning from the child's perspective. It is a chapter in an edited book entitled "*Constructing educational achievement: A sociocultural perspective*" (S. Phillipson, Ku & S.N. Phillipson, 2013). The book is the targeted outcome of the same-titled colloquium which was held at Hong Kong Baptist University in December 2011. Distinguished academics and researchers from around the world, including Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Scotland, Serbia, and the U.S., were invited to present at the colloquium and contribute a chapter for the book. My supervisor, Professor Marilyn Fleer, was one of the distinguished scholars being invited. She recognised that my research fitted very well to the theme and suggested that I send an abstract to the colloquium organisers (and book editors) for their consideration. After their careful consideration, I was given the honour to be included in this prestigious project.

Because this publication was involved in the specific project (high quality output was in demand), it went through many reviews and revisions: the abstract was reviewed and approved by the editors, a full chapter draft was sent to the editors prior to the colloquium for an initial screening, then presented in the colloquium, receiving feedback from other presenters and the participants. The editors' detailed advice was given for revision before external review, then the external reviewer's assessment and comments were received for revision, and the final

version sent to the editors for final review and advice. The review process was thus comprehensive and the comments were valuable, aiming at pushing the chapter to high quality throughout. I have benefitted immensely from this project.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, some senior academics had suggested writing a chapter in an edited book provides freedom in writing. The valuable experience gained from this project, has helped me to realise that in addition to according authorial freedom, being an author of a book chapter allows one to focus on the theme and guidelines of the book provided by the editors in planning and constructing the structure and content of his/her own chapter. Co-operating in publishing a book with the same theme and goal can help to push the chapter and the whole book to a high quality outcome and contribute greatly to new knowledge through collaborative communication. In the case of this publication, the focus and process of writing resulted in a theoretical advancement in the study of children's learning and development.

7.2 Overview of Publication 5

Publication 5 further elucidates Vygotsky's concept of the social situation of development. It is an extension of Chapter 6 (Publication 4), which investigated the process of the development of a learning motive that embraced the Chinese concept of learning. It reveals how the Chan parents worked actively according to their values and interpretation to structure an environment (the social situation) that would promote their children's learning and development. It shows how Vincent responded to his parents' demands and structured activities and how encouragement in different forms helped his development of motive and

competence. It provides an empirical illustration of Vygotsky's concept of the social situation of development.

This chapter further conceptualises the concepts of encouragement and the child's perspective within cultural–historical theory. In this chapter, encouragement is extended further by foregrounding the child's perspective in the mediation process. The concept of the child's perspective is conceptualised as the child's perception and personal sense. With this conceptualisation, the underrepresented children's voices about their experiences of their learning environment and their own contribution to their development can be captured and understood concretely.

This publication aims to understand how achievement related learning and development are fostered through encouragement in everyday family practices, and identify how children make meaning and sense of these. It focuses on capturing and examining children's perspectives on their school and enhancement learning and the role of parental encouragement in fostering in their children an achievement-related learning motive. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

Figure 7.1 below shows the role of encouragement in developing an achievement related learning motive. Encouragement from parents and other significant adults is most productively based on the parents'/adult's understanding (and modification) of both the demands they place on the child and the child's perspectives (personal sense and perception) of these. The figure also depicts the relationship among the social situation (the social situation created through parental demands and associated practices), the child's perspectives (the sense the

child makes of this social situation and his/her understanding of this) and the resultant social situation of development of the child. The dialectical nature of the relation between the child's perspectives and the social situation based on parental demands is emphasised, since the positive effects of encouragement can only occur if the parents take account of the child's perspectives and the child can understand make positive sense of the parental demands.

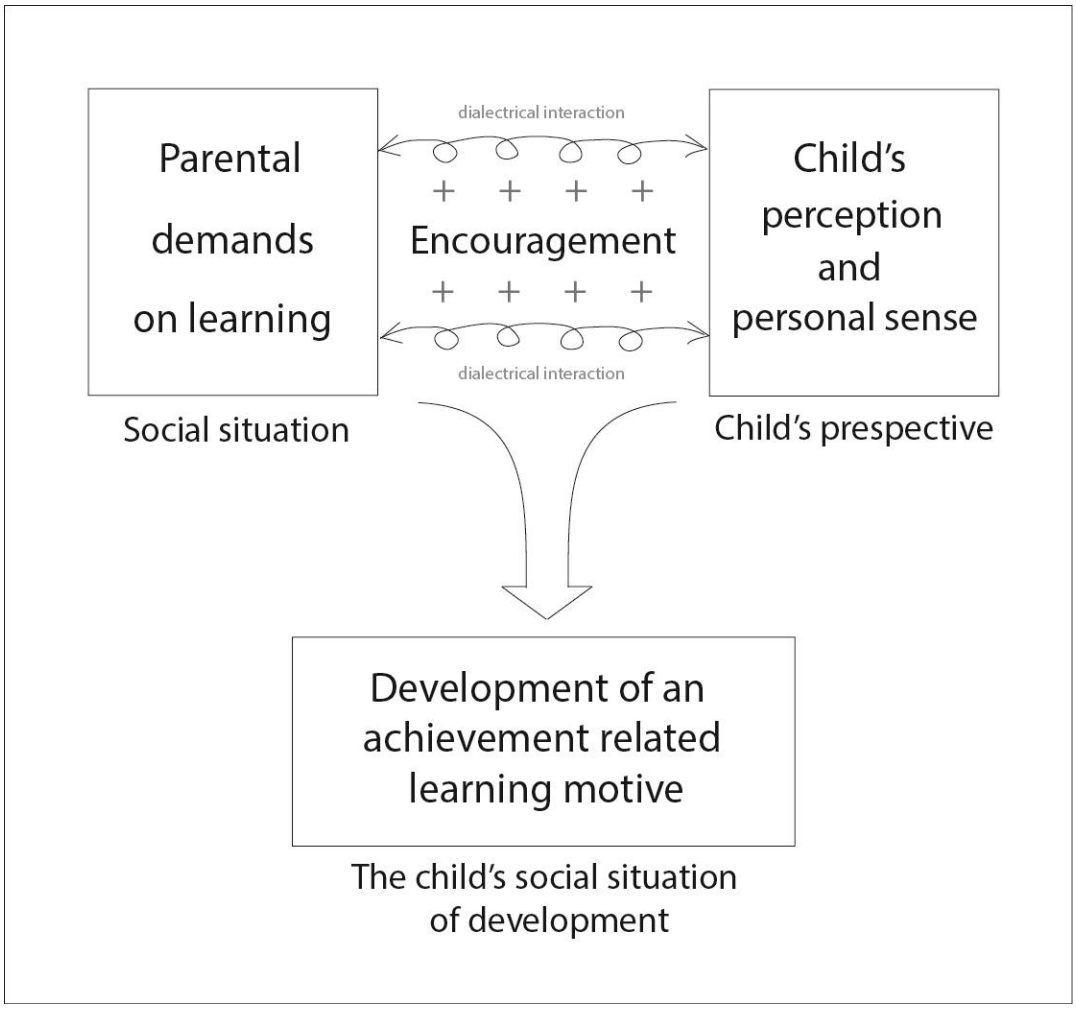


Figure 7.1 The role of encouragement in developing an achievement related learning motive

The particular research questions that Publication 5 investigated are:

What meaning and sense do Hong Kong–Australian children make of the everyday family practices aimed at their school and enhancement learning?

What role does encouragement play in Hong Kong–Australian parents' attempts to create conditions that foster their children's development of an achievement related learning motive?

To better understand how Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop, it is important to examine both the parents' affordances and how the children perceived and made sense of their learning in the situations their parents structured for them as well as the relations between these. The above two questions address these matters. For the detailed response to the research questions please see Publication 5 below.

7.3 Content of Publication 5

Wong, P. L. (2013). How encouragement in everyday family practices facilitates Hong Kong–Australian children's motive for learning. In S. Phillipson, K. Y. L. Ku & S. N. Phillipson (Eds.), *Constructing educational achievement: A sociocultural perspective* (pp. 201–214). London/New York: Routledge.

Published in March, 2013.

In the original print thesis, pages 195–208 included the published book chapter just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

7.4 Significance of Publication 5

Publication 5 is significant as it provides a fine-grained picture of how a child's perspective can be captured, analysed and presented. These methodological techniques are detailed in the publication. It gives an understanding of children's perceptions and personal sense and the ways these interact with parental values and demands in their learning situations which are crucial for studying children's educational experiences and development but rarely accounted for in other research. Table 7.1 shown below is the summary of the perceptions and personal sense of the participant children regarding their school and enhancement learning. It was intended to be included in Publication 5, however, due to the word limitation it was taken out. The information in Table 7.1 depicts useful insights regarding the participating children's perspectives on their learning environment.

The publication offers a more detailed account of processes and the critical role of encouragement, illustrating the dialectical relationship between parental demands and practices and the child's perception and personal sense in the development of children's achievement related learning motives. It demonstrates the importance of attending to children's perspectives for effective outcomes. Parents and educators can gain understandings about how to be responsive to the perspectives of the children in their charge as they develop their demands, practices or pedagogy.

Table 7.1 The Children's Perception and Personal Sense of their Learning and Education

Child	Perception		Personal sense	
	School (School is where I...)	**Out–of–school learning** (They require/help me...)	**School** (I feel...)	**Out–of–school learning** (I feel...)
Jessica 6-year-old Year 1	*learn to read, do maths & play with friends *explore many interesting activities *aim to active & capable - liked by teachers *have a normal part of life	*become good at things * do what parents like *acquire different skills *make effort, do homework & practice *be attentive & actively participate	*good going to school *activities are enjoyable *happy when teachers praise & parents are proud of me *playing with friends is fun	*enjoyment learning & becoming good at things *happy - mum guides me with homework & practice *confident & enjoyment - praised by teachers & parents when I do well
Vincent 9-year-old Year 4	*learn new knowledge & interact with friends *have many tasks to finish *have a normal part of life	*do what I have to & not give up *do what parents want *do extra practice & homework	*competent at school *happy to play with friends *most activities are fun *bored doing homework & tests but these are not hard	*it's hard - no confidence in some activities *bored doing homework & practice *free time for TV, Wii & computer is fun & enjoyable
Steven 7-year-old Year 2	*learn to read, do maths & play with friends *have many tasks to finish *have a normal part of life	*do what parents want *be persistent & make effort *do extra practices & homework *receive candies	*good going to school *happy playing with friends *activities are fun *bored doing homework & tests but these are not hard	*bored learning a lot of things and being persistent *unhappy doing homework & practice *happy receiving rewards
Jenny 11-year-old Year 6	*learn different knowledge for better future *make effort for good performance *aim to be good at many things *aim to be a conscientious & capable student - liked by teachers & principal	*learn additional things *do extra practices and learning in advance - help get good results at school *feel amounts & types of learning are just right *become good at things & receive awards	*happy acquiring new knowledge *confident & competent *satisfied being top-tier *satisfied having teachers' & principal's trust & appreciation *playing with friends is fun	*it's interesting & playful to do exercises from tuition *satisfied being top-tier & with excellent performance *happy receiving many prizes & awards *confident to do well when efforts have been made
Betty 7-year-old Year 2	*acquire knowledge especially English & Maths *play with friends & explore many interesting activities *have to make effort to perform well	*become good at things & receive awards *do extra homework & practice *see conscientious learning as part of life	*going to school is fun *it's interesting & playful to learn & do all the activities at school *happy playing with friends *competent at school	*happy receiving praise & awards *confident to do well with effort *worried when homework not finished
Micky 5-year-old Pre-prep (Kinder)	*have to follow patterns & rules & learn things seriously *explore different activities *play with friends	*do activities like my sisters *make efforts & learn things & skills seriously *do homework & practice *become good at things	*it's interesting & playful doing different activities *serious when learning *playing with friends is fun	*serious about learning *happy receiving praise & awards *annoyed when I don't want to attend & do practice

7.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 5

There are three points I would like to make regarding this publication. The first is about the issue of reiteration. The publications included in this thesis progressively

extend and elaborate on the discussion of children's development processes. This study sought to understand the Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development in relation to the prevalent phenomenon in this community. Each publication was self-contained and the research context and phenomenon under investigation needed to be expressed, yet since the background contexts and the related literature were common to all publications, when they are brought together in this thesis, there might seem to be reiteration. Methodology is another part that is most reiterated, mainly because my publications are research based, and a description of the research design and methods is essential for research based publications. I have tried to write this section in each publication in a slightly different way.

The second point is about my reflection on the concept of the social situation of development. I postulate that this concept is not only able to be used for the child, but can also be applied to individuals at all ages. This concept was introduced by Vygotsky (1998) regarding child development at a given age period. It is referred to as "the system of relations between the child of a given age and social reality" (p. 199). Vygotsky (1998) indicates that at certain age periods the social situations for development are created in accordance with the environmental and physical demands (societal/environmental expectations as well as the physical growth/factors of the child at given age) placed on the child at that age. This social situation is also interpreted by the child through perception and personal sense of his/her situations, driving his/her development. Together, the social situation and the child's perceptions of and response to it lead to a qualitative change and reorganisation of the psychological functions of the child (Kravtsova, 2006; Veresov, 2004). It is not every interaction or social situation that will bring

development; only those that the child perceives and senses as a dramatic contradiction between the environmental demands and the child's current level of motives and competences causes a crisis for the child, activating a driving force for development. Vygotsky (1998) specifies the critical ages for development at 0, 1 3, 7, 13 and 17 because at these ages, either the environment or the child's biological/physical change – or both – places demands on the child which he/she perceives as substantially different from his/her own motives and competences and this causes a crisis for the child, driving him/her to meet the demands with the help of social others. For example, a child at age 1 can walk and begin a new way of interaction with his/her environment. Also, in Russia at Vygotsky's time school started at the age of 7, so a child at age 7 was expected to attend school and behave like a school child; this creates a new form of expectation, interaction and relations for the child vis-a-vis his/her environment. Therefore, the key is the dramatic contradiction/conflict between environmental demands and the individual that creates the social situation. The interaction between the social situations and the internal positions of the child lead to qualitative change and development. The concept of social situations of development can be used to shed light on individuals' development at all ages. Examples of how the social situation of development promotes development are evident in the account of the nine-year old Vincent's development of a learning motive through his guitar learning experience, but also in the participant parents' self-reported growing up experiences and the Chan parents' academic and career pathways discussed in Chapter 4.

Further to this discussion the third point that I would like to make is about the child's perception and personal sense discussed in this chapter and the

interpretation and life experience of parents discussed in Chapter 4. The concepts of perception and personal sense apply to both the parents and the children. When I attempted to conceptualise the child's perspective, I did think of using the word 'interpretation' but it suggests a process that is a little too cognitive, conscious and implicit; which is more suitable in use for adults. Finally, I have used 'perception' which is more suitable for use in relation to the child. The relation between personal sense and life experience is that life experience accumulates throughout the person's life and acts as the foundation for personal sense and in turn personal sense shapes the life experience. Both illustrate that the environment and conditions are the sources of influence but whether they cause any effect on the adults or children will depend on their perceptions/interpretations and how they make sense/experience of them. This indicates that Vygotsky's work is applicable for analysing adults as well as children.

CHAPTER 8

LEARNING AS LEADING ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

8.1 About Publication 6 and its Process

The publication included in this chapter examines the common family pedagogy adopted by the three Hong Kong–Australian families, which fostered formal learning in their children's everyday activities to support development. It is a journal article co-authored with Professor Marilyn Fleer and was published in the Journal of International Research in Early Childhood Education (IRECE) in April, 2013. IRECE is an online double-blind peer-reviewed journal. IRECE was published in printed version as the Journal of Australian Research in Early Childhood Education (ARECE) before 2010. This article was first presented at the International Society for Cultural and Activity Research (ISCAR) Congress in September 2011. ISCAR is a scientific association aiming at promoting the use of the Vygotskian sociocultural, cultural–historical and activity theoretical approach in developing multidisciplinary theoretical and empirical research on societal, cultural and historical dimensions of human practices (ISCAR, 2012). When I presented the paper at the Congress, it drew much attention and prompted a good discussion. For example, some of the audience found the phenomenon of parents wanting their children to learn as soon and as much as possible to be odd in their societies, while others noted that the phenomenon was increasing in their societies and tended to be spreading around the globe. Yet others commented that they were beginning to understand why so many Chinese heritage children were good at academic work, while some were interested in the concepts of leading activity and periodisation, thinking that fostering formal learning in children at an early age at the expense of play might diminish their creative development.

Although the article was written prior to the congress (in full draft), presented and appreciated at the congress, the process of getting it published was not smooth. Prior to it being accepted by IRECE, it was sent to another journal that tended to privilege post-structuralist articles, however, room was available for theoretical papers and other empirical studies following different traditions. The paper was though, unexpectedly rejected. From this experience, I recognised how much paradigm matters, as differences in paradigm are accompanied by different worldviews and thus differences in the ways knowledge is pursued and interpreted (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Tudge, 2009). The paradigms and theoretical viewpoints that the reviewers (and the journals) hold are crucial to how they assess the article.

I noticed that my research has experienced certain difficulties in getting published in many early childhood journals because of the theoretical orientations of reviewers (and journals); my research topics (immigrant family practices and children's education and learning) have been investigated by others predominantly using sociological approaches and a post-structural paradigm (not to mention the paradigms involved in journals oriented towards traditional psychology journals, submission to which I did not contemplate). I had already had a glimpse of this in the reviewers' feedback from the Asia Pacific education book chapter and the AJEC review, but it was not completely evident. After adjusting the book chapter and the article in response to reviewers' comments, they were accepted. Nevertheless, it seems to me that more research is needed on children's development and family studies using the cultural–historical paradigm, thus allowing it to become more recognised in the field of early childhood, because this

framework permits a very close look at the minutiae of the processes involved in development.

8.2 Overview of Publication 6

Chapters 4 to 7 examined in detail the family practices of the participating families. Chapter 4 illustrated how the Chan's family practices formed and changed in relation to the societal, cultural, historical and individual influences; Chapter 5 elucidated the family practices of the Chan and the Lee families and their relations with their children's school practices; Chapter 6 showed the role of the Chan family practices (including encouragement) in the process of the Chan son's development of a learning motive, and Chapter 7 illuminated the meaning and sense the participant children made of their everyday family practices. Findings of the publications in Chapters 4 to 7 reveal that the family practices of the three families were focussed on formal learning. The families had adopted the pedagogy of fostering formal learning as the principal tool for their children's development.

Moreover, the literature shows that many parents from the Hong Kong immigrant community desire their children to engage in learning and structure plenty of formal learning activities in their everyday lives at an early age (Archer & Francis, 2007; Guo, 2006; S. Phillipson, 2010). Despite this being a prevalent phenomenon of the community, little is known about whether or not this type of family pedagogy is actually leading to development for young children in Hong Kong immigrant families. It is important to systematically investigate this phenomenon with a suitable paradigm and theoretical tool.

Cultural–historical theory offers a framework for understanding holistically the development of the child in family and other institutional contexts. Two significant concepts in this theory that have been used in research in Russia and Europe are leading activity and periodisation. They are helpful theoretical tools in examining the psychological development of a child at different age periods. These concepts suggest that imaginary play is the leading activity for preschool children and formal learning is the important activity leading early school children's development.

This publication extends from the previous findings chapters and addresses the gap in the literature. Drawing on the concepts of leading activity and periodisation in cultural–historical theory, the aim of this publication is to understand the mechanism and effects of the family pedagogy of engaging children in formal learning at an early age, and to identify whether – and if so how and when – the Hong Kong–Australian children acquire learning as a leading activity and develop a learning motive. It focuses on examining the family pedagogical practices of three Hong Kong–Australian families for their children's learning from birth, the conditions that the parents provide for their children's learning and development, and the children's responses to these. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

A diagrammatic representation of the publication illustrating how the Hong Kong–Australian families structure formal learning as the principal activity for their children's development is shown in Figure 8.1.

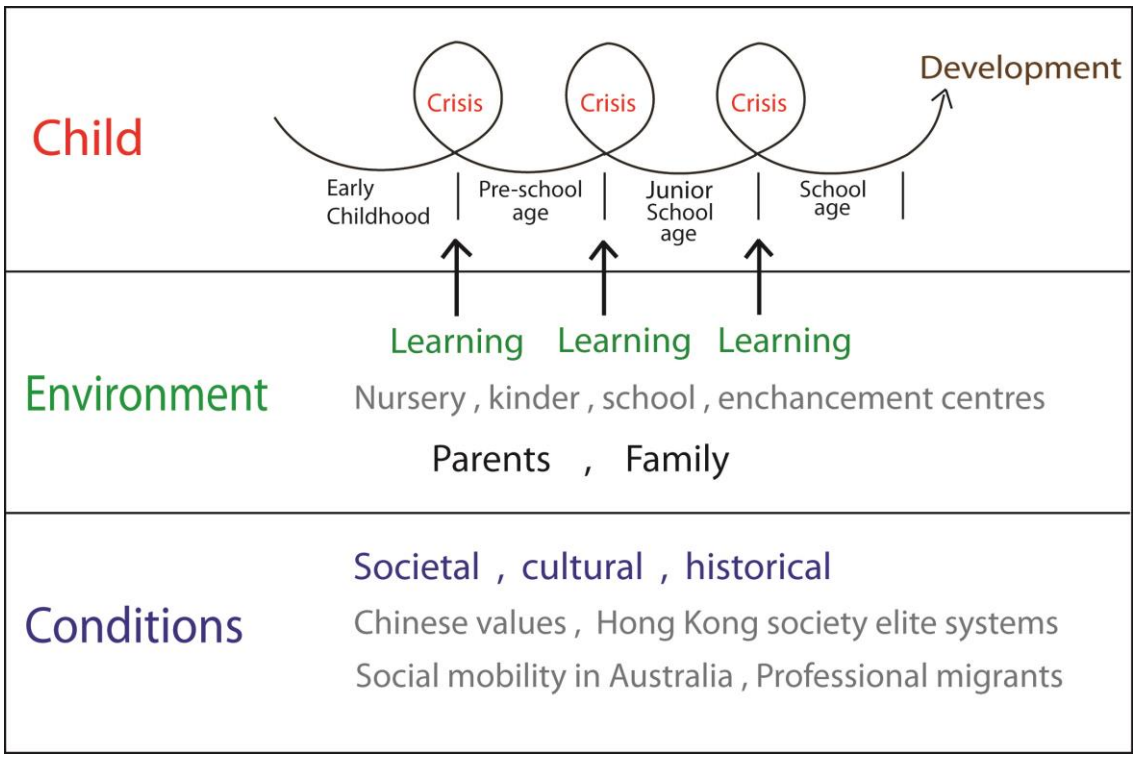


Figure 8.1 Learning as leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children's development

The particular research questions that Publication 6 investigated are:

Is learning a leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children? And if so when does this occur?

What are the mechanisms, activities and pedagogy supporting learning as a leading activity in the family environment?

For the detailed responses to these two research questions, please see Publication 6 below.

8.3 Content of Publication 6

Wong, P. L. & Fleer, M. (2013). The development of learning as the leading activity for Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia. *International Research in Early Childhood Education*, *4*, 18–34.

Published in April, 2013.

Monash University

Declaration for Thesis Chapter 8

In the case of Chapter 8, the nature and extent of my contribution to the work was the following:

Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Conception, key ideas, research investigation, data collection, data analysis, development and write up	80

The following co-authors contributed to the work. Co-authors who are students at Monash University must also indicate the extent of their contribution in percentage terms:

Name	Nature of contribution	Extent of contribution (%)
Marilyn Fleer	Conception, support for data analysis and write up	20

Candidate's Signature	[redacted]	Date 20/6/2012

Declaration by co-authors

The undersigned hereby certify that:

(1) the above declaration correctly reflects the nature and extent of the candidate's contribution to this work, and the nature of the contribution of each of the co-authors.
(2) they meet the criteria for authorship in that they have participated in the conception, execution, or interpretation, of at least that part of the publication in their field of expertise;
(3) they take public responsibility for their part of the publication, except for the responsible author who accepts overall responsibility for the publication;
(4) there are no other authors of the publication according to these criteria;
(5) potential conflicts of interest have been disclosed to (a) granting bodies, (b) the editor or publisher of journals or other publications, and (c) the head of the responsible academic unit; and
(6) the original data are stored at the following location(s) and will be held for at least five years from the date indicated below:

Faculty of Education, Building A, Monash University, Peninsula Campus, Franskton

Co-author's Signature	[redacted]	Date 20/6/2012

In the original print thesis, pages 221–237 included the published article just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

8.4 Significance of Publication 6

Publication 6 is significant as it has systematically examined the prevalent phenomenon of many Hong Kong immigrant families of adopting the pedagogy of emphasising the use of formal learning for their children's development from an early age. It gives a deeper and more concrete explanation of how Hong Kong immigrant children come to achieve highly in academic studies, and explicates the real underlying relationship between motives and demands in families where high academic achievement is valued. Investigating the family pedagogy with a focus on the mechanisms, principles and the concept of leading activity (Karpov, 2005; Kravtsova, 2006; Veresov, 2006) reveals that high parental expectations and demands and the structuring of ample learning activities serve to create crisis and new self-awareness in the children. More importantly, parents' encouragement and support, by paying responsive attention to their children's perceptions and personal sense, help their children develop a learning motive, master the competences and meet the demands. The integration of the demand to engage in the activity, the new-formation in the child and the help in developing the motive and mastering the competence constitute the establishment of a leading activity.

The findings of this publication indicated that formal learning was established early (before early school age) as the leading activity for the children in the three Hong Kong–Australian families. These findings provide evidence supporting the criticism of the rigid norms in the traditional maturational theories of child development. Moreover, they raised questions about the specification of particular sequences of leading activities in the views of periodisation promoted by cultural–historical theorists. These findings have further foregrounded and deepened

Vygotsky's concept of the social situation of development, confirming the importance of cultural and temporal factors in the development of pedagogical practices in families.

8.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 6

This publication has given me a lot of inspiration. In addition to the points that have been mentioned in Section 8.1 regarding the importance of research paradigm in relation to reviews and getting published, this publication has also clearly foregrounded the significance of the paradigm being used in the research process and outcomes.

This study is informed theoretically by the cultural–historical paradigm which is characterised by the understanding that interactions and processes in development are dialectical and culturally and historically framed. This characteristic was also a feature of how the methodology developed as the study progressed. For example, after completing the data collection as originally designed and having gone through an initial data analysis, I was prompted to gather additional data beyond the data collection period, so as to search for relevant historical data about the families. I noted the changes, the process of the children's development and traced the leading activity for the participant children at different age periods. This helped to better understand the way the participant children were learning and developing since birth. This reveals how the research methodology shaped and is shaped dialectically by the way my research was conducted and interpreted.

This study was extended to trace the process and details of the children's participation in their everyday activities from birth in order to re-construct a holistic picture of the children's learning and development. However, due to the time constraint for a PhD study, the data were limited to the interviews with the parents supplemented by the photos and documents (e.g. school reports, certificates of participation in enhancement activities and awards) about the children in the past. Given that the cultural–historical paradigm emphasises the investigation of processes and changes, it provides powerful lenses for longitudinal studies of child development and families. However, this combination of approaches to doing research has not been commonly found. It is worth making a move towards using the cultural–historical paradigm in longitudinal child and family studies for more comprehensive and insightful outcomes.

The literature portrays Chinese heritage immigrant communities as having a high incidence of excellent academic achievement and many studies have related this outcome to the parents' emphasis on fostering formal learning in their children as early and as much as possible (Francis & Archer, 2005; Jun Li, 2004; Louie, 2004; Shek & Chan, 1999). This publication does not claim that every Hong Kong–Australian family emphasises formal learning, but rather investigates what happens when formal learning is an emphasis. As mentioned in Section 8.4, the outcomes of this study offer a more comprehensive understanding of this prevalent phenomenon. Moreover, the conclusion traces two seemingly contradictory arguments. On one hand, it confirmed the establishment of formal learning as the leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children before early school age which problematises the concept of leading activity and periodization as they have been heretofore understood. On the other hand, it called on related

literature (Bozhovich, 2009) to consider the possible drawback of this type of family pedagogy of an early emphasis on formal learning, which is that it may come at the expense of developing creativity and imagination. I deliberately teased this out as I found the contradictions, in turn, have deepened the concept of the social situation of development and have extended the application of the dialectical reasoning to the contradictory findings for productive outcomes.

The present study suggests that, at least for the participant families, family pedagogy fostering formal learning as the leading activity very early results in children developing a learning motive which values academic and other learning achievements. This pedagogical orientation had its roots in the cultural, historical and societal heritage of the parents. Clearly play, in the sense given the term by Vygotsky, is not a prominent orientation. The study suggests then that family pedagogical orientations and practices can provide lessons for us all. We can learn from each other and apply dialectical reasoning to achieve an even more fruitful approach to child development.

The form or content or the way formal learning occurs can be different in different societies. The education system of one country may allow its children to engage in more imaginative activities while other countries may place greater emphasis on learning knowledge and skills. If a more culturally diverse perspective were taken, and no particular cultural emphasis privileged, there is great potential for building new pedagogies for our globalised culturally diverse society, in which new motives may be developed, such as playful learning, with thorough understandings of what each element involves. Understanding how leading activities are generated through culture, environment, needs and capabilities, and understanding how

development occurs through leading activities sheds light on how parents and educators can enrich family and institutional practices to make the leading activity richer and more effective. For example, in the case of the Hong Kong community early use of learning as a leading activity could well encompass practices otherwise associated with play as a leading activity to enhance children's imagination and creative thinking.

The context (social situation) for development shapes the leading activity for the child in a particular period. This publication has dealt with periodisation and its important contribution in that it looks at the micro socio-cultural elements (the social and cultural trajectory of the family) that have changed the way in which periodisation works for this group of children in comparison to the mostly Western settings and background of the families. In the case of the Hong Kong–Australian families, the traditional Chinese values and culture exerted a significant influence on their values and practices, but these were also in myriad ways mediated by their personal life experiences and interpretations. Despite the fact that the children are in a Western setting, the cultural elements that come through the families still prevailed to a certain degree in determining the kind of leading activity. I talked about periodisation because it is one way of showing people that the process of the development of the learning motive is highly contextual. The context of development is the key but the cultural element in that context and the history of development of the family are equally important in determining the kinds of activities and practices and the resulting leading activity for the children. This publication emphasises the need to look at the family in micro cultural, societal and historical ways that reveal the social situations for individual development.

CHAPTER 9
A MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING AND FACILITATING CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

9.1 About Publication 7 and its Process

Publication 7 included in this chapter is a journal article presenting a cultural–historical model which helps to understand, analyse and facilitate a child's development holistically. It was submitted to *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* (*EECERJ*) for consideration for publication in June 2012. It was accepted for publication in July 2013. *EECERJ* is the journal of the *European Early Childhood Education Research Association* (*EECERA*). It is one of the world's most prestigious early childhood journals and is positioned in the Social Sciences Citation Index (*EECERJ*, 2012). Apart from the fact that this journal is scholarly and particularly interested in publishing research papers which provide insights applicable to the field, another reason for choosing *EECERJ* to publish this article is that I had presented an early version of this model in the EECERA 2010 Conference in Birmingham, U.K. and I received the 2010 Student Research Award for the best postgraduate student research, which was jointly sponsored by Community Playthings and EECERA.

Since *EECERA* and *EECERJ* have a clear interest in research and publish papers which have application to early childhood education and care policy and practice, this helped to shape this publication not only regarding its focus on presenting the theoretical constructs of the model and explaining how the model works but also on providing methodological (a template for analysis) and practical applications (guidelines for effective family pedagogy) for use by researchers, practitioners and

parents. I gained valuable experiences and skills from writing this publication and finalising the model that was developed from this study.

In addition, an early version of this publication received the Monash Education Research Committee (MERC) Postgraduate Publication Award which supports writers of promising papers to prepare them for publication.

9.2 Overview of Publication 7

Publication 7 presents the cultural–historical model that draws together and extends concepts explored in the previous findings chapters (Chapters 4 to 8). It discusses the essential dimensions and components identifying the underlying theory and the applications of the model. The model is a holistic representation of the processes, mechanisms and influences in child development. Publication 7 aims to respond to the need shown in the literature for a clear model that can facilitate a holistic understanding about how children learn and develop in their communities and how to support children to develop optimally.

It focuses on explicating the new model and showing its ability to focus on complex interrelations of influences, which makes it a powerful analytical tool for use by researchers and educators. Representing the culmination of understandings from the increasingly holistic levels of analysis of the case study of the three Hong Kong–Australian families, working toward a holistic view, this final model was subsequently applied again to the same three families. Six main issues for a holistic understanding of child development and guidelines for an effective family pedagogy for the Hong Kong–Australian families were developed from the

application of the model. A summary of the publication is attached in Appendix G for quick reference.

The model in this publication serves as a response to the main research question – **How can Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday practices?** It also responds to the following question:

How can we understand, analyse and facilitate each child's development holistically in our complex, diverse and ever changing society?

In respect of the former, the publication and the model provide a holistic understanding of the ways children's development can best be promoted in the specific contexts of the Hong Kong–Australian families studied. The model can be used in response to the latter question to facilitate both the development of pedagogy for other families, institutions and communities, and for research analysis. Details of Publication 7 ensue.

9.3 Content of Publication 7

Wong, P. L. (Accepted). A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children's development. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*.

Accepted in July, 2013

Note: Depending on the journal's final decision, the published form of the article may be different from the one shown in the print thesis.

In the original print thesis, pages 247–279 included the article just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions.

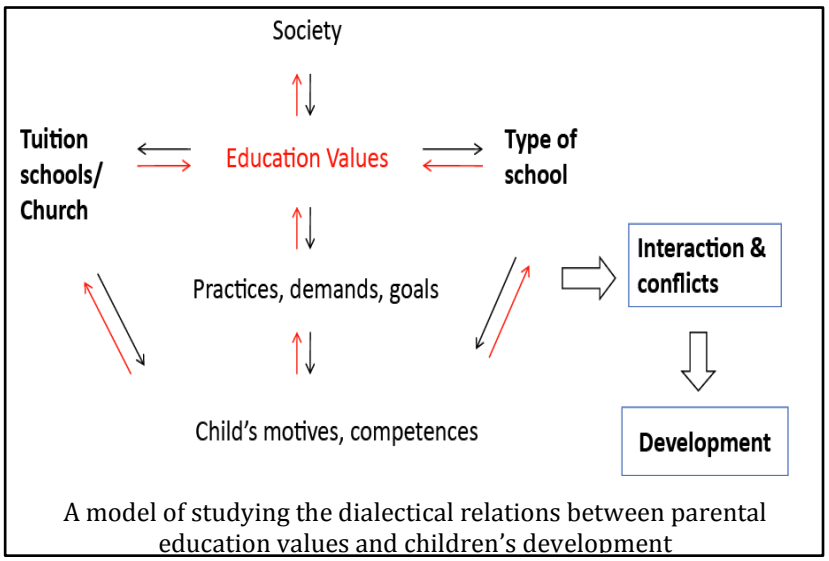
9.4 Significance of Publication 7

The holistic model in this publication incorporates relevant socio-cultural–historical concepts and further advances understandings of the unit (the essential components and dimensions) and processes facilitating children's development. It is more detailed than previous models, incorporating visually the unit (all the important components) contributing to child development and representing the dialectical relationships involved in the interplay of components. It represents new understandings of influences such as encouragement and the role of semi-institutional environments in the process of child development. The inclusion of encouragement is especially significant as it focuses on a facilitative set of strategies not previously represented in socio-cultural–historical models.

9.5 Reflection and Commentary on Publication 7

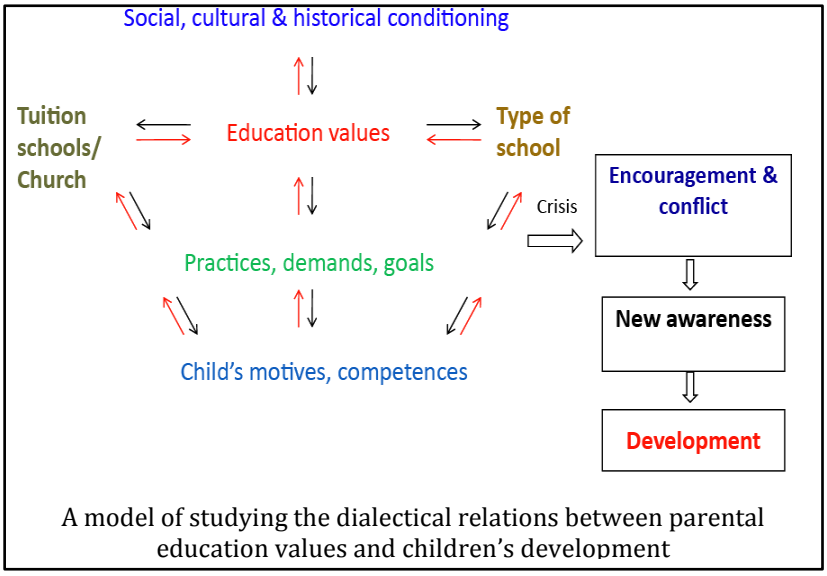
The model presented in the publication evolved from its initial form – derived from the literature review in relation to the research questions of the study – to its advanced and more concrete form shown in this publication. Altogether the model progressed through six versions, illustrating the process of conceptual development associated with the review of literature, analysis and response to the findings from the study, and the re-visiting of the key concepts and theories within the cultural–historical paradigm (Vygotsky, his collaborators, such as Elkonin, Leontiev, and contemporary cultural–historical scholars, such as Fleer, Gonzalez Rey, Hedegaard, van Oers). Version 1 of the model was derived before data collection, and helped in the research design guiding the collection and analysis of data. Versions 2 to 5 gradually incorporated into the model the specific findings from the study (such as encouragement) and the related theoretical concepts

(such as dialectical relationships, conflict, crisis and new self-awareness) corresponding to the study findings. Although the model evolved gradually to its quite mature form from Versions 1 to 4 during the study, Version 5 and subsequently Version 6 (the final version) brought substantial changes to the model. When the model was required to be consolidated and finalised as an article for submission to *EECRJ* for consideration for publication, I was driven to revisit the data, findings, the preceding publications (Publications 1 to 6), key concepts and contemporary research on cultural–historical theory of child development, and to relate this literature and data together carefully to produce the present final version (Version 6) of the model as it appears in this publication. A summary showing the evolution of the different versions of the model is shown in Figure 9.1.



A model of studying the dialectical relations between parental education values and children's development

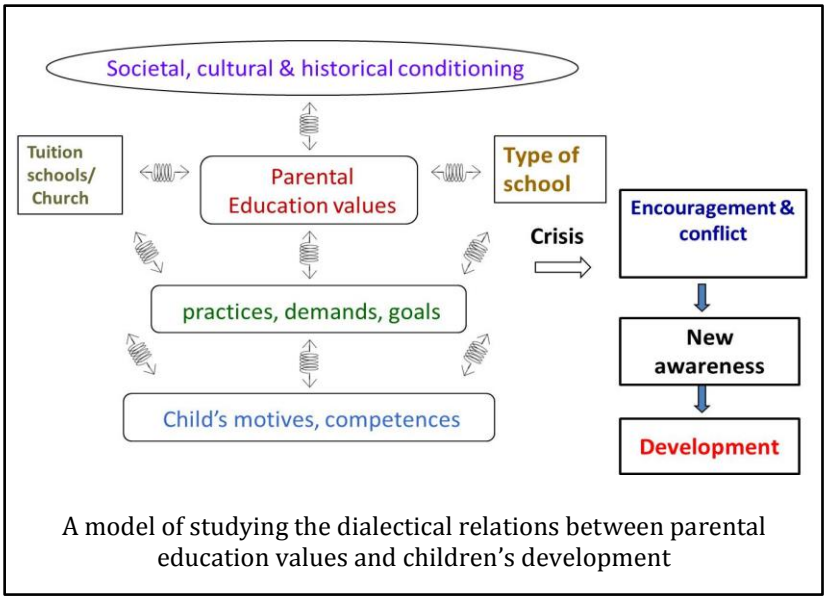
Version 1
The initial form of the model deriving from the literature review in relation to the initial research questions before data collection



A model of studying the dialectical relations between parental education values and children's development

Version 2

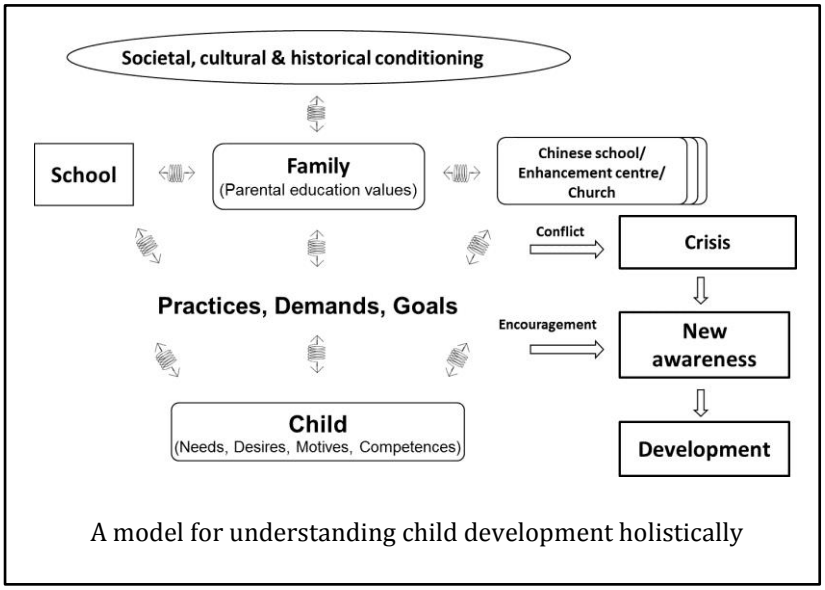
It incorporated encouragement, an important finding of the study, and the concepts of crisis and new self-awareness into the model



A model of studying the dialectical relations between parental education values and children's development

Version 3

It foregrounded the dialectical relationship in the process and revised social to societal to reflect the societal influences as the social influences that should have already taken into account/embedded when we look at the dialectical interactions among the child and his/her social environment



A model for understanding child development holistically

Version 4

The detailed concepts of development have been further clarified and updated (e.g. the relations between conflict, crisis and encouragement, the family as an institution where parental education values is included under family, including the needs, desires together with the motives and competences of the child in the model.

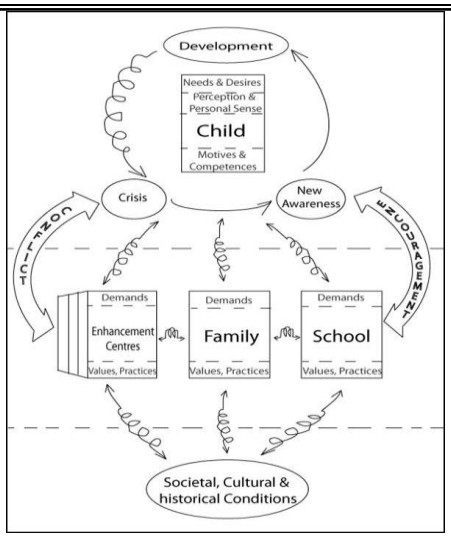
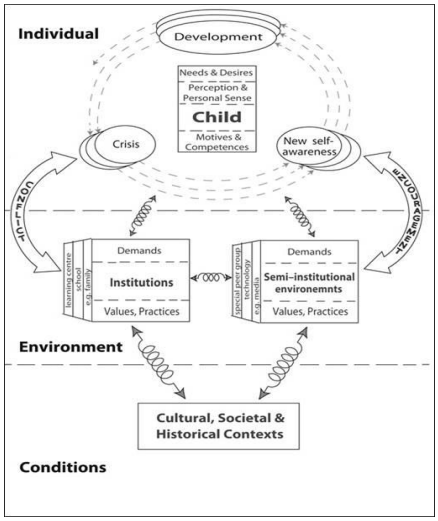
 A model for understanding child development holistically	**Version 5** Expanded the concepts and components of child's perspective, re-organised and refined the essential components and dimensions incorporating with the relevant theoretical bases.
 A model for understanding and facilitating children's development	**Version 6** It further refined from Version 5, expanded the concept of institutions, including semi-institutional environments, a more visualise and traceable model is developed, illustrating the essential components, dimensions, mechanism and process of a child development.

Figure 9.1 The evolution of the model

This publication is in fact the culmination of my research. The model synthesises all the insights from the previous publications, the theory and the study data. Each of these publications responded to the individual research questions. As a synthesis of these, Publication 7 presents a theorised methodological tool that can respond to not only the main research question for this study regarding Hong Kong–Australian families but also similar questions set in other contexts. It serves

as a framework for research analysis and for the development of context-appropriate pedagogy. In this sense this publication serves as a principal outcome of the study.

CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

This study has examined the ways Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices through a qualitative case study of three Hong Kong immigrant families living in Melbourne, Australia. Adopting (and adapting) Vygotsky's cultural–historical paradigm and a dialectical interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008) helped set the direction on the ways to conduct the study, and collect, analyse and interpret the data. Through video observations of the participant children's everyday activities, extensive interviews, field notes, and photos, video clips and various documents related to the children's education and learning provided by participants, this study closely examined the family practices and activities that the participant children engaged in and interacted with in their everyday lives. These provided rich information to study the social situation of development of the children. Thus, comprehensive and insightful understandings of the ways the participant children learned and developed were obtained.

As presented in Chapters 4 to 8, each of the included publications has itself responded to one or more associated research question(s). Chapter 9 explicates a model that was developed in the study by bringing together all the findings from the publications. This model facilitates a holistic understanding of and support for children's development. Altogether these chapters and publications have presented a holistic response to the main research question of the study, "How do Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family

practices?". Furthermore, as suggested in Chapter 9, the model can serve as a framework for parents, educators, researchers and policy makers to use in shaping effective pedagogies, tools and policies to facilitate children's optimal development. In the next section, the essence of the findings in relation to the main research question is elaborated. I then provide an account of the contributions this study makes to knowledge and the limitations of the study. Finally, future research directions are recommended.

10.2 Hong Kong–Australian Children Learn and Develop

Heeding the problems of over simplified, stereotypical (along cultural lines) and inconsistent results found in the existing literature about children's learning and development in Hong Kong immigrant families, this study – unusual in its detailed tracing of family interactions and practices – has obtained a holistic and authentic understanding about how Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday family practices through the case study of three Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia. Thus, essential insights into the facilitation of effective learning and development for children have been unlocked.

This study shows that positive mutual responsiveness lies at the heart of the process of the Hong Kong–Australian children's learning and development. Mutual responsiveness in this study refers to the dialectical interactions of two or more parties (e.g. parent and child) paying attention to and taking consideration of each other's perspectives and giving positive responses to each other, such as through accommodation or synthesis of values, practices, demands and desires. Because of the presence of mutual responsiveness, the participating children learn and develop effectively within their family valued practices. The importance of mutual

responsiveness is evident in the relationship between the cultural, societal, historical conditions and the parents' life experiences and interpretations (Chapter 4), between the families and their children's schools (Chapter 5), between parental demands and practices and the child's motives and competences (Chapter 6), between parental encouragement and the child's perceptions and personal sense (Chapter 7), between cultural and temporal influences and the leading activity for the children's development (Chapter 8) and within and among the individual, the environment and the conditions (Chapter 9).

In this study, the parents were responsive; although they placed demands on their children which set the target for their development (and these demands might initially have been based on what they believed would benefit their children), they also paid close attention to their children's motives, competences and responses, were prepared to adjust and accommodate their demands and practices, and used encouragement (in various forms) to help their children to appropriate family values and meet the demands. For example, Chapter 6 shows how Vincent's parents noticed his dislike of the piano, thought Vincent might prefer the guitar and enrolled him to learn this instrument. On noticing his continued resistance they made the experience of practising and learning more palatable to Vincent by introducing incentives, arranging a role to play guitar in the church's children's choir and praising him for effort and achievement. The children in this study were also responsive. They appropriated family values which had been influenced by Chinese values and the Chinese concept of learning, developed a learning motive in their school and enhancement learning and were willing to work towards meeting parental (and environmental) demands, resulting in high achievement and competency. Such responsiveness is exemplified in Vincent's guitar learning

experience and his development of motive for learning. The mutually responsive interactions between parents and child (and in a broader sense among the individual, his/her environment and the conditions) evolved, facilitating development.

One of the key tenets of the cultural–historical paradigm for studying children is the attention to the dialectical relationship among the individual, environment and conditions (Hedegaard, 2008a, 2009; Wong, Accepted). This study finds that mutual responsiveness is a form of dialectical relationship that facilitates positive development. In Vygotsky's (1994, 1998) theory of child development, he indicates that the ideal form (what is intended to have been achieved at the end of the development period) already exists in the child's environment. When he talks about a child learning to speak, he explains that the developed form of language that the child learns is already there – the language that his/her parents, the significant social others and his/her community speak to the child. Apart from this example, not many others are mentioned, which makes people feel that Vygotsky's theory of child development is abstract and not particularly practical (Daniels, 2001; Valsiner, 1998). The current study has offered and illustrated an example of an ideal form of child development. This example is pertinent to Chinese heritage families. It gives useful insights into how parents can foster their children's learning and development with the outcomes that they desire and at the same time ensure their children are willing and motivated. The study demonstrates how children of Hong Kong Chinese heritage learn and develop in everyday family practices through the complex dialectical process of interaction of parental demands and values, cultural values, and children's desires through responsive negotiations and appropriation. This sits in contrast to the picture painted by

much of the literature which characterises the learning environment and process of Chinese heritage children as replete with imposition, rigid discipline and uni-directional demands (Jun Li, 2004; Louie, 2004; L. Wong, 1997).

10.3 Contributions of the Study

This study has added knowledge to the literature theoretically, methodologically and practically.

10.3.1 Theoretical contributions

The study applied Vygotsky's 'abstract' concept of child development to real life contemporary issues. On the one hand, this helps to reveal mechanisms and processes in child development, thus helping us to obtain deeper and more comprehensive understandings of child development in a particular community than had been produced by prior research. On the other hand, the real case can illustrate the power, the tenets and usefulness of Vygotsky's concepts. This supports Chaiklin's (2003) disagreement with some researchers who "have characterized Vygotsky's concept as 'metaphorical' and/or 'heuristical' or rhetorical, descriptive, and not intended for systematic theoretical development" (p. 58). This study gives a concrete illustration of the concepts of the social situation of development and dialectical relationships.

The study maps everyday terms onto Vygotsky's cultural–historical theory. For example, demand represents the ideal form and the child's motive and competence the present form of development, with encouragement as a mediation process between ideal and present forms. The study has also incorporated both children's and parents' perspectives regarding encouragement, and has conceptualised the

child's perspectives as perceptions and personal sense to help understand how the processes work.

The model in Chapter 9 conceptualises the whole process in ways and terms that are accessible to parents, researchers and practitioners, without losing the sense of holism and complexity. In building the model, I extended the theory based on my own study. In sum, the written outcomes of the study make Vygotsky's concepts more concrete and I extended and synthesised all these understandings into a useful and practical model.

The study is firmly grounded in Vygotsky's (1987, 1997a, 1997b, 1998) cultural–historical theory, especially on the concept of the social situation of development. Vygotsky (and his collaborators) developed and applied the cultural–historical theory based in a Russian context during the Soviet era. Drawing also on the work of Leontiev (1978, 2009), ElKonin (1971, 1999), Hedegaard (2008a, 2009), and Fleer (2010), who have researched European and Australian contexts, the present study has extended these thinkers' understandings of particular concepts, added new concepts and illustrated all of these with examples from a societal, cultural and historical context that has had little written about it in these theoretical terms before.

Some of Vygotsky's concepts, such as the zone of proximal development, language and thinking, mediation and artifacts, are widely used in educational research, yet many important concepts central to his theory have been under-researched in subsequent investigations, such as his concepts of the social situation of development, the child's perspective, the genetic law of cultural development and

leading activity. I have tried to honour the following tenets of Vygotsky regarding children's development, which hold that:

- The social situation of development is central to an understanding of development;
- The process of development is dynamic and interactive – thus dialectic interaction between the child and others in the environment must be foregrounded;
- Children's perspectives are critical to identifying (and responding to) what is happening developmentally, and to understanding the roles of social others in this, and
- Understandings can only be achieved through attempts to gain a holistic appreciation of the situation.

I have advanced the discussion and understanding of the following concepts (some new, some familiar in cultural historical theory) in the ways indicated:

1. The institutional demands (mostly parents') and their relation to the child's motives, competences, perceptions and personal sense were foregrounded. The study found that children are active agents who play an important role in contributing to their own development. Though the Hong Kong–Australian parents actively worked towards configuring the social situations according to their values that they felt were optimal for their children's learning and development, effective development could only occur when mutual responsiveness between parents and child was achieved (See Chapter 7)

2. The concept of the social situation of development established by Vygotsky was still abstract because of his untimely death. This concept has been applied to this empirical study, bringing new insight for the theory and deepening knowledge of child development in the Hong Kong–Australian community (See Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9)
3. The notion of learning motive was investigated and the data illustrated the dialectical ways in which children gradually appropriate the motive their parents intend them to develop (See Chapter 6). This involved illustrating the complex dialectical process of values development (See Chapter 4), visualizing the process of the formation of a learning motive embracing parental values, which included Chinese (Confucian) values and the related meaning system of learning. Importantly, this was achieved without cultural essentialism since each family was shown to do this differently.
4. ElKonin's (1971) explication of periodisation was shown to differ in the detail when investigated with the study families. A learning motive was developed early and dominated for a long period in the children's lives (see Chapter 8)
5. The importance of conflict and encouragement for children's learning and development has been foregrounded, and examples of these are given in Chapters 6 and 7. Because the study data pointed so clearly to it as a tool for promoting development, encouragement was conceptualised in detail along with the allied practices. Various forms of encouragement were identified and their part in the process of development of the individual was included in the final model in Chapter 9.

6. The model is a visual representation that takes care to indicate the dialectical relationships among and across the individual child, his/her environment and the conditions influencing the process of development. The model has extended Hedegaard's (2008a, 2008b, 2009) model of children's learning and development through their participation in institutional practices for wider use by adding semi-institutional environments, specifying the micro nature of societal, cultural and historical contexts/influences within an individual's trajectory rather than in the macro sense of society, culture and traditions, and foregrounding the role of encouragement for effective development.

10.3.2 Methodological contributions

My use of cultural–historical dialectical-interactive methodology including multiple methods has confirmed its power to reveal the details of the processes, mechanisms and interactions between people, institutions and even cultural traditions from various perspectives in a child's learning and development.

Given the centrality of a holistic view and the importance of interactions, the methods I chose to collect data were aimed at capturing multiple views, everyday interactions and activities in a range of settings, and accounts of past perspectives and practices, and to do this over as long a time period as possible within the time scales imposed by candidature and the need to publish. The result was a combination of video observations of various daily institutional practices and children's activities, interviews with parents and children, photos provided by family members, informal conversations, field notes and related documents (e.g. handbooks, certificates and reports about the children's academic and

enhancement learning) and relevant internet information. The combination provided rich, multilayered records of family practices and children's everyday life. The retrospective interviews and conversations, whether about the parents' life as children or about the concert that the child had just played in, helped elucidate the societal, cultural, historical and personal trajectories of a family and the family members, or reveal the child's. The rich tapestry woven by the multiple methods is necessary for detailed research on processes in child development, yet has not been widely used. Using the cultural–historical paradigm, dialectical-interactive methodology and visual methods in trying to understand child development and the phenomenon of high-achieving Hong Kong–Australian children is in itself an innovation, as the majority of the studies regarding immigrant children's educational experiences are still dominantly framed under sociological approaches where surveys, interviews and/or general observations are the main methods.

Methodologically, the richness of data yielded through visual methodology and extensive interviews revealed the interactions over time between parents, child and community, facilitating an understanding of the mediation process in which encouragement played a central role in the child's development towards the ideal form. Moreover, the longitudinal aspect (12 months) of the research permitted these rich data to be available throughout a whole process of learning and development (e.g., Vincent's guitar learning experience), making visible the myriad ways the mutual responsiveness of parents and child helped learning to evolve.

The model developed from this study presented in Chapter 9 constitutes a methodological tool that can be used by parents, researchers, and educators to identify in detail the components, dimensions, conditions and mechanisms of what

is happening in a child's development process as well as to make decisions about ways to optimise this process. It permits a holistic view of how the child, significant social others, institutions and the societal, cultural and historical conditions interact and support development. It also introduces new conceptual elements such as encouragement and semi-institutional environment so that they can be focussed on in the process of investigation. It is particularly useful as I have used visual tools, thus expanding on existing cultural–historical studies that investigate everyday life. This is a practical step forward for researchers who can apply it in different communities and contexts.

10.3.3 Practical contributions

In practical terms, the research has provided a fuller understanding of how Hong Kong–Australian family practices lead to children achieving high levels of results in academic learning.

By investigating the individuality of each family's and school's practices the study has also ensured that stereotyped explanations were not used to oversimplify ostensible similarities in practices and values in families. The research showed that nuanced differences in values and practices could lead to significant differences in children's developmental pathways (See Chapters 4 and 5).

A useful practical outcome is the model in Chapter 9 and the guiding principles for effective family pedagogy that accompany it. These can facilitate the identification of supportive practices for particular children in particular institutional contexts – such as family or school – or semi-institutional contexts, such as children's good friends, social networking, and media.

In addition, the following implications may be drawn from the study. All pertain to the need to focus on:

- individuals in community;
- the details of the complex and dynamic relations and mechanisms through a model;
- capturing and understanding perspectives and origins;
- learning from each other with attention to detail and synthesising from there;
- holistic processes;
- mutual responsiveness among children and their social realities as key in analysing and promoting development.

10.4 Limitations

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the data collected for this study are rich, but could not be utilised fully especially since this thesis has been completed by publication. With the restrictions of theme, scope, word length and review process imposed on the publications, only relevant data were included. For example, data from school, Chinese school and other enhancement classes were only discussed in terms of what activities were related to them and why and how many activities parents arranged for their children in order to trace the parents' values, demands and practices. However, although the children's responses to and relationship with these activities were analysed, the focus of the publications meant that these data were not fully utilised. Their presentation remains for further publications.

Another methodological limitation is that, as recognised in the research design, this case study is not aimed at providing findings that can be generalised to populations (statistical generalisation). For example, the form of encouragement that the Chan family found useful to motivate the Chan children might not be as useful for the other families. However, it has yielded insights that can be used as "lessons learned" by other families, communities or contexts (Yin, 2009). Moreover, the methods used and the theoretical propositions in this study can serve as a sample for reference to other families, communities or contexts.

Problems were encountered in the process of study for this thesis by publication in the use of cultural–historical theory in immigrant family studies, which is rather new and not much is available for reference in comparison with studies using critical, post-structural and in particular the sociological approach, which all seem to focus on the 'big picture'. This study focuses on looking at an individual family and child and aims to find out the process of child development, and trace it carefully to its roots. Thus a theory representing the complex holistic process of development was selected. Nevertheless, because of the paucity of close theoretical studies using cultural–historical approaches, this study also encountered critiques from the perspectives of traditional psychology, which tends to look at child development in relation to certain factors, aspects or elements instead of as a complex process.

While the cultural–historical approach emphasises tracing the historical and continuous process of development, longitudinal tracing of the changes both backward and forward of the children and the families is not easy to achieve because of PhD candidature. To compensate for the limited time, this study tried to

trace the history of the family practices and children's activities through in-depth interviews with the parents.

The Hong Kong immigrant community has its specific characteristics which I wanted to foreground in my study. However, due to the rapid growth of China on the world stage and Hong Kong becoming a special administration region of China, nowadays this community is being more and more subsumed under the broader Chinese community. This means that specific information and studies about the Hong Kong–Australian community (also Hong Kong immigrant community in other Western countries, such as Canada, the UK and US) are difficult to obtain. In addition, the data from the census of the Hong Kong–Australian community are limited to Hong Kong-born which does not yield a complete set of statistical data for the target population of the study as many of offspring of the Hong Kong-born have been born in Australia and they are subsumed in the Australian-born category. Therefore, the information discussed about the Hong Kong community in Australia can only provide a general picture of the trends of the community.

10.5 Recommendations for Future Research Directions

This study reveals the power of using a cultural–historical approach in studying child development and family studies. However, it is still not commonly used in these fields. More use of a cultural–historical approach is recommended in child development and family studies, in particular in longitudinal studies of children and family.

Moreover, the study has teased out the main features and concepts together with the conceptualisation of some everyday terms within the cultural–historical

orientation, such as dialectical relationships, the process of development, ideal and present forms, internal positions, encouragement, child's perception and personal sense. These concepts have still not been well understood and exploited by many researchers. A recommendation for future research is that these concepts be focussed on in family and child development studies. For example, looking at processes and the dialectical nature of development offer a beneficial way of understanding children's learning and development, a way that involves heeding the voices of children, indeed, the voices of all participants in the process, so we can actually see the relationships between them in specific periods and over time.

The model is an important outcome of this study, as indicated in Chapter 9. It can serve as a powerful analytical tool and a useful framework to understanding and facilitating children development, thus helping adults shape effective pedagogies, tools and policies to facilitate children's optimal development. It is an analytic generalisation for these applications. Further research on the applications of the model across a broader sample set and contexts is recommended.

This study has foregrounded very interesting findings regarding the leading activities of play versus learning and the development of creativity versus academic abilities in the Hong Kong community (applicable to Asian communities). It suggests an important direction for further research examining the impact of early formal learning combined with play (playful learning) on Hong Kong families in Australia, and on other groups. Further research into this area may bring new insights that help Hong Kong students to develop not only excellent academic performance but also creative abilities that will help them confront their futures with innovativeness, flexibility and enjoyment.

10.6 Concluding Remarks

An effective model of child development is in demand and parents, educators and policy makers need this knowledge to help bring up health, happy and capable children. This thesis ends here but its end marks a new stage in which the findings of the study and the resulting model could be put to use, not only academically in respect of the knowledge developed, but also practically by the public such as parents, children, educators, families and schools. The model could be used and disseminated as a basis for developing effective programs on parenting and supporting children's development. It promotes the consideration of the multiple perspectives of those involved in children's development (including the children themselves), the use of encouragement, mutual responsiveness, and the use of dialectical reasoning aiming for advancement through synthesis. All of these lie at the heart of positive learning experiences, which are the best gifts we can give our future generations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Publication 1

Content of Publication 1

Wong, P. L. (2007). The Education values of Hong Kong community in Australia: A review of the literature. In B. Denman (Ed.), *Proceedings of International Co-operation through Education: 35th ANZCIES Annual Conference (*pp.313–326). Armidale: University of New England and the Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society.

Published in November 2007

In the original print thesis, pages 324–337 included the published article just referred to. This article is not included in this text due to publishing restrictions but can be accessed as per the details in the reference.

APPENDIX B A Sample of Parent Interview Schedule

The following questions are indicative of the type of questions I should ask. Depending upon responses of the participants, other questions may be asked:

Personal

Can you tell me something about yourself (e.g. schooling, living and working experiences in Hong Kong and in Australia)?

Do you think education is important? Why? How important is it?

What do you think are desirable outcomes that education can provide for your child(ren)? Why?

What other issues can you think of which are important to your child too? Why?

Drawing on the literature regarding parental education values, I would like to go through with you a list of commonly found values (refer to the attached sheet "Literature on parental education values), please rate each of them according to its importance to you (1 being not important at all to 7 being extremely important). Among them which one is most important?

How important do you think is the social and emotional development of your child(ren)?
How do you promote and support your child's social and emotional development?

What kind of education curricula, essential skills and elements that you would like your child(ren) to acquire through their education?

How do you feel about the amount of your time and money invest on your child(ren)'s education?

How do you feel about your child(ren) achievements?

Interpersonal

Can you tell me something about your family (e.g. each family member, their schooling, living and working experiences in Hong Kong and in Australia)?

What were your parent(s)' views on education? Are they the same as yours? Do you think your education values have been influenced by your parent(s)? Why and how?

What activities do you normally have with your child(ren) during weekdays, the weekend and holiday (e.g. story telling every night, transportation to weekend school)? Do you enjoy these activities? How about your child(ren)? What activities would you most like to spend with your child(ren)? Why?

Is there any conflicts between you and your spouse on your child(ren)'s education (e.g. views, strategies, arrangements)? How about with your child(ren)? How do you deal

with these?

Do you think your child(ren) can understand your views, expectations and arrangements for their education? Why?

Societal, cultural and historical contexts

How do you find your life and your family's life in Australia? How about in Hong Kong?

Do you like to live in Australia? Why?

Would you prefer living in Hong Kong or Australia? Why?

What are the advantages of being a Hong Kong Chinese in Australia? How about the disadvantages?

What challenges have you experienced as an immigrant in Australia? How did you overcome these challenges?

Do you socially engage with the Australian society? How about your child(ren)? How important is it to be socially engaged with the Australian society?

Will these or other social factors affect your views and aspirations for your child(ren)'s education? Why?

How would you consider your ways of life (in Australian/ Chinese/ Hong Kong style)? Why? What are the differences between them? How about your child(ren)'s ways of life?

In your opinion, what are the differences between Chinese (traditional) values on education and Western (Australian) values on education?

How would you consider your education values, are they influenced by the Chinese cultural traditions and/ or the Western or Australian cultural traditions? Why?

Do you find yourself or your family members have acculturated by the dominant Australian culture/ ways of life after you or your family members have lived in Australia? Why and how?

What aspect of cultural heritage would you like your child(ren) to preserve? Why?

Do you think your schooling and experiences of growing up in Hong Kong have played an influential role on the way you see your child(ren)'s education and the way you raise your child(ren)? Why? In what ways?

Do you or your family members have a religion? If yes, which religion? Will this religion affect your education values? Why?

Literature on Parental Education Values

Please rate the importance of each of the following statement (1- not important at all to 7- extremely important). Each statement starts with "Education will provide my child with…"	Not important at all						Extremely important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
the route to success							
a promising future							
a good job							
a professional position							
material prosperity							
economic security							
an upward social mobility							
prestige for the family							
a development to his/her full potential							
development according to his/her unique needs							
an all-around development							
an enrichment of knowledge							
a clever mind/ an avoidance of being stupid							
the cultivation of moral character							
a development of the human mind							
a quality life							
an enjoyable life							
a happy life							
ways to become a responsible person							
ways to become a better global citizen							
ways to become a useful person in society							
ways to contribute towards society							
Other 1 (please specify):							
Other 2 (please specify):							

The following questions are indicative of the type of questions I should ask.

Are there any differences between Hong Kong and Australia? In what ways?

What do you think about Chinese cultures (e.g. Confucianism and the Imperial civic service examination)? How about Australian culture?

What do you think of being a Hong Kong immigrant in Australia? How about the offspring?

How do you define success?

What kind of success (e.g. educational, career, economic) do you want your child(ren) to achieve? Why is this kind of success so important?

What do you understand by educational success?

What do you understand by career success?

What do you understand by economic success?

What does it mean to be a successful Hong Kong Chinese in Australia? How are you going to pass on this message to your child(ren)? At what age (e.g. the earlier the better, when the child is over 6, when the child is in secondary school)?

What do you think of the education systems and policies of Hong Kong? How about those of Australia? What are the differences and similarities? Which systems do you like better (HK or Aus)? Why?

What would you most like your child(ren) to achieve from education? Why are these goals so important to achieve?

How are you trying to help your child(ren) achieve these educational goals? What kinds of activities have you asked your children to do? Why these activities and not others?

What education qualification do you hope your child(ren) will achieve? Why? What would you like your child(ren) to be? Why?

Do you think your expectations would be easier to achieve in Australia or in Hong Kong?

What are your opinions about private school, government school, Chinese school and tuition school? Would you like your child(ren) to attend these schools? Why?

What are your comments on enhancement and scholarship classes? Are they useful to your child(ren)? Why and how?

What is your opinion about homework? How much homework do you consider appropriate?

APPENDIX C A sample of children's interview schedule

Children's interview: the Chan son

You are having different activities everyday such as practicing guitar, playing computer game, etc and different activities in different days such as boy brigade in Friday and Chinese school in Saturday right. Can you name some of the activities that you do?

At home?
(practising guitar and table tennis, helping housework, reading book bought from school, homework from school and Chinese school, bible study, pray for god, playing computer games and Wii, watching TV, packing school bag and lunch, playing scooter)

Among these activities which activity you like most, second and third? Why?
Which you hate most, second and third? Why? If you hate these activities, why you do these activities? Can you stop doing these activities? Why? Would you like stop doing them? Why?

Do you think these activities are important? Why? Which are important and which are not important? Why? Which is the most important, second and third? Why? Which is the least important, second and third? Why?

Do you have any activities that you would like to add to your everyday home activities list? i.e. now you don't have but you would like to have these activities to do at home, e.g. playing chess, walking dog. Why? Are these activities important?

Do you have any activities that you , would like to take away from your everyday home activities list? i.e. now you have these activities but you don't want to have these activities to do at home any more. Why? Are these activities important?

At school?
All right, can you tell me what activities you have at school?
(playing with schoolmates, show & tell, telling others about the awards you got, assembly, English, maths and other subjects lessons, such as sports, music, motor skills, dictation, presenting your projects, having lunch, break time)

Among these activities which activity you like most, second and third? Why?
Which you hate most, second and third? Why? If you hate these activities, why you do these activities? Can you stop doing these activities? Why? Would you like stop doing them? Why? If you can't stop doing them, how you are going to face/cope with them?

Do you think these activities are important? Why? Which are important and which are not important? Why? Which is the most important, second and third? Why? Which is the least important, second and third? Why?

Do you have any activities that you would like to add to your everyday school activities list? i.e. now you don't have but you would like to have these activities to do at school. Why? Are these activities important?

Do you have any activities that you would like to take away from your everyday school activities list? i.e. now you have these activities but you don't want to have these activities to do at school any more. Why? Are these activities important?

At enhancement class/church?

Now let's talk about the extra-curricular activities that you participating in. Can you tell me what afterschool or weekend classes do you have?
(guitar class, boy brigade, table tennis club, Chinese school, kid church, swimming class)

Among these activities which activity you like most, second and third? Why?
Which you hate most, second and third? Why? If you hate these activities, why you do these activities? Can you stop doing these activities? Why? Would you like stop doing them? Why?

Do you think these activities are important? Why? Which are important and which are not important? Why? Which is the most important, second and third? Why? Which is the least important, second and third? Why?

Do you have any activities that you would like to add to your extra-curriculum activities list? i.e. now you don't have but you would like to have these activities during your leisure time, e.g. trumpet class . Why? Are these activities important?

Do you have any activities that you , would like to take away from your extra-curriculum activities list? i.e. now you have these activities but you don't want to have these activities any more. Why? Are these activities important?

APPENDIX D Interview schedule for family historical data

Questions to explore on the development of the child

Starting from birth step by step, what activities your child has participated?

For example, when did he/she go to playgroup, childcare centre, kindergarten, Chinese school, pre-school?

How were these activities run?

For example, Chinese school?

What and how did you, your spouse, siblings or other persons communicate/interact with your child?

What activities you, your spouse, siblings or other persons have with your child at home?

For example, what you do at home with your child at different ages? What your spouse/siblings/close persons do at home with your child at different ages?

Did you teach your child things at home at different ages? What did you teach? How? Workbooks? Set worksheets for the child to do? When?

Why you/your spouse took these activities for your child?

How was your child reacted (happy to participate, not happy, cried, avoid, ….)? Why?

Do you have any documents/photos/videos of your child participated in this activities that can give to me as data?

Try to remember your child just born, at 1, 3, 7 (just start prep & grade 1), 10, 11, did you discover any particular/specific changes at this ages? If yes, what were that?

Is there at particular age/stage did you discover there were big changes from your child?

Is there any conflict you found between you and your child, your spouse and your child, siblings? What is it? When? How to deal with? Result? Implication?

How do you see play and learning? Do your child have play activities? How about learning activities? What are these activities? When? How?

Do your child have role play activity? When? With who? How? A lot of these? Do you like your child have role play activities? How about learning activities?

Do you think your child have good imagination? Can you mention some examples?

How is your child emotion development/experience? Happy? Moody? Easy to get angry? Easy to give up? Shy? ... Always? At some stages? When?

APPENDIX E Observation summary template

Family ( ) : Observation summary of activity ( )

Date: **Time:**

Camera 1: ( ), Person:( ) **Camera 2: ( ), Person: ( )**

Description overview:

Activities (over the observations):

Links to video clips:

Focus persons: ( ), others involved ( )

Categories:

Parent (education) values:
- Form and change:
- Societal:
- Cultural:
- Historical:

Personal (grow up & life) experience:
- Relation to good life:
- Relation to institutional practices

Institutional practices:
- Family:
- School:
- Institution ( ):

Institutional perspectives (demands & goals):

Parent perspective (demands & goals):

Child perspective (motives & competences):

Researcher perspective:

Social interactions:
- Mother and the child
- Father and the child
- The child and siblings
- The child and peers
- Father and mother
- Others (e.g. child-teacher, child-grandparents)

Relations to observer/researcher:

Dominant activity:

Emotional experience:

Conflicts:

Crisis:

Child development:

Points of interest (analysis potential):

APPENDIX F Example of Observation Summary

Family (Chan): Visit 5, Video Observation 4 (Daughter) summary
Date: 14 Aug., 2009
Time: 8:00 – 9:20 a.m.
Camera 1: Sony video camera (an old model), Research Assistant
Camera 2: Panasonic video camera, Researcher

Description overview:
Mother and the two children usually wake up at 7:30 a.m. Father has to wake up very early and leave home to work at around 6 a.m. Mother and the two children woke up 7:30 a.m. on that morning. We arrived there at 8:00 a.m. Mother said the children woke up on time on that day, but sometimes especially the son, wake up at 8 a.m. when they slept late the day before. As the school bell rings at 9:00 a.m. and they usually start off to school at 8:40 a.m. (driving). The daughter and mother were in the kitchen making (put spread on the bread) and eating their breakfast when we arrived. They were having Nutella's hazelnut spread and white bread, daughter had milo with milk and mother had soy milk. The daughter was having her second piece of bread. The son had had his breakfast and was doing other things in his room (might be changing his clothes) and in the lounge (practicing guitar). In the midst of breakfast daughter was showing her workbook to me (mother was bought it for his son, but his son had not done it, now the daughter is doing it- it consisted of English comprehension exercises for age 6-8) and would like to do the exercises in it. Mother asked her not to do it right now, ate quickly and should finish her breakfast first. The daughter is a good girl, she obeyed what her mum said and continued eating her bread. The mother said that the observation on that day is the normal routine of the children's every school day's morning. With reference to last visit, it is noticed that the son's bed has been removed from the daughter's room (before they shared a room, now they have their own bedroom) and a big long table was put in the place where the old bed was. It is interesting to know that they brushed their teeth after breakfast. The mother said this can help to wash away the food left on the teeth after breakfast. It was ironic that after brushing their teeth, mum and daughter went back to the kitchen table/bench to finish up their remaining milo and soy milk.

Video rundown:
0-1:14 Preparing (put spread on bread) and eating breakfast with mum in the kitchen
1:14-2:14 Showing me her workbook and wanting to do it, but mother asked her to finish breakfast first
2:14-5:38 Continued eating their breakfast, son called out from the lounge about his guitar practicing and mother had gone there to see what were the matter for 3 times and daughter had gone once but was brought back to her seat to finish her breakfast by her mother
5:38-8:00 Drawings and son's everyday task sheet on the wall
8:00-8:38 Finished the breakfast (with a bit of bread left), tried to do the workbook, mum said no and asked her to change clothes first, daughter was confused whether that day was a school day
8:38-9:00 Daughter went back to her bedroom and changed
9:00-9:50 Son playing guitar
9:50-11:25 Daughter packing up schoolbag
11:25-12:31 Mother helping daughter to comb her hair

12:31-16:03 Daughter brushing her teeth, went to bedroom to wear her sock and went back to toilet to watch her brother brushing his teeth, mother brushing her teeth there too and checked the son teeth
16:03-16:27 Mum asked the son to take a basket of dirty clothes to wash in the washing machine at downstairs, son first said "no" when mum requested but when mum started the action (took the basket of dirty clothes from the bath) and said please, then he did this housework straight away
16:27-18:27 Daughter and mother went to kitchen to finish their drink and tidy up the table
18:27-27:00 (8.5 mins) Mother accompanied daughter to do the workbook
27:00-31:10 (4 mins) Watching brother played their favourite computer game
31:10-33:26 (2 mins) Mum checked daughter schoolbag, helped her to clip her hair and the children walked downstairs with the school bags, put them down near the stairs
33:26-35:34 (2 mins) the children playing their scooters
35:34-37:56 (2 mins) daughter pick up her school bag, put it on her back and shout to her brother to remind him to carry his own school bag, son shout back trying to ask his sister to carry for him, sister ignore him carrying her own school bag and walking along the pathway to their car which was parked on the road in front of their house, mum called his son to take his own school bag, son came back from the car to carry his bag to the car. Daughter laughed. Ready to drive to school
37:56-39:43 (2 mins) Arrived school, parked the car in the area and walked to the school entrance from the car (around 30-50 m)
39:43-46:57 (7 mins): Daughter playing with schoolmates in school playground

Activities (over the observations):

- Making and eating breakfast (her second piece of bread) with her mother in the kitchen
- Showing her workbook to me and trying to do on it in the midst of breakfast (but was stop by mother)
- Getting dressed school uniform
- Packing school bag
- Mother helping her to comb hair
- Brushing teeth on her own and watching her brother brushing his teeth
- Finishing her milo and the mother finishing her soy milk just after brushing their teeth
- Tidying up the table (putting soy milk into fridge and peanut butter, nutella and milo into cupboard
- Doing workbook
- Watching her brother playing their favourite computer game- the penguin
- Mother checked her school bag and helped her to clip her hair
- Playing scooter
- Carrying school bag on back and walking to the car
- Mother driving them to school
- Playing with schoolmates in the school playground

Categories:

Parent (education) values:

Mother/parents does focus on training children intellectual, English (literacy) and Mathematic (numeracy) competences, as they are the school emphasis too. Apart from those mother/parents also believes that helping housework, sharing family responsibility, taking care of own self and doing physical exercises such as playing scooter will help their children growth better, healthier and more all-rounded.

From the everyday task sheet that mother design for her son show that reading bible and practicing (e.g. guitar & table tennis) are believed to be important for the children development too.

Form and change:

Social:

Mother/parents believe that people need to know more and have the basic life skills, in order to live well in society. [Son & daughter have to take care of themselves- e.g. wash face, brush teeth, change uniform, pack lunch, school bag]

Religious has played a very important role to this family, children are trained to read bible and pray every day.

Cultural:

Traditional (Confucian) family values: Family goes first, individual should scarify to make the family good, emphasis on collectivism, [Son & daughter have to help out for the housework], work hard, value efforts rather than innate ability (more practice the better)

Historical:

Although academic performance (intellectual) is always the main emphasis on schools in Hong Kong, during the parents' schooling in Hong Kong, moral, physical, social and aesthetic were also the key areas which schools cultivating their students.

Relation to good life:

All the things that the mother/parents try to train her children (such as practicing guitar, doing workbook, taking care of themselves) are related to hoping their children will have a good life when grown up.

Relation to institutional practices (family)

Traditional Chinese family practices- family first, children helping to do housework, work hard now to prepare for a better future

Institutional practices:

Family:

Father goes to work early in the morning leaving home at 6 a.m. Mother is responsible to send their children to school, and usually father is responsible to receive them from school back home. Mother works 4 days a week with Tuesday off, and father work 5 days a week and usually finished work before 2 p.m.

Mother wakes up at round 7:30 a.m. and children are expected to wake up at 7:30 a.m. but with flexibility (if the date before slept late, they are allowed to wake up a bit later at 8 a.m.). Son is expected to practice guitar in the morning and or after school. Mother created a daily tasks list (read, homework, pack lunch, free time, read bible, practice guitar, practice table tennis) for the son to complete every day. Daughter also need to do some tasks such as read book brings back from school and practice piano, but mother thinks that she does not need a task sheet, since she does not have many tasks and usually she can complete her tasks herself or mother will guide/accompany her to complete. They start off to school by car (driving) at 8:40 a.m. The family with the lead of mother can use their time very efficiently. Sticker incentive system is used to motivate son and daughter to do the work that parents would like them to do. The sticker incentive system is linked to their children's favourite activities (computer game, play Wii and watch TV)- one sticker is for 5 mins free time that the children can choose to do their favourite activities e.g. play computer game for 5 mins.

School:

School starts at 9:00 a.m. and school bell rings at 9 a.m. Parents can drop their children down and children can play at the school playground before school start.

There are school assemblies on every Monday and Friday morning. In the Friday assembly, students can show their awards achieved, students usually show their awards received from their extra-curricula activities, such as Kumon, swimming, gymnastic. This Friday's assembly was run by senior grade students, they did all the announcements and presented school prizes/awards to students at each grade. .

Institutional perspective (demands & goals):

School:

The school's motto is "Pride in performance". It emphasizes on academic performances (English and Mathematics), high rankings in school related events (such as sports, arts and drama) among other schools. The school schedules English and Mathematics lessons for the students to learn in the morning, as the school principal believe that students should have their freshest mind in the morning and thus learn better.

In every Friday's morning assembly, there is a section for students to present their awards. Students are encouraged to bring in their prizes and awards to show and tell to the whole school.

Parent perspective (demands & goals)

Although school starts at 9 a.m. and is only 15 mins walk or 5 mins drive from home, the mother wants her children to wake up early (prefer 7:30 a.m.) so that they can do a bit of practice (guitar/piano) and/or exercise (e.g. scooter), housework before going to school. She would like her children are able to take care themselves and help out the family by sharing some housework, as she wants her children understand that they are part/members of the family.

The mother has prepared an everyday task sheet to her son wanting him to finish all these essential tasks automatically without her reminder. Thus, she does not have to be angry and worry. She also has set up a sticker incentive system for both son and daughter

Child perspective (motive & competences)

The daughter is eager to imitate/do the things that her brother is doing or those things that he has asked to do, including those things that her brother was asked but not willing to do, e.g. doing the workbook and looking her brother playing computer game. This creates the motive to the daughter to do the things that her brother can do.

The daily task list for the son can guide him to complete his everyday tasks. The task list is beautifully design with colourful pictures and placed at the eye catching place, it helps the son to visual what he needs to do and what he has not done yet. It helps other family members know clearly too. This motivates the son to complete the task, especially this is linked to the sticker incentive system, which enable him to earn free time for computer games/playing wii/watching TV. As the task list includes practices that need to do, such as practicing guitar, table tennis etc, the more he practices, the more competences he has. The sticker incentive system applies to the daughter as well, but she doesn't have the everyday task sheet. As the mother thinks that her daughter doesn't have many things need to remind her to do (she doesn't have much to do as her brother and she usually can complete her task quickly).

Researcher perspective

The researcher and research assistant were amazed by the morning of the Chan mother and the children, a lot of things had been done during the short period of time. The Chan family values and practices, the children responses to demands and some of the school practices were seen. The data collected were very rich.

Social relations:

Mother and daughter

The mother and daughter relation is well. The daughter obeys her mother. She enjoys her mum be with her especially accompany her to do the workbook. Mother accompanies with her daughter most of the time, only the son needed her, she then left her daughter for a while and then came back when things have fixed. The accompany of mother provides the scaffolding to her daughter learning and expended her zone of proximal development

Mother and son

Mother is more relax with his academic (his academic is good in school standard) but pay more attention on his extra-curriculum activities and other life applications/character building. She usually let him to do his work on his own. Son basically can do his work independently, but when facing difficulty (e.g. as shown in the observation: guitar was out-tuned, washing machine was dead (not working) and can't tune the guitar on his own), he does try to solve first but very quickly he turns to his mum for help.

Daughter and her brother

Brother is dominant and the daughter often follows his ways. They are good companions. Daughter is very interested on what her brother do and would like to imitate/involve. Brother is more self-centre and not very care about others.

Daughter and the peers

Play well with schoolmates. Have a lot of good friends at school

Relations to observer/researcher:

Daughter likes to interact with me. Son played trick with my son who was shooting the son on that day (running around tried not to be shot).

Focus persons:

The **daughter**, mum and son

Interaction:

Mother interacts more with daughter, as she thinks that she is still young and need more attentions and guides. Mother tells her son what need to do and let him to do on his own. The daughter loves to involve in everything. She enjoys doing the workbook as mum is there to accompany her to finish the exercise. When there is problem, son does try to solve it by himself first, but very quickly turn to seek help from his mum. Mum attends his problems when request. The daughter and her brother are good companion on play, they often play together (e.g. playing computer- brother playing sister watching with comments, playing scooters together)

Encouragement:

Encouragement was a newly discovered category during second visit where first video observation was conducted. It was noted down under the "points of interest" category and was then included as an individual category. The sticker incentive system and the imitation of daughter create the motives for both daughter and son. These encourage them to do/practice more on the items (e.g. practicing guitar and piano). The more they do/practice, the better they can handle (more competence). The encouragement leads them to recognise their competences.

Conflicts/Problems:

Daughter was trying to do her workbook (original was bought for her brother) during her breakfast (1^{st} attempt) and just after her breakfast (2^{nd} attempt) which mum stopped her. Asking her to finish breakfast first (mum's respond on her 1^{st} attempt) and change school uniform first (on her 2^{nd} attempt).

Mum asked her son just before brushing their teeth to help taking the dirty clothes to wash, son reclined saying no. Mum asked why, he said he has already done twice, but mum was not happy that he was not willing to help to do housework.

Child development

The encouragement from the incentive system and the daughter's enjoyment of doing the workbook together with mum, leads the children recognise and gain their competences (bring to new awareness) and thus lead to learning and development.

There are several little conflicts observed, such as son refused to take the dirty clothes to wash when mum first asked and mum was not happy about this. This brings the awareness to the son that he has to help out the housework although he was not happy to do, so when mum requested him to do again just after brushing their teeth (mum just picked up the basket of dirty clothes and passed to him saying please and thank you), he took the dirty clothes to the washing machine downstairs to wash without further recline. The little conflict brings him to a new awareness that he need to help out for the housework and thus brings to development.

Questions to explore:

Points of interest (analysis potential)

Mother does not have much requests/expectations for her daughter which is very different from what she required from his son This may be due to her daughter is more obedient, willing and wanting to do most of the things that her brother is required or even refused to do, and the mother thinks the daughter is still young. Why?

Daughter and son often forget to bring things (e.g. clothes back from school), why this happen?

Mother requested her daughter to follow her ways of reading a book and doing workbook exercise. Why?

Son problem solving pattern, very quickly go to seek help from mum. Why?

APPENDIX G Summaries of Publications 2 to 7

Publication 2	Title & Focus	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
Asian education: Diversity, challenges and changes (P. W. K. Chan Ed.) *Book chapter – sole author *Published in August 2012	**Title:** Hong Kong–Australian Parents' Development of Values, Expectations and Practices for their Children's Education: A Dialectical Process **Focus:** Using cultural–historical perspective to examine the influences of society, culture, history and individual experience on the formation and alteration of parental values, expectations and practices of two Hong Kong–Australian parents in relation to their children's education and future careers. **Aim:** To trace the dialectical process of the development of parental values, practices and expectations towards children's academic performance and career aspiration in a Hong Kong–Australian family.	The Hong Kong community in Australia is a group of high educational achievers and many of them are worked as professionals. (BIMPR, 1995; DEST, 2005; DIAC, 2006; Wong, 2007; Zhao, 2000) Studies indicate that the educational and economical successes of the Hong Kong–Australian community are related to the high value immigrant parents place on education and their high expectations of their children's academic performance and career pathways. (Chu, 2003; Pe-Pua et al,. 1996; Wong, 1997)	In most relevant studies Hong Kong has been subsumed into the Chinese or Asian groups. Studies in developed countries confirmed that the high parental expectations and specific practices associated with their children's education and upbringing are linked to the Asian and Chinese immigrant students' high educational achievement and career success (Cheng, 1998; Francis & Archer 2005; Li 2004; Louie 2001; Mak & Chan, 1995; Matthews 2002; Nozaki & Inokuchi, 2007; Pearce 2006). The sociological view adopts cultural and social structural theories to explain the high educational expectations and achievements and career successes of Chinese immigrant communities (Francis & Archer 2005; Louie 2001; Nozaki & Inokuchi 2007; Pearce 2006). However, these approach tend to homogenise and essentialise Asian/Chinese immigrant groups without taking the diversities within and among the ethnic groups into consideration.	The Hong Kong community in Australia is under-researched. Cultural and social structural explanations are unable to address individual differences within groups influenced by the same culture and society. Holistic investigation of the interwoven influences of the cultural, historical and societal factors in family context is under-researched.

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
How do Hong Kong–Australian parents' values, expectations and practices in relation to children's learning and development form and change (this publication particularly focused on academic performance and career aspirations)?	Cultural–historical theory (Daniels, 2001; John-Steiner and Mahn, 1996; Minick 1987, 34; Nasir & Hand, 2006; Rogoff 1995; Vygotsky, 1978) The social situation of development (Vygotsky, 1998) Hedegaard's model of children's learning and development (Hedegaard, 2009; Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008, p. 7) Fleer (2010) was drawn upon for the overall study but not in this chapter	Methodology: A qualitative case study following cultural–historical approach (Vygotsky, 1997a, b) and dialectical-interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008) Participants: one Hong Kong–Australian family – the Chan family: a daughter (age 6, Yr. 1), a son (age 9, Yr. 4), and father and mother were in their late 30s; they were international students and immigrated to Australia in late 1990s. Both children were born in Australia; they studied in a government school Methods: Data were gathered for 12 months through Video observations, interviews, children and parents take photos and videos Outputs: 22 visits; 35 hours of video footage and 7 hours of audio recording Analysis: The categories identified for analysis were parental values, expectations, demands, practices and the dialectical relationships among these	The Chan parents implicitly and unconsciously placed a high value on their children's academic performance, which is consistent with the outcomes of many related studies (e.g. Louie 2001; Pe-Pua et al. 1996; Wong 2007). However, the Chan parents did not hold a specific career aspiration for their children as do those reported in other studies (e.g. Francis & Archer 2005; Li 2004; Pearce 2006). Parental values were formed and changed through a complex dialectical process. Revealed the ways societal, cultural and historical contexts, the personal life experiences and interpretation of parents played an important role in the formation and alteration of their values related to academic performance and career aspirations for their children.	It adds nuanced knowledge to the literature about Hong Kong immigrant families' parental values, expectations, demands and practices. Illustrates the complex dialectical process of the shaping and reshaping of values occurring in a family over time, and reveals the importance of looking beyond often reified cultural and social structural explanations. It also reveals the power of a cultural–historical research approach to trace complex and holistic understandings of individual families and their development across cultures and over time.

Publication 3	Title & Focus	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
Australasian Journal of Early Childhood *Journal article – sole author *Published in December 2012	**Title:** Parents' perspectives of the home-school interrelationship: A study of two Hong Kong–Australian families **Focus:** Capturing and analysing the family practices of two families with a similar background and their relations with their children's school practices as perceived by the parents. **Aim:** To explore the interrelationships between the family and school practices of two Hong Kong–Australian families and their children's schools.	Families and schools provide two most significant contexts for young children's development. The relation between these two environments plays a part in determining how favourable the conditions of development are for the child.	A mutual understanding between family and school in increasingly multicultural societies is important for enhancing home-school relations and acting for the betterment of the child. (De Gioia, 2009; Sanagavarapu, 2010, Vuckovic, 2008). Ignoring, misunderstanding, assuming or stereotyping family or school practices can worsen the home-school relations and disadvantage children's learning and development. (Archer & Francis, 2007; Dooley, 2003; Hedegaard, 2005, 2009; Fleer & Hedegaard, 2010). Discrepancy does not inevitably result in disadvantage; indeed it can in turn emerge as a source of development for the child. However, if the dissonance is excessive, this may lead to detriment. (Hedegaard, 2009; Kravtsova, 2006; Vygotsky, 1998)	Detailed study about the values and practices between individual families within a cultural group is limited. The ways in which family and school practices are related are under-researched.

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
What are the values and practices of Hong Kong–Australian families and how they are related with those of their children's schools? Sub-questions: What differences and similarities among the families are there in these relationships? What facilitates or impedes productive relationships between schools and these families?	Cultural–historial paradigm (Vygotsky, 1998) Children's learning and development through participation in institutional practices (Hedegaard, 2009) The model of institutional practice (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2009)	Methodology: A qualitative case study following cultural–historical approach (Vygotsky, 1998) and dialectical-interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008) Participants: Two Hong Kong–Australian families with similar characteristics – the Chan and Lee families, both were recruited from the same Chinese church. Methods: Data were gathered for 12 months through Video observations, interviews, children and parents take photos and videos, documents, and school and government websites. Outputs: (for the overall study) 80 hours of video footage, 18 hours of audio recording, 150 photos and 90 video clips. Analysis: The categories used in the analysis of data were family values and practices, school values and practices, and the interrelationships between family and school practices.	In macro sense the values and practices of the two Hong Kong–Australian families were similar, but on further examination, various differences were identified. These differences can provide different conditions for the child's development and influence the ways families interact and relate with their children's schools. Revealed three types of relationship between home and school: Concordance leads to harmonious continuity; constant dissonance breaks relations, and dialectical relations make positive changes.	Reveal the importance of looking beyond the socio-cultural construction of families and communities and pay attention to individual relations between families and schools. Suggest that the consistency in practices, effective communication, mutual understanding and two-way accommodation were the key elements for close and productive home-school relationships. Reveal a set of principles that could be mobilized to enhance the understanding of the ways in which other families and schools form productive relationships to support children's learning and development.

Publication 4	Title & Focus	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
Mind, Cultural and Activity *Journal article – co-authored with Professor Marilyn Fleer *Published in April 2012	**Title:** A cultural–historical study of how children from Hong Kong immigrant families develop a learning motive within everyday family practices in Australia **Focus:** Examining the family practices of the Chan family and the process of the Chan son's development of a learning motive that embraces the Chinese concept of learning. **Aim:** To explore the ways a child from Hong Kong immigrant family in Australia develops through participation in everyday family practices and understand how the child develops a learning motive in an environment that is dominated by parental values and choices.	Children from the Hong Kong community are often required to participate in activities that are perceived by their parents to be beneficial to their development, thus their perspectives may be being ignored.	Many Hong Kong immigrant parents are willing to invest and sacrifice much for their children's education. They have high expectations and believe that a good education can provide their children with a prosperous future. They try to instill in their children a desire to perform well academically and equip them with certain talents and skills, hoping to cultivate them to become all-round persons. (Cheng, 1998; Francis & Archer, 2005; Mak & Chan, 1995; Pe-Pua, Mitchell, Iredale, & Castles, 1996; Wong, 1997; Wong, 2007) The majority of related studies confirm that these practices have contributed to Chinese (including Hong Kong) immigrant communities' high academic attainments (Francis & Archer, 2005; Li, 2004; Louie, 2001; Matthews, 2002; Pearce, 2006). Some studies suggest that these family practices have created great stress for both parents and children, which may in fact hinder children's social development and academic performance (Dooley, 2003; Li, 2005; Pe-Pua et al., 1996; Ryan & Louie, 2007; Wong, 1997)	Little is known about how the parent-dominated family practices in Hong Kong immigrant families result in a child's learning and development. It is important to understand how children from this community acquire the competences and develop motives for learning under high parental expectations and demands

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
How do Hong Kong–Australian children develop a learning motive within highly structured everyday family practices?	Cultural–historial approach of child development The social situation of development Ideal and present forms of development (Veresov, 2010; Vygotsky, 1994, 1998) Child development through participation in institutional practices (Fleer, 2010; Hedegaard, 2008, 2009; Kravtsova, 2006) Motive (Hedegaard, 2002; Hedegaard & Chaiklin, 2005) The development of a learning motive embracing the Chinese meaning system of learning (Hedegaard, 2010; Li, 2001; Vygotsky, 1998)	Methodology: An in-depth qualitative case study following cultural– historical approach and dialectical-interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008) Participants:focus on the Chan family and the 9-year-old son Methods: Data were gathered for 12 months through orientation meeting, video observations, interviews, chats at critical incidents, children and parents take photos and videos Outputs: 22 visits; 35 hours of video footage and 7 hours of audio recording Analysis: Categories and themes were identified in the data through deductive and inductive processes. The parents' perspectives and the son's perspective were captured and analysed. The categories used for analysis were parental values, family practices, motives and competences, demands and crises, encouragement, new self-awareness, and development of learning motives.	The societal, cultural, historical and parents' life experiences shaped the Chan parents' values regarding their children's learning and development. They were trying to organise, according to their cultural tradition, values and beliefs, the best environment for their children's development (the ideal form). Revealed that the parent-child interaction in the Chan family was interdependent and the Chan son actively contributed to the ways activities were conducted. The interaction and mutual responsiveness of the child's motives and competences and the parents' demands thus helped shape the son's development. Revealed that encouragement played an important role in bridging the gap between parental demands and the child's competences and motives, assisting the child to appropriate family values, and facilitate the formation of a learning motive and learning itself. Revealed that development can be facilitated if parents not only place demands on the child but also provide encouragement as the moving force to meet demands.	Conceptualise parental demands, child's motives and competences as well as encouragement within a cultural–historical framework, thus helping to better understand the nuanced parent-child interaction and child development in family context. Contribute to a more complex, dynamic, and holistic understanding of the way a child from a Hong Kong immigrant family develops a learning motive embracing the Chinese concept of learning through participation in everyday family practices shaped by parental values and facilitated by encouragement. Help explain why many Hong Kong Chinese heritage children develop learning motives and gain an esteemed record of academic success within the Australian community.

Publication 5	Title & Focus	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
Constructing educational achievement: A sociocultural perspective (S. Phillipson, Ku and S.N. Phillipson Eds.) *Book chapter – sole author *Published in March 2013	**Title:** How encouragement in everyday family practices facilitates Hong Kong–Australian children's motive for learning **Focus:** Children's perspectives on their school and enhancement learning and the role of parental encouragement in fostering in their children an achievement-related learning motive **Aim:** To understand how achievement related learning and development are fostered through encouragement in everyday family practices, and identify how children make meaning and sense of these	Hong Kong–Australian children are achieving highly academically, and this has been attributed to parental values and supports regarding learning and education	A body of literature argues that parental emphasis on and supports for learning have helped Hong Kong and Chinese heritage students' academic success. (Archer & Francis, 2007; Li, 2004; Matthews, 2002; Pearce, 2006; SBS, 2011a, b) On the other hand, various sources argue that parents' dominant family practices emphasising academic competence result in excessive pressure and negative outcomes for children's academic achievement. (Li, 2005) Children's views on family practices and their effects are important to provide a more trustworthy understanding (Bozhovich, 2009; Lawrence & Valsiner, 2003; New York Post, 18 January 2011; van Oers, 2011)	Little is known from the child's perspective about how they acquire the competences and develop a learning motive for academic success Children's perceptions and experiences of their learning environment are under-researched, as are their own contributions to their development The ways parents engage with children to provide appropriate conditions for their learning so that children can achieve parental expectations willingly are also underrepresented in the literature

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
What meaning and sense do Hong Kong–Australian children make of the everyday family practices aimed at their school and enhancement learning? What role does encouragement play in Hong Kong–Australian parents' attempts to create conditions that foster their children's development of an achievement related learning motive?	The social situation of development (Bozhovich, 2009; Vygotsky, 1994, 1998) Children's perception (Vygotsky, 1994) and personal sense (Leontiev, 1978) and (Bozhovich, 2009; Hedegaard, 2008; Gonzales Rey; 2009; Lawrence & Valsiner, 2003) Chinese concept of learning (Li, 2001) Cultural transformation of learning (van Oers, 2008) Development of motive (Hedegaard, 2010; Leontiev, 1978; Wong & Fleer, 2012; Vygotsky, 1998) Encouragement (Lawrence & Valsiner, 2003; Wong & Fleer, 2012; Vygotsky, 1998)	Methodology: An in-depth qualitative case study following cultural–historical approach (Vygotsky, 1997) and dialectical-interactive methodology (Hedegaard & Fleer, 2008) Participants: three Hong Kong–Australian families – the Chan, Lee and Cheung families Methods: Video observations, interviews, children and parents take photos and videos Outputs: 56 visits (22-Chan, 19-Lee and 15-Cheung); 80 hours of video footage and 18 hours of audio recording; and over 150 photos, 90 video clips and various documents related to the children's learning and education were provided by the participants. Analysis: Common sense, situated practice and thematic interpretations (Hedegaard, 2008)	Encouragement played an important role in the responsive process of fostering a positive learning motive. It was varied in kind. To be effective it both aligns the child's personal sense and perception with the parental demands, and modifies demands in response to these perspectives. Revealed how the participant children perceived and made sense of their learning in the situations their parents configured for them. To provide an effective environment for fostering learning motive within the framework of parental values and culture, it is important that parents take into account children's perspectives and personal sense, and be responsive to these in their affordances.	Provides an understanding of children's perceptions and personal sense and the ways these interact with parental values and demands in the learning situations It foregrounds the children's perceptions and personal sense of their learning environments, revealing the role of encouragement in facilitating a learning motive. Provides a more detailed understanding of processes and the critical role of encouragement in the development of children's learning motives. Provides parents and educators with understandings about how to improve their own demands/ practices/ pedagogy with children in their charge.

Publication 6	Title & Focus	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
International Research Journal of Early Childhood Education *Journal article – co-author with Professor Marilyn Fleer *Published in April 2013	**Title:** The development of learning as the leading activity for Hong Kong immigrant families in Australia **Focus:** The family practices of three Hong Kong–Australian families, the conditions that the parents create to support their children's learning and development, and the children's responses to these. **Aim:** To understand the mechanism and effects of the family pedagogy of having children engage in formal learning at an early age, and to identify whether, and if so how and when learning becomes a leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children.	Many Hong Kong–Australian parents desire their children to learn at an early age and as much as possible, and their children continue to perform well academically.	The phenomenon for many Hong Kong parents wanting their children to learn as early and as much as possible has its cultural, historical and societal underpinnings. (Cultural: Appledaily News, August 17, 2011; Archer & Francis, 2007; Louie, 2004; Pe-Pua et al., 1996; Phillipson, 2010; Sethi, Este & Charlebois, 2001; Guo, 2006; Ho, 2000; Mak & Chan, 1995; Shek & Chan, 1999; Reagan, 2005) (Historical: Cheng, 1998; Ho, 2000; Wong, 2000; Wong, 2012) (Societal: Archer & Francis, 2007, Louie, 2004; Ho, 2000; Wong, 2007; Zhao, 2000) Leading activity is considered as an important concept to understand child development for the cultural–historical studies in Russia and Europe. (Elkonin, 1971; Kravtsova, 2006; Veresov, 2006)	Little is known about the pedagogy that underpins such development in the family or the appropriateness of this for children's development. In-depth studies of actual family practices for and children's responses to the phenomenon of Hong Kong–Australian families are limited.

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
Is learning a leading activity for the Hong Kong–Australian children? And if so when does this occur? What are the mechanisms, activities and pedagogy supporting learning as a leading activity in the family environment?	Leading activity (Elkonin, 1971; Kravtsova, 2006; Vygotsky, 1966, 1998) Periodisation (Elkonin, 1971; Vygotsky, 1966) Mechanism for the development of a leading activity (Kravtsova, 2006; Vygotsky, 1998)	Methodology: An in-depth qualitative case study Participants: three Hong Kong–Australian families – the Chan, Lee and Cheung families Methods: Video observations, open ended interviews and interviews using stimulated recall methodology, children and parents take photos and videos, field notes and documents Outputs: 56 visits (22-Chan, 19-Lee and 15-Cheung); 80 hours of video footage and 18 hours of audio recording; and over 150 photos, 90 video clips and various documents related to the children's learning and education were provided by the participants. Analysis: The categories for analysis were framed in relation to the children's everyday activities, the family practices, parental demands, the child's motives and the child's competences.	Learning as a leading activity was able to be established in the participant children at an early age. Revealed that learning as a leading activity worked productively so that the children valued learning and developed a learning motive. The family pedagogies focused on introducing structured learning activities to the children from their early years supported the development of this orientation to learning. Socio-cultural and temporal factors were very significant in shaping the family pedagogy.	The findings problematise the expected norms and milestones for traditional maturational theories of child development, as well as raising questions about the specific aspects of leading activity and periodisation promoted by cultural–historical theorists. These findings also confirm the importance of cultural and temporal factors in the development of pedagogical approaches in families.

Publication 7	Title, Focus and Aim	Phenomenon in context	Relevant insights from literature	Gap
European Early Childhood Education Research Journal *Journal article – sole author *Accepted in July 2013	**Title:** A cultural–historical model to understand and facilitate children's development Focus: Explaining a holistic model of child development with its theoretical bases, discussing its application in analysing a study of three Hong Kong–Australian families and presenting guidelines for effective family pedagogy. Aim: To present a model that facilitates a holistic understanding about how children learn and develop in their communities. The article also illustrates how it can be applied as a powerful analytical tool and the ways parents can use it as guidelines for effective family pedagogy.	The issue of how to facilitate children's development has been of great concern to many parents, educators, researchers and policy makers. Child development theories and tools are often used as the basis of educational and child-rearing practices to support children in learning and developing, but they are not always comprehensively and coherently collated to assist users. Moreover some important influences are not included in these theories.	Traditional child development theories that have been widely applied in Western education are found problematic as they have ignored important factors in child development that can result in limiting or even detrimental effects on children's development. (Charlesworth 2011; Lindon 2010) Vygotsky's cultural–historical theory has laid down the foundation for a holistic framework to explore child development. (Daniels 2001; John-Steiner and Mahn 1996; van Oers 2011; Vygotsky 1997, 1998; Wong 2013) The elaboration of a holistic approach to child development by contemporary theorists; each of the theories or tools is built according to the paradigm that the theorist/researcher used and its purpose, scope, context and application. (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Tudge, 2009; Rogoff, 2003; Hedegaard, 2009 & Fleer, 2010)	A holistic approach is needed to better understand and facilitate children's development. Moreover, a model or account that offers visible and traceable characteristics and mechanisms in the process of child development is needed to help parents and educators identify, analyse and improve their strategies, processes and practices. Such a model should help parents and educators to trace sociocultural and individual influences in the child's environment.

Research question	Theoretical perspective	Research design	Findings	Significance
How can Hong Kong–Australian children learn and develop within everyday practices? How can we understand, analyse and facilitate each child's development holistically in our complex, diverse and ever changing society?	The general genetic law of cultural development (Vygotsky, 1997) The social situation of child development (Vygotsky, 1998) The problem of environment (Vygotsky, 1994) Children's learning and development through participation in institutional practices (Hedegaard, 2009) Cultural–historical view of child development (Fleer, 2010) Internal position (Bozhovich, 2009; Lubovsky, 2009) Demands as the ideal form and child's motives and competences as the present form (Wong & Fleer, 2012) Dialectical relationship (Blunden, 1997; Bozhovich, 2009; Daniels, 2008; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Vygotsky, 1997; Woods & Grant, 2005) The process of development including crises and self-awareness (Fleer, 2010; Hedegaard, 2009; Kravtsova, 2006; Vygotsky, 1998) Encouragement (Wong, 2013; Wong & Fleer, 2012)	The model was developed through literature review (empirical studies, theories and concepts and methodology) and refined through a qualitative case study of three Hong Kong–Australian families involving field notes; photos, video clips and relevant documents provided by participants; interviews and digital video observations of the children's everyday activities. Overall, 56 field visits, 80 hours of video footages, 18 hours of audio-recordings, 90 short video clips, 150 photos and various documents were collected.	Identification of model components (from literature and data) and their interactions and mechanisms. Identification of 6 main issues for a holistic understanding of child development for the Hong Kong–Australian families in the study. Identification of guiding principles for effective family pedagogy.	The model offers a rich template for the holistic understanding and analysis of the processes in a particular child's development. It also provides guidelines for effective family pedagogy. The model provides a visible and traceable analytic tool to study child development in a holistic way. It can also offer parents, educators, researchers and policy makers a useful framework to understand the way children develop and thus help them to shape effective pedagogies, tools and policies to facilitate children's optimal development. Encouragement, which helps to ensure positive development, is foregrounded in the model, as it has been shown to significantly smooth the process of development, avoiding excessive and detrimental struggle, and facilitating positive steps forward.