ACADEMIC INTEGRITY THROUGH THE LENS OF CRITICAL THEORY

Mainland Chinese students’ epistemological adaptation to studying on UK master’s programmes

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Focus Group Research

Mainland Chinese Masters students in the UK

8 Focus Groups

25 participants

Various stages of study and after returning to China
Epistemological Reflection Model
Baxter Magolda (1992)

1. Absolute Knowing
2. Transitional Knowing
3. Independent Knowing
4. Contextual Knowing

From looking to authority to becoming an authority(ity)
How is Social order possible?

1981: Theory of Communicative Action (TCA)
Communicative Action

Intersubjective Consensus on Truth

Instrumental Action

Norm-free, impersonal & strategic
**LIFEWORLD:**
Informal place of shared meanings and understandings where people share knowledge, reach understanding, and create social cohesion through reasoned consensus.

**SYSTEM:**
Money and power – economy and administration
Aimed at supporting the efficient reproduction of the lifeworld.

**COLONIZATION:**
Fragile equilibrium is disturbed where the system “turn[s] back destructively upon the lifeworld itself” (Habermas, 1981, p. 189).

**SYSTEMATICALLY DISTORTED COMMUNICATION:**
Instrumental education & threats to academic Integrity.
TCA, Chinese Students & Academic Integrity

Colonisation of the Lifeworld & Distorted Communication

Modern China
Educational background
Rational Accountability
Cultural Background
Chinese Learner
Language competency
Colonisation of the Academic Lifeworld
Increasingly instrumental

Chinese Learner

- Educational background
- Rational Accountability
- Cultural Background
- Language competency
- Modern China

British Higher Education

- Democratic society
- Internationalisation
- Marktisation
- Internet
Intersubjective Consensus on Truth

- Academic norms – referencing
- Adopting a particular epistemological approach
- Transmission of knowledge through discourse
- Development of higher level thinking skills – rational accountability/critical thinking
- Reflected in the pedagogy

Plagiarism or lack of critical thinking as a denial of self in the knowledge process
ANY QUESTIONS?