

Chinese background students' national identities in an Australian government's document

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Abstract

Over the past two decades, increasing numbers of overseas students have come to Australia. Exporting education has played a major part of Australian services trade. In 2002, there were 273,552 international students enrolled in Australia, but in 2005 the figure has increased to 344,815 almost by average 8% per year (AEI-International Education Network, 2005). In 2005, 9 of the top 10 source countries were in Asia accounting for 68.8% of the total overseas students, in which the students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore represented 38.2%. Traditionally, these students are considered the main source of Chinese background students. More surprisingly, among these 10 countries, the number of mainland Chinese students rocketed up. Especially, in 2002, China first surpassed Malaysia in student numbers studying in the Australian tertiary education system (AVCC, 2005) and became the biggest export country of the Australian education sector. In 2004-2005, the number of China's students even grew by 17.8% (AEI-International Education Network, 2005), with almost 10% above the average. By accepting increasing numbers of overseas students, Australia had become more widely recognised in the arena of international education, and was regarded as a safe, friendly study destination with high quality courses, said by Mr. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs (2005). Then, how does the Australian government look at these students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia, as four of the big overseas student sources? How does the Australian government identify their national identities?

This paper aims to probe for these students' national identities in Australian government's perspective by examining an official DIMIA (Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs) document. This research focuses on an official policy relating to assessment levels in terms of financial proof for the process of overseas student applications for Australian education. The analysis adheres to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), employed by Van Dijk, Fairclough and Foucault et al. The paper is undertaken in two stages. The first, a general characterization of Australian education export discourse, reveals different financial

evidence for students from the above four countries and region. The second is followed by a critical analysis of this policy based on its language used and a comparative analysis between this policy and those of other western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, France and Spain, which surfaces evidence of a bias ideology manifested in the discourse of Australia. The study concludes with a discussion regarding generalization issue in this policy and its implication in a society as a way to unravel the way in which prejudice is still imbricated within friendly educational discourse of Australia.

Introduction

Commonly, identity in the definition of Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia is the fact of being who or what a person or thing is. While national identity is thus the fact of being who a national is. This characteristic represents the identity of a nation.

The paper focuses on how bias manifests itself by examining and identifying national identities of the overseas students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia in an official document of Australia. I present how the discourse in the DIMIA document regarding assessment levels of financial proof in student visa processing can be used as an instrument to exert ideological dominance in the recruitment of overseas students. I also examine how this policy is embedded in such larger, but less transparent structure of power discourse that disguises dominance in naturalized discourse.

Background

Australia was an early player in the education export industry. Today it is the largest provider per head of population, and the third largest English-speaking provider of international education services, with seven per cent of the market, behind the USA (32 per cent) and the UK (15 per cent). The industry is now Australia's third largest service export industry (Kenyon & Koshy, 2003).

Through the past two decades, increasing numbers of overseas students have come to Australia. In 2002, there were 273,552 international students enrolled in Australia, but in 2005 the figure has increased to 344,815 almost by average 8% per year (AEI-International Education Network, 2005). In 2005, 9 of the top 10 source countries were in Asia accounting for 68.8% of the total overseas students, in which the students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore represented 38.2%. Traditionally, these students are considered the main source of Chinese

background students. More surprisingly, among these 10 countries, the number of mainland Chinese students rocketed up. Especially, in 2002, China first surpassed Malaysia in student numbers studying in the Australian tertiary education system (AVCC, 2005) and became the biggest export country of the Australian education sector. In 2004-2005, the number of China's students even grew by 17.8% (AEI-International Education Network, 2005), with almost 10% above the average. The foregoing data also show that the increasing trend in numbers of overseas Chinese students still remains strong. To sum up, exporting education of Australia has been forging active links with other countries, especially in mainland China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore, from which over one third of overseas students originate.

By accepting increasing numbers of overseas students, Australia has become more widely recognised in the arena of international education, and is regarded as a safe, friendly study destination with high quality courses, Mr. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs said (2005). However, there are still some latent superior sentiments and attitudes resonating with bias beneath the surface of this "friendly study destination".

The aim of this paper is to show how discursive strategies expressed in this commonwealth government policy work to practise unegalitarianism, so as to help us better understand how prejudice on student national identities is imbricated within the words of this policy in Australia. DIMIA is the main policy-maker and policy-enforcer in the field of migration and education exports in Australia, i.e. it plays a key function in dealing with multicultural issues in the domestic and international scopes. Therefore, in this sense, this document chosen from DIMIA has much more significance or persuasiveness than otherwise. Before the discursive strategies are being dealt with, it is necessary to first briefly introduce a general characterization of Australian education export discourse.

In the last 20 years, trans-national education has become a global phenomenon, fuelled by many forces. These include the globalisation of trade and communications, internationalisation of labour markets, declines in the costs of international travel and communications, and growth in the numbers who can afford to obtain better educational opportunities than previous generations. Governments are more actively promoting the international mobility of students and teachers for a mix of cultural, political, labour market and trade reason. International education became part of Australia's geo-political positioning after World War II (Poole, 2004). Today's Australian education export industry owes its genesis to the Australian Government's

initiative in 1986 to open Australian education to full-fee paying overseas students (AEI-International Education Network, 2005).

General characterization of financial proof for overseas student visa applicants

With respect to the recruitment of full-fee paying overseas students, DIMIA set up a series of policies to ensure that all the overseas student visa applicants have sufficient financial capacity for their studying and living while in Australia. Such regulations are formulated for overseas student visa applicants as follows:

- *You will need to show that you have enough money to pay for living expenses, education costs and travel for the duration of the course.*
- *You will need to show that you have enough money for you, your spouse and all of your children aged under 18 years, whether or not they will be coming to Australia with you.*

Your visa subclass and assessment level determines how you will need to prove your capacity to meet your financial requirements. (DIMIA, 2005)

These descriptions reveal that overseas student visa applicants not only need to show that they can afford for their cost of living, education and travel but their family's ones if applicable, whether or not they will be coming to Australia. More importantly how much fund they need depends on their visa subclass and assessment level. Before presenting this key part of the paper, i.e. assessment levels, it is necessary to let us first look at what visa subclasses are (see Table 1):

Table 1:

<i>If the main course you will be studying is a(n)...</i>	<i>Then you can apply for the following visa subclass</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), undertaken as a stand-alone course, not leading to an Australian award</i> <i>or</i> • <i>ELICOS undertaken as a stand-alone course, leading to a certificate I, II, III or IV,</i> 	<p><i>... 570 - Independent ELICOS</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>primary school course</i> • <i>secondary school course, including junior and senior secondary</i> 	<p><i>... 571 - Schools</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> or • <i>approved secondary exchange program,</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>certificate I, II, III, and IV (except ELICOS)</i> • <i>diploma</i> • <i>advanced diploma</i> • <i>vocational graduate certificate</i> or • <i>vocational graduate diploma.</i> <p>Note: <i>Former RATE system qualifications: Certificate, Advanced certificate and Associate diploma,</i></p>	... 572 - Vocational Educ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>bachelor degree</i> • <i>associate degree</i> • <i>graduate certificate</i> • <i>graduate diploma</i> or • <i>masters coursework,</i> 	... 573 - Higher Educatio
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>masters research</i> or • <i>doctoral degree</i> 	... 574 - Postgraduate R
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>enabling course: non-award foundation studies</i> or • <i>other full-time course or components of courses not leading to an Australian award,</i> 	... 575 - Non-award
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>full-time courses of any type undertaken by an AusAID or Defence student sponsored by the Australian Government,</i> 	... 576 - AusAID

(DIMIA, 2005)

By browsing the form, we can see there are seven visa subclasses, in which, generally speaking, Subclass 570 is for language learning, Subclass 571 is for primary and secondary schools, Subclass 572 for TAFE, Subclass 573 for coursework degree and Subclass 574 for research degree, Subclass 575 is non-award courses and Subclass 576 can be any type, but it is hard to get sponsorship from the Australian Government. And from the data provided by Overview – Australia’s Student Visa

Program of DIMIA (2005), we can understand that a predominant majority of overseas students come from Subclass 572, 573, 574.

Conspicuously, DIMIA also set up four assessment levels by countries as a way to determine what materials student visa applicants need to provide in order to meet the relative financial requirements according to their visa subclasses. Table 2 describes what financial requirements are corresponding to assessment levels in student visa assessment.

Table 2:

<p><i>If your assessment level is ...</i></p>	<p><i>Then you will need to ...</i></p>
<p>1,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>... declare that you have access to enough money to meet the minimum financial requirements in the Student visa application form</i>
<p>2,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show that you have access to the minimum financial requirements for the first 12 months of your stay in Australia • declare that you have access to the minimum financial requirements for the remainder of your stay in Australia. <p>Note: Although non-cash assets are not directly acceptable, it is possible to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liquidate the assets prior to applying for a student visa, depositing the money you receive in a bank or • use the assets as collateral for a loan from a financial institution
<p>3,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show that you have access to the minimum financial requirements from an acceptable source for the first 24 months of your stay in Australia • declare that you have access to the minimum financial

	<p><i>requirements for the remainder of your stay in Australia</i></p> <p>Exception: <i>If you are applying for a subclass 574 (Postgraduate Research sector) visa, you will need to show that you have access to the minimum financial requirements from an acceptable source for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least <i>the period of any preliminary course and</i> • <i>the first 12 months of your principal course</i>
4,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show <i>that you have access to the minimum financial requirements from an acceptable source for the first 36 months of your stay in Australia</i> • declare <i>that you have access to the minimum financial requirements for the remainder of your stay in Australia</i> <p>Exception: <i>If you are applying for a subclass 574 (Postgraduate Research sector) visa, you will need to show that you have access to the minimum financial requirements from an acceptable course for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least <i>the period of any preliminary course</i> • <i>the first 12 months of your principal course</i>

(DIMIA, 2005)

What groundings these assessment levels were set up remain unstated or unexplained, even a little, in the DIMIA documents. Nevertheless, what can be easily perceived is that:

- The countries on Level 3 in most subclasses (for a total of 29): Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Cuba, Ecuador, Fiji, Ghana, India, Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Russian Federation, Samoa Western, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Turkey, Tuvalu, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- The countries on Level 4 in most subclasses (for a total of 4): Cambodia, China (excl. SARs and Taiwan), Lebanon and Pakistan

The geographic distribution of these countries is as follows:

- 24 Asian countries: Cambodia, China (excl. SARs and Taiwan), Lebanon, Pakistan (all of Level 4 countries come from Asian), Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Fiji, India, Iran, Jordan, Kiribati, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Philippines, Samoa Western, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Tuvalu, Vietnam.
- 6 African countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- 2 Latin Americans: Cuba, Ecuador
- 1 European: Russian Federation

The ongoing data display that a majority of countries on Level 3 and 4 are in Asia. Ironically, 'Asia is Australia's most important regional market for education exports, and will continue to provide unprecedented opportunities for Australia, as Asian incomes grow and higher education takes on increasing prominence.' said Dr Brendan Nelson (2005), Minister of the DIMIA. She then continued 'In terms of international student spending, Australia's top eight markets measured on fees are in Asia. China is Australia's largest source of foreign students with almost 70,000 students enrolled in Australian institutions in 2004.'

For assessment levels of the four countries researched in this study, mainland China is placed on Level 4 in all visa subclasses; Hong Kong is set on Level 2 in 3 visa subclasses and on Level 1 in the rest 3 visa subclasses; Malaysia and Singapore are all positioned Level 1 in all visa subclasses. Needless to say, students from China and Hong Kong are all Chinese. Malaysian-Chinese ethnicity represents about 40% of the total population of Malaysia (Smith, 2001). In addition, for many years, Malaysian government has been carried on privilege policies in education to non-Chinese ethnic students in order to reach equal development of all Malaysian ethnics. As a result, Chinese ethnical students in Malaysia are more likely to pursue education overseas. Although it is hard to get by an accurate percentage of Chinese ethnic students in Malaysian students in Australia, it is well realized that more than half of Malaysian students are Chinese. For the population of [Singapore](#), [Chinese](#) predominate, making up more than three-fourths of the total (mid-year 2004 Chinese accounted for 76%) (Britannica Online, 2006). Therefore, it could easily be conjectured that at least half of overseas Singaporean students are Chinese. However, seen from the assessment level policies of Australia, although these Chinese background students are all Chinese origin, they are categorized into different assessment levels by nation. The detailed table about their assessment situations is presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: STUDENT VISA PROCESSING – ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Passport held	5 7 0 E L I C O S	5 7 1 S c h o o l s	5 7 2 V E T	573 Hig her Edu cati on	574 Postg radua te Resea rch	5 7 5 n o n A w a r d
Chi na (ex cl. SA Rs and Tai wan)	4	4	4	4	4	4
Hon g Kon g SA R	2	2	1	1	1	2
Mal aysi a	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sin gap ore	1	1	1	1	1	1

Excerpted from Form 1219i for Overseas Student Program-Assessment Levels (DIMIA, 2005)

In terms of the students from these countries, an additional requirement is made for them with regard to acceptable financial sources. The following table (Table 4) describes acceptable sources for the funding if their assessment levels are 3 or 4.

Table 4

Assessment level	The funds to support you and your family members can come from ...
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a money deposit with a financial institution held by you or an individual providing support to you for at least 3 consecutive months immediately before the date of your visa application • a loan from a financial institution made to you or an individual providing support to you • a loan from the government of your home country • your proposed education provider • the Commonwealth of Australia or an Australian State or Territory government • the government of a foreign country • a provincial or state government of a foreign country that has the written support of the national government of the foreign country • a corporation • an organisation gazetted by the Minister • an acceptable non-profit organisation • a multilateral agency. <p style="text-align: center;">Examples: United Nations, World Bank or Asian Development Bank.</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a money deposit with a financial institution that has been held for at least 6 consecutive months immediately before the date of your visa application by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ you ○ your spouse

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>your brother or sister</i> ○ <i>your parents</i> ○ <i>your grandparents</i> ○ <i>your aunt or uncle (only if they are usually resident in Australia and either a citizen/permanent resident of Australia or an eligible New Zealand citizen).</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a loan from a financial institution made to (and in the name of):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>you</i> ○ <i>your spouse</i> ○ <i>your brother or sister</i> ○ <i>your parents</i> ○ <i>your grandparents</i> ○ <i>your aunt or uncle (only if they are usually resident in Australia and either a citizen/permanent resident of Australia or an eligible New Zealand citizen).</i> • <i>a loan from the government of your home country</i> • <i>your proposed education provider</i> • <i>the Commonwealth of Australia or an Australian State or Territory government</i> • <i>the government of a foreign country</i> • <i>a provincial or state government of a foreign country that has the written support of the national government of the foreign country</i> • <i>a corporation</i> • <i>an organisation gazetted by the Minister</i> • <i>an acceptable non-profit organisation</i> • <i>a multilateral agency.</i> <p style="text-align: center;">Examples: <i>United Nations, World Bank or Asian Development Bank</i></p>
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Theoretical framework

Now, it is necessary to lay down the theoretical framework within which the entire analysis is undertaken. This paper adheres to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) employed by Van Dijk (1993; 1996) and Fairclough (1992; 1995), who point out CDA has been influential beyond the area of discourse to 'an explanation of how and why particular discourses are produced. Discourse is not only a product or reflection of social processes, but seen to contribute towards the production (or reproduction) of these processes' (Teo, 2000). Gramsci (1971) and Althusser (1971) have both stressed the significance of ideology for modern societies to sustain and reinforce their social structures and relations. 'As a pre-eminent manifestation of this socially constitutive ideology, language becomes the primary instrument through which ideology is transmitted, enacted and reproduced' (Foucault, 1972). Teo (2000) then states: 'thus, by analysing the linguistic structures and discourse strategies in the light of their interactional and wider social contexts, we can unlock the ideologies and recover the social meanings expressed in discourse'. Van Dijk (1993; 1996) and Fairclough (1992; 1995) share a common vision of the centrality of language as a means of social construction, and they embark upon various investigatory studies designed to unmask and make transparent the kind of socio-political or socio-cultural ideologies that have become entrenched and naturalized over time in discourse.

Data analysis

The analysis of this policy discourse is undertaken in two parts. Some words within this policy are first sketched under linguistic analysis, with a focus on particular discursive strategies that have the potential to harbour ideological meaning. Following this, a comparative analysis based on relative policies in other western countries is undertaken. In so doing, I hope to gradually reveal the construction of a prejudice ideology embedded within its words.

In a linguistic perspective, we can find that on Level 1 in Table 2 there is no requirement for financial proof, just to 'declare'. However, on Level 2, it changes into '**show** that you have access to the minimum financial requirements for the first **12 months** of your stay in Australia', which is written in block. And then on Level 3 it shifts to '**show... and 24 months**' and on Level 4 '**show... and 36 months**' both of which are written in block. The increasing months can only give one implication, i.e. of decreasing credibility or sense of trust towards these overseas student visa applicants. Another difference also appears between Level 2 and Level 3 and 4. On Level 2, the requirement only states to '**show** that you have access to the minimum financial requirements for the first **12 months** of your stay in Australia', but On Level

3 and 4, 'an acceptable source' is added to it. That phrase implies some financial sources are not accepted or 'we' do not trust other sources in the countries on Level 3 and 4. What is more, between Level 3 and Level 4 in Table 4, in the delimitation of 'an acceptable source', there are still two disparities. One shows that on Level 3 one item states 'a money deposit with a financial institution held by **an individual** providing support to ...', while on Level 4 it changes into 'a money deposit with a financial institution that has been held ...by **you/your spouse/your brother or sister/your parents/your grandparents/your aunt or uncle (only if they are usually resident in Australia and either a citizen/permanent resident of Australia or an eligible New Zealand citizen)**' which means DIMIA only trusts people list above as your financial supply sources. The other one appears that on Level 3, a money deposit is required for at least '3 consecutive months immediately before the date of your visa application', but on Level 4, the corresponding requirement turns to be 'at least 6 consecutive months'. The discourse expressed in these expressions reveals that the degree of credibility is set up in a decreasing order along the four assessment levels.

What caused DIMIA to take such an action to ensure adequate financial capacity of those overseas students? And what is discursive strategy used in the discourse of this DIMIA policy? Although the reasons remain undeclared in the DIMIA documents, it is not hard to work out some reasons. For example, some students from Hong Kong on Level 2, especially from China on Level 4 might falsify their application documents which lead to the decrease of their credibility. However when a deeper thought is given, we might find this issue more likely concerns educational levels of visa applicants, other than their financial capacity. As most of financial proof such as money deposit are very hard to replicate or falsify and these are also very easy to be identified by only a ring to their corresponding financial institutions. In this sense, it seems not sufficient to justify this policy with the reason of document falsification. Or worse, that might give a suggestion that Australian government be more commercial oriented in the recruitment of international students. The second reason easily identified is to prevent illegal migration from mainland China and Hong Kong. That sounds rather reasonable, but when we look closely back to the visa subclasses, it is similarly easy to be noted that for Master or Doctorate candidate applicants, one of the DIMIA minimum requirements is bachelor degree which they got with efforts of as long as three or four years, undoubtedly illegal residence in Australia costs them too much and must be much more harm than good; for bachelor pursuant, they are only around 17 or 18 years old and too young to risk their whole lives in a totally different

country; for TAFE pursuant, English is an unsurmountable task; as a matter of fact, IELTS (the International English Language Testing System) is the hardest part and an unachievable task for people in mainland China who intend to remain in Australia. The last reason for this policy could be to prevent overseas students from mainland China and Hong Kong to do too much part-time work in case their working activities will have a negative impact on domestic labour markets and also affect their own full-time study if in a noble perspective. But that is also groundless, as far as the researcher knows few of overseas students are not engaged in casual work after having started their courses, it is also clear that no matter how hard they work, they can not make money enough to cover their tuition fees, working is more likely a life experience. Since Australia has started to recruit fee-paying students for around 20 years students should have been aware of that before they apply for students visa, in that if they can not afford their schooling fee, they must be in a big awkward trouble after they commence their courses.

It can easily be perceived that the policy is based on such an assumption that Australian government is quite afraid of people from Hong Kong, especially mainland China to sly into Australia and remain illegally. The assumption is made by such a preconception that some students from mainland China and Hong Kong provided falsified documents when applying for student visas, so DIMIA generalized this small group of people to their whole nation and region presuming that all the people from there have the disposition for falsifying documents and incredibleness. In Teo's point of view (2000) and in discursive strategy, DIMIA blames these people for their circumstance on their own faults, then naturally they deserve this strict policy. However, one result of which can not be neglected is that, new applicants from these countries have to take the responsibility for the bad influence made by their prior compatriots, although they have done nothing wrong. One example might give a clearer elaboration, such as in a family, all the four children have been raised by the same parents and under the same family environment, if a brother broke a vase and left away, no one would agree on that the parents should punish the rest three. The problem occurred in the discourse of this policy might be they are not in a same 'family', although they all live on the earth.

Moreover, compared with other western countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada, France and Spain, we can see their policies on financial proof in Table 5, financial policies are also very strict and specific such as income tax documents, original bank books and/or statements, business registration, licenses and payslips etc. just like what Australia does, but they do not identify

different assessment levels by countries like Australia, all the overseas students are treated by the same requirements no matter how strict they are.

Table 5: Policies of financial proof in such major six western countries as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, France, and Spain

C o u n t r y	Policy of Financial Proof
U S A	<i>Financial evidence that shows you or your parents who are sponsoring you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition and living expenses during the period of your intended study. For example, if you or your sponsor is a salaried employee, please bring income tax documents and original bank books and/or statements. If you or your sponsor own a business, please bring business registration, licenses, etc., and tax documents, as well as original bank books and/or statements (from US Department of State, November 2004)</i>
U K	<i>Bank statements, payslips or other evidence to show that you can pay for your stay and your course of studies in the UK.. (http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1018721067373,09/09/05)</i>
C a n a d a	<i>Proof of funds available to support yourself and family members during your stay and to enable you to leave Canada, such as a bank statement, pay stubs, proof of employment or proof of travellers' cheques. (http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/applications/guides/5256E2.html2005-09-01)</i>
N e w	<i>Evidence of sufficient funds to support yourself for the period you will be studying (If you are studying in New Zealand for less than 36 weeks please provide evidence of NZ\$1000 per month. If you are</i>

<p>Z e a l a n d</p>	<p><i>intending to study in New Zealand for more than 36 weeks please provide evidence of NZ\$10,000 per year as well as sufficient funds to purchase an outward ticket); AND a guarantee of accommodation. (Application to Study in New Zealand, September 2005)</i></p>
<p>F r a n c e</p>	<p><i>Each French embassy sets the level of financial resources to be demonstrated by prospective students from that country. The amount is on the order of 3,000 francs for each month to be spent in France. Students receiving scholarship grants must produce a statement indicating the amount and duration of their grant on the letterhead of the granting organization.</i></p> <p><i>If the required resources are guaranteed by an individual residing in France the student must produce a signed statement of financial responsibility, a photocopy of the national identity card of the guarantor, and proof of the guarantor's own financial resources (such as the guarantor's three most recent pay stubs and most recent tax return).</i></p> <p><i>If the resources come from abroad, the student must demonstrate that a bank account has been opened into which the necessary funds will be deposited and produce a promise of payment, translated into French and bearing the authenticated signature of the individual responsible for making the payments, or a statement of payment of funds from the authorities of the student's country of origin.</i></p> <p><i>(www.frenchculture.org/education/france/go/visa.html,24/10/05)</i></p>
<p>S p a i n</p>	<p><i>Letter from the study abroad program assuming full financial responsibility for tuition, room and board for the student during his stay in Spain. For many students this information is included on the previously mentioned letter of acceptance.</i></p> <p><i>Proof of having received financial aid or scholarship covering expenses for tuition, room, board, and personal expenses during the stay in Spain (minimum of \$350 per month).</i></p> <p><i>Notarized letter from parents assuming full financial responsibility for</i></p>

<p><i>the student for at least \$500 per month of stay in Spain.</i> <i>(http://www.spainemb.org/ingles/consulate/Student.htm, 24/10/05)</i></p>

Discussion and Conclusion

The foregone analysis aims to provide a broad overview of discursive strategies that the policy-maker can and does exploit, whether consciously or sub-consciously, to develop a particular ideology. Now we are going to see how discursive strategies like generalization can be used to create a reality that generates and reinforces the negative stereotyping of national identity.

'Generalization refers to the extension of the characteristics or activities of a specific and specifiable group of people to a much more general and open-ended set' (Teo, 2000). Most significantly, categorizing someone into a particular social schema also tends to colour the perception of the meaning of what that person does. Thus a child taking an eraser from another may be seen as aggressive if he is black but assertive if he is white (Sagar & Schofield, 1980). Similarly, if a student from Singapore or Malaysia found providing falsified documents may be perceived as an individual case, a mainland Chinese student may likely be ascribed to a nation's tendency. That is based on the preconception of much more such cases happening to mainland Chinese students, with disregard to a much larger mainland Chinese student base in Australia, individuality of mainland Chinese students and even prospective change of these students source.

Given the analysis above, the conclusion could be surfaced that the way which the DIMIA policy is stipulated and carried out not only reflects but reinforces the kind of social schemata that overseas students from Hong Kong, in particular, mainland China are less honest, even then less trustful, need inflicting more restrict policies on themselves. In a naturalized way, these students are gradually distanced from the mainstream society, which is just the most symptomatic of national bias that this paper is concerned with.

'A critique of discourse inevitably becomes a political critique of those responsible for the perpetuation of dominance and hence social inequality (Van Dijk, 1993)'. It is hoped that this critical analysis of the official document contribute to the field of CDA and stimulate further research to be undertaken in all areas the harbour ideological

persuasion, to make transparent the processes that enter into the construction of social inequality and injustice.

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