Up close and personal: Using high engagement techniques to study Chinese visitors' landscape perceptions

Abstract

Given the well-documented increase in Chinese outbound tourists, it is no surprise that the Chinese market continues to attract considerable scholarly interest. Previous studies have been primarily quantitative, using methods and instruments administered prior to and/or immediately after visitation. While useful, such approaches may struggle to capture the complex cultural attributes of the Chinese market. Accordingly, this paper proposes the adoption of high-engagement (HE) methods, namely Accompanied Walk and Visitor Employed Photography (VEP), as additional in-situ techniques for studying Chinese visitors. Drawing on fieldwork conducted at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, this paper details the procedures of using HE approaches to collect data. An insider positionality and triangulation of data from multiple techniques are particularly useful for unravelling cultural nuances. The strengths of each method in obtaining quality data from Chinese tourists are discussed, together with strategies for overcoming challenges encountered in the field.

Keywords: High engagement techniques, Accompanied Walk, Visitor Employed Photography (VEP), Chinese visitors, landscape perception

1. Introduction

> *'People in any country see their terrain through preferred and accustomed spectacles'.*
>
> *Lowenthal and Prince (1965, p. 186)*

Landscapes are integral to tourism – beaches, mountains, waterfalls, escarpments, lakes, forests all form part of the tourism lexicon and are regularly used by marketers and tourists to describe holiday destinations and experiences. Landscapes also feature in interpretation – signs, talks, displays and multi-media presentations are often used to explain formation of particular structures and to communicate their relevance. Researchers have championed using stories, illustrations and examples to enhance interpretive offerings (Hughes & Ballantyne, 2010; Moscardo, 2010), but is this enough? With increasing urbanisation, more and more people are attempting to re-connect with nature through nature-based tourism experiences (Holden, 2015). Concurrently, tourist markets are becoming increasingly diverse, with the rise in Chinese and Asian tourists being noted by many researchers (Kimber, Yang, & Cohen, 2019; Pearce, Wu, & Chen, 2015). Given these trends, the tourism industry needs to ensure that landscapes are being presented, interpreted and experienced in a way that is meaningful for all.

The challenge lies in knowing how to cater for tourists who may use very different lenses to view diverse and 'foreign' landscapes. Simply translating interpretation into other languages may not be enough; more nuanced approaches may be needed. While valuable findings are

generated from researcher-led, statistical oriented studies, there is still space for innovative methods that facilitate new and refreshing insights (M. Li, Sharpley, & Gammon, 2019; Scott, Carter, Brown, & White, 2009). Additionally, shifts in paradigms, types of empirical data and assumptions in recent literature have empowered scholars to explore beyond the dominant Eurocentric approach to understanding Chinese independent visitors (Cohen & Cohen, 2015).

In light of these shifts, this methodological paper proffers high-engagement (HE) interpretivist methods as a means of obtaining new insights into the lived experiences of Chinese outbound tourists. It does so in the context of tourist-landscape encounters, an aspect of the touristic experience intrinsic to explorations of destination sites. Derived from a mobile ethnographical paradigm, the term high-engagement (HE) is used in the paper to describe methods that amplify the interaction between the researcher and the participant, allowing the researcher as-it-happens access to the participant (tourist). Key to this methodological configuration is a researcher who is capable of building deep and personal rapport with participants, and who is perceptive of subtle meanings in spoken and unspoken communication.

The propositions of the paper are grounded in the recognition of the inherent complexity of culturally situated meaning-making, and the corresponding need for methods that are appropriately sensitive; methods that provide researchers with a suitably pluralist intellectual space to interrogate and articulate subjective tourist experiences. In a field of study where the characterisation of 'the tourist' implicitly implies a Westerner, creating more epistemic diversity is paramount.

This study seeks to demonstrate how HE methods can be used in the field. The discussion is situated in the context of independent Chinese visitors' encounter with Uluru in Central Australia, a culturally significant site that attracts visitors from all over the world. The reflexive account reveals the strengths and challenges associated with HE approaches, and how they shaped the fieldwork. The paper also charts a trajectory for future research.

2. Literature review

The concept of landscape is multi-faceted – definitions include references to layered meanings, perceptions and projections of human values (Wattchow, 2013). Experiencing tourism landscapes is a complex and personal process, and refers to interactions between nature and culture, human and the land. The meanings of tourism landscape are contextual, resulting from the interplay of history, geography, culture, and politics amongst others (Knudsen, Soper, & Metro-Roland, 2007). Encounters with landscape require not only information from stimuli in the environment, but also imaginations in the mind of the perceiver (Thompson, 2013). Therefore, the same landscape can hold different meaning for different people. It can be even more complicated when a tourism landscape is explored through a cultural lens. How do we present and interpret landscapes for visitors who might view and interact with the landscape differently?

Studies in landscape perception present a paradox – does landscape quality inherently reside in its physical feature or does it derive from the eyes of the beholder? (Lothian, 1999). Various attempts have been made to evaluate aspects of landscape, informed by these two paradigms. These include the visual (Jacobsen, 2007), multi-sensory and multi-perspective (Dorwart,

Moore, & Leung, 2009; Scott et al., 2009), and reflexive approaches (Mullins, 2009). Further, social constructivists have argued that the meaning of landscape is socially and culturally constructed (Greider & Garkovich, 1994). Human beings' actions under particular circumstances are derived from shared understandings or meanings (Goldkuhl, 2012). In this paper, we borrow from these fields by construing the tourism landscape as a subjective, multi-sensory, reflective and social construct, shaped by self- and cultural identities.

Traditionally, Chinese relationships with landscapes were cultivated through philosophical ideas and connections to literacy (Diep, 2016; H Xu, Ding, & Packer, 2008). Chinese views of landscape can be seen as "a vision of the invisible" which goes beyond the singular landscape idea and the "absoluteness of Western logic" (Diep, 2016, p. 80). Accordingly, images, stories and interpretive materials that built upon cultural aesthetics and appreciations often work well for Chinese tourists visiting domestic attractions (S. Li, 2005; Honggang Xu, Cui, Ballantyne, & Packer, 2013). Researchers have noted that Chinese visitors often walk around for hours at the Yellow Mountain expounding on what they can 'see' and recalling fragments of myths, poets or artworks, whilst Western visitors struggle to move beyond the visible (Bruun, 2014; S. Li, 2008). Many Chinese tourism attractions provide interpretation and experiences that transform place names, physical constructions (steep stairways or rock inscriptions), calligraphies and well-known mountains to a bundle of "mythograms". These "mythograms" act as carriers that record and convey spiritual knowledge from ancient mythologies or glorious pasts (Bruun, 2014; Han, 2008). Yet, little is known about whether this approach works in unfamiliar landscapes outside China. A recent study found that Chinese tourists travelling in Australia had a preference for interpretation that focussed on scientific information and landscape formation (Packer, Ballantyne, & Hughes, 2014), suggesting that different forces may be at play in 'foreign' landscapes.

Many preconceptions and stereotypes exist when it comes to Chinese outbound visitor research. The sheer volume of Chinese visitors and the significance of their travel expenditure makes it tempting to apply quick fix approaches to understanding this market. Essentialist assumptions about how Chinese visitors should speak or act, particularly in relation to living up to their "Chinese-ness", are often evident (S. Li, 2008; Ooi, 2019). Dominant stereotypes are usually based on traditional cultural philosophies (Confucian, Daoism and Buddhism), the collective harmony, history and literacy (J. Li & Lu, 2016; Ogden, 1992). Most of these elements and behaviours were observed and labelled by Western scholars in an attempt to explain the Chinese tourist market. These assumptions have in turn informed many studies on Chinese outbound tourists.

The outbound Chinese tourist market is maturing and diversifying rapidly, however. It has been noted that researchers should be cautious of overestimating the distinction and significance of Chinese cultural differences, particularly in relation to the role of traditional culture in influencing the behaviour of Chinese outbound tourists (Cui, Liao, & Xu, 2017; Jørgensen, Law, & King, 2017; Sun, Zhang, & Ryan, 2015). Chinese cultural studies often attribute tourism phenomena to cultural differences, while overlooking other equally important or even stronger reasons (e.g., socio-political). For example, the classic concept of harmony can be used as a 'sympathiser for political repression' on social media platforms (Sun et al., 2015, p. 593). Jørgensen et al. (2017) recommend that 'great sensitivity and nuance' are needed before claiming the 'prominence of cultural factors as determinants' and

remind researchers to contemplate complex questions when they discover differences between Chinese and non-Chinese groups (Jørgensen et al., 2017, p. 886). Examples include: how exactly are Chinese tourists different? From whom do they differ? What are the implications of such differences?

In recent years, research approaches to understanding Chinese visitor market have experienced a gradual paradigmatic shift, giving voice to an alternative discourse in order to enrich our understandings (Cohen & Cohen, 2015; Ooi, 2019). Along with this shift, emerging methodological approaches that aim to decentre dominant Eurocentrism and invite voices of others have become important. This is not a rejection of Eurocentric tourism knowledge, but rather a call to acknowledge that research needs to take into account the dynamic and socially manifested cultural complexity of the Asian tourist (Ooi, 2019; Winter, 2009). In essence, new approaches recognise that attempts to understand a tourist group should be grounded in respective cultural contexts and perspectives.

Studies of Chinese visitors using in-depth and innovative qualitative approaches are on the rise. These include netnography through travel blogs (Pearce et al., 2015; Tse & Zhang, 2012), focus group interviews (Huang & Hsu, 2007), observation studies (J. Zhang, Tucker, Morrison, & Wu, 2017), photo elicitation interviews (Hughes, 2016; M. Li et al., 2019), and performative gazing ethnography (Kimber et al., 2019). While these have generated great insights, most have focused on visitors' pre-visit or post-visit expectations, memories, and rationalisations. On-site studies exploring visitors' interactions with their surroundings are rare.

Using a constructivist lens, this paper seeks to demonstrate how high engagement research techniques can facilitate a better understanding of how Chinese independent visitors encounter and interact with the natural landscape. In this study, field research is undertaken at Australia's most popular natural landscape attractions, Uluru. High engagement techniques are applied to gain as-it-happens access to Chinese visitors' landscape experiences and provide researchers with data about landscape features that attract attention, provoke thoughts and spark conversations. In doing so the researchers demonstrate how these techniques can also allow for the identification of cultural nuances in the ways tourists perceive, interact with, and recollect their travel experiences. The following section provides extensive detail regarding these HE techniques and the corresponding processes and procedures undertaken by the researcher. Following this, insights relating to the strengths, challenges and lessons learnt from the application of these immersive methodological approaches are shared.

3. Methodology: Unpacking the High Engagement (HE) Approach

The authors define high-engagement approaches as research techniques that amplify the interaction between researcher and participants and require researchers to immerse themselves in the researched phenomenon or environment. These techniques are ideally, but not always, conducted by researchers with relevant insights into the cultures and/or phenomenon being studied (Fung & Jim, 2015; Gou & Shibata, 2017). They are labelled high engagement as they require considerable time involved with those being studied. High engagement methods focus on meanings, with full awareness of the researcher's own biases,

pre-understandings and perspectives (Mair & Frew, 2018). We argue that such approaches are necessary to generate "new ways of thinking about issues" through a direct access to researcher-participant and within-group participant interaction (Sohng, 2005, p. 77). Both derived from ethnography, we note that mobile ethnography shares several similarities with HE techniques used in this study. These similarities include the mobile nature of research methods, researcher-participant co-presence, and immediacy of research events (Novoa, 2015; Urry, 2007). Mobile ethnography focuses on movements of people or objects (images, opinions or information) and how they make realities (Buscher & Urry, 2009). HE techniques are closely linked with meanings, co-created through the interactions between the researcher and the researched. The researcher's identity becomes fluid in producing ideas and meanings that are mobilised in interaction with others. Thus, the HE technique and its principles can be applied to a broader research context and complemented with other methods to amplify interactions and understand participants' intersubjective meaning-makings.

When using HE techniques it is essential that the researcher acts as an active member within the subject group, and observes how participants describe realities in their own accounts (Jennings, 2010). A central question guiding HE techniques is - what is going on here? Essentially participant-led, HE techniques allow co-production of knowledge between researcher and participants (Ingram, Caruana, & McCabe, 2017), and can be achieved in various ways depending on the appropriateness to the respective research aim and settings. In this study, two key HE techniques are adopted; namely, accompanied walk and visitor employed photography (VEP).

3.1 Participative Mobile Method – Accompanied Walk

Accompanied walk is a hybrid of interviews, shadowing and participant observation commonly used in the field of human geography, that allows researchers to understand the interactions between humans and their surroundings (Carpiano, 2009; Jorgensen, 1989). The researcher walks alongside participants, observing and recording conversations and movements. This allows participants to engage with landscape in a more intimate manner and provides extra layers of insights into the participants and how they interact with their surroundings (Solnit, 2001). Rather than the researcher providing prompts, it is features in the actual setting that elicit responses. This limits the researcher's influence and captures a more authentic, rounded view of landscape perception (Evans & Jones, 2011; Riley & Holton, 2017). Depending on the level of researcher involvement (observing to participating), familiarity with the site and the nature of the study, this approach is variably referred to as: accompanied walks, go-along, shadowing, and walking interviews (Czarniawska, 2007; Evans & Jones, 2011) or a slightly modified "jography" in the form of jogging (Cook, Shaw, & Simpson, 2016). Regardless of the term applied, this approach uses real-time, flexible and naturalistic conversations to obtain subtle and complex place meanings. These approaches also take into account participants' lived experiences, lifestyles, histories and habitual responses, providing a dynamic view and added texture (Macpherson, 2016; Myers, 2011).

Accompanied walks require the researcher to 'immerse oneself in the participants' local environment in order to observe the obvious and not-so-obvious aspects of their lives and culture' (Ribeiro & Foemmel, 2012, p. 377). This method is particularly suited to studying environmental perception as it allows for flexible open-ended opportunistic process, intuition and empathy (Jorgensen, 1989; Silverman, 2011, p. 117).

Another aspect of conducting accompanied walk is the careful choice of participant numbers per session, as the researcher cannot physically be at more than one location or setting simultaneously (Jennings, 2010). If conversations are being recorded, group numbers have to be high enough to maintain sufficient conversation yet not so high that they can't be reasonably managed by the researcher. The mobile nature of this approach inevitably contributes to physical fatigue as the researcher will be required to be frequently moving, taking notes and observing the setting (Czarniawska, 2007). It can be tempting during fieldwork to concentrate on observation and interaction with participants, which leads to delayed notetaking and reliance on undependable memories. Consequently, supporting techniques, such as a follow-up interview, regular field note-taking and audio-recording are often necessary to avoid missing data due to loss of conscious awareness (Jorgensen, 1989).

3.2 Visitor Employed Photography (VEP)

Taking photographs to capture moments during holidays has become a ritual for many travellers. Inherently, visual aids such as photographs, postcards and videos act as manifestations of visitors' travel behaviours. They trigger discussions, help visitors to construct meanings, and assist in "experiencing and consuming places" (Scarles, 2014, p. 325). Tourist photography generally falls into two perspectives: passive replication of existing media images, and active re-creation of embodied places (M. Li et al., 2019; Stylianou-Lambert, 2012). Research studies using tourist photographs have tended to focus on exploring personal meanings of photos, memories, personal identities and self-expressions, as well as encounters within groups of tourists (Stylianou-Lambert, 2012).

Photographs are believed to have the capabilities to allow participants to conjure up sophisticated meanings and associations as they see and interpret their surroundings (Balomenou & Garrod, 2010; Haywood, 1990). Using visitor employed photograph (VEP) has been extensively adopted in geography and landscape planning to understand landscape perception, preferences, and outdoor recreational experiences, as well as to inform urban planning (e.g.: Fung & Jim, 2015; Nielsen, Heyman, & Richnau, 2012; Oku & Fukamachi, 2006). VEP allows participants to 'respond to the actual landscape while they are experiencing it, in contrast to a simulated environment' (Chenoweth, 1984, p. 138).

The process of VEP originally started with giving participants inexpensive disposable cameras and asking them to take a set number of photographs either by personal free will or by indicating particular themes or research criteria (Cherem & Driver, 1983; Garrod, 2008; Jacobsen, 2007). Nowadays, with the advancement of digital technologies, this method is often conducted with visitors' own cameras or mobile devices.

3.3 Procedure: using HE methods at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park

The fieldwork was conducted at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, located in central Australia. It is renowned for the unique flaky red colour, the monolith and its outstanding natural and cultural significance (Parks Australia, n.d,). Unlike other secular landscape sites, Uluru is a tourist attraction of significant sacredness and spiritual meanings to the local Anangu

Aboriginal people. Popular tourist activities include guided and self-guided walks, indigenous cultural presentations, and sunset/sunrise viewing. It has been noted that tourists are often involved in quest for numinous, quiet and reflective activities to understand the totality of Uluru and its deeper meanings (Shackley, 2004). Whether or not this occurs amongst Chinese tourists is, however, unknown. It may well be that Uluru is perceived as underwhelming and unfamiliar compared to other more commercialised sites.

The research was conducted outdoors at the Mala Walk (see Figure 1), because of its popularity, suitable duration (30-40 minutes) and diverse landscape features. The walk is 2 kilometres in length and is depicted in Figure 1.

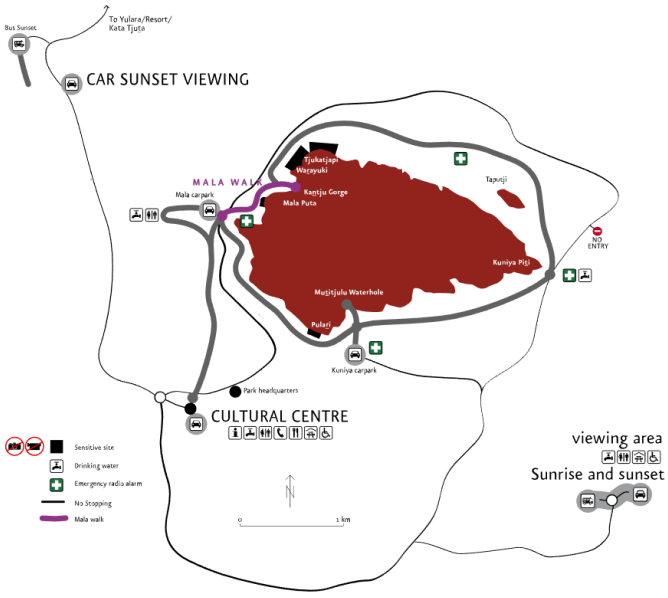


Figure 1: Research site in this study (Parks Australia, n.d,)

A purposive sampling strategy was adopted to source participants from mainland China, travelling independently in small groups (2-4 people). Recruitment took place at the sunrise/sunset viewing point, and in the lobbies of two hotels operated by Ayers Rock Resort. Recruitment fliers with the lead researcher's contact details were also handed out to Chinese visitors at the entry station by national park staff.

Recruitment and the actual walk almost never occurred on the same day. Recruitment usually started with the researcher spending time with the group casually chatting, offering help and suggestions. This allowed the researcher to determine whether prospective participant groups met the sampling criteria of travelling independently and being from China. As an 'insider', the researcher was also able to serve as a conduit between the familiar (Chinese culture) and the unfamiliar (Australian landscape).

Tourists who met the sampling criteria were asked to participate in the research. They were informed that the researcher would be accompanying them on a walk, listening to and recording their conversations, and asking them to select a sample of their photographs at the end of the walk. If they agreed to be involved, a time to meet for the walk (usually the next day) was arranged. On the day of the walk, the researcher drove the group to the site (30-40

minutes car ride) and back to their accommodation. Occasionally, the researcher may accompany the group for souvenir shopping and sunset viewing. These approaches were deemed necessary for two reasons. First, rapport was essential to the data collection process due to its immersive nature and prolonged duration. Second, it provided the researcher with an understanding of the relationship and dynamic of the group. These trust-building steps are critical as the researcher enters into the group as an authentic insider with knowledge of the group dynamics, rather than just a cultural insider.

The lead author is a native Chinese, born and raised in a conservative family. She used to live in heavily populated metropolitan cities and spent 10 years studying, working and travelling in Australia. Exposure to both cultures and lifestyles challenged her ways of thinking and behaving, which enables her to recognise and be sensitive to cultural differences (Crowne, 2013). She has travelled to many national parks in regional Australia, particularly nature-based, and has observed a myriad of different ways visitors interpret and interact with the landscape. This cultural position allows her to easily relate to the Chinese travellers (research participants) and explain the nuances in the interactions among/with them during the fieldwork. Her past experiences and dual cultural understandings have also informed the interpretations of findings.

Central to the high engagement qualitative inquiry is using multiple techniques and perspectives create a comprehensive reality. The triangulation of HE techniques (VEP and AW), data types (images, conversations and reflective text) and multiple investigators in this study allowed "display of multiple, refracted realities simultaneously", offering rich contextual insights (Carpiano, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5). Through collecting various forms of data on the same phenomenon, the triangulation process (re)constructed multi-layered meanings of visitor-landscape interactions, and added rigor (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) to the method design.

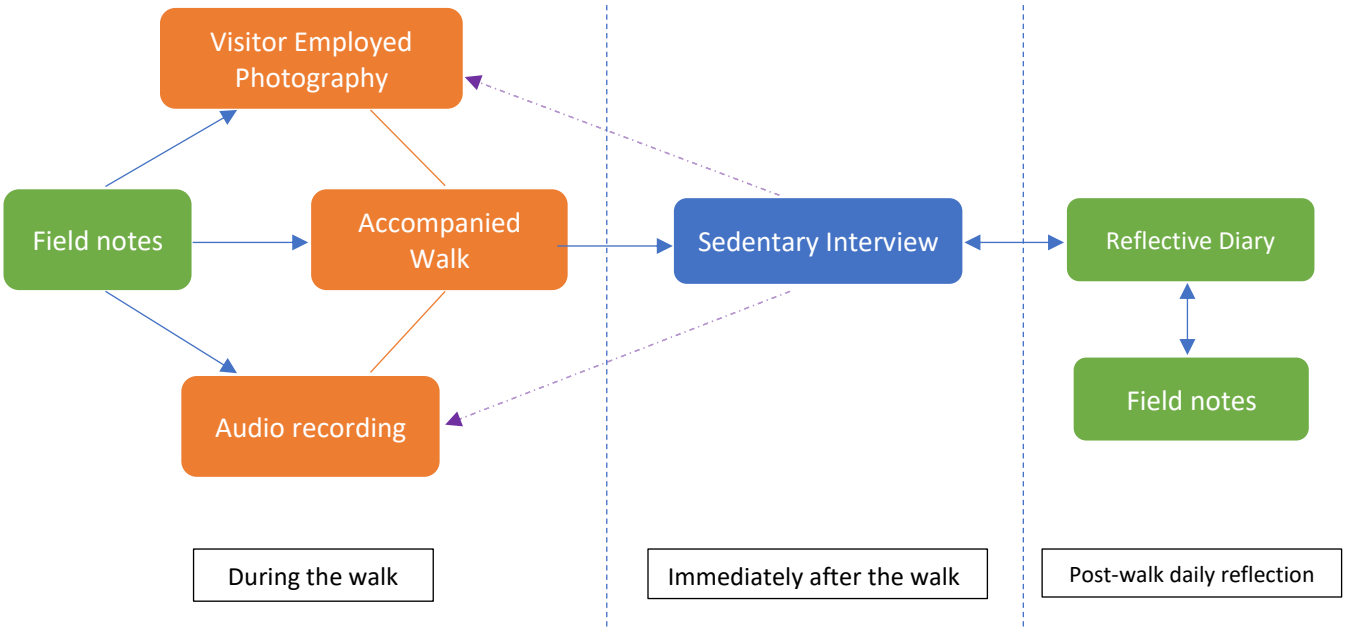


Figure 2: High Engagement Methodological Framework

A research protocol was used to guide fieldwork and maintain consistency, including a pre-walk brief, observation checklist during co-walk and post-walk interview (please see Appendix A). As illustrated in Figure 2, the HE process in this study consists of three phases. In all three phases, individual sentiments and group conversations were recorded. This allowed the researcher to track the flow of individual views as well as the group dialogue to ensure nothing is omitted. Demographic information was also noted.

First, the group participated in an accompanied walk. The lead researcher recorded conversations and made field notes. Second, immediately after the walk, the group participated in a 20-30-minute semi-structured interview with the researcher which allowed them to co-reflect upon the walk experiences. It augmented their walk experiences because participants are given the opportunity to clarify, revise and add to comments made during the walk. This was also recorded. Participants then reviewed the photos that they had taken, picked 1-2 that most represented their idea of Uluru, and reflected upon their choices. At the end of the day, the researcher made notes in a reflective diary to complement her field notes.

4. Strengths, Challenges and Lessons Learnt

High engagement techniques possess many strengths and challenges for researching Chinese visitors' landscape interactions in tourism settings. These are discussed below, together with strategies for maximising the benefits of using these approaches.

4.1 Strengths

The immersive nature of HE techniques required the researcher to spend long hours (between 2-4 hours) with each group, which contributed to rapport building. Once this was achieved, the researcher's presence was accepted in the group, and in some instances, she was welcomed and encouraged as an authentic group member. The researcher was regarded as a point of familiarity, security or convenience. Her role expanded to "*finally someone who can speak Chinese*", or "*take a group photo for us*", as opposed to a stranger or intruder. This allowed her to assimilate into the group dynamic more easily.

Showing empathy and anticipating participants' needs were also integral to success. For example, water and first aid equipment were offered on walks to reduce participants' concerns about safety and dehydration. This required an insider's understanding of the delicate cultural codes for expressing empathy while maintaining an appropriate demeanour as a researcher.

The trustful relationship led to an evident sense of comradery, faced with the hot, dusty or a freezing, windy environment of Uluru. The outdoor walks injected "mood-enhancing effects" and positive emotions biologically (release of endorphins), environmentally (bright daylight and breeze) and socially (health benefits of group walking and leisure experience) (Lamb, Bartlett, Ashley, & Bird, 2002; Macpherson, 2016), creating a pleasant atmosphere among the group. The positive atmosphere could also be attributed to the photo-taking, which has been known to increase visitors' levels of happiness and strengthen group bonding (Garrod, 2008; Gillet, Schmitz, & Mitas, 2016). While walking, the aesthetics and intrigue of Uluru kept the group highly engaged with the environment and with each other. Working out the perfect

poses for photos also brought much laughter, sparked conversations and lightened the mood among the group. The joyful moments of sharing photos of peculiar landscape scenes and reflecting on their meanings also helped the researcher discover new interpretations of the landscape.

Furthermore, most of the accompanied walks involved casual yet in-depth conversations and discussions that capitalised on the actual landscape as stimuli in real time. The researcher noted that her native understanding of Chinese culture helped shape how the conversations progressed *in-situ* and enabled her to intuit latent layers of meaning in the data. This 'on-the-move' approach provided opportunities for the researcher to review, paraphrase and confirm tourists' statements. She was also able to make reference to elements in the tourist environment to clarify meanings and probe participants for further information where necessary. This allowed the meanings to be (co)constructed and (re)constructed between the researcher, the researched and the site. Beaulieu (2010) concludes that the co-presence allows for new prospects in knowledge production to emerge from fieldwork.

Chinese visitors are often figurative thinkers who enjoy weaving up their own imagined stories and analogies triggered by landscape stimuli as it happens (Bruun, 2014; Li, 2008). This would be difficult to capture if using survey or off-site interview methods. Table 1 illustrates visitors' negotiation of landscape meanings, via their own photographs, initial conversations during the co-walk, and interview reflections. This demonstrates the variety and depth of data that can be collected through HE techniques.

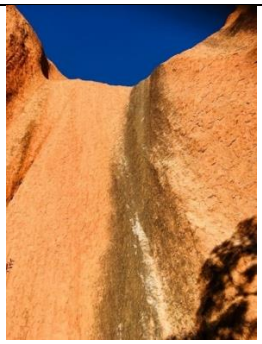
VEP	Co-walk Conversation Extract	Interview extract
 **Researcher reflective note:** They went from initial aesthetic awe, to speculations of its cause. However, the conversation ceased as the group continued to walk. The silent ambience and speculations on water trace led to further discussions of life and survival in the ancient days.	A: Wow, that's really beautiful, but also really high (*cliff wall*) B: It's like a mini mountain. Hey? Why is there a black trail? Was there a waterfall back in the days? A: I was just thinking that. Probably the residue from water flow. B: But how? Rainwater? It can't be. Rainwater wouldn't be enough! A: I don't know. B: Or perhaps it got strike by thunder. A: That's more likely. B: But then why is it shaped like that? A: How would I know haha. You have to ask the indigenous people! Haha [*M11 – Co-walk*]	*B: Hmm, I don't particularly like this photo, but I do love this spot.* *R: Okay, what would you name it?* *A: The voice of silence! hehe* *B: Yeah, not bad. Exactly how I feel when I'm sitting right here, utmost silence. I actually want to call it the spring of life. I'm unsure which one is better now…I like both. …Hmmm, I'll go with the latter.* *R: Care to elaborate?* *B: Because in the ancient time, survival is the most significant thing of all. The sole purpose for them is to survive. Unlike modern civilization, survival is a given... Water, in desert, represents hope and life. It's like the cradle of all lives…* *A: Nurturing all types of lives.* *B: Oh yes. That's it. [M11 – Interview]*

Table 1: Examples of data types

It was noted that the *in-situ* approach to collecting data allowed and sometimes even facilitated serendipitous encounters with elements of the environment and other tourists.

Participants naturally engaged in conversations with their travel companions and spontaneously took photographs. Kinney (2017) points out that walking alongside the researcher makes talking and recalling memories/experiences easier than in a face-to-face interview. Dube, Schinke, Strasser, and Lightfoot (2014) agree, arguing that this approach removes the power imbalance and eases participation. This was clearly observed in the present study - participants naturally drove the conversation flow, cutting in or finishing each other's sentences, instead of waiting for their turns. It was also noted that silence and ceasing of conversation become less awkward as participants engaged with the site and other members of the group. Importantly, the co-walk approach did not alter the way Chinese visitors experienced Uluru, as allowing them to act as they would without the presence of the researcher: taking photos, strolling, stopping and pondering. Participants had full control of when, where and how long to stop and resume the walk.

VEP was particularly suitable for revealing insights into Chinese visitors' landscape perceptions. First, photo-taking is an integral social practice amongst modern Chinese tourists (Kimber et al., 2019), which is unlikely to be considered intrusive or difficult, or require any prompts. The ubiquitous access to smartphones enables Chinese tourists to take, store, review and share quality photos on-the-go (W. Zhang, 2017). Thus, most participants agreed to the researcher's request to take photos almost immediately without any hesitation. Second, the Chinese photographic gaze has been characterised as distinctively culturally unique, particularly among young independent travellers (M. Li et al., 2019). Photo-taking gives tourists a sense of control over the tangible landscapes, creating their own narratives through free-choice photography (Stylianou-Lambert, 2012). The use of VEP to complement data obtained through the accompanied walks and interviews in this study assisted the researchers to identify the influences underpinning such distinction.

4.2 Challenges

HE techniques are subject to many challenges and limitations, some of which are common to other interactive research approaches, while others are specific to Chinese visitors. First, approaching potential participants in the field and asking them to spend extensive amount of time with a stranger (the researcher) was daunting and stressful. The fear of being around strangers creates uncomfortable and awkward moments for both the researcher and the participants. For example, the lead researcher noted that she felt embarrassed to maintain long eye contact and mumbled when people showed impatience or annoyance. Chinese people are accustomed to traditional research techniques like questionnaires (Yang, Ryan, & Zhang, 2012), which require minimal interaction between researchers and participants. Often in the field, they would immediately offer: "*I can fill out a survey for you*", or "*we can talk about our experiences here, it is easier (looking around the hotel lobby), but we will not go to the park with you"*. Chinese tourists are also notoriously time-poor on holidays (Tourism Research Australia, 2019), and this was evident. Participating in time-intensive activities such as interviews and accompanied walks was therefore an unwelcome intrusion on their leisure time, for some. This led to frequent rejection, avoidance of the researcher, or deliberately rushing to end the walk. To mitigate these challenges, offering incentives such as a small guided talk upon completion of the walk, free transport, and gift vouchers, were trialled with mixed success. It was noted that such strategies created other risks concerning safety

(offering strangers lifts in the researcher's vehicle) and potential visitor disappointment (visitors not having enough time to participate in the guided walk).

Second, it is common for Chinese travellers to treat strangers with suspicion to avoid being drawn into possible scams (J. Li & Pearce, 2016). A researcher asking permission to accompany you on a walk and/or record your personal conversations is likely to raise a fair degree of suspicion. On one occasion, to verify the researcher's legitimacy, one group checked her university ID, photographed it, searched the university website and even geo-posted on their social media as a safety precaution. Furthermore, a young female fieldworker is often associated with hoaxes, fraud, and pyramid schemes at many iconic Chinese tourism attractions. Such assumptions arise from relentless media reporting on the ever-changing scam tricks, which usually use young females as bait. When travelling overseas, the fear of scams and fraudulent behaviour is likely to be amplified and may result in self-protective behaviours. Indeed, during participant recruitment for the present study, the field researcher was often being ignored, frowned upon, stared at, teased, or told off. In one instance, she was concerned for her personal safety after being mistakenly considered as 'soliciting' by two males. This incident led her to alter recruiting locations to the resort or motel check-in lounge, where hotel staff were always present nearby. The more public environment lowered visitors' suspicion as well as ensuring the researcher's safety. It is useful to note that the discomfort, reluctance and embarrassment from the field encounter also form an important "interactive context" in which the research takes place (Koning & Ooi, 2013, p. 20).

Third, on-the-move approaches in the open may pose many expected and unforeseen impacts on the research process and outcomes. At Uluru, the harsh environment, extreme weather, and physical fatigue could not be overlooked. Many of the Chinese visitors were not well-equipped to deal with the harsh weather conditions, physical requirements of the walk, or the relatively long distance to bathrooms and cafes from the site, which led to annoyance and physical discomfort. Participants expressed concerns about their personal safety in relation to wildlife, such as dingos, mice and insects. These interfered with the participants' willingness to spend time in the field and the researcher's ability to concentrate.

Recording conversations outdoors with multiple participants also proved to be challenging. The quality of the recording was compromised by strong wind, noise, multiple members speaking simultaneously, and distance. It was therefore important to pre-warn participants of physical and weather conditions prior to the walk. In addition, two recording devices were used at all times to minimise data loss. The researcher also noted that the unique Uluru landscape triggered a great sense of wonder and awe among participants: "*I was completely muddled and in total awe", "completely speechless" at this "uncanny masterpiece of Mother Nature".* These reactions sometimes led to a commensurate unawareness of other landscape elements. For example, participants remained oblivious to several stopping spots as they were chatting enthusiastically over a previous site or information.

Fourth, while spontaneous conversations can be easily elicited using HE techniques, they can also be easily distracted and interrupted by surrounding landscape stimuli or other members of the group. Participants' descriptions and conversations also tended to be fragmented or superficial at times. This made it critically important for the researcher to remain alert to the changing dynamics of the interactive contexts, and prompt participants accordingly as the

walk progressed. Such prompts potentially distort visitors' interactions with the landscape and were thus recorded in a reflective diary as part of the data.

Finally, while using insiders to collect data provides rich, detailed and extensive material, the analysis of this data may not be completely objective. The lead researcher being a female may also impose limitations, such as the absence of male viewpoints in data interpretation and potential gender stereotypes in Chinese society. Being part of the cultural group may have also clouded her judgements in extracting meaningful findings. One solution to this problem is to have a diverse research team comprising at least one 'outsider'. In the present study, the three other authors were able to fill this role, making observations that were not immediately evident to the insider researcher. Through this process, the team was able to build a multi-faceted picture of Chinese visitors' reactions to the research site that incorporated the views of the tourist, the cultural insights of the insider researcher, and the 'big picture' perspectives of the outsider researchers.

5. Conclusion

Culturally situated knowledge has important and desirable epistemological implications for tourism studies—it creates a body of work that is more plural and 'multi-centric', one that has the capacity to challenge Eurocentric notions and normative biases about 'the tourist'. Using high engagement techniques to study Chinese visitor's landscape perception taps into a promising research approach that has yet to receive much scholarly attention. We are confident the discussions in this paper will ignite further adoption of innovative and highly engaged methods as these methods can offer new layers of understanding and insider insights into visitors' actual experiences. Fusing HE techniques with other methods creates synergy in data generation and optimisation. In addition, the implementation of HE methods in tourism settings tends to be more social and leisurely, which requires a low level of effort from participating visitors. Indeed, participants' overall reactions towards the high-engagement methods were very positive. They expressed gratitude in particular for the opportunity to have fun, in-depth, reflective conversations throughout the co-walk.

We have argued, referring to the context of Chinese tourists' landscape experiences, that HE approaches allow the researcher to explore tourist experiences in ways that capture the elusive nuances of culturally anchored meaning-making. Using these approaches, we were able to gather rich, personal accounts that would otherwise be inaccessible through a less interrogative research approach.

In seeking to unravel the cultural frames of tourists' subjective landscape interpretation, we advocate for an 'insider' positionality for the researcher, where possible. While 'outsiders' can still produce valuable knowledge, they face a higher likelihood of missing the subtle codes of meaning that an insider is well positioned to access. While an insider positionality is helpful, being a cultural insider does not necessarily guarantee privileged access to participants or automatic insights (Kusenbach, 2003). Rapport and even friendship are essential to ensure the success of this approach. Furthermore, HE formats offer flexibility as they allow participants to drive the direction of data in terms of voicing their subjective experience and

the meanings attached to it. This is highly desirable at a time when the travel industry is seeking to match the needs of new market segments.

There are important caveats, however, which must be noted. HE approaches, by their highly immersive nature, can be onerous. Time-poor researchers will not always be able to adopt them. The processes can be taxing to participants too. It is therefore important that researchers adopting these techniques maintain a keen awareness of the participants' needs and show empathy. These challenges aside, we hope that future studies will deploy these approaches to achieve, as we sought, a much richer understanding of tourist experiences in all of their complex configurations. In an increasingly diverse tourist market, we have no choice.

References

Balomenou, N., & Garrod, B. (2010). Using Volunteer-employed Photography: Seeing St David's Peninsula through the Eyes of Locals and Tourists Nika. In P. Burns, J.-A. Lester, & L. Bibbings (Eds.), *Tourism and visual culture: methods and cases*. Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Beaulieu, A. (2010). From co-location to co-presence: Shifts in the use of ethnography for the study of knowledge. *Social Studies of Science, 40*(3), 453-470.

Bruun, O. (2014). When you have seen the yellow mountains: approaches to nature, essence and ecology in China. *Worldviews, 18*, 1-29.

Buscher, M., & Urry, J. (2009). Mobile methods and the empirical. *European Journal of Social Theory, 12*(1), 99-116.

Carpiano, R. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The go-along interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. *Health & Place, 15*, 263-272.

Chenoweth, R. (1984). Visitor employed photography: a potential tool for landscape architecture. *Landscape Journal, 3*(2), 136-143.

Cherem, G., & Driver, B. (1983). Visitor Employed Photography: a technique to measure common perceptions of natural environments. *Journal of leisure research, 15*(1), 65-83.

Cohen, E., & Cohen, S. (2015). Beyond Eurocentrism in tourism: a paradigm shift to mobilities. *Tourism Recreation Research, 40*(2), 157-168.

Cook, S., Shaw, J., & Simpson, P. (2016). Jography: Exploring meanings, experiences and spatialities of recreational road-running. *Mobilities, 11*(5), 744-769.

Crowne, K. A. (2013). Cultural exposure, emotional intelligence, and cultural intelligence: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 13*(1), 5-22.

Cui, Q., Liao, X., & Xu, H. (2017). Tourist experience of nature in contemporary China: a cultural divergence approach. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change, 15*(3), 248-264.

Czarniawska, B. (2007). *Shadowing and other techniques for doing fieldwork in modern societies*. Sweden: Copenhagen Business School Press.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. California: SAGE Publication Inc.

Diep, V. T. (2016). The landscape of the void: truth and magic in Chinese landscape painting. *Journal of Visual Art Practice, 16*(1), 77-86.

Dorwart, C., Moore, R., & Leung, Y.-F. (2009). Visitors' Perceptions of a Trail Environment and Effects on Experiences: A Model for Nature-Based Recreation Experiences. *Leisure Sciences, 32*(1), 33-54.

Dube, T. V., Schinke, R. J., Strasser, R., & Lightfoot, N. (2014). Interviewing in situ: employing the guided walk as a dynamic form of qualitative inquiry. *Medical Education Research, 48*, 1092-1100.

Evans, J., & Jones, P. (2011). The walking interview: Methodology, mobility and place. *Applied Geography, 31*(2), 849 - 858.

Fung, C., & Jim, C. (2015). Unraveling Hong Kong Geopark experience with visitor-employed photography method. *Applied Geography, 62*, 301-313.

Garrod, B. (2008). Exploring place perception a photo-based analysis. *Annals of Tourism Research, 35*(2), 381-401.

Gillet, S., Schmitz, P., & Mitas, O. (2016). The Snap-Happy Tourist: The Effects of Photographing Behavior on Tourists' Happiness. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 40*(1), 37-57.

Goldkuhl, G. (2012). Pragmatism vs Interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European Journal of Information Systems, 21*, 135-146.

Gou, S., & Shibata, S. (2017). Using visitor-employed photography to study the visitor experience on a pilgrimage route – A case study of the Nakahechi Route on the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage network in Japan. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, 18*, 22-33.

Greider, T., & Garkovich, L. (1994). Landscapes: the social construction of nature and the environment. *Rural Sociology, 59*(1), 1-24.

Han, F. (2008). *The Chinese View of Nature: Tourism in China's Scenic and Historic Interest Areas.* Queensland University of Technology,

Haywood, K. M. (1990). Visitor-Employed Photography: An Urban Visit Assessment. *Journal of Travel Research*, 25-29.

Holden, A. (2015). Evolving perspectives on tourism's interaction with nature during the last 40 years. *Tourism Recreation Research, 40*(2), 133-143.

Huang, S., & Hsu, C. H. C. (2007). Mainland Chinese residents' perceptions and motivations of visiting Hong Kong: Evidence from focus group interviews. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 10*(2), 191-205.

Hughes, K. (2016). Interpreting Australian Landscapes for Chinese Tourists. In J. Jafari & L. A. Cai (Eds.), *Bridging Tourism Theory and Practice* (pp. 231-246). Australia.

Hughes, K., & Ballantyne, R. (2010). Interpretation Rocks! Designing signs for geotourism sites. In D. Newsome & R. Dowling (Eds.), *Geotourism: the tourism of geology and landscape* (pp. 184-199). Oxford, UK: Goodfellow Publishers.

Ingram, C., Caruana, R., & McCabe, S. (2017). PARTivipative inquiry for tourist experience. *Annals of Tourism Research, 65*, 13-24.

Jacobsen, J. S. (2007). Use of Landscape Perception Methods in Tourism Studies: A Review of Photo-Based Research Approaches. *Tourism Geographies, 9*(3), 234-253.

Jennings, G. (2010). *Tourism Research*. Milton, QLD: John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd.

Jorgensen, D. (1989). *Participant observation: A methodology for human studies*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publications.

Jørgensen, M. T., Law, R., & King, B. E. (2017). Understanding the past, anticipating the future - a critical assessment of China outbound tourism research. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 34*(7), 880-891.

Kimber, S., Yang, J., & Cohen, S. (2019). Performing love, prosperity and Chinese hipsterism: Young independent travellers in Pai, Thailand. *Tourism Studies, 19*(2), 164-191.

Kinney, P. (2017). *Walking interviews*. Retrieved from UK: http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU67.pdf

Knudsen, D., Soper, A., & Metro-Roland, M. (2007). Gazing, Performing and reading: A landscape approach to understanding meaning in tourism theory. *Tourism Geographies, 9*(3), 227-233.

Koning, J., & Ooi, C.-S. (2013). Awkward encounters and ethnography. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal, 8*(1), 16-32.

Kusenbach, M. (2003). Street phenomenology: The go-along as ethnographic research tool. *Ethnography, 4*(3), 455-485.

Lamb, S., Bartlett, H. P., Ashley, A., & Bird, W. (2002). Can lay-led walking programmes increase physical activity in middle aged adults? A randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 56*, 246-252.

Li, J., & Lu, Y. T. (2016). Chinese culture in tourst research: a review and comparison of Chinese and English studies in 1993-2012. *Tourism Review, 71*(2), 118-134.

Li, J., & Pearce, P. (2016). Tourist scams in the city: challenges for domestic travellers in urban China. *International Journal of Tourism Cities, 2*(4), 294-308.

Li, M., Sharpley, R., & Gammon, S. (2019). Towards an understanding of Chinese tourist photography: evidence from the UK. *Current Issues in Tourism, 22*(5), 505-521.

Li, S. (2005). *Chinese common knowledge, tourism, and natural landscapes: Gazing on "Bie you tian di"–"An altogether different world.* (Doctorate). Murdoch University, Australia.

Li, S. (2008). Culture as a Major Determinant in Tourism Development of China. *Current Issues in Tourism, 11*(6), 492-513.

Lothian, A. (1999). Landscape and the philosophy of aesthetics: is landscape quality inherent in the landscape or in the eye of the beholder? *Landscape and Urban Planning, 44*, 177-198.

Lowenthal, D., & Prince, H. (1965). English Landscape Tastes. *The Geographical Review, 55*.

Macpherson, H. (2016). Walking methods in landscape research: moving bodies, spaces of disclosure and rapport. *Landscape Research, 41*(4), 425-432.

Mair, J., & Frew, E. (2018). Academic conferences: A female duo-ethnography. *Current Issues in Tourism, 21*(18), 2152-2172.

Moscardo, G. (2010). The shaping of tourist experience: The importance of stories and themes. In M. Morgan, P. Lugosi, & J. R. Ritchie (Eds.), *The tourism and leisure experience: Consumer and managerial perspectives* (pp. 43-58). Bristol: Channel View.

Mullins, P. M. (2009). Living Stories of the Landscape: Perception of Place through Canoeing in Canada's North. *Tourism Geographies, 11*(2), 233-255.

Myers, M. (2011). Walking again lively: towards an ambulant and conversive methodology of performance and research. *Mobilities, 6*, 183-201.

Nielsen, A., Heyman, E., & Richnau, G. (2012). Liked, disliked and unseen forest attributes: Relation to modes of viewing and cognitive constructs. *Journal of Environmental Management, 113*, 456-466.

Novoa, A. (2015). Mobile ethnography: emergence, techniques and its importance to geography. *Journal of Studies and Research in Human Geography, 9*(1), 97-107.

Ogden, S. (1992). *China's Unresolved Issues: Politics, Development and Culture*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Oku, H., & Fukamachi, K. (2006). The differences in scenic perception of forest visitors through their attributes and recreational activity. *Landscape and Urban Planning, 75*, 34-42.

Ooi, C.-S. (2019). Asian tourists and cultural complexity: Implications for practice and the Asianisation of tourism scholarship. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 31*, 14-23.

Packer, J., Ballantyne, R., & Hughes, K. (2014). Chinese and Australian tourists' attitudes to nature, animals and environmental issues: implications for the design of nature-based tourism experiences. *Tourism Management, 44*, 101-107.

Parks Australia. (n.d,). Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. Retrieved from https://parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru/do/walks/mala-walk/

Pearce, P. L., Wu, M.-Y., & Chen, T. (2015). The spectacular and the mundane: Chinese tourists' online representations of an iconic landscape journey. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 4*(1), 24-35.

Ribeiro, N., & Foemmel, E. (2012). Participant observation. In L. Dwyer, A. Gill, & N. Seetaram (Eds.), *Handbook of Research methods in tourism*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Riley, M., & Holton, M. (2017). Place-based interviewing: Creating and conducting walking interviews. In *SAGE Reseach methods cases*. London: SAGE Publications.

Scarles, C. (2014). Tourism and the Visual. In A. Lew, C. M. Hall, & A. Williams (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Tourism* (1 ed.): John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Scott, A., Carter, C., Brown, K., & White, V. (2009). Seeing is not everything': exploring the landscape experiences of different publics/ landscape research. *Landscape Research, 34*(4), 397-424.

Shackley, M. (2004). Tourist consumption of sacred landscapes space, time and vision. *Tourism Recreation Research, 29*(1), 67-73. Retrieved from https://parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru/people-place/amazing-facts.html

Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data* (4 ed.). London: SAGE.

Sohng, S. (2005). Participatory research approaches: Some key concepts. In J. Gonsalves, T. Becker, A. Braun, D. Campilan, H. D. Chavez, E. Fajber, M. Kapiriri, J. Rivaca-Caminade, & R. Vernooy (Eds.), *Participatory research and development for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management* (Vol. 1, pp. 75-78). Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

Solnit, R. (2001). *Wanderlust: A history of walking*. London: Verso.

Stylianou-Lambert, T. (2012). Tourists with cameras: Reproducing or Producing. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(4), 1817-1838.

Sun, M., Zhang, X., & Ryan, C. (2015). Perceiving tourist destination landscapes through Chinese eyes: the case of South Island, New zealand. *Tourism Management, 46*, 582-595.

Thompson, C. W. (2013). Landscape perception and environmental psychology. In P. Howard, I. Thompson, & E. Waterton (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Landscape studies*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Tourism Research Australia. (2019). *Chinese free and independent travellers - Their potential for regional Australia*. Retrieved from Australia: https://www.tra.gov.au/data-and-research/chinese-free-and-independent-travellers-their-potential-for-regional-australia

Tse, T., & Zhang, E. Y. (2012). Analysis of blogs and microblogs: A case study of Chinese bloggers sharing their Hong Kong travel experiences. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 18*(4), 314-329.

Urry, J. (2007). *Mobilities, Polity*. Cambridge.

Wattchow, B. (2013). Landscape and a sense of place: A creative tension. In P. Howard, I. Thompson, & E. Waterton (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion of Landscape studies*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Winter, T. (2009). Asian tourism and the retreat of anglo-western centrism in tourism theory. *Current Issues in Tourism, 12*(1), 21-31.

Xu, H., Cui, Q., Ballantyne, R., & Packer, J. (2013). Effective environmental interpretation at Chinese natural attractions: the need for an aesthetic approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 21*(1), 117-133.

Xu, H., Ding, P., & Packer, J. (2008). Tourism research in China: understanding the unique cultural context and complexities. *Current Issues in Tourism, 11*(6), 473-491.

Yang, J., Ryan, C., & Zhang, L. (2012). The use of questionnaires in Chinese tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*, 1683-1724.

Zhang, J., Tucker, H., Morrison, A., & Wu, B. (2017). Becoming a backpacker in China: A grounded theory approachto identity construction of backpackers. *Annals of Tourism Research, 64*, 114-125.

Zhang, W. (2017). Smartphone photography in urban China. *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering, 11*(1), 2312-2239.

Appendix A: Fieldwork Research Protocol

Research Protocol

1. Pre-Walk introduction

- **Explain** the purpose of the research study and what participants should expect during the walk.
- **Obtain** participants' **verbal and written** consent for audio recording and the use of data for research. Encourage participants to verbalize their thoughts during the walk.
- **Ensure sufficient equipment**: water, sunblock and insect repellent.

2. Accompanied walk (AW) observations

Researcher checklist

- Dates, time, weather condition, sample unit dynamic, roles in the sample units, walking speed, movement, frequency of stops, and changes in directions.
- Locations of photography, frequency of photography, conversations/comments before/after photography, comments/responses after researcher probing.
- General emotions, moods, social interaction between sample unit and with researcher, body language, characteristics of landscape, length of stay and points of interest mentioned at interpretive signage, materials and forms, interactions with various forms of interpretation.
- Researcher's personal feelings, hunches, guesses and speculations.

Audio-recording of conversations

- Audio-recording commences upon the start of the walking tour. Two voice recorders are used.
- Approximately every 20 minutes researcher must check the recorders are working.

3. On-the-move Prompt list

- Photo-taking of scenery, wildlife, human activities, interpretative signage: *Why did you take a shot of…? How do you feel about …? What does the … make you think of?*
- Long silence, sudden stops or contemplation: *What is currently on your mind? How does that make you feel?*
- Engagement with interpretive materials: *What elements interest you? What makes you laugh/frown/…? How does that make you feel? (*Or other impromptu questions emerging from participants' interaction with interpretive materials).
- General: *At …, I heard you mention…, could you tell me more about it?* (Or other impromptu questions emerging from participants' social interactions and conversations).

4. Semi-structured Interview

- Photo selection and naming: *Could you please review the photos taken during the trip and pick 1-2 that best represent your idea of Uluru? Could you please name each photo and tell me why?*
- General impressions of Uluru*: What are the things that stick in your mind about Uluru?*
- *Could you provide me with one element during the walk that you remember the most?*
- *What more would you like to see?*

Follow up on comments, responses and observations that the researcher is uncertain about, based on personal speculations.

Provide gift vouchers and thank them for their time.