**Globalink Research Award   
Research Proposal**

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| * Complete this proposal using the same language used in your application form. For further information, please visit the [Globalink Research Award website](https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/globalink). |

**1. Student statement of interest** *(approximately 0.5 pages)*

Explain how participating in Mitacs Globalink will benefit your academic studies and research career (e.g., working with internationally renowned experts, unique opportunities for fieldwork or data collection, access to facilities, or expertise not available at your home institution).

I’m interested in participating in the Mitacs Globalink because I believe that this once-in-a-lifetime experience will allow me to develop a better understanding about how students from different cultures learn, specifically how students in China acquire English as a second language. Teaching French as a second language in Canada is parallel to teaching English as a second language in China. Observing firsthand English language teachers in both primary school (grades one to six) and middle school (grades seven to nine) classroom settings in China over a period of three months will be beneficial to me as a French language educator in a multicultural society. By conducting these classroom observations, I will be able to learn about new teaching strategies and resources for learning a second language that I can bring not only to my classroom, but also to my pedagogy in order to become both a better educator and a lifelong learner.

Although my mother’s native language is Tagalog and my father’s native language is Vietnamese, I can only speak English and French, having gradually lost the ability to speak my parents’ native languages. This is a situation faced by many Canadian students with immigrant parents. Personally, I did not enjoy learning Tagalog and Vietnamese as a child and I’m curious to find out whether or not a pedagogical issue is the reason behind it. This has sparked my interest in learning about how other Asian languages are taught in Asian countries. Mitacs Globalink offers me the opportunity to study in China and I firmly believe that the experience will permit me to develop a better understanding of pedagogy in Asian countries. More specifically, the research will allow me to better comprehend language and culture as resources for our development as second language educators. The best resources combine the strengths of teaching English in China and the strengths of teaching French in Canada. Ultimately, these resources will help to make Canadian classrooms both multicultural and multilingual with the intent of shaping the students of future generations to become multilingual.

Culturally, I believe that my participation in Mitacs Globalink will diversify my international cultural experience and strengthen my positive attitude towards international relations. The course of adapting to and immersing myself within the Chinese culture will give me both a new perspective on the culture itself and a deeper sense of appreciation and respect for it that I can carry forward throughout the rest of my career as an educator.

**2. Research proposal** *(1.5 to 2.5 pages single spaced excluding timeline and cited literature)*

**2.1 Background** and review of relevant prior work

This research takes as its starting point the idea of a global community in which ideas, things and people move between countries and cultures. The significance of this research is related to the fact that Chinese people are Canada’s, and more specifically, Ontario’s largest immigrant group. There are 466,940 Chinese-born immigrants in Canada, of whom 49.3 percent live in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2006). In Toronto, 35.4 percent of families speak a foreign language at home, and 15.8 percent of them speak a Chinese language (Statistics Canada, 2011). For Canada overall, the prevalence of Mandarin has risen by 51 percent since the 2006 Census. Complicating the immigration figures is the fact that circular migration (i.e. return to homeland, see Xu, 2012) of Chinese people runs at about a third of all Chinese immigration (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005).

Canada-China relations are often discussed in terms of economics, trade and civil rights. But in the rise of a knowledge-based society, education is crucial to economic development (World Bank, 2007). The underlying awareness and wariness of China, its rigorous educational system (Gilmour, Bhandar, Heer, and Michael, 2012), and the rapidly expanding Chinese language learning programs in the West, are part of the Canadian educational landscape (e.g. CBC, 2006). It is also a fact that Chinese students have statistically shown academic excellence in Canadian schools and universities. In an interview by ABC News (Pham, 2010), Dr. Shijing Xu took the position that both systems have much to teach the other; that it is not a matter of one system being better than the other. There is a need for reciprocal learning. It is critical to explore what we can learn from Chinese philosophies of education and its educational system, and what Canada can offer China in return. The originality of this project derives from the principle of reciprocal learning between the two systems (Xu & Connelly, 2008; Xu, 2011).

The overall goal of the SSHRC Partnership Grant Project is to compare and contrast Canadian and Chinese education in such a way that the cultural narratives of each provide frameworks for understanding and appreciating educational similarities and differences. The summarized objectives of this research are (1) to build knowledge and understanding from a cross-cultural perspective, (2) to support new approaches to research on a complex important topic (K-12 education) that relates to societal challenges of improving education in the context of globalization, and of addressing the needs of a culturally diverse school population, and (3) to mobilize knowledge towards professional, policy-maker and public audiences with the aim of social and economic benefit within the global environment. Our overall goal centers on reciprocal learning in teacher education and school education between Canada and China.

Host supervisors in China will work with the students within their respective teams to help make connections in the schools for visits and observation, provide instruction on how to properly conduct themselves within the culture and put their projects into a national context, accompany the students on site visits, provide guidance to the students throughout the project and grow their research questions in meaningful ways, troubleshoot issues, assist in the analysis of student findings and provide perspective on conclusions drawn.

While the Globalink Research Award participants are expected to contribute to the overall SSHRC PG Project via insightful observation and attentive journal/note taking, a variety of methods have been proposed and approved in the original SSHRC proposal, including but not limited to literature reviews, participant observation, individual interviews and focus groups. In the following paragraph, I will describe my individual research questions, methodologies and anticipated outcomes and contributions to the overall project.

My research project builds on the comparison and contrast of Canadian and Chinese education objective of the SSHRC Partnership Grant Project by analyzing the pedagogies and perceptions of English language teachers in China. The acquisition of English as a second language is becoming an area of great interest in Chinese education as a result of globalization (Zuo, 2006). In fact, there are more than 300 million English language students in China (Yan, 2015). The differences between Chinese and English can pose challenges for Chinese students learning English as a second language. Phonetically, for example, there is less emphasis placed on the syllables when reading a sentence written in English than reading a sentence written in Chinese (Zhang & Yin, 2009). Morphologically, the formation of new English words involve creating new morphemes whereas new Chinese words are formed through the combination of existing morphemes (Wang & Chen, 2013). Due to language differences such as these, it is imperative that English language teachers utilize teaching strategies and resources that will facilitate the proper usage of the English language in English language classrooms in China.

The overall objective of my research project is to thoroughly examine the pedagogies and perceptions of English language teachers in China with the intent of comparing and contrasting them to those of French language teachers in Canada. The summarized objectives of this research are (1) to develop a clear understanding of teaching strategies used by English language teachers in China, (2) to gain insight into the teaching resources used by English language teachers in China, and (3) to analyze how teacher-student interaction facilitates the usage of the English language in English language classrooms in China. The conclusions drawn from this research project will be used to contribute to the overall goal of the SSHRC Partnership Grant Project of developing a better understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences between Canadian and Chinese education.

As a Globalink Research Award participant under the guidance of my host supervisors, I will implement a variety of research methods into my project that include but are not limited to observations of English language classrooms in primary and middle schools in Chongqing, China; weekly written reflections documenting my observations; and a written newsletter, a Mitacs report, and a completion of an exit survey that outline my overall experience in Mitacs Globalink.

**2.2 Objectives** of the project

The purpose of my research project is to observe how the pedagogies and perceptions of English language teachers in China are shaped by their teaching strategies, their teaching resources, and their interactions with students.

Main Question: What are the pedagogies and perceptions of English language teachers in China?

Sub Questions:

-What are the teaching strategies used by English language teachers in China?

-What are the teaching resources used by English language teachers in China?

-How does teacher-student interaction facilitate the usage of the English language in English language classrooms in China?

**2.3 Significance** of the project

Explain the perceived importance of this project to the research community, industry, or society.

My project will contribute to the construction of the framework of the SSHRC Participant Grant Project for understanding and appreciating educational similarities and differences between Canada and China. Observing firsthand how English language teachers educate students in primary and middle school classrooms in China will allow me to combine the strengths of teaching English in China with the strengths of teaching French in Canada and incorporate them both into my teaching pedagogy that I will bring to my classroom practicums in the pre-service education program at the University of Windsor. In addition, the combination of teaching strengths from both cultures, combined with the foundation of my teaching pedagogy, will facilitate my development as a global educator. Furthermore, the project will allow me to bring a global perspective to Canadian classrooms over the course of my educational career and benefit the academic community by increasing multiculturalism within Canadian classrooms and, in turn, helping to make the classrooms and its students multilingual.

**2.4 Timeline** showing which task will be done when to achieve each objective.

Pre-Departure Timeline:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Objective/Task | Week | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| November 2016 | | | | December 2016 | | | | January 2017 | | | | February 2017 | | | | March 2017 | |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Submit Mitacs application and research proposal |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Consult the International Student Centre at the University of Windsor to ensure its requirements and policies are adhered to with regards to research abroad |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Attend University of Windsor pre-departure briefing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sign, complete, and submit International Pre-Departure form and Student Code of Conduct and Ethics form to Mitacs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Make appropriate travel and accommodation arrangements |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ensure validation of a Canadian passport that meets China’s requirements |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Obtain Chinese visa and other travel documentation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Obtain comprehensive and sufficient medical and health insurance for duration and destination of travel |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Obtain appropriate immunizations and/or prophylaxis and ensure routine immunizations are up to date |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Register with the Registry of Canadians Abroad |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Register with the Safety Abroad Database and/or University of Windsor equivalent |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Participate in mandarin language classes at the University of Windsor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Post-Departure Timeline:

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| Objective/Task | Week | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | March 2017 | | April 2017 | | | | May 2017 | | | | June 2017 | | | | | July 2017 | | |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 1 | 2 |
| Organize data collection methods and meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Observe teacher-student interaction in a primary school English language classroom and collect classroom data (classroom handouts from teachers, photos of group activities, photos of textbooks), meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Observe teacher-student interaction in a middle school English language classroom and collect classroom data (classroom handouts from teachers, photos of group activities, photos of textbooks), meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Write weekly reflection on classroom observations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Analyze observation data and meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Summarize observation notes, write overall reflection, and meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Write newsletter, Mitacs report, and exit survey about overall experience; meet with supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Submit newsletter, Mitacs report, and exit survey |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |

**2.5 Cited literature**

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**3. Interaction**

Provide detailed information on the interaction between the host supervisor and the student, including the supervision and mentorship that the student will receive, as well as the frequency and location of these interactions. If portions of the research will be conducted away from the primary host institution, such as field work, indicate the percentage (%) of time during the project that the intern will spend at the host university.

Host supervisors in Southwest University, China will work closely with the students within their respective teams to help make connections in the schools for visits and observation, provide instruction on how to properly conduct themselves within the culture and put their projects into a national context, accompany the students on site visits, provide guidance to the students throughout the project and grow their research questions in meaningful ways. In addition to maintaining a close working relationship with the host supervisors, the Canadian students will be part of their team working closely with the Chinese graduate students. Each Southwest University host supervisor has a team of six to ten graduate students working closely within the larger SSHRC Partnership Grant Project. The graduate students will help the Canadian students by accompanying them to the research sites, communicating with the research site faculty and staff, and providing continued guidance with the student’s research project.

Additionally, host supervisors and graduate students will be assisting the Canadian students with troubleshoot issues, assist in the analysis of student findings and provide perspective on conclusions drawn. Canadian students will be meeting with their host supervisor on a weekly basis. The meetings with the host supervisors will include debriefing of the student’s school observations, discussing any questions the students may have, maintaining the students on their respective research plan, and guiding the students on their next steps.

**4. Collaborations**

**4.1 Does this project build on an existing international collaboration?**

Yes \_\_X\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**4.2 Does this project create potential for future collaborations?**

Yes \_\_X\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**4.3 Please describe briefly the existing, planned or future collaboration.**

For a pre-existing international collaboration, include a summary of the collaboration and length of time, any past exchange of personnel, etc.

This project is part of an ongoing SSHRC PG project entitled “Reciprocal learning in teacher education and school education between Canada and China” (funded 2013 to 2020). The overall goal is to compare and contrast Canadian and Chinese education so that the cultural narratives of each provide frameworks for understanding and appreciating the similarities and differences. To accomplish the reciprocal learning, cohorts of students from Canada and China spend time with each other, university researchers, school board administrators and teachers creating a laboratory for the comparative study of knowledge, values and teaching methods. Research focuses on six areas: Teacher Education; General Education and Culture Language Education; Mathematics Education; Science Education; Information, and Communications and Technology Education. Each fall, students from China arrive to Canada and accompany Canadian Education students into the local schools and work with University researchers, while the converse typically occurs in May (four cycles have been completed). Until now, the previous four cohorts of University of Windsor students stayed in Chongqing for only four weeks. To take advantage of the Mitacs Globalink Research Award, the program has been modified and expanded to accommodate a twelve-week research project where the students will play a larger role in working toward the objectives and deliverables spelled out in the original SSHRC PG project.

With SSHRC Partnership Grant’s extended period of time between 2013 and 2020, both Canadian and Chinese student participants in the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program can be involved in a sister school project established between Windsor and Chongqing. The sister school network between Windsor and Chongqing is an extension of the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program. Student participants will help establish the sister school network and assist with school-based research activities.

The Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program is developed between the University of Windsor (UW) in Canada and Southwest University (SWU) in China, and in the partnership with the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB). This program is part of an ongoing SSHRC Partnership Grant Project entitled “Reciprocal Learning in Teacher Education and School Education between Canada and China” (funded 2013 to 2020). Therefore this Reciprocal Learning Program is funded by the SSHRC Partnership Grant, the UW Strategic Priority Fund and the SWU Teacher Education Fund.

The goals of this Reciprocal Learning Program are to provide an exceptional experience with international engagement, to broaden teacher candidates’ horizons for a society of increasing diversity, to foster international collaboration among faculty members who are interested in cross-cultural studies, multicultural education, and to enhance the international reputation of the University of Windsor.

To accomplish the reciprocal learning, cohorts of students from Canada and China spend time with each other, university researchers, school board administrators and teachers creating a laboratory for the comparative study of knowledge, values and teaching methods. Research focuses on six areas: Teacher Education; General Education and Culture; Language Education; Mathematics Education; Science Education; Information, and Communications and Technology Education.

Each fall, twenty students and a guide professor from SWU, China arrive to UW, Canada and, accompanied by Canadian Education students, go into the local Windsor schools, taking and observing courses in the pre-service program; and working with University researchers, while the converse typically occurs in May (four cycles have been completed). Until 2014, previous four cohorts of University of Windsor students stayed in Chongqing for only four weeks.

Since spring 2015, the Reciprocal Learning Program has been developed in partnership with the Mitacs Globalink Research Award, which expands the China Study Trip to three months with conducting the student participant’s own mini educational research and doing the international practicum in Chongqing, China. For example, from March to June 2015, thirteen Canadian teacher candidates and four graduate students took advantage of the Mitacs Globalink Research Award to accommodate a twelve-week research project in SWU where the students played a larger role in working toward the objectives and deliverables spelled out in the original SSHRC PG project. After the Reciprocal Learning Study Trip, three teacher candidates out of thirteen went back to China to teach in the high school. One student decided to stay in the University of Windsor to continue graduate studies. Besides, with SSHRC Partnership Grant’s extended period of time between 2013 and 2020, both Canadian and Chinese student participants in the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program can be involved in a sister school project established between Windsor and Chongqing. The sister school network between Windsor and Chongqing is an extension of the Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program. Student participants will help establish the sister school network and assist with school-based research activities.