Managing the Adjustment of EFL Teachers in English Language Schools in China

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Abstract

The current study was designed to better understand the adjustment of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to living and working in China. The thriving EFL industry in China; its reliance on expatriate EFL Teachers who have to adjust to an unfamiliar environment; and the lack of previous research on the adjustment of EFL Teachers make this an important study. A sample of 51 EFL Teachers was surveyed using an online questionnaire. The Results indicated that language ability was significantly related to interaction and work adjustment. Perceived Organizational Support was significantly related to all three dimensions of adjustment: interaction adjustment, work adjustment, and adjustment to the general environment. The sample was relatively well-adjusted to living and working in China, although findings also implied that language schools need to improve their management of the adjustment of EFL Teachers with regards to increasing the effectiveness of culture and language training. The paper is concluded with practical recommendations and implications for future research. The study adds to the body of literature on expatriate adjustment by focusing on the adjustment of EFL Teachers, who are self-initiated foreign employees rather than sent abroad by a parent company; and by measuring a range of variables using a unique combination of instruments adapted from previous research with self-developed instruments.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

In today’s global business climate the need for effective communication could not be more important. With 600 to 700 million speakers worldwide, English is undoubtedly one of the foremost languages used for international communication (Harmer, 2001). Commentators have attributed the dominance of the English language to the coming of the internet age, the rise of high-technology (Egan and Farley, 2004) and the impact of the USA on the economy and culture of the world (Harmer, 2001). As a result English has become the lingua franca for international business (Charles, 2007). For non-native speakers, the learning of English represents a range of opportunities in a variety of professions with English proficiency helping employees to secure promotion and move up the career ladder (Desai, 2008). Unsurprisingly, in China, the country with the world’s second largest economy and traditionally a non-English speaking country (CIA World Factbook, 2008- www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/) the demand for English language teaching is high, with language education representing a US$ 3 billion industry (Financial Times Online, 2007- www.ft.com). An article in the Economist (2006) estimated that up to a fifth of China’s population of 1.3 billion were learning English, with people of all ages eager to take up the language. According to the Economist (2006) there may up to 50,000 private language schools offering English tuition in China, ranging from small family businesses to Chinese and International chains.

Whilst it makes logical sense that the majority of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers are expatriates from countries where English is spoken as the native language (Egan and Farley, 2004), previous research on expatriation indicates that an unfamiliar host environment, such as that of China, will pose a variety of challenges for EFL Teachers. First of all, expatriate employees are almost certain to face culture
shock upon arrival in the host country, leading to tension and conflict (Winkelman, 1994). EFL Teachers operating in China will be met with a new environment consisting of unfamiliar cultural values, social practices, religious beliefs, politics, economic climate, and language (see Black et al., 1991; Ambler and Witzel, 2004; Tang and Ward, 2002) on top of a new and potentially challenging job. According to Selmer (2005), the unique cultural setting of China is particularly demanding for most western business expatriates. Culture also has a substantial influence in the Chinese classroom and the behaviour and attitudes of Chinese students (Li et al., 2007), providing a further challenge for EFL Teachers.

Inability of expatriates to successfully adjust to their new surroundings has been reported to result in early return home or reduced performance (Cited from Takeuchi et al., 2002). According to Black (1988), previous research has shown expatriates failing to complete their assignment as between 20 and 40 percent. Failure in expatriate assignments has damaging implications for both the expatriate and the employer (Aycan, 1997). For the employer expatriate failure can be expensive, damaging to the standing of the company and result in loss of business; for the expatriate failure can have a negative psychological impact and lead to loss of faith in the company (Aycan, 1997).

In the context of language schools in China, the failure of EFL Teachers to adjust and their consequent early return home is likely to result in the cancelling of classes and hence a financial cost for the school. The need to recruit a replacement may also be difficult in a country where there is an urgent need for top-class EFL Teachers (see Egan and Farley, 2004). Likewise, as the performance of EFL Teachers is crucial to the reputation of language schools (Townsend Hall, 2008), it follows that EFL Teachers failing to perform their work to high standards due to adjustment problems are likely to cause a loss of reputation for the school, which could result in financial costs and loss of customers to competitors. With this and previous research in mind, it seems that the adjustment of EFL Teachers to their new lives in China is crucial from
both a business point of view and the point of view of EFL Teachers. The current study on adjustment aims to be beneficial for both EFL Teachers and language schools operating in China.

1.2 Author’s interest in the topic
In her native China, the author has witnessed the growth of the English language industry first-hand. As a Trilingual and English speaker the author is well-aware of the demand for English language teaching, and has been given significant opportunities on the basis of her English ability. Her English ability, and in particular her score on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) has helped the author to gain admission into universities abroad. The author has experience as a language teacher, teaching Korean to Chinese students as well as experience being taught English by non-Chinese EFL Teachers in China. She has also previously had friends and colleagues who were EFL Teachers who have talked about their difficulty in adjusting to living in China. Currently a student in Dublin, Ireland, the author has experienced the culture shock of moving to a new country and has had to adjust to her new environment. The combination of these life experiences has made the author extremely interested in the adjustment of EFL Teachers to living and working in China.

1.3 Research angle
Although a substantial amount of research has explored factors relating to the adjustment of expatriates (e.g., Aycan, 1997; Black, 1988; Black, 1990; Black et al., 1991; Takeuchi et al., 2002; Selmer, 2005; 2006a; 2006b; Selmer et al., 2007; Shaffer et al., 2006; Goodall et al., 2006; Sims and Schraeder, 2004 etc.) very few studies have focused on the specific adjustment of EFL Teachers or the management of expatriate adjustment in EFL schools. Research has tended to concentrate on expatriates sent by their company to overseas units for a set length of time rather than expatriates such as EFL Teachers who are self-initiated foreign employees (SFEs) (Fu et al., 2005). In many ways EFL is a unique industry in which expatriates are viewed
as a necessity rather than a choice, given that native English speakers are often required by language schools (Egan and Farley, 2004). Additionally, recent research on the adjustment of expatriates to the Chinese cultural setting (e.g., Selmer 2006a; 2006b; 2005; Huang et al., 2005) has tended to focus on single factors that may be related dimensions of adjustment rather than considering the range of factors that may influence adjustment at one time.

With the above in mind, this study adds to the body of research by; focusing on the specific adjustment of EFL Teachers and its implications for language schools in China; investigating the management of adjustment by language schools; and by exploring a range of variables that may influence the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. The questionnaire instrument used in the current study also represents a unique aspect of the research. The combination of questions and scales adapted from previous research with those which were self-developed allowed the research to measure a range of organizational and individual variables, proposed to influence expatriate adjustment, which have seldom been measured in a single study; as well as measuring the effectiveness of language schools’ efforts to manage adjustment; and the degree to which EFL Teachers are well-adjusted to living and working in China.

1.4 Research questions

The current study is driven by three research questions:

1) To what extent do expatriate EFL Teachers adjust well to living and working in China?

Rationale: There are many reported problems associated with expatriation such as culture shock, language barriers, conflicts with local staff and stress of the new environment. Furthermore, Chinese culture may be considerably different than the culture that most EFL Teachers are accustomed to. The degree to which EFL Teachers are adjusted to living and working in China will provide a measure of how well they cope in their new environment. Knowing the extent to which EFL Teachers are able adjust to living and working in China will be useful for EFL
Teachers currently working in China, those considering taking up an EFL Position in China, language schools in China, and those considering establishing language schools in China.

2) What factors are related to the adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers to living and working in China?
Rationale: knowing the factors which are associated with the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China may prove valuable to both EFL Teachers and language schools. Such factors may provide EFL Teachers with methods to improve their adjustment or reasons why they have been unsuccessful in their adjustment to living and working in China. Such factors may also supply language schools with specific methods or ideas on how to facilitate the successful adjustment of employees. They may also enable language schools to look for certain attributes prospective candidates for EFL jobs or improve current training that is supposed to facilitate adjustment. Hypotheses for this research question are outlined in the chapter 3 of this paper.

3) To what extent is adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers managed well by language schools in China?
Rationale: Given the researched problems associated with expatriation it is vital to know the extent to which expatriation problems are considered by management at schools, and the extent to which problems are effectively managed by schools. The answer to this research question may enable schools to determine whether or not their management of the adjustment of EFL Teachers is sufficient or whether improvement is needed.

1.5 Outline of chapters of this paper
The paper begins with a review of the literature concerning culture, culture shock and adjustment. There is a specific focus on the adjustment literature including factors that previous research has identified as important to adjustment. Following the Literature
Review, research hypotheses are made. The Hypotheses specifically relate to the second research question. This is followed by the Methodology section which details the methodology adopted for the current study. This is followed by a presentation of the findings. These are based on analysis of responses to an online questionnaire exploring the adjustment of EFL Teachers living and working in China. Findings are outlined with respect to the three research questions. The findings are evaluated and discussed in the next section. Practical implications and limitations of the research are also detailed in the Discussion chapter. In the final chapter the study is concluded with recommendations and implications for further research discussed.

1.6 Terminology

*EFL Teacher*

The term EFL Teacher is defined as Teachers of English as Foreign Language. For the purpose of the current study this term encompasses teachers who hold managerial and non-managerial positions.

*ESL*

The term English as a second language is conceptually similar to EFL. Both terms are widely used in teaching industry.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the Literature

The literature review examines a variety of research relating to the effects of an unfamiliar cultural environment on EFL Teachers living and working abroad. While no previous empirical research has investigated the extent to which expatriate teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) adjust to the Chinese cultural environment or how language schools have facilitated the adjustment of EFL Teachers, research on Chinese Culture (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Kaye and Taylor, 1997; Kim et al., 1998; Fan, 2007 etc.) Expatriate Culture Shock (e.g., Winkelman, 1994; Scott, 2005; Smith, 2008; Pires et al., 2006 etc.) and Expatriate Adjustment (Selmer, 2006; Black et al., 1991; Aycan, 1997; Shaffer et al., 2006 etc.) can provide a valuable background for EFL Teachers and Managers of Language Schools. Additional literature from the field of English Language Teaching (e.g., Harmer, 2001; Egan and Farley, 2004; Chan, 1999) has highlighted some of the cultural differences and potential problems that EFL Teachers face in foreign and specifically Chinese classrooms.

The Literature review follows a logical format, starting with a broad scope and narrowing to the focus of this study. The first section (2.2) demonstrates that cultural differences have important consequences for international business. The second section (2.3) investigates dimensions of Chinese culture and its implications for EFL Teachers and expatriates in general. The third section (2.4) considers the culture shock experienced by individuals, such as EFL Teachers, who move to unfamiliar cultural environments. The final part of the literature review (2.5) analyses the Adjustment literature and identifies a variety of factors which have been shown to influence the degree of cross-cultural adjustment. These antecedents of adjustment are helpful to in that they provide ways in which language schools can facilitate the successful adjustment of foreign teaching staff. This topic is the focal point of the current study.
2.2 Culture and International Business

While the concept of culture has been regarded as difficult to describe (see Lindridge, 2005), it plays a major role in the understanding of international business (see Hofstede, 1980; 1983; 1999; Trompenaars, 1996). Hofstede (1980) defines culture as “the collective mental programming of people in an environment”. Culture affects individuals in all aspects of their life in both a work and non-work context and in their relationships with others (Hollensen, 2007). With these descriptions of culture in mind, it is reasonable to suggest that problems may arise when individuals from different cultural backgrounds, such as expatriates and local staff, encounter one another in the work-place.

Research by Hofstede (1980; 1983; 2001) and Trompenaars (1996) has identified distinct cultural characteristics of nations around the world. These characteristics have provided valuable insights for businesses wishing to expand overseas. Trompenaars (1996) argues that to resolve cultural conflicts, it is necessary to understand and reconcile cultural difference. This suggests that a greater understanding of their cultural surroundings may aid expatriate teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) when living and working abroad.

2.3 Chinese Culture and Implications for EFL Teachers

Dimensions of Chinese culture

Hofstede’s five cultural dimensions of Power Distance, Individualism/Collectivism, Long term/Short term orientation, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity/Femininity are a valuable tool for understanding Chinese culture (Kaye and Taylor, 1997). Although Hofstede’s study has been criticised for its limited sample of employees from a single multinational company (Chinta and Capar, 2007) and Holden (2004) warns against dependence on what may be an out of date notion of culture, findings of Hofstede’s original (1980) research have been largely supported by replica studies (Cited from Sondergaard, 1994). Chinta and Capar, (2007) also found partial support for Hofstede’s research in a comparison of American and Chinese managers.
While Hofstede’s original (1980) research only directly investigated Greater China, consisting of Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong, recent updates of his work have expanded the study to include The People’s Republic of China (see Hofstede, 2001; http://www.geert-hofstede.com/; Chinta and Capar, 2007). China has been categorized as high in the dimensions of Collectivism, Power Distance (Kaye and Taylor, 1997; Chinta and Capar, 2007; Hofstede, 2001; http://www.geert-hofstede.com/) and long-term orientation (Hofstede, 2001; http://www.geert-hofstede.com/; Lee and Dawes, 2005).

In China’s traditionally collectivist culture people are expected to seek the goals of their larger group as a means to personal satisfaction (Kaye and Taylor, 1997) and are discouraged from seeking their own individual motives and interests (Ambler and Witzel, 2004) and expressing their individual opinion (Tang and Ward, 2002). The latter point would suggest that foreign teachers in China may have difficulties in getting students to answer questions and participate in class on an individual level. Chinese students value modesty and can be reluctant to speak their true feelings due to China’s Confucian heritage (Chan, 1999). Additionally, another potentially problematic area for expatriates coming from individualistic cultures is the lack of consideration for personal space and privacy unlike in individualistic countries (Tang and Ward, 2002). However, research by Ralston et al., (1999) (Cited from Goodall et al., 2006) revealed more individualist characteristics in managers who were forty-years and under. People living within regions of China that have been subject to influence from overseas have also been shown to have more individualistic beliefs (Ralston et al., 1996; Cited from Goodall et al., 2006).

China’s high Power Distance score implies that Chinese employees expect their leaders to act in an autocratic manner enjoying benefits that are not available to employees of a lower stature (See Hofstede, 1980; 1983; 2001). Confucian philosophy has also played a major part in the Chinese acceptance of a hierarchal structure of society (Tang and Ward, 2002; Farh, 2007). Confucian cultures are governed by the belief that each person has their own position in society.
This dimension has important implications for the relationship between foreign teachers and their students (see Du-Babcock, 2006). Chinese school students rely heavily upon their teacher, expecting them to care about their progress and look after their needs (Tang and Ward, 2002). Teachers are treated with a great deal of respect and are expected to take an authoritative stance with students. By the same token students are not expected to disagree with their teacher (Chan, 1999; Tang and Ward, 2002). This is reflected in the teacher-centred classes given by Chinese teachers (Tang and ward, 2002). Chan (1999) highlights the cultural differences in teaching methodology between East Asia and other parts of the world, noting that learning in East Asia is often a passive process for students, with classes featuring rote learning and tests as a motivating factor. Concepts are given more importance than skills development.

This is in sharp contrast to EFL teaching which takes a more personalized learner-oriented approach, involving a much greater degree of interaction amongst students and between students and teachers (Egan and Farley, 2004) These cultural differences in teaching approaches can be the source of difficulty for EFL Teachers and students alike in the classroom (Harmer, 2001).

That Long Term Orientation is China’s highest scoring dimension is in line with results from all other Asian countries (http://www.geert-hofstede.com/). Chinese business people expect to build-up fruitful long term relationships with business partners. When Chinese business people form relationships with staff and partners, they consider the implications for the future rather than just the present (Lee and Dawes, 2005). This may have implications for the length of time the expatriate EFL Teachers are expected to say overseas by the managers of Chinese schools and the length of expatriate assignment.

China’s medium rank in terms of Masculinity/Femininity suggests that societal gender roles are not as clearly defined as in more masculine cultures where men would be expected to viewed as dominating society (Hofstede, 1980; 1983). This is supported by the high prevalence of women in employment in China (see Cooke, 2001). This suggests that female expatriates, such as female EFL Teachers may receive equal
treatment while employed in China. According to Kaye and Taylor (1997), the Chinese people’s willingness to change and take moderate risks is reflected in their medium to low score for Uncertainty Avoidance.

Kim et al., (1998) argue that Chinese culture can also be explained in terms of Hall’s (1976) concept of high versus low context culture. In this explanation of culture, China is categorized as high-context. This suggests that Chinese people express important thoughts and feelings in a simple manner without having to explicitly say what they mean (Kim et al., 1998). This would seemingly have an impact on communication between expatriates and Chinese natives. In terms of EFL Teachers there is potential for misunderstanding with local staff, students and school managers.

**Unique concepts in Chinese culture**

Researchers have also drawn attention to the concepts which are unique to Chinese culture. Important examples include, *Guanxi* and *Mianzi*. While the term *Guanxi* literally refers to social connections and relationships with others, it is the underlying implications of the concept which play a major part in Chinese business (Fan, 2007). Numerous researchers have highlighted that an understanding of Guanxi is a necessity for conducting business in China (e.g., Ambler and Witzel, 2003; Fan, 2007; Leung and Wong, 2001; Selmer, 2005; Lee and Dawes, 2005). According to Ambler and Witzel (2003) it is these important relationships are extremely important for effectively getting things done in Chinese business. Good *guanxi* can help businesses to: evade hindrances associated with China’s bureaucratic system, receive special benefits and hard to obtain knowledge, gain important help in times of need, and minimising insecurity (Fan, 2002).

Good Guanxi is beneficial for all those involved and important for facilitating equal business negotiations (Leung and Wong, 2001). By the same token, these special relationships require trust and commitment as well as maintenance of the relationship via practices such as gift giving, favour giving, regular phone calls, and forming relationships outside of a business context (Chen, 2001). Selmer (2005) expresses
concerns about the ability of western expatriates to develop meaningful *guanxi*. This could potentially be a problem for EFL Teachers in China who wish to develop good working relationships with their superiors, local staff, and students.

*Mianzi* or *face* refers to and individual’s respect and social standing which, like *guanxi*, has important consequences for business relationships in China (Fan, 2007; Ambler and Witzel, 2003). Correspondingly, loss of *face* denotes the loss of respect of a party within a social relationship (Cardon and Scott, 2007). Causing someone to lose face can cause great harm to relationships that have been established and developed with counterparts; leading to a termination of mutually beneficial activities and possible reprisals (Ambler and Witzel, 2003; Chen, 2001). Chinese people may even lie to preserve face for themselves or others (Chen, 2001). Maintaining the *face* of superiors is important and subordinates should not be seen to undermine or disagree with their bosses (Tang and Ward, 2002). Chinese culture’s emphasis on harmony, *face* and non-confrontation makes it difficult to give or receive feedback (Chow, 2004). This may pose a problem to western expatriate teachers who may be accustomed to expressing their true feelings with little regard for the *face* of another person. Teachers should also be careful about the impact of *face* in the classroom. Students are likely to feel uncomfortable if they are asked direct questions by their teacher, as they do not want to lose face in front of their classmates (Li, 2007). Chan (1999) recommends that teachers modify their approach to encompass more group interactions in the classroom so as to avoid putting individual pressure on students and causing potential for loss of face.

### 2.4 Culture Shock

Culture shock denotes “the confusion, disorientation, and emotional upheaval that follows a move (not a visit) from one country to another” (Scott, 2005). Culture shock is accepted as a normal reaction experienced by those encountering new cultures for an extended period overseas (Winkelman, 1994; Scott, 2005; Kaye and Taylor, 1997; Goodall et al., 2006). Nonetheless, it can result in severe reactions and desire to return
home (Smith, 2008; Winkelman, 1994) Although critical research relating to the overseas experience of EFL Teachers is sparse, it is reasonable to assume they would encounter culture shock in a similar way to other expatriate and immigrant groups.

Culture shock has been argued to be a gradual process that consists of four distinct stages (Winkelman, 1994; Scott, 2005; Smith, 2008; Ferraro, 1990). The first phase sometimes referred to as the honeymoon phase involves positive emotions, excitement and interest in the new cultural setting (Winkelman, 1994). While it may be natural that in this stage people feel relaxed and happy (Scott, 2005) individuals usually have unrealistic expectations of the host environment in this stage (Feichtinger and Fink, 1998).

In the second phase, the crises phase, individuals start to develop negative feelings of loneliness and isolation with a sense of the cultural gap between home and host culture (Pires et al., 2006). This phase typically starts after the first few weeks or the first month, however, it can vary with individual differences with some people experiencing crisis upon arrival (Winkelman, 1994). During this period individuals are likely to feel dissatisfied with the local culture and its differences with the home culture (Arredondo-Dowd, 1981). The stress of not understanding the language is likely to add to feelings of crisis in this phases which could last two or three months (Scott, 2005).

The adjustment and reorientation phase is where people start to learn how to accept and adjust to the new culture (Winkelman, 1994). Individuals experience some degree of contentment with their own ability to survive in the new culture (Pires et al., 2006). In this stage people begin to manage their expectations and make sense of the host culture (Pires et al., 2006).

The final stage-the adaptation, resolution or acculturation phase is when one has achieved an understanding of the new setting and achieved an identity in the new culture (Winkelman, 1994). To reach this stage individuals must actively manage and respond to their culture shock (Winkelman, 1994; Smith, 2008).
2.5 Expatriate Adjustment

Definitions and Dimensions of Adjustment

Aycan (1997) defines expatriate adjustment as the level of harmony between the expatriate and their new surroundings with respect to their work and non-work environment. Berry (2003) (Cited from Berry, 2006) views adjustment as a condition in which individuals undergo psychological and cultural transitions arising from exposure to a new cultural setting.

Recent research on cross-cultural adjustment has differentiated between psychological adjustment and sociocultural adjustment (e.g., Ward and Kennedy, 1992, 1993a, 1993b; Aycan, 1997; Fish 2005; Berry et al., 2006; Selmer, 2005; Selmer et al., 2007). While both notions are interrelated they have distinct characteristics and implications (Selmer et al., 2007).

Sociocultural adjustment denotes the proficiency of expatriates to harmonize and successfully cooperate with members of their new cultural setting (Ward and Kennedy, 1993b). Sociocultural adjustment entails cultural learning and development of social skills in the host country environment in order to competently interact with host country nationals (Wang and Mallinckrodt, 2006; Ataca and Berry, 2002). Researchers have used the difficulty that individuals have in handling social situations in the new environment as a measurement of this dimension of adjustment (Ward and Kennedy, 1993a). Psychological adjustment concerns the mental and emotional state and contentment of the individual in their new setting (Ward and Kennedy, 1993b). It has been associated with personality traits, the amount of received social support, and life alterations (Ward and Kennedy, 1993a). Researchers have assessed psychological adjustment of individuals by examining their self-disclosed psychological symptoms (Wang and Mallinckrodt, 2006). Berry et al., (2006) found empirical support for sociocultural and psychological adaptation as two separate kinds of adjustment in a sample of over 5,366 youth immigrants in 13 societies after factor analysis of five adaptation variables: satisfaction with life, self-esteem, behaviour problems, psychological problems, and adjustment to school.
Further dimensions of adjustment have been identified in the literature leading researchers to describe expatriate adjustment as a multifaceted phenomenon (e.g., Black et al., 1991; Aycan, 1997; Selmer, 2005). This contrasts with earlier studies which regarded adjustment as a unitary concept (e.g., Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1962; Oberg, 1960; Torbiorn, 1982; all cited from Black et al., 1991). Black et al., (1991) identify three dimensions of adjustment: adjustment to work, adjustment to interacting with host country nationals and adjustment to the general environment. This tripartite model has found support from Black and Gregersen (1991) who found that distinct antecedents were related to the different dimensions of adjustment in a study of expatriate managers in four East-Asian Countries. Selmer et al., (2007) reports further empirical endorsement of the tripartite model proposed by Black et al., (1991) from numerous researchers. There are evident conceptual similarities between the facets of Black et al.’s (1991) model and the notions of sociocultural and psychological adjustment. The concept of adjustment to interacting with locals, proposed by Black et al. (1991), bears obvious resemblance to the definition of sociocultural adjustment. The concept of adjustment to the general environment is also seen to encompass psychological and sociocultural adjustment (Aycan, 1997).

The view that adjustment to work is a distinct facet of expatriate adjustment has been upheld by various researchers (e.g., Aycan and Berry, 1996; Aryee and Stone, 1996; Aycan, 1997; Breiden et al., 2006). Expatriate adjustment to work is defined in terms of the degree of emotional attachment and positive feeling the expatriate has towards their new position and the extent to which they exhibit the necessary skills to fulfil the requirements of the job and new working environment (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984; Aycan and Berry, 1996; Aycan, 1997; Breiden et al., 2006).

Factors related to Adjustment

Within the body of literature on expatriation researchers have investigated a range of variables and their relationship to successful adjustment. These factors encompass both characteristics of the expatriate and organizational features of the company. The
time before the individual arrives in the new environment has been considered as well as the period after arrival (Aycan, 1997).

**Personality traits**

The personality traits demonstrated by the individual in their new environment are widely viewed as an important predictor of cross-cultural adjustment (see Shaffer et al., 2006; Huang et al., 2005; Aycan, 1997 etc.). Personality factors have been associated with the dimension of psychological adjustment in particular (Ward and Kennedy, 1993a; Ataca and Berry, 2002; Searle and Ward, 1990, Cited from Ataca and Berry, 2002).

Recent research (e.g., Shaffer et al., 2006; Huang et al., 2005) has focused on the relationship between expatriate adjustment and the Big Five personality traits. The Big Five is a model devised by personality trait theorists to explain personality in terms of five factors. These are extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness (Digman 1990). Huang et al., (2005) found partial support for the influence of the Big Five Characteristics on expatriate adjustment. Findings based on questionnaire data of American expatriates living and working in Taiwan revealed that extroversion was related to more successful interaction adjustment and general adjustment. Agreeableness was also found to be related to interaction adjustment while openness was positively correlated with general adjustment and adjustment to work. Huang et al., (2005) argue that these findings could have important implications for expatriates living in countries influenced by Chinese culture. The influence of the Big Five on adjustment has also received empirical support from Shaffer et al., (2006). In line with Huang et al., (2005) findings revealed that agreeableness, openness, and extraversion were positively correlated with interaction adjustment, work adjustment, and general adjustment respectively. A positive correlation was also found between emotional stability and work adjustment.

Other personality traits that have been related to adjustment include cultural flexibility (Aycan, 1997; Sims and Schraeder, 2004), hardiness (Ataca and Berry, 2002), internal
locus of control (Ward and Kennedy, 1993a; Ward and Kennedy, 1992a, Cited from Ward and Kennedy, 1993a; Black, 1990) and curiosity (Kets de Vries and Mead, 1991, Cited from Huang et al., 2005). However these factors of personality may well be categorized under the Big Five model of personality.

**Attitude towards acculturation**

Acculturation attitudes of individuals who enter new cultural environments are considered an important predictor of expatriate adjustment (Aycan, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Ataca and Berry, 2002). Upon entering a new cultural domain an individual’s attitude towards preserving their own cultural identity, and the importance they place on developing and maintaining relationships with people of the host environment play a crucial part in how well they adjust to their new settings (Aycan, 1997; Berry et al., 2006; Ataca and Berry, 2002). According to Berry (1976) (Cited from Ataca and Berry, 2002) individuals keen to maintain their cultural identity and also their relationship with members of the host culture take on an attitude of ‘integration’. An ‘assimilation’ attitude is adopted by individuals who wish to develop relationships with host country nationals but do not wish to maintain their cultural identity. Individuals who prefer to uphold their cultural heritage but have no inclination towards forming relationships with members of the host country are considered to have a ‘separation’ attitude. A ‘marginalization’ attitude describes individuals who do not wish to be involved with the host society or retain their cultural characteristics. Aycan (1997) an attitude of ‘integration’ will facilitate optimum expatriate adjustment. This proposition is supported by the research of Berry et al., (2006) who finds that individuals with this acculturation attitude exhibit better psychological and sociocultural adaptation. However, Berry et al.’s sample of youth immigrants may not be relevant to that of expatriates. An ethnocentric attitude has been identified as an important factor relating to how well expatriates adjust to their new environment (Stahl, 2000; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Shaffer et al., 2006). Ethnocentric individuals view their own cultural values as being superior to those of a different culture they hence make little effort to learn about the host culture or interact with
host nationals (Black at al., 1990; Cited From Sims and Schraeder, 2004). Stahl (2000) identified ethnocentrism as tendency of less successful expatriate managers in a survey of German expatriate managers in the US and Japan. More successful expatriate managers tended to build relationships with host nationals, learn from their cultural experience and minimize cultural conflicts.

In two separate questionnaire studies, Shaffer et al., (2006) found a significant negative correlation between ethnocentrism and interaction adjustment plus other variables relating to expatriate effectiveness. The study of Japanese expatriates based in 20 countries around the world also found a significant negative correlation between ethnocentrism and work adjustment, based on longitudinal data. Florkowski and Fogel (1999) also found a negative relationship between ethnocentrism and work adjustment. These findings support the view that expatriates should not separate or marginalize themselves in their new environment.

Language ability

It seems a reasonable assumption that the ability of expatriates to use the host language effectively would facilitate more effective interaction with host nationals and thus give rise to greater sociocultural adjustment. A considerable amount of empirical support for language ability as a predictor of adjustment has been found within the literature (e.g., Selmer, 2006; Wang and Mallinckrodt, 2006; Takeuchi et al., 2002; Ward and Kennedy, 1993a; Ataca and Berry 2002; Greenland and Brown, 2005).

Theorists have argued that inability to use the host language could present expatriates with a serious barrier to interacting with host nationals and adapting to the new environment (e.g., Fish, 2005; Black et al., 1991). Fish (2005) also holds that poor host language ability can lead to practical problems performing work-related tasks, citing the inability to negotiate a contract with a host country client as an example of a problem related to lacking language ability. Moreover, language proficiency may amount to more than the sole ability of communicating with locals. Learning a
language exposes individuals to concepts that are not easy to translate but which may be important aspects of the host culture and opens them up to greater level of cultural understanding as well as allowing expatriates to express politeness (Eschbach et al., 2001). It also enables learners to demonstrate their willingness to learn about the language and culture to colleagues and host nationals (Eschbach et al., 2001; Yavas, 2004). The willingness to speak in the host language has been argued as influencing expatriate adjustment more than language proficiency (Brislin, 1993, Cited from Goodall et al., 2006).

In the context of expatriates working in China, an ability to communicate in Chinese may be conducive to the formation of Guanxi with employees and clients (Selmer, 2006). Goodall et al., (2006) found that Chinese employees were extremely positive about expatriate managers who were able to speak some Chinese, and sometimes negative about those who were perceived as unwilling to learn any Chinese. These good relationships formed on the basis of language ability would be expected to facilitate expatriate adjustment. It follows that good relationships with local colleagues and clients would reduce conflict and facilitate a greater level of subjective well-being and hence better psychological adaptation, as well as enabling expatriates to complete their work-related tasks (e.g., managing staff, negotiating deals) more effectively and hence leading to better work adjustment.

Knowledge of the host culture

It has been argued that knowledge or awareness of the host culture helps expatriates adjust to their new cultural setting (e.g., Takeuchi et al., 2002; Fish 2005; Goodall et al., 2006). In a survey of Japanese expatriates working in the USA Takeuchi et al., (2002) found a significant correlation between prior cultural knowledge and the three dimensions of adjustment which were tested (interaction, work and general adjustment). Knowledge of the host culture prior to arrival allows expatriates to gain insight and cultural understanding before entering the new environment. It helps them to manage their expectations of the host country culture and thus should ease their adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2002; Caligiuri et al., 2001, Cited from Takeuchi et al.,
There are numerous means by which expatriates can gain cultural knowledge of the host setting. Goodall et al., (2006) cites examples of expatriates gaining cultural knowledge of China from spouses who are host country natives, through interacting with local people, and through reading books. A book is an obvious means by which expatriates can gain knowledge prior to arrival. However, expatriates should ensure that they get the latest materials (Goodall et al., 2006). This suggestion may be especially appropriate in China where society and culture are changing at a rapid pace. Nonetheless, it is debatable how much a guide book would prepare individuals for the real experience of living in a new culture. Goodall et al., (2006) also advocates the use of a local consultant to assist on cultural issues.

Cross-cultural training

Cross-cultural training has been advocated as a means of gaining vital knowledge about the host culture and facilitating adjustment (e.g., Yavas, 2004; Eschbach et al., 2001; Black and Mendenhall 1989; 1990; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Zakaria, 2000). Cross-cultural training may incorporate different methodologies with different purposes. Such purposes include learning how to effectively interact with host country natives, learning about the important values of the new culture, recognising cultural differences between the host and home cultures, gaining active experience within the new cultural milieu, acquiring fact-based knowledge regarding the new surroundings, and learning behaviours that will be met with reward in the new culture (Brislin et al., 1983; Cited from Eschbach et al., 2001). Language training has also been regarded as an important element of cross-cultural training (Yavas 2004; Eschbach et al., 2001). Zakaria (2000) argues that cross-cultural training can lead to a variety of advantages for the employer and employee. These include: enabling the expatriate to cope with stress, disorientation and the culture shock of the new environment; developing the ability to cooperate with natives of the host country; enabling expatriates to hone their management skills to suit the host culture; and providing benefits to the organization as a whole (Zakaria, 2000). In order to be successful, cross-cultural training should
take place in both pre-departure and post-arrival phases of expatriation (Avril and
Magnini, 2007; Yavas 2004; Eschbach et al., 2001).
The effectiveness of cross-cultural training has received empirical support from
numerous studies. Black and Mendenhall (1990) found evidence of a positive
relationship between cross-cultural training and adjustment based on a meta-analysis
of twenty-nine previous studies. Black and Mendenhall (1990) also found similar
relationships between cross-cultural training, work performance and well-being, both
of which could be argued as facets of adjustment (see Aycan, 1997; Black et al., 1991;
Selmer, 2005 etc.). Eschbach et al, (2001) found that thorough cross-cultural training
reduced the time it took expatriates to adjust to the host culture and work environment
based on retrospective questionnaire and interview data of American repatriates.
Selmer (2005) argues that the apparent need for cross-cultural training for expatriates
operating in China is significant given China’s unique cultural environment. Selmer
(2005) also found modest support for a positive relationship between cross-cultural
training and work adjustment in joint ventures operating in China but not in other
types of organization, using a sample of western business expatriates. Selmer’s (2005)
findings suggest that the effectiveness of cross-cultural training is reliant the kind of
organisation the expatriate is working in. Cross-cultural training may be more
effective organisations where expatriates and host nationals have to work closely
together as would be the case in joint ventures.
Despite the reported empirical findings in favour of cross-cultural training as a way to
manage adjustment some researchers have expressed doubts about how successful it
really is (see Selmer, 2005; Sims and Schraeder, 2004). Firms may also regard
cross-cultural training as an expensive activity with an intangible return on investment
(Sims and Schraeder, 2004). However, the general support in the literature for
cross-cultural training as aiding adjustment and limiting culture shock means that it
may be an invaluable tool for companies that employ expatriate workers.
Previous cross-cultural experience

Empirical findings have supported the view that previous cross-cultural experience is related to the adjustment of expatriates in subsequent overseas assignments (e.g., Shim and Paprock, 2004; Shaffer et al., 1999). While expatriates with overseas experience will still be prone to culture shock upon commencement of a new international assignment their previous experience can help to ease their adjustment to the new environment (Black et al., 1991). Researchers have rationalized that previous overseas experience enables expatriates to develop techniques that will help them in further assignments (Tye and Chen, 2005). Shim and Paprock (2004) found that previous cross-cultural experience was one of the factors that helped facilitate expatriate adjustment. As well as easing adjustment to general international assignments, previous experience may play a major role in helping expatriates adjust to the specific cultural setting they in which they work (Aycan, 1997). Studies have shown that the previous experience of companies in Greater China (Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong) has led to greater performance in mainland China (Cited from Selmer, 2005). This suggests that the knowledge gained in Greater China helps firms to adjust to business on the mainland. Although research has not explored whether this is related to cross-cultural adjustment at an individual level, it would seem reasonable that expatriates who have been exposed to aspects of Chinese culture in Greater China, would experience a reduced culture shock and easier adjustment in mainland China.

Technical ability

The technical ability of expatriates is also likely to affect how well they adjust to their new environment. Expatriates who exhibit a better technical ability are less likely to experience the negative psychological symptoms associated with job uncertainty. Their competence is also likely to be received well by local employees thus breaking down barriers and helping to develop co-operative relationships in the new workplace (Aycan, 1997). However, while technical ability is obviously important firms are cautioned against selecting individuals for assignments on the sole basis of technical
ability (Black et al., 1991; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Tye and Chen, 2005). Research by Eschbach et al, (2001) also indicates that cross-cultural expertise is more helpful for expatriate adjustment than technical competency. Nonetheless, technical ability is still a crucial factor that can facilitate expatriate adjustment and reduce culture shock (Sims and Schraeder, 2004). Breiden et al, (2006) underscored the technical abilities of the expatriate as a key element to their correspondence model of work adjustment. Their proposition was supported by empirical findings of a multiple regression analysis which showed the fit between expatriate abilities and job requirements as having a significant positive relationship with expatriates’ job satisfaction.

Organizational Support

Organizational support has also been viewed as a factor positively influencing the degree of expatriate adjustment by several researchers (e.g., Avril and Magnini, 2007; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Aycan, 1997; Kraimer et al., 2001). When individuals accept an expatriate assignment they have to make crucial arrangements about their new life abroad in both work and non-work domains. The support given by the company to expatriates in making arrangements, such as those regarding accommodation, schooling of children, obtaining employment for the expatriates’ wife, and the relevant visas and permits reduce the time and stress expended by expatriates on such matters, hence facilitating their adjustment (Aycan, 1997). It is also important that companies continue to support expatriates once they have commenced their assignment abroad through regular communication and assistance (Avril and Magnini, 2007; Aycan, 1997). The support which expatriates perceive on behalf of the company is being increasingly linked to expatriate adjustment (Sims and Schraeder, 2004). Sims and Schraeder (2004) argue that perceptions of organizational support relate to the expatriates’ beliefs on range of company-related issues such as adequacy of salary, extent of prior-training, fairness of expatriate selection process and perceived prospects upon repatriation.

*Implications for language schools in China*

The above factors related to adjustment present managers of language schools with several possible methods with which to manage adjustment of EFL Teachers. Many of the aforementioned factors can be dealt with when looking at curriculum vitae (CV) of prospective teachers. According to Avril and Magnini (2007) the CV of candidates can provide insight into the candidates’ host language ability, previous cross-cultural experience and technical competence. The interview process can help assess whether the candidate exhibits suitable personality characteristics for the expatriate assignment (Avril and Magnini, 2007). It is viewed that the identified factors of personality traits and acculturation attitude could be partially managed by interviews. Based on the literature it would seem appropriate for language schools to implement cross-cultural and language training to facilitate adjustment. However, it should be noted that while these suggestions are implied in the literature, most of the studies are based on samples of expatriate managers, rather than expatriate EFL Teachers, or specifically EFL Teachers living and working in China. This study hopes to contribute to the literature with specific findings relating to EFL Teachers working for language schools in China.
3. Hypotheses

Based on the literature review several hypotheses are made regarding the relationships that variables will have on dimensions of adjustment in EFL Teachers. The Hypotheses are all made with reference to the second research question: What factors are related to the adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers to living and working in China? It is viewed that these hypotheses are necessary given the large amount of variables that have been identified in the literature as having and impact on expatriate adjustment. Hypotheses are made with respect to the three dimensions of adjustment detailed by Black et al. (1991): General adjustment, interaction adjustment and work adjustment. This is in line with previous research that has measured the level of adjustment in expatriates (e.g., Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Shaffer et al., 2006; Selmer 2006a; 2006b; Huang et al., 2005 etc.). To remain consistent with the expatriation literature, Black et al’s (1991) tripartite model of adjustment is chosen over Ward and Kennedy’s (1992, 1993a, 1993b) bipartite model, consisting of psychological and sociocultural adjustment, for the current study. Nevertheless, both models are important to the current research. They are conceptually similar with general adjustment comprising of sociocultural and psychological adjustment (Aycan, 1997). This study shall focus on the variables of Language Ability, Perceived Organizational Support, Cross-cultural Training, Previous Cross-cultural Experience, and Technical Ability.

Researchers have highlighted that inability to speak the host language can lead to problems interacting adjusting to the new cultural milieu, interacting with host nationals (Fish, 2005; Black et al., 1991) and work performance (Fish, 2005). Hence it follows logically that the ability to speak the host language may lead to success in the areas of work, interacting with locals, and adjusting to the general environment. Selmer (2006a) found empirical evidence supporting a positive relationship between the language ability and all three facets of adjustment in western expatriates living
and working in China. It is hypothesised that a similar relationship will be found in expatriate EFL Teachers living and working in China.

*Hypothesis 1a:* The Chinese Language Ability of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with general adjustment.

*Hypothesis 1b:* The Chinese Language Ability of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with interaction adjustment.

*Hypothesis 1c:* The Chinese Language Ability of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with work adjustment.

It is hypothesised that Perceived Organizational Support will also have an impact on all three facets of adjustment. Aycan (1997) argued the perception of support from the company reduces stress and uncertainty enabling expatriates to focus more on adapting to their new cultural situation and facilitate their overall adjustment. Kraimer et al., (2001) found evidence of a positive relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and the three facets of adjustment via structural equation modelling. It is hypothesised that a similar relationship will be found in expatriate EFL Teachers living and working in China.

*Hypothesis 2a:* Perceived Organizational Support felt by EFL Teachers in China has a positive relationship with general adjustment.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Perceived Organizational Support felt by EFL Teachers in China has a positive relationship with interaction adjustment.

*Hypothesis 2c:* Perceived Organizational Support felt by EFL Teachers in China has a positive relationship with work adjustment.
It is hypothesised that Cross-cultural Training will help EFL Teachers to adjust to Chinese culture. Zakaria (2000) argues that Cross-cultural Training enables expatriates to greater understand the new culture, learn how to interact with host nationals, and learn norms of the new working environment. It follows logically that Cross-cultural training may facilitate the three dimensions of adjustment for EFL Teachers living and working in China’s unique cultural environment.

**Hypothesis 3a:** Cross-cultural Training received by EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with general adjustment.

**Hypothesis 3b:** Cross-cultural Training received by EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with interaction adjustment.

**Hypothesis 3c:** Cross-cultural Training received by EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with work adjustment.

Aycan (1997) proposes that expatriates who have had Previous Cross-cultural Experience exhibit increased levels of adjustment due to them acquiring skills that are beneficial in an international setting. It is logical to suppose the skills learnt from previous cross-cultural experience may help EFL Teachers in work and non-work domains and in their interactions with host nationals.

**Hypothesis 4a:** Previous Cross-cultural experience of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with general adjustment.

**Hypothesis 4b:** Previous Cross-cultural experience of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with interaction adjustment.

**Hypothesis 4c:** Previous Cross-cultural experience of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with work adjustment.
The Technical ability of EFL Teachers is expected to be associated with their adjustment. Sims and Schraeder (2004) argue that the technical ability of expatriates has an important effect on their ability to perform their job in the host environment. Black’s (1988) findings revealed that the technical ability of expatriates was associated with work adjustment. It is predicted that a similar relationship will be found in EFL Teachers working in China.

**Hypothesis 5:** Technical ability of EFL Teachers has a positive relationship with work adjustment.
4. Methodology

4.1 Methodology Introduction
The following details the methodological design used for conducting the research on adjustment of EFL Teachers in the context of language schools in China. It is also details implementation procedures and practical issues relating to implementation. This section is concluded by considering the limitations of the methodology and subsequent research.

4.2 Research Philosophy
A pragmatic philosophy was adopted for this research. Therefore, the research questions, strategy, method, and data collection instruments were all adopted with the practicality of the research in mind rather than a deep-rooted philosophical belief. Elements of various philosophies were used at different stages of the research. For instance, the research questions were developed with a view to increasing the knowledge of the adjustment of EFL Teachers to the Chinese host environment; providing practical insight into factors that may be related to their adjustment; and providing useful techniques that may used by language schools to manage the adjustment of their teachers. However, a more positivistic approach was taken in developing hypotheses based on previous research and existing theory on international adjustment. The research strategy and data collection methods were developed with objective measures in mind so that the findings could be empirically analysed and have strong validity. While there was a greater focus on quantifiable data, the research also considered a small amount of qualitative data relating to the opinions of EFL Teachers. This represents a combination of positivism and interpretivism (see Blumberg et al., 2005).

4.3 Research Strategy
A survey research strategy was utilized for the current study. This was largely dictated
by the type of data needed to fulfill the research questions. In order to adequately address the extent to which EFL Teachers adjust to living and working in China, the extent to which adjustment of teachers is managed by language schools in China, and the factors that are related to the adjustment of EFL Teachers; it was viewed as necessary to communicate with teachers of EFL rather than taking an observation strategy. Many previous studies that have measured adjustment of expatriates have employed a survey strategy (e.g. Black, 1987; 1990; Selmer, 2006a; 2006b; Fish, 2005; Takeuchi et al., 2002; Huang et al., 2005 etc). This suggests that surveys are an effective means to measure adjustment. Survey research was viewed as the best means to gain information from EFL Teachers based in various locations around China, as was required for this study.

Data from survey research can be collected and analysed easily. Survey research often involves standardized methods in which all participants answer the same questions, enabling statistical analysis of data (McNeil, 2005). Additionally, it was viewed that survey research is comparatively easy to conduct for the researcher given the geographical distance between the researcher and the sample. Survey research is also much more cost and time-efficient than other observational research strategies (Blumberg et al., 2005). Case study research was also viewed as impractical due to the distance between the researcher and the sample. The use of a survey research also represents a departure from the literature, which tends to focus on the anecdotal experiences of teachers in adjusting to life in China (e.g. Egan and Farley, 2004; Du-babcock, 2006), to more empirical research.

4.4 Data Collection Instruments

Choice of Data Collection Method

The chosen data collection method was an internet-mediated questionnaire. An internet-mediated questionnaire was chosen over a postal questionnaire as it was not viewed as practical given the distances involved and possible time delay of postal services. Additionally, threats of terrorism have rendered mail surveys less effective.
in recent years (Selmer, 2006 b). Interviewer-administered questionnaires were viewed as impractical given the physical distance between the researcher and sample and the fact that the researcher had limited time and resources. These were also the reasons that face-to-face interviews were viewed as impractical. Semi-structured telephone interviews were initially considered as a means to gain more qualitative data regarding the experiences of EFL Teachers adjusting to Chinese culture as a companion to the more quantitative questionnaire method. However, semi-structured telephone interviews were viewed as unfeasible given the limited budget, time constraints. It was also viewed that the questionnaire method would adequately address the research questions.

Online questionnaires provided several advantages to the researcher: internet-mediated questionnaires can be completed at the respondents’ convenience, rather than having to arrange appointment times. They are more cost-efficient than the aforementioned data collection methods which would involve paying for postage, long international telephone calls, or airfare (in the case of face-to-face interviews). Online questionnaires also offer a short turnaround of results, with results being processed when each interview is completed, and shorter execution time than other methods (Blumberg et al., 2005).

Sample
The target population was defined as non-Chinese individuals who teach English as a foreign language in China. As well as Teachers, this includes Senior Teachers, Directors of Studies, and a variety of other academic positions. (NB: the title ‘EFL Teacher’ is used as general term covering all of the job positions).

Internet-based resources were primarily used to compile the population list. These included directories of English Language Schools in China, EFL websites, school websites, and online teacher discussion forums. While not exhaustive, the use of the internet is a viewed as a practical method to overcome difficulties in assembling a
population list while at a distance from the target population (Blumberg et al., 2005) as was the case in the current study with the researcher based in Ireland and the target population in China. As the internet mainly yielded correspondence information for schools, it was necessary to communicate with schools in order to gain contact information for individual EFL Teachers. This information was gained by contacting schools via telephone and asking teachers to supply their work E-mail addresses. Additionally, many school managers were happy to supply work E-mail addresses of EFL Teachers at their centre.

From the resulting population list consisting of contact details for 380 EFL Teachers a standard Email was sent out to 190 EFL Teachers selected through simple random sampling. The figure of 190 was chosen as 50% of the population list and viewed as a manageable amount of data to analyse within the time constraints of the study. The population list consisted of EFL Teachers dispersed throughout locations within mainland China. This is reflected in the geographical location of the final sample shown in Table 3. The simple random sample was chosen by using Random.org, which is a True Random Number Generator (See www.random.org). The standard Email briefed recipients on the study and requested their participation as well as ensuring confidentiality and offering a research report. A link to the online questionnaire was enclosed. From the sample 51 usable questionnaires were returned. This represents a response rate of 26.8 percent. This response rate is comparable with previous studies that have investigated adjustment of expatriates in China (e.g. 25.2 percent: Selmer, 2006a; 25.2 percent: Selmer, 2005; 22 percent: Aryee and Stone, 1996). Two questionnaires were received from Chinese nationals. A further ten questionnaires were incomplete. These questionnaires were not deemed usable and not included in the study.

Most of the 51 respondents were male (N = 35, 68.6 percent). Respondents were mainly Teachers (N = 21, 41.2 percent) and Directors of Studies (N = 20, 39.2 percent). 2 respondents (3.9%) were Senior Teachers and 8 respondents (15.7 percent)
occupied other academic positions. Most of the EFL Teachers were from Great Britain (N=26, 51.0 percent), USA (N = 6, 11.8 percent), Australia (N = 4, 7.8 percent), South Africa (N = 4, 7.8 percent) and Ireland (N=3, 5.9 percent). On average they had been living in China for 3.07 years (SD = 2.31) and been teaching in China for 2.97 years (SD = 2.26). Additionally, respondents were located in 29 different cities in China. These represented 13 of China’s 23 provinces, 3 of China’s 4 municipalities and 1 of China’s 5 Autonomous Regions.

Table 1. Background of the Sample (N = 51)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>31.4</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>31.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
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<td>41.2</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>41.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior teacher</td>
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<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>DoS</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>84.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>15.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</table>

Table 2. Nationality of the Sample (N=51)

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<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Table 3. Geographic location of the sample

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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guangxi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hainan</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>23.5</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaoning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>58.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shandong</td>
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<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>74.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sichuan</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>76.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tianjin</td>
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<td>11.8</td>
<td>88.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Access Issues**

In order to gain access to the sample, the benefits of the research were stressed to prospective participants. One such benefit was the possibility of the research highlighting techniques that may be effective in facilitating the adjustment of EFL Teachers living and working in China. This information could prove beneficial for Directors of Studies who may wish to incorporate some of the techniques into teacher training and to teachers in general who may wish to gain insight into what might help them adjust more to living and working in China. A similar benefit is the possibility of findings revealing certain attributes or qualifications that are conducive to EFL Teachers' adjustment to China. This could help Directors of Studies when employing new teachers and could show teachers the attributes or qualifications that would help them better adjust to the Chinese environment. Prospective participants were thus offered a report of the research findings upon completion of the study. Prospective participants were also made aware of how valuable their participation would be given the lack of research in the area. Anonymity was also offered to participants as it was
viewed that the response rate would be increased if participants did not have to divulge their personal information.

The initial telephone calls that were made to English Schools in China were crucial in gaining access to the sample. As well as enabling the collection of specific contact information, it allowed the researcher to answer any questions or concerns that prospective participants had about taking part in the survey and generate interest in the study. The standard Email that contained the link to the questionnaire also contained links to the Portobello College website and the contact Email of the research supervisor. It was felt that this enhanced the perceived credibility of the research and allowed prospective participants to confirm that the study was genuine. The Email address and telephone number of the researcher was also provided in the standard Email in case participants required further clarification.

**Ethical Issues**

High ethical standards were maintained throughout the duration of the study. The American Psychological Association Ethics Code (www.apa.org) was followed throughout the study. Any personal information submitted by respondents was entirely confidential, as were the names and details of companies taking part in the study. Potentially sensitive issues could arise with the use of company names and details, especially given that the questionnaire measured Perceived Organizational Support and asked respondents if they had received specific kinds of training. If company names and details had not been kept confidential the extent to which employees felt supported, or the amount of training received could potentially reflect on a company in a negative way. For this reason, the respondents were not asked to name the company at which they work. Questions that asked for personal information on the questionnaire were all optional.

Care was taken to ensure that no unsolicited E-mails were sent to prospective participants. Initial telephone calls to schools were made when compiling the
population list. When the schools were telephoned, the researcher made contact with Directors of Studies who were fully briefed on the study and asked for their contact E-mail address. Directors were then asked to transfer the call to teachers who were then asked if they would like to participate in the study and provide their work E-mail address. Some Directors volunteered the work Email addresses of EFL Teachers working for the company. The privacy policies of companies that were contacted were totally respected. Some companies preferred that information on the research was sent to them by E-mail before staff members were asked to participate. Other companies preferred that they had the researchers’ contact details so that individuals could make contact with the researcher if they wished to participate. At all times it was made clear that participation in the study was voluntary. No further correspondence was made with individuals or company representatives who wished not to take part in the study. All individuals and companies that submitted contact information were ensured that contact information would not be passed on to any third parties.

**Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire was initially designed as a Microsoft Word document, and then as an online survey on the GROUPSURVEYS website ([www.group-surveys.com](http://www.group-surveys.com)). A draft questionnaire was sent to ten volunteers in a small pilot survey. Volunteers consisted of personal contacts who had previously worked in the EFL industry. The volunteers were asked for feedback on the questionnaire, and specifically if they had any difficulty understanding any parts of the questionnaire. Their feedback was utilized in designing the final version of questionnaire.

The questionnaire was informed by the research questions and the findings of the literature review. The questionnaire was designed to measure variables of Language Ability, Perceived Organizational Support, Training, Previous Cross-cultural Experience, Technical Ability and three dimensions of adjustment.
Adjustment

The questionnaire measured the three dimensions of adjustment proposed by Black et al., (1990): adjustment to the general environment, adjustment to interacting with host nationals and work adjustment. This was measured using an adaptation of the 14-item scale developed by Black and Stephens (1989). This scale has become an accepted instrument for measuring adjustment having been used in multiple studies within the literature (e.g. Black, 1990; Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Huang et al., 2005; Selmer et al., 2007; Selmer 2006a; 2006b; 2005; Takeuchi et al., 2002). The respondents rated how well adjusted they were to each item using a seven-point Likert Scale ranging from 1- Not at all adjusted, to 7- very well adjusted. The items for general adjustment were: living conditions in general, housing conditions, food, shopping, cost of living, entertainment / recreation facilities and opportunities, health care facilities. The items for interaction adjustment were: socializing with Chinese nationals, speaking with Chinese nationals, interacting with Chinese nationals in general, interacting with Chinese nationals outside of work. The items for work adjustment were: specific job responsibilities, performance standards and expectations, supervisory responsibilities. The term “host nationals” from Black and Stephens’s (1989) adjustment questionnaire was replaced with “Chinese nationals” following the recommendations of all small pilot study with a draft version of the questionnaire in which many respondents did not understand the term. The Cronbach’s alpha scores for General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment and work adjustment were 0.791, 0.905 and 0.874 respectively, suggesting internal validity for each measure.

Respondents were also asked two open-ended questions relating to adjustment: ‘What do you think has helped you to adjust to living and working in China?’ and ‘What do you think has prevented you from adjusting more to living and working in China?’ The purpose of these questions was to gain qualitative insight into the adjustment experiences of EFL Teachers.
**Language Ability**

Language ability was measured using a self-developed four-item scale. Each item addressed the respondents’ productive and receptive Chinese language skills. Receptive skills refer to reading and listening, whereas productive skills denote speaking and writing (Harmer, 2001). Respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement with four statements using a five-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The four statements were: ‘I can manage a conversation in Mandarin’, ‘I can understand most things that Chinese people say to me in Mandarin’, ‘I can read Chinese characters’, and ‘I can write Chinese Characters’. Previous survey research into expatriate adjustment has measured language ability using similar scales (e.g. Selmer, 2006a; Takeuchi et al., 2002). The Cronbach’s alpha for the Language ability scale was 0.885, suggesting internal validity.

**Perceived Organizational Support**

Perceived organizational support was measured using a shortened version of Eisenberger et al’s (1986) *Survey of Perceived Organizational Support* (SPOS). The original 36-item scale was viewed as too long for use in the current study given that this was not the only variable being measured. Respondents may be reluctant to complete questionnaires that are considered to be overlong (Burgess, 2001). The shortening of the SPOS is consistent with previous research that has investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support and expatriate adjustment (e.g. Wang and Takeuchi, 2007; Kraimer et al., 2001). The shortened version of the scale consisted of eight items. Respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement with four statements using a five-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The Cronbach’s alpha score for this measure was 0.920, suggesting strong internal validity.

**Training**

Respondents answered questions about language training and cross-cultural training. A distinction was also made between pre-departure and post-arrival training.
Respondents answered four ‘yes / no’ closed-questions: ‘Did your company give you training on Chinese culture before arriving in China?’, ‘Has your company given you training on Chinese culture since arriving in China?’, ‘Did your company give you Chinese language training before arriving in China?’, ‘Have your company given you Chinese language training since arriving in China?’ For each of these questions, respondents who answered ‘Yes’ were to rate the effectiveness of the training. Effectiveness of training was rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Very effective, 2 = Effective, 3 = Average, 4 = Ineffective, 5 = Very ineffective).

**Previous Cross-cultural Experience**

Respondents were asked two closed questions relating to previous cross-cultural experience: ‘Before living in China, had you lived in a country that wasn’t your home country?’ and ‘Have you ever lived in Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Singapore before?’

**Technical Ability**

Although various questions were asked that concerned the technical ability of the respondents, no instrument was designed to test technical ability as a whole. Job position was an assumed indicator of technical ability with those in more senior positions (i.e. Assistant Director of Studies, Director of Studies, and Centre Manager) assumed to have a higher technical ability than Teachers and Senior teachers. Qualifications were also an assumed indicator of technical ability. Respondents were asked three closed questions relating to their qualifications: ‘Do you have a degree?’, ‘Do you have a teaching qualification?’ and ‘Do you have a management qualification?’ For each question, respondents who answered ‘Yes’ were asked to specify their qualification.

**Background variables**

Respondents were also asked questions relating to their personal and contact details (Name, Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, and E-mail Address). The questions asking for Name, Date of Birth, and E-mail address were optional. While these are
standard questions in most surveys it was viewed that some respondents may view these questions as intrusions of privacy. With the prevalence of Cybercrime on the internet (see Nykodym and Ariss, 2006; and Jagatic et al., 2007) it was thought that respondents may also be wary about giving out personal details online, and perhaps be worried that the survey was an attempt to gain their personal information for ulterior motives. Making the mentioned questions optional was considered to be a solution to this potential problem.

Additionally, respondents were asked for the length of time they had been living in China, the length of time they had been teaching in China, and the location of their school.

4.5 Data Analysis Procedures
Data was coded and analysed using SPSS computer software. Graphs and tables were created using SPSS and Microsoft Excel software. Common themes were gleaned from the small amount of qualitative data which were then tallied and graphically represented using Microsoft Excel software. Key quotes relating to the themes were highlighted and subsequently displayed in the Findings chapter of this paper.

4.6 Limitations of Methodology
There are obvious limitations to survey research. These should be applied to the current study. Survey research is reliant on the willingness of respondents to participate and their honesty in answering the questions (Blumberg et al., 2005). While the questionnaires that were completed suggested that EFL Teachers were willing to cooperate, it cannot be determined that all of the questions were answered truthfully. However, it is believed that the procedures in collating a population list for the study, which involved an initial phone call with prospective respondents, helped to garner interest in the study and build up a relationship with members of the sample. It is believed that this process facilitated interest and goodwill with the respondents; giving them less reason to submit false answers than if they had received unsolicited E-mails from someone with whom they had no previous contact. Another general
criticism of survey research is that it may not have an opinion on some of the questions that are asked. To limit this problem, the two-open ended questions in the survey (‘What do you think has helped you to adjust to living and working in China?’ and ‘What do you think has prevented you from adjusting more to living and working in China?’) were optional. This meant that respondents who did not have an opinion on the topics were not required to answer the question. Hence, the responses that were received could be said to correspond more to actual opinions rather than writing an answer just because it was obligatory. Additionally, those who responded to the survey may be certain kinds of people. For example, the EFL Teachers who respond to the survey may only be those who feel that they are well-adjusted to living and working in China or only those that feel they have not adjusted to the Chinese environment.

There are also specific limitations to online questionnaires. As no interviewer is involved, there is no opportunity to further explore some of the respondents’ answers by asking follow-up questions specific to answers given. However, this is also an advantage in that online questionnaires are possibly more standardized than interviewer administered questionnaires. Also, as no interviewer is used in online questionnaires there is no chance of respondents feeling intimidated by the interviewer, answering questions based on the perceived expectations of the interviewer and no possibility of interviewer bias. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the use of some semi-structured interviews may have provided richer qualitative data for analysis. Another potential criticism is that online questionnaires rely on respondents having computer access and computers having the capabilities of running the questionnaire. However, during completion of the population list from which to make the sample, all schools expressed that they had internet and Email access. Also, the questionnaire was text only, could be completed on computers with low specifications and was accessed via a standard website with no special software requirements. The format of the questionnaire was moderately restricted by what was permitted to be inputted on the website. However, this did not pose a problem for the questionnaire design. The GROUPSURVEYS website (www.group-surveys.com) was
selected over other questionnaire websites as it suited the planned format of the questionnaire the most. The recent development of internet cybercrime (see Nykodym and Ariss, 2006; and Jagatic et al., 2007) may have been a factor in non-response. However, it is believed that the researcher making initial telephone calls helped put the potential respondents’ mind at ease about such a possibility.
5. Findings

5.1 Introduction to Findings

This section details the findings of the research. They are largely based on quantitative and analysis of the data received from 51 questionnaires, which were deemed usable, although some attention is also paid to the qualitative data received from the two open-ended questions. The findings are presented thematically with respect to the original research questions.

5.2 To what extent do expatriate EFL Teachers adjust well to living and working in China?

The mean score for General Adjustment in the sample was 5.39 (SD 0.864). The mean score for Interaction Adjustment was 4.53 (SD 1.496). The mean score for work adjustment was 5.68 (SD 1.130). These results are shown in Table 4. Each mean score is located on the ‘adjusted’ side of the 7-point Likert scale. Results of a one-sample T-Test revealed that the mean scores of each dimension of adjustment were significantly higher than the neutral midpoint of the scale, 4.00: General Adjustment- $t = 11.531; p < .001$, Interaction Adjustment- $t = 2.527; p < .05$, and Work Adjustment- $t = 10.607; p < .001$. This suggests that the sample of EFL Teachers were relatively well-adjusted to living and working in China. Results of the one-sample T-Test are detailed in Table 5.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the Three Dimensions of Adjustment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>1.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. One Sample T-Test for the Three Dimensions of Adjustment with a Test Value of 4.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment</td>
<td>11.531</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.395</td>
<td>1.15 - 1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment</td>
<td>2.527</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>.11 - .95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment</td>
<td>10.607</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.678</td>
<td>1.36 - 2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 What factors are related to the adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers to living and working in China?

Pearson Correlations among the variables of the Three Dimensions of Adjustment, Language Ability and Perceived Organizational Support are shown in Table 6. Language Ability was significantly related to Interaction Adjustment ($p < .01$) and Work adjustment ($p < .05$). There was no significant relationship found between Language Ability and General Adjustment. Perceived Organizational was significantly related to all three variables of adjustment; General Adjustment ($p < .05$), Interaction Adjustment ($p < .05$) and Work Adjustment ($p < .01$). The Three Dimensions of Adjustment were also significantly related to each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General Adjustment</th>
<th>Interaction Adjustment</th>
<th>Work Adjustment</th>
<th>Language ability</th>
<th>Perceived organizational support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Adjustment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction Adjustment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.448**</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Adjustment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.322*</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Ability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.451</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Organizational Support</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.319*</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.451</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Language Ability

Descriptive statistics for Language Ability are shown in Table 7. The mean score for language ability was 2.28 (SD 1.120). A one sample T-Test showed that the mean score for Language ability was significantly lower than 3.00, the neutral midpoint of the scale ($t = -4.595; p < .001$). This suggests that the Chinese Language Ability was relatively weak among the sample of EFL Teachers. Results of the one sample T-test are shown in Table 8.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Language Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEAN language ability</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. One Sample T-Test for Language Ability with a Test Value of 3.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Value = 3.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Ability</td>
<td>-4.595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language ability emerged as a major theme in when respondents answered the open-ended question ‘What do you think has prevented you from adjusting more to living and working in China?’ Of the 37 respondents that answered this question, 23 respondents cited the language barrier, or perceived inadequate language ability as a factor preventing them from adjusting more to living and working in China.

Respondent reference 424039 stated that a better level of Chinese would help them adjust more:

“I am not satisfied with my level of Chinese, which would have been instrumental in my assimilation. If I spoke the language better, I would fit in more.”

Respondent reference 425869 also attributed language difficulties as a barrier to adjustment:

“Typically, language difficulties are the main obstacle to adjusting to life and work in China. As I become more fluent in the native language, less problems are evident.”

Respondents also viewed language ability as a factor that had helped them to adjust to the Chinese environment. Out of the 39 respondents that answered ‘What do you think has helped you adjust to living and working in China?’ 8 cited ability to use the language as helpful to their adjustment.

**Perceived Organizational Support**

The mean score for perceived organizational support was 3.40 (SD 1.085).

Descriptive statistics for Perceived Organizational Support are displayed in Table 9.

The mean value was found to be significantly greater than 3.00, which was the neutral
midpoint of the scale when a one-sample T-Test was conducted; $t = 2.661, p < .05$. This suggests that the level of Perceived Organizational Support was relatively high in the sample of 51 EFL Teachers living and working in China.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Organizational Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10. One Sample T-Test for Perceived Organizational Support with a Test Value of 3.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Organizational Support</td>
<td>2.661</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>.10 to .71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answers relating to Perceived Organizational Support were submitted by 6 respondents when asked about what factors had prevented them from adjusting to living and working in China. The more detailed responses are quoted below:

“Sometimes the schools can take too much advantage of the teachers.”
(Respondent reference 426165)

“…Cheating and unfaithfulness of my bosses…”
(Respondent reference 424409)

“The absolute dishonesty of employers and recruiters [and] absolute rotten
accommodation instead of private decent accommodation in own flat”.
(Respondent reference 423948)

“No help from (organisation name omitted)”
(Respondent reference 424049)

**Cross-cultural Training**

The mean scores of General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment, and Work Adjustment were higher for the EFL Teachers that had received Cross-cultural Training (Either Chinese language training, or training on Chinese culture) than the group that had not. Results are shown in Table 11. However, independent samples T-Test deemed that the difference was not significant.

**Table 11: Mean Scores of General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment, and Work Adjustment for Respondents That Had and Had Not Received Cross-cultural Training.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross-cultural training</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>1.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>1.481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>1.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>1.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>1.199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Previous Cross-cultural Experience**

Respondents that had previous Cross-cultural Experience had a higher mean score of General Adjustment and Work Adjustment but lower mean score for Interaction Adjustment than respondents who had not previously lived in a foreign country. This data is displayed in Table 12. However, independent samples T-Test revealed that the difference in mean scores was not significant.
Table 12: Mean Scores of General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment, and Work Adjustment for Respondents that Had and Had Not Previously Lived in a Foreign Country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before living in China, had you lived in a country that wasn't your home country?</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>.935</td>
<td>.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td>.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>1.527</td>
<td>.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>1.462</td>
<td>.335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>1.221</td>
<td>.280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous cross-cultural experience emerged as theme when respondents were asked about what they thought had helped them to adjust to living and working in China. Out of the 39 Respondents that answered this open-ended question, 8 cited their experience living, working or travelling abroad as helpful to their adjustment to the Chinese environment.

Respondent reference 424645 expressed that previous travel in two Asian countries facilitated their adjustment in China:

“In the early 90's I travelled to India and Vietnam. This gave me a general insight of what to expect. On arrival in China I found that China was far more developed than these two countries had been at my time of visit so was very pleasantly surprised.”

Respondent reference 424052 stated that long periods of time living in foreign countries had aided their adjustment:

“I have lived away from home since the age of 19 (35 years) and have spent long periods of time living abroad”

Similarly, respondent 425910 stated that previous international work experience had helped them adjust to living and working in China:
“The fact that I have about 20 years of international working experience”

**Technical Ability**

Mean scores of Work Adjustment for respondents with a degree (Mean 5.84, SD 1.069) were slightly higher than those without a degree (Mean 5.39, SD 1.209). However, independent samples T-Test revealed that this was not significant. As shown in Table 13, mean scores of work adjustment for respondents who were Directors of Studies (Mean 5.92, SD .977) were higher than those who were Teachers (Mean 5.34, SD 1.260). This was also not deemed significantly significant using independent samples T-Test.

Furthermore, No significant relationships were found between the measures of Technical Ability and any of the three dimensions of adjustment.

**Table 13: Mean Scores of General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment, and Work Adjustment for Directors of Studies and Teachers.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Position</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Adjustment</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.764</td>
<td>.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DoS</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Adjustment</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DoS</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>1.426</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Adjustment</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>1.260</td>
<td>.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DoS</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.92</td>
<td>.977</td>
<td>.218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Support from Friends and Colleagues**

Support from friends and colleagues was the most prominent theme emerging from the open ended question ‘What do you think has helped you adjust to living and working in China?’ 20 out 39 respondents viewed support or close relationships with friends or colleagues as helpful to their adjustment. This is shown in Figure 1.
Some of the more detailed responses regarding support from friends and colleagues are quoted below:

“Good relationships with a handful of very good English teachers (Chinese) and a few excellent students who took special interest in helping us.”

(Respondent reference 427286)

“Coming to China with a friend of mine was a big help when I first arrived. I think that we helped each other get through the first few months. Meeting a Chinese girlfriend who is now my wife was a massive advantage. She was able to explain about Chinese culture and help me adjust to the different customs and values. She also taught me the language. So it’s all thanks to my wife really…”
“Living here with my Canadian husband cancelled out the usual things to contend with such as loneliness, idealizing my own culture and homesickness”
(Respondent reference 424039)

“Having people around who have done this for awhile and learning from their experiences, making friends outside of work and having an open mind”
(Respondent reference 423002)

**Personality**
The theme of personality also featured in the qualitative answers of respondents. 7 respondents mentioned personality or specific personality attributes as helpful to their adjustment to living and working in China. ‘Flexibility’ was mentioned by 2 respondents. ‘Open-mindedness’ was mentioned by further two respondents. The more detailed responses regarding personality are quoted below:

“…Flexibility is essential too, the willingness to accept the things you cannot change, change the things you can and wisdom to know the difference.”
(Respondent reference 424039)

“Open mind to new concepts and alternative points of view. Low initial pessimistic [and] expectations…”
(Respondent reference 426056)

“Control. Will power. Thinking long and hard. Being determined to succeed… Not dwelling on problems and looking for solutions…”
(Respondent reference 423078)
Experiences of Racism

7 out of 37 respondents reported that experiences of what they perceived to be racism prevented them from adjusting more to Chinese Culture. This is displayed in Figure 2. Respondent reference 423078 felt that racism and prejudice from host nationals had prevented them from adjusting more:

“There are many more cases that I have observed…”

“Some inherent jingoism since locals are not at all used to foreign company and outwardly display racist tendencies that mirror those of my parents’ generation. What is often explained as love of a country by my host nationals actually portrays itself as negative, ill informed prejudice about foreigners…This can work both ways. As an English man I am considered a gentleman. This is beneficial to me - but is an inaccurate stereotype about my country. There are many more cases that I have observed…”

Some other perceptions of racism are quoted below:

“…The niggling racism, pointing, laughing, touching etc from some Chinese nationals…”
(Respondent reference 423049)

“…Criticism from my university students, humiliation of my country by Chinese students…”
(Respondent reference 424409)

“…I am still treated as a foreigner, staring in the street etc and being treated at times reverentially and at times like an idiot- has been very difficult to adjust to…”
(Respondent reference 423727)
Figure 2. Themes Which Emerged From the Open-ended Question, ‘What do you think has prevented you from adjusting more to living and working in China?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme of Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language difficulties</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Organization support</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences of Racism</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Support from Foreign Affairs Office</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Workload</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cultural Differences**

Cultural difference also emerged as a theme viewed as preventing the sample of EFL Teachers from adjusting more. 6 out of 37 respondents mentioned cultural differences as a barrier to adjustment, as shown in Figure 2. Some of the views are quoted below:

“The concept of 'face' can be difficult to understand and can lead to miscommunication issues.”

(Respondent reference 424645)

“…More deeply ingrained beliefs such as feeling towards particular countries, behaviour towards others and difference in upbringing will take much more time to adapt to.”

(Respondent reference 422968)
“Different social rules, difficult to get used to at first”
(Respondent reference 423323)
Further themes which emerged from each of the open-ended questions are displayed in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

5.4 To what extent is adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers managed well by language schools in China?

The findings on Perceived Organizational Support are relevant to this research question. These findings are detailed in section 5.2 above, and also in Table 9, Table 10 and Table 6.

The amount of EFL Teachers that received Cross-cultural Training is also relevant to this research question. As shown in Table 18, 35 respondents (68.6 percent) had received Cross-cultural Training. The majority of respondents had not received training on Chinese culture, as shown in Table 14 and Table 15. 3 Respondents had received training (5.9 percent) on Chinese culture prior to arriving in China, compared with 12 (23.5 percent) post-arrival (23.5 percent). Frequencies of respondents who had received Chinese language training are shown in Table 16 and Table 17. 3 Respondents had received training (5.9 percent) on Chinese culture prior to arriving in China, compared with 29 (56.9 percent) post arrival.

Table 14. ‘Did you receive training on Chinese culture before arriving in China?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid No</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15. ‘Have you received training on Chinese culture since arriving in China?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. ‘Did you receive Chinese language training before arriving in China?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17. ‘Have you received Chinese language training since arriving in China?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Frequencies and Percentages for respondents that Had and Had Not received Cross-cultural Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3 illustrates the answers of respondents when asked to rate the effectiveness of post-arrival training on Chinese culture. 8 respondents viewed the training as ‘average’. 2 respondents viewed the training as ‘effective’ and 2 as ‘ineffective’. No respondents rated their post-arrival training on Chinese culture as ‘very effective’ or ‘very ineffective’. Figure 4 illustrates the answers of respondents when asked to rate the effectiveness of Post-arrival Language training. 12 respondents viewed the training as ‘average’, 9 respondents as ‘ineffective’, 4 respondents as ‘ineffective’, 2 respondents as ‘very ineffective’ and 1 respondent as ‘very effective’. The mean score for this question was 3.25 (SD .928). This score is located the ‘ineffective’ side of the neutral midpoint (3:00, ‘average’) as this question had reversed polarity from previous questions. However, a one-sample T-Test deemed that the mean score was not significantly different than the neutral midpoint.
Figure 4. Effectiveness of Post-arrival Chinese language Training

![Bar chart showing the effectiveness of post-arrival Chinese language training. The chart includes categories such as Very effective, Effective, Average, Ineffective, and Very ineffective.](chart)
6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction to Discussion
This section discusses the findings of the research with respect to the original research questions, the research hypotheses and previous research. This section starts by considering the implications of the results of the study for each of the research questions. The limitations of the findings are then evaluated before discussing the implications of the research for EFL Teachers and language schools in China.

6.2 The extent to which expatriate EFL Teachers are adjusted to living and working in China
The empirical findings from the current study indicate that EFL Teachers are fairly well-adjusted to living and working in China. Findings are consistent with research by Selmer and colleagues (Selmer, 2006a; Selmer, 2006b; Selmer, 2005; Selmer et al., 2007) in which expatriate groups living and working in China were considered to be reasonably adjusted to the host environment. Also consistent with the aforementioned studies (Selmer, 2006a; Selmer, 2006b; Selmer, 2005; Selmer et al., 2007) are the relative levels of each facet of adjustment, with the sample of EFL Teachers exhibiting the highest levels of adjustment in the work dimension and lowest levels of adjustment in the interaction dimension. These findings suggest that of the three dimensions of adjustment the sample of EFL Teachers had the greatest difficulty adjusting to interacting with host country nationals. This may be indicative of the difficulty learning the Chinese language poses foreign expatriates. Goodall et al., (2006) found that western expatriates working in China often ceased studying Mandarin Chinese because they felt that it was too complex. This view is supported by the somewhat weak Chinese language ability of the EFL Teachers in the current study.
Another reason that could account for interaction adjustment having the lowest score is miscommunication brought on by cultural differences between the EFL Teachers
and native Chinese. Goodall et al., (2006) also found that interaction problems between expatriates and Chinese nationals arose because of differences in communication norms based on culture, such as Chinese not wishing to commit to making an opinion so as not to lose face or negatively affect guanxi. Selmer (2006a) acknowledges that even when interacting in the same language aspects of Chinese culture can lead to inevitable communication problems with non-Chinese. Therefore, while it would be expected that given their profession EFL Teachers would be in a position to meet and interact with host nationals that are able to speak at least a basic level of English, this doesn’t necessarily mean that interaction difficulties based on cultural differences do not occur.

Although the finding that EFL Teachers were least adjusted to interaction with host nationals can be explained in terms of the Chinese language and culture, the result supports the view of Black et al., (1992) (Cited in Selmer, 2006a) that interaction adjustment is generally the most difficult dimension of adjustment to accomplish. The finding that the EFL Teachers in this study exhibited relatively high levels of work adjustment suggest that adjusting to the foreign work environment is the least problematic dimension of adjustment. This may be explained by prospective EFL Teachers having a greater ability to prepare for their new working environment and work role in comparison to other cultural aspects of the new environment. Black et al., (1991) propose that the ability of expatriates to anticipate the requirements of their future adjustment facilitates the actual adjustment when they start their assignment. It seems reasonable that EFL Teachers would be able to anticipate the adjustments they need to make in order to do their job. EFL Teachers would have presumably had an interview before being accepted for the position (see Townsend Hall, 2007; www.englishfirst.com). In the interview they are likely to have been told about what the job involves and will almost definitely have been asked interview questions regarding certain aspects of the job role (Townsend Hall, 2007). They may also have been given a job description and a contract. It is presumed they would have done some research about what the job entails before the interview or else it is likely they would not have received a job offer. The acquirement of a teaching qualification may
also have enabled them to further anticipate what they must do to be successful as an
EFL Teacher in China. However, learning about Chinese culture and how to interact
with Chinese nationals are less tangible concepts which may be more difficult to
anticipate.

The relatively high levels of work adjustment may also be indicative of social support
received by EFL Teachers. Black (1990) found evidence of a positive relationship
between social support and work adjustment, with expatriates receiving high levels of
support from home national friends, social groups, and organization members
showing significantly higher levels of work adjustment than those receiving lower
levels of support. This interpretation of the finding of greater adjustment to the work
than the other facets of adjustment is supported by the qualitative findings of the
current study in which EFL Teachers expressed that the support of friends and
colleagues had helped them to adjust to living and working in China.

A related explanation involves Perceived Organizational Support. Findings from the
current study showed that the sample of EFL Teachers had relatively high levels of
Perceived Organizational Support. Furthermore, Perceived Organizational Support
was most closely correlated with the work dimension of adjustment. Therefore, the
higher score for work adjustment may be indicative of high levels of perceived
organizational support. However, that fact that samples of expatriates in numerous
studies (Shaffer et al., 2006; Selmer, 2006a; Selmer, 2006b; Selmer, 2005; Selmer et
al., 2007; Black, 1990) were all the most adjusted to the work facet may imply that
work adjustment is generally the easiest dimension of adjustment to accomplish for
expatriates on the whole.

Regardless of the differences in the levels of each facet of the adjustment, the fact that
findings show that the sample of EFL Teachers was somewhat adjusted to the host
environment implies that adjustment to China’s unique environment is not an
insurmountable challenge. This should be viewed as an encouraging finding from
those within the EFL industry in China or EFL Teachers wishing to locate to China.
6.3 Factors related to the adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers to the Chinese Environment

The results of the correlation analysis endorse the view of language ability and perceived organizational support as important antecedents of adjustment. As expected, language ability had a significant positive association with both interaction adjustment and work adjustment, supporting *Hypotheses 1a* and *1c*. Language ability was found to be more significantly associated with interaction dimension of adjustment. This is in line with the previous research of Selmer (2006a) who also found that the ability of expatriates to use the Chinese language was more closely related to interaction adjustment. However, findings did not support a significant association between language ability and general adjustment. This is in contrast to the results of previous research (Selmer, 2006a; Takeuchi et al., 2002) and also fails to support *Hypothesis 1b*. There are a few possible reasons for the contrasting findings. Perhaps the lack of a significant relationship between language ability and general adjustment signifies that the EFL Teachers in the current study spend most of their time outside of work with other English speakers. This is a reasonable assumption given that the colleagues of EFL Teachers are also likely to be English speaking EFL Teachers. This assumption is also supported qualitatively by respondents who expressed that it was fairly easy to only associate with other expatriates and make friends with other English speakers. If EFL Teachers mostly associate with other foreigners or English speaking host nationals it is unlikely that host language ability would play a significant part in their daily life and thus not greatly affect their adjustment to the general environment in which they live.

Another explanation may be that the finding is indicative of the improving English language ability of Chinese nationals. It is estimated that up to one in five Chinese people are learning English (Cited from Economist, 2006). The level of English is also thought to be higher in China’s urban areas (X. Li, 2002; Cited from Selmer 2006a), which is where most of the EFL Teachers in the current study were located. Therefore, learning Mandarin may not be as essential in order to adjust to the general environment of China as it was in previous times.
There is some empirical support for language ability being less associated with general adjustment than the other dimensions of adjustment. Kraimer et al., (2001) similarly found a significant relationship between language ability and both interaction and work adjustment but not with general adjustment. It seems logical that language ability may not be as closely related to some aspects of general adjustment, such as adjusting to the food, cost of living, housing conditions, and living conditions of the host culture.

Regardless of the lack of a significant relationship between language ability and general adjustment in the current study, the significant relationships between language ability and the other two dimensions plus qualitative accounts point to the importance of EFL Teachers learning the host language to facilitate adjustment.

As expected, Perceived Organizational Support had a significant positive association with each of three dimensions of adjustment. These findings support Hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c and are in line with the previous research (e.g. Aycan, 1997; Kraimer et al., 2001; Sims and Schraeder, 2004) that has acknowledged an important link between organizational support activities and the adjustment of expatriates. Findings from the current study imply that Perceived Organizational Support is crucial for the successful adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. That Perceived Organizational Support was related to all facets of adjustment suggest that its influence on the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China is more crucial than that of language ability.

The significance that Perceived Organizational Support and language ability have on adjustment may also have an important bearing on the performance of EFL Teachers. Work adjustment has been shown to be an important predictor of expatriate job performance. Research by Parker and McEvoy (1993) identified work adjustment as positively associated with the self-reported job performance of expatriates. This was supported by Kraimer et al.’s (2001) findings which revealed work adjustment to have a significant positive association with both of the two dimensions of job performance that were measured in the study. Interaction adjustment has also been related to job performance. Kraimer et al.’s (2001) study also revealed interaction adjustment as having the strongest relationship with expatriate contextual performance of three
dimensions of adjustment. This is consistent with observations by Feldman and Thomas (1992) (Cited from Selmer 2006a). Selmer (2006a) argues that interacting with host country nationals in may be particularly beneficial to performance in China as much of Chinese business involves developing guanxi. Research on the relationship between general adjustment and job performance is somewhat mixed. Although Parker and McEvoy (1993) found that general adjustment was negatively related to self-reported job performance, both Kraimer et al. (2001) found that general adjustment was positively associated with expatriate contextual performance. Findings from Calligiuri (1997) (Cited from Selmer, 2006a) also conflicted with those of Parker and McEvoy (1993) finding a positive relationship between general adjustment and self-reported performance. Additionally, Takeuchi et al. (2002) found that general adjustment and work adjustment had a negative association with expatriates’ intention to return home early.

With the aforementioned research in mind, the relationships that Perceived Organizational Support and language ability were shown to have with adjustment of EFL Teachers may lead to further beneficial consequences for EFL Teachers and Language Schools, such as increased job performance and decreased intent to return home early.

In the current study cross-cultural training did not seem to be significantly associated with adjustment. Hence, Hypothesis 3 was not supported. These findings conflict with previous studies (e.g., Yavas, 2004; Eschbach et al., 2001; Black and Mendenhall 1989; 1990; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Zakaria, 2000) that have proposed the use of cross-cultural training as a means to aiding adjustment. However, Selmer (2005) deems previous research on the benefits of cross-cultural training to expatriates as inconclusive and somewhat flawed, regarding some research as failing to consider the specific details of the expatriate assignments under study. Sims and Schraeder (2004) also raised some doubts about the effectiveness of cross-cultural training. With this in mind, the results of the current study may not be entirely surprising. Selmer’s (2005) findings that cross-cultural training was related to work adjustment but not the other
facets of adjustment in Chinese international joint ventures and not related to any of the facets of adjustment in non-joint venture companies in China may help explain why no relationship was found in the current study. However, details on company type were not obtained in the current study. The findings of current study may be explained by when the EFL Teachers received their training. Cross-cultural training that was received by EFL Teachers in the current study. Whereas researchers (e.g., Yavas, 2004; Zakaria, 2000; Aycan, 1997; Sims and Schraeder, 2004) have stated the importance of cultural training at the pre-departure stage, only a very small number of EFL Teachers had received pre-departure training on Chinese culture (3 respondents) or Chinese language (3 respondents). The effectiveness of the training that was received may also explain the finding. The ratings that respondents assigned to their post-arrival training suggest that training was average. Perhaps a better standard of cross-cultural training for EFL Teachers would facilitate adjustment.

Findings from the current study on the relationship between previous cross-cultural experience and adjustment were somewhat inconclusive. While quantitative data did not support a significant relationship between previous cross-cultural experience and adjustment qualitative findings suggested that previous travel and overseas experience had helped EFL Teachers adjust to living and working in China. Previous overseas experience was the second most cited reason that respondents gave were asked what had aided their adjustment. This suggests that previous cross-cultural experience at least had a perceived association with adjustment. However, the mixed findings mean that hypothesis 4 is not fully supported. The findings may imply that previous cross-cultural experience is not as strong a predictor of adjustment as researchers (e.g., Aycan, 1997; Shim and Paprock, 2002) have suggested. Perhaps the knowledge acquired through previous cross-cultural experience is not sufficient enough to help their adjustment in the unique environment of China. According to Selmer (2005), the substantial differences between China and most western countries make adjusting to the Chinese environment particularly difficult for expatriates. Therefore, previous cross-cultural experience may be less relevant to EFL Teachers in China, unless the
experience was gained in a country that is viewed as having a similar culture. Perhaps
tellingly, only one expatriate had previously lived in any of the countries of Greater
China. The countries that the EFL Teachers had previously lived in may not have bore
enough resemblance to China to facilitate adjustment of EFL Teachers at a
meaningful level. However, the qualitative support for the benefits of previous
cross-cultural experience means that its impact on adjustment cannot be entirely ruled
out.

The lack of evidence to support hypothesis 5 implies that technical ability is not a
significant factor related to the work adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. While this
is inconsistent with research that has endorsed a positive relationship between
technical ability and work adjustment (e.g., Aycan, 1997; Sims and Schraeder, 2004),
a number of researchers (e.g., Black et al., 1991; Sims and Schraeder, 2004; Tye and
Chen, 2005) have raised concerns about selecting expatriates solely on their technical
ability. Based on findings of the current research, those who employ EFL Teachers
should also be cautioned about only considering the perceived technical ability of
prospective EFL Teachers.

The qualitative findings of the current research provide further insight into factors that
may influence the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. While this study did not
quantitatively measure social support the qualitative findings indicate that it had a
major impact on adjustment. It was the single most cited reason that EFL Teachers
gave when asked what had helped them adjust to living and working in China. It is
impossible to tell whether social support was significantly related to adjustment at a
statistical level in the current study. It is also impossible to tell whether it was more
related to a particular dimension of adjustment. Nonetheless its prevalence in the
current study cannot be ignored.

Personality was another interesting theme that arose in the qualitative findings.
Qualitative analysis would suggest that EFL Teachers who are open-minded and
flexible may adjust better to living and working in China. Notably, the phrases that
respondents used when describing personality characteristics that helped adjustment seemed to bear resemblance the traits studied Shaffer et al. (2006) and Huang et al. (2005), in particular the characteristics of openness and agreeableness which both studies found related to facets of adjustment. Once again the exact nature of the relationship between personality traits and adjustment cannot be determined for the current study. However, given the qualitative findings and previous research it may be advisable that EFL Teachers are encouraged to have an open-minded and flexible attitude when coming to Teach in China.

The emergence of experiences of racism as a factor that negatively impacts on adjustment makes logical sense. It is reasonable to assume that those who perceive racism or discrimination against them would feel uncomfortable in the new environment. This may add to the stress of expatriation and make EFL Teachers wish to return home and hence affect their adjustment. Ataca and Berry (2002) found that discrimination was an important factor relating to sociocultural adjustment in a sample of Turkish immigrant couples in Canada. They reasoned that discrimination could lead to immigrants not wishing to interact with the society at large and cause adjustment problems. A similar phenomenon may have occurred in respondents in the current study who perceived racism. It should be noted, however, that what was perceived as racism may have been a result of cultural misunderstanding or miscommunication. Also relevant is that respondents also mentioned the hospitality of host nationals as being helpful to adjustment. Applying the logic of Ataca and Berry’s (2002) explanation of the possible affects of discrimination, perhaps perceived hospitality of host nationals makes expatriates wish to interact more with the society and facilitates adjustment. However, this study did not investigate the statistical relationship between perceived racism/hospitality and adjustment; therefore, a strong association cannot be established between the aforementioned variables on the basis of the current study.
6.4 The extent to which is the adjustment of expatriate EFL Teachers is managed well by language schools in China

The relatively high levels of Perceived Organizational Support suggest that language schools communicate with and assist EFL Teachers while they are teaching in China. The findings from the current study show that the perception of organizational support is positively associated with all facets of adjustment. Furthermore, Qualitative data also indicates that EFL Teachers receive support from colleagues which was perceived to aid adjustment. With these findings in mind it can be argued that language schools do to some extent effectively manage the adjustment of EFL Teachers. However, it is unclear whether or not the levels of support arise from an active effort at organizational level to help EFL Teachers adjust to living and working in China. That a considerable amount of EFL Teachers had received cross-cultural training indicates that language schools in the study are somewhat aware of the need to help EFL Teachers to adjust to living and working. However, as very few of the respondents had received pre-departure cross-cultural training, which is viewed by researchers (e.g., Yavas, 2004; Zakaria, 2000; Aycan, 1997; Sims and Schraeder, 2004) as a crucial for assisting adjustment, it seems that language schools may have a limited knowledge of how best to facilitate the adjustment of EFL Teachers. Findings from the current study also indicate a need for more effective cross-cultural training. Therefore, while there seems to have been a clear effort from language schools to help EFL Teachers to adjust to living and working in China, there is evident need for improvement.

6.5 Limitations of Study

The findings from the current study should be considered with the limitations of the study in mind. In addition to the methodological limitations outlined in the methodology section of this paper some further limitations may apply to the findings. The small sample size is considered a major limitation of the current study. There are concerns about whether the sample of 51 expatriate is representative of the full population of expatriate EFL Teachers living and working in the huge country of
China. The results of the current study may only correspond to the overall adjustment of EFL Teachers that took part in the research. With this in mind, the findings of the current study must be viewed as tentative, and caution must be taken in applying these findings to the wider population of EFL Teachers located China. However the size of this somewhat specific sample of expatriate EFL Teachers is viewed as comparative to sample sizes of general business expatriates in China studied in previous research (e.g., 165, Selmer, 2005; 165, Selmer, 2006a; 183, Wang and Takeuchi, 2007).

Additionally, the external validity of the study may be called into question. The respondents were a specific sample of EFL Teachers living and working in China. Therefore, findings may not be generalisable to other expatriate groups outside of EFL Teachers, or to the international setting of EFL teaching in various countries around the world. However, it should be noted that the targets of the research were specifically related to the adjustment EFL Teachers in China rather than the wider environment or other expatriate groups. Also the fact that hypotheses about language ability and Perceived Organizational Support, which were then supported by the results of the study, were made on the basis of findings from research in non-EFL Teachers and in a different international settings may indicate that some of the findings are somewhat generalisable to different contexts.

The findings may have been influenced by single-method variance as all of the variables were measured using a self-reported online questionnaire. Respondents may have provided information that they felt was logical or perceived to be expected of them. However, the precautionary measures were taken to reduce single-method variance. The questionnaire was carefully ordered and questions relating to different variables were separated into different sections. Careful care was taken when deciding the position of the open-ended questions in the study. The open-ended questions were placed before any of the questions relating to factors that were hypothesized to relate to adjustment; it was also impossible for respondents to go back to previous pages. This meant that the questionnaire had to be completed in the sequential manner it was designed. Therefore, respondents could not use the later questions to inform their
answers to earlier questions to exaggerate the relationship between the variables. The answering formats of the questions varied and the polarity of some items was reversed. This made it difficult for respondents to maintain a uniform response throughout answering the questionnaire. These methods are consistent with measures employed in previous studies (e.g., Black, 1990; Selmer, 2006a) to reduce single method variance.

6.6 Implications for language schools and EFL Teachers operating in China

The current study has a variety of implications for both EFL Teachers and teaching organizations, such as language schools, in China. A major implication relates to Perceived Organizational Support. It is extremely important that language schools offer a high degree of organizational support to EFL Teachers in order to help them adjust to their new climate. Based on the research of Aycan (1997), it is recommended that organizational support is provided by language schools prior to EFL Teachers arriving in China. Whilst it would be expected that EFL schools assisted prospective EFL Teachers by obtaining the relevant documentation and working visa, more complex assistance is required by EFL Teachers that have families. In such cases it is recommended that language schools take an active role in such tasks as recommending schools for the EFL Teachers’ children and helping the EFL Teachers’ spouse to find employment. Based on the current study there may be a need to improve the accommodation that Chinese language schools supply to EFL Teachers. This is another aspect of organizational support that should not be neglected.

Organizational Support in the form of regular communication and assistance from the company should continue after arrival (Aycan, 1997). Language schools should consider this activity as mutually beneficial given the well-documented links between adjustment and performance. EFL Teachers are advised to consider the degree of support that language schools offer when they are looking for a job. According to Sims and Schraeder (2004), items that are considered important as markers of organizational support include support given to the expatriates’ family, adequate cross-cultural training, the salary package, and amount of contact between
organization and employee. These items should be evaluated by EFL Teachers before taking up a job offer. If possible, prospective EFL Teachers should contact current EFL Teachers working for potential employers in order to assess the supportiveness of the language school.

This study also highlights the necessity of EFL Teachers learning the Chinese language in order to successfully adjust to living and working in China. Given that the teaching methodology used by EFL Teachers usually involves only English being spoken in the classroom (Egan and Farley, 2004); there may be a misconception that host language ability is not as necessary for EFL Teachers as other expatriates. However, this does not seem to be the case. Prospective EFL teachers should try to learn some Chinese before arriving in China in order to prepare for daily interactions with Chinese nationals. Chinese phrasebooks are widely available and can be bought cheaply. This may serve as an effective starting point for EFL Teachers. Qualitative findings imply that a small amount of basic Chinese language ability is beneficial to EFL Teachers. This view is supported by Selmer (2006a). It is recommended that language schools take active involvement helping EFL Teachers acquire host language skills. While the current study suggests that EFL Teachers do receive language training upon arrival, there seems to be a need to increase the effectiveness of the training. This point is highlighted by the relationship found between language ability and adjustment but not between language training and adjustment. The language school should view providing language training as advantageous to the teacher and the school. It may also be perceived as organizational support from the school. Another possibility is making language ability part of the criteria when employing new teachers. However, given the demand for competent EFL Teachers (Egan and Farley, 2004) it is unlikely that language schools can afford to be so selective.

A further implication is the need for pre-departure cross-cultural training. However, this may prove logistically challenging as EFL Teachers may not be previously employed by the school unlike other expatriates who are assigned to the host country by a company headquarters. However, it may be logistically possible for larger
multinational language school companies. Although there are cost implications for training to be considered, failure of EFL Teachers to successfully adjust to their new life in China may prove much more costly.
7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions
This research has provided much needed insight into the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. The study has provided clear evidence of the importance of Perceived Organizational Support and language ability for the successful adjustment of EFL Teachers living and working in China. While previous studies (e.g., Selmer, 2006a; Kraimer et al., 2001) have found relationships between these variables and the facets of adjustment in expatriate workers, these relationships have not previously been investigated specifically in EFL Teachers, who operate in a distinct environment from other business expatriates. In this respect, the study has added to the body of literature relating to international adjustment. Qualitative data from the study points to the value of social support and previous overseas experience in assisting the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China and also to the negative impacts of language difficulties and perceived racism or discrimination on adjustment. The qualitative information has also contributed to an understanding of the experiences and feelings of EFL Teachers as they attempt to adjust to the unique environment of China. This study has also provided evidence that these EFL Teachers have been able to reach a reasonable level of adjustment to the Chinese environment. This is viewed as having positive implications for the EFL industry in China and EFL Teachers who may be considering working for a language school in China. Furthermore, this piece of research has assessed the extent to which language schools effectively manage the adjustment of EFL Teachers and highlighted a need for a higher standard of cultural and language training. It is viewed that the current study is a valuable addition to both the international adjustment literature and the literature concerned with Teaching English as a Foreign Language.
7.2 Recommendations

Recommendations are made on the basis of the practical implications outlined in the discussion section of this paper:

Firstly, it is recommended that heads of language schools in China recognize the importance of the adjustment of EFL Teachers to their new host environment. Adjustment has been shown to relate positively to performance (see Kraimer et al., 2001; Parker and McEvoy, 1993) and negatively to intent to return home early (see Takeuchi et al., 2002). With this in mind, the adjustment of EFL Teachers should be a primary concern for language schools. Directors of Studies should consider attributes such as language ability, previous travel experience, and personality traits that could facilitate adjustment when interviewing candidates for teaching positions. They should also recognize the need to provide organizational support to the EFL Teachers and the families of EFL Teachers at the pre-departure stage and for the duration of their contract (see Aycan, 1997). Prospective EFL Teachers are recommended to investigate the extent to which their prospective employer offers organizational support.

Secondly, it is recommended that EFL Teachers recognize the importance of learning the Chinese language for their adjustment to living and working in China. Preparations, such as buying a Chinese phrasebook and learning simple practical phrases should be made prior to departure. EFL Teachers should show a willingness to interact with host nationals once arriving in China (Swagler and Ellis, 2002) and attempt to communicate using the Chinese language (Goodall et al., 2006). Based on qualitative findings from the current study, it is advised that EFL Teachers make an effort socialize with host nationals and Chinese speakers rather than solely socializing with other English speaking foreigners and expatriates.

Finally, it is recommended that language schools improve the standard of their cross-cultural (including language) training. While it is difficult to recommend specific areas that need to be improved there is an obvious need to improve the
effectiveness of the training currently offered. Where logistics and resources allow, pre-departure training should be offered. In improving the effectiveness of cross-cultural training, language schools should consider the specific cultural aspects of working in China (such as those outlined in the literature review) that EFL Teachers would find beneficial to their working and non-working life. Such training should enable EFL Teachers to get used to Chinese cultural values, possible cultural misunderstandings and the effects that the concepts of *face* and *guanxi* might have on their day-to-day lives.

7.3 Implications for future studies

This study has several implications for future research. The qualitative findings point to social support as an important factor facilitating the adjustment of EFL Teachers to living and working in China. However, the current study did not investigate the statistical relationships between social support and the three dimensions of adjustment. Exploration of these relationships could prove valuable in ascertaining whether social support is significantly related to any of the facets of adjustment or is just perceived by EFL Teachers to aid adjustment. While Caligiuri and Lazarova (2002) view social support as an important factor related to adjustment, Black (1990) deemed his findings which investigate the statistical relationship between different types of social support and the three facets of adjustment as difficult to interpret. Kraimer et al. (2001) found that spousal support did not relate to adjustment. With this mixed research in mind, it is viewed that a study on the relationship between social support and the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China may bring some clarity to the area of social support. Such a study would also add to the current literature in its focus on EFL Teachers in China.

Qualitative findings also point to the perceived experiences of racism and discrimination as having a negative impact on the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China. As with social support, the current study did not test the empirical relationship between perceived experiences of racism and the facets of adjustment in EFL.
Teachers. Although, Ataca and Berry (2002) found evidence of a negative relationship between discrimination and sociocultural adjustment of Turkish immigrants in Canada, scant research has investigated the effects of racism on adjustment in EFL Teachers or other expatriates. With this in mind, a study which examines the relationship between perceived racism and adjustment may prove valuable to both the expatriation and EFL literature.

While the extent to which language schools managed the adjustment of EFL Teachers in China was investigated in the current study, there is a need for fuller data on the subject. It would be helpful to interview Directors of Studies and School managers about their awareness of the need for EFL Teachers to adjust to their new environment, content of training and other schemes in place to facilitate adjustment of staff. It would also helpful to know of any practical difficulties that might prevent language schools from offering of effective language and cultural training. It may also be relevant to investigate the differences between the adjustment of EFL Teachers working at different kinds of organizations such as small private language schools and large multinational language education companies, as it there may be differences in the abilities of certain types of schools to offer training and organizational support.

Finally, a replica of the current study which uses a larger sample of EFL Teachers in China may be useful for eliminating any doubts about how representative the findings of the current study are. It would also be useful for the language education industry to know if the relationships between language ability and Perceived Organizational Support found in the current study are similar to those found in EFL Teachers in other countries around the world.
References:


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**Online references:**


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RANDOM.ORG. Available from: http://www.random.org/lists/[Last Accessed 5th September 2008]


Appendices:
Appendix A: Questionnaire - Adjustment of EFL teachers to living and working in China

Section 1: Personal information

1. Name (optional): ______________________
2. Date of Birth (optional): ______________________
3. E-mail (optional) ______________________
4. Gender:
   Male (  )
   Female (  )
5. What nationality are you? __________
6. How long have you been living in China? __________
7. How long have you been teaching in China? __________
8. What is your current job position? (Choose one option only)
   Teacher (  )
   Senior teacher (  )
   Director of Studies (  )
   Department head (  )
   Center Manager (  )
   CEO (  )
   Other (please specify) __________
9. Which city is your school in? ______________________
Section 2: Adjustment to living and working in China

*Please indicate how adjusted you are to each item by clicking a number on the scale. 1 = Not at all adjusted; 7 = Very well adjusted*

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Living conditions in general</td>
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<td>2. Housing conditions</td>
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<td>3. Food</td>
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<td>4. Shopping</td>
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<td>5. Cost of living</td>
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<td>6. Entertainment/recreation Facilities and Opportunities</td>
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<td>7. Healthcare Facilities</td>
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<td>8. Speaking with Chinese host nationals</td>
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<td>9. Interacting with Chinese host nationals outside of work</td>
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<td>10. Socialising with Chinese host nationals</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Interacting with Chinese host nationals in general</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Specific job responsibilities</td>
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<td>13. Performance standards and expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Supervisory responsibilities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

15. What do you think has helped you to adjust to living and working in China? (optional)

________________________________________________________________________
16. What do you think has prevented you from adjusting more to living and working in China? (optional)


Section 3 Qualifications

1. Do you have a degree?

   YES (   )
   NO (   )
   NO (   )

   ➢  *IF YES, what kind of degree do you have?*

   Undergraduate (e.g., Bachelor) (   )
   Graduate (e.g., Masters) (   )
   Doctorate (e.g., PhD) (   )
   Other________

2. Do you have a teaching qualification?

   YES (   )
   NO (   )

   ➢  *IF YES, please specify the qualification you have. (optional)*

   

3. Do you have a management qualification?

   YES (   )
   NO (   )

   ➢  *IF YES, please specify the qualification you have. (optional)*

   

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Training

1. Did your company give you training on Chinese culture before arriving in China?
   
   YES ( )  
   NO ( ) 
   
   IF YES, How adequate is this training?  
   (Choose one option only)
   
   Very Effective ( )  Effective ( )  Average ( )  Ineffective ( )  Very Ineffective ( )

2. Has your company given you training on Chinese culture since arriving in China?
   
   YES ( )  
   NO ( ) 
   
   IF YES, How adequate is this training?  
   (Choose one option only)
   
   Very Effective ( )  Effective ( )  Average ( )  Ineffective ( )  Very Ineffective ( )

3. Did your company give you Chinese language training before arriving in China?
   
   YES ( )  
   NO ( ) 
   
   IF YES, How adequate is this training?  
   (Choose one option only)
   
   Very Effective ( )  Effective ( )  Average ( )  Ineffective ( )  Very Ineffective ( )

4. Has your company given you Chinese language training since arriving in China?
   
   YES ( )  
   NO ( ) 
   
   IF YES, How adequate is this training?  
   (Choose one option only)
   
   Very Effective ( )  Effective ( )  Average ( )  Ineffective ( )  Very Ineffective ( )
Language ability

Indicate how much you are agree or disagree with the statements below.

1. I can manage a conversation in Mandarin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. I can understand most things that Chinese people say to me in Mandarin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I can read Chinese characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I can write Chinese characters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Previous Cross-cultural expatriate experience

1. Before living in China, had you lived in a country that wasn’t your home country?

   YES (   )
   NO (   )

2. Have you ever lived in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore before?

   YES (   )
   NO (   )
Organizational support

*Indicate how much you are agree or disagree with the statements below.*

1. The company I work for values my contribution to its well-being.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

2. The company I work for fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

3. The company I work for would ignore any complaint from me.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

4. The company I work for really cares about my well-being.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

5. Even if I did the best job possible, the organization would fail to notice.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

6. The company I work for cares about my general satisfaction at work.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

7. The company I work for shows very little concern for me.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

8. The company I work for takes pride in my accomplishments at work.
   Strongly disagree Strongly agree
   1 2 3 4 5

Thank you for your participation
Appendix B: Standard letter to EFL teachers in China

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a postgraduate student from Portobello College in Dublin, Ireland. I am conducting research as part of my course requirement.

My research investigates the adjustment of EFL teachers to living and working in China and the factors that are related to the level of adjustment.

The results of my questionnaire may prove very valuable to your company and provide you with techniques to manage the adjustment of teachers at your school.

It will only take about 10 minutes to complete.

Your confidentiality will be totally protected, and if you wish you can complete the questionnaire anonymously. Your company information will also be kept confidential. Participation in the study is completely voluntary.

Upon completion of my research, you will be entitled to a free copy of my final report and findings.

To complete the questionnaire, simply click on the link below.

http://gs-survey.com/s.asp?s=5222

If you have any questions or queries about my project, or would like any further information, feel free to contact me:

Mobile: 00353-87-2657850

E-mail: qiu923@live.ie

If you would like more information about Portobello College, please click on the below link:

http://www.portobello.ie/

Alternatively, you may contact the Course Director, Ms Brid Lane:

E-mail: laneb@portobello.ie

Thank you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Ms Qiu Xu

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Appendix C: Photocopy of researcher’s IELTS certificate