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Thesis title: Exploring the Dialogic Potential in Chinese EFL Contexts

Title: ‘The thoughts we have learned:’ Coming to terms with the meaning of Doctorate.

ABSTRACT: This paper begins with the view that any learning experience is basically meta-cognitive and is mediated through an essentially Bakhtinian ideological process involving internally persuasive discourse. New understandings are akin to a partial opening of previously inaccessible ways of thinking about something as we struggle with the discourses of others and relate these to our own developing idea system.

To illustrate elements of these new ways of thinking, examples of my research based on essentially a Bakhtinian notion of ‘ideological becoming’ will be addressed. According to Bakhtin, ideological becoming happens in what is called ‘the ideological environment’ whereby learners selectively assimilate the words of others. In this context it is noted that human consciousness does not come into contact with existence directly, but through the medium of the surrounding ideological world.

In the context of learning and teaching post-graduate programs in a Chinese university over several years I have been working to help students develop their own internally persuasive discourses in settings that are in many ways quite different to traditional ways of learning but which are consistent with communicative language teaching and task based learning.

I will attempt to show that in addition to the basic process of my engagement with ‘ideological becoming’ in approaching the research with Chinese students, there is also a parallel in the way that my doctorate has been developing.

