

Chinese Overseas Students' Perspectives on Benefits and Limitations of English Language Learning and Teaching between China and Thailand

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Abstract

This research aims to explore Chinese overseas students at a Thai university with regard to their perceived benefits and limitations, which are underpinned by the cultures of English language learning and teaching in China and in Thailand. Drawing upon the notion of “cultures of learning” (Cortazzi & Jin, 2013; Jin & Cortazzi, 1993, 1996), this study investigates the students’ expectations, beliefs, and values in terms of effective teaching styles, approaches and methods, learning strategies and styles, classroom interactions, activities, and the appropriate rapport between students and teacher. Based on the students’ focus-group data, the findings reveal that the Chinese students compared and contrasted the benefits and limitations in terms of educational philosophies, values, policies, and practices, linguistic and cultural diversity, and sociocultural contexts, which impacted on their situated learning styles and strategies. “Cultures of learning” were linguistically specific, culturally sensitive, contextually dependent, dynamic, agentive, and non-generalizable. The pedagogical implications are related to Chinese students’ academic, socio-psychological, socio-economic, cultural and political dimensions. This study addresses the students’ beliefs and practices in a language and culture immersion program at a Thai university, which, in retrospect, promote culturally appropriate and sensitive teaching of English for comparative overseas education between China and Thailand.

Keywords: Chinese overseas students, cultures of learning, English language teaching and learning, Thai university

Cite as: Nomnian, S. (2018). Chinese Overseas Students’ Perspectives on Benefits and Limitations of English Language Learning and Teaching between China and Thailand. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (2). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.17>