



## **Difficulties in transitioning from the Confucian to Socratic learning model: implications for academic writing**

### **Key Words**

Confucian and Socrates learning models, Chinese International undergraduate students, UWA

### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the difficulties Chinese international undergraduate students studying at The University of Western Australia have when adapting to a Socratic (Western and Anglophone) learning model. The study highlights the implications for academic writing development. I first evaluate the participants' awareness of the Socratic cognitive and conceptual foundations of academic writing, prior to exploring their experience of education in China. Through this I will be able to identify the key distinctions between the two models of learning and writing. It is anticipated that the outcomes of the research will provide writing instructors with better knowledge to assist Chinese international undergraduate students to improve their academic writing. Previous scholars have looked at different cultural models of language learning, including the Socratic, Confucian and Malay (Budi) academic learning models (Boghossian 2006; Hyland 2002; Kirkpatrick 1997; Tweed & Lehman 2002; Wan et al. 2015). Zhang (2011) in "A Nested Model of Academic Writing Approaches: Chinese International Graduate Students' Views of English Academic Writing" explores 10 Chinese international graduate students' perceptions of literacy practices in a different academic milieu, and in various disciplines, at a Canadian university. Whilst Zhang examines how different epistemologies in different cultures and disciplines have impacted Chinese International students' English academic writing, I will investigate the critical distinctions between two culturally defined learning models in an Australian context. I will adopt an ethnographic approach and conduct short, semi-structured interviews with 10 first-year Chinese international undergraduate students at the University of Western Australia. The anticipated outcome of the study is the development of strategies to facilitate a smooth transition from one learning model to another. In other words, this will provide the Chinese international undergraduate students the means to improve skills that are required to independently conduct, conceptualise, analyse and publish research in the future. The study also offers the opportunity for other scholars to explore the possibility of developing culturally varied or 'hybrid' learning models.

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