

DOCTORAL THESIS

Persuasiveness of sex: a comparison between generation-Y in China and Poland in Langerian act-based terms

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**Persuasiveness of sex: A comparison between generation-Y in China and
Poland in Langerian act-based terms**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

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Hong Kong Baptist University

August 2014

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work which has been done after registration for the degree of PhD at Hong Kong Baptist University, and has not been previously included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications.

Signature: _____

Date: August 2014

ABSTRACT

This study applies the act paradigm to identify, explain, and compare persuasiveness of sex among generation-Y in China and generation-Y in Poland, to provide insights for communication practitioners, and to enhance future scientific research.

In the conceptual part of the thesis, persuasion, sex, and culture were reconceptualized under the act paradigm. Sex was defined as a form of interpersonal involvement. It was measured in reference to its four stages: attraction, courtship, arousal, and allegiance. Culture was defined as a form of group involvement. It was measured in reference to the country's ideology (parents and teachers) and religion. Persuasion was defined as a form of communication aiming at involvement. It was measured in reference to sex ideas at generation-Y and culture levels. The ideas were examined and selected as persuasive based on their strength and pressive relations with other ideas.

For the purpose of collecting data, a structured interviewing protocol was designed and pilot-tested. Analytical methodology using in-depth interviews was conducted. Thirty-four generation-Y males and females, 17 from China, 17 from Poland, were interviewed during November and December 2013.

In addition to culture, intimacy was also found to shape individuals' sexual conduct. This new finding required further extension of the conceptual framework. Along with it, intimacy was defined as a form of conceptual involvement between two people that primarily occurred through verbal disclosure. Sex was further defined as a form of biological involvement between two people that primarily occurred through interactional touch.

It was found that in China, ideology (parents and teachers) primarily shaped sexual conduct of young people. In Poland, the role was in the hands of religion (the Roman Catholic Church). In both countries, ideas about sex and intimacy were expressed through the same actions and artifacts; intimacy dominated over sex, which was attributed to cultural influence. While intimacy was stronger in China than in Poland, sex was stronger in Poland than in China. Conflict between the Church and generation-Y was identified in Poland. The only issues identified in China were the results of past tensions.

The dissertation introduced and applied a new paradigm for social sciences—Langerian act-theory. In addition, the study initiated the building of previously nonexistent knowledge of Poland, and enriched the already growing knowledge of China. As a result, the application of its findings was provided for various communicators and academic disciplines.

Keywords: Persuasion, sex, sex appeal, intimacy, culture, religion, ideology, China, Poland, generation-Y, Langer, act theory, act paradigm.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	x
I. INTRODUCTION	11
II. PROBLEM STATEMENT	16
2.1 Rationale	16
2.2 Identified issues.....	16
2.2.1 Pragmatic: Economically driven research.....	16
2.2.2 Conceptual: Static approach.....	18
2.2.2.1 Persuasion	19
2.2.2.2 Sex.....	23
2.2.2.3 Culture.....	25
2.3 Proposed solutions	28
2.3.1 Pragmatic: New area of research.....	28
2.3.1.1 China	28
2.3.1.2 Poland.....	29
2.3.2 Conceptual: Langerian act-paradigm with universal act-language	31
2.4 General purpose	31

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	32
3.1 Persuasion in act terms.....	32
3.1.1 Ideas.....	34
3.1.1.1 Internal dynamics.....	37
3.1.1.2 Feelings	38
3.1.1.3 Symbolic expressions.....	38
3.1.1.4 Tensions.....	39
3.2 Sex in act terms	40
3.3 Culture in act terms	42
3.4 Research questions.....	44
IV. RESEARCH PROCEDURES	46
4.1 Variables (Acts).....	46
4.2 Measurement procedures	46
4.2.1 Persuasion.....	46
4.2.1.1 Idea strength.....	47
4.2.1.2 Tension	48
4.2.2 Sex	48
4.2.3 Culture	49
4.3 Methodology	50
4.3.1 Research sample	50
4.3.2 Instrumentation.....	52
4.3.3 Pilot study.....	56
4.3.4 Data collection.....	57
4.3.5 Treatment of the data.....	58

V. FINDINGS.....	62
5.1 Culture.....	62
5.1.1 Religion	62
5.1.2 Ideology.....	71
5.1.2.1 Teachers.....	71
5.1.2.2 Parents.....	83
5.2 Generation-Y.....	93
5.2.1 Attraction (Flirting)	93
5.2.2 Courtship (Dating).....	103
5.2.3 Arousal (Sex/Intimacy).....	111
5.2.4 Allegiance (Committed relationship)	121
VI. DISCUSSION.....	132
6.1 Unanticipated findings	132
6.2 Revised theoretical framework	133
6.2.1 Sex and intimacy in act terms.....	133
6.2.1.1 Expression of sex and intimacy	134
6.2.1.2 Internal structures of sex and intimacy	136
6.2.1.3 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy.....	140
6.2.2 Culture, sex, and intimacy in act terms	141
6.2.2.1 Sexual transformation model	143
6.2.2.2 Cultural identity	144
6.3 Revised procedures of analysis.....	145
6.4 Summary of analysis.....	146
6.4.1 Internal structures of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level	146

6.4.1.1 Intimate involvement in China and Poland.....	146
6.4.1.2 Sex involvement in China and Poland.....	147
6.4.2 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at generation-Y level....	149
6.4.3 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at culture level	152
6.4.4 Dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels	154
6.4.4.1 Sexual transformation of China and Poland	155
6.4.4.2 Cultural identity of China and Poland.....	155
VII. CONCLUSION	158
7.1 Conclusions.....	158
7.2 Application.....	160
7.3 Theoretical contributions	161
7.4 Limitations	162
7.5 Recommendation for future research.....	163
APPENDICES	168
Appendix 1A: Interview sheet (English version).....	168
Appendix 1B: Interview sheet (Polish version).....	175
Appendix 2A: Classification of actions and artifacts into signs	182
Appendix 2B: Classification of actions and artifacts into symbols	184
REFERENCES.....	187
CURRICULUM VITAE	199

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Summary of problems with solutions—research contributions.	16
Figure 2.2. Persuasion of sex appeal—summary of results in terms of examined cultures and generation-Y.....	31
Figure 3.1. Visualization of reconceptualization process.....	32
Figure 3.2. Internal structure of act (Source: Powers, 2011a).....	34
Figure 3.3. Organic processes—as an underlying unit of human-related analysis (Source: Powers, 2011a).....	36
Figure 4.1. Variables in the study.	46
Figure 4.2. Persuasion measurements.	48
Figure 6.1. Sex and intimacy—primary and secondary forms of expression.	135
Figure 6.2. Hierarchy of interactional touch levels—internal structure of sex.	137
Figure 6.3. Hierarchy of discourse levels—internal structure of intimacy.	140
Figure 6.4. Model of sexual transformation.....	144
Figure 6.5. Social goals—comparison between China and Poland.	147
Figure 6.6. Interactional touch—comparison between China and Poland.....	149
Figure 6.7. Comparison of dynamic relations of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland—summary of findings.	151
Figure 6.8. Dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels in China, and Poland—summary of findings.	154

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Aad	Attitude towards ad
Ab	Attitude towards brand
Ap	Attitude towards product
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model
PI	Purchase intention

I. INTRODUCTION

For over a century, persuasion has been a core interest of various disciplines, including psychology, rhetoric, marketing, advertising, and political science. Persuasion has also been surrounded by controversy. Its most problematic aspect concerns the ability for any type of message to influence someone's behavior. The issue becomes most apparent when considering the persuasion of advertisements. The idea that a picture could make its viewers buy the product seems to be suspect—especially when the advertisement portrays sex.

Sex, despite the recent transformations of the sexual revolution, remains at the core of controversy. Even though it has been inherent in our lives since the very beginning of our existence, its communication has been accepted only under very specific conditions. When it is treated as a tool in securing human survival or continuing the species, it is regarded as one of the primary human needs. When it is treated as a source of pleasure, it is considered a cause célèbre, the source of scandal. Perhaps for these reasons, sex has received some attention in the natural sciences, and very little in the human sciences.

The change in perception of sex in the Western world has accompanied the sexual revolution in the US. The revolution had only just begun in the aftermath of the Second World War when Alfred Kinsey published his first book on sexual behavior in 1948. It immediately expanded with the emergence of female sex icons, e.g., Marilyn Monroe in the 50's, Madonna in the 80's, and more recently, Britney Spears and Miley Cyrus. They have all played their part in breaking the

taboo—overcoming the inherent biological stigma of sex and lifting it to a new level of understanding.

However, despite their efforts, to date, progress in understanding of sex has been slow and remains in its infancy. There is still ample room left for its exploration. One way in which it could be better understood is through examining cultures. How individuals in different cultures respond to sex could be a valuable source of information. Not only could it provide additional insight into the underlying motivations of human behavior, but also it could challenge some of the existing assumptions about the extent to which different cultures perceive sex as a taboo. And this is what the present study has been designed to do, to search for another point of view when examining sex from the perspective of young people in China and Poland.

In doing so, this thesis will be divided into six parts: problem statement, theoretical framework, research procedures, findings, discussion, and conclusion. In the first part, two issues will be identified, the pragmatic issue and the conceptual issue. The pragmatic issue will refer to the limited knowledge of communication in China due to the paucity of research, and complete lack of knowledge of communication in Poland. The occurrence of the issue will be attributed to economically driven research. The conceptual issue will refer to inconclusive research on persuasiveness of sex. The occurrence of the issue will be attributed to the static approach pervading human-related sciences. Accordingly, solutions will be proposed for the identified issues. The pragmatic issue will be resolved by conducting studies on China and Poland. The conceptual

issue will be resolved by the application of a dynamic approach, the Langerian act paradigm, in examining persuasion, sex, and culture.

In the second part, a theoretical framework for studying persuasion, sex, and culture will be developed. The framework will be built on the Langerian act paradigm for social sciences enhanced with already existing theories and concepts. Persuasion will be identified as form of communication aiming at involvement. It will be connected to the concept of beliefs and values. Sex will be identified as a form of interpersonal involvement. It will be connected to the concept of the four *stages* structure of biological sex. Culture will be identified as a form of group *involvement*. It will connect to the concept of ideology and religion. Furthermore, based on the identified issues, and in line with the proposed theoretical framework, research questions will be developed.

In the third part, methodological procedures will be developed for examination of persuasive qualities of sex in the two countries. First, variables will be identified, and measurements of persuasion, sex and culture will be proposed. Measurement of persuasion will be based on identification of the *strength* and *tension* of ideas about sex. Measurement of sex will be based on identification of individuals' ideas about sex at generation-Y level. Measurement of culture will be based on identification of both ideology's and religion's stands on sex-related topics. In-depth interviews will be proposed to address the research questions. Furthermore, the research sample will be proposed for the study. Instrumentation will be depicted accordingly. The interviews will be preceded by a pilot study. The stages

of data collection will be described, along with techniques applied for its treatment, organization and analysis.

In the fourth part, the findings will be presented. They will be divided into two parts—those examining culture and those examining generation-Y, in China and Poland. The examination of culture will be subdivided into examination of religion and ideology in the two countries. Furthermore, ideology will be further subdivided into parents and teachers. The examination of generation-Y will be divided into the four stages at which sex was inspected: *attraction*, *courtship*, *arousal*, *allegiance*.

In the fifth part, the findings will be discussed. The discussion will be divided into two steps. In the first step, an unanticipated result will be accounted for. Intimacy, as another form of interpersonal involvement will be identified along with culture as shaping individuals' ideas about sex. The finding will be accounted for through revitalization of the theoretical framework and revised measurement procedures. The framework will be revised in the context of the Langerian act paradigm. It will include extended definitions of sex and intimacy, their primary and secondary dimensions, *internal structures*, and *dynamic relations* formed with one another and with culture. In addition, further concepts will be embedded into the new framework; a sexual transformation model will be designed, and a cultural identity concept will be applied. The new conceptualization will be accounted for by amending measurement procedures. In addition to the relationship between sex and culture, dynamics between sex and intimacy, and intimacy and culture will be analyzed.

In the second step of the discussion, four analysis summaries will be presented. The first summary will include a comparison of internal structures of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland. The second summary will include a comparison of dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland. The third summary will include a comparison of dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at culture level in China and Poland. The fourth summary will include a comparison of dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels in China and Poland.

In the final part, the study will be concluded. First, the research questions will be addressed. Types of sex messages that are predicted to be persuasive in targeting generation-Y in China and Poland will be described. Similarities and differences between persuasiveness of sex in China and Poland will be summarized. Lastly, the role of culture in similarities and differences will be outlined. Second, the application of the findings to educators, policy makers, advertising and marketing practitioners will be proposed. Finally, limitations, along with recommendations for future research will be suggested. The recommendations will be structured around natural and human sciences research that will allow minimizing of the conceptual issue, and thus, resolve the occurrence of the pragmatic issue.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

2.1 Rationale

The study on persuasiveness of sex among Chinese and Polish generation-Y will notably contribute to the solution of at least two issues. The first—a pragmatic issue—refers to the limited knowledge of Eastern markets. The second—a conceptual issue—refers to inconclusive research on the capability for sex to persuade. The proposed study will not only provide reasons why the two issues have occurred, but it will also offer appropriate solutions to them. The pragmatic issue, attributed to economically driven research, will be addressed through a new area of research covering China and Poland. The conceptual issue, attributed to the static approach adopted in social sciences, will be addressed through the application of a dynamic approach—the Langerian act-paradigm (see Figure 2.1).

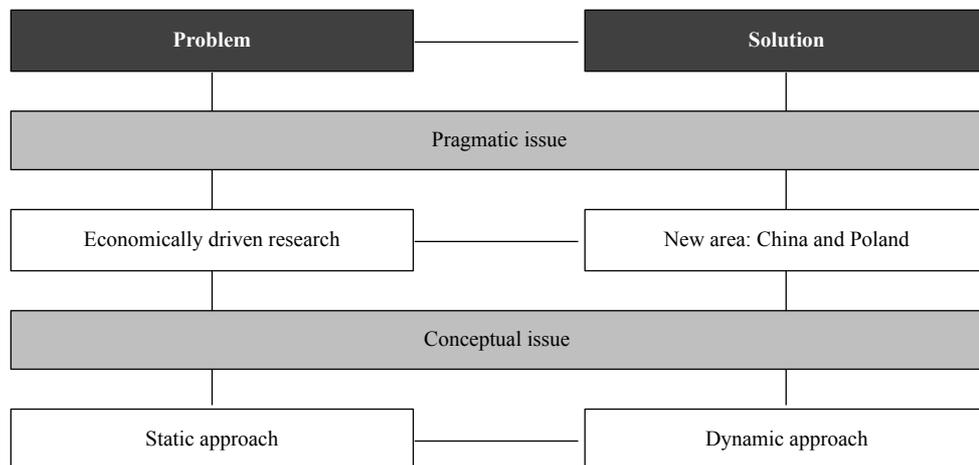


Figure 2.1. Summary of problems with solutions—research contributions.

2.2 Identified issues

2.2.1 Pragmatic: Economically driven research

The pragmatic issue concerned with the limited knowledge of Eastern markets could be attributed to economically driven research. When America, and then Europe were facing problems of saturated markets, and were enduring one financial crisis after another, China began to benefit from its open door policy reforms in 1979, gradually becoming one of the world's most attractive markets. It was around that time that the economic shift towards the new region became visible. Companies struggling with saturated and financially distressed Western markets were extending their operations to China, hoping to raise their profitability and secure their future existence. For the same reasons, their focus soon expanded to the other three BRIC countries. Together with China, Brazil, India, and Russia comprise over half of the world's population (Frith & Mueller, 2010); thus, these four countries sustain the most profitable market in the world.

The radical change from the West to the East in the world's economic situation was soon reflected in the shift of academic interest. The threatened prosperity of the emerging businesses facing new challenges on uncharted waters created a demand for knowledge, thus boosting academic research. At first, the new area of study with the possibility of making useful discoveries generated enthusiasm among the researchers. However, with time, it uncovered some previously hidden issues. It was soon found that most of the Western-generated concepts were insufficient for comprehending the East. In many cases, the concepts could not be applied at all. In other cases, when they were applied, they provided limited understanding of what was happening on the other side of the world. The inapplicability dilemma initiated an era during which the credibility of scientific

achievements has been questioned. Concepts such as *global theory* called for unlearning what has been learned and relearning it again with a new, global set of eyes (Lee, 2012).

At the same time, the too drastic shift towards the East deprived already challenged research the opportunity to solve some of its issues. Somewhere along the way, the entire bloc of Eastern-European countries slipped between the cracks and never appeared in any communication research. However, the transitional countries—nations that in some aspects belong to the West and in others to the East, could serve as a valuable source of clues. They could function as a link between the West and the East, and examining them could be helpful in apprehending differences and similarities between the two cultural hemispheres (Mestrovic, 1994).

2.2.2 Conceptual: Static approach

The conceptual issue concerned with inconclusive research on persuasiveness of sex could be attributed to the static approach in social sciences. In the static approach, everything is viewed as a material entity. Every entity takes the shape of an object. Each object is examined in terms of its characteristics and functions. Furthermore, modeled on physics, the approach applies mathematics to explain the impact the objects have on one another, i.e., how one material entity causes another one to behave (Langer, 1942, p. 91). In that sense, the materialistic approach reduces human phenomena to a billiard game. In the game, the balls are randomly spread across the table. Each ball functions on its own, and in separation from the others. It can only move as a result of the application of some

external force. And it is only that force that, by causing the ball's own movement, can also cause its interaction with the other balls.

Lack of fundamentals, or a framework on which the concepts are initially constructed, remains as the core issue in the materialistic approach. On the one hand, it offers too much freedom. Without any substantial restrictions, it permits the formulation of multiple definitions of the same concept. On the other hand, it brings some limitations. It offers no in-depth analysis to the constructed definitions. The limitations go even further. Freely created definitions, increasing in number, give rise to various interpretations of how the phenomena might work—theories. Each theory, deprived of any framework and formulated on different assumptions, is limited in its ability to be combined with other theories, thus dramatically slowing the speed of social scientific progress. In addition, various interpretations produce a number of measures of the same concept. In turn, they harvest incoherent research, often contradictory in results. This contradictory research, unable to be supported by other existing theories, leaves gaps. Restricted explanations further limit application of the already slowly progressing research to practice. The practice departs from the science. Practitioners are left to their own devices, and in the hands of their own approach—trial and error.

2.2.2.1 Persuasion

The material notion of human phenomena with the problems that they cause could be best observed in persuasion. First, the approach has allowed the generation of several definitions of the same concept. Belief, for example, resulted in a number of definitions across persuasion theories. Fishbein & Ajzen (2010) defined it as

“the subjective probability” (p. 221). Rokeach (1968), on the other hand, not only defined it as “an inference made by an observer about underlying states of expectancy” (p. 1), but also as “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does” (p. 113). Furthermore, Festinger (1962), without any sufficient definition, included it as one of the elements of cognitions.

Multiple definitions of the same concept gave rise to several persuasion theories, each assumed for a different aspect to command human behavior. The Theory of Reasoned Action assumed intention—attitude combined with a perceived norm and perceived behavioral control, to be the main driver for human behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 22). On the other hand, Cognitive Dissonance Theory assumed the occurrence of dissonance between all types of cognitions, “knowledges, attitudes, beliefs, values, and opinions about the environment, about oneself, or about one’s behavior” to be the main driver for human action, as subordinated to the reduction of dissonance (Festinger, 1962). The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) recognized two paths to persuasion, central and peripheral, and placed attitude as the main determinant for human behavior (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). Finally, theories of beliefs and values placed neither intentions nor attitudes, but values—enduring beliefs, in the centre of interest of any persuader (Rokeach, 1968, 1973).

Further, various interpretations of how persuasion might work gave rise to several measurements of the concept in advertising research. The following items: attitude towards the ad (Aad), attitude towards the product (Ap), attitude towards the brand (Ab) (Ashill & Yavas, 2005; Dahl, Sengupta, & Vohs, 2009; Ford,

LaTour, & Clarke, 2004; Ford, LaTour, & Honeycutt, 1997; LaTour & Henthorne, 1994; Lee, 2000; Liu, Cheng, & Li et al., 2009; Mehta, 2000; Paek & Nelson, 2007; Sawang, 2010); purchase intention (PI) (Bird, DeFanti, Vaghi, & Caldwell, 2010; Ford et al., 1997; Ford et al., 2004; LaTour & Henthorne, 1994; Li, 2008; MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986; Miller, 1992; Paek & Nelson, 2007; Prendergast & Ho, 2006); recall (Lang, Wise, Lee, & Cai, 2003; Stanton & Herbst, 2006; Till & Baack, 2005); ad liking (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2008; du Plessis, 1994; Fam, 2006; Gazley, Krisjanous, Fam, & Grohs, 2012; Mckechnie & Leather, 1998; Polegato & Bjerke, 2009); beliefs and values (Okazaki & Mueller, 2007; Wang & Sun, 2010) exemplified the most commonly employed measures in identifying whether an advertisement was influential, or not.

Among the 32 reviewed publications on the persuasiveness of sex published between 1990 and 2010, none of them directly addressed the concept of persuasion. Furthermore, the topics most often addressed revolved around identifying the effect of sexual appeal in advertising on attitudes and purchase intentions (Miller, 1992; LaTour & Henthorne, 1994; Ford et al., 1997; Waller, 1999; LaTour & Henthorne, 2003; Garcia & Yang, 2006; Prendergast & Ho, 2006; Chan, Li, Diehl, & Terlutteret, 2007; Liu et al., 2009; Black, Organ, & Morton, 2010). In studies conducted by LaTour & Henthorne (1994), strong overt sexual appeal in a print advertisement was not well received, and resulted in a less favorable attitude towards the advertisement, the brand and the purchase intention. Moreover, the most negative attitude was found among women (Liu et al., 2009), as opposed to men who had positive attitudes towards advertisements with a

highly sexual theme (Black et al., 2010). Furthermore, a high level of sexual content increased attention to an advertisement, but when exposure to sexual content continued, resulted in a negative outcome for the advertisement and brands advertised using sexual appeal (LaTour & Henthorne, 2003). In summary, consumers held more favorable attitudes towards advertisements that used mild sexual appeal compared with those containing strong sexual themes (Garcia & Yang 2006).

Not only was gender important when estimating attitudes towards products advertised with sex appeal, in addition, levels of extraversion and openness positively affected beliefs and opinions directed towards advertisements with sexual content. In general, sexual appeal had a stronger effect on attitudes towards the advertisement than the brand (Black et al., 2010). Findings presented by Chan et al. (2007), concluded that perceptions of advertisements had a significant impact on consumers' intentions to reject the products and the brands. Negative perceptions of a product negatively influenced a company's image (Prendergast & Ho, 2006), and increased the likelihood of women taking action and boycotting an advertised product (Miller, 1992; Waller, 1999). However, that intention varied across cultures (Ford et al., 1997).

Purchasing was also affected by different levels of sexual appeal. When the advertisement was perceived to be offensive, it generated attention that was negative in relation to the purchase (Prendergast & Ho, 2006; Lang et al., 2003). The role portrayals were also important factors when estimating purchase

intentions (Ford et al., 1997), especially among women with a high level of feminist consciousness (Ford et al., 2004).

2.2.2.2 *Sex*

However, the acclaimed persuasion measures were incapable of measuring persuasion per se. They dispersed from the original concept, and gave rise to persuasion's partial equivalents, i.e., effectiveness, offensiveness, response, or likeability (likability). This contributed to the production of incoherent and often contradictory results in sex research. On the one hand, the rising number of sexual portrayals along with an increase in explicit images of female and male models (Hicks, 2003) suggested sexualized advertisements were persuasive or at least, as a minimum, effective. The idea was additionally supported by the success of brands, e.g., Dolce & Gabbana, Benetton, or the Polish apparel brand House, which regularly used sex appeal in their campaigns. On the other hand, research on the topic suggested otherwise. Not only did sexual appeal in advertisements turn off Americans (Reichert & Lambiase, 2003, p. 1), but also these advertisements were perceived as offensive (Garcia & Yang, 2006). This negatively affected attitudes towards the advertisements and purchase intention (Chan et al., 2007; Lang et al., 2003; Prendergast & Ho, 2006).

In terms of the different responses to sexual appeal in advertisements between men and women, according to Prendergast & Ho (2006), women were not only more offended by nudity than men but also rendered more tense (LaTour & Henthorne, 2003) as opposed to men, who were more energized (LaTour, 1990) when they viewed advertisements that used sexual appeal. Moreover, men had

positive feelings associated with a nude model whereas women's feelings were negative (LaTour, 1990), and even resulted in perceiving the advertisement as offensive (Li, 2008). In summary, using sexual content was more effective when directed at men than women (Sawang, 2010).

The differences among women in how they perceived advertising with sexual content also varied. LaTour & Henthorne (2003), cautioned advertisers against using overt sexual appeal due to increased feminist consciousness that was activated in the presence of highly sexual themes. Reichert & Fosu (2005), on the other hand, discovered that women with more positive sexual self-schemas were more accepting of the sexual content in advertisements than those with more negative self-schemas. Ford et al. (1997), argued that female consciousness played an important part in the perception of sexual advertisements and differed between cultures, resulting in varied preferences for viewing advertisements with sexual content (Sawang, 2010). Furthermore, role portrayals were perceived differently in certain countries (Ford et al., 2004).

Moreover, as reported by Reichert (2003a), young consumers were often “victims” of advertising that used sex appeal, even though they still favored fair labor messages over sexual appeal (Hyllegard et al., 2009). Accordingly, in the study by Nilaweera & Wijetunga (2005), no evidence was found that young consumers in Sri Lanka were more accepting of sexual appeal in advertisements than their older counterparts.

Several scholars attempted to understand what type of content could be considered sexual in their studies, as well as determine the difference between

sexy and offensive. Reichert (2003b) developed a classification of sex appeal. He identified different levels of nudity, sexual behavior, physical attractiveness, sexual referents, and sexual embeds as the main criteria in establishing levels of sexual explicitness in advertisements. The research on the effects of sex appeal turned out to be even more confusing when, for reasons that are unclear, researchers narrowed down its examination to only one criterion—level of nudity. In line with this, different countries approved of exposed nudity to different degrees (Paek & Nelson, 2007). Furthermore, while Chinese consumers were most offended by advertisements containing sexism or sexual connotation (Li, 2008), the idea became entirely undermined in an Australian study, where nudity was perceived to be the least important reason for personal offense (Waller, 1999). However, interpretation of nudity in advertisements did not necessarily have to be restricted to sex. It was found that, while in some nations nudity was related to sex, in others it symbolized purity (Mooji, 2011, p. 144).

2.2.2.3 Culture

The contradictory and confusing sex research was further validated by the application of academic theories and concepts from various academic fields. For example, fear appeal (Black et al., 2010; LaTour & Henthorne, 2003; LaTour, 1990; LaTour, Pitts, & Snook-Luther, 1990; Nilaweera & Wijetunga, 2005; Prendergast & Ho, 2006; Reichert & Fosu, 2005; Reichert, Heckler, & Jackson, 2001), information processing (Garcia & Yang, 2006; LaTour, 1990; Reichert & Fosu, 2005; Reichert et al., 2001; Reichert, 2003a), and ethical theories (Dahl et al., 2009) were the most often applied concepts in understanding sexual

phenomena, when their examination was conducted in a mono-cultural arena. On the other hand, trait-based approaches, i.e., Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Chan et al., 2007, Garcia & Yang, 2006; Liu et al., 2009), and the Big Five Personality Traits (Black et al., 2010) were the most often applied concepts in understanding sexual phenomena when their examination was conducted in a multi-cultural arena.

Several studies reported significant differences between, and in cultures with reference to sexual appeal. In research conducted by Chan et al. (2007), Chinese respondents were less accepting of offensive advertising than Germans. Moreover, they were most offended by advertisements containing sexism or sexual connotation (Li, 2008). Despite the differences between Chinese and German consumers, a similarity between US and Chinese respondents was found. According to the authors, even among similar cultures, consumers' reactions to advertisements utilizing sex appeal could be different (Liu et al., 2009). Moreover, deep-rooted differing stereotypes between Western and Eastern values could no longer be valid in this fast-moving era of globalization (Paek & Nelson, 2007).

Personality traits affected responses to sexual appeal; therefore, overt sexual appeal was not effective when used on a target audience of introverts or people who were characterized as quiet, shy and reserved (Black et al., 2010). Exposure to sexual advertisements did not appear to result in heightened accessibility of sexual constructs. Respondents with negative sexual self-schemas, who perceived sexual advertisements as offensive or less appealing presented increased memory and cognitive dissonance (Davies et al., 2007).

The effects of ethical issues and cultural values were significant when establishing the effectiveness of sex appeal in advertisements on people's attitudes and behaviors. In studies conducted on Sri Lankan consumers, negative opinions about advertisements using female sexuality came from cultural values (Nilaweera & Wijetunga, 2005). Sexual appeals were often perceived as offensive due to the conflict with local cultural norms and values (Garcia & Yang 2006). However, not only cultural but also family values were predictors of consumers' perceived offensiveness of sexual advertisements (Li, 2008).

Nonetheless, group values of a specific segment, personal values and personality traits were more useful than cultural values for predicting consumer response. Thus, standardized, cross-national advertising using sexual appeal was more effective when advertisers had identified cross-national consumers who shared the same or similar cultural values (Liu et al., 2009). Moreover, a higher level of education resulted in lower perception of offensiveness (Prendergast & Ho, 2006), and the effect of sexual appeal was not as great for consumers who were highly involved in the product as those who were not involved at all (Liu et al., 2009).

However, according to Powers (2011b), "Trait-based explanations seem to follow the 18th century pattern of reasoning that explained why some people have better memories than others by proposing that they had more of the 'remembering faculty'. In this way, traits are not so much explanations as they are labels for repetitive patterns of behavior that have yet to be explained". Moreover, currently offered images of the communicator are all derived from the same assumptions of the mind-body dualism, and the external forces causing human action.

Furthermore, they look for explanations at the same macro-level of observation as the phenomena they wish to account for. Therefore, they are incapable of explaining the underlying reasons for the occurrence of human behavior. Until they can be explained by other concepts delivered from the micro-level of observation, their explanatory power will remain limited, and thus insufficient in providing a comprehensive explanation for human behavior.

Consequently, superficially examined effects of sex resulted in insufficient explanations of its persuasive qualities, and forced attribution of success or failure of sexual portrayals to the unspecified artistic character of their creations (Gibbons, 2005). Therefore, persuasiveness of sex appeal in advertisements has been left outside the scope of understanding. Progress in sex-related persuasion research has been frozen. The question of where the line lies between offensive and persuasive sex messages, as well as how that line varies in different cultures, has remained unanswered. The science has departed from the practice and left message creators at the mercy of their common sense and intuition.

2.3 Proposed solutions

2.3.1 Pragmatic: New area of research

The problem of limited knowledge of Eastern markets that springs from economically driven research could be overcome by comparative examination of the two countries, China and Poland.

2.3.1.1 China

Today, China is one of the fastest growing countries in the world with a population of approximately 1.3 billion, with 50% of its people under the age of 24. Moreover, China has one of the highest personal saving rates in the world (40%), along with a shopping rate of 9.8 hours per week—almost three times higher than Americans. Additionally, estimations show that, by 2020, 55% of the Chinese population will constitute a middle class, allowing for the demand and spending rate to significantly increase (Frith & Mueller, 2010).

2.3.1.2 Poland

Poland, with its strategic location linking Western with Eastern Europe has been expanding rapidly, especially after joining the European Union in 2004. The conciliation has mainly resulted in economic development along with the establishment of Polish companies and brands. However, saturation of the home market has required some Polish businesses to seek economic profits outside the country. Currently, the expansion is mainly aimed at the post Soviet Union satellites, of which Poland used to be a part until 1989. It is possible the similarities between the markets, as well as their convenient location are two of the main reasons Polish producers focus their efforts on their neighbors.

Alternatively, similarities between Poland and China seem to exist. For a relatively long time the two countries shared the same political and social systems, while remaining separate in terms of their religious and historical background. The analogies would allow Polish producers to consider the Chinese market as equally suitable as the post Soviet Union satellites, and that it would be worth spending time and money to further their aim of expansion. More

importantly, the country's location would allow Poland to be considered as a transitional country, where the West meets the East.

However, the literature review conducted on the persuasion of sex appeal identified that only 5 out of the 32 examined publications studied China and none of them studied Poland. In addition, only 5 of the publications examined generation-Y, and none of them conducted a study in a multi-cultural arena (see Figure 2.2). In that sense, China would warrant more research, especially in reference to the younger generations that will shape the country's future course. Concurrently, examination of Poland could fill a significant gap on the map of cultural awareness, and thus provide a unique contribution to the existing communication research.

Country	Publications	Total	Gen-Y
Australia	Liu et al., 2009; Prendergast & Ho, 2006; Waller, 1999	3	0
Brazil	Paek & Nelson, 2007	1	0
China	Chan et al., 2007; Ford et al., 2004; Li, 2008; Liu et al., 2009; Paek & Nelson, 2007	5	0
Germany	Chan et al., 2007	1	0
Hong Kong	Prendergast & Ho, 2006	1	0
India	Ford et al., 2004	1	0
Japan	Ford et al., 1997	1	0
Mexico	Garcia & Yang, 2006	1	0
New Zealand	Ford et al., 1997	1	0
Singapore	Ford et al., 2004	2	0
South Korea	Paek & Nelson, 2007	1	0
Sri Lanka	Nilaweera & Wijetunga, 2005	1	1
Thailand	Paek & Nelson, 2007	2	0
USA	Bird et al., 2010; Black et al., 2010; Bülbül & Menon, 2010; Dahl et al., 2009; Davies, Zhu, & Brantley, 2007; Ford et al., 1997; Ford et al., 2004; Garcia & Yang, 2006; Hicks, 2003; Hyllegard, Ogle, & Yan, 2009; Israel & Strassberg, 2009; Lang et al., 2003; LaTour & Henthorne, 1994; LaTour & Henthorne, 2003; LaTour et al., 1990; LaTour, 1990; Le Bel, 2005; Liu et al., 2009; Miller, 1992; Paek & Nelson, 2007; Reichert & Fosu, 2005; Reichert et al., 2001; Reichert, 2003a; Reichert, 2003b; Sawang, 2010; Sender, 2003; Stephen, 2003	27	4

Figure 2.2. Persuasion of sex appeal—summary of results in terms of examined cultures and generation-Y.

2.3.2 Conceptual: Langerian act-paradigm with universal act-language

The problem of inconclusive research on the capability for sex to persuade that springs from the limitations of the materialistic approach could be overcome by application of the new paradigm for social sciences. The act theory, originally developed by Susanne Langer (1942, 1953, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1982), provides an entirely new perspective on any type of human phenomena. The act paradigm, in contrast to the materialistic approach, has been entirely based on the assumption that “our material bodies are not as ontologically fundamental as the organic processes that maintain them” (Powers, 2011a). Therefore, in the act paradigm, an *act*, or a *process*—not an object or an entity—serves as the basic unit of every analysis. Accordingly, unlike the materialistic paradigm, it offers solid fundamentals for in-depth analysis of any type of human-related phenomena. The analysis of any act could be conducted in reference to a set of act-rules—principles, and corollaries (Powers, 2011a).

2.4 General purpose

In reference to all of the above, the general purpose of the paper is the application of the Langerian act paradigm to identify, explain, and compare persuasiveness of sex among generation-Y in China and generation-Y in Poland, to provide insights for communication practitioners, and to enhance future scientific research.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the proposed study covered three main concepts: persuasion, sex, culture. The concepts were reconceptualized under the new paradigm. In doing so, five primary principles of acts were introduced and applied: *evolutionary dynamics of acts*, internal structures (dynamics) of acts, relational dynamics between acts, *act-based principles of feelings*, and *levels of acts*. In addition, the three concepts were further connected with already existing theories, which served as the basis for their reconceptualization. Persuasion was reconceptualized in reference to Rokeach's (1968, 1973) concept of beliefs and values, as well as to the concept of liking. Sex was reconceptualized with reference to Rodgers's (2002) identification of the stages of sex. Finally, culture was reconceptualized with reference to Geertz's (1973) anthropological studies (see Figure 3.1).

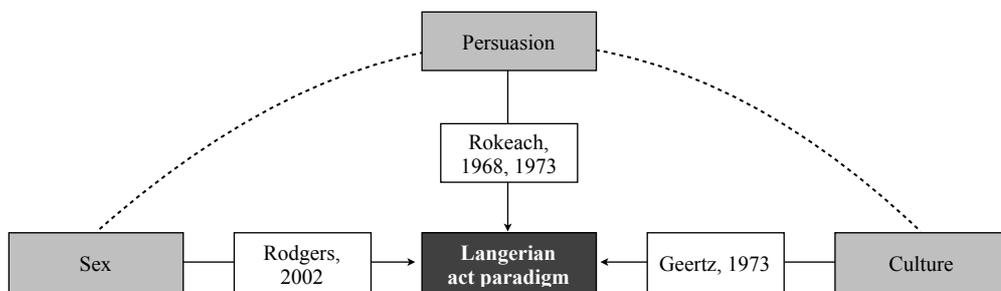


Figure 3.1. Visualization of reconceptualization process.

3.1 Persuasion in act terms

Persuasion, in the act paradigm, could be defined as a form of communication conveyed by one or more individuals to become involved with one or more others.

“Involvement is the process whereby separately originating acts (or previously

individuated groups of acts) come to be progressively more closely interrelated with one another so that, collectively they form an identifiable unit of activity” (Powers, 2011a). Furthermore, according to Langer (1967, 1972, 1982), involvement is always accompanied by another process—*individuation*. These processes are two of the primary drives of evolution, including the evolution of human mind. “Individuation is the process whereby a group of rhythmically recurring and interrelated acts tend to separate off (i.e., individuate) from the larger matrix of acts in which they arise so that they take on their own functional identity” (Powers, 2011a). In other words, while individuation finds its form in separation, involvement's form is exhibited in connectedness.

Therefore, persuasion would be a part of one of the two evolutionary processes. It would sustain the process that aims to bring people together. The process of bringing people together would be nothing else than the process of forming new, or changing already existing behaviors of individuals so they would be consistent with the behaviors of the group they are persuaded to involve with.

Furthermore, “communication is the process of intentionally transmitting ideas from one individual to one or more others using symbolic means” (Powers, 2011b). Therefore, when regarded as a form of communication, persuasion would be a process. Every process in act theory exhibits a typical internal act structure—unfolding through four *phases* (stages) (Powers, 2011a). In the *preparatory stage*, impulses are formed that, when activated, proceed towards the second stage. While successfully unfolding in the *development stage*, the process eventually peaks in the *climax phase*. After that, it moves towards the *cadence phase*. The

progression, not definable according to any standard unit of time, takes place along a path, the act's trajectory (Powers, 2011a) (see Figure 3.2). In that sense, persuasion would not simply happen as an impact-reaction type of occurrence, but instead, as a progression of its stages.

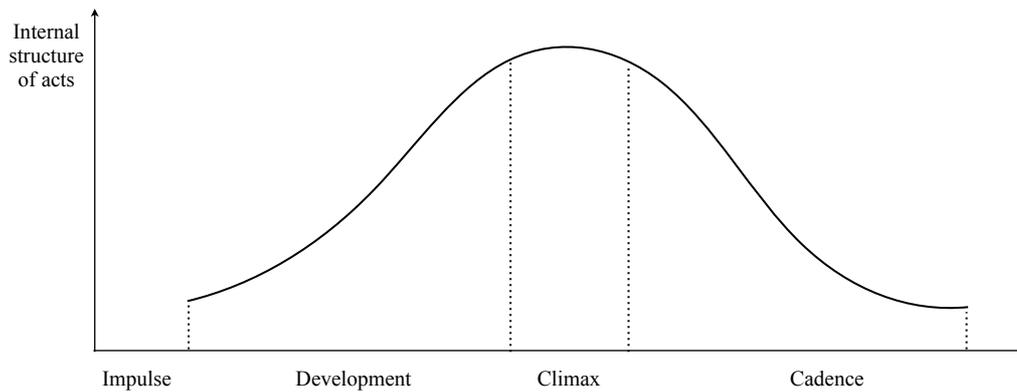


Figure 3.2. Internal structure of act (Source: Powers, 2011a).

When regarded as both involvement and a form of communication, persuasion would be based on intentional transmission and interpretation of a specific type of idea, a purposed involvement. Furthermore, the ideas with their meanings would be transmitted through, and interpreted from symbolic means—discursive and presentational, actions, and artifacts (Powers, 2011b). In that sense, it could be connected to the concept of liking, assumed to be a link to persuasion in advertising research (du Plessis, 1994; Fam & Waller, 2004; Murphy & Tang, 1998; Polegato & Bjerke, 2009). In Langerian terms, an advertisement would be liked when it was persuasive—involving.

3.1.1 Ideas

Furthermore, according to the situational motivation principle, “only acts already in progress can directly motivate new impulses”. Environment—all occurrences

outside the organism, stripped of any motivational powers, only provides a situation with opportunities, i.e., to either activate acts that have been suppressed, or suspend acts that are already expressed (Langer, 1942, 1953, 1972, 1982; Powers, 2011a). Therefore, the primary focus of persuasion should be on individuals with whom someone intended to become involved. More importantly, the focus should be on their ideas, a specific category of acts, and symbolic forms that they use to express them. Once the ideas and their forms were recognized, they could serve as a framework for designing persuasive messages.

For Langer (1972), ideas are fundamental drivers of human action, behavior. In the human realm, they have taken over any other types of primary biological instincts, including these that secure subsistence of any living organism, like drinking or eating (p. 261). Perhaps, for this reason, political prisoners are capable of surviving extreme conditions, or suicide bombers sacrifice their own lives—all in the name of defending ideas (Powers, 2011a). Furthermore, ideas are the markers that separate humans from animals. As much as people like to believe that their pets have thoughts, plans, or goals, these qualities belong only to the human realm (Langer, 1942, p. 26-52).

Ideas, in Langerian terms, are also acts. Not only do they exhibit the internal structure of the four stages, but they also form relations with one another. As they pass through the four stages, they are subject to external occurrences of other acts that modify their course. The relational dynamics of acts describe eight types of relationships that acts form with each other. In line with them, an idea motivates, or is motivated by other ideas (*motivational relations*); implements, or is

implemented by them (*implementing relations*); forms rhythmical connections with them (*rhythmic relations*); entrains, or is entrained by them (*entrainment relations*); forms a hierarchy with other ideas (*hierarchical relations*); presses, or is pressed by them (*pressive relations*); competes with other ideas (*competitive relations*); and reciprocates, or is reciprocated by them (*reciprocal relations*) (Powers, 2011a). Therefore, as a process, an idea could be analyzed in terms of its internal structure, as well as the dynamic relations it could form with other ideas.

Additionally, in the act paradigm, ideas are specific types of processes—feelings. The act concept recognizes body and feelings as the two consequences of the same matrix of constantly ongoing organic processes. While the body is the material (physical) expression of that activity, feeling constitutes its psychical phase (Powers, 2011a) (see Figure 3.3). Feeling—everything that is felt in one way or another (Powers, 2011a), is a phase of activity that intensifies beyond a certain threshold (Powers, 2011a). “For example, seeing is the way we feel patterns of light with our eyes; thinking is the way we feel our own mental activity; knowing a poem and understanding an idea are felt experiences” (Powers, 2011a). Therefore, as a type of feeling, ideas could be further analyzed in terms of the principles of feelings (Powers, 2011a).

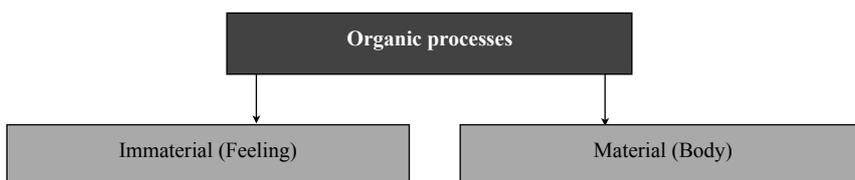


Figure 3.3. Organic processes—as an underlying unit of human-related analysis (Source: Powers, 2011a).

In line with all of the above, ideas could be classified into different types based on their qualities. Qualities refer to the idea's strength and tension. The strength of an idea would be related to its internal dynamics, and its qualities as a type of feeling. It would also be related to symbolic forms used for its expression. The tension would be related to dynamic relations an idea would form with other ideas. Recognition of their qualities would allow the selection of those ideas that would be most effective when creating persuasive messages.

3.1.1.1 Internal dynamics

Based on their internal dynamics, ideas could be classified into three categories of strength: those that are passing through the first and the fourth stage, those that are passing through the second stage, and those that are passing through the third stage. In line with act theory, the strength of an act would be based on its ability to resist external influences, i.e., the environment with other progressing acts that it would be subject to when passing through the four stages. The strongest ideas would be the ones passing through the climax phase. Relatively weaker (medium) would be those passing through the development phase. The weakest ideas would be those passing through the cadence phase, and those in an impulse phase.

The internal stage of an idea would be directly related to the concept of belief. Belief, as a type of idea, could be defined as an idea one holds about one's experiences (Rashotte & Webster, 2005), or how one interprets the past and expects future experiences to develop (Langer, 1953). Therefore, its stage of development would be directly related to an individual's past experiences. Not only would these experiences affect the future course of the belief, but more

importantly, its present state. Experiences would accumulate with age. In that sense, the more advanced the stage of life, the stronger the belief.

3.1.1.2 Feelings

Based on their connection to feelings, ideas could be additionally divided into central and peripheral (Powers, 2011a). Central ideas—emotions, include ideas that are felt as actions. Peripheral ideas—sensations, include ideas that are felt as impacts. Classification of ideas into central and peripheral follows the classification provided by Rokeach (1968). Central ideas when motivated internally are relatively stronger. In Rokeach’s classification they sustain Type A (primitive, 100% consensus), and Type B (zero consensus) beliefs. Peripheral ideas when induced peripherally by a stimulus are relatively weaker (Powers, 2011a). Accordingly, in Rokeach’s classification, peripheral ideas sustain Type C (authority), Type D (derived), and the weakest among all five types—Type E (inconsequential) beliefs. The most efficient way to identify central beliefs would involve reduction of exposure to stimuli.

Another classification of feelings divides ideas into felt and unfelt. That is, one could either feel, or not feel one's ideas. Furthermore, the former would be regarded as stronger than the latter. Felt and unfelt ideas could be identified through recognition of participants’ opinions, i.e., positive vs. negative, acceptable vs. unacceptable, pleasant vs. unpleasant; or lack of them, i.e., “no opinion”, “no idea”, “not sure”, “don’t know”.

3.1.1.3 Symbolic expressions

Finally, the variety of forms applied to express ideas would be helpful not only in their identification, but also in establishing their strength. Identification of ideas expressed discursively could be supported by examination of their presentational equivalents. The more forms applied in the idea's expression, the stronger the idea. Moreover, the extended repertoire of expression would allow increasing reliability of a research attempting to examine sensitive topics, e.g., sex. It would allow the identifying and measuring of ideas that are approved of, or disapproved of by cultures from presentational forms, and would not require directly (verbal) admitting to liking or disliking them.

3.1.1.4 Tensions

Tensions refer to eight types of dynamic relations with other ideas. However, pressive relations would sustain the type of dynamics that would allow the establishment of the most effective persuasion. In reference to them, ideas could be divided into five main types: depressed (frustrated), suppressed (suspended), compressed (reshaped), impressed, and expressed. A depressed idea refers to an act in which consummation has been entirely constrained by other acts. For example, one could value sex, but entirely withdraw from its expression. A suppressed idea could be described as an act in which consummation has been temporarily terminated. For example, after engaging in sexual activity, a person temporarily withdraws from it. A compressed idea could be described as a fully expressed act with a modified trajectory. For example, one could value all forms of sex, but in the presence of religious, or social constraints, only engage in sexual activities that have been approved. An impressed idea refers to an act in its

impulse phase waiting for a means of expression. For example, one's ideas about sex have not yet been expressed. The last type of idea, expressed, refers to an act that unfolds without any modification of its trajectory. For example, one could value various forms of sex and fully engage in them (Powers, 2011a).

The above tensions could only be identified by examining the relation of one idea to another. Furthermore, depressed and suppressed ideas would generate the highest tension, as they would both push for continuation of their expression. In the case of compressed and impressed ideas, tension would be at the medium level, as they would both be partially expressed and would only push for an unshaped expression. Tension would be relatively low in the case of expressed ideas.

In line with all of the above, persuasion would be effective where it is involving. That is, it would induce the strongest and medium strength ideas of its targeted receivers. The strongest and medium strength ideas would include centrally felt ideas in their climax or development phases, expressed in several symbolic actions and artifacts. The form of communication would be most effective when the induced ideas were either depressed or suppressed, or alternatively, when they were compressed or impressed.

3.2 Sex in act terms

Sex, in the act paradigm, could be defined as a form of interpersonal involvement. As involvement, sex would be a process. As a process, it would exhibit the four-phase structure. Attraction, courtship, arousal, and allegiance have been identified

as the stages of sex (Rodgers, 2002, p. 3). The impulse phase—attraction, could be characterized by all types of activities that suggest sexual interest between the two people, i.e., flirting in general—looking at each other, smiling, etc. The development phase—courtship, could be characterized by all types of activities that bring the two people together, i.e., romance, dating. The climax phase—arousal, could be characterized by all types of activities that result in the most intimate forms of involvement, i.e., sexual intercourse. The cadence phase—allegiance, could be characterized by all types of activities that would secure further continuation of the process, i.e., commitment in a relationship as a boyfriend/girlfriend, or as a husband/wife.

These identified stages of sex could serve as alternative classification of sexual portrayals to the one proposed by Reichert (2003b). In line with them, sexual portrayals would be divided into those depicting attraction, courtship, arousal, and allegiance. More importantly, the four stages of sex would serve as the basis for the identification of the sex ideas of young people in China and Poland at two group levels—generation-Y and culture.

Furthermore, “as a natural unit of all organically unfolding events, the act form may be observed at every level of organically-based process one may choose to investigate” (Powers, 2011a). Additionally, “all act-based explanatory principles operate at multiple levels of organic process, just as acts do” (Powers, 2011a). Therefore, sex as a form of interpersonal involvement could be analyzed at two levels: individual, and interpersonal. At the interpersonal level, sex would be viewed as a joint activity of two individuals. At the individual level, sex would be

viewed as a single activity performed by one individual to become involved with another. At the individual level and from the biological perspective, the organic basis of sex would be the release of the internal tension of an organism (Powers, 2011a; Rodgers, 2002, p. 14). Here, sex would be viewed as an externally induced process releasing internally stored tension built up as a result of constantly unfolding organic processes, i.e., circulatory, sensory (Rodgers, 2002, p. 14). In that sense, reproduction would not be the primary, but only the secondary consequence of the entire process. That is, sexual activity could, but would not necessarily, motivate another act—the production of offspring.

The new perspective of looking at sexual activity would treat it as a necessary act embedded in every person's day-to-day functioning. The organic activity would be expressed in sign-based individual actions and artifacts at an individual level, and in relational actions and artifacts at an interpersonal level. When frustrated (depressed, or suppressed)—e.g., by social norms, or religion, the built-up tension would have to seek a way to vent in activities other than sexual intercourse. When eventually expressed in its primary form, it would constitute a conceptual realm. The whole activity—when, with whom, how we have sex, in its simplest and socially approved, or disapproved forms like prostitution, homosexuality, or polygamy—could be imagined as symbolic behavior guided by ideas about ourselves and about others. Here, sex would be expressed in symbolically produced secular actions and artifacts, presentational and discursive.

3.3 Culture in act terms

Culture, in the act paradigm, could be defined as a form of group involvement. In the case of Chinese and Polish groups, the involvement would be based on territorial and linguistic affiliations. Culture could also be defined as “a group’s set of commonly shared beliefs and all of the signs and symbols used to express those beliefs” (Powers, 2011b). Furthermore, every culture controls sexual conduct to a different degree, and would treat it as a taboo to varying extents (Mooji, 2010, p. 141). In this case, externally produced beliefs could influence and shape the sex ideas of its involved individuals. In doing so, they could produce tensions. Moreover, at the culture level, sexual activity would be a sign of reaching adulthood. Here, sex controlled by a culture would be viewed as a form of individuation from parents, and a form of involvement with peers.

Cultural shaping would be in the hands of a country’s ideology and religion (Geertz, 1973). “Cultural patterns, i.e., ideology and religion; provide a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes” (Geertz, 1973, p. 216). “The importance of religion lies in its capacity to serve, for an individual or for a group, as a source of general, yet distinctive, conceptions of the world, the self, and the relations between them” (Geertz, 1973, p. 123). On the other hand, ideology is concerned with the protection of the selected conceptions of the world, the self, and the relations between them (Geertz, 1973, p. 231).

Therefore, religion would refer to any type of organized set of beliefs. It is separated from the ideology institutions and is in the hands of formal institutions, e.g., the Church and their representatives, the religious leaders. Religious ideas would be expressed in sacred symbols, presentational or discursive, actions and

artifacts (Powers, 2011b). On the other hand, ideology, as a political system of a country would be in the hands of its public institutions, e.g., governments, public schools, public space such as parks and museums, and their representatives, e.g., politicians, teachers, and parents. Ideology ideas would be expressed in secular symbols, presentational or discursive, actions and artifacts (Powers, 2011b).

3.4 Research questions

In reference to the general purpose of the paper, and in line with the theoretical framework, the following research questions were developed.

RQ1: What stages of sex (attraction, courtship, arousal, allegiance) would be the most persuasive for Chinese and Polish generation-Y individuals: Are there any tensions between culture and generation-Y in the two countries in a context of sex?

RQ2: What are the differences in persuasion of sex among generation-Y in China in comparison to generation-Y in Poland: Are the tensions different in the two countries?

RQ3: What are the similarities in persuasion of sex among generation-Y in China in comparison to generation-Y in Poland: Are the tensions the same in the two countries?

RQ4: What is the role of the culture (ideology, religion) in similarities in the persuasion of sex among the Chinese generation-Y individuals in comparison to their Polish equivalents?

RQ5: What is the role of the culture (ideology, religion) in differences in the persuasion of sex among Chinese generation-Y individuals in comparison to their Polish equivalents?

IV. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

4.1 Variables (Acts)

Sex's ability to persuade (persuasion) was established through examination of the dynamic relations between two acts: ideas about sex (sex involvement) at culture (cultural involvement) and ideas about sex at generation-Y level in China and Poland. Persuasion consisted of three dimensions: strong (depressed, suppressed), mild (compressed, impressed), weak (expressed). Sexual involvement contained four dimensions: attraction, courtship, arousal, and allegiance. Cultural involvement contained two dimensions: ideology, and religion. Ideology was further divided into two sub-dimensions: parents and teachers (see Figure 4.1).

Variables in the study		Culture					
		Ideology				Religion	
		Parents		Teachers			
		China	Poland	China	Poland	China	Poland
Sex (Gen-Y)	Attraction						
	Courtship						
	Arousal						
	Allegiance						

Figure 4.1. Variables in the study.

4.2 Measurement procedures

4.2.1 Persuasion

Persuasion, as a form of communication purposed involvement, was measured in reference to the preconceived ideas, beliefs, and opinions of generation-Y in

China and Poland about sex. The ideas were examined in the context of their qualities at two levels: culture and generation-Y. The analysis of the ideas' qualities involved examination of their strength and tension. Strength enables the prediction of effective persuasion. Strength was established in reference to the stage of development, centrality, whether the ideas were felt, and in reference to their symbolic expressions. Tension enabled the prediction of the most effective persuasion. It was established in reference to dynamic relations between sex ideas at culture and generation-Y levels.

4.2.1.1 Idea strength

Stage of development served as the main indicator of an idea's strength. The relatively young age of the generation-Y participants suggested either the impulse or development phase of their sex beliefs. The ideas were regarded as relatively weak, and thus, relatively flexible to changes in the presence of external influences. In addition to age, experiences served as a supporting measure in establishing the phase of an idea. The more experiences, the more advanced the development.

Furthermore, the effects of external stimuli were minimized in the study; thus, centrality of identified beliefs was assumed. Classification of ideas as either felt or unfelt was based on the types of responses. For example, lack of opinion about, or knowledge of the sex topic classified a belief as unfelt. The higher the number of actions and artifacts applied, the stronger the idea. For example, liking flirting was regarded as stronger when supported by engagement in corresponding actions.

In reference to the above, in this study, strength of sex ideas was measured in relation to whether they were felt, and in reference to their symbolic expressions at the generation-Y and culture levels. Once the strength was identified, their tensions were further examined (see Figure 4.2).

Persuasion measurements		
Strength		Tension
Felt/Unfelt	Symbols (actions and artifacts)	Dynamic relations

Figure 4.2. Persuasion measurements.

4.2.1.2 Tension

The search for tension involved a comparison of sex ideas at the generation-Y level with their equivalents at the culture level. The comparisons allowed the identification of pressive tensions. Tensions, along with the strength of the sex ideas that induced them, served as the basis for the prediction of effective persuasion. Strong and depressed, or suppressed ideas suggested the most effective persuasion; strong and compressed, or impressed ideas suggested mildly effective persuasion; strong and expressed ideas suggested relatively weak persuasion.

4.2.2 Sex

Sex, as a form of interpersonal involvement, was measured in reference to pre-established sex-related actions and artifacts, at four stages of the process. Attraction referred to all types of signs and symbols a person applied to induce sexual interaction, i.e., looking at each other, smiling, friending on Facebook, type

of clothes worn, cosmetic applications (make-up, nail polish), etc. Courtship referred to all types of signs and symbols a person used to further develop already initiated attraction, i.e., dating, spending time together, texting, etc. Arousal referred to all types of signs and symbols a person treated as the most intimate forms of involvement with another person, i.e., kissing, sexual intercourse, sexting, carrying condoms, etc. Allegiance referred to all types of signs and symbols a person considered to secure further repetition of the sexual interaction, i.e., changing Facebook status, wearing a ring, etc.

Furthermore, participants' sexual engagements were examined in reference to participants' own ideas about sex at each of the four stages: attraction, courtship, arousal, allegiance. Participants from the two countries were asked to describe how they felt about their four types of sexual experiences, either imagined or real. When describing their experiences, additional sex-related secular actions and artifacts were identified.

4.2.3 Culture

Culture, as a form of group involvement, was divided into religious and ideological involvement. Religious involvement was related to interviewees' engagement in sacred actions, e.g., going to a place of worship, membership of religious organizations, as well as through corresponding sacred artifacts, i.e., carrying the Cross, the Beads, or a picture of Jesus, etc. Ideological involvement was further divided into ideological involvement with teachers, and ideological involvement with parents. It was established through engagement in secular

actions, e.g., interaction with parents and teachers, forms of rewards and punishments for behavior, membership in school clubs and organizations encouraged by parents and teachers, as well as through corresponding secular artifacts, e.g., costuming, material accessories encouraged or discouraged by parents and teachers.

Further, once the involvement was established, religion's and ideology's sex ideas were identified. Religion's sex ideas were identified from a respondent's opinion of his or her religious leader's position on sex at each of its four stages. Accordingly, ideology's sex ideas were identified from a respondent's opinion of his or her parent's and teacher's positions on sex at each of its four stages. Participants from the two countries were asked to describe their own experiences with their religious and ideological guides in a context of the four types of sexual experiences. When describing their experiences, additional sex-related secular and sacred actions and artifacts were identified.

4.3 Methodology

In addressing the research questions, the study adopted one of the qualitative measurements. Thirty-four in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of generation-Y in China and Poland between November and December 2013.

4.3.1 Research sample

The classification of generation-Y was adopted from the study conducted by Schmidt et al. (2011). It included a cohort of young adults between 19 and 24

years old. A total of 34 participants were selected for the study. Among these, 17 participants were from mainland China and 17 were from Poland. The Chinese group consisted of 11 females, and 6 males; the Polish group consisted of 8 females, and 9 males.

Chinese participants came from large cities in various provinces in mainland China: Shanghai, Beijing; Wuhan, Xiangyang (Hubei province); Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Foshan (Guangdong province); Zhengzhou (Henan province); Changchun (Jilin province); Longyan (Fujian province); Kunming, (Yunnan province); Jiangsu province. Polish participants came from five large cities in Poland: Warsaw, Krakow, Lodz, Lublin, Gizycko.

Participants from both countries were aged between 19 and 24 years old. They were similar in terms of their socio-economic demographics. In terms of their family's economic status, all Chinese participants claimed to come from average-income families; among these, 3 participants reported coming from the more affluent families in this category, and 1 participant from a less affluent family. In most instances (13), they were aware of their parents' monthly income, which ranged between RMB 4000 and 35000. Similarly, in terms of their family's economic situation, 12 Polish participants claimed to come from average-income families, 4 from above-average income families, and 1 from a below-average income family. In contrast to the Chinese group, most of the Polish participants (9) were not aware of their parents' monthly income; those who were, reported the income to range between PLN 6000 and 20000. Furthermore, all of the participants were single (not married); they all completed their high school

education and were college or university students—mainland Chinese students studying in Hong Kong, and Polish students studying in Warsaw, or Krakow. Furthermore, most of the Polish participants (15) came from multi-children families. In contrast, most of the Chinese participants (16) came from single-child families.

4.3.2 Instrumentation

The interview comprised five parts. The first part was an introduction, the second part covered demographics; the third part included religious beliefs about sex; the fourth part included ideological beliefs, subdivided into parents' and teachers' beliefs about sex; the fifth part included individuals' ideas about sex. Each part began with a closed-ended question, followed by an open-ended one, and terminated with closed-ended questions. Questions for both groups were designed in English, and then translated and back translated to Polish for the Polish group. Interviews with the Chinese participants were conducted in English.

The introduction included information about the research, the researcher, and the structure of the interview. Participants were presented with the four stages of sex, which were described to them in abstract terms. In order to improve the ecological validity of the study, the names of the four stages were replaced with, respectively, flirting, dating, sex, committed relationship. Following two interviews in the Polish group, sex was replaced with sex/intimacy. The change reflected an additional variable identified in the study—intimacy. In later stages, participants were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the study. They were invited to ask questions at any stage of the interview. They were also asked to respond

according to how they felt, and not to treat the interview as a test. Finally, they were asked for permission to audio record the interview for the purpose of future analysis of the collected information.

The demographics part of the interview included the gathering of personal information from the participants to ensure that they fitted the required criteria. In that part, name, age, nationality, city and province in mainland China, city in Poland, gender, number of siblings, and the family's annual income were identified.

In the religious beliefs part of the interview, participants were asked whether they professed any religion. If they did, they were asked how often they attended a place of worship, whether they were members of any religious club or organization, whether they were wearing, or carrying any religious symbols, e.g., a Cross, Beads, and to name the source of their religious beliefs. If their religious beliefs were shaped by their parents, then the second part of the religious beliefs section was skipped, and the ideology beliefs were identified. If the source was not their parents, then their religion's sex ideas were examined. The questions aimed at identifying how they felt their source of religious beliefs felt about flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships. Participants were asked to evaluate each stage from their religion's perspective in terms of whether they were good or bad; necessary or unnecessary; and in the context of types of behavior that were approved of or disapproved of, allowed or not allowed.

The ideology beliefs part of the interview was divided into two subparts: parents and teachers. In the parents' beliefs part, participants were asked to value (very

good, good, neutral, nonexistent, bad, very bad) and describe their relationship with their parent(s). They were asked how often they voluntarily spent their leisure time with their parents. They were also asked whether they were rewarded or punished by their parents, along with the types of rewards or punishments handed out. In the second part, participants were asked to describe how they felt their parents felt about flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships. Participants were asked to evaluate each stage from their parents' perspective in terms of whether they thought it was good or bad, necessary or unnecessary; and in the context of types of behavior that were approved of or disapproved of, allowed or not allowed.

In the teachers' beliefs part of the interview, participants were asked to first identify the school they thought had influenced them the most. They were asked whether they liked, or did not like going to that school, as well as all the reasons for liking or disliking. Once the school was identified, they were asked to value (very good, good, neutral, nonexistent, bad, very bad) and describe the relationship(s) with their teacher(s) in that school. They were also asked whether they were rewarded or punished by their teachers, and the types of rewards or punishments handed out by them. Next, they were asked whether they were members of any school organizations or clubs at that school. In the second part, research participants were asked to identify their teachers' opinions of flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships. Participants were asked to evaluate each stage from their teachers' perspectives in terms of whether they

thought it was good or bad, necessary or unnecessary; and in the context of types of behavior that were approved of or disapproved of, allowed or not allowed.

Individual's sex ideas were divided into four parts: flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationship. In the first part, interviewees were asked to describe how they felt about flirting, whether they regarded it as good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, pleasant or unpleasant. They were asked whether they had been attracted to anyone in the past. If they had, they were asked to describe the most memorable experience that accompanied the attraction, what they did and said. If they had not been attracted to anyone, they were asked to describe the most desired experience, what they would do or say. In the second part, participants were asked to identify types of cosmetics they used (makeup, deodorant, perfumes, colognes, etc.). In addition, they were asked to quantify the amount of time they needed to get ready for school, or for going out.

In the second part, interviewees were asked to describe how they felt about dating, whether they regarded it as good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, pleasant or unpleasant. They were asked whether they had been on a date before. If they had, they were asked to describe the most memorable experience that accompanied the date, what they did and said. If they had not been on a date, they were asked to describe the most desired experience, what they would do or say. In addition, participants were asked how often they went out to clubs, to bars, or to hang out with their friends, as well as how they usually spent their free time.

In the third part, interviewees were asked to describe how they felt about sex/intimacy; whether they regarded it as good or bad, necessary or unnecessary,

pleasant or unpleasant. They were asked whether they had been intimate with anyone before. If they had, they were asked to describe the most memorable experience that accompanied the sexual/intimate bonding, what they did and said. If they had not been intimate, they were asked to describe the most desired experience, what they would do or say. In addition, participants were asked whether they had ever sent out messages that were sexual in nature, e.g., naked picture, sexting, sex words. They were also asked whether they used sex protection or carried condoms.

In the fourth part, interviewees were asked to describe how they felt about committed relationships; whether they regarded them as good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, pleasant or unpleasant. Then they were asked whether they had ever been in a relationship. If they had, they were asked to describe the relationship that they remembered the most. If they had not been in a relationship, they were asked to describe the relationship they would desire now, or in the future. In addition, participants were asked whether they had worn any symbol associated with being in a relationship, e.g., ring, necklace, bracelet, or carried a picture of a person they were in a committed relationship with (see Appendix 1A for interview sheet in English and Appendix 1B for interview sheet in Polish).

4.3.3 Pilot study

The pilot study was conducted by the researcher in order to test and secure measurement reliability. Two representatives of generation-Y, one female from China, and one from Poland were selected for the pretesting. The pilot interview

with the Chinese female was conducted in person. The interview with the Polish female was conducted via Skype. Both interviews were audio recorded.

4.3.4 Data collection

Data collection was preceded by two stages, recruitment and selection. The first stage involved recruitment of the research participants from China and Poland. During that stage, the recruitment advertisement was designed—one in English, and one in Polish. The advertisement stated the title of the dissertation, the main purpose of the study, and requirement criteria: age, nationality, country and city of origin. It also included information about financial remuneration for participation—HKD 100 for the Chinese participants, and PLN 40 as the equivalent for the Polish participants. In the case of the Chinese advertisement, an additional requirement of a good command of spoken English was outlined. In China, the advertisement was placed on public internet platforms for students studying in Hong Kong. In addition, students were directly approached by the researcher during their in-class activities at Hong Kong Baptist University with the consent of the class instructor. In Poland, the advertisement was placed on Facebook and other internet platforms accessible to Polish students. In both countries, snowball sampling was applied. Once a few participants had been recruited, they were asked to invite their friends to participate in the study. The recruitment process was constrained by limited sexual experience in the Chinese group, as well as by a larger number of females in comparison to male students among targeted groups of students.

In the second stage, the students were selected. The selection criteria, apart from age and nationality, included city/province of origin and gender. The city/province allowed the creation of diversity within the research group. The gender permitted the creation of a balanced sample. Once the students were selected, the introduction part of the interview was emailed to them.

In the final stage, the data was collected. Before the interviews began, the introduction part was once more introduced to the participants. Interviews were performed in a relaxed and friendly environment that encouraged openness and honesty. This becomes especially important when conducting research on sex, which has proven to be a sensitive topic. The interviews with Chinese participants were conducted in English; the interviews with Polish participants were conducted in Polish. Most of the interviews with the Chinese participants were conducted via Skype, or FaceTime. The remainder were conducted in person at the Hong Kong Baptist University premises. Interviews with the Polish participants were conducted via Skype. Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The interviews were audio recorded. After the interview, participants were offered the opportunity to view the results. They were asked to provide their contact details, along with their bank details for transfer of the remuneration.

4.3.5 Treatment of the data

The collected data was further transcribed and analyzed in Excel. The Excel spreadsheets were divided into two groups: Chinese and Polish. Within each group, each sheet was devoted to one of the sections of the interview: religion, ideology, and individuals' ideas on sex.

The religion section was analyzed in terms of an individual's religious involvement and religion's ideas about sex at its four stages. The strength of religious involvement was derived from the types of actions and artifacts they employed, e.g., whether they visited a place of worship, or wore any type of religious symbol. Religion's ideas about sex at its four stages were derived from an individual's opinions on how his or her source of religious beliefs felt about flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships. Participants were asked to evaluate each stage from their religion's perspective in terms of whether they were good or bad; necessary or unnecessary; and in the context of types of behavior that were approved of or disapproved of, allowed or disallowed.

The ideology section was subdivided into parents and teachers. It was analyzed in terms of an individual's ideological involvement with parents and teachers, and their parents' and teachers' ideas about sex at its four stages. The strength of ideological involvement was derived from the types of actions and artifacts they employed, e.g., how much and how often they spent their free time with parents and teachers, whether they were punished or rewarded by them, etc. Parents' and teachers' ideas about sex at its four stages were derived from an individual's opinions on how his or her parents and teachers felt about flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships. Participants were asked to evaluate each stage from their parents' and teachers' perspectives in terms of whether they thought it was good or bad, necessary or unnecessary; and in the context of types of behavior that were approved of or disapproved of, allowed or disallowed.

The individuals' ideas on sex section was analyzed in terms of individuals' ideas about flirting, dating, sex/intimacy, and committed relationships as feelings, along with actions and artifacts that accompanied them; that is, through which the feelings were expressed. The type of feeling at each of the stages was described as either good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, pleasant or unpleasant. The form of expression of the feeling was derived from past memories—the ones that they remembered the most, and future expectations.

Within each group and each section, answers were grouped around a single question. The answers were organized around ideas as types of feelings, and as actions and artifacts. In the next step, actions and artifacts were grouped into the classification of signs and symbols developed by Powers (2011b). Signs included individual and relational actions and artifacts. Individual actions included body activities (face, trunk and legs), vocal activities (pitch, volume), and verbal activities (word choices, topic choices, information presupposed). Individual artifacts included clothing (amount, style), and cosmetic applications. Relational actions included interactional spacing (distance, territoriality), interactional touching (placement, duration), and interactional framing (mutual body orientations). Symbols included discursive and presentational actions and artifacts. Discursive actions included spoken language (metaphors, speech acts, social goals). Discursive artifacts included all types of written messages (Facebook, sms, etc.). Presentational artifacts were divided into creative (sculpture, architecture, paintings, photography), and secular (costuming, toys). Presentational actions were divided into creative (music, song, dance, film, drama,

poetry), and secular interaction routines (play, school, work) (see Appendix 2A for classification of actions and artifacts into signs and Appendix 2B for classification of actions and artifacts into symbols).

V. FINDINGS

In reference to the two levels of analysis of sex ideas, the findings of the study were divided into two parts: culture and generation-Y. Culture was further divided into religion and ideology; ideology was further subdivided into the analysis of teachers and the analysis of parents. Generation-Y was divided into four stages of sex: attraction (flirting), courtship (dating), arousal (sex/intimacy), and allegiance (relationship). Each part was summarized in reference to ideas about sex: feelings, internal structure (actions and artifacts), and tensions (dynamic relations).

5.1 Culture

5.1.1 Religion

In general, the Polish participants (as representing young people in Poland) were more religious in comparison to the Chinese participants. While in the Polish group, 9 participants declared themselves to be committed to a religion, in the Chinese group only 3 people declared their affiliation. Furthermore, among Polish believers, Christianity—Roman Catholic (7)—was the primary religion, and Buddhism (2) was the secondary religion. However, among Chinese believers, Buddhism (2) was the primary religion, and Christianity (1) was the secondary religion. Even though Confucianism was not mentioned in any of the interviews, Chinese traditional wisdom was often used by the participants to explain their understanding of the “rules and mechanisms” behind the process of forming intimate relationships. As one of the participants mentioned, “In the past, I was upset with my mother because she was always telling me a lot of old Chinese

truths, and it bored me.” However, he often used Chinese sayings to portray his ideas. When he was talking about being in a relationship he explained, “There is this old Chinese saying that everything happens for a reason. If something has already happened, then we should be happy about it. If it didn’t happen, then we shouldn't worry about it.”

Furthermore, the process of believing was different in the two countries. In Poland, the majority (16) were baptized by their parents after they were born, and thus grew up with Christian guidance. As one participant explained, “I should be Catholic as I'm Polish, but after attending classes on religion given by the ‘qualified’ teacher during second grade in high school, I stopped believing in anything.” Another participant said, “I come from a family that says they believe [in God], but in reality, they don’t. No one in my family goes to church for Sunday mass”. Another participant claimed, “I don’t believe in any religions now, but I come from a family of believers. My father is Catholic. I was baptized and I've received my first communion.” One girl described how she felt, “I don’t feel like a believer, but theoretically I am, meaning that I was baptized when I was little so formally I am, but I don’t entirely agree with it, and I don’t practice it.” After entering young adulthood, some of them completely withdrew from the predetermined moral conduct. They became atheist (7), switched to another religion, i.e., Buddhism (2), or switched to another form within the same church, i.e., Dominicans (2). “I don’t believe in any god. I practice Buddhism, but I was brought up in a Catholic family. I've been a conscious Buddhist for the past three and a half years. Before that, my beliefs were, in fact, those of a Buddhist,

although at that time, I was not aware it [type of beliefs] was known by this name. Before that, I was practicing neither Christianity nor Catholicism. I was going to church from time to time, but I couldn't find any support in it; it didn't make any sense to me ... Christianity's view on relationships is definitely not in line with my own."

In contrast, in China, the participants were born and grew up without any religion (17). Those who believed, or considered committing to a religion in the future, claimed that building a strong belief in oneself had to be established before any other beliefs could be further assimilated. The possibility of future commitment to any religion (4) was usually triggered by facing adversity in life, as well as positive evaluated in terms of compatibility between the individual's and the religion's beliefs systems. "I don't think I will ever commit to the Christian religion, but I think I might possibly come to believe in Buddhism. I was brought up in a family without any religion. Now, I love reading the Buddhist sutra. It has beliefs in common with mine. I think I'm drawn more to that religion." Another participant explained, "I don't believe in God. I partly believe in Buddhism. If I had to choose one belief, I'd choose Buddhism. It influences my daily life; when I'm depressed or unhappy, I read various books to encourage myself ... these books have been really useful to me, especially during hard times." Another participant described, "When I was a child, I was a Buddhist. My grandma would take me to temples during New Year Festivals ... Now, I'm more rational. I don't think anyone can help you except yourself. So I don't believe [in any religion]." Another Chinese participant explained, "I visit a temple when I feel stuck or

confused, and I can't find my way in my life, so I go there [to a temple] hoping that I'll find the way. ... I don't think I need to believe in any religion. I think that if I do my best to be a good person, and avoid hurting others intentionally, then it's enough.”

For those who continued to follow their Christian religion in China and Poland, the main source of influence came from their peers—other students, boyfriends, friends, siblings. In other cases, it came from their teachers, both religious and secular, e.g., a ‘cool’ priest or ‘cool’ teacher, who displayed a rather open-minded approach to problems young adults were experiencing, i.e., sexuality. “It was my boyfriend who encouraged me to start thinking in philosophical categories when it comes to religion. He inspired me to deepen my religious knowledge and beliefs ... When I went on a pilgrimage [a journey to a holy place, usually organized by the Church in Poland], I was in a group with my friends. They were the ones who signed me up for it.”

The role of Chinese and Polish parents and grandparents in influencing their children's and grandchildren's religious beliefs declined around the time they entered young adulthood. Chinese parents who were Buddhists made little or no attempt to influence their children's religious past and future affiliations. In contrast, in one of the Chinese cases, a Christian mother attempted to influence her son not only to commit to the same religion as hers, but also to look for a girlfriend who was Christian. As one of the respondents outlined, “If you want to marry someone, especially in China, you need to listen to the opinions of your parents. In particular, my mother, she doesn't like other religions, especially

Buddhism. She'd prefer me to be with someone of the same religion. I wouldn't say that she can decide who I marry, but I can see that she has some influence over me. I don't want to sever the relationship with my mother just for a girl."

In both countries, religion was claimed to play a secondary role in influencing young people's own ideas. It was treated as a form of support in confusing times, and related to forming their identity as adults. One of the girls illustrated this by explaining, "Everything began when I made my first pilgrimage, which was during the time when I had begun to spend a lot of time thinking about my existence. On that pilgrimage, I met so many great people. I was impressed with how many young people believed in God." In one case, a Polish interviewee expressed a strong affiliation with Buddhism. He described it not as a religion, but as a structure that could be easily used in forming all types of beliefs. None of the Christian participants expressed such a strong bond with his or her religion. "The word religion comes from the Latin, *religare*. *Ligare* would be a part of Buddhism, but not necessarily *re*, as it suggests that we've lost something and now we have to find it again. Buddhism doesn't identify with that ... Dharma is very practical, very much related to everyday life." Another Polish participant stated, "I do believe in God but not in the Church. To me, the Church is an institution. I go there [to a church] 'cause this is how I was brought up, and I don't feel the need to object to that, even though I don't necessarily agree with it."

Both Christianity and Buddhism distinguished intimacy and sexuality as two processes that are related to one another. Polish participants displayed clear ideas on Christianity's stand on sexuality and intimacy. According to them, not only did

their religion privilege intimacy over sexual conduct, but also, while encouraging them to engage in all stages of intimacy, it only allowed the first stage of sexual conduct to be entered into. “For sure! According to the Church, people shouldn't have sex on their first date. Physical contact shouldn't happen all at once. What can we do? We can go to movies, to the theatre, for a walk, for a coffee, etc. I think the Church wants two people to get to know each other better before they commit to one another...”

For the Church, being in a love relationship was acceptable at any age, as long as people loved each other. “The Church assumes that if two people love each other, even if they're relatively young, for example 18 years old, then the Church would approve of it [relationship/marriage].” However, any form of sexual development—French kiss, petting, vaginal, anal or oral sexual climax—was strictly forbidden before marriage. As one interviewee sarcastically pointed out “... the only thing that the Church allows us to do with a boyfriend is to come to church with him”. Another Polish participant expressed, “My religion would look askance at transforming from the attraction phase to the intimacy phase; it would look askance at going to bed after one, or two dates. In general, as far as I'm concerned, my religion has a very stereotypical view on sex, that is, any type of sexual intercourse can only take place after marriage.” Another respondent pointed out, “In terms of religion, no distinction exists between attraction and sex; everything has been put in the same sack labeled ‘sex’, and this [sex] is reserved for marriage.”

On the other hand, Buddhism encouraged both sexuality and intimacy as long as intimacy preceded sexuality. Young people's engagement in sexuality was restricted only by their own feelings, and the level of consideration for others. As the Polish Buddhist stated when describing his religion's view, "We need to consider whether our step forward will make the other person feel bad or uncomfortable in the future, because she or he will be disappointed with us. So at this stage [sexual intercourse] we need to be more cautious, we need to be sure that we want to spend more time with that person and plan for the future, and not focus on the present moment."

However, while both religions equally strongly supported intimacy at every stage, each of them put some constraints on types of sexual involvement. While Buddhism restricted sexual conduct between people where the age difference was substantial, it allowed homosexual relationships; Christianity restricted any sexual conduct between people of the same sex. "The Church disapproves of living together before marriage, and sleeping together [sexual intercourse]. In general, the Church is not progressive in these matters." Another Polish respondent portrayed Christianity's position, "According to religion, there are some constraints on picking up other people. I'm not sure about kissing, but more intimate touching between a man and a woman shouldn't occur before marriage. My feeling is that, according to my religion, the only thing I am allowed to do is smile. I'm not really happy about it. Holding hands is also OK according to religion. Kissing on the cheek would be treated as gallant behavior, so it's OK, but religion would find kissing [French] disturbing." As another respondent

explained, “I’m also confused by Christianity ... because according to the Holy Bible we need to love a person of the opposite sex, but I know so many people who believe in God who also support homosexuality. So I think it doesn’t matter.”

From the Buddhist’s perspective, “I think if we’re interested in another person, there is no rational reason why we shouldn’t engage with that person [sexually]. My religious teacher is very open to it. He used to have a wife, now he has partners because his wife passed away. Maintaining a good style is the most important thing. I didn’t really think about it much, but all types of interactions should be done in a good style; we should respect the other person, that’s the most important determinant [of good style].” Another Polish Buddhist elaborated, “[in Buddhism] there is a commandment, perhaps more a type of saying, that using sex to hurt people is bad; it destroys Karma. So Buddhism clearly states that we can’t use sex to hurt other people, e.g., rape, sexual harassment, sleeping with someone and then abandoning the person, in general using people. ... There are no restrictions [in Buddhism] on types of relationships that can be formed and what they should look like, except for some obvious cases, e.g., age limitations—it wouldn’t be acceptable for a 40-year old to be involved with a 12-year old. In terms of sex, there are no problems. Homosexual couples in Buddhism are acceptable.”

Furthermore, one Polish interviewee, while providing the Church’s ideas on the nature of sex, identified the most problematic aspect of religion for the young Poles. One of her religious educators discouraged engagement in any sexual behavior, but also promoted natural sex—without condoms. According to the

educator, sexual intercourse was a process that purposed the extension of the species by allowing women to get pregnant. He did not see any reason other than reproduction for having sex. Furthermore, one of the methods in which a person could cool off his or her unwanted sexual desire was to drink a glass of cold water, or to put the feet into a bowl filled with cold water. “I remember quite clearly what my high school teacher said ... he said we can’t form a true merger between two people if there is a piece of gum in between, by gum he meant condoms. ... He was discouraging us from any type of sexual behavior. He thought that if you were having sex, you had to have it in a natural way—to get pregnant, or not to have it at all. He said the only reason for sex was to get pregnant, to ensure the continuation of the human species. It was also a way to get closer to another person, but it comes more from the fact that we are biologically equipped to reproduce—what an awful word—to get pregnant. According to him, there was no reason other than physical connection to have sex, it was not meant for mental connection. ... According to Catholic beliefs, if you feel the urge to have sex, you should drink a glass of cold water, or put your feet in a bowl of cold water.”

The Catholic Church’s stand on sexuality was postulated to be problematic not only by the Polish participants, but also by their Chinese counterparts. As some of the Polish participants indicated, it was one of the aspects that drove them away from their religion, or forced them to look for alternatives. Another participant explained, “Before I switched to the Dominicans, I didn’t have a very good opinion of the Church. I thought preachers were empty, boring and didn’t bring

anything new into my life. When I joined the Dominicans, I started attending ‘normal’ masses with ‘normal’ preachers—they were saying such wise things, words from the gospel were not just thrown at people, but were analyzed, just the way I liked it ... Intimacy and sex are very sensitive topics in the Church—the reason I was pushed away from the Church. ... On the one hand, I was under the influence of enormous social [peer] pressure that having sex was cool ... On the other hand, I was under the influence of religion, which has a problem with it.”

5.1.2 Ideology

5.1.2.1 Teachers

The approach of the teachers to love relationships was consistent across a wide spectrum of schools. Chinese participants did not identify a specific school, but rather the college entry exam as the turning point in their teachers’ opinions on forming any type of involvement. As they described it, any type of relationship, even friendship, that could negatively affect a student’s grades, was forbidden. Striving for good grades was supposed to be their primary goal. A Chinese university student pointed out, “In mainland schools, the teachers would prohibit students from starting relationships. If they found two people getting too close, the teachers would say something, and give a kind of warning. They were worried that it would affect their studies.”

In some of the schools, the idea was expressed by policies that forbade girls from having long hair to keep their focus away from their looks. As one Chinese girl described it, “My high school didn’t allow students to have long hair. If it was

longer than your collar you had to cut it. I'm not sure why, but some schools in mainland China have this rule. I think it's because they imagine girls will spend too much time doing their hair every morning.” Another girl shared her experience, “One time my teacher took me out of the classroom and said something really negative to me [about me being reluctant to cut my hair], which made me feel embarrassed. Later on, it turned out that the teachers who were in charge of checking hair length were OK with me. So I couldn't understand why she got involved. I felt embarrassed, angry, and almost cried because of this incident. It's a kind of regulation in my school.”

In other cases, students risked being expelled from school if caught engaging intimately with others. “Any type of intimacy is out of the question. Years ago, I think intimacy was a kind of taboo topic in schools in China. Teachers won't broach the topic themselves, and students won't ask. If they [the teachers] see a couple holding hands, they call their parents. If they catch two people having sex, they call their parents again and the school won't allow them to study there anymore—they'd be expelled.” However, once they passed the exam and went to a college or university, their romantic life was freed from most of the constraints previously imposed by the teachers.

Several participants provided some explanation of these phenomena. On the one hand, based on what their teachers explained to them, their academic performance was related to their future quality of life. The better grades they had, the better school they could get into, and thus, the more comfortable a life they could have in the future. In addition, love between people aged 15 to 18 years old was

considered 'puppy love' in China. Relationships at that age were doomed to fail, mainly due to physical separation during the college or university years, and therefore were an unworthy pursuit. "In high school, they consider love at ages 15 to 18 to be puppy love, which means the temporary infatuation of a young boy or girl for another person. When we were in high school, most teachers didn't encourage you to become involved with others. If two students were a couple and their student performances were good, the teachers wouldn't say anything about it [the relationship]. I have two friends, they were a couple and they still are, seven years now? ... Pretty long ... I think they're going to marry soon, so I wish them the best luck. Their Headmaster attempted to stop them once, but they didn't break up so ... The teacher said, 'you guys can't be a couple'. They weren't hiding—they were actually quite high profile. They just ignored the Headmaster and did their own thing anyway. ... They did express their feelings for each other in public. And other couples that I knew also did it [expressed feelings in public]. There was this one couple in my class. First, the teacher informed the parents, and then the guy told me he didn't like the girl, so they eventually broke up. Some of the relationships ended when exams began. They [couples] separated because they went to different cities, different universities, etc."

In contrast, the Polish group was consistent in its choice and selected high school (14) as their most influential experience. The maturity exam, the equivalent of the college entry exam in China, was mentioned only once as a reason why teachers discouraged young Poles from falling in love. "...When she saw two of my classmates talking, she [the teacher] was always saying, Mikolaj please don't flirt

with Ania, you'll have time for that after school ... In general, they were OK with students forming relationships, they even made comments such as, 'yes, this is good', 'they look nice together', 'wonderful', etc., especially when the two students had good grades. The situation wasn't so promising when someone fell in love before the maturity exam, 'Dear God, young men, I told you not to focus on that [love] right now—the maturity exam is soon, you won't pass your history exam' but they were saying it in a very light-hearted way, very friendly." In another example, the teachers advised girls to focus on studying instead of boys during their high school years. "The teachers said, 'girls, remember that at your age studying is the most important thing, so it's not sensible to engage too much and spend more time on a relationship than on studying'. It was directed at everyone, but the opinion was that girls are more emotional and therefore have more of a tendency to enter relationships than boys do."

However, in most cases, the young participants in Poland did not feel any restrictions on forming relationships. As one of them described it, "There was this one teacher, you could see she was really happy when she saw students from the same school out on a date after school ... Even when two students were kissing and touching intimately in front of others in the school corridor, it would take some time before they were noticed; but after a while someone [one of the teachers] told them it was not the place for contrived fantasies." All stages of intimacy were equally supported, and in some cases, even encouraged. Dress and adornment choices were left to students' individual preferences; girls were allowed to wear make-up. "We could look as we wished, dress as we wished;

being different was accepted, fully tolerated and not attacked. I remember I was shocked during my first days there when I saw an older student with gel-styled hair and tattoos; you could tell he was gay, he was carrying a woman's purse and rotating his hips when he walked, and was wearing high heels. He was walking down the corridor, he had lots of girlfriends. Nobody paid any attention to him, no one was laughing, teachers were even saying 'hi' to him. I was amazed. This is when I decided to shave my head. I did it in the second grade and no one cared. Wow" Furthermore, in one case, a teacher allowed a student to skip classes in order to "chase the girls".

In addition, flirting, sexual teasing, and forming relationships between teachers and students—including those that resulted in pregnancy—were reported on several occasions. In one case, "One girl in my school, she had a lot of problems as she got pregnant by a teacher. It happened when we went for a five-day field trip to Latvia. That's where they met, and that's where it all started. They tried to hide it at first, but at some point it became impossible. He even became her teacher for a while. There was no scandal as they hooked up during her first grade and everybody found out at the end of the school year. Anyway, he stopped being her teacher afterwards." Another Polish girl reported, "My gym teacher was flirting with me when I was in primary school. Everybody knew about it, including all my girlfriends." These incidents were also noticed by boys, as one of them illustrated, "Teachers liked younger and attractive girls, they often flirted with them, and they joked with them to keep the atmosphere relaxed during

class ... Some of my girlfriends told me they didn't feel comfortable when their gym teacher stared at them when they were exercising, bending over.”

Sexual intercourse was the primary concern for the teachers, but only when it occurred on their watch. “If someone wanted to have sex during the lessons that would be the only problem, otherwise, never.”

Even though students in China felt a lot of pressure about their school performance, they reported having good or very good relationships with their teachers. One interviewee expressed how highly he valued his teachers. He explained that, according to the old Chinese saying, one day we will all become teachers of others, and we will become fathers of others. “We have a very good relationship with teachers. I don't know what others are thinking, but as far as I'm concerned, as my father is a professor, I have great respect for teachers. There is this very famous old Chinese saying, ‘one day you are a teacher of others, you are a father of others’. That's why we consider our teachers to be our fathers. I really respect teachers. Thus, I have a really good relationship with my teachers.”

In contrast, Polish relationships between students and their teachers were more varied. They ranged from very bad to very good. Teachers were listened to and appreciated when they acted as students' friends (peers), rather than like their parents (authorities). “I was most influenced by the non-conservative teachers. First of all, they were much better prepared for their teaching role. Second, they had a more open-minded view on everything.”

Teachers in China were reported to exert a lot of control and influence over the students, especially during and before the exam period. Moreover, on several occasions, the ideological connection between teachers and parents was pointed out. One of the interviewees described the bond as one echoing the arguments of the other. “I never mentioned this issue [sex] to her [Headmistress], but she raised the topic with me. It was quite premature. She talked to me about it. She echoed the arguments of my parents. She said, ‘it’s OK to engage in a relationship as long as you can continue to manage your studies’.”

In cases where the teachers were concerned about students’ performance or engagement with peers, they asked parents to further deal with the situation. Despite that, the line between them was very clear. The teachers did not have as much autonomy as parents when it came to types of punishments. “At that school, because we were young they punished us verbally, but it wasn’t serious because of our young age, so they wouldn’t call our parents like they did in high school. They called parents in high school because you needed to prepare for the university exam, and only parents could force people [who were in a relationship or were dating] to separate. And it did happen; they managed to force two students from another class to stop dating.” Another Chinese participant further explained, “The high school teachers were strict about relationships. In high school, teachers were responsible for ensuring that students would go on to a college, so they were strict. They were very, very sensitive. If they found out [someone was in a relationship] they’d talk to you and say, ‘this isn’t good for you, you can play with him or her after the entry exam’. And sometimes they told the parents, which I

think is really bad, as that's what happened to me. Parents would react really badly. They'd be afraid that once their child was in a relationship, they wouldn't study and they wouldn't listen to their teachers.”

In contrast, the level of control in Polish schools was rather low, or nonexistent. “In my school, the attitude [towards couples] was rather casual, or positive. There were no scandals. For example, people were publicly French kissing in the corridors. There were a lot of couples in my school; I think it was because we had so many students in my school.” Teachers did not interfere with students’ lives unless something extreme was happening, e.g., someone was beaten up, or someone became pregnant. In these cases, some teachers became involved and tried to help. In most cases, as participants explained, “when a girl got pregnant a teacher was helping her out, but in general they were not engaged in our stuff”, or “teachers treated us as if we were adults; they allowed us to make our own decisions”. “Teachers had nothing to do with it [flirting]; they didn’t get involved, they weren't interested. I think they would get involved if the situation was extreme, for example, when a girl was beaten up and came to school.” Another Polish participant outlined, “My school was small, a boutique type; all the teachers knew everything about the students. When a situation arose where a history teacher suspected one of her students was pregnant, she became very involved, wanted to help her out. But other teachers weren't interested, they didn’t support her, they only grumbled about the student not attending their classes, etc.” In contrast to China, no connection between parents and teachers in Poland was identified.

In both countries, participants identified three types of teachers in relation to their attitude towards love relationships. The “young” teachers were described as more open minded and unofficially supportive of forming relationships between students. The “old” teachers officially rejected the idea and actively expressed it. The third type, “indifferent”, did not care about love relationships at all, or, in the case of China, they did not care as long as the student’s grades were good. As one Chinese participant explained, “I think some teachers were very open because during their youth they'd experienced the same situations as we did. Maybe they'd had a boyfriend or a girlfriend. When they were older, they'd succeeded [in a relationship], so they said it was OK [to engage in a relationship]. Most teachers were middle-aged men and women so they had their own kids. They thought it was not OK [to engage in a relationship].” A Chinese participant explained, “, I was actually secretly dating boys in high school and they didn’t notice. If they did notice ... some of them were quite conservative and wouldn’t let students date when they were at school. They [the teachers] would interfere and cause problems, affect the relationships, I know it. But there were also some teachers who were indifferent. As long as it didn’t affect your academic performance, it would be fine. Yeah, two types. So it depends.”

The Polish participants explained, “Most of the teachers [in primary school] were conservative about these things [sex related]. There were also those, mainly younger ones, who were more open-minded about this stuff; they made jokes about it. They could approach the subject in an intelligent manner—not

stereotypically like the older ones, e.g., they'd tell us that a girl should not date too many boys, etc.”

Even though the education system in China prohibited more advanced stages of intimacy and all stages of sexuality, it did not entirely stop young people from engaging in relationships with one another. “The stronger they [teachers] pushed us to stop the relationships, the more we pursued them. So the teachers’ function was not that strong in China. When they were too strict, students pushed back.” Another student said, “Sometimes the teachers knew it was happening [kissing, holding hands], but they wouldn't force you to stop. They would, but only in class, or they said, ‘Don’t kiss, don’t hug, you're too young for that’. They knew it existed. In primary and junior high school they forbade it. Students are smarter these days; they do it in a very safe place, to keep themselves safe, to enjoy themselves.”

In addition to the three types of teachers, Chinese participants identified two types of students in relation to their engagement in love relationships. One type of student obeyed the rules, and the other type did not obey the rules. Among those who did not obey the rules, there were students who were hiding their relationship from teachers (keeping their relationship secret), and those who expressed their relationship publicly without any consideration for possible consequences. In most cases, even when not in a relationship themselves, participants had observed couples in their schools. As one interviewee noted, the fact that teachers forbade students from intimately engaging with one another and that the students had to hide made the whole experience even more exciting. “For example, in my senior

high school my teacher told us not to talk to girls too much. If you did, you had to sit at the back of the class. Sometimes they waited outside the school gates to catch the students [couples]. It was easy to recognize us as we were wearing school uniforms. So students only walked very close to one another, they couldn't hold hands openly, kissing only happened in secluded places. They had to find somewhere they could hide. To be honest, it was more exciting when we had to hide. It's funny, teachers force us to do that and we get more excited. It's very strict.”

Both Chinese and Polish participants referred to their schools in a context of public and private intimate conduct. Schools in China were treated as a public space in which the expression of intimacy was forbidden, and therefore had to be expressed outside the school. “In public, teachers wouldn't encourage to students develop an intimacy with each other, but in private it was a different matter. Teachers still wanted the students to focus more on their studies. Otherwise, the students would get down and dirty with each other and the class would become chaotic. But in private, they understood we had to find someone to be with in the future. So in private they'd encourage us to have relationships with others.” Another Chinese participant described, “No bonding, I could really like a boy, feel good with him, and he could like me back, but in public we couldn't say that we loved each other. Teachers wouldn't allow this relationship to happen.”

On the other hand, one Polish interviewee noted that while expressing affection in public places like a school used to be disapproved of, e.g., kissing and hugging, it was allowed nowadays. “I remember a Polish Literature teacher, the Headmistress

[in high school]; she mentioned she was disgusted when she saw two people standing next to her office and the boy was touching the girl's ass. She said it was unacceptable, to her it was a public exposure of intimacy. So I think my perspective differs from my teacher's. Some time ago, intimacy was looked upon differently—a kiss on the tram or in a public place was considered inappropriate. Today, it's different, it's OK. Hugging a girl—I'm not talking about touching her ass—used to be perceived differently in the past.” Another respondent provided an example in which kissing in school was disapproved of during classes, but allowed during the parties organized by the teachers on the school premises. “The only place where they got involved in that stuff was primary school. Students weren't allowed to kiss in corridors, etc. When there was a discotheque it was OK, but not during a regular school day. It was not too much, anyway [they didn't apply too much pressure].”

Intimacy and sexuality were taught in some of the schools in China and Poland. However, most of the classes were devoted to sex education. Only in one case in Poland did students have talks with psychologists about intimacy; and only one case in China occurred where a student remembered the four types of love introduced to her during one of the intimacy-related classes. Respondents from the two countries agreed on the uselessness of the schools' sex education programs. Shown from animal or technical perspectives, e.g., how the oocyte merged with a sperm cell, it only touched the surface of the topic, and did not bring any depth to their understanding. Thus, they obtained their knowledge about sex and intimacy from other people's personal engagements, from novels, movies, and from stories

posted on the internet. As one of the Chinese respondents explained, “We had a general talk, but we didn’t have any sex education. My talk was in biology class at primary school. Talks about relationships at school were conducted by someone from the outside. They talked about psychology and they talked about types of love. I remember there were four kinds of love; they said each happens at different stages of life ...” Another participant from China further elaborated on the subject, “We did have sex education, but just one class in the middle, and one in primary school. They'd just tell you what you should do with your lady parts. They'd separate boys and girls. Boys would have a class somewhere else. I don't think this kind of talk was helpful. What they told us we could have learned from television. This was because they didn't cover anything very deeply. They just told us about our body in a biological way. It didn't include anything like sex. They'd just say that if you get pregnant then you should do this and that. So it was very technical.” From a Polish participant's perspective, “Once, a WOS [Knowledge about Society] teacher tried to tell us about these things ..., but she was unable to talk about them. It looked like she wanted to tell us the stuff, but it was inappropriate as we were too young. Anyway, we knew most of the things she wanted to tell us.”

5.1.2.2 Parents

The majority of the Chinese participants came from one-child families (16). In addition, most of them reported very good relationships with their parents. They often expressed strong love for both of them, and ease in communicating with them. In most cases, they reported a stronger bond with their mothers than with

their fathers, whom they turned to when they were seeking career-related advice. “It’s complex because my father is a Party member and my mother is a Christian. But my father, I can ... men at my age are confused about the future. I want to look for a job, and my father could be a good example of how to get a job. So I’d talk about jobs with my father more than with my mother ... I think my relationship with my father is good, but I love my mother more than my father.”

Another participant explained, “It’s very good. It’s very good. I like my mom better than my dad, but my relationship with my dad is also good. My mother is more lenient when I make a mistake; she doesn’t criticize me too much, she’ll help me to correct my mistake. But if my father found out [about the mistake], he’d be very strict. That’s the only difference. They both treat me very well in daily life.”

In contrast, the majority of Polish participants came from multi-child families. The value of relationships with their parents ranged from very good to very bad. Similarly to the Chinese group, the Polish group reported better relationships with their mothers than with their fathers. In contrast to their Chinese peers, only one person in Poland expressed strong love for his mother, and a few pointed to difficulties in communicating with their parents. In both groups, when the relationship was good, the children and their parents engaged in the same types of joint activities, e.g., shopping, eating out, jogging, cycling, and traveling. Two Polish participants described this. “Yes, I spend a lot of time with them. ... So yes, every day we have a chat. When there’s something happening in my life I call my mom. My dad finds out what’s happening in my life automatically from my mum ... When there’s something happening in my relationship, I usually talk about

it with my mom.” Another participant portrayed her relationship with her parents, “It's very good, with both of them. I spend a lot of time with them. The last time we saw each other was yesterday. We usually talk, shop together, eat, cycle, jog, do some recreational stuff together. We also go for holidays together.” Another reported, “It's not a very bad relationship, but it's also not a very good one; somewhere in the middle.” Another one explained, “My relationship with my parents is bad. We never talk. When we do talk, we only talk about current affairs, but not about the stuff that's happening; we fight all the time, my mother has some problems of her own too ...”

Most of the Chinese parents had punished and rewarded their children on several occasions. However, once their children grew up, the form of punishment shifted from physical to mental. Along with this, the type of relationship shifted from authoritative to friendship. “Yes, it did happen to be physical, but I was very young back then. Once I grew up, they tended to use verbal punishment more often than physical. The last time was during the summer break. I broke a precious vase that my father treasured, so he was really unhappy about it. ... They never compliment me openly. They're quite conservative; they wouldn't think it was necessary. But they would buy something tasty and cook it for me. They'd treat me to a very nice meal.” In some cases, Chinese young adults were involved in family decisions. In both groups, rewards and punishments were mainly related to school performance. “I have a very open-minded family. My relationship with my parents is just like my relationships with my friends. My father and I act as if we were brothers. I can talk to him about anything. They [parents] listen to my

advice. Not all the time, but often ... My family even involves me in big matters, and making major decisions.”

In terms of forming relationships, Chinese parents took the same approach as Chinese teachers. Any type of relationship that could negatively influence school performance was forbidden, and allowed only after the college entry examination. “They would have really hated it if I'd had a boyfriend before I went to college or university. In China, during those 9 years of education, children are supposed to work harder and harder, endless hard work. You need to make endless efforts in your education, in your studies. You should never flirt or get involved with a boyfriend 'cause they think it would impact your future negatively—your development would be suspended. ... Hug, kiss? No! Definitely! They can't tolerate relationships, so how could they tolerate people kissing? It's OK to have friends during that time, but only if you don't spend too much time with them. Study is the priority. If I'd made good progress in my studies, they'd tell me it's OK to have a boyfriend, or friends.” In one case, a Chinese respondent described how her dating activities were stopped by her mother. When the mother was informed about the relationship by a teacher, she removed her daughter from the dormitory and forced her to move back home. The dating was resumed after the exam. “I think my mom's attitude could be divided into two stages. When I was young, she thought my main purpose was to study. But after I entered college, she said it was my decision and my life. ... In junior high school I liked a boy, but I didn't tell him. I hid it and never expressed it aloud. ... During my first year at high school, I had a good relationship with another boy. My teacher told my mom.

I was living in the dormitory at the time, but once my mom found out, I was forced to move back home and eat at home, and go straight back home after classes. I had no time to play outside. I didn't really listen to my mom. We quarreled a lot about it. But after a while, I obeyed her and I studied hard. When my time at high school ended, after the examination, the college entrance examination, we had a summer vacation. During that time, I repaired the relationship that I'd had with the boy in the first year of high school, but it didn't last long, just three months, and then we broke up."

In other cases, Chinese participants reported hiding their relationships from their parents to avoid any problems. In some cases, even though respondents were dating during their university years, they still kept it secret from their parents. However, in these cases, they kept a low profile because they were too shy to tell their parents. They also did not want their parents to think the relationship was serious until they were sure themselves.

Similarly, Polish parents also followed the pattern of Polish teachers in their approach to the love relationships of their children. They either did not get involved, were involved only partially, or encouraged their kids to pursue love engagements. Polish parents thought that everybody should find their 'other half'. The majority of them did not impose any age restrictions. Only in one case did a respondent mention her mother's advice that it was better to focus on a career and studying instead of relationships. In most instances, parents were up to date on the personal affairs of their children, and not only knew the status of the relationship but also some details of its progression. As one of the Polish participants

described, “I talk to my mom about intimate topics. We actually talk about everything; I remember that in the beginning of my relationship with my boyfriend, my mum helped me a lot in finding a gynecologist. She did it so I wouldn’t get pregnant when I was 18 years old. I went to her and told her that I’d been with my boyfriend for over a year, and that it [sexual intercourse] was an inherent part of our lives at that stage. At first, she was terrified; she thought I was going to become a young mother. This fear wasn’t as a result of her own experiences, ’cause she had me when she was 31. She was afraid I was going to end up with a big belly when taking the maturity exam. So there’s nothing I couldn’t tell her about, even if she doesn’t approve of it, or it’s against her own beliefs. She’ll help me as much as she can ... Mother knows I’m having sex with my boyfriend, but she doesn’t know the details. No one knows that except for me and my boyfriend.”

Even though Chinese parents were not involved in the relationships of their children, they provided some advice on how the partner should be selected. One Chinese respondent referred to it as a ‘background check’. Chinese parents advised their children to make sure that the person was upright, had a good personality, a similar educational level, wasn’t spoiled, and did not have any bad habits, e.g., drinking, smoking, gambling; in one case they advising selecting someone who had the same religious beliefs. As one of the Chinese boys portrayed it, “My parents want to make sure that the girl I’m keen to develop a relationship with is reliable, not a spoiled child, and that she won’t waste too much money on buying unnecessary items. If they could be sure about that, then

they'd be fine. ... They'd ask me to perform a background check before starting to flirt with someone. They'd definitely make it clear that you can't have sexual interaction with that person at such a very early stage. Next, they'd ask me not to spend too much time on the relationship. My priority should be my studies, my work. My work can't be seriously affected by this." As one of the Chinese girls described it, "I think they'd tell me to be careful. To be sure the boy is an upright person, and to understand his personality. If he's a good guy, then you can go out with him. They'd say, 'You shouldn't go out with a boy who like to drink, or gamble' ... yes. They'd tell me the qualities I should look for in a boyfriend."

Furthermore, even though they approved and even encouraged their children to engage in relationships, sex was reserved mainly for marriage, and in some cases also for longer and stable relationships. Parents did not have any conversation with their children about sex in particular, but only in general terms in a context of protection, care, and responsibility. Even when they knew their children were engaging in disapproved of sexual activities outside a committed relationship, they did not put a stop to it, and implicitly tried to make sure they acted responsibly and used protection. As one of the Chinese expressed, "Sometimes I talk about relationships with my parents, not all my relationships. ... But even then, there are some things I can't talk about with them. Like sex, like what we think about the future. There are some people who don't like talking about these things. ... My parents would approve of me flirting with girls, but they'd give me some advice. They'd tell me to be a proper gentleman, responsible, and kind to girls. They don't tell me what kind of girl I should be with, they respect my

choice. They'd say, 'If you decide to be with that girl, be responsible.' ... I don't talk to them about every person that I'm with. They have different judgments, opinions for different types of relationships. Sometimes, when you're dating a girl and you have a kind of relationship with her, it's not the type of relationship that they think it is. It's a new type of relationship created by our generation. They respect my decisions, but they don't respect these new kinds of relationships. Just dating [without commitment] isn't OK with them. Maybe in their eyes it's a kind of playboy way of life, but it's very common today. They can't update their feelings about relationships, so we can't talk about these kinds of relationships. But we can about the serious ones." One of the Chinese girls illustrated, "They encourage me to do it [dating]. They treat it as a kind of practice relationship. It's too early for me to talk about getting married, but before I do, I need to learn how to deal with other people, how to get along with a boy and prepare for a deeper relationship. ... They think I shouldn't commit to a relationship too early. ... In terms of what I should, or shouldn't do, they'd be very subtle, and say something like 'a girl must protect herself', meaning sexual behavior, being aware of it. In fact, my parents would mean no sexual behavior at all." Another one added, "We seldom talk about this ... I'm engaged. During my engagement ceremony, my mother talked to me about sex, but actually it was too late. She just suggested I used a condom. I didn't have any talks like that with my father."

Polish parents indicated the division between intimacy and sexuality at the dating stage. Two types of flirting were suggested, one that led to something serious, and another—playful, that did not lead to anything. Some of the Polish parents

encouraged their children to engage in both, even when their children were already in relationships. As one of the Polish girls explained, “It's a bit odd 'cause my mom encourages me to flirt with others, even though I'm in a long-term relationship with my boyfriend. She says that I'm cutting myself off from other men. The only reason I don't talk to them [other boys] is because I want to be loyal to my boyfriend, and I don't feel a need to talk to them anyway. My mom says to me, ‘I can see there's a boy from your class who wants to talk to you so why don't you want to flirt with him a little bit?’ I say, ‘mom, I don't need that, it makes me feel weird’.”

Unlike Chinese parents, they did not make any suggestions about the process of selection and only became involved at later stages when they were concerned about their child's well-being, e.g., when in a harmful relationship. As one of the Polish boys explained, “When I was in a toxic relationship, because it was toxic, I had a lot of advice like maybe you should find someone else, you should have some fun before getting too serious. Now, my parents are OK, they want me to be happy; they know it's my private life, they respect my private space, my choices. They know that I'm not the kind of guy who jumps from one flower to another [changing partners frequently], but that I'm loyal to the woman of my choice. So these days, I don't get any comments about meeting my friends more often, or that I should propose, nothing like that.” A Polish girl additionally described, “My parents encourage me to flirt with others. She [my mother] says, go, go girl, looks aren't the most important thing. ... I was in a relationship for six years. We broke

up 10 months ago. Recently, my mom told me she was happy that I broke up with him 'cause she didn't like him, but she never said a word during these six years.”

In terms of sexuality, Polish parents, just like the Chinese, did not approve of engaging in sex outside a relationship. Unlike the Chinese, they were more open to the idea when the two were in love with one another. In contrast to Chinese parents, they let their children's intimate partners stay over. “My mom approved of all my companions who used to visit me. She never had a negative attitude towards them. I wasn't bringing home girls on a first date. After I was 18, some of them stayed over for the night. My mother was OK with it. When she did have something against it, it was more related to the frequency of the visits ... she was also not happy if it happened on school nights, but there was no tragedy.”

In most cases, they knew their children had already had, or were having sex with others, but they were not involved in the details. In one case, a parent wanted to know details of the intercourse. However, the child felt it was awkward to share this knowledge with her parent, and pointed the mother to the internet as a better source of that type of information. “We talk a lot about these things with my mum, so I know my mother's opinion about me flirting. She thinks I'm too keen to seduce, and that I don't always play fair, and she worries sometimes ... My mum knew, even when I was with boys, whether I was sleeping with them or not [having sex]. She didn't know the details. She did want to know some things, some details. For example, she wanted to know how two girls have sex, as she couldn't imagine it. But that was against my own beliefs, I didn't feel comfortable talking about it to her, so I asked her to check out some other sources like the

internet, or read something as I wouldn't explain it to her myself." If a conversation about sex occurred, it usually revolved around responsibility and using condoms. Finally, one interviewee mentioned his parents believed that a relationship had a better chance of survival when it was within a form of a marriage.

5.2 Generation-Y

5.2.1 Attraction (*Flirting*)

In China, in most cases, flirting was valued as good and necessary. It was a starting point for something else; a situation where one felt attracted and attractive. The attraction was based on individual preferences for the other person's appearance. One person referred to the style of dressing, and another to natural looks. One Chinese respondent described, "I think flirting is mostly very good, and it makes you feel pleasant because you feel that you're attractive when you're flirting with someone, and it relaxes you." Another Chinese participant explained his experience, "It's something nice. It's necessary because someone needs to make the first move. In my personal experience, I just want to let the girl know that I like her. If that's flirting then I have two types of experiences. One, when I say I like her and she says OK. As she didn't say no, I consider that as being halfway to success, there's still hope. Second, when she says no. In China, girls have a particular way of rejecting a guy, 'I think you're a good guy and we can be friends; that's cool, that's enough'. That's another way of saying no. That's a rejection and it might mean that we can never be friends again. So that's one of the pitfalls of flirting".

In contrast, the value of flirting in Poland was more varied. It ranged from natural, good, necessary, fun, and a game, through to useless, or a waste of time. As one of the Polish participants described, “Whether I like it or not? It depends; when I'm in a good mood then yes [I like it]. And it's necessary. It's human nature to flirt with others.” Another participant explained, “I think it can be fun, but in general I think it's a waste of time. I think it requires a lot of unnecessary work. It's like forced self-presentation, showing something that might not be true, and usually is not.” One more participant pointed out, “It would be so much more fun if I wasn't blushing, or if I didn't have any problem looking into the other person's eyes. ... It's fun to flirt when the two people flirting know that nothing will come of it, for example, when I flirted with my gym teacher at high school, or with my professor at university.” Finally, another participant was more enthusiastic about it, “Flirting is the best! I love it 'cause it's a game, you can start by chatting and then move on to seducing. I love it because of the adrenaline, uncertainty, emotions, because it's something completely new. I like it. I also think that some flirtations are innocent, and even if you're already in a relationship, are OK.”

In both countries, respondents pointed to two types of flirting; one leading to something serious and another leading to nothing serious, e.g., a ‘one-night stand’. In both countries, respondents suggested separate names for the two types, attraction and seduction accordingly. Attraction was associated with an intention to form a relationship. It involved acting naturally and showing one's true self. Seduction was considered as unintentional, and involved playing games. Seduction either led to nothing, or it led to sexual involvement at any of the

stages. As one of the Chinese respondents pinpointed, “Actually, there's some difference in the meaning of the words. I don't think the translation of the words in Chinese has the same meaning in the Western context. [... 调情 (tiáoqíng) is not a very serious [type of flirting]. A person might want to have a one-night stand with you, so they'll approach you to talk about interesting topics. They'll get a bottle of wine, go to a restaurant and have a nice night. It's more about physical attraction. It's not the same when you want to live with that person for the rest of your life. ... I don't believe in the value of looks; you can't judge a book by its cover. I think you need to have a very long relationship with someone and know each other for some time, have some experiences together, learn to communicate with this person. We need to know what we want in the future, more general values, and even much deeper things. But not just based on physical attraction. 爱情 (ài qíng) is the serious one, true love. It's when you actually think about the potential relationship rather than acting on physical attraction only”

A Polish girl explained, “My image of flirting has changed since high school. First of all, this word is associated with something pretentious, the act itself is nice and friendly, but I don't like the word for it. Flirting for me is more like seduction, something really direct. ... You see, I used to have this idea that games, playing games was nice, but that's changed ever since I met my current boyfriend. He completely blew my mind with his honesty, he wasn't faking anything, he wasn't playing any games; I wasn't expecting it so it blew me away. Since then, I'd define flirting differently; simply as an interest in another person and willingness to get to know him/her better ... For sure, there are two types of flirting. Now that I have

a boyfriend, I don't feel under any pressure; I don't need to meet anyone, so my attitude is friendly. It doesn't mean I don't engage in flirting anymore. It's the phase of getting to know each other when you don't have any particular intentions; it's simply an interaction that aims to induce positive emotions in another person." One of the Polish participants summed it up, "What is flirting to me? I'm not interested in seduction. For me, flirting is an initial relationship built between two people that will eventuate in them ending up in bed [having sex] and then perhaps a relationship?"

In addition, one of the Polish interviewees described attraction as being more conscious and more intentional, and seduction as more delicate and less conscious. As one of the Polish girls described it, "The two types of flirting differ in terms of the topic of conversation, I think. There is flirt for flirting's sake, and flirting for something more. The more personal one is the flirting that's for something more. Less personal is the one just for flirting. When you flirt just for flirting's sake, it's more delicate, less conscious. When flirting if something more is at stake, I'm more conscious of my body, like it's more intentional."

In addition, flirting was divided into being in or outside of a relationship; being in a relationship involved flirting with the partner or with third parties. For example, two girls from the different countries admitted to putting on make-up and dressing nicely for their boyfriends. As the Polish girl declared, "This is how I emphasize my charms to show that I care for him. He told me that he likes it when I am wearing make-up because he feels that I am doing it for him." In addition, the Chinese girl admitted to wearing make-up for her boyfriend and her boyfriend's

friends. She wanted to make her boyfriend feel good because she was attractive in the eyes of his friends. “When I flirt, I talk to him, dress in a more beautiful manner, send messages, and I use social media to express my emotions. I really want him to see this message. When I'm flirting, I'm more careful when sending a message. When I'm talking to a friend, I only need about 10 seconds to text a message, but when I flirt, then perhaps 10 or 20 minutes. ... I wear make-up, but not every day, only for important occasions. When I'm in a relationship, I wear it more often. It's for my boyfriend and his friends. It's a strange kind of emotion actually; I want him to feel that he has a beautiful girlfriend and I also want his friends to see that.”

In most of the Chinese cases, flirting was considered as an interaction between two people who already knew each other. In some examples, it involved reconnecting with a person from their childhood, or segueing from friendship to romance. “At the initial stage, I'd just send a message. We know each other, we're already friends so it's just normal. I knew him for many years. It's not just that we are friends, but our families are also in a close relationship. I knew him for five years before I approached him. Before that, we were too young to know whether there was something more between us. We had to grow up and see whether our interests matched once we were older.” Another Chinese participant explained, “I think the most successful way is to get more and more familiar with the girl so you become a part of her life. In that case, the relationship will develop very naturally, it will just happen. There'd be no need to think about how to get her, how to check her out, no need to plan. Some people like doing that because it's

faster. Some of my other friends are like that, they don't like to waste too much time.”

For some of the Chinese participants, flirting was preceded by a background check. Before expressing their affection, they wanted to learn something about the personality of the object of their ‘crush’—a brief but intense infatuation with someone. “Yeah, I just tried to get access to him at my university. At first, I didn’t know his name so I found out this information from my friends, and I took the opportunity to be close to him during some of his activities, I tried to sit beside him, to be close enough to start talking and get to know each other better.”

They usually did this through seeking advice from friends in common, or by befriending people who were friends of the person to whom they were attracted. Some participants observed that they thought more about flirting than actually engaging in it. One person admitted that before he decided to approach a girl, he had to feel that he had a crush on her at least three times when seeing her, otherwise he would not engage in any type of flirting. “I like it [flirting], but I think about it more than I do it. To be honest, three years ago when I was younger, I'd do it without thinking twice, but now I think differently about it. If I like a girl and I find her attractive, I wouldn't try to find out information about her immediately. I call that a crush. ... If, when I meet her for the third time, I still have feelings for her, I'll ask her a question to learn something more about her. That's my choice now, but three years ago, I'd have done that immediately.” Other participants treated flirting as something more casual, less serious. It had a more playful character with the possibility, but not the intention, of developing further.

They usually engaged in flirting in clubs or bars. “Me and my friend usually go to nightclubs. The clubs are dark so boys and girls they ... because we drink alcohol. When you're a little drunk, but not too drunk, then if I think a guy is attractive, I'd go and talk to him. I'd play that dice game with him [the dice game is always played in bars to see who is going to drink next. If you lose you have to drink next.]. So if we're both attracted to each other, what can I say, we drink and then we touch each other. I think this is flirting. He put his arm around my shoulder and he's happy. So we're closer.”

In contrast, for most of the Polish participants, flirting started with what they described as a ‘connection in the air’; they had to ‘feel’ that other person. In none of the cases was any type of activity resembling a background check identified. Their flirting was more body oriented. As one interviewee stated, paying attention to what a person looks like was the way to identify the personality, “... Number one is her looks: what she looks like, hair color, her body, the way she is, what she wears, what she says, how she says it, what she is interested in.” The interviewee claimed to be able to pick up all the necessary information without directly talking to the person.

Friends played an important role in flirting in the Chinese group. Not only serving as a valuable source of information when performing background checks, and as an opportunity to meet new people, but also, most importantly, they mediated the communication process between the two individuals. As one of the Chinese boys described it, “I'd definitely try to know the person better by asking other students for advice. I'd also develop friendships with close friends of the girl I was

interested in, 'cause they know her very well and I'd want to know about other aspects of her. So I'd still be in touch with that girl, and I'd try to initiate some activities that we both enjoy, like going to the cinema, or traveling.” In the Polish group, the role of friends in flirting involved the aspect of providing opportunities for meeting new people. Once the two individuals met, the interaction process was in their hands. “I met a few girls when I was going out with a group of my friends. We were partying together, and then we met another group of people. One of the girls was among them. We started talking at the party, we exchanged phone numbers, and then we stayed in touch.”

When flirting, both Chinese and Polish participants tried to be close to the person in whom they were interested, and attempted to make contact with her or him. For the Chinese group, the main places that they could get close to the desired person was at university during in-class group activities, or alternatively, at a restaurant when eating out with a larger group of friends. In other cases, it was at a bar. As one participant depicted, “If people are told to form a group [during a class activity], I'd ask her to be in a group with me. Sometimes, when I eat out with friends, I'd ask her to come along. I'd get her personal details, Facebook, WeChat. I'd chat with her to get to know her better. I think the process of approaching someone doesn't mean that much, it's just a way to know each other better, so, often, we can find out whether we're suitable for each other or not. It doesn't always happen. I don't form relationships easily.”

For the Polish group, the most common places for the initial engagement were at a party, at home, or at a club. Alcohol was mentioned by both groups as playing a

significant role for those who engaged in flirting in bars or clubs. As one Chinese interviewee explained, it eliminated discomfort and shyness, and allowed one to become more relaxed. In addition, both Chinese and Polish flirting often involved social media, messengers, and internet dating websites to either search for a romantic partner, or express their emotions. In the Polish group, dancing was mentioned as a common way of flirting with other people. As one of the girls described, “When I think about flirting, I'm thinking about this one event. We were at a salsa party; there were a lot of people from South America there. This is where I had a chance to flirt; I was salsa dancing very close to my dance partner.” Another girl explained, “I have this friend, every time we go to a party together he doesn't let me dance with anyone else. It really irritates me, 'cause even if I were in a relationship with him, he shouldn't stop me doing that. He thinks if he's flirting with me, I should only dance with him and no one else.”

Chinese participants admitted to making eye contact, dressing differently, wearing more make-up, and talking differently when they liked someone. Polish participants elaborated on the presentational aspects of flirting in more detail. They mentioned several types of body language: facial expression, e.g., different smile, red cheeks, more intensive eye contact; touch, e.g., arms around shoulders, embracing, massaging neck; or proximity, e.g., sitting close to one another, minimizing distance between two people. They also identified verbal aspects, such as a change of pitch in the voice. They identified topics that were chosen for discussion when flirting, e.g., music or hobbies. Both groups identified two conversational engagements, direct and word games. Direct included asking out

on a date, or indicating genuine interest in the other person in order to identify similar attitudes towards the same things. Word games included conversations with a double meaning, not necessarily sexual in nature. For the Polish group, jokes, irony and humor indicated playfulness. As one of the girls portrayed, “The other day, when I was sitting at a bus stop waiting for the bus, I saw this guy. He was so cute, his looks, his body. He was so cute I could eat him up! So I had to go and talk to him, ’cause I wasn’t sure if the same situation would arise again.”

The Chinese style of imagining flirting revolved more around predicting future developments of an interaction that had already happened, rather than fantasizing about people they had never seen or never met. Lacking the courage to approach another person was one of the identified issues and reasons that created different paths of development. As one of the boys described, “Yes, I did [imagine flirting]. I think it’s hard for me to ask a girl out because I’m shy. So in my imagination, I’d go straight up to a girl and ask her, ‘hey, what’s your number?’ Or, ‘my cell phone has been stolen, can you lend me your phone so I could call my number?’ ”

Inability to recognize whether the attraction was mutual served as another reason for imagining scenarios. In other cases, the inspiration came from TV dramas. “I’m a little confused about how to communicate with boys. If you’re too easy, they say that you’re too available. When you act too cold, then they think that you’re not interested in them.” Another girl expressed, “In China, men take the initiative more in these kinds of things, and girls just wait for them to engage with them. But in the US, girls are brave, they choose men they are interested in and ask them to dance with them. But on mainland China, girls wait for them [boys] to

invite them to dance. I'm trying my best to learn from the American girls. Some scholars say that if you take the initiative then you lose the game. But for me, I think as an individual, I'll try my best to be braver, and choose men I'm interested in. But I've never taken the initiative, so I'm just starting out with my new plan.” In comparison, imagining was more frequent and more vivid among the Polish group. It was usually not concerned with the place, but the type of feeling it induced, e.g., surprise through the accidental engagement of the two people; feeling special, appreciated; or a feeling of connection through pleasant conversation.

5.2.2 Courtship (Dating)

In general, dating in China was valued as positive, necessary, good, useful, or efficient. One interviewee referred to it as the most wonderful experience in life. A few enjoyed the excitement that accompanied it, which they felt when their heart was beating stronger. However, the Chinese participants also admitted that dating could be exhausting. As one interviewee stated, the fatigue was caused by the fact that he had to pretend to be a gentleman when he was interacting with girls. As one of the Chinese boys described, “Dating is much more difficult for me. It's because my expectations of girls have risen, so It's not that much of an attraction for me. I'll only date girls I have some feelings for. I won't date a girl I don't like. In general, I prefer to talk with boys, there's more freedom, we can discuss more casual topics. Actually, when I'm talking to a girl, I pretend to be gentleman. I'm a very outgoing guy, but when I have to pretend, it makes me feel tired. So I only pretend to be a gentleman if I have feelings for her.”

In comparison, dating in Poland was valued as good, necessary, or nice. Similarly to the Chinese, Polish participants admitted that dating could be problematic, but the problems revolved around their difficulties in interacting with others. In other cases, the stress caused their stomach to ache, which added to the distress. As one of the girls described, “I had many different dates. When I was in high school, a boy asked me if I would go shopping with him. After that we went for a coffee, and I remember I was so stressed, I had a stomach-ache, and I wanted to go home. So I think it was stressful, but in a positive way, and it was certainly new to me as it was one of my first dates ever. That's why I can remember it so clearly. Nothing happened afterwards, we separated, he went to his place I went to mine.”

For Chinese and Polish participants, dating was an opportunity to get to know the other's person personality. Chinese participants were interested in whether the object of their affection was polite, careful, and interesting, and whether he or she had a sense of humor. It allowed them to make judgments and decisions more wisely—without basing them on pure emotion. At the same time, for the Chinese, dating was an opportunity to reveal their own personality. In one case, it was described as the most magical moment; a challenge that involved persuading a girl who initially did not like the boy to change the way she felt about him after the date. “By dating, you can find out more about the person; you can make your decision more wisely instead of basing it purely on emotions. Although, love is always emotional.” Another Chinese participant expressed, “The best part of a date is ... I have a really good Chinese word to describe it, but I want to translate it into English ... the moment before. Consider, I have feelings for a girl, but she

doesn't have feelings for me, she thinks I am only OK. If I arrange a very good date to show my personality, my advantages, then maybe she'll develop some feelings for me. To me, the process of making her like me is the most magical moment. I enjoy that. I think it's the best moment of the whole relationship. It's better than the becoming a couple moment. It's much more exciting than anything else.”

In comparison, for Polish participants, dating served the purpose of verifying the other person. They wanted to reach deeper, see who he or she really was, and how he or she was spending their free time. They wanted to get to know the person in private as his or her behavior could differ from that displayed in a group. They wanted to understand the reasons for his or her behavior. Their judgment was mainly based on their feelings. “Good, and necessary [dating]; we can meet on a different level than in a group, we can have direct contact with each other. This is how we can get to know each other better, we aren't influenced by the group. Some people behave in the same way when they're in a group as when they're alone with someone, some behave completely differently in a group to when they're alone. For example, they try to impress, they show off too much in a group, and later it turns out they're actually quite nice and decent people. Or, the other way round, they're reserved and quiet in a group, and then turn out to be very talkative and intelligent when you meet them outside the group. So this is a way to get to know another person.”

In both countries, two types of dating were identified. In China, the distinction was associated with gender. According to the participants' views, men were like

animals—sexually passionate, and too eager to touch girls' private parts. Women were passionate too, but in a different way. They focused more on spiritual aspects. They had to test whether a man was spiritually compatible before they went further, to the sexual aspect of the relationship. As one of the Chinese respondents described, "Sex and making out, I wouldn't do it on the first date. No, I wouldn't do that. It's too early for me. I don't like guys who are too eager to get to your private parts. I think they approach you with just that purpose. Guys are like very animal, animal, they're sexually passionate, yeah, and if they're too eager to touch your private parts, then it means they don't respect you at all. ... Women are also passionate, but in a different way. They focus more on a spiritual type of relationship, I think, at least in the beginning. They have to test first whether the guy is suitable for the spiritual part and then we can move to the physical part."

On the other hand, in Poland, the distinction between the two types of dating revolved around the type of intentions, i.e. whether the intentions were clear, or hidden. When the intentions were clear, then the date was considered as good. Alternatively, when there was some hidden agenda, probably sex, it was considered as not good. In addition, another Polish interviewee identified two types of dating based on the type of relationship that she intended to form, friendship or romantic. She treated meeting with a potential girlfriend and boyfriend as the same type of date, with the same goal—to find out whether they had anything to talk about. The difference lay in the types of emotions that accompanied the experience. She was concerned more about her looks when she was meeting a boy. When she was meeting a girl she did not worry about such

things. “I treat the first meeting with a potential girlfriend and a potential boyfriend equally. To me, they're equally important, but associated with different types of emotions. The goal is the same: get to know the other person better, whether I have anything to talk about to her or him. I'm more concerned about my looks when I'm going out with a guy, I care whether I look good, whether my hair is right, the way I laugh ... When I'm meeting a potential girlfriend, I don't care about any of that. It's just that with a guy, I care more about my looks and the type of impression I am making on him, and what he thinks of me.”

Additionally, dating before and in a relationship was differentiated. The two types of dating oscillated around different issues. While the focus of the first type was more on getting to know the other person, the second type was more about already knowing each other well enough, and searching for things that could be shared, that both partners would like. Dating in both countries was dominated by conversation. One Polish interviewee also mentioned the ability to feel comfortable with each other in silence as an important indicator of the quality of the connection with another person. “I'm in a committed relationship so for me dating refers to meeting with your partner. ... We usually choose something we both like; we're not going to a horror movie because they scare me, or we're not going to a romantic comedy because it might bore him. ... When I was talking to my girlfriends recently, they told me that being able to talk easily with another person is usually a sign that there's the potential for a relationship, whether we'll meet again, or not. It's all based on whether we have something to talk about, or not.”

Conversations in China usually took place while walking in a park, at the zoo, studying at the library, traveling, hiking, going to a cinema, eating in a restaurant, and window-shopping. Conversations in Poland usually took place while ice-skating, swimming in a pool, going for a drink or coffee, walking in a park, going to a cinema, and shopping. One interviewee stressed the importance of a public place for the first date to provide a sense of security. In both countries, movies were often mentioned, and played an important role in initiating topics for further conversations. A few Chinese participants identified selecting an unsuitable movie that would not allow triggering of a conversation as a serious risk for their date to end unsuccessfully. “It was our first date. We went to a movie called ‘Ocean’. I think we selected the wrong movie as it had no words, just creatures swimming in the sea. There wasn't much in it we could talk about. Then we went to a bookshop. But unfortunately, he didn't like reading books. So it was kind of a bad experience ... After that date, we talked more and knew each other better. So it wasn't our last date.”

Physical aspects of interaction remained as a secondary matter for Chinese participants. They identified bodily interaction, close proximity, and holding hands as various types of bodily contact they engaged in during their dates. Kissing was appropriate, but not on the first date. When it happened, it was usually in a form of a kiss on the lips, and rarely French kissing. Kissing on the cheek was described as a Western phenomenon rarely employed by Chinese participants. As one of the participants put it, “Chinese don't kiss on the cheek. Chinese seldom kiss. It's too intimate. For sure, if people are already in a

relationship they'll kiss, but not with friends. I don't kiss my friends. We only hug if we haven't seen each other for a long time, but not with friends that I see every day. I've only been holding hands with my boyfriend since we started dating.” Another respondent described, “I think, in China, if two people of different genders aren't a couple, they won't have very intimate physical relations. Physical intimacy implies a relationship. I wouldn't engage in any physical intimacy with a boy if I didn't expect him to be my boyfriend someday.”

As one Polish interviewee explained, while a kiss on the cheek had a friendly connotation, a kiss on the lips was sexual in nature. While sexual intercourse on the first date was out of the question for most of the Chinese, the Polish were more approving of it, but not entirely liberal. As one of the girls expressed, going to bed on the first date was socially unacceptable. If it happened with a person she felt serious about, she would be more concerned about what he would think of her than with the act itself. Furthermore, one of the boys admitted he would not respect a girl if she had sex with him on their first date. In one case, a girl was dissatisfied and felt used after it occurred. “If I were on a date with a person I'd like to be in a relationship with—I've never experienced that—then I don't think I'd go to bed [have sex] with him. Not because I wouldn't want to, but because I think society disapproves of it to the extent that I'd be afraid of what he'd think of me if I slept with him. But I also think that if someone was sexually attracted to me, and I was sexually attracted to him, then I'd have no problem with having sex with him, especially if I knew there was no prospect of a longer commitment.” Another boy provided his perspective, “First of all, I wouldn't want to have an

awkward situation on the first date. Kissing and French kissing would be acceptable, but not sex. ... If a girl wanted to have sex on the first date, I'm not sure what I'd think of her because I've never been in that situation, but I think my opinion of her would change, it would be worse.”

Both Chinese and Polish participants were not very enthusiastic about imagining their ideal dates. One of the Chinese girls explained that there was no point in imagining it. She felt that if it was meant to happen then it would happen. It was better for her to focus on her job and be open to it rather than be pushing to be dating someone. “I'd imagine it, but I think there's no point in imagining. I think I need to do my job. When it's the right time for a boy to appear, then he'll appear, there's no point in imagining. I think pushing it is useless. I've tried it so I know it's useless.”

Those who did imagine their ideal dates were inspired by TV dramas. They mainly involved a romantic dinner or traveling together. In comparison, Polish participants treated most of their dates as ideal ones. If they had ideas, they were inspired by books. They mainly involved accidental meetings that turned into a first date, and mysterious places; some ended with sex and breakfast on the following day. As one of the girls described, “If I wanted to impress a girl, I'd drive there in a car and pick her up with a bouquet of roses. I'd take her to a secret place for a wonderful dinner. After that, I'd take her home. Eventually, I'd be invited into her house—just like in the movies—I can bet that we'd end up in bed together. That would be a good ending and a good reward for the effort. I'd prefer to stay overnight and cook breakfast in the morning.”

Partying and clubbing were identified as important among Polish participants. In most of the Polish cases, but in only a few of the Chinese cases, they functioned as activities for meeting new people. For Polish people, going to clubs was quite common. One person described it as a sign of individuation. When one could go to a party at a nightclub, it meant he or she was not so dependent on parents anymore. The house party was more a way of meeting with friends and talking. Both types of parties involved alcohol. The Polish parties had their Chinese equivalents: eating out, and karaoke bars. Most of the Chinese participants described clubs as too noisy to talk, or too dangerous. They expressed their intention of visiting a club sometime in the future, but only in company of friends, or their boyfriend/girlfriend. “I go to Karaoke bars. I want to go to a place where I can dance, but I haven’t gone to one yet. I don’t like to going to nightclubs, so I don’t know where to go where I could dance. I don’t like nightclubs ’cause I don’t drink. A nightclub for me is a noisy place where you drink. I go there with my boyfriend, but I won’t go there without him.”

5.2.3 Arousal (Sex/Intimacy)

Both Chinese and Polish participants clearly identified two dimensions of connecting with others in a love relationship—intimacy and sex. As one of the Polish respondents stated, “I understand intimacy in two ways: it either refers to sex or to a couple’s separation from the rest of society in order to create their own sphere. It’s nice to be around friends, but at the same time when we are, we can’t maintain close physical contact, or we can’t discuss some topics with each other. Occasionally, it’s necessary to separate yourself from the rest.” Another participant

expressed her opinion, “Intimacy in a larger sense refers to physical contact. However, there's also an emotional aspect, psychological, where some of my thoughts—there's a part of me I don't want to share with the whole world.” Another Polish participant opined, “For sure, it's important. It depends on how we understand it. The fact that I'm having to define it means that people's understanding of it differs; we don't have a single definition for it. I may understand it as a psychical closeness connected with a physical one, to others it may only be physical closeness.” One Polish participant described her thoughts on the topic, “I understand intimacy as sex, but also as closeness, meaning talking about things I can't talk about with my buddies at university or at work; talking about things that are deep inside you. Spending time together with the lights off, talking, I don't mean about sex, just night conversations at two or three in the morning. To me, that's intimacy. I can tell someone something that I'd be ashamed to tell anyone outside the relationship. This is intimacy.” One of the Chinese respondents emphasized physical aspects of intimacy, “My parents and I, we both think that intimacy is physical, and isn't proper at a very young age. ... Maybe because I'm a traditional kind of person, I have to be certain before forming a relationship. I have to be sure that he'll be that one person I'm going to be with for a long time. Then I can allow myself to become intimate with him.” Another respondent focused on the emotional aspects, “Intimacy, I think, is more about the emotional side of connection. Of course, you can kiss or touch each other, but I think the most important part is emotional; you can talk with each other on a very deep level, and he'll know things [about me] that others don't.”

For most of the Chinese participants, intimacy was more important than sex when bonding with others. When they considered sex as a part of a love relationship, it had to follow the intimate connection. In comparison, Polish participants, while giving priority to intimacy over sex, admitted the possibility of bonding when sex led and intimacy followed. One person admitted to being able to have sex without being intimate, but not the other way round. “Intimacy in an emotional sense, people need that, specifically I need intimate relationships ... Why? We're a part of evolution, I don't know. I need to be close to someone, to tell them about my feelings, or at least some of them, not all of them. I don't know why people have that ... Physical intimacy is nice, and necessary as we have sexual drives, and need to do it ... I think they can function separately [physical and emotional intimacy], but in most cases it would be very difficult to achieve. I personally could be physically intimate with someone without being emotionally intimate, but I couldn't do it the other way round.”

In both countries, intimacy was treated as a psychological or emotional connection. For the Chinese, intimacy was associated with a feeling of being loved, cared about, taken care of, thought about, and important. One person described it as the best part of a relationship. Furthermore, Chinese participants identified several stages of intimacy. One person classified the most intimate experience as occurring with her mother, when they were lying in bed together and disclosing private information. In another case, traveling with a good friend, or closeness with one's best friend were described as the most intimate experiences, now experienced with her romantic partner. As one of the

participants explained, “Intimacy could also be between friends. I really enjoy the time that I spend with my friends. We can just talk about anything and it can help you to get to know more people ... My parents, take my mom, I love talking to her. When I was studying a long way from my hometown, I could only go home during my winter or summer breaks. The breaks were very short, so when I went home I just slept in the same bed as my mother. We just talked and talked and talked. It was intimate as I could share secrets with my mom. When I was falling asleep I just wanted to hug her, hold her hand. I felt really safe with her.” Another participant compared her most intimate experiences between her best friend and current boyfriend, “At my middle school I had a best friend, she was a female, we had a really good relationship, and I shared everything with her. With my boyfriend, we have the same kind of feeling. If I compare these two experiences, they aren't different. Maybe I remember the one with my female friend more because it was the first one. It happened before I met my boyfriend. And maybe I need more time to get to the same point with my boyfriend.”

Intimacy between romantic partners included comforting one another when one of them was in low spirits, knowing everything about the other person, and understanding each other when others could not. Finally, a friendly elder brother or a teacher, for example, assisting when embarrassed or facing a confrontation by mature person, served as additional type of intimacy identified by the Chinese participants. As one of the Chinese boys revealed, “The most intimate experience I've ever had, was when a girl came to me and comforted me because I was in really low spirits. She knew what had happened to cause this. I was quite helpless,

and I was feeling miserable, so she came and offered me some help. That was, in a spiritual sense, quite intimate.”

In contrast, intimacy for the Polish participants was a form of separation from society to create a private sphere, and discuss topics that cannot be discussed with others. In one case, intimacy was explained as evolution. One Polish interviewee expressed that intimacy in a love relationship should reflect the intimacy between friends. At the same time, she admitted to a lack of understanding of the idea, and pointed to a clear distinction between friends and intimate partners. She expressed her confusion, “At this stage of my life, I still think that a friend is a friend, and a partner is a partner [relationship oriented] ... we don’t have a partner to be friends with them, at least not immediately. To me, that feeling, physical attraction, should come first, much earlier than anything else. That's why I could never understand the love theme in the television series X-Files where at first they were friends and then they became partners; they started a relationship. To me, it feels a bit weird.”

Polish participants also identified an additional dimension of intimacy—being by oneself. “When I'm alone, it's also intimate. I don’t want anyone to come into my room and disturb me when I'm thinking about something, and I need to be left alone for at least an hour, to be able to contemplate.” In one case, intimacy was defined as a need to connect with others in order to confide their feelings. However, this person admitted to a lack of knowledge of the existence of this type of phenomenon among humans. Others identified knowing things that no one else knew about, the ability to say things a person would be embarrassed to say to

anybody else, and knowing someone in situations no one else knew him or her in as criteria for being intimate with another person. In one example, a person felt her intimacy was being violated when talking about a book she was recommending to another person. “I felt a certain level of intimacy when I was at high school and I recommended a book to my girlfriend. The book was about drugs, about drugs being better than alcohol. The story was three days in the life of a girl. She was clubbing and taking drugs. Some of the descriptions were very detailed, especially depictions of sex scenes, feelings when having sex while high on the drugs. I felt my personal, intimate sphere was violated when I was talking about the book and recommending it to her [my friend], and when I was explaining why I thought it [the book] was amazing.”

On the other hand, sex in both countries was treated as a physical (bodily) connection. Chinese participants referred to sex as normal, and good when pleasant. As one interviewee pointed out, physical connection was supposed to induce pleasure in both parties—a man and a woman. As one of the participants explained, “I think it [physical intimacy] is quite important. I think if you can’t achieve good physical contact—I don’t think—the marriage will last long. Many traditional Chinese people don’t care about that, but I think it’s quite important. I also heard a lot of stories about people being married for many years and then finding out they weren’t satisfied with the quality of their physical connection. They had to struggle with the decision of whether to divorce or not. So I think both [types of intimacy] are very important, physical and emotional, for a healthy marriage.”

In comparison, Polish participants referred to sex as great, and necessary, and as a natural way of expressing the connection between two people. In both countries, the necessity (sex drive) and importance of sex was justified as a natural instinct that humans shared with animals. As one Polish interviewee described it, just as we need to eat and drink, we need to be sexually fulfilled. Sex induced hormones that generated happiness, and lowered stress levels. As one of the Polish girls explained, “Intimacy is very important. Just like we need to eat, drink and sleep, we also need to fulfill our sexual needs. Apart from that, being close to someone, hugging, kissing, sleeping in someone else’s arms, this is when happiness hormones are induced; we feel safe, the level of stress reduces so it's very important in our lives. However, I disagree with my mother, because I don’t see any problem with going to bed [having sex] even if I don’t know the person, or when I've only known him or her for three hours, and I can skip the stages of flirting and dating. Although both are good, it depends what a person is looking for.”

Chinese participants considered engaging in sexual intercourse when two people were familiar with each other and/or they knew the connection was going to further unfold. Feeling safe with the person was one of the primary criteria for engaging in physical intimacy. There was no pressure to build this type of connection, at least not at its highest stage. Sexual intercourse was treated as something that can either happen, or not. However, when that type of connection occurred, it generated a feeling of pleasure and attachment.

In comparison, for the Polish group, physical connection was considered as being able to show one's naked body to another person, to undress without any problems. Physical intimacy for me would start in a situation where I wouldn't have any problem about showing my naked body to another person ... so it's related to self-confidence. I also have that thing about imagining myself at 40 to 50 years old. Say, I'm not married, and I have a liberal attitude towards sex—more liberal than I have right now—I imagine myself picking up young boys just for fun, to have one-night stands, to have sex with them. If that happened, I wouldn't treat it as an intimate experience, it would be much more intimate to me to have sex with a partner in a relationship.”

For the Polish, sex was estimated to constitute 30-40% of the importance when forming or being in a love relationship. According to them, good sex bonded people and prevented arguments, and even resolved some misunderstandings between partners. Sex was pleasurable as it allowed tension to be released between two people. As one of the Polish boys described it, “At the end of every week, after work and after school I'm usually tired, so I like to spend my Sundays in bed with a person that I feel close to, and no one else. Sometimes, I like to go for a walk with her. Spending my free time with that special person is part of being intimate with her. Physical intimacy is strongly connected. For the relationship to survive, good sex will sustain a large part of it. It's difficult to feel comfortable around another person when the sex isn't working out. Sex contributes about 30 or 40% of the success of forming a relationship.”

Even though sex was mentioned among the Polish participants as a way of connecting with others, they still required some intimacy to precede it. For some of the participants, engagement in anything between kissing and sexual intercourse required trust that this was not going to be used against them or that they were not going to be laughed at. As one of the girls explained, “I need to feel I can trust the other person, in the sense that I can engage in everything between sex [intercourse] and kissing, but only when I feel I can trust my partner. I need to feel that the other person is not trying to use me, not trying to use my weaknesses against me, that he won’t laugh at me, and instead he’ll be compassionate and understanding. So, I wouldn’t engage in any these things with someone I didn’t know, I couldn’t trust.”

While the Chinese did not put pressure on the development of a sexual connection, in contrast, one Polish interviewee brought up the wisdom of a drunk who, using vulgar slang, stressed the significance of sexual intercourse, “it is always better to screw than not to screw”. As one of the Chinese girls explained, “I don’t think it’s [sex] necessary, I just think it’s natural. Because if people are attracted to each other, it’s natural that they’ll want to do something close. For me, it’s holding hands, kissing, and sexual behavior. I think intimacy really means something, so if I’m not certain about the relationship I won’t do anything. I need to know it’s going somewhere.”

The strongest connection with another person was either associated with physical or psychological aspects. When it involved psychological connection, it usually revolved around discursive and presentational expression of love to another

person. When it involved physical connection, it was not necessarily associated with the climax phase of sexual involvement. One Chinese interviewee admitted his first kiss felt more intimate than sex. Others mentioned holding hands and embracing as extremely intimate. In other cases, the first sexual experience was considered as the most intimate in both groups. As one of the Chinese boys described his experience, “Looking back at those experiences, it wasn't sex that I considered the best experience, but maybe the first kiss ... the first touch with the girl left the biggest impression on me. The things that happen on videos [sex videos] you can do elsewhere, after many sex experiences, it [sex] is very common, not that special. In contrast, I still remember the first time I touched, I was very excited.”

Furthermore, situations in which intimacy bonded with sex—one giving way to the other, seemed to be one of the most powerful, fulfilling and remembered experiences for some of the Polish participants. Expression of love followed by sexual intercourse, lying in a bed naked together all day, or the moment after sex, when a couple shared their points of views with one another, were some of the examples in which intimacy and sex were closely related. Finally, in most of the cases, forming a strong connection with another person was not so much associated with a particular place as with a particular situation. In one case, it was allied with the amount of light in the place in which people interacted. A darker place was considered more private and thus more intimate. As one of the girls described it, “The first thing that came to my head was that moment after sex. We're together in bed and we can say anything and everything to each other. We

discuss many things after we have sex, we talk about many things, not necessarily about sex. We're alone and no one can disturb us. We're naked because we're not wearing any clothes, so it's easier for us to accept each other and it feels so nice.”

In addition, carrying condoms in a wallet was identified by Polish participants as an intention to engage in sexual intercourse outside the relationship. As one person explained, her suspicions about the infidelity of her boyfriend were confirmed when she found condoms in his wallet. When people were in a committed relationship, condoms were kept where they were having sex. “It's more like being on the lookout for an opportunity with a girl. When you're in a relationship, you keep condoms where you make love to the girl. When you store them in a wallet, it's more for a chance event with a random girl, a casual encounter. It sounds horrible, but unfortunately that's the way it is. I even heard about an experience of this recently. A friend of mine broke up with her man, they lived together. She thought he was cheating on her when she discovered one condom was missing and she found it in his wallet.”

5.2.4 Allegiance (Committed relationship)

Chinese and Polish participants placed great value on committed relationships. The Chinese described it as the most wonderful thing in life. One interviewee expressed her need for commitment as coming from the bottom of her heart. Polish participants described it as a beautiful feeling, or the most important value. For Chinese participants, relationships were felt to be a natural part of life. They explained that human beings need to be with someone in order to feel safe; to know that someone cares; to support each other; to love and feel loved; to protect

and be protected; and to bring some excitement to life. As one of the Chinese girls explained, “From the bottom of my heart I need them [love relationships]. I need them to feel safe, to know that someone cares for me. I don’t need to show off my relationship in public, in front of others. I often wish I had a partner.” Another girl described relationships as, “stability, I can focus on my studies and career now, I don’t need to worry that my parents will arrange a blind date for me anymore. And the feeling that comes with it, the feeling that I am being loved, protected by someone.”

Most of the Polish participants felt that being in a relationship was necessary. On the one hand, they were under the impression that everybody had to settle down at some point in their lives. On the other hand, they felt it was always better to be with someone than to be alone, to have someone on their side, to have someone who completed them and lightened their burdens. “It’s nicer and easier living when you’re in a stable relationship, in the sense that you share everything with your partner, you can talk about anything with that other person, and that person is always supportive.” In one case, a person recognized loneliness as a negative, but socially desired feeling, and thus suggested she had to fight with her need to be with someone, especially when engaging in activities. “I’d like to be with someone in a relationship, to be sure that someone is out there for me. This is because I don’t like being alone. It doesn’t mean I have to be with someone all the time; I just don’t want to be alone. I don’t like doing things by myself. I might like to go somewhere, or go for a jog, but I won’t do it by myself. .., I’m fighting this; I want to be able to do things on my own, to be independent.”

Chinese and Polish participants also identified more pragmatic reasons for being in a committed relationship. For some of them, being in a relationship came with tax benefits and the ability to gain and pay back a mortgage. Sex was also identified as one of the perks of a relationship in both countries. In addition, one Chinese interviewee was cautious about 'heart numbness'. On the one hand, relationships can teach people a lot about how to treat others. On the other hand, after many relationships the heart can feel weary, and thus cause people to engage with others for the wrong reasons, e.g., financial comfort. As one of the Chinese boys described it, "Despite all the difficulties, human beings need to be with someone. They want to have someone that they can talk to, and is willing to discuss things. Once you've set up a family, your life will be much easier. You can live together, pay the mortgage together, you can also enjoy more benefits, tax benefits, and other things. That's the incentive for people to stay together and become intimate."

In addition, relationships were described as tiring mainly due to the restraints they came with, and the requirement for permission from the partner to do things individually. "When I was younger, I thought being in a relationship was very important, but more recently I don't think so. I think being engaged in a relationship for many years is very tiresome. You can't do a lot of things without his permission. I'd tell him not to drink too much, not to always go out. He'd restrict me from doing things, too. He'd ban me from smoking, he doesn't like me drinking, he doesn't like me to go out. It [a relationship] comes with a lot of restrictions for me." One of the Chinese interviewees considered relationships to

be dangerous. The danger came from the possibility of the two people becoming easily bored with each other. Therefore, commitments not only required an investment of time and energy, but also one's ideas in order to keep it going.

Furthermore, in the Polish group, problems in a relationship started with a feeling of suffocation associated with limited personal space, and fatigue associated with a habitual life-style that overwhelmed the feeling of novelty and excitement present in early stages of a relationship. In addition, according to some Polish participants, jumping into relationships too rapidly could pose a threat to building a friendship with the person in the relationship, and with others. "Every relationship has its pros and cons. I think that at a certain stage of our life it's necessary as it supports me. I can't imagine being 26 or 30 years old and living alone, and not to have another person that I could share my life with. Even now, when I'm only 20, it's nice to be in a relationship. I always have someone to go to a party with, and someone who gives me a lot of support. I can talk to that person about anything, I have someone to sleep with, to hug, and that person stays overnight—unlike casual sex when the person leaves after sex, suddenly disappears. It also has a negative side. In a relationship it's only one life between the two of you; you're treated as one unit, and this is when I start feeling suffocated. I feel like I'm in some kind of cage, routine kicks in, it becomes a bit boring, and this is when problems start. It's good to be able to be in a relationship. I know this girl, she's had about 30 girls that she's dated and had sex with, but she has never been in a long-term relationship with any of them. If she did manage to be in one, it never lasted longer than a month. Even though she said she was in

love, she was cheating; she just couldn't be in a relationship. I feel sorry for her, I think it must be horrible. The longer you stay in that kind of situation, the more difficult it will be in the future to form relationships.”

For the Chinese, relationships were mainly about communicating their true feelings to one another, expressing what they needed and hoping they would receive what they expected from that other person. Furthermore, for the Chinese, relationships were mainly about an understanding between two people. For the Polish, that understanding was intuitive—they knew what the other person wanted without any need for verbal expression. The Chinese imagined a relationship as two people on the same boat who had only one task—to drive that boat with precision and caution. “I think when two people are together, they should take care of each other and share difficulties, plan the future together. It's as if they're on the same boat and their only task is to sail this boat safely and perfectly. I think it should be like a marriage, sharing many things together; I don't want to meet a male who can't talk to me. I want to meet a man who can listen to me and I can listen to him too.”

The Polish imagined a relationship as having a mirror—by looking at another person they were able to see their own reflection. “I can see now that this is something that I need; I'd feel much worse if I were alone. Now I think that relationships are good. This has been since I've been with my girlfriend. I've noticed that a relationship is like a mirror, you know? You can look at another person and you can see yourself, everything that you need to correct in your character for example. Even from a very egoistic perspective, you can amend your

character faults. The fact that you gain a lot of pleasure just from looking at someone else—that's another story.” Moreover, for Polish participants, being in a relationship involved doing the same things they were doing when they were alone, making decisions together, planning a future together, meeting with friends, and making love.

The basis for Polish relationships was love. People had to be in love in order to form a relationship. One interviewee distinguished between being in love and loving someone. Being in love was the minimum requirement to form a relationship. Loving someone came with the longevity of the relationship. Once the couple became older, the love transformed into a habit. “I think that if you decide to be in a committed relationship, it means that you're at least, as a minimum, in love with that person. I differentiate between being in love and loving someone. To me these are two separate things, they could be sequential, and not necessarily appearing simultaneously. When you're in a relationship, it's great when you're in love. Once I was in a relationship and I wasn't in love with him, so I broke it off. We were officially a couple; he was a few years older than me. When I realized after being together for three months that I wasn't thinking about him, and that my feeling towards him hadn't evolved, I decided it didn't make any sense to be together. .. Being with someone for 50 years is another thing, another type of love. ... That kind of love is more like a habit, not in a negative sense, but more as if you can't imagine being without that person anymore.” Trust was also often mentioned among the Polish as a requirement for

forming a relationship. Living together suggested that a relationship should be classified as serious.

Both Chinese and Polish pointed to a distinction between their love relationships and relationships they had with their parents and friends. For an interviewee from China, the relationship with parents was all about their good health. On the other hand, a love relationship was all about protecting another person, making her happy, and living together. “A relationship is the most wonderful thing in a human being’s life. The love between my girlfriend and me is a very different type of love from the love between my parents and me. When I’m with my girlfriend, I want to protect her. I want to make her happy, and I will try anything to make her feel happy. But I want my parents to be healthy. I want to protect and live with my girlfriend, and I don’t want to live with my parents forever.”

For an interviewee from Poland, a love relationship was based on a different type of love and replacement of the parent relationship. Instead of taking his problems to his mother, he was seeking advice from his girlfriend. In addition, a love relationship was described as friendship, but with extended physical contact. “Everyone needs at least two or three months to get to know the other person. Many things can influence the depth of the relationship. It’s a cliché when we describe our partner as our other half, but this is how I feel, I feel fulfilled. I used to take every problem to my mom, I was holding onto her skirt. Today, I share every secret I have with my partner; it’s a way to escape from the problem.”

In addition to different types of relationships, an interviewee from China identified different stages of love relationships in that relationships at a young age

involved different things than at a later age. “When we were 15 years old we shared dreams, held hands and talked about parents. When we were 19 years old it was more about settling down, but included a lot of uncertainty.” “I've been in one, or in more than one [relationships]. I can see now they progress differently at different stages of your life. You know, my first relationship with a girl was when I was 15. ... We shared dreams, held hands, or even talked about our parents. At that time, we thought it was a relationship. ... Later on, relationships were different. When we were 19, both of us were settling down, everything was uncertain, we didn't know what was going to happen. ... Maybe after my graduation I'll develop a different style of relationship with a girl. After I graduate I want to look for a job, get ready to settle down in my career. Every new relationship reminds you of the past so it helps you to progress ... I don't feel pressure in pursuing my career. I'm not saying that I'll focus on only one thing, I'm just saying that these could be two sides to my life. I'll focus on my career, but I might also focus on a family in the future. But right now, I've got nothing drawing me back, so I can think more about my career than about a relationship.”

The majority of Chinese participants gave priority to intimacy over sex in a love relationship. One person desired to have a long distance relationship. Another person agreed that sex could be replaced with sex toys if there was no desire for sex in the relationship. Even though the majority of the Polish participants prioritized intimacy over sex, they mentioned it along with sexual exclusiveness more often than the Chinese as a necessary part of a relationship. “But it's not necessary to have sex in a relationship. It doesn't necessarily involve sex. It's more

about two people understanding each other, than about having sex. It's possible to be in a relationship and not have sex. I'd be OK with that. I don't think I could have sex with other people if I were in a sexless relationship. ... If I really want [to have sex] why not have it? I don't think there are necessarily clear requirements before a relationship. It's not as if we always can, or can't do certain things; it depends on the situation. If I really want to have sex, and I can't have it with my partner, I'd turn to some tools, like sex toys.”

The Chinese wished for stability in their relationships, even though they were aware that complete avoidance of sudden changes was impossible to achieve. Some participants expressed their preference to be with a mature partner who could teach them something. “If I could find a man who is very mature and can teach me many things, and treats me as if I'm important to him, then I think I could have a very intimate relationship with him for many years. I would even change my habits for him. ... My habits are OK at the moment. I think. When you're young you go out and play for fun. But when you reach the age when you have to get married, then you shouldn't have this habit anymore.” Equality and partnership were important to them. Willingness to change habits for the other person, but without changing one's own identity, was also crucial in relationships. “The most important element of the relationship is tolerance. When you're committed, you don't want to separate easily, you want to stay together, and you want to stay with each other for quite a long time. Tolerance is important because we're all different from each other; everyone has certain aspects that the other

person might not like, so both need to be tolerant. Sometimes it [tolerance] can be an insurance against suffering ...”

The Polish wished for their relationships to be based on compromises and sacrifices. Participants wished their relationship partners could accept them for who they were, openly discuss topics they disagreed on, control reactions and avoid aggression. Finally, they wished they could express their love all the time, and in various forms, e.g., with gifts, or by saying “I love you”. “An ideal relationship to me is about acceptance of and respect for another person. The ability to talk, to communicate without any aggression, and the ability to accept what the other person is saying or thinking, in the sense that I can disagree with what someone is saying, but I need to work on my reactions. I must be able to listen to that person and learn how to talk to him or her about things we disagree on, without getting angry or nervous. What else? Support for your partner’s ideas, or in difficult situations, understanding or at least attempting to understand. To be able to spend a pleasant time alone in silence, and at parties, and to be happy to meet with your partner's friends.”

Photos were the most common way in which the Chinese and Polish symbolized their commitments. They either set photos up as phone wallpaper, carried them in their wallets, or framed them and placed them in rooms. Rings were exchanged in what was considered a serious commitment. In the Chinese group, in cases where participants did not want their parents to find out they were in a relationship, where the relationship was not considered as having a future, or where participants considered them a highly sensitive topic and private matter, any types

of symbols were avoided. “I don’t really like these kinds of symbols. I like my own jewelry. I just don’t like wearing rings. I have one, but it belongs to my parents. Earrings, I always forget to wear them so there's not really anywhere to put a symbol of our relationship. He never bought me anything like that; he gave me an iPad, so I think that's a kind of simple symbol of our commitment.”

VI. DISCUSSION

6.1 Unanticipated findings

In the original framework, sex was regarded as a form of interpersonal involvement. The activity was performed by individuals to release a tension. This organic tension was primarily expressed in signs. It was also expressed in symbolic forms, as it was mostly guided by ideas about oneself and about others. The ideas were largely shaped by a culture that, to different degrees, controlled sexual conduct, and thus its expression. As a result of this cultural influence, sex was treated as individuation from parents, and involvement with peers.

The interviews identified that sex was accompanied by another act—intimacy. The distinction between the two processes was most visible at the arousal stage, where participants described their most personal experiences. It was also visible at the attraction stage, where they identified two types of flirting: sexual described as seduction, and intimate described as attraction. Finally, the distinction between sex and intimacy appeared at the courtship stage, where participants construed sexual and intimate types of dating. In summary, intimacy formed dynamic relations with sex while jointly progressing through the four stages of biological sex. Therefore, not only culture, but also intimacy became responsible for shaping sexual conduct of young people in China and Poland. This new and unanticipated finding prompted an amendment of the original theoretical framework. Accordingly, the measurements procedures also needed adapting.

6.2 Revised theoretical framework

The revision of the theoretical framework, based on the Langerian act concept, included extended definitions of sex and intimacy along with their distinctive repertoires of expression, internal structures, and the dynamic relations they formed with one another in a larger involvement, as well as with a culture they were both part of.

6.2.1 Sex and intimacy in act terms

In the act framework, sex and intimacy would be regarded as two distinct forms of involvement. Sex would be described as a form of biological involvement between two individuals, while intimacy would be defined as a form of conceptual involvement between two individuals. The primary distinction between the two types of involvement would refer to different types of organic processes with which they would be concerned. Conceptual involvement would be primarily concerned with mental activities.

Mental activities would refer to different types of ideas; concepts that are intentionally or semi-intentionally “displayed” in some type of form at any of the stages of intimate involvement. On the other hand, physical activities would refer to all types of processes that display themselves on the body’s surface at any of the stages of sexual involvement. At the organic level of analysis, mental activities would be based on the neural activities—an increased level of interaction between peripheral (sensory organs) and central (brain with imagination) activities (Langer, 1948; 1967; 1972; 1982). At the same level, physical activities would be

based on the muscular and circulatory processes where increased levels were observed when primary sex organs—breasts, penis, vagina—were internally (mentally) and externally (physical touch) stimulated (Masters et al., 1995, pp. 74-75). Therefore, at the individual level and from the biological perspective, the organic basis of intimacy would be the same as that of sex—release of internal tension of an organism. While sexual involvement would be subject to the release of tension generated by physical activities, intimate involvement would be subject to the release of tension generated by mental activities.

6.2.1.1 Expression of sex and intimacy

The distinction between sex and intimacy would also be displayed in their dissimilar forms of expression. When actions and artifacts of sexual and intimate involvement identified by participants from China and Poland were classified into categories of signs and symbols, primary and secondary forms of expression—dimensions of sex and intimacy, were identified. Primary dimensions included forms of expression that dominated when sexual and intimate information was transmitted. Secondary dimensions included forms of expression that supported the primary dimensions of either sex or intimacy. They also included forms of expression the two types of involvement shared—signs that pointed to sex and intimacy simultaneously using either the same, or different forms.

Interactional touch (placement, duration)—a relational actional sign—was identified as the primary expression of sexual involvement. On the other hand, language, discourse—a discursive actional symbol—was identified as the primary expression of intimate involvement. Secondary dimensions of sexual involvement

included individual actions and artifacts—body activities (face, trunk), amount of clothing, and cosmetic applications (make-up). Secondary dimensions of intimate involvement included discursive artifacts, presentational actions, and presentational artifacts. Discursive artifacts included all types of text messages (sms, Facebook, email, etc.). Presentational actions included secular interaction routines (travelling, walks, watching movies), and creative actions (dancing). Presentational artifacts included secular costuming (clothing style, hairstyle, make-up style), and secular tools (ring, necklace, photo, food and drinks). Finally, secondary dimensions shared between sexual and intimate involvement included individual and relational actions. Individual and relational actions that used the same form in the two types of involvement included vocal activities (pitch, volume), interactional spacing (distance, territoriality), and interactional framing (mutual body orientations). Individual actions that used different forms in sexual and intimate involvement included verbal activities (word choices, topic choices, information presupposed) (see Figure 6.1).

SEX	Interactional touch	Verbal activities			Discursive actions	INTIMACY
		Vocal activities				
		Body activities	Interactional spacing	Discursive artifacts		
		Clothing	Interactional framing	Presentational actions		
		Cosmetic applications		Presentational artifacts		

Figure 6.1. Sex and intimacy—primary and secondary forms of expression.

Identified primary dimensions of sex and intimacy allowed further elaboration on the already proposed definitions of the two concepts. In line with these, sexual involvement would refer to a specific form of biological involvement between

two individuals that primarily occurs through interactional touch. On the other hand, intimate involvement would refer to a specific form of conceptual involvement that primarily occurs through discourse (conversation).

6.2.1.2 Internal structures of sex and intimacy

Internal structures of sex and intimacy would refer to the four stages through which the two processes would individually progress. The structures could be described in terms of the actions and artifacts primarily employed for their expression. Furthermore, the structures would be based on the advancement of their levels. Thus, internal structure of sex would refer to the progression of levels of interactional touch. Internal structure of intimacy would refer to the progression of levels of discourse.

Interactional touch holds a significant place in the realm of sex-related expression. Masters, Johnson, and Levin (1975) identified touch as crucial for human survival. Participants described forms of touch that could be divided into three categories, based on their destination. The first category included touching the skin in a general sense. It was further divided into touching (covered parts of the upper body), embracing, kissing on the forehead, and kissing on the cheek. The second category included touching hands, lips, and tongue. The second category was further divided into holding hands, kissing on the lips and French kissing. The third category included touching breasts, genitals, and buttocks—the primary sex organs. The last category was further divided into touching private parts (touching breasts, buttocks), kissing below the head and above the waist, petting (touching genitals), oral sex, vaginal penetration, and anal penetration.

The developed categories and subcategories of touch served to denote levels of sex. Touching skin in general was considered as the lowest and touching sex organs as the highest in the hierarchy of interactional touch (see Figure 6.2). Therefore, the impulse stage of sex was expressed in actions included in the first category of touch; the development stage, in actions included in the second category of touch; the climax stage, in actions included in the third category of touch; and the cadence stage of sex was expressed in all three identified categories of touch.

Categories of interactional touch	Skin in general sense	Hands, Lips, Tongue	Breasts, Genitals, Buttocks
Subcategories of interactional touch	→		
	Touching covered parts	Holding hands	Touching private parts
	Hugging	Kissing on the lips	Kissing below the head and above the waist
	Kissing on the forehead	French kissing	Petting
	Kissing on the cheek		Oral sex
		Vagina/Anal penetration	

Figure 6.2. Hierarchy of interactional touch levels—internal structure of sex.

In line with Masters, Johnson and Kolodny (1995, p. 72), even though the hierarchy of levels of interactional touch was established, participants noted that all types of activities could be equally arousing. Furthermore, interactional touch was used to symbolize specific types of involvement with others. All of these would suggest the conceptual character of sex. It would justify the original theoretical framework in which sex guided by ideas was analyzed as a form of involvement expressed symbolically. Therefore, the identified dimensions of sex would function simultaneously as signs and as symbols. Depending on their

relational structure, they would either point to a condition or to a concept (Powers, 2011a). Finally, their hierarchy, when based on the ability of interactional touch to induce sexual arousal, would not only be biologically determined, but mostly conceptually structured.

Discourse was identified to be the primary activity that people in China and Poland engaged in when forming an intimate involvement. Different types of disclosures were classified in reference to five categories of speech acts and three levels of intimacy developed by McAdams (1995). Speech acts were defined as “the social action performed by uttering certain words” (Powers, 2011a). Several general categories of speech acts were identified when participants talked about how they were involved in the past, or imagined being intimately involved in the future. Proposing, Inviting, Denying, Complimenting, Soliciting, Promising, Praising, Naming, Wedding, Pleading, Accepting, Directing, Defending were the most commonly applied.

Furthermore, in order to identify a hierarchy between them, the speech acts were grouped into five subcategories of illocutionary acts. Their hierarchy was based on their ability to form an involvement between two people. Assertives and expressives were recognized as having relatively little capability to form an involvement between activities of two individuals. They only functioned as indicators of a possible connection. Commissives had relatively more power to form an involvement between discursive actions, but only by one individual as they influenced the future action of the speaker. In comparison, directives were identified as presenting stronger capability in their ability to involve acts of two

individuals as they committed the hearer to take a future action. Finally, declaratives were the most powerful in terms of forming an involvement as they brought in new situations by their very utterance, for both the speaker and the hearer (Powers, 2011b).

In addition to speech acts, social goals along with topic choices were classified into three levels of intimacy (McAdams, 1995). The hierarchy between them was based on the level of knowing someone, i.e., how much one person comprehended the individuality of the other person. The first and most superficial, and thus most accessible level aimed at identification of the personality structure—traits. The second level, relatively more intimate, aimed at identification of personal concerns—beliefs, values, roles, etc. The third and probably the most intimate level aimed at identification of the other person’s identity—personal story. Participants from China and Poland analyzed their (potential) partners in order to identify the fit, connection, understanding, etc., at all three levels of getting to know their partners (see Figure 6.3).

Therefore, the impulse stage of intimacy would be expressed in all types of speech acts that aimed at identification of another person’s personality traits; in the development stage, in speech acts that purposed identification of another person’s personal concerns, roles, and beliefs. The climax stage of intimacy would be expressed in speech acts subordinated to recognition of another person’s identity of, first, communion (involvement) and then, agency (individuation). At that stage, speech acts would change their form, “I” would become “we” for the first time. The cadence stage of intimacy would include all types of speech acts that

would allow further identifying and apprehending another person’s identity of agency (individuation). Two unified individuals would attempt to further connect at other levels. “I” would continue to be “we”, and more intimate topics would be discussed.

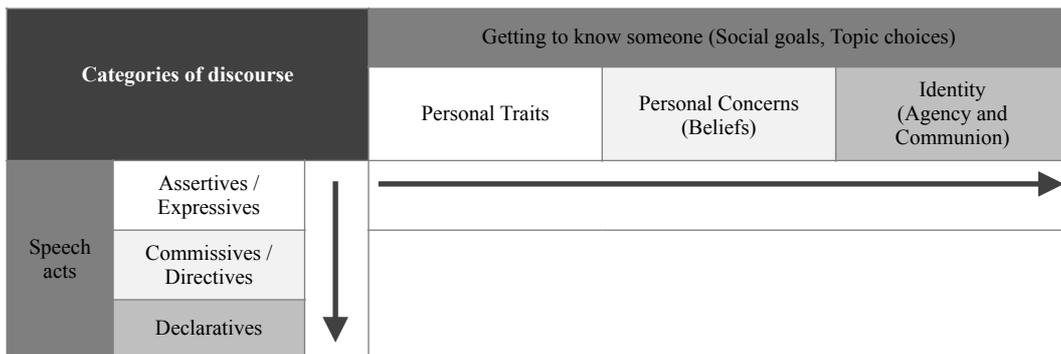


Figure 6.3. Hierarchy of discourse levels—internal structure of intimacy.

6.2.1.3 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy

Sex and intimacy could be further analyzed in a context of a larger process that they both would be integral parts of—a love relationship. In a love relationship, sex would be regarded as erotic involvement; intimacy would be regarded as romantic involvement. As two separate processes, sex and intimacy would form dynamic relations with one another when progressing through the four stages: attraction, courtship, arousal, allegiance.

In line with the act theory, any involvement is based on forming rhythmic and entrainment relationships between two acts. Rhythm (sequence) between two acts refers to two independent acts that are connected in series—a cadence phase of one act is an impulse phase of another act. Entrainment (synchrony) between two

acts refers to two independent acts influencing one another so the unfolding of their phases becomes more closely timed together (Powers, 2011a).

In that sense, each stage of a love relationship would be described in terms of advancements of rhythm (sequence) and entrainment (synchrony) of sex and intimacy. In addition, the two types of dynamics would have to be examined in a context of other relations that would allow the identification of what their sequence and synchrony would look like—whether sex followed intimacy, or intimacy followed sex; phases of the two involvements in which two processes were synchronizing, etc.

6.2.2 Culture, sex, and intimacy in act terms

Furthermore, as two separate processes, sex and intimacy would form individual relations with culture. That is, group involvement would shape its interpersonal equivalent. In that sense, love relationships would have to be examined in a context of dynamics with religion and ideology. That is, in addition to the analysis of relationships between culture and sex, the analysis would need to be extended to the examination of relationships between culture and intimacy.

While expressing their ideas on forming sexual and intimate involvements, Chinese participants identified four types of relationships, equivalents of the four types of love in ancient Greece (McAdams, 1996, pp. 290-291): relationship with parents (storage), relationship with friends (philia), relationship with love partners (eros), relationship with kids or younger people (agape). Each type of relationship could be evaluated in terms of dynamics between sexual and intimate

involvements. If such analysis were conducted, it would soon become clear that, while intimate involvement carried no constraints, sexual involvement carried many. Only the first level, and partially the second level of interactional touch were allowed in all types of relationships. In contrast, the third level of sexual involvement was allowed only in love relationships, and strictly discouraged in other types of relationships when attributed with concepts like pedophilia, incest, sodomy, and homosexuality.

Furthermore, even in love relationships, sexual involvement was subject to social and cultural constraints. As the findings indicated, not only was sexual intercourse only allowed with people of the same or similar age, and of the opposite sex, but above all, only when the relationship was legalized (Rosenbury & Rothman, 2010). Additionally, even when the relationship was formalized by law or by the church, the sexual conduct was subject to further constraints. For example, in some cultures anal sex was referred to as “sodomy” and was punishable by law (Morris, 1981).

Therefore, while intimacy would remain as a form of involvement, sex in the conceptual realm would become a form of individuation. As already pointed out, a type of interactional touch not only would be a condition but also an expression of ideas. That is, holding hands between two girls would not only signify their sexual involvement, but would also function as a form for expressing their more general ideas on human sexuality. Accepting homosexuality would oppose the cultural preferences, and thus would be a form of sexual individuation. On the one hand, the occurrence of sexual movement, or transformation, could be blamed on

cultures with their restrictions. On the other hand, it could be blamed on the inevitability and irreplaceability of human touch when forming an involvement. In any case, sexual involvement moving to the conceptual realm would become a part of more general intimacy, from which it would individuate by having its own relational structure and name, i.e., physical intimacy.

Moreover, while sex would be regarded as a form of conceptual individuation, it would also be regarded as a form of biological involvement. The inconsistency would be a source of tension. As a result, the tension would need to be reduced in two ways: by pushing sex towards biological individuation, or by pushing it towards conceptual involvement. The former would be expressed in partial or complete control and withholding from the activity with others, unless for reproductive purposes, e.g., purity, masturbation. The latter would be expressed by including the third level of interactional touch as culturally accepted and recognized conduct in all types of relationships. And that has already happened, mainly in the West. On the one hand, sexual involvement has been accepted in the context of love relationships, with all the movements promoting the legalization of homosexuality. On the other hand, sexual involvement is slowly being pushed towards acceptance in other types of relationships, e.g., associations promoting the acceptance of consensual pedophilia, such as The North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA).

6.2.2.1 Sexual transformation model

In line with all of the above, a sexual transformation (see Figure 6.4) model could be designed. The model would be based on two extremes. One extreme would

represent the biological and conceptual individuation of sex, and the other the biological and conceptual involvement of sex. The former would purpose minimizing sexual involvement between two people; the latter would aim at maximizing sexual involvement between two people. The model could be used in analysis of cultures and identification of types of tensions that would occur.

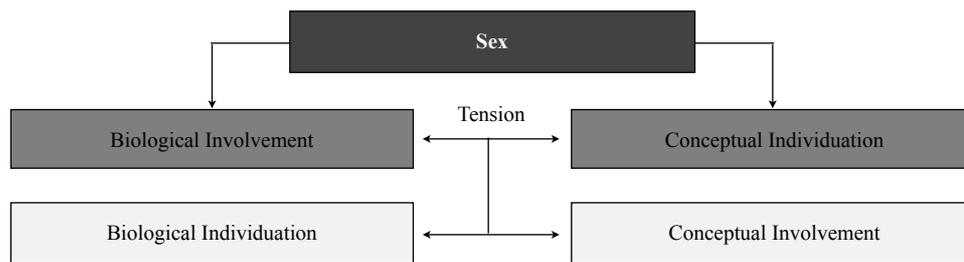


Figure 6.4. Model of sexual transformation.

6.2.2.2 Cultural identity

Possible reasons why the differences between generation-Y in China and generation-Y in Poland would occur could be further explained through the concept of cultural identity. The concept was already applied at the individual level, where it was treated as one of the three levels of intimacy. In line with the principle of act levels, not only individuals, but also every culture would have its own identity—an internalized and evolving cultural myth that would integrate the different roles the culture has played since the beginning of its existence. The purpose of the cultural story would be to identify how the past led to the present, and how it will lead to the future. Most importantly, like every other story, the cultural myth would be composed of at least two characters—one *imago of communion* (involvement), and one *imago of agency* (individuation). The two

characters would be responsible for the development of the story (McAdams, 1996, p. 102).

6.3 Revised procedures of analysis

The new conceptualization demanded revision of the methodological procedures applied in the analysis. In addition to sex, an individual's ideas about intimacy had to be analyzed in terms of their qualities: strengths and tensions. Strength of sex referred to the identification of the feeling it was associated with, as well as the levels of interactional touch that appeared at each of the stages of a love relationship. Strength of intimacy referred to the identification of the feeling it was associated with, as well the levels of discourse (disclosure) that appeared at each of the stages of a love relationship.

The search for tensions additionally included a comparison of intimacy ideas at the generation-Y level with their equivalents at the culture level, and their further comparison with sex ideas at the two levels. The comparisons allowed the identification of pressive tensions—depressed, suppressed, compressed, impressed, and expressed sex ideas. Identified tensions were further analyzed in a context of a developed sexual transformation model. The groups were either assigned to sexual individuation or sexual involvement. Furthermore, identified preferences were examined in reference to a cultural identity concept. The identity was primarily recognized through the type of stories the research participants told, as well as in reference to word choices they made when telling the stories.

6.4 Summary of analysis

The analysis resulted in four types of summaries. The first summary included a comparison of internal structures of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland. The second, a comparison of dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland. The third, a comparison of dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at culture level in China and Poland. The fourth summary included a comparison of dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels in China and Poland.

6.4.1 Internal structures of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level

Classification of actions and artifacts identified that sexual and intimate repertoires of expression were almost identical in the two countries. When identified actions and artifacts were examined in a context of their internal structures, differences between the Chinese and Polish groups were found. While intimacy dominated over sex in both countries, it was stronger in China than it was in Poland. On the other hand, while sex was inferior to intimacy in both countries, it was stronger in Poland than it was in China.

6.4.1.1 Intimate involvement in China and Poland

Even though intimacy dominated over sex in both countries, in China it was stronger than it was in Poland. A background check, employed to form initial ideas about the person of interest, was performed by most of the young Chinese participants long before they decided to make their “first move”. Furthermore, the initial stage of a Chinese intimate involvement was often preceded by a process of

“knowing the self”, or “becoming their own person”. The analysis of social goals further supported the finding of intimacy being stronger in China than in Poland. Becoming friends with the person of interest, or becoming a part of the other person’s life were mentioned by the Chinese group as necessary before going out on a date. In contrast, the same social goals were only mentioned by the Polish participants during the second, or the third stage of forming intimate involvements (see Figure 6.5).

Social goals	Attraction	Courtship	Arosual	Allegiance
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to attract attention - to see personality fit - to get familiar with each other - to become friends with friends of the person - to become friends with the person of interest - to become a part of someone’s life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to show personality - to show I am good guy, gentleman - to know each other better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to show the side or something others don’t know 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to form understanding between two people - to build honesty and integrity - to have stability - to share hobbies - to maintain sparks
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to identify interest in another person - to identify interest in me - to find common topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to see if conversation is smooth - to see whether we have anything to talk about - to get to know someone outside the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to show true self not accessible to the rest of the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to have someone always on my side - to have things under control - to form strong bond - to become friends with friends of the person - to tell anything to the other person - to get to know each other through conversations

Figure 6.5. Social goals—comparison between China and Poland.

6.4.1.2 Sex involvement in China and Poland

Even though sex was inferior to intimacy, in Poland it was stronger than it was in China. The difference was most visible during the analysis of individual bodily expressions. Not only were the Polish more perceptive of different types of facial expressions, but also of different body movements involving arms, trunk, and

legs. Furthermore, the amount of clothing and style were mentioned on several occasions as forms of inducing sexual attraction. In contrast, looks played a secondary role for the Chinese participants. Obligatory uniforms and haircuts were imposed during the period before the college entry exam to divert young people's focus away from forming an involvement to studying. This limitation was observed in later stages of their lives during their university years, when lack of interest in looks was reported, or when a relatively smaller number of cosmetic applications was identified.

More importantly, Polish participants emphasized the importance of touch at different stages. They defined different types of kissing, and associated them with different stages, or different types of relationships they intended to form. At the same time, some of the Chinese participants claimed that they would refrain from intentional touching, unless there was a practical reason for it, e.g., to help the other person. Furthermore, embracing was only allowed and practiced at the second stage of a love relationship in the Chinese group. For most of the participants in China, the third level of touch was only allowed after a love relationship was formed. In contrast, for most of the Polish participants, sexual penetration was not restricted by and limited to an erotic/romantic involvement (see Figure 6.6).

Interactional touch	Attraction	Courtship	Arosual	Allegiance
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Touching - Arms placed around the shoulders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holding hands - Hugging - Kissing on the cheek - Kiss on the lips - French kissing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holding hands - Hugging - French kissing - Touching each other intimately (private parts) - Sexual intercourse (different sex positions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kissing - Sexual intercourse
Poland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subtle touch - Neck massage - Hands placed on the shoulders - Hugging - Kissing on the lips - Kissing on the cheek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French kissing - Kissing below the head and above the waist - Sexual intercourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hugging (all night) - Touching - Kissing - Kissing below the head and above the waist (breasts) - Oral sex - Sexual intercourse - After sex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hugging - Sexual intercourse

Figure 6.6. Interactional touch—comparison between China and Poland.

Based on all of the above, it could be argued that the cultural differences in sexual and intimate involvement would be concerned more with how and when they happen, rather than whether they happen at all. In other words, cultural differences would be based on the type of actions and artifacts, and their levels in reference to the stage of a larger involvement at which they would appear.

6.4.2 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at generation-Y level

The analysis of the dynamics between sex and intimacy identified three types of relations that shaped rhythm and entrainment between the two kinds of involvement at generation-Y level: motivational, hierarchical, and pressive relations.

In terms of motivational and hierarchical relations, intimacy dominated sex during all the stages of a love relationship in the Chinese group. Furthermore, it motivated sex only at the second stage of a love relationship. In Poland, intimacy also controlled sex, but not as much as it did in China. Sexual involvement

dominated during the first and third stages of a relationship. At the second and fourth stages, the hierarchy between the two involvements was reversed—intimacy dominated over sex.

Different hierarchy and motivational relations between sex and intimacy resulted in different rhythmic and entrainment relations between China and Poland. In China, bodily involvement was developed after the mental one was established. Sexual involvement only began to synchronize with intimate involvement at the end of the third, and in the beginning of the fourth stage of a love relationship. In contrast, in Poland the two types of involvement were fully synchronized and unfolded simultaneously. The first stage of bodily involvement gave rise to the first stage of mental involvement, which was then a beginning of the second stage of bodily involvement, and so on.

In terms of pressive relations, identified tensions in China could be divided into two periods: before the college entry exam, and after the exam. Before the exam, sex was either suppressed or compressed, and intimacy was compressed. The tensions were expressed when young Chinese people suspended (suppressed) their love relationships, or partially expressed them (compressed) when they kept them secret. After the exam, sex was impressed in the Chinese group. For most of the participants, the entry exam served to mark the beginning of their erotic involvements. This became an issue in the process of recruitment for the interviews, as most young Chinese people did not have any prior sex experience. When expressed, sex was compressed by intimacy when preceded by the

background check or becoming their own person. In contrast, sex and intimacy in the Polish group were expressed without any constraints (see Figure 6.7).

Furthermore, sexual tension was most visible when young Chinese people expressed their concerns about the reduced value of sex in a love relationship, or the double standard employed in understanding the sexual pleasure of men and women. The obstacles were overcome by pursuing sex education. Intimacy tension was most visible when young people were concerned about difficulties in meeting new people. The hardships were minimized by participation in-person or online activities.

Dynamic relations generation-Y	China		Poland	
	Sex (S Gen-Y)	Intimacy (I Gen-Y)	Sex (S Gen-Y)	Intimacy (I Gen-Y)
Motivation	II stage: Intimacy motivated Sex		I stage, III stage: Sex motivated Intimacy II stage, IV stage: Intimacy motivated Sex	
Hierarchy	4 stages: Intimacy stronger than Sex.		4 stages: Intimacy stronger than Sex	
Rhythm	II stage of Intimacy followed by I stage of Sex, III stage of Intimacy followed by II stage of Sex, etc.		I stage of Sex followed by I stage of Intimacy followed by II stage of Sex followed by II stage of Intimacy, etc.	
Entrainment	III/IV stage: Intimacy synchronised with Sex		Sex and Intimacy synchronised within stages	
Pressions	Before: Suppressed/Compressed (Entry exam) Now: Impressed (Lack of experience); Compressed by Intimacy (Background check. Becoming their own person)	Before: Compressed (Entry exam) Now: Expressed	Expressed	Expressed

Figure 6.7. Comparison of dynamic relations of sex and intimacy at generation-Y level in China and Poland—summary of findings.

Based on all of the above, it could be further argued that the focus of cultural research on sexual and intimate involvement in love relationships could be further extended to examination of the dynamic relations sex and intimacy would form

with one another that would shape their fundamental, rhythmic and entrainment relations in a love relationship.

6.4.3 Dynamic relations between sex and intimacy at culture level

The research identified ideology in China, and religion in Poland as playing a major role in structuring relations between sexual and intimate conduct of young people in the two countries. In China, the structure of romantic and erotic conduct was in the hands of the ideology, parents and teachers. Religion, when practiced, and Chinese wisdom played only a secondary role. They provided general architecture of life dynamics, and were only applied by the young people as a support when forming an involvement. Ideology in China imposed the college entry exam as the first mark of the official beginning of their sexual and intimate involvements. Before the exam, teachers in China, together with parents, encouraged young people to focus on becoming their own person, primarily through education. During that time, sexual and intimate involvement was treated as an unworthy pursuit of puppy love, and was only accepted if it did not affect individual development. After the exam, sexual involvement was allowed, but only at the first level of interactional touch. The second and third levels of sexual involvement were only approved of by parents after marriage, or in a serious relationship.

In contrast, the structure of romantic and erotic conduct in Poland was in the hands of religion, the Roman Catholic Church. Parents and teachers in Poland did not generally get involved in the sexual life of young people. In a few cases when they did, they supported sexual and intimate conduct rather than restricting it.

Sexual involvement in Poland was constrained by the Church to the first level of interactional touch throughout the first three stages of a love relationship. The Church recognized marriage as the only form of formalized relationship where the second and the third levels of sex were allowed. Marriage was not restricted by age but dictated by love. In contrast, all levels of intimacy were equally allowed, and even encouraged by the Church in all types of relationships, and at all of its stages.

In summary, the influence of Chinese ideology on sexual and intimate conduct could be divided into two periods: before and after the college entry exam. Before the exam, sexual conduct was suppressed, and intimacy was compressed by parents and teachers. After the exam, sexual conduct was compressed before marriage or a committed relationship, and intimate conduct was motivated. On the other hand, sexual conduct was compressed before marriage, and intimate conduct was motivated at all times by the Catholic Church in Poland. Furthermore, Chinese wisdom and religion in China, along with Polish parents and teachers, if anything, only motivated the sexual and intimate choices of young people in the two countries (see Figure 6.8).

Dynamic relations Culture			China		Poland	
			Sex	Intimacy	Sex	Intimacy
Pressions	Culture	Ideol.	Before: Suppressing (Entry exam, Puppy love) Now: Compressing (Marriage, Relationship)	Before: Compressing (Entry exam, Puppy love, Becoming your own person) Now: Motivating	Now: Motivating	Now: Motivating
		Rel.	Now: Motivating	Now: Motivating	Now: Compressing (Marriage, Love)	Now: Motivating

Figure 6.8. Dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels in China, and Poland—summary of findings.

6.4.4 Dynamic relations of sex and intimacy between generation-Y and culture levels

Comparison of dynamics between sex and intimacy in love relationships at the two levels identified that generation-Y and culture levels were similar in China, and different in Poland. In most cases, young Chinese people followed the structure of love conduct provided by their ideology. The only tension that resulted in conflict occurred when they were younger, before the college exam period. Even then, the conflict was minimized by compressed expression. Otherwise, identified tensions brought about some issues. Impression and compression of sex in the presence of intimacy were associated with failure of long term relationships, e.g., marriages. Compression of intimacy during the period before the college entry exam was associated with young people's problems in forming a love involvement after that.

In contrast, young Polish people did not follow the structure of love conduct provided by their religion. As a result, created tension transformed into an open conflict. The conflict was most visible when young Polish people were switching

to other religions, or to denominations that did not oppose sexual engagement before marriage, e.g., Buddhism, Dominicans, Franciscans. It was also visible when they entirely withdrew from the moral conduct offered by the Catholic Church.

6.4.4.1 Sexual transformation of China and Poland

Furthermore, while the dynamics between sex and intimacy at generation-Y levels were different in China and Poland, the dynamics were almost identical at culture levels in the two countries. In both countries, intimate involvement dominated sexual involvement, in China guided by ideology, and in Poland guided by religion. In addition, marriage was the mark indicating the beginning of a sexual involvement between two people at the third level of interactional touch.

These would suggest some kind of cultural agreement in terms of how they believed relations between sex and intimacy should look. At the same time, it would suggest some kind of disagreement on how the young generations believed dynamics between sex and intimacy should look. Based on the analysis, it could be argued that, while Chinese generation-Y followed biological individuation in the sexual transformation model, Polish generation-Y proved its transitional character and fell somewhere in between. Young Polish people, while nurturing intimacy, pushed towards conceptual involvement of sex.

6.4.4.2 Cultural identity of China and Poland

Possible reasons why the differences between generation-Y in China and generation-Y in Poland occurred could be attributed to different cultural identities.

The study identified two different types of words participants from China and Poland chose for their expressions when describing their experiences in the context of the four stages of a love relationship. The most common words chosen by the Chinese included protection, safety, and care. On the other hand, the most common words chosen by the Polish included love, passion, invisible connection, and understanding. Therefore, the selections would suggest Chinese communion identity of the caregiver, and Polish communion identity of the lover.

The image of the caregiver is based on the ancient goddess Demeter, who cared for her offspring to the extent that she was ready to sacrifice herself and her domain to save them. The caregiver is one of the richest images in adult life stories because it connects thematically to so many different aspects of life. In contrast, the image of the lover refers to passionate love in both its noblest and most degraded forms (McAdams, 1996, pp. 149-158).

The two cultural identities of involvement would be associated with two different approaches to love relationships, different ideas on dynamics that sex and intimacy should form. In reference to the characteristics, it could be argued that for the caregiver, sex would become secondary and preceded by taking care of another person. On the other hand, for the lover, sex in its degraded form would become equal to intimacy—its noblest form. In that case, love as the primary religious criterion for getting married would support the cultural pattern of the lover. At the same time, when suppressing sexual intercourse until after marriage, it would compromise its free development. Without sufficient reasons to support

its stand, religious guidance would be either ignored, or entirely abandoned by the young Polish lovers.

VII. CONCLUSION

7.1 Conclusions

In line with the research questions, the primary interest of the study was to identify the stages of sex that would be persuasive when implemented in messages directed at generation-Y in China, and Poland. In addition, the study was interested in identification of similarities and differences between persuasive sex appeal in the two countries, as well as the role of culture in structuring identified similarities and differences.

From our findings, the type of persuasive sex message would depend on the group it would be targeting. Even though the majority of the participants from China could be placed somewhere close to sexual individuation, there were also those that were more inclined towards the transitional zone in the sexual transformation model. The same situation occurred among the Polish. Even though most of the Polish participants could be placed somewhere along the transitional zone in the sexual transformation model, there were also those who leaned towards the dominating preference of the Chinese.

If one aimed at involvement with the majority in China, and minority in Poland, the first and second levels of interactional touch (attraction, courtship) could be applied in the message, but only if the message was in the context of intimacy, or commitment in a love relationship. For example, an advertisement could portray a couple of people french kissing when wearing rings, or other symbols suggesting they are in a committed relationship with one another.

If one aimed at involvement with the majority in Poland and minority in China, all three levels of interactional touch (attraction, courtship, arousal) could be applied in the message, and not necessarily in the context of intimacy, nor a committed love relationship. For example, an advertisement could portray any type of sexual activity, including intercourse without indication of any type of relationship between the two portrayed people.

In addition to the types of sex appeal that could be persuasive in the two countries, the cultural context of the messages would also be different. Based on identified tensions, the Polish context could revolve around the conflict between generation-Y and the Catholic Church. The context was already utilized in one of the campaigns by the Polish apparel brand, “House”. The campaign elicited a lot of attention from young people in Poland, as well as from Church organizations, which eventually influenced its banning. On the other hand, the Chinese context could revolve around young people’s problems in initiating love relationships (difficulties in approaching new people), and then in successfully maintaining them (lack of sexual knowledge).

The main similarity between persuasive sex appeal in China and Poland revolved around intimate involvement dominating over sexual involvement. The similarity could be attributed to the influence of the two cultures, Chinese ideology and Polish religion. Another similarity between persuasive sex appeal in the two countries revolved around the similarity of actions and artifacts through which the involvement was expressed. Both Chinese and Polish participants enjoyed traveling, watching movies, walking, or even having sex. The similarity could be

attributed to how similar young people are becoming in the era of increased pace of communication technologies, in which the same actions and artifacts contain the same meanings.

Finally, the differences between persuasive sex appeal in China and Poland revolved around different levels of the same actions and artifacts that appeared at different stages of a love relationship. Furthermore, while the Chinese sexual pattern was shaped by ideology, the Polish sexual pattern was in conflict with the one proposed by religion. The reasons for these phenomena were attributed to the Chinese biological individuation and the cultural identity of the caregiver, and the Polish transitional character of sexual transformation and the cultural identity of the lover.

7.2 Application

The results of the study could be applied in various fields that are interested in creating effective messages—teaching programs, laws, or advertising—that target youth in China and Poland.

On several occasions, participants from China and Poland commented on the lack of adequate education programs in the area of partner relationships. They also claimed too much focus was placed on the animal aspect of biological involvement, which they felt had very little to do with their own relationships. Therefore, the findings could be applied to the development of educational programs for young people in both countries. The programs could combine education in the area of sexual intimacy from the conceptual and biological

perspectives. In return, the intimacy programs could strengthen the status quo in China and minimize the tension in Poland.

In addition, representatives in governments and organizations could use the information to adjust their love relationship-related policies and laws. Policies and laws could be modified in a way that would make them consistent with the model of sexual transformation their country would aim to follow, as well as with their country's evolving cultural identity. For example, by loosening some of the religious policies on sex in Poland the cultural tension could be lessened.

Finally, the research could be helpful to marketers and advertisers who would like to connect with young people in China and Poland. Some of the concepts could be applied when creating brand identities and advertisements, and promoting them in the two countries. The tensions identified in the two countries could serve as a valuable source of information on how to design the messages so they would be persuasive and effective.

7.3 Theoretical contributions

The main contribution of the study revolves around the application of the new paradigm for social sciences—the act theory. The application allows the combination of several theories, i.e., sex stages (Rodgers, 2002), culture (Geertz, 1973), belief and values (Rokeach, 1968, 1973), identity (McAdams, 1995, 1996), etc. In addition, it provided an entirely new perspective on one of the most utilized concepts, i.e., persuasion. In that sense, it provided the groundwork for further elaboration and combination of all existing persuasion theories. Finally, the new

framework could be further applied to other cross-cultural studies examining persuasiveness of sex.

7.4 Limitations

The main limitation of the research referred to its framework. The study aimed at analyzing sex and ended up with the analysis of love relationships—the dynamics between sexual and intimate involvement. However, the reason for which the framework was expanded should not be attributed to the analysis of sex in a context of a larger involvement. As the study portrayed, sex was bonded to intimacy. The involvement was always accompanied by, or guided by the intimate one. Therefore, it would be impossible in practice to study sex in isolation from intimacy. The examination would always need to be conducted in the context of some type of relationship, if not with partners then with friends, or strangers.

Instead, the reason why the framework was expanded should be attributed to the limited understanding of the symbolic character of sexual involvement—physical intimacy as opposed to sex. The limited understanding demanded further elaboration of the originally developed framework. The distinction between sex and intimacy had to be established in order to portray the distinction between biological and conceptual understanding of sex.

Another limitation of the study could be associated with the language in which the interviews were conducted. The interviews with the Polish group were conducted in their native tongue. In contrast, the interviews with the Chinese group were conducted in English. That could have posed some threats to the external and

internal validity of the study. However, the limitation was partially reduced. First of all, the level of English among the Chinese participants in the study was relatively high. Secondly, the participants were given an opportunity to express themselves in Chinese whenever they felt it was too difficult otherwise. The opportunity was barely used, and the differences between the two groups were clear when the analysis was conducted. Therefore, it could be assumed that the validity of the research was not compromised.

The last identified limitation of the study referred to the analysis of the data. The analysis was conducted without the additional support of software applications, e.g., NVivo, which could have improved its validity. However, discourse analysis should not be limited to the analysis of words. Currently offered software is only capable of the analysis that is detached from the other cues, e.g., facial expression, vocal pitch, volume, pauses, etc. All types of cues became crucial in identification of participants' feelings, especially in the context of sensitive topics like sexual involvement. For example, the Chinese participants often lowered their voice when they were talking about sexual involvement. When they were talking about intimate involvement their voice volume and pitch were relatively higher, and the time of response was shorter. That could indicate their confidence and preference of one over another.

7.5 Recommendation for future research

As already mentioned, studying sex separately from intimacy would be impossible in practice. Therefore, future research would be subject to examination of both of these. In more general terms, the research could be divided into

conceptual and pragmatic research. The conceptual would focus on verification and further elaboration of defined concepts (sex, intimacy, physical intimacy, cultural identity) and models (sex and intimacy dimensions, sexual transformation). On the other hand, the pragmatic would focus on expanding our knowledge on sex and physical intimacy at individual, group, and culture levels.

Sex and intimacy research could also be divided into natural sciences research, e.g., biology and genetics, and human sciences research, e.g., art, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. In both cases, it would have to be subject to prior revision of what has already been discovered. The discoveries would have to be “translated” into act-based terms so they could be further connected with one another.

Natural sciences research would be based on the premise that the underlying reasons for the occurrence of sex would be pleasure and release of tension. The new approach would allow the dispelling of the “mystery” the g-spot has been surrounded with, and put to rest the debate over its existence (Puppo & Gruenwald, 2012). On the other hand, natural sciences research should focus on further examination of the type of physical processes underlying sexual and intimate involvement. That is, whether the two types of pleasure are induced by different processes or the same processes operating at different thresholds. The measurement in natural sciences research would involve specially designed equipment that would allow identification of neural changes in both peripheral sensory organs and the central brain, as well as identification of physiological changes, i.e., muscular, circulatory, etc.

Identification and measurement of different levels and thresholds of physical activities underlying sexual intimacy could be developed around the proposed categories of interactional touch. The categories could be further divided into subcategories based on the secondary dimensions of sex—level of nudity, interactional spacing and framing, facial expression and body movements. In turn, the developed categories of sexual involvement could not only serve as the basis for research in natural sciences, but also in human sciences.

Human sciences research on sex and intimacy would include identification and measurement of the types of ideas at different levels: individual, group, and public (cultural). The tools that would need to be applied in that type of research would include qualitative and quantitative methods, i.e., content analysis, interviews, observation, questionnaires, etc. This study identified that Skype, or FaceTime would be the most appropriate and effective tools for conducting interviews. First, the video-conference software allowed participants to feel comfortable in their own environment, which was very valuable when answering questions about sex. Second, the applications reduced the number of sensory organs that might have been unintentionally induced in the presence of the interviewer, and thus compromise the validity of the research.

At the individual and group levels, further research could be the extension of the presented study to different socio-economic groups in China and Poland, e.g., adolescents, middle-aged, elderly. Based on this study, it would be advisable for the interviewer to conduct the examination on different cultures, rather than his or her native culture. This would allow the elimination of any presupposed

information on the part of the interviewer, and increase the objectivity of the research.

In addition, the current research could be extended to different cultures considered as typically Western, e.g., USA, UK, France, or Australia (Waller, 1999). That type of research would allow the testing and examination of the hypothesized sexual transformation model. In addition, it would allow further examination of initially identified rhythmic and entrainment dynamics between sex and intimacy in love relationships, i.e., non-repetitive rhythms; and repetitive rhythms, periodic and dialectical (Powers, 2011a). It would also allow the identification of cultural marks—dynamics that were not present in partner relationships in China and Poland, as well as expand types and levels of actions and artifacts at each of the stages of the relationship. Forms of greetings, such as shaking hands, kissing on the cheek or bowing, could be helpful in estimating the level of sexual intimacy within and between different groups, or cultures.

Furthermore, the research could be extended to the examination of different types of relationships in China and Poland, as well as in different cultures. It could focus on dynamics between sex and intimacy in relationships with strangers, friends, or parents. For example, whether the types of disclosed information (topic and word choice), would differ among types of relationships.

Finally, the cultural research would not necessarily have to be conducted in reference to parents and teachers. The cultural messages could be identified from secular and sacred actions and artifacts, e.g., government and public policies regarding sexual and intimate involvements, national anthems, emblems and flags

as expressions of cultural identity (agency and communion). However, that type of research would require the prior development of two models, one for the analysis of presentational actions, and another for the analysis of presentational artifacts. The models would combine different theories developed in visual arts (film, paintings, dance, etc.) organized around the theory of art developed by Langer (1953).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1A: Interview sheet (English version)

<p>INTERVIEW QUESTIONS ENGLISH "Persuasiveness of sex: A comparison between Chinese and Polish generation-Y in Langerian act-based terms"</p>
<p>INTRODUCTION</p>
<p>Dear Respondent,</p> <p>I am a PhD student at Hong Kong Baptist University, School of Communication. The interview I am about to conduct has been developed for my PhD thesis: "Persuasiveness of sex: A comparison between Chinese and Polish generation-Y in Langerian act-based terms". By taking part in the study you will contribute to improvements in understanding young people in China.</p> <p>The interview has been divided into four parts: Personal information, Religious beliefs, Ideology beliefs, and Sex-related beliefs. Additionally, each of the four parts has been subdivided into the following subsections: Flirting, Dating, Intimacy, and Committed relationship.</p> <p>Flirting refers to the initial attraction and interaction that occurs between two people, usually when they meet for the first time. Dating is a further development of the flirting stage. Once the two people feel attraction towards one another they decide to engage in some type of activity. Through that interaction they get to know each other. Intimacy is a further development of the dating stage, the process during which the two people, through repeated interaction become increasingly familiar with one another. Finally, committed relationship is a further development of the intimacy stage. The process during which the two people, familiar with one another, commit to remain involved with one another through socially recognised structure, i.e.: partners, spouses.</p> <p>The intention of the study is to identify your own beliefs as well as beliefs of others in reference to the four described stages. Please, answer all the questions according to your best knowledge, and within your comfort zone. Please remember, this is not a test, and therefore, there are no correct/wrong, good/bad answers. Your confidentiality and anonymity will be fully secured. The interview will be audio-taped only for my own references. If you have any doubts about any of the questions, feel free to interrupt and ask me for the explanation at any time.</p> <p>At the end of the interview will be asked to provide your details: Name and Surname (English and Chinese), Department, Contact telephone number, Email, Sex, Marital status, HKID/ Passport number, and number of the bank account to which the gratification will be transferred.</p> <p>Thank you for your participation.</p>
<p>PART I: Personal information</p>
<p>What's your name?</p>
<p>2. How old are you?</p>
<p>3. What is your nationality?</p>
<p>4. Which city and province in Mainland China do you come from?</p>

5. What is your gender? Do you feel like a boy, or like a girl?
6. Do you have any siblings, brothers and/or sisters? If yes, how many?
7. What is your family's income? What would you consider your family status to be: very rich, rich, average, poor, very poor?
This is the end of Part I: Personal information. Now, we will proceed to the Part II: Religious beliefs.
PART II: Religious beliefs
1. Do you profess any religion, believe in any god? (If the answer is no, skip to PART III: Ideology beliefs)
2. Does your religion require you to go to any worship place (i.e.: Church)? If yes, how often do you go there?
3. Are you a member of any religious organization/club? If yes, what is the organization's name? How long have you been the member for?
4. Do you wear any religious symbols, i.e.: cross, beads, etc.?
5. What is the source of your religious beliefs, i.e.: religious leaders, bible, parents, grandparents, etc.? (If the source of religious beliefs are parents then skip to PART III: Ideology beliefs).
Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your source's of religious beliefs opinion on flirting, dating, intimacy, and committed relationship with reference to people of your age. In other words, what do you think is your religion's position on flirting, dating, intimacy, and committed relationship with reference to people of your age.
1. What would your religious source say about flirting among people of your age, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary. What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for people of your age to engage in when flirting with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
2. What would your religious source say about dating among people of your age, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary. What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for people of your age to engage in when dating another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
3. What would your religious source say about intimacy among people of your age, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary. What type of activities would be allowed and what type of activities would not be allowed for people of your age to engage in when intimate with another person?

Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
4. What would your religious source say about committed relationships among people of your age, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary. What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for people of your age to engage in when in a committed relationship with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
This is the end of Part II: Religious beliefs. Now, we will proceed to Part III: Ideology beliefs. This part will be divided into two subsections, A: Parent(s), B:Teacher(s).
PART III: Ideology beliefs
A: Parent(s)
1. How would you describe your relationship with your parent(s), i.e.: very good, good, non-existing, bad, very bad?
2. Have you ever (voluntarily) spent your free time with your parent(s)? If yes, when was the last time? How often has it occurred?
3. Have you ever been punished, or rewarded by your parent(s) for a bad, or a good behavior? If yes, what were you punished for, or rewarded for? What was the punishment, or reward?
Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your parent's (parents') opinion on you flirting, dating, intimacy, and relationship with another person. In other words, what do you think is your parent's (parents') position on flirting, dating, intimacy, and committed relationship with reference to you.
1. What would your parent(s) say about you flirting with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when flirting with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
2. What would your parent(s) say about you dating another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when dating another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:

3. What would your parent(s) say about you being intimate with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when being intimate with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
4. What would your parent(s) say about you being in a committed relationship with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when being in a committed relationship with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
B: Teacher(s)
1. Which school influenced the most your personality/character?
2. Do/Did you like going to that school? What are/were the reasons?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your teacher(s) in that school, i.e.: very good, good, non-existing, bad, very bad?
4. Have you ever been punished/rewarded by your teacher(s) for a bad/good behaviour? If yes, what were you punished/rewarded for? What was the punishment/reward?
5. Are you a member of any school organization/club? If yes, since when?
Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your teacher's/teachers' opinion on you flirting, dating, intimacy, and relationship with another person. In other words, what do you think is your teacher's/teachers' position on flirting, dating, intimacy, and committed relationship with reference to you.
1. What would your teacher(s) say about you flirting with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when flirting with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
2. What would your teacher(s) say about you dating another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when dating another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:

Not allowed:
3. What would your teacher(s) say about you being intimate with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when being intimate with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
4. What would your teacher(s) say about you being in a committed relationship with another person, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.? What type of activities would be allowed, and what type of activities would not be allowed for you to engage in when being in a committed relationship with another person?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
Allowed:
Not allowed:
This is the end of Part III: Ideology beliefs. Now, we will proceed to the last Part IV: Sex-related beliefs.
PART IV: Sex-related beliefs
Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your own opinion on flirting, dating, intimacy, and being in committed relationship with others. In other words, what do you think about flirting, dating, intimacy, and committed relationship.
A. Flirting
1. What do you think about flirting with others, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
2. Have you ever been attracted to anyone?
a. If yes, what was it like? Describe the experience that you remember the most. What did you do?
b. How would you imagine it to be like (next time), what would you do?
3. Do you wear make up?
4. How long (approximately) does it take you to get dressed before you go out and meet with your friends, i.e.: to the school, at the party?
B. Dating
1. What do you think about dating with others, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
2. Have you ever dated anyone?

a. If yes, what was it like? Describe the experience that you remember the most. What did you do?
b. How would you imagine it to be like (next time), what would you do?
3. Have you ever gone out clubbing, dancing, hanging out with friends?
a. If yes, when was the last time and how often has it occurred?
b. If no, what do you usually do in your free time?
C. Sex/Intimacy
1. What do you think about intimacy, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.?
Good/Bad, Necessary/Unnecessary:
2. Have you ever been intimate with anyone?
a. If yes, what was it like? Describe the experience that you remember the most. What did you do?
b. How would you imagine it to be like (next time), what would you do?
3. Have you ever been sexting?
4. Have you ever carried condoms, morning-after pill, or any type of sex-protection?
D. Committed relationship
1. What do you think about committed relationships, i.e.: good, bad, necessary, unnecessary, etc.?
2. Have you ever been in a committed relationship with anyone?
a. If yes, what was it like? Describe the experience that you remember the most. What did you do?
b. How would you imagine it to be like (next time), what would you do?
3. Have you ever worn a ring, bracelet (or any other symbol of relationship)?
<p>This is the end of the interview. Thank you for your involvement. If you would like to access the results of the study please leave your email address and you will be contacted by once the study is completed. Additionally, you can contact the researcher at: renata.wojtczak@gmail.com</p>
Name and Surname (English and Chinese):
Department:
Contact telephone number:
Email address:
Sex:
Marital status (single / married):

HKID number/Passport number:

Account number:

Appendix 1B: Interview sheet (Polish version)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS POLISH	
"Persuasiveness of sex: A comparison between Chinese and Polish generation-Y in Langerian act-based terms"	
WSTĘP	
<p>Drogi Uczestniku,</p> <p>Jestem doktorantką na Uniwersytecie w Hong Kongu, na wydziale Media i Komunikacja. Przygotowane przeze mnie badanie zostało opracowane na potrzeby mojej pracy doktorskiej: "Persuasiveness of sex: A comparison between Chinese and Polish generation-Y in Langerian act-based terms". Twój udział w nim przyczyni się do lepszego poznania młodych Polaków w arenie międzynarodowej.</p> <p>Wywiad został podzielony na cztery części: Dane demograficzne (I), Wierzenia religijne (II), Wierzenia ideologiczne (III), oraz Wierzenia dotyczące seksu (IV). Dodatkowo, w odniesieniu do czterech faz procesu, każda z części została podzielona na cztery podkategorie: Podrywanie, Randkowanie, Intymność, Związek partnerski.</p> <p>Podrywanie obejmuje wstępne zainteresowanie drugą osobą, które ma miejsce podczas pierwszego kontaktu pomiędzy dwojgiem ludzi. Randkowanie stanowi dalszy rozwój podrywania. W celu lepszego poznania się, dwie zainteresowane sobą osoby, decydują się na wspólne spędzenie czasu. Intymność jest dalszym rozwojem etapu randkowania. Jest to proces w trakcie którego wspólna interakcja jest pogłębiana. Powtarzalna interakcja pozwala na bliższe poznanie się i budowanie więzi pomiędzy dwojgiem osób. Związek partnerski jest dalszym rozwojem intymności. Na tym etapie dwójka ludzi decyduje się na stworzenie związku formalnie rozpoznawanego w strukturach społecznych. Dzięki temu intymność między parą zostaje dalej pogłębiana.</p> <p>Moją intencją jest zbadanie Twoich przekonań (wierzeń) oraz przekonań innych (religijnych i ideologicznych) na każdym z powyższych etapów i w odniesieniu do czterech faz procesu. Odpowiadaj na pytania zgodnie z Twoim własnym przekonaniem. Pamiętaj proszę, to nie jest test. W związku z tym, nie ma tutaj ani dobrych, ani złych, poprawnych, czy niepoprawnych odpowiedzi. W przypadku jakichkolwiek niejasności, czuj się swobodnie aby przerwać i poprosić o wyjaśnienie. Poufność i anonimowość są w pełni zagwarantowane. Wywiad będzie nagrywany jedynie na moje własne potrzeby.</p> <p>Po zakończonym wywiadzie, zostaniesz poproszony o podanie swoich danych: Imię i Nazwisko, Telefon, Email, Płeć, Stan cywilny, Numer dowodu osobistego/Paszportu oraz numer konta na które zostanie przelane wynagrodzenie za udział w wywiadzie. Dane gromadzone są na potrzeby refundacji kosztu badań przez Uniwersytet (Hong Kong Baptist University). W celu usprawnienia procesu zalecane jest wcześniejsze przygotowanie wymaganych informacji.</p> <p>Dziękuję za Twój udział.</p>	
CZEŚĆ I: Dane demograficzne	
1. Imię i Nazwisko	
2. Ile masz lat?	
3. Jaka jest Twoja narodowość?	

4. Z jakiego miasta pochodzisz? Gdzie obecnie studiujesz?
5. Jaka jest Twoja płeć; czujesz się jak chłopak czy jak dziewczyna?
6. Czy masz rodzeństwo, brata (braci), siostrę (siostry)? Jeżeli tak, to ilu/ile?
7. Jaki jest dochód Twojego/Twoich rodzica/rodziców ? Jak ocenił(a)byś statut swojej rodziny (bardzo bogaty, bogaty, przeciętny, biedny, bardzo biedny)?
Koniec części I: Dane demograficzne. Teraz przejdziemy do części II: Wierzenia religijne.
CZĘŚĆ II: Wierzenia religijne.
1. Czy jesteś wyznawcą/wyznawczynią jakiegokolwiek religii; wierzysz w jakiegokolwiek boga? (Jeżeli nie to przejdź do części III: Wierzenia ideologiczne).
2. Czy Twoja religia wymaga od Ciebie uczestnictwa w jakichkolwiek rytuałach, np., uczestnictwo w mszy świętej? Jeżeli tak, to jak często uczestniczysz?
3. Czy jesteś członkiem/członkinią jakiegokolwiek religijnej organizacji, religijnego klubu? Jeżeli tak, to jakiej/jakiego, i od kiedy?
4. Czy nosisz przy sobie jakiegokolwiek symbole religijne (np., krzyż, paciorek, itp.)?
5. Skąd czerpiesz swoje wierzenia religijne (liderzy, biblia, rodzice, dziadkowie, itp.)? (Jeżeli od rodziców to przejdź do części III: Wierzenia ideologiczne).
Teraz zadam Ci kilka pytań dotyczących wierzeń Twojego źródła religijnego na temat Twojego udziału w podrywaniu, randkowaniu, intymności, oraz trwałych związków partnerskich.
1. Co Twoje źródło religijne powiedziałyby na temat podrywania w odniesieniu do osób w Twoim wieku (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? Jakie czynności byłyby dozwolone a jakie zabronione dla osób w Twoim wieku w ramach podrywania z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
2. Co Twoje źródło religijne powiedziałyby na temat randkowania w odniesieniu do osób w Twoim wieku (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? Jakie czynności byłyby dozwolone a jakie zabronione dla osób w Twoim wieku w ramach randkowania z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
3. Co Twoje źródło religijne powiedziałyby na temat intymności w odniesieniu do osób w Twoim wieku (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? Jakie czynności byłyby dozwolone a jakie zabronione dla osób w Twoim wieku w ramach intymności z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:

Niedozwolone:
4. Co Twoje źródło religijne powiedziałyby na temat trwałych związków w odniesieniu do osób w Twoim wieku (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? Jakie czynności byłyby dozwolone a jakie zabronione dla osób w Twoim wieku w ramach trwałych związków z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
Koniec części II: Wierzenia religijne. Teraz przejdziemy do części III: Wierzenia ideologiczne. Ta część została podzielona na dwie podczęści: A: Wierzenia Rodzica(ów)/Rodziny, B: Wierzenia Nauczyciela(i).
CZĘŚĆ III: Wierzenia ideologiczne.
A: Rodzic(e)
1. Jak opisałbyś/opisałabyś swój związek z rodzicem(rodzicami) (bardzo dobry, dobry, nieistniejący, zły, bardzo zły)?
2. Czy kiedykolwiek dobrowolnie spędziłeś/spędziłaś swój wolny czas z rodzicem (rodzicami)? Jeżeli tak to jak często to miało miejsce i kiedy był ostatni raz kiedy to miało miejsce?
3. Czy kiedykolwiek byłeś/byłaś ukarany/ukarana lub nagrodzony/nagrodzona przez swoich rodzica(ów) za dobre lub złe zachowanie? Jeżeli tak to za co byłeś/byłaś ukarany/ukarana lub nagrodzony/nagrodzona i jaka była to kara lub nagroda?
Teraz zadam Ci kilka pytań dotyczących wierzeń Twoich rodzica(ów) na temat Twojego udziału we podrywaniu, randkowaniu, intymności, oraz tworzenia i bycia w trwałym związku z innymi osobami.
1. Co Twój (Twoi) rodzic (rodzice) powiedziałyby (powiedzieliby) na temat Twojego podrywania z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach podrywania innych osób?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
2. Co Twój (Twoi) rodzic (rodzice) powiedziałyby (powiedzieliby) na temat Twojego randkowania z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach randkowania z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:

3. Co Twój (Twoi) rodzic (rodzice) powiedziałby (powiedzieliby) na temat Twojej intymności z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach intymności z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
7. Co Twój (Twoi) rodzic (rodzice) powiedziałby (powiedzieliby) na temat Twojego bycia w trwałym związku z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach trwałego związku z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
B: Nauczyciel(e)
1. Która ze szkół najbardziej wpłynęła na Twój rozwój osobisty?
2. Lubisz chodzić do tej szkoły? Podaj powody.
3. Jak opisałbyś/opisałabyś swoją relację z nauczycielem(ką)/nauczycielami (bardzo dobra, dobra, nie-istniejąca, zła, bardzo zła)?
4. Czy kiedykolwiek byłeś/byłaś ukarany/ukarana lub nagrodzony/nagrodzona przez swojego (swoich) nauczyciela(kę)/nauczycieli za dobre lub złe zachowanie? Jeżeli tak to za co byłeś/byłaś ukarany/ukarana lub nagrodzony/nagrodzona i jaka była to kara lub nagroda?
Teraz zadam Ci kilka pytań dotyczących wierzeń Twojego(Twojej)/Twoich nauczyciela(ki)/nauczycieli na temat Twojego udziału w podrywaniu, randkowaniu, intymności, oraz tworzenia i bycia w trwałym związku z innymi osobami.
Co Twój (Twoja)/Twoi nauczyciel (nauczycielka)/nauczyciele powiedziałby (powiedziałyby)/powiedzieliby na temat Twojego podrywania innych osób (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach podrywania innych osób?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
2. Co Twój (Twoja)/Twoi nauczyciel (nauczycielka)/nauczyciele powiedziałby (powiedziałyby)/powiedzieliby na temat Twojego randkowania z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach randkowania z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:

Niedozwolone:
3. Co Twój (Twoja)/Twoi nauczyciel (nauczycielka)/nauczyciele powiedzialby (powiedzialaby)/powiedzieliby na temat Twojej intymności z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach intymności z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
4. Co Twój (Twoja)/Twoi nauczyciel (nauczycielka)/nauczyciele powiedzialby (powiedzialaby)/powiedzieliby na temat Twojego trwałego związku z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)? W jakich czynnościach mógłbyś/mogłabyś uczestniczyć a jakie byłyby zabronione w ramach trwałego związku z innymi osobami?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
Dozwolone:
Niedozwolone:
Koniec części III: Wierzenia ideologiczne. Teraz przejdziemy do ostatniej części IV: Wierzenia dotyczące seksu.
CZĘŚĆ IV: Wierzenia dotyczące seksu
Teraz zadam Ci kilka pytań dotyczących Twoich osobistych wierzeń na temat podrywania, randkowania, intymności, oraz tworzenia i bycia w trwałym związku z innymi osobami.
A. Podrywanie (uwodzenie)
1. Co myślisz na temat podrywanie (uwodzenie) innych osób (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
2. Czy kiedykolwiek ktoś Ci się podobał (seksualnie)?
a. Jeżeli tak to jakie było to uczucie? Opisz w kilku słowach swoje doświadczenie (co robiłeś/robiłaś?)
b. Jak sobie wyobrażasz tego typu doświadczenie (po raz kolejny), co byś robił/robiła?
3. Używasz makijażu?
4. Ile czasu (w przybliżeniu) zajmuje Ci przygotowanie się do wyjścia na spotkanie ze znajomymi (przyjaciółmi), np.: do szkoły, na imprezę?
B. Randkowanie
1. Co myślisz na temat randkowania z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:

2. Byłeś/byłaś kiedykolwiek na randce z drugą osobą?
a. Jeżeli tak to jakie było to uczucie? Opisz w kilku słowach swoje doświadczenie (co robiłeś/robiłaś?)
b. Jak sobie wyobrażasz tego typu doświadczenie (po raz kolejny), co byś robił/robiła?
3. Byłeś/byłaś kiedykolwiek na imprezie, spotkaniu ze znajomymi?
a. Jeżeli tak to jak często i kiedy ostatnio miało to miejsce?
b. Jeżeli nie to jak najczęściej spędzasz swój wolny czas?
C. Seks/Intymność
Co myślisz na temat intymności z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
2. Byłeś/byłaś kiedykolwiek intymny/intymna z drugą osobą?
a. Jeżeli tak to jakie było to uczucie? Opisz w kilku słowach swoje doświadczenie (co robiłeś/robiłaś?)
b. Jak sobie wyobrażasz tego typu doświadczenie (po raz kolejny), co byś robił/robiła?
3. Wysyłałeś/wysyłałaś kiedykolwiek intymne wiadomości do drugiej osoby?
4. Nosileś/nosiłaś kiedykolwiek przy sobie prezerwatywy?
D. Trwały związek
1. Co myślisz na temat trwałych związków z innymi osobami (dobre, złe, potrzebne, niepotrzebne, itp.)?
Dobre/Złe, Potrzebne/Niepotrzebne:
2. Byłaś/byłeś kiedyś w trwałym związku z drugą osobą?
a. Jeżeli tak to jakie było to uczucie? Opisz w kilku słowach swoje doświadczenie (co robiłeś/robiłaś?)
b. Jak sobie wyobrażasz tego typu doświadczenie (po raz kolejny), co byś robił/robiła?
3. Nosileś/nosiłaś kiedykolwiek pierścionek, obrączkę, bransoletkę, zdjęcie w telefonie albo jakikolwiek inny przedmiot symbolizujący bycie z stałym związku?
<p>Koniec wywiadu.</p> <p>Dziękuję za Twoje zaangażowanie i poświęcony czas. Jeżeli życzysz sobie dostępu do wyników badań, podaj proszę swój email. Skontaktuje się z Tobą jak tylko badanie zostanie ukończone. W razie pytań możesz się ze mną skontaktować na email:</p> <p>renata.wojtczak@gmail.com</p>
Imię i Nazwisko:
Telefon:
Email:

Płeć:
Stan cywilny:
Numer dowodu osobistego/Paszportu:
Numer konta (do przelewu):

Appendix 2A: Classification of actions and artifacts into signs

SIGNS					
Country	Stage	Attraction	Courtship	Arousal	Allegiance
Individual actions					
Body activities					
China	Face (Eye contact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The looks - Eye contact 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong attraction - Crying 	
Poland	Face (Eye contact)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focusing attention - Looking at each other - Red cheeks - Smile differently 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crying 	
	Trunk and Legs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Body movements - Adrenaline - Butterflies in stomach 			
Vocal activities					
China	Pitch, Volume		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher pitch: laughing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower pitch: (sorrow, worry) 	
Poland	Pitch, Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of pitch - Natural talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural - Stressed 		
Verbal activities					
China	Word choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Words/stories with double meaning, not direct (car story) - Dirty words (sex related) - Carefully thought of before expressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funny - Polite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Love - Sorrow, - Worry - Support - Help - Protection - Dirty words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Love - Protection - Lack of isolation
Poland	Word choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honesty, no games - Genuine - Word games - Double meaning - Fun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honest - No hidden intentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honesty - Care - Sacrifice - Fidelity - Trust
China	Topic choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting topics - Future plans - Problems - Shared experiences (when travelling) - Individual experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep talks - Feelings - Weaknesses - Life - Opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intimate talks - Thoughts (ideas) - Dreams - Parents - Funny - Hobbies
Poland	Topic choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Themselves - Sexual topics in nature - Music - Hobby - Passions - Funny (irony, sense of humour) - Phone number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Things we can't talk about with others, friends - Love (expression) - Personal opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Venting out things - Problems - Future plans
China	Information Presupposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background check 			
Poland	Information presupposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People already known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Known each other before 		
Relational actions					
Interactional Spacing					

China	Distance, Territoriality	- Small distance: sitting close, beside - Get close to talk	- Small distance		
Poland	Distance, Territoriality	- Being close		- Forming private sphere - Isolation from others	
Interactional Touch					
China	Placement, Duration	- Touching - Arms placed around the shoulders	- Holding hands - Hugging - Kissing on the cheek - Kiss on the lips - French kissing	- Holding hands - Hugging - French kissing - Touching each other intimately (private parts) - Sexual intercourse (different sex positions)	- Kissing - Sexual intercourse
Poland	Placement, Duration	- Subtle touch - Neck massage - Hands placed on the shoulders - Hugging - Kissing on the lips - Kissing on the cheek	- French kissing - Kissing below the head and above the waist - Sexual intercourse	- Hugging (all night) - Touching - Kissing - Kissing below the head and above the waist (breasts) - Oral sex - Sexual intercourse - After sex	- Hugging - Sexual intercourse
Interactional Framing (Mutual Body Orientations)					
Artifacts					
China	Clothing (Amount and Style)	- Appearance - Dress beautifully, look nice			- Sex toys
Poland	Clothing (Amount and Style)	- Appearance - Hair colour - Dress style	- Appearance - Clothes (nice) - Hair style	- Undressing - Showing naked body	
China	Cosmetic Applications	- Wearing make up			
Poland	Cosmetic Applications		- Make up		

Appendix 2B: Classification of actions and artifacts into symbols

SYMBOLS					
Country	Stage	Attraction	Courtship	Arousal	Allegiance
Presentational					
Actional					
China	Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TV Dramas - Movies - Book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TV Dramas - Movies - Music: jazz - Book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poems (writing)
Poland	Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book - Jazz music - Movies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Movies - Books
China	Secular Interaction Routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spending day together - Conversation - Group activities (dinner, school) - Cinema, Movies - Night clubs, Bars - Restaurant - Watching Football game - Library - Walks - Travelling - University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quiet place - Bright place - Place with nice scenery - Travelling (Japan) - Beach - Swimming - Scuba diving - Cinema, Movies - Restaurant - Shopping mall - Window shopping - Walks in the park - Walks along the lake - Zoo - Feeding seagulls - Bringing food - Restaurant with a good view - Bar - Karaoke bar - Roller skating - Bookshop - Driving as a passenger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private corners, place - Dark (dim light) place - Place with beautiful scenery - Walks - Hiking - Lying in a bed together - Bodily interaction (kissing, hugging, holding hands, intercourse) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel (around the world) - Living together - Studying together - Dinner - Sending food - Mortgage and tax benefits
Poland	Secular Interaction Routines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spending time together - Talking in person - Phone conversations - Giving phone number - Listening - Party - Drinking - Cinema - Walks - Touching under the table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spending time together - Talking - Quiet place - Autumn - Night/Evening - After work, classes - Nice view - Wilderness - Falling stars - Grassland - Lake - Park - Bar - Coffee place - Dinner at home, - Dinner at a restaurant - Party - Cinema, Movies - Theatre - Sports: swimming, jogging, ice skating - Visiting friends - Walks - Shopping together - Rifle range (shooting) - Playing board games - Sitting on the bench - Driving a car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talking at night - Lying in bed naked all day - Walking together - Movies - Summer holidays - Tropical countries - Sea - Beach - Nice view - Car trips - Bicycle trips - Hidden places hard to get to - Wilderness - Sitting in the room together - Romantic dinner at home - Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spending time together - Talking - Listening even when disagreeing - Being Silent - Living together - Party - Movies - Books - Go-carts - Paintball - Car trips - Being in a constant touch - Making decisions together
Artifactual					

China	Creative			- Photos (sending: naked and almost naked)	- Ring - Photo in wallet - Photo (taking)
Poland	Creative		- Slide show		- Ring - Necklace - Photo in the wallet, room
China	Secular	- Dice game - Alcohol (Wine) - Food (group dinner)	- Fireworks - Car, limousine - Alcohol - Food (Dinner)	- Bed	- Food - Mortgage, Taxes
Poland	Secular	- Alcohol - Phone	- Drinks: Beer, Tea, Hot chocolate, Coffee, Wine - Scrabble - Gun - Food: Sushi - Flowers: roses	- Drinks: Hot chocolate - Candles - Food: Salad (aphrodisiac) - Rose petals	- Gifts - Chimney
Discursive					
Actional					
China	Speech acts, Metaphors	- Proposing: direct ask (phone number) - Inviting: invitation to someone's place, movies, dinner - Dismissing: indirect refusal: nice boy but let's be friends, or say I will consider that (hope) - Complimenting: complements - Soliciting: seek advice from friends	- Praising: saying something sweet - Soliciting: seek help and comfort when in a low spirit, feel helpless—offer help	- Praising: saying something sweet - Soliciting: seek support, help in embarrassing and difficult situations, i.e., confrontations, protect; comfort me when I am unhappy - Naming: "little husband", "sweetie", "landlord", "soulmate" - Wedding: can understand when others can't	- Accepting: tolerance - Promising: willing to change for the other person, changing habits - Denying: restrictions - Directing: permissions - Wedding: ideas, dreams - Defending: help each other, support - Metaphor: boat
Poland	Speech acts, Metaphors	- Proposing: proposition - Inviting: invitation to a date, to go to a party together, cinema, direct approach - Complimenting: complements		- Pleading: expression of love - Promising: offering ourselves to another person	- Wedding: sharing problems - Accepting: differences, acceptance and respect, faults and advantages - Promising: correcting character faults - Agreeing: no fighting, finding compromise - Pleading: expression of love - Metaphor: Mirror, Two apples
China	Social goals	- to attract attention - to see personality fit - to get familiar with each other - to become friends with friends of the person - to become friends with the person of interest - to become a part of someone's life	- to show personality - to show I am good guy, gentleman - to know each other better	- to show the side or something others don't know	- to form understanding between two people - to build honesty and integrity - to have stability - to share hobbies - to maintain sparks

Poland	Social goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to identify interest in another person - to identify interest in me - to find common topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to see if conversation is smooth - to see whether we have anything to talk about - to get to know someone outside the group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to show true self not accessible to the rest of the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to have someone always on my side - to have things under control - to form strong bond - to become friends with friends of the person - to tell anything to the other person - to get to know each other through conversations
Artifactual					
China	Written messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media: Facebook chat - Text message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile phone chats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email and message - Sex chats 	
Poland	Written messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facebook 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mail - Text message - Chat (gadu gadu) 	

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