

SOLSTICE & CLT Conference 2016

**Adaptation required by international
students in a new learning environment**

Dr Keith Cook, Edge Hill University

**Edge Hill
University**



9th & 10th June 2016

Agenda

- Why this study?
- Contextualisation
- Findings
- So what?

Contextualisation

- In 2012–13 there were almost 300,000 students from outside the EU
- 125,000 students from non-UK EU countries studying in the UK
- China
 - 84,000 in 2013
 - 88,000 in 2014
- 700,000 students studying overseas for a UK qualification
- Part of the *marketization of H.E.* (Brown and Carasso 2013)

The findings were.....

- There are three areas of difficulty for international students when they need to adapt
 - Language
 - Culture
 - Pedagogy
- BUT I could have guessed this without doing the research.....

Findings

- Not three equal elements as originally thought (Language, Pedagogy and Culture)
- Face impacts upon all students but especially Chinese learners
 - Collectivist/Individualist societies
- What does it mean?

Findings

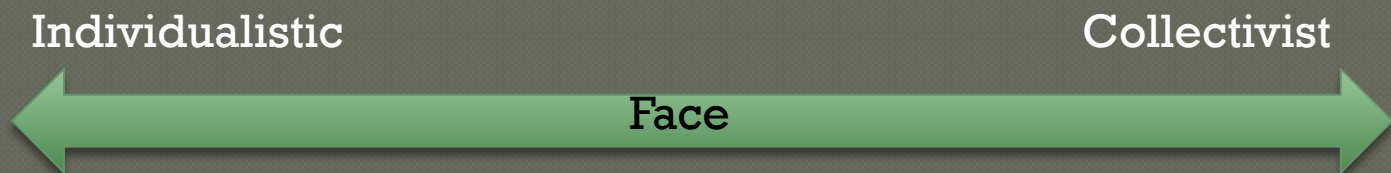
- The notion of 'face'

- *'Self in the view of others', Qi (2011)*
- Collectivist/individualist societies
- Face
 - multi-dimensional notion
 - protecting face
 - giving face
 - winning face
 - losing face
- the importance of esteem (Goffman, 1967; Spencer-Oatey, 2005; Wang, Fang and Teo 2011).

Findings

○ Student face v Collective face

- Student face can be narcissistic (*Goffman 1967*)
 - Individualistic
- Student face can be difficult for the individual in a Collectivist sense (*Kim and Nam, 1998*)
- A serious problem, e.g. poor performance or failure reflects upon the family or social group via the student, e.g. collective social face (*Spencer-Oatey, 2005*)



Findings

- Face is not recognised in relation to some key issues;
 - Language, IELTS
 - Pedagogy and participation in classroom activities
 - Academic support for students
 - Academic writing
 - Essays

So what does it all mean?

- Not generalizable
- If we understand the issue of face we begin to understand our students' perspectives, especially Chinese learners
- Therefore;
 - Support the learners
 - Lessen the effect of face on students
 - Educate the staff
 - Be available after sessions or in small group meetings
- If we can lessen the fear of losing face students will begin to adapt more easily