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**Jin, Haipeng (2019) *Understanding Chinese tourist shopping in Australia: a social practice perspective*. PhD Thesis, James Cook University.**

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<https://doi.org/10.25903/5ca3e33f5ab3b>

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**Understanding Chinese tourist shopping in Australia:  
A social practice perspective**

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January 2019



## **Acknowledgements**

An ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi once wrote, “The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.” I started my PhD journey at James Cook University on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Looking back, I cannot believe how quickly time flies, but meanwhile, I can see how far I have come. It is with my support network that I have arrived this far, making the journey full of beautiful stories and memorable experiences.

To my supervisors, Professor Gianna Moscardo and Associate Professor Laurie Murphy, thank you very much for the commitment, wisdom, encouragement and advice you offered throughout my PhD studies. The Advisory Panel of the Year Award tells how excellent you are as supervisors. More than 60 supervisory meetings embody the consistency of your support. This thesis is a testament to my accomplishment through your inspiration and guidance. It has been an honour to work with you.

To the staff in the College of Business, Law and Governance and the Graduate Research School, thank you for all the assistance, conversations and opportunities. Special mention to Ms Belinda Wilson for organising my confirmation and pre-completion seminars, and Professor Zhangyue Zhou and Associate Professor Riccardo Welters for interesting discussions over lunch.

To my fellow PhD colleagues and friends, I am privileged to meet and know you guys along the PhD journey. Without you, this journey is not complete. I have learnt a lot from you. Special thanks to Dr Amy Osmond, Dr Christopher Nicholas, Mr Thien Minh Le, Dr Rachel Hay, Dr Keji Huang, Dr Junjie Wen, Dr Meen Chee Hong, Dr Tingzhen Chen, Ms Jing Li, Dr Xing Zhao, Dr Putu Mustika and Ms Karmen Luzar.

To my wife, Lan Zhang, words are powerless to express how grateful I am to have you in my life. Thanks for cooking so that dinner is ready when I get home. Thanks for listening to me and trusting me when I feel stressed and anxious. Thanks for being you. Your kindness, simplicity and mildness are the eternal sunshine of my life.

Finally to my family in China, I cannot thank you enough for your endless love and support. Despite the physical distance between us, you are always there for me no matter what. You do everything you can to keep me focused on my studies. It is because of you that I started to understand there is no place like home. I feel blessed to be a part of this loving family.

## Statement of the contribution of others

Nature of assistance	Contribution	Names, titles and affiliations of co-contributors
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	Editorial assistance	Associate Professor Elizabeth Tynan, JCU
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Financial support	Stipend	China Scholarship Council (2014-2018)
	Research support grant	Graduate Research School, JCU (2014-2018)
Data collection support	Approval for the conduct of observation research	Mr Mike Williamson, Cairns Airport Mr Mark Stanley, Cairns Night Markets Ms Belinda Huang, DFS Galleria Cairns Ms April Ruggles, Woolworths Cairns
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## Publications from the thesis

<b>Chapter number</b>	<b>Details of publications on which chapter is based</b>	<b>Nature and extent of the intellectual input of each author</b>
2	Jin, H., Moscardo, G., & Murphy, L. (2017). Making sense of tourist shopping research: A critical review. <i>Tourism Management</i> , 62, 120-134	Jin found and summarised the literature, developed the conceptual framework and wrote the first draft of the paper which was revised with editorial input from his supervisors Moscardo and Murphy.
3	Jin, H., Moscardo, G., & Murphy, L. (2018). Exploring Chinese outbound tourist shopping: A social practice framework. <i>Journal of Travel Research</i> , accepted for publication	Jin selected the theoretical framework, designed the methodology and wrote the first draft of the paper which was revised with editorial input from his supervisors Moscardo and Murphy.

## **Abstract**

Chinese outbound tourism has become a significant phenomenon in world tourism development. Shopping makes up the highest proportion of the travel expenditure of Chinese outbound tourists. However, despite its importance to many destinations, Chinese outbound tourist shopping (COTS) remains underexplored in the tourism literature. A critical review of the existing published research on COTS reveals that most studies are quantitative and focused on explaining satisfaction, motivation and perception from a consumer behaviour perspective. Also, academic interest in COTS has primarily focused on Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, leaving COTS in Western countries poorly understood. To fill these research gaps, the thesis employed a mixed methods approach to systematically examine COTS in Australia from a sociological perspective.

The overall aim of this thesis was to use social practice theory (SPT) as a theoretical foundation to understand Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. COTS as a social practice is the basic unit of analysis, while Chinese outbound tourists are decentralised as the carriers of this practice. Inspired by a zooming in and out approach, the overall aim was broken down into three research questions:

1. What are the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia?
2. How do Chinese tourists carry out shopping practices on site?
3. Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel?

Three studies were conducted to answer these three research questions. The first study used a social practice framework to explore the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia. Netnography was employed to collect and analyse shopping-related texts and images in 40 travel blogs from two Chinese online travel communities – Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn. The findings show that Chinese tourist shopping practices consist of four interconnected elements: materials, competences, meanings and settings. Chinese tourists purchase a variety of utilitarian products in Australia, ranging from clothing, accessories and

cosmetics, to healthcare products, food and drinks (materials). They not only shop in tourist attractions for souvenirs, but also expand into pharmacies, supermarkets, department stores and local markets (settings). Although language is an obstacle for many Chinese tourists shopping in Australia (competences), a range of information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as shopping websites and mobile apps are used by Chinese tourists to facilitate their shopping (materials and competences). The significance of their participation in shopping practices is multifaceted, including hunting for mementos, seeking brand value, pursuing product quality and authenticity, and maintaining *guanxi* (meanings).

The second study drew upon the notion of practice as performance to examine how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold in Australia. The study focused on the embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances. At a major tourist destination in north-eastern Australia, 110 participant observations conducted, then the field notes were analysed in a content analysis software, Leximancer 4.5. Chinese tourist shopping practices were found to be performed on site through a range of intra-personal and inter-personal embodied actions. Also, the shopping performances of Chinese tourists differ across shopping settings and categories of products. For example, the research found that while in markets, Chinese tourists often browse and leave without purchase, a pattern of activities not seen in other settings. When Chinese tourists buy clothing and accessories, they try on the items at the shop, but when selecting healthcare products, they rely very much on the images stored on their smartphones. Smartphones are commonly used by Chinese tourists, especially in supermarkets, to store product images, search information online and communicate with family and friends not present in the shopping setting through social media during product selection and purchase.

The first two studies zoomed in on Chinese tourist shopping practices to obtain detailed insights, while the third and final study zoomed out to uncover how these practices are connected to, and embedded in extensive networks of practices. In this study, 32 semi-structured interviews were conducted to identify the major social and consumption practices

that affect Chinese tourist shopping in Australia, and reveal how the identified practices lead to the dominance of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in their travel. It concludes that Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia result from a combination of Chinese consumerism and *guanxi* maintenance under the condition of outbound travel. Chinese tourist demand for consumerism, mainly featuring a desire for Western brands and the pursuit of high quality, is not matched by relevant supply in China, but can be met and further stimulated through outbound travel. Chinese tourists shop not only for themselves, but also to maintain *guanxi* via gift buying and purchasing products requested by others. Although outbound travel means temporary absence from *guanxi* networks at home, their emphasis on *guanxi* maintenance continues. Further, the low frequency of outbound travel, especially to long-haul destinations like Australia, means that Chinese tourists shop not just for their current needs but also for future use.

Overall, this thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective. The application of SPT to COTS research enriches and extends tourist shopping knowledge by offering new insights into what COTS is, how it unfolds and why it is the way it is. More broadly, this thesis also contributes to rectifying the dominance of investigations on motivational and perceptual aspects of tourist shopping, broadening the spectrum of this activity and how to research it. From a practical perspective, the findings of this thesis provide guidelines for retail businesses in the tourism industry to develop policies tailored to the valuable Chinese market.

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## **Abbreviations**

ADS – Approved Destination Status

COTS – Chinese Outbound Tourist Shopping

DFO – Direct Factory Outlets

DIBP – Department of Immigration and Border Protection

ICTs – Information and Communication Technologies

QVB – Queen Victoria Building

SPT – Social Practice Theory

TRS – Tourist Refund Scheme

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organisation



# **Chapter 1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a general introduction to the PhD research which incorporates COTS into the broader consumption landscape in China. The chapter is structured as follows. Section 1.1 presents the background of the conduct of this PhD research. This section includes a brief review of the development of consumption in China, that of Chinese outbound tourism in general and Chinese outbound tourism to Australia in particular, with the prominence of COTS being highlighted. Section 1.2 reviews the existing research on COTS and outlines the research gaps that this thesis aims to address, followed by Section 1.3 which gives an overview of the theoretical foundation of this thesis. After that, the chapter describes the overall aim and research questions in Section 1.4, with the research methodologies employed in the thesis being introduced in Section 1.5. Finally, Section 1.6 presents the thesis outline in order to graphically show the structure, content and flow of this thesis.

## **1.1 Background**

### 1.1.1 Consumption in China

China (referring to the People's Republic of China) has transformed from an ascetic to a consumer society since its establishment in 1949 (Wang, 2009a). Under the leadership of Mao Zedong (1949-1976), the state controlled nearly all aspects of what people consumed to concentrate efforts on developing heavy industries (Wang, 2009b). The consumption patterns of Chinese people at that time were largely moulded by egalitarianism, frugality and anti-bourgeoisie lifestyles, with these ideologies being considered as necessary in the course of socialist construction (Zhang, 2017). China underwent a consumer revolution after launching the reform and opening-up policy in 1978 (Davis, 2000). Consumerism was no longer contrary to the dominant ideology (Zhao & Belk, 2008), and was viewed as an engine for both economic growth and social stability (Yu, 2014). Especially after the 2008 financial crisis, the Chinese government stimulated consumption as a main approach to boosting domestic demand. In 2017, consumption contributed to 58.8% of economic growth in China (Lu, 2018). The World Economic Forum (2018) predicts that China will transition to a consumption-driven development model, and will continue to be the largest contributor to the growth of global consumption.

However, the consumer revolution in China is not just a replication of the Western consumer culture (Davis, 2000), but the outcome of rapid transformations in Chinese economic, social and technological structures (Yu, 2014). On the one hand, Chinese people have adopted some of the materialist behaviours of their Western counterparts (Zhang, 2017). For example, China leads in global luxury consumption, generating significant demand for global luxury brands in every segment (Horton, 2016). On the other hand, the driving forces of Chinese materialism are different because of unique historical experiences and cultural values (Zhang, 2017). There is consensus in the broader literature on contemporary Chinese consumption that is a unique social and economic phenomenon emerging from a combination of changing economic circumstances, changing political ideologies and a re-emergence of Confucian

based traditional values (Doctoroff, 2012; Sun, D'Alessandro, & Johnson, 2014; Yang & Stening, 2012; Zhang, 2017, 2018). Research into Chinese consumer behaviour in general consistently identifies four interconnected dimensions. The first is the intensity and overt nature of conspicuous consumption, which is driven by opportunity, current political ideology, and supported by both the importance of face and *guanxi*, which are embedded in traditional Chinese culture (Sun, et al., 2014; Yang & Stening, 2012; Zhang, 2018). Face and *guanxi* are the next two elements. Face, reflecting the desire to be respected, is a major direct driver of materialism and consumption (Sun, et al., 2014; Yang & Stening, 2012). *Guanxi*, which refers to important social networks based on mutual commitment and obligation and the continued exchange of favours (Lin, 2011), also emerges from traditional Confucian values and contributes to consumption through gift giving (Qian, Abdur Razzaque, & Ah Keng, 2007). The final dimension of contemporary Chinese consumption is the traditional collectivist nature of Chinese culture. Collectivism is connected to consumption through social conformity and group influence over purchase decisions. For instance, it has been found that brand meanings in China are socially constructed amongst groups of important others, rather than created at the individual level (Eckhardt & Bengtsson, 2015). This collectivist approach to consumption is especially evident in the use of social media and Internet technology to inform and guide purchase decisions (Kasabov, 2016; Wang, Yu, & Wei, 2012). As Zhang (2017) stated, Chinese consumers choose values from their cultural repertoire – which contains both Western and traditional Chinese values – to legitimise their spending decisions. COTS reflects this new Chinese consumer culture, and has become a prominent consumption practice in the development of Chinese outbound tourism.

### 1.1.2 Chinese outbound tourism

Chinese outbound tourism did not commence until the early 1980s, when group tours were organised for Chinese citizens to visit their relatives in Hong Kong and Macao (Huang, Keating, Kriz, & Heung, 2015). At that time, Chinese outbound tourism was on a small scale with tight policy control. The apparent growth of Chinese outbound tourism began in 1997

with the promulgation of the “Provisional measures concerning the administration of outbound travel of Chinese citizens at their own expenses” (Xie & Li, 2009). Meanwhile, to regulate outbound travel, the Chinese government implemented the Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme, which is a bilateral tourism agreement between China and another country, whereby Chinese citizens are permitted to undertake leisure travel in groups to that country (Keating, 2009). In 2012, China became the largest source market and the top spender in outbound tourism across the world (United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2013), with 83 million Chinese tourists spending USD102 billion abroad (China Tourism Academy, 2013). In 2017, the number of Chinese outbound tourists reached 131 million (China Tourism Academy, 2018a), which is more than three times that in 2007 (Zhang & Lai, 2009). China continues to lead global outbound travel (UNWTO, 2017).

It can be claimed that Chinese outbound tourism has developed at a remarkable pace, making it a significant phenomenon in the world tourism development. This phenomenon has attracted great attention from both academia (for a review, see Jin & Wang, 2016) and the industry (e.g., Tourism Australia, 2011; U.S. Travel Association, 2018). Interestingly, shopping continues to make up the highest proportion of the travel expenditure of Chinese outbound tourists (China Tourism Academy, 2018a). It is reported that Chinese tourists are keen on a large variety of products, ranging from luxury brands in Europe (Clark, 2014) to toilet seats in Japan (Silbert, 2015). The Japanese media even coined a new term “*bakugai*” – which translates as “explosive buying” – to describe the shopping sprees of Chinese tourists in Tokyo (Ryall, 2015). The shopping-led consumption of Chinese outbound tourists generates about 13% of global tourism receipts, benefiting many destinations around the world (UNWTO, 2015). Accordingly, tourism organisations in many countries are developing strategies to take full advantage of this aspect of Chinese tourism (see Clark, 2014; Pash, 2016).

### 1.1.3 Chinese outbound tourism to Australia

Australia was one of the first Western countries to gain ADS approval in 1999 (Tourism Australia, 2017). From then on, Australia was allowed to host group leisure tours from China. In addition to group package tours, there are a rising number of Chinese tourists traveling to Australia independently. According to Tourism Research Australia (2015a), China has dominated the growth of free and independent travellers to Australia since 2005, with 45% of Chinese leisure visitors to Australia falling into this category in the period 2011-2013. Taken together, as shown in Figure 1.1, Chinese visitor arrivals to Australia have experienced a large increase with continuing fast growth in recent years. In 2017, there were 1.36 million Chinese visitor arrivals to Australia with a total spend of AUD10.4 billion, and China remained Australia's second largest and the most valuable inbound tourism market (Tourism Australia, 2018).

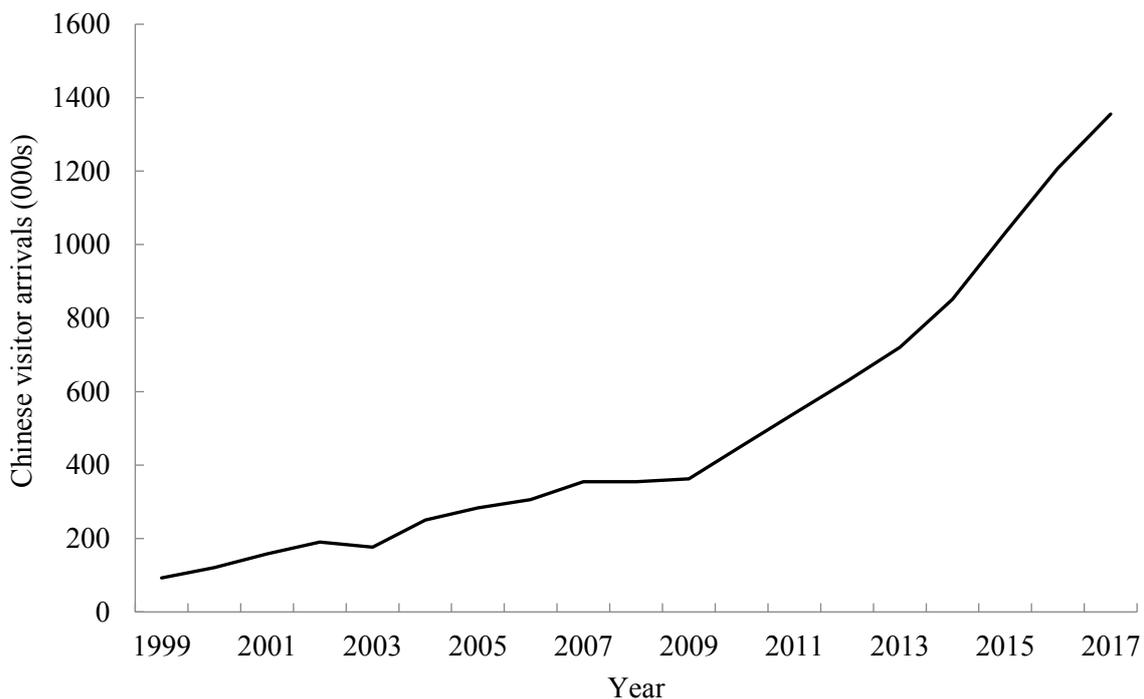


Figure 1.1 Chinese visitor arrivals to Australia (1999-2017)

Source: Australia Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Arrivals & Departures

As with their shopping enthusiasm in other countries (Sun, Ryan, & Pan, 2015; Xu & McGehee, 2012; Zhu, Xu, & Jiang, 2016), Chinese tourists spend a sizeable amount on shopping when traveling in Australia. According to Tourism Research Australia (2017), “Chinese visitors love going shopping. Almost 1 million visitors went shopping for pleasure, spending (AU) \$1.1 billion on items to take home.” (p. 1) Shopping has also been identified as a key driver for creating a positive travel experience for Chinese tourists to Australia (Tourism Research Australia, 2014). However, Chinese tourist shopping in Australia has only been explored by Kwek and Lee (2013) and Gao, Huang, and Brown (2017). Specifically, Kwek and Lee (2013) examined the preference of Chinese corporate group travellers for Western brand names. Gao, et al. (2017) also focused on Chinese group tourists, and investigated the influence of face on their gift purchase behaviour. It can be argued that more research needs to be conducted to understand Chinese tourist shopping in Australia in a holistic manner and in depth.

## **1.2 Chinese outbound tourist shopping: The state of knowledge**

COTS remains underexplored in the tourism literature, despite its importance to many destinations. A systematic literature search<sup>1</sup> identified that the first journal article that focuses on COTS appeared in 2006, when Lin and Lin (2006) assessed the shopping satisfaction of Chinese professional group tourists in Taiwan. Lin and Lin (2006) found that Chinese tourists were only satisfied with providing home delivery service by comparing tourist expectations and perceptions towards 20 shopping attributes. Further, it was found that knowledge of the sales staff contributed most to the overall shopping satisfaction of Chinese tourists, followed by shopping attributes such as marking product price and product commemoration (Lin & Lin, 2006). The literature search also indicates that there have been only 23 journal articles

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<sup>1</sup> This literature search consists of three steps. Firstly, four key academic databases covering the main international tourism journals – ScienceDirect, Sage Journals, Taylor & Francis Online and Emerald Insight – were selected to search for articles, in which “Chinese”, “tourist”/“tourism”, and “shopping”/“purchase”/“buy” appeared in the title, abstract and/or keywords. Then “Chinese tourist shopping” was used as the search term in Google Scholar to identify other relevant articles. The third and final step was conducted by looking through the reference lists of the selected articles in the first two steps to ensure that key publications were not missed.

on COTS published from 2006 to 2017 (see Appendix A for details). These articles take Chinese outbound tourists as the research object to investigate a range of topics, including shopping satisfaction (e.g., Wong & Wan, 2013), the influence of face on gift purchase behaviours (Gao, et al., 2017), and the zero-fare tour in shopping tourism (Tse & Tse, 2015).

It is apparent that the shopping satisfaction of Chinese outbound tourists in general has attracted attention from tourism researchers. Similar to Lin and Lin (2006), Liu, Choi, and Lee (2008) evaluated the satisfaction of Chinese tourists towards fashion retailers in Hong Kong. In this study, three out of 10 shopping attributes – product quality, price and service quality – were found to be unsatisfactory (Liu, et al., 2008). Wong and Wan (2013) conceptualised tourist shopping satisfaction as a four dimensional construct that reflects tourist satisfaction of service product and environment, merchandise values, staff service quality and service differentiation, and reported that Chinese tourist satisfaction with the service product and environment is the most important predictor of positive shopping experiences. Wong and Lam (2016) argued that tourism research commonly defines tourist shopping satisfaction as a general destination attribute, which fails to account for the differences among retail stores. In their study, the store shopping satisfaction of Chinese tourists in Macau were found to mediate the effects of shopping motives and store loyalty programmes on store loyalty and destination outcomes (length of stay and frequency of visit) (Wong & Lam, 2016).

Tourist shopping motivation forms another line of research on COTS. For example, Chan, To, Chu, and Zhang (2014) identified that Chinese tourists' purchase of luxury goods is primarily motivated by four factors: self-satisfaction, possession obsessiveness, status consciousness and personal differentness. Based on these motivations, Chinese tourists can be segmented as shopping hedonists, ego-defended achievers and conspicuous fashionistas (Chan, et al., 2014). Tsang, Lee, and Liu (2014) applied Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to understand Chinese tourist shopping motivations in Hong Kong, and found that Chinese tourists with more shopping experiences do not necessarily place more emphasis on higher-level of motivational

factors. More recently, Lin (2017) stated that the strongest motive for Chinese tourists' food souvenir purchase is acquiring gifts, which is distinctly different from Western tourists' emphasis on souvenirs as evidence (Wilkins, 2011). Besides, it was noted that symbolism stands out as the most relevant product attribute with Chinese tourist shopping motivations (Lin, 2017).

A number of issues can be identified with this existing body of research. Firstly, the coverage of the COTS phenomenon is piecemeal and limited in several ways. Only four studies (Gao, et al., 2017; Kwek & Lee, 2013; Xu & McGehee, 2012; Zhu, et al., 2016) focused on destinations outside Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Wang, Doss, Guo, and Li (2010) noted this could be a major limitation as other destinations offer a very different context and set of conditions for shopping. The existing research has only limited coverage of the major dependent variables of actual shopping behaviour, with only five studies (Choi, Heo, & Law, 2016a; Gao, et al., 2017; Guo et al., 2009; Yeung & Yee, 2012; Zhu, et al., 2016) measuring the full spectrum of what Chinese outbound tourists actually purchased. Two studies (Chang, 2014; Kong & Chang, 2016) measured overall expenditure but did not examine what was actually purchased and Lin (2017) measured food souvenir purchases only. The majority of the studies measured satisfaction with shops and service, preferences for shop and product features, or intention to purchase. In virtually all of these studies there was an underlying assumption of a direct link between these measures and actual purchase behaviour. These untested assumptions about the assumed precursors to actual shopping behaviours are problematic in two significant ways. The first problem is that they are derived from Western marketing/psychology models of behaviour that assume individuals are shopping for themselves and are relatively free agents unconstrained in their options. Given the emphasis in the broader literature on the collectivist nature of, and ideological influence on, Chinese consumption (Zhang, 2017, 2018), these untested assumptions of individual agency are likely to be erroneous. Indeed several of the papers, especially the more recent ones, raise this as an issue (Kwek & Lee, 2013; Lin, 2017; Wang, et al., 2010; Zhu, et al., 2016). The second problem is the borrowing of Western models that assume purchases are primarily for the

individual tourist. Again more recent studies have challenged this with Lin (2017) arguing that more than 80% of all purchases made were gifts for others, although Guo, et al. (2009) also noted its importance in one of the earliest papers on COTS.

The coverage of COTS research has also been limited to quantitative survey methods and this research gap is reflected in the prevalent use of statistical analysis tools, such as factor analysis and structural equation modelling. Only three studies used alternative methods, with Xu and McGehee (2012) and Zhu, et al. (2016) conducting semi-structured interviews and Kwek and Lee (2013) reporting on a participant observation study. This very limited range of methodological approaches highlights a second major issue for this existing COTS research, its lack of explanatory power. Zhu, et al. (2016) suggest that the bulk of the previous COTS research can be described as “descriptive marketing studies” (p. 293). This reflects the primary goals of all but a handful of studies (specifically Kwek & Lee, 2013; Lin, 2017; Wang, et al., 2010; Zhu, et al., 2016) focused on recommendations to retail stores and destinations as to how to attract the attention of Chinese tourist shoppers. Despite the extensive use of multivariate statistics, there are almost no attempts to explain any of the observed relationships at anything beyond a shallow descriptive level. In 2010, Wang and colleagues warned that China was a complex and dynamic country and researchers needed to seek a more “in-depth understanding of its culture” if they wanted to get beyond simply describing what Chinese tourists do to explaining why they do it and moving to predicting how they might change in the future (Wang, et al., 2010, p. 434). The three more qualitative studies (Kwek & Lee, 2013; Lin, 2017; Zhu, et al., 2016) all attempted to take more sociological approach in attempting to better link COTS behaviours to their social and cultural context.

Overall, this area of research needs more qualitative and mixed methods research to support the induction of more complex explanatory models that take into account the unique characteristics of Chinese consumption and that focus on COTS as a holistic phenomenon. In addition, research is required in a wider range of destinations and with greater attention paid

to the actual shopping behaviours. The present thesis seeks to address these needs by employing a mixed methods approach to COTS in Australia and by using theoretical frameworks from sociology that supports both a holistic approach to the phenomenon and attempts to place this particular form of consumption in its social, political and cultural context.

### **1.3 Theoretical foundation**

#### 1.3.1 Sociology of consumption

The sociology of consumption is a sub-discipline of sociology, which places consumption at the centre of research questions, studies and social theories. Historically, sociologists rarely examined consumption in its own right (Warde, 1990), as it was often seen as a phenomenon of low explanatory value in examinations of production (Ritzer, Goodman, & Wiedenhof, 2001; Slater, 2005). The production-dominant paradigm was transformed mainly by the cultural turn in the humanities and social sciences in the 1970s (Warde, 2014). As a consequence, consumption was reconceptualised as a sociocultural activity with symbolic and communicative capacities, helping to express and mediate social relations, structures and divisions (Rief, 2008). Nowadays, as Rey and Ritzer (2012) assert, “the sociology of consumption is destined to become increasingly important because consumption can only grow in importance.” (p. 465)

Warde (2015) divided the development of the sociology of consumption into three periods: prior to 1980s; the years between the early 1980s and the mid-2000s; and the subsequent decades. Empirical research explicitly on consumption within sociology was nearly non-existent before the 1980s (Warde, 2015). Although some classical social theorists, such as Weber and Simmel, made passing comments about consumption, they were to a great extent locked into a productivist bias (Ritzer, et al., 2001; Zukin & Maguire, 2004). The second phase, when the influence of the cultural turn was paramount, witnessed many of the most reliable and best-documented findings to date (Warde, 2015). These findings suggested that consumption was a means by which people expressed their identities through symbolic

representation in taste and lifestyle (Warde, 2014). In the parlance of (Soron, 2010), the sociology of consumption sought to “understand how and why consumption became such a socially valued and culturally meaningful sphere of activity.” (p. 175) However, the cultural analysis of consumption has been criticised for the neglect of material entities and embodied procedures (Warde, 2014). In response, the sociology of consumption has its third and latest phase, with new theoretical perspectives including SPT emerging (Warde, 2015).

### 1.3.2 Social practice theory

SPT is currently employed across a number of disciplines ranging from the humanities and social sciences to business and public health. Some tourism researchers also started to employ this theory to examine touristic phenomena in recent years (e.g., James & Halkier, 2016; Lepoša, 2018). It should be noted that the applications of SPT to tourism research will not be discussed here, but later in the individual study chapters. The focus of the current section is to introduce the SPT that this thesis draws upon, and to provide the rationale for using it.

SPT is not a unified theory. Rather, it constitutes a broad family of theoretical approaches connected by a web of historical and conceptual similarities (Nicolini, 2012). Nicolini (2012) further elaborated SPT from six research traditions as below:

- The work of Giddens and Bourdieu. Both Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1977, 1990) contend that social life is a contingent and ever-changing texture of human practices. Giddens (1984) regarded social practice as the basic domain of study of the social sciences, but did not provide any analytical examination of this concept. Differently, Bourdieu (1977, 1990) worked extensively on theorising practice through the use of a range of new concepts such as *habitus* and symbolic capital.
- Practice as tradition and community. This scholarly tradition examines practice as a form of tradition reproduced in time through a process of active engagement and participation sustained by a specific community. Notably, Lave and Wenger (1991) proposed a model of situated learning which shows how legitimate peripheral participation leads to membership in a community of practice.

- Practice as activity. This tradition, especially the cultural and historical activity theory (Engeström, 1987), puts particular emphasis on several aspects of practices, including the role of artefacts in mediating practices, the notion of an activity system, the organising capacity of objects, and the conflicting, dialectic and developmental nature of practices.
- Practice as accomplishment. Ethno-methodology (Garfinkel, 1967) treats practices as spatio-temporal accomplishments obtained by knowledgeable actors who use a variety of (ethno) methods, tools, techniques and procedures. It suggests that no descriptions of traditional categorical features of social life are complete without the concreted description of how they are lived through in practices.
- Practice as the locus of the social. This version of SPT builds explicitly upon the legacy of Heidegger and/or Wittgenstein. As a leading exponent, Schatzki (1996, 2002) provides the most thorough and sustained body of work that puts social practice at the core of social order and personal conduct. Social practices, not well-informed individuals or overarching systems, are construed to be the starting point for theorising the social world.
- Practice as discourse. Approaches to discourse translate into a set of tools for understanding practices. For instance, Foucault's (1972) view of discourse brings to the fore the material and heterogeneous nature of practices, and highlights the need to explain why and how practices, from which discourse derives its power and influence, come to exhibit overarching regularities across time and space.

Given this diversity of theoretical approaches within SPT, it should be pointed out that the SPT used in this thesis is mainly based on the extensive work of Schatzki (1996), Reckwitz (2002), Warde (2005), Nicolini (2012) and Shove, Pantzar, and Watson (2012). According to these practice theorists, social practices are the basic units of analysis, whereas individuals are decentralised as carriers of the practices. It is at this fundamental level that SPT provides a new vista on the operation of social world. A social practice can be defined as:

a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to each other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotions and motivational knowledge. (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249)

Influenced by this definition, Shove, et al. (2012) put forward a scheme in which a social practice is made of three broad elements: materials, competences and meanings (see Figure 1.2). A social practice exists as an entity, which is a recognisable conjunction of the constitutive elements (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012). As Reckwitz (2002) stated, the existence of a practice depends on the existence and interconnectedness of its elements and cannot be reduced to any one of single elements. At the same time, a social practice exists as performance, which refers to the carrying out the practice (Schatzki, 1996). It is only through successive moments of performance that the nexus provided by practice as entity is filled out and the interdependences between its elements are sustained over time (Shove, et al., 2012).

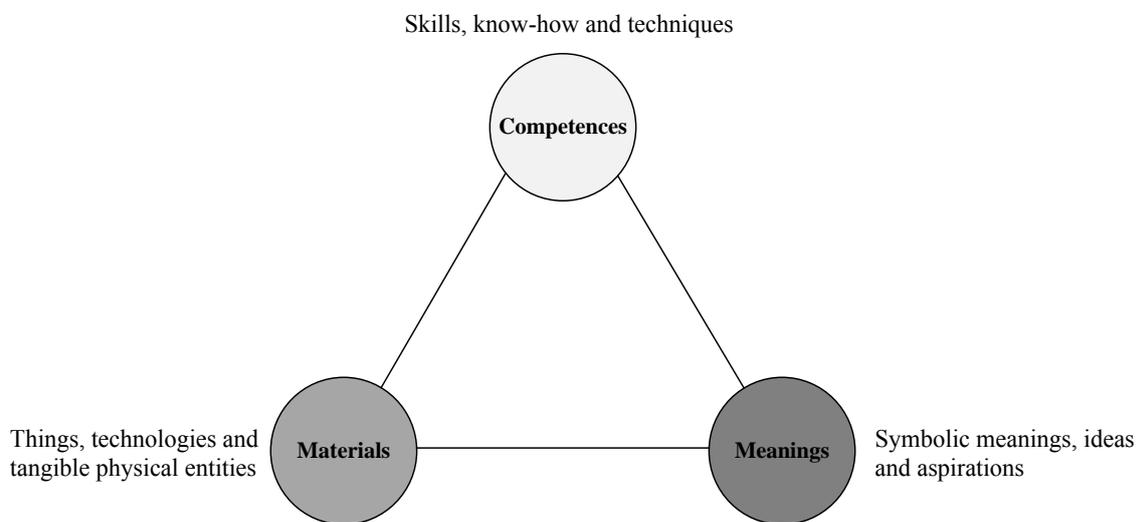


Figure 1.2 A social practice scheme (adapted from Shove, et al., 2012)

Nicolini (2012) employed a zooming metaphor to show how to examine social practices: zooming in on the accomplishments of practices, and zooming out of practices in a wider picture. The first movement is to capture and convey the elements that constitute practices, the trajectories of practices, and how practices are performed. The “zooming out” movement

seeks to uncover the connections between practices and to understand how practices are connected to, and embedded in, extensive networks of practices. SPT situates the social in practices, which is in essence different from both individualistic and structural views (Reckwitz, 2002; Røpke, 2009; Schatzki, 1996; Spaargaren, 2011). In this way, SPT provides a distinctive account of the social world and how it changes.

This use of social practices to bridge the agency-structure divide is an especially important one in tourism in general, and for understanding COTS in particular. The debate between these two approaches to causal explanation of human behaviour roughly aligns with two of the fundamental social science disciplines, with sociology traditionally connected to structural explanations of actions and psychology based on individual agency theories of actions. Individual agency argues that individuals make choices about how to behave based on their individual characteristics, perceptions of the situations and their personal abilities or constraints. By way of contrast, structuralists within sociology argue that action arises out of social structures and institutions that constrain and direct individual choices (Elder-Vass, 2010). In both psychology (Cote & Levine, 2002) and sociology (Cohen & Cohen, 2012) recent theoretical advances have attempted to bridge what Bramwell and Meyer (2007) call the “unhelpful dualism between agency and structure” (p. 766). Despite calls for tourism researchers to more explicitly consider and address this fundamental issue on the developing causal explanations in tourism (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Davis, 2001; MacCannell, 2001), the agency-structure divide has mostly been ignored in tourism (Bramwell, 2007). Arguably it appears that few tourism researchers seem to be even aware that it is an issue. Moscardo (2015) and Dann (2015) note that much of the psychology based research into tourist motivation does not actually address why people chose to travel, but rather decisions about how and where to travel. The decision to spend discretionary time and money on travel is one that is more likely explained by broader social structures. Moscardo (2015) also notes that even within these studies, tourism researchers routinely confuse motivation with other concepts such as perceived destination features and attitude towards destination or travel form attributes. Similar criticism can be made of research into COTS. At the technical level,

many of the scales used to measure shopping motivation are actually measures of preferences of shopping context characteristics. Like the work on travel motivation much of the work on COTS claims to be examining why Chinese outbound tourists shop but instead focuses on a limited aspects of how they shop. At a broader level, the available research into COTS and Chinese consumption in general suggests that elements of social structure may play an important role in COTS. Social practices offer a new level of analysis that allows for the integration of individual and social levels of causal explanation which offers the potential to uncover new insights and develop more complete explanations of COTS.

#### **1.4 Research aim and objectives**

This thesis seeks to fill the research gaps identified in Section 1.2 by examining COTS in Australia from a sociological perspective. It incorporates the broader consumption landscape in China into the analysis rather than just investigating individual functioning as in most of the previous COTS research. The **overall aim** of this thesis was to use SPT as a theoretical foundation to understand Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. COTS is seen as a social practice that is carried out by Chinese outbound tourists. Inspired by Nicolini's (2012) "zooming in and out" approach, the overarching aim was broken down into three research questions:

**Question 1:** What are the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia?

**Question 2:** How do Chinese tourists carry out shopping practices on site?

**Question 3:** Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel?

Correspondingly, three studies were designed to answer these three research questions respectively. **Study one** was an exploratory study. It employed the social practice scheme put forward by Shove, et al. (2012) as a preliminary framework to explore the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia. **Study two** investigated the second research question. This study drew upon the notion of practice as performance (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005) to examine how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold

in Australia by focusing on the embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances. Both study one and study two zoomed in on Chinese tourist shopping practices to obtain detailed insights, while **study three** zoomed out to uncover how these practices are connected to, and embedded in extensive networks of practices. Study three answered the third research question by identifying the major social and consumption practices that affect Chinese tourist shopping in Australia, and revealing how the identified practices contribute to the dominance of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in their travel.

### **1.5 Methodology**

Methodologies are “the principles that guide the way that a researcher produces knowledge.” (Jennings, 2010, p. 441) Research methodologies are traditionally classified into two categories: quantitative and qualitative methodology, with the mixed methods approach more recently being recognised as the third category (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have their strengths and weaknesses, and one methodology is not necessarily superior to the other (Kumar, 2011). The mixed methods approach, which can be broadly defined as a merging of quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Jennings, 2010), has evolved as a pragmatic way of using the strengths of both methodologies (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Which methodology should be used in a study largely depends upon its research questions. In the words of Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), “Research methods should follow research questions in a way that offers the best chance to obtain useful answers.” (p. 17)

Generally speaking, quantitative and qualitative methodologies have different philosophical underpinnings in terms of ontology and epistemology. According to Bryman (2016), quantitative research is often associated with objectivism (an ontological position that implies that social reality is external to social actors) and positivism (an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of natural sciences to the study of social reality). By contrast, qualitative research is generally associated with constructionism (an ontological position that asserts that social reality is accomplished by social actors) and interpretivism (an

epistemological position that emphasizes the differences between people and the objects of natural sciences). Despite these differences, the advocates of mixed methods research argue that quantitative and qualitative methodologies are compatible and can be mixed fruitfully. The combination of the two methodologies is to give prominence to the strengths of each, and accordingly, to find the best opportunities for answering research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This is the stance that I adopt in the present thesis.

To answer the three research questions presented in Section 1.4, this thesis as a whole took a mixed methods approach. There are a range of ways to mix quantitative and qualitative methodologies during the research process (see Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). In this thesis, qualitative methodology has dominant status in comparison with quantitative methodology. Only qualitative data were collected, but both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted. In other words, the collected qualitative data, if in large volume, were converted into numerical codes that can be statistically analysed in order to more fully interpret the phenomenon under study. Quantitising qualitative data, i.e., performing quantitative analysis with the collected qualitative data, is widely recognised as one of many variations of mixed methods research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Table 1.1 shows the method design, data collection and analysis methods of the three studies in this thesis.

Table 1.1 Methodology matrix

<b>Study</b>	<b>Method design</b>	<b>Data collection</b>	<b>Data analysis (software)</b>
One	Qualitative	Netnography	Thematic analysis (QSR NVivo 11)
Two	Qualitative and quantitative	Participant observation	Content analysis (Leximancer 4.5)
Three	Qualitative	Semi-structured interview	Thematic analysis (QSR NVivo 11)

More specifically, study one employed netnography for data collection. Netnography is a qualitative research method that adapts ethnographic techniques to study the online cultures

and communities (Kozinets, 2002). The data collection and analysis were conducted from September 2015 to January 2016. There were 40 travel blogs of Chinese tourists, which contained rich information of shopping related texts and images in Australia, collected from the two most popular online travel communities in China – Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn (Shen & Liu, 2016). The shopping related texts were the main sort of data in this study, while the images were used to triangulate the text data. Thematic analysis was employed to code and categorise the text data in QSR NVivo 11, based on the social practice scheme proposed by Shove, et al. (2012).

In the second study, qualitative data were collected via participant observation, and then quantitative techniques were used to analyse the data. Participant observation was employed to collect data because it allows researchers to work directly in the field studying natural social processes as they happen (Flick, 2006; Schutt, 2009). Cairns, which is a major tourist destination in north-eastern Australia, was selected as the research field for data collection. There were 110 participant observations conducted in five shopping venues in Cairns in August 2016 – a duty free store, a national grocery chain, night markets, the airport (domestic terminal) and a local market. These observations were mainly recorded by taking field notes, with research diaries and photos being kept to provide additional information. The field notes were analysed in a content analysis software Leximancer 4.5 to examine the embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances contained in the 110 observations.

The third and final study took a qualitative approach to gather an in-depth understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. Semi-structured interviewing was considered suitable as the data collection method in this study as it allows researchers to ask open-ended questions with the flexibility to explore particular response further (Bryman, 2016). A total of 32 semi-structured interviews were conducted by the author during a 22 day fieldtrip in China in May 2017. A purposive sampling method (Bryman, 2016) was used to get up-to-date information on the shopping practices of a heterogeneous group of Chinese tourists with respect to demographic characteristics and travel type. The conduct of each interview was

facilitated by using an interview guide. All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The interview data were analysed in QSR NVivo 11 by following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guide to performing thematic analysis.

## 1.6 Thesis outline

This thesis consists of six chapters, as shown in Figure 1.3. It should be noted that this thesis is presented as a PhD thesis by publication. The main chapters of this thesis, i.e. Chapters 2 to 5, were developed and written as separate journal articles, with Chapter 1 and Chapter 6 being added as the introduction and synthesis of the thesis respectively. More specifically, Chapter 1 (the current chapter) provides a general introduction to the background and the theoretical foundation of this thesis. It then outlines the overall aim and research questions, based on which the research methodologies employed in this thesis are presented. This chapter concludes with the thesis outline in order to graphically show the structure, content and flow of this thesis.

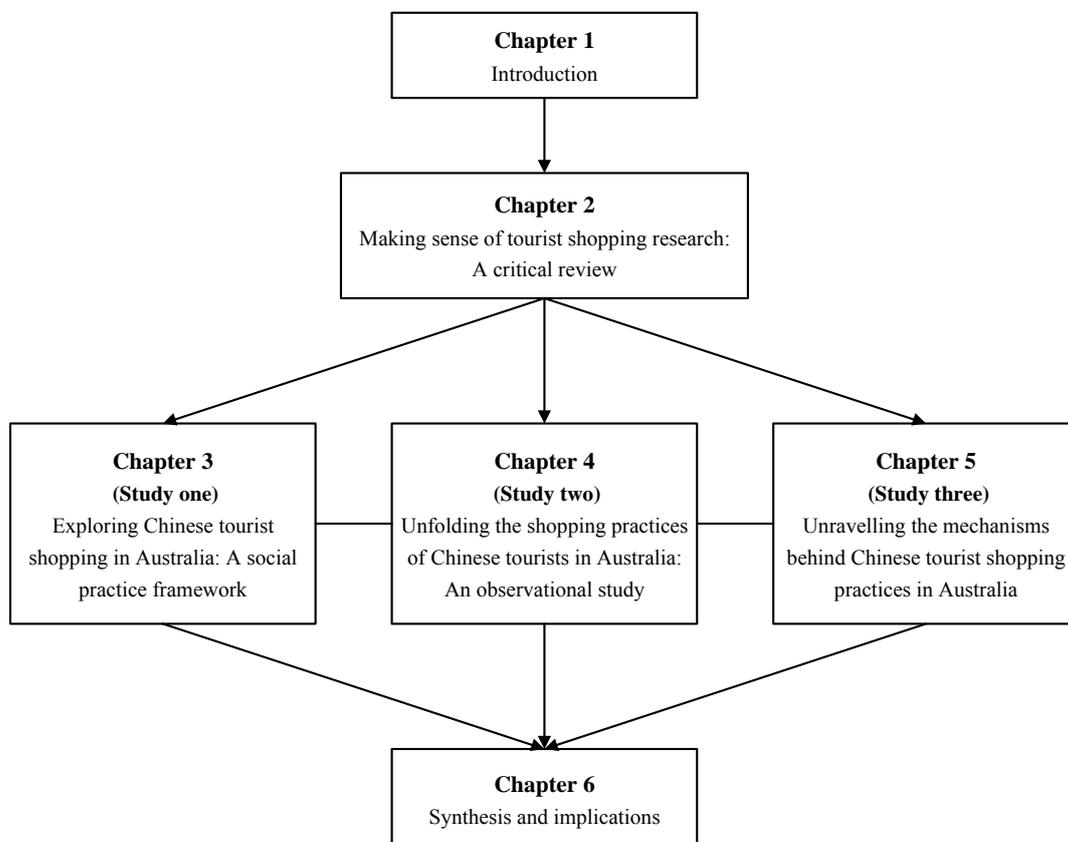
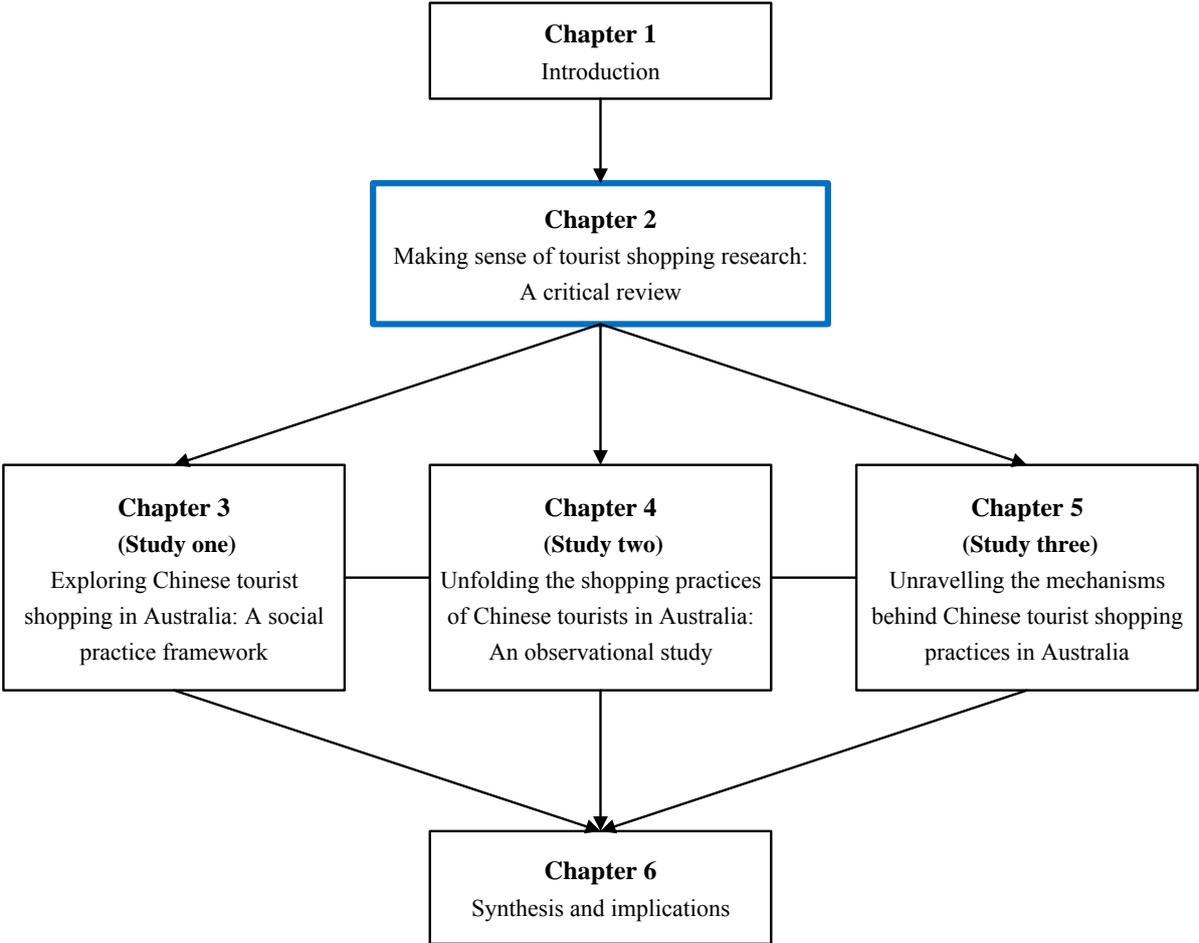


Figure 1.3 Thesis outline

Chapter 2 presents a critical literature review of tourist shopping studies from 2000 to 2015. This chapter provides an operational definition of tourist shopping, and then proposes a descriptive framework for classifying tourist shopping research. Attention then shifts to a critical review of conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues in this area. The chapter also offers a discussion of key topics that deserve further attention in future tourist shopping research, with some of these topics having inspired the conduct of this thesis. This chapter has been published in the *Tourism Management* (Jin, Moscardo, & Murphy, 2017).

As can be seen from Figure 1.3, Chapter 3, 4 and 5 describe the three studies conducted in this thesis respectively. These chapters use SPT as a general theoretical foundation and base on different parts of it to examine Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from three different perspectives. Chapter 3 (study one) explores the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia; Chapter 4 (study two) investigates how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold on site in Australia; Chapter 5 (study three) reveals the mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia. Each chapter contains a brief introduction to the research question with relevant literature review, and provides detailed information on the processes of data collection and analysis. The findings of each chapter are presented with supporting data and connections to existing research. Chapter 3 is under review in the *Journal of Travel Research*, and Chapter 4 and 5 are ready for submission.

This thesis concludes with Chapter 6. The final chapter summarises the thesis, and provides a synthesis of the key findings of the studies described in this thesis. Based on these findings, the chapter outlines the research contributions and practical implications of this thesis. The chapter then describes the limitations of this thesis and directions for future research, finishing with some concluding comments.



## **Chapter 2 Making sense of tourist shopping research: A critical review**

This chapter is a modified version of a paper published in the *Tourism Management*:

Jin, H., Moscardo, G., & Murphy, L. (2017). Making sense of tourist shopping research: A critical review. *Tourism Management*, 62, 120-134

This chapter provides a critical review of tourist shopping studies from 2000 to 2015 with the aims of describing progress, and identifying research gaps and new areas for research. Section 2.1 highlights the necessity of conducting a critical literature review on tourist shopping, with an operational definition of this term and the review methodology being presented in Section 2.2 and Section 2.3 respectively. The chapter then proposes a descriptive framework for classifying tourist shopping research in Section 2.4. After that, Section 2.5 presents a critical review of conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues in this research area. This chapter concludes with a discussion of key topics that warrant further investigation. It should be noted that, although the paper presented in this chapter did not consider tourist shopping studies published since 2016, the reviews of relevant literature in the individual study chapters of this thesis do include recent relevant publications. These more recent publications are not substantively different from the literature reviewed in this chapter and do not alter the key conclusions the thesis research is based on.

## 2.1 Introduction

The significance of shopping has been widely recognised from the perspective of both the tourist and the destination. Shopping is a pervasive and pivotal tourist activity (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Lehto, Cai, O'Leary, & Huan, 2004; Lin & Lin, 2006; Snepenger, Murphy, O'Connell, & Gregg, 2003; Timothy, 2014; Tsang, Tsai, & Leung, 2011; Yüksel, 2007). In some cases, it functions as a factor in tourists' destination choice (Moscardo, 2004); in others, it is the primary reason for travel (Lehto, Chen, & Silkes, 2014; Timothy, 2005; Wong & Wan, 2013). This act is not only utilitarian with a focus on acquiring daily necessities (Timothy, 2005), but also a way to obtain reminders of the travel experience, understand local culture and strengthen social networks. For destinations, shopping can be a major revenue source (Murphy, Benckendorff, Moscardo, & Pearce, 2011). Shopping also contributes to a variety of job opportunities and to building a favourable image amid intense competition (Chang, Yang, & Yu, 2006; Heung & Cheng, 2000; Kattiyapornpong & Miller, 2012; Law & Au, 2000; Reisinger & Turner, 2002; Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007). As such, many places have adopted tourist shopping as the basis of tourism policy initiatives and promotional campaigns (Rabbiosi, 2015; Timothy, 2005).

Despite the close link between tourism and shopping, relatively little attention has been devoted to substantive issues and questions surrounding this theme in tourism research (Timothy, 2014). The extant literature in this area is fragmented, with only a few reviews (Choi, Heo, & Law, 2016b; Coles, 2004; Timothy, 2005, 2014). Coles (2004) adopted the supply chain as an organising principle to incorporate production, distribution and transaction into a scholarly agenda for the tourism-shopping-retailing nexus. Timothy's (2005) seminal work provided the most systematic knowledge about shopping and tourism at that time, in which the history and forms of the combination of shopping and tourism, souvenirs, shopping venues and accompanying retail management were included. He later summarised some trends for future research, including alternative venues, place-making and branding, demand and globalisation (Timothy, 2014). Although these reviews provide insights into a research

agenda, the phrase “retailing” in their titles suggest an emphasis on “the business of tourism” (Tribe, 2010, p.30). Most recently, Choi, et al. (2016b) assessed the progress in shopping tourism research. This review was, however, more descriptive than critical and conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues are largely omitted.

The present chapter seeks to critically examine the literature on tourist shopping and to synthesise it in a holistic manner. The remainder of this chapter follows a similar format to that used by Sharpley (2014) in his review of research into host perceptions of tourism. First, the chapter addresses the definition of tourist shopping. Second, the review methodology used in this chapter is outlined. Tourist shopping research is then reviewed using the major themes emerging from the papers and organised by a descriptive framework. After that, extant research is further evaluated with critical reflections on the key concepts, theoretical underpinnings and methodological issues. Finally, a section is dedicated to key topics that merit future attention.

## **2.2 What is tourist shopping?**

Three terms – shopping tourism, tourism shopping and tourist shopping – frequently appear in the shopping-related tourism research. Although shopping has captured more attention in tourism academia in recent years, there exist few, if any, conceptual analyses of these terms. At this point it would be valuable to have a clear understanding of what the three terms mean in the existing research.

A consensus has been reached on shopping tourism, which is seen as a distinctive form of tourism where shopping is the primary purpose for taking a trip (Choi, et al., 2016b; Coles, 2004; Timothy, 2005). It entails people travelling explicitly to shop, or to destinations where shopping is recognised as one of the most significant attractions (Timothy, 2014). As such, tourists belonging to this category are less likely to be content with their travel if retail conditions do not meet their expectations (Timothy, 2014). Places such as Hong Kong and Dubai, and border areas in North America and Europe, are often used to illustrate the emergence and sustained development of shopping tourism.

The other two terms, tourist shopping and tourism shopping, have not yet been consistently defined and deployed. Some researchers tend to favour the use of one term over the other, such as tourist shopping for Wu, Wall, and Pearce (2014) and tourism shopping for Reisinger and Turner (2002); Others often use the terms tourist shopping and tourism shopping interchangeably (see Heung & Cheng, 2000; Li, Deng, & Moutinho, 2015; Littrell, Paige, & Song, 2004). No matter which term is used, with a few exceptions (Chang, et al., 2006; Heung & Qu, 1998; Law & Au, 2000; Murphy, Moscardo, Benckendorff, & Pearce, 2011; Oviedo-García, Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Reyes-Guizar, 2016; Saayman & Saayman, 2012; Tosun, et al., 2007; Tsang, et al., 2014), it has rarely been explicitly defined. Where definitions have been provided, there is considerable variety but also overlap in the aspects included in the definitions. For example, Heung and Qu (1998) and Law and Au (2000) for statistical purposes equated tourism shopping to tourist expenditures on goods purchased. Chang, et al. (2006) defined tourism shopping as the purchase behaviours of tourists at their destination. More recently, Tosun, et al. (2007) and Murphy, Moscardo, et al. (2011) treated tourist shopping as a contemporary recreational activity that involved looking, touching, browsing and buying.

“Shopping as a tourist activity” (Jansen-Verbeke, 1994, p. 349) has been acknowledged and underlined in most of the existing research, regardless of the use of the term tourist or tourism shopping. It can also be argued that it is more useful to see tourists’ expenditure on purchasing goods and their purchase behaviours as two important facets of shopping as a tourist activity. In spite of the conceptual difference between tourist and tourism (Leiper, 1979), the two terms tourist shopping and tourism shopping in the extant research have not been used to describe distinctly different phenomena, but rather have functioned as two varied names for the same phenomenon. In other words, it seems that either the term tourist or tourism shopping has been employed depending on the researcher’s habit and preference without much difference in the meaning. This is similar to the common usage of the two terms tourist experience (e.g., Uriely, 2005) and tourism experience (e.g., Wang, 1999) in the literature. Taking shopping as a tourist activity as the starting point, the term tourism

shopping is not essentially distinct from, but can be understood as a variation of, the term tourist shopping. In order to avoid confusion, this chapter proposes to use the term tourist shopping and defines it as a recreational activity in which tourists browse, select and purchase goods to take home during their travel. Although this operational definition guides the chapter, a range of terms, as noted in the following section, were used to search for relevant studies.

### **2.3 Literature review methodology**

Briner and Denyer (2012) identified a number of different types of academic reviews including:

- traditional, narrative reviews providing detailed coverage of all the relevant studies on a topic, often presented in chronological order;
- meta-analytic reviews involving additional analysis of data reported in specific types of quantitative research papers; and
- expert, thematic or argument based reviews where academics provide a synthesis of key aspects of a topic.

According to Webster and Watson (2002) the expert thematic literature review is important for theoretical development and can direct new research through the identification of topics that have not been examined in detail and by attempting to describe cumulative patterns of results that can support theoretical development. The aim of such a review is to provide a broad overview of what has been done, identifying major themes emerging from the field and critically assessing the overall direction and progress in a field with the focus being more on synthesis than comprehensive description. Briner and Denyer (2012) acknowledge the value of this type of review but also argue for more systematic reviews which provide explicit details on how the review is conducted. Such a process should involve a clear description of the methods used for locating and appraising the studies that are reviewed, and that method should attempt to minimise any bias from the reviewers that might influence how the papers are chosen (Briner & Denyer, 2012). After deciding on the studies to be included a systematic

review should analyse and synthesise the key information on the review topic (Briner & Denyer, 2012).

The author sought to conduct this thematic review following the guidelines suggested by both Webster and Watson (2002) and Briner and Denyer (2012). Four key academic databases covering the main international tourism journals – ScienceDirect, Sage Journals, Taylor & Francis Online and Emerald Insight – were chosen to search for articles in which “shopping” and “tourism”, “shopping” and “tourist”, “tourism shopping” or “tourist shopping” appeared in the title, abstract or key words from 2000 to 2015<sup>2</sup>. The year 2000 was selected as the start date for the search in order to identify contemporary topics in tourist shopping research (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014). Additional searches were carried out by using Google Scholar and looking through the reference lists of selected papers to ensure key contributions were not missed. After retrieving the articles, the author further read the abstracts to confirm their appropriateness for the current chapter (Li, 2014).

The searches stated above identified 88 journal articles in total from the four databases (see Appendix B for details). These articles have been used to develop an overall framework for synthesising key aspects of tourist shopping research and conduct critical reflections on relevant conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues in the area. The outcomes of this synthesis are presented in the following sections. The major themes in tourist shopping research are explained using a combination of commonly cited references, the most recent references and exemplars of key points. In the case of the critical analyses, all the articles reviewed were used to develop a systematic coding to calculate the frequency distributions of employed concepts, theoretical bases and methodologies. Based on the coding, the author present a series of critical reflections on the nature of research in this area to date.

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<sup>2</sup> All returned articles published between 2000 and 2015 (or electronically available at the time of collection) were selected.

## 2.4 Main themes in tourist shopping research

A thematic review seeks to identify the key foci in a research area and to organise the research studies into a coherent framework. In order to assist with this a “4W2H” framework is proposed and is presented in Figure 2.1. In this framework, the research literature on tourist shopping is grouped according to six categories: who (segmentation), what (product), why (motivation), where (setting and service), how (experience and behaviour) and how much (expenditure). While these distinct subjects are identified, it is important to acknowledge that they are not mutually exclusive, with studies often combining elements from all the categories. These major groupings, with corresponding studies, are discussed further below.

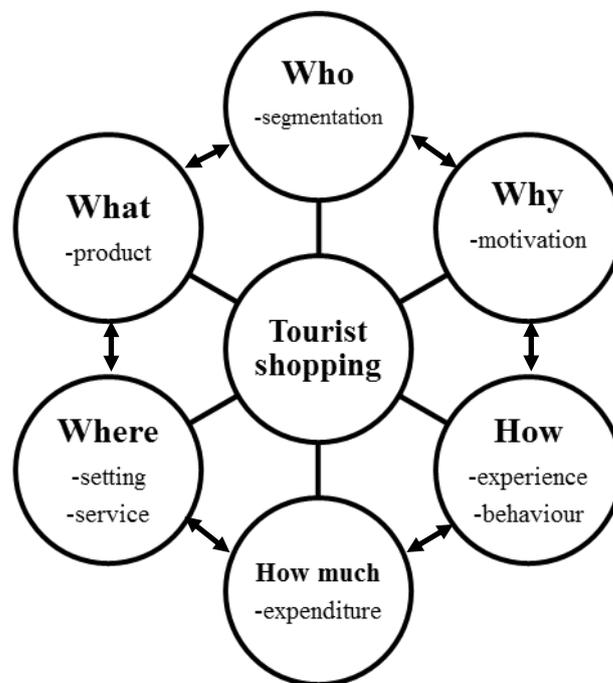


Figure 2.1 A “4W2H” framework for reviewing tourist shopping research

### 2.4.1 Who: Tourist shopping segmentation

A range of segmentation techniques and variables has been used to analyse tourist shopping characteristics. For instance, Moscardo (2004), using the importance of shopping in destination choice and actual participation in shopping activities, categorised tourist shoppers into four types: serious shoppers, art-and-crafts shoppers, not-so-serious shoppers and non-shoppers. Hu and Yu (2007) combined tourists’ shopping involvement and their craft

selection criteria, identifying three distinctive groups: shopping enthusiasts, shopping lovers and indifferent shoppers. Most recently, Choi, et al. (2016a), used Schwartz' values, to classify Chinese shopping tourists into four clusters: uncertainty, passion, balance and conservation. While these tourist shopping segmentation studies typically seek to contribute to developing marketing strategies, only Hu and Yu (2007) assessed each segment's feasibility and attractiveness to a travel destination based on three criteria – profitability, reachability and accessibility.

Rather than exploring the overall segmentation of tourist shoppers, some scholars focus on a specific group to examine shopping characteristics. Littrell, et al. (2004) and Han, Hwang, and Kim (2015), for example, concentrated on senior tourists. In the study by Littrell, et al. (2004), three different profiles of senior tourists were identified, which encompassed active outdoor/cultural tourists, cultural tourists and moderate tourists, based on their preferred travel activities and shopping behaviours. Han, et al. (2015) tested senior tourists' repurchase decision formation in an airport-shopping context and verified the mediating impact of age by comparing senior to non-senior tourists. Luxury tourist shoppers have also attracted the attention of some researchers. Park and Reisinger (2009), for example, looked at cultural differences in luxury shopping, with Asian tourists found to attach the most importance to buying "gifts for others", followed by Western and Hispanic tourists. A study by Park, Reisinger, and Noh (2010) showed tourists who shopped frequently and those who attached greater importance to shopping cared more about luxury goods, their characteristics, shopping venues and destinations than those tourists who shopped less frequently or for whom shopping was less important. A similar study was reported by Zaidan (2016) analysing luxury shopping in Dubai. International residential tourists' shopping motivations and the relationship between their acculturation and shopping behaviours have also been explored by De Juan-Vigaray, Sarabia-Sánchez, and Garau-Vadell (2013) and De-Juan-Vigaray and Garau-Vadell (2015) respectively.

## 2.4.2 What: Tourist shopping products

### 2.4.2.1 Product preference

Identifying the purchase preferences of tourists is another way to analyse tourist shopping. For example, Kim, Timothy, and Hwang (2011) found Japanese tourists liked to buy food, duty-free products of foreign brands and clothes in Korea. Zhu, et al. (2016) grouped the items Chinese tourists purchased in Europe into three categories: functional goods, adornment goods and social gifts. As well as country of origin, tourists' shopping preferences have also been related to their gender, age, and income (Lehto, et al., 2004; Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005). Lower income tourist shoppers, for instance, have been found to be more likely to buy functional items, while their higher income counterparts were less inclined to do so (Lehto, et al., 2004). When compared to other groups, Japanese tourists were unique in their desire to purchase leather handbags and accessories in a study conducted in Hawaii (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005). Product preferences have also been found to differ across different destinations (Lehto, et al., 2004; Wong, 2013; Xu & McGehee, 2012). A wide variety of merchandise, ranging from antique watches and jewellery to health products and running shoes, was listed among purchases of Chinese tourists visiting the United States (Xu & McGehee, 2012), but for this group in Macau, souvenirs were found to be the most popular products, followed by clothing and footwear (Wong, 2013).

### 2.4.2.2 Souvenir purchase

Not surprisingly, a considerable volume of research has been undertaken on tourist souvenir purchase. As the most universal artifacts of tourism (Swanson, 2014), souvenirs are not only treated as the evidence and reminders of tourists' travel experience, but also as gifts for family and friends to maintain social networks and to meet interpersonal obligations (Moscardo, 2004; Wilkins, 2011). Factors influencing tourists' purchase of souvenirs continue to be a major topic of research. Hu and Yu (2007) found that tourists' souvenir purchase choices were based on a wide spectrum of variables, including workmanship, sensuous appreciation, cultural linkage and ease of handling. Lin and Mao (2015) categorised

food souvenir attributes into three dimensions – sensory appraisal, utility appraisal and symbol appraisal. Travel activities also affect tourists’ souvenir purchases (Swanson & Horridge, 2004; Yu & Littrell, 2003). For example, tourists who participate in community festivals prefer crafts, antiques and books about the area, while those who focus on eating food from the region often purchase local food as souvenirs (Swanson & Horridge, 2004). Other variables that have been found to be related to tourists’ souvenir purchases include demographic characteristics of tourists (Li & Cai, 2008; Yu & Littrell, 2003), tourist types (Fairhurst, Costello, & Fogle Holmes, 2007), attitudes towards souvenirs (Kim & Littrell, 2001), culture (Park, 2000; Wong & Cheng, 2014) and destination image (Wong & Cheng, 2014).

Tourists’ perception of souvenir authenticity forms an additional line of research. Revilla and Dodd (2003) concluded that tourists’ perceived authenticity of Talavera pottery encompassed five major factors: appearance/utility, traditional characteristics and certification, rarity, local production and low cost. Later, three attributes – makers, designs and material uses – were used by Xie, Wu, and Hsieh (2012) to examine tourists’ perception of authenticity in indigenous souvenirs in Taiwan, and the findings suggested that tourists preferred souvenirs produced with traditional rather than generic materials and perceived modern designs combined with indigenous markers to be more authentic than traditional designs. More recently Torabian and Arai (2016) suggested that tourists perceive authenticity subjectively based on their connection to the souvenir, their social networks, preconceived notions and cultural biases.

#### 2.4.3 Why: Tourist shopping motivation

Shopping motivation has received much attention from tourism scholars, and there have been two research streams within this category. One stream tries to answer the question of what drives tourists to shop. For example, Moscardo (2004) categorised tourist shopping motivation into two types: instrumental and expressive. The former refers to obtaining necessities associated with travel and meeting social/cultural obligations regarding souvenirs,

while the latter is related to relaxation, escape, social networks and status. Shopping motives appear to vary across both groups of tourists and contexts. Hsieh and Chang's (2006) investigation into tourist night markets showed that novelty-seeking and experiencing local culture were major factors that motivated tourists to shop in this setting. Studies into cross-border shopping, however, often report lower price as a primary motivator (Lau, Sin, & Chan, 2005; Wang, 2004).

The second stream explores the relationships between tourists' shopping motivation and other variables, such as involvement (Josiam, Kinley, & Kim, 2005), satisfaction (Murphy, Moscardo, et al., 2011), expenditure (Alegre & Cladera, 2012) and participation (Alegre & Cladera, 2012; Lin & Chen, 2013). Josiam, et al. (2005) ascertained that levels of shopping involvement were consistently associated with both push and pull motivators in a hierarchical manner. Murphy, Moscardo, et al. (2011) reported that providing a unique, entertaining local experience and distinct, value-for-money products were predictors of tourists' satisfaction in tourist shopping villages. More recently, Alegre and Cladera (2012) suggested that tourist motivation did influence the decision whether or not to partake in shopping but not the amount of expenditure. Particularly in airports, time pressure and impulse buying have been shown to have moderating effects on the relationship between tourists' shopping motivations and their actual activities (Lin & Chen, 2013).

#### 2.4.4 Where: Tourist shopping setting and service

##### 2.4.4.1 Shopping setting

The variety of tourist shopping settings has been widely recognised (Murphy, Benckendorff, et al., 2011; Timothy, 2005). With the constant expansion and diversification of the tourism industry, new types of shopping settings continue to develop throughout the world. For example, Rabbiosi (2011) described how a formal industrial area has evolved into a shopping place in Italy. Some researchers analyse tourist shopping from the perspective of a country, a region or a city, such as the United States (Xu & McGehee, 2012), Hong Kong (Tsang, et al., 2014) and Hawaii (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2006), while others pay attention to specific

locations, like heritage sites (Wong & Cheng, 2014), shopping malls (Shim & Santos, 2014) or even souvenir stores (Yu & Littrell, 2005). In addition, festivals and events have also caught the attention of researchers, such as the Canton Fair in Guangzhou, China (Luo & Lu, 2011) and the Bikes, Blues and BBQ Festival in Arkansas, USA (Way & Robertson, 2012). On the whole, much research into tourist shopping has focused on urban locations with little regard to rural ones, and similarly, on developed countries while many questions remain to be answered in developing countries (Timothy, 2014).

Some issues pertain to one specific type of shopping setting. Shopping malls, for example, increasingly serve as popular tourist attractions, even though they are often deemed as placeless urban environments (Shim & Santos, 2014). It has been suggested that this is because malls offer a negotiated reality between the forces that create placelessness (e.g., globalisation) and those that enhance their appeal (e.g., contemporary authenticity and symbolic meanings) (Shim & Santos, 2014). In local markets, special shopping behavioural elements, such as bargaining (Tsang, et al., 2011; Wu, et al., 2014), *renao* (bustling noise and excitement) (Ackerman & Walker, 2012), and contributing to community development (Hurst & Niehm, 2012; Murphy, Benckendorff, et al., 2011) have been of concern to tourism researchers.

The role of exterior shopping environments has also been given some research attention. Yüksel (2007) measured the impacts of out-of-store environments in shopping districts on tourists' emotions (pleasure or arousal), shopping values (utilitarian or hedonic) and approach behaviours. The results indicated that tourists spent more money and time on shopping than originally planned when the macro-environment was perceived to be stimulating. Environmental quality also helped improve emotions, which in turn created greater hedonic value and more approach behaviours (Yüksel, 2007). Yüksel (2013) reaffirmed the importance of the exterior environment on tourists' approach intention and concluded that, compared to perceived merchandise quality, the external environment had a greater impact on service quality inferences, which significantly affected tourists' approach intentions.

#### 2.4.4.2 Shopping service

Shopping service embodies the soft power of places where tourists shop during their travel. It can also be an important predictor of their shopping behaviours and experience, since tourist shopping is a highly social and psychological undertaking (Timothy, 2005). Chang, et al. (2006) proposed that the interaction between salespeople and tourist shoppers was a vital component of product delivery, which was consistent with Yuksel's (2004) conclusion. In the study by Chang, et al. (2006), service-orientated sales behaviour was shown to have positive moderating effects on tourists' shopping motivation and satisfaction in terms of variety of products, quality of products and shopping habits, while product selling-orientated sales behaviour had negative moderating effects in terms of perceived quality of products, uniqueness/good value and non-availability. The significance of tour guide performance has also been investigated by Chang (2014). The results confirm that the performance of tour guides positively influences tourists' perceived trust and satisfaction, which further affects their shopping behaviour. Researchers have concluded that attention needs to be paid to specific services to secure the patronage of cross cultural tourists, such as foreign language staff and signage and currency exchange services (Timothy, 2005; Xu & McGehee, 2012).

#### 2.4.5 How: Tourist shopping experience and behaviour

##### 2.4.5.1 Shopping experience

Shopping experience is a blend of perceptions of products, services and places (Murphy, Moscardo, et al., 2011; Tosun, et al., 2007; Wong & Law, 2003). Shopping experience is created by a bundle of factors including shopping activities, perceptions of shopping dimensions, tourist characteristics, and interactions with others. Experience has been found to play a crucial role in tourists' subsequent shopping satisfaction and behavioural intentions. For instance, Yüksel and Yüksel (2007) affirmed the negative effects of shopping risk perceptions on tourists' emotions, satisfaction and behavioural intention. In Lo and Qu's (2015) study, product quality and staff performance were reported to have direct impacts on behavioural intention and overall satisfaction respectively.

The shopping experience also differs across different groups of tourists. Yuksel (2004), for example, assessed domestic and international visitor evaluations of service provided by the retail sector. The results indicated that there were significant differences between these two groups in the perceptions of services in shops, and compared to their international counterparts, domestic visitors were more negative in their service evaluations (Yuksel, 2004). Similarly, differences in antecedents and outcomes of customer perceived value between local and tourist shoppers and that between cross-border and international outshoppers were confirmed by Lloyd, Yip, and Luk (2011) and Sharma, Chen, and Luk (2015) respectively. Both studies used seven antecedents, including perceived product quality, employee service quality, perceived risk, store environment, lifestyle congruence, perceived effort and value for money, to evaluate customer perceived value. In addition to customer satisfaction and behavioural intention in the study by Lloyd, et al. (2011), Sharma, et al. (2015) added word of mouth as a third outcome.

Tourist shopping satisfaction can be defined as tourists' subjective evaluation of their shopping experience during their stay in the destination (Wong & Wan, 2013). This construct is usually judged by a comparison between tourist expectations and perceptions of shopping attributes (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Lin, 2006; Murphy, Moscardo, et al., 2011; Wong & Law, 2003). Reisinger and Turner (2002) compared Japanese tourists' shopping satisfaction in Hawaii with that in the Gold Coast, the former rating higher than the latter in general. Wong and Law (2003) noted that there was considerable difference between Western and Asian tourists' expectations and perceptions of the shopping attributes in Hong Kong, with Western tourists demonstrating more satisfaction with nearly all attributes investigated than Asian tourists. The underlying dimensions of tourist shopping satisfaction continue to be examined by researchers (see Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Lin, 2006; Tosun, et al., 2007), and were conceptualised by Wong and Wan (2013) as service product and environment, merchandise value, staff service quality and service differentiation. Moreover, the mediating role of tourist shopping satisfaction between shopping value and consequences, such as word

of mouth and destination loyalty, has recently been verified by Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci, and Martin (2015) and Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, and Oviedo-García (2015).

#### 2.4.5.2 Shopping behaviour

Tourist shopping behaviour refers to a range of actions made by tourists in the process of their shopping and, while it can include patterns of movement, social interactions and physical contact with products, most researchers have focussed on actual purchases. Relationships between shopping behaviour and other variables are frequently examined in tourist shopping studies. For instance, differences were identified among international tourists to Hawaii based upon their residential country-of-origin, with Japanese tourists distinctive in their shopping behaviour (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005). Kattiyapornpong and Miller (2012) tested the relationships between tourists' shopping behaviour and the interactions of demographic variables, and between their behaviour and psychographic variables. Similarly, influences of tourist socio-demographic characteristics, trip-related and motivational factors on shopping behaviour were also analysed by Oh, Cheng, Lehto, and O'Leary (2004), Lau, et al. (2005) and Alegre and Cladera (2012). In these studies, tourists' shopping behaviour is normally treated as a dependent variable that is measured by whether or not they actually purchase or how much they spend on shopping activities.

Although recognising that tourist shopping behaviour is a mixture of planned, impulsive and experiential behaviour (Meng & Xu, 2012), researchers often focus on one specific aspect, such as the use of shopping space (Snepenger, et al., 2003), shopping route choice (Kemperman, Borgers, & Timmermans, 2009), bargaining behaviour (Kozak, 2016; Tsang, et al., 2011) or impulse buying (Li, et al., 2015). Tourists' use of shopping space differs with regards to their purchasing power, shopping activity preferences, perceived retail mix and their sense of place in the shopping district (Snepenger, et al., 2003). Kemperman, et al. (2009) found that the supply and accessibility of shops, physical characteristics of the shopping environment and the history of the route followed are important factors influencing tourist's shopping route choice behaviour. Tourists' shopping motivations, familiarity with

the area and planning of a route have also been shown to be important factors in determining behaviour (Kemperman, et al., 2009). Tourists' participation in bargaining behaviour has also been analysed and it seems to be induced by a focus on value for money and perceptions of sellers' offerings (Tsang, et al., 2011). Additionally, two underlying dimensions of bargaining attitudes and behaviour – bargaining for psychological well-being and bargaining intensity – have been shown to have significant positive impacts on tourists' overall shopping satisfaction (Tsang, et al., 2011). A strong connection has also been reported between tourist activities, emotional responses and impulse buying, with tourist participation in activities leading to more pleasurable responses that can stimulate impulse buying behaviour (Li, et al., 2015).

#### 2.4.6 How much: Tourist shopping expenditure

Shopping expenditure can account for a significant amount of tourists' total travel spending (Bojanic, 2011; Heung & Cheng, 2000; Hobson & Christensen, 2001; Law & Au, 2000). For example, Mexican visitors spent more than 50% of their budgets on shopping during their travel to south central Texas (Bojanic, 2011), consistent with the shopping expenditure of tourists in Hong Kong (Law & Au, 2000). The economic contribution of tourist shopping to destinations has also been highlighted by researchers. Wong and Law (2003), for instance, stated that sales to tourists accounted for more than 2% of the Gross Domestic Product of Hong Kong. More recently, Sullivan, Bonn, Bhardwaj, and DuPont (2012) calculated that every dollar spent by Mexican national cross-border shoppers could generate between \$1.29 and \$1.45 for the local economy, and the multiplier could be higher - ranging from \$1.40 to \$1.73 at the regional level.

The economic significance of shopping for the tourism industry has driven researchers to investigate the determinants of tourist shopping expenditure. Lehto, et al. (2004) examined Taiwanese tourists' shopping expenditure in relation to their socio-demographic characteristics and trip attributes. An enthusiastic tourist shopper, with the highest expenditure, could be generally described as a female in her 20s who joined a package tour

for leisure purposes and travelled with companions (Lehto, et al., 2004). Age was not found to be a significant factor influencing Mexican visitors' shopping expenditures in south central Texas, but the presence of children affected the amount of money spent on shopping, with couples or single parents with children spending dramatically less on shopping than their younger counterparts without children (Bojanic, 2011). In addition, the effect of perceived authenticity on tourists' shopping expenditure in Christmas Markets was analysed by Brida, Disegna, and Osti (2013). Their results illustrated that tourists were more likely to spend more if they considered the cultural event and products sold to be authentic.

## **2.5 Critical reflections: Concepts, theoretical bases and methodologies**

The review of tourist shopping research described in the previous sections reveals few consistent findings or conclusions with the findings best described as fragmented and piecemeal. The majority of studies are single examinations of a specific context - either type of tourist, setting or time, and it is difficult to see any significant progress in understanding tourist shopping. This section seeks to explore the area in more detail offering a series of critical reflections on conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues in the reviewed tourist shopping research. To this end, a systematic coding of all the articles reviewed was developed focusing on:

- concepts, which were defined as labelled ideas overtly employed to explain the tourist shopping phenomenon;
- theoretical bases, which refer to theories and predictive models that were used to guide the shopping research; and
- methodologies, which included data collection and analysis methods.

Appendix B provides the full details of this coding from which a simple frequency distribution table was created (Table 2.1) to assist in describing both the major areas emphasised and the gaps in these tourist shopping studies.

Table 2.1 Concepts, theoretical bases and methodologies in the selected tourist shopping studies

Category	Frequency	Item
<b>Concepts</b>	13	Customer satisfaction
	11	Motivation
	8	Culture
	6	Attitude
	4	Authenticity, Service quality, Shopping value
	3	Behavioural intention, Impulse buying, Lifecycle, Perceived risk
	2	Bargaining, Customer perceived value, Effort, Involvement, Luxury, Product attribute, Product quality, Shopping attribute, Shopping environment, Tourism typology, Tourist gaze, Word of mouth
	1	Acculturation, Acquisition utility, Artisan link, Cohort, Commitment, Consumerism, Craftsmanship, Cultural linkage, Destination image, Experiential consumption, Experiential marketing, Family life cycle, Flow, Inference, Life course, Loyalty, Overall image, Place, Placelessness, Planned behaviour, Power, Price, Process orientation, Product importance, Product orientation, Sensory appraisal, Sensuous appreciation, Service perception, Schwartz values, Shopping emotion, Sign value, Spiritual value, Store attribute, Store environment, Subjective norm, Symbolic appraisal, Time pressure, Trust, Tour guide performance, Tourist shopping habitat, Transaction utility, Urban branding, Use and exchange value, Utility appraisal, Value for money
<b>Theoretical Bases</b>	5	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm
	4	Theory of reasoned action
	3	Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance model
	2	Stimulus-Organism-Response model, Consumer style inventory
	1	Cue utilisation theory, Input-output model, Labour theory of value, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Push-pull theory, Radom utility theory, Rough set theory, Theory of repurchase decision-making
<b>Methodologies</b>	61	Quantitative methods
	13	Qualitative methods
	10	Mixed methods

### 2.5.1 Key concepts

Some clear trends can be seen in the list of concepts adopted as displayed in Table 2.1 with a large number of concepts being used only once. Such single pieces of research are usually noncumulative in nature (Dann, Nash, & Pearce, 1988) creating a challenge for the development of understanding in tourist shopping research. Further, the four most frequently used concepts, customer satisfaction, motivation, culture, and attitude, were all used as broad, generic ideas with little explicit or detailed discussion of their use or of any particular theoretical approach to them. For example, Moscardo (2004) analysed tourist motives for shopping, but did not refer to the wider literature on motivation and did not develop either the measures or framework based on any particular theory within motivation. This limited use of the four most common concepts, with critical reflections, can be elaborated as follows.

#### 2.5.1.1 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a term frequently used by behavioural researchers in marketing. The literature investigating customer satisfaction is so voluminous that Ryan (1999) thought that to review the work in this respect might be seen as an act of insanity or megalomania. Customer satisfaction is an important concept for many studies in the tourist shopping context, with the focus of researchers shifting from the assessment of tourist shopping satisfaction (see Heung & Cheng, 2000; Wong & Law, 2003) to its antecedents and consequences (see Sirakaya-Turk, et al., 2015; Vega-Vázquez, et al., 2015). These applications, based on either the expectancy disconfirmation or performance-only approach to satisfaction (Kozak, 2001), use structured questionnaires as their most common data collection method to measure satisfaction. Although the relationships between satisfaction and a series of variables have been examined, the diverse nature of these examinations and the variables chosen has produced mixed results and makes it difficult to contrast and compare the findings across different studies.

The use of customer satisfaction in the context of tourist shopping could benefit from an examination of the concept within mainstream marketing research. For example, the

American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) links customer expectations, perceived quality and perceived value as three central drivers of customer satisfaction, and complaints and attitudinal loyalty as the two primary outcomes of satisfaction (Hult, Morgeson III, Morgan, Mithas, & Fornell, 2017). The variables in this model, particularly in the area of customer complaints, have not been systematically investigated in previous tourist shopping studies. Also, greater use of triangulation and/or combinations of measurement instruments could be useful when assessing tourist shopping satisfaction. While the expectancy disconfirmation and performance-only approaches to satisfaction are valuable, work outside tourism suggests that they may not capture the full picture of how satisfaction/dissatisfaction functions in tourist shopping scenarios. For instance, neither of them pays attention to whether and how tourist-tourist interaction influences the shopping satisfaction judgement. The expectancy disconfirmation paradigm could be expanded with a consideration of attribution, emotion and equity. These three concepts have been seen as major antecedents used to measure customer satisfaction (Bowen & Clarke, 2009) in mainstream marketing literature. Greater use of these techniques has the potential to not only refresh the quality of how tourist shopping satisfaction is assessed, but also enrich the means of relevant information collection (Bowen, 2001; Cohen, et al., 2014; Tsiros, Mittal, & Ross, 2004).

#### 2.5.1.2 Motivation

Motivation is a well-established concept in psychology that has been borrowed extensively by tourism researchers. As Pearce and Packer (2013) stated, studies of tourist motivation are fundamental to much tourism inquiry. In the tourist shopping field, the concept of motivation has mainly been used to address the question of what drives tourists to shop and examine the relationships between tourist shopping motives and other constructs. However, the confusion around motives and related concepts (Moscardo, 2014) has limited the value of much of the use of motivation in the selected tourist shopping studies. For example, destination attributes, such as product quality and convenience, are often improperly equated with, and used to, measure tourist shopping motivation (see Chang, et al., 2006; Lin & Chen, 2013; Tsang, et al.,

2011). In the words of Dann (1981), the motivational “push” has been confused with the destinational “pull”. Also, most motivational studies were conducted using measures developed solely for particular settings, with little, if any, use of recent psychological discussions of motivation. In many cases, these studies are just locally applicable and, because of the idiosyncratic nature of the motivation measures, contribute little to conceptual accumulation (Pearce, 2014).

The employment of motivation in the tourist shopping context could be improved by reference to relevant conceptual and theoretical foundations. First, researchers interested in tourist shopping motivation should have a clear understanding of the concept of motivation *per se*. Previous motivational studies often misuse this concept and in consequence, offer little in the way of explanation as to why tourists shop. As Moscardo (2014) suggested, motivation should be recognised and measured separately from other similar constructs, such as value and destination perception. Second, future investigations on tourist shopping motivation need to keep up to date with relevant advances in psychology. Recent progresses made in theories of motivation potentially offer new ways to tackle the motivational issues in tourist shopping scenarios. For example, Forbes (2011) placed motivational concepts from past work within a comprehensive structure, developing a new framework of human motivations as a function of focus of aspiration (intrapsychic, instrumental and interpersonal) crossed by level of aspiration (expectation, experience and outcome). This unified model, comprising nine motivational domains, may provide a foundation for a detailed and systematic analysis of tourist shopping motivation.

### 2.5.1.3 Culture

The concept of culture constitutes a pervasive influence on human behaviour, but also poses definitional and operational difficulties for research (Soares, Farhangmehr, & Shoham, 2007). In tourist shopping research, culture has been employed to either illuminate the function of a particular culture or cultural attribute, or illustrate the effect of cultural differences on tourist shopping. Unfortunately, existing studies in this area suffer from the absence of a theoretical

framework and rarely examine culture in a systematic manner. For example, cultural issues have been said to effect aspects of tourist shopping, but without any reference to cultural theories to explain how or why these impacts occur (see Hobson & Christensen, 2001; Park, 2000). Nationality has most commonly been used as a proxy for cultural affiliation, mostly because it has been utilised by other tourism researchers (see Park & Reisinger, 2009; Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005), despite its many limitations. These tourist shopping studies do not draw much upon generalised cultural knowledge, and often oversimplify the connotation and manifestation of culture.

The impact of culture on tourist shopping should be examined with theoretical frameworks and more methodological rigor. The accumulated literature on culture provides rich resources from which tourist shopping researchers can draw (cf. Briley, Wyer Jr, & Li, 2014). For example, in the work of Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), culture is categorised into five dimensions: power distance (from small to large), collectivism versus individualism, femininity versus masculinity, uncertainty avoidance (from weak to strong) and long-term versus short-term orientation. This framework has been widely used to operationalise culture and to formulate hypotheses for comparative cross-cultural studies (Soares, et al., 2007). With regard to methodological concerns, it is suggested that multiple methods be used to assess culture (Li, 2014). Lenartowicz and Roth's (1999) culture assessment approaches, including ethnological description, use of proxies – regional affiliation, direct values inferences and indirect values inferences, are good examples to take into consideration. Additionally, measurement equivalence, which is a necessary condition for meaningful comparisons within and across countries (Davidov, Meuleman, Cieciuch, Schmidt, & Billiet, 2014), should be tested and guaranteed in cross-cultural investigations in the tourist shopping field. As worldwide tourism markets become increasingly multicultural, more sophisticated cross-cultural tourist shopping research, with solid theoretical foundations and rigorous methodologies, is warranted.

#### 2.5.1.4 Attitude

Attitude (towards shopping) occupies fourth place on the list of explanatory concepts because of a belief in its importance for explaining human behaviour. Specifically, attitude studies in the tourist shopping area rely to a large degree on the original work of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), and typically measure this concept using a set of evaluative responses to structured question formats (Pearce & Packer, 2013). From Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) point of view, an individual's attitude towards the behaviour, combined with subjective norms, determines the individual's behavioural intention. This conceptual structure was built on the basis of assuming humans to be "rational animals who systematically utilise or process the information available to them." (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p.vi) This assumption has been subjected to considerable critique (Sniehotta, Presseau, & Araújo-Soares, 2014) and both extended versions of Ajzen's work and alternative approaches to attitudes and the link between attitudes and behaviour are available (Bohner & Dickel, 2011). This issue of irrationality seems to be relevant Cohen, et al. (2014) as several empirical studies have demonstrated the influence of impulse buying on tourist shopping behaviour (see Li, et al., 2015; Lin & Chen, 2013). Thus, Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) early model may be problematic when applied to the tourist shopping context.

The attitude work in the tourist shopping field could be enhanced by a combination of multiple evaluation methods. Tourist attitudes towards shopping are more than Likert scale responses to structured attributes; they are socially negotiated communications (Pearce & Packer, 2013) and are closely related to emotions (Cohen, et al., 2014). Analysis of tourists' shopping-related narratives or storytelling could address the dynamic and affective characteristics of attitude, and thus has the potential to be used as a supplement to the more traditional approaches to attitude evaluation. Another issue that merits more attention is the attitude – behaviour gap, which in general refers to the inconsistency between what people say and what they actually do (Caruana, Carrington, & Chatzidakis, 2016). Although tourists' attitudes towards shopping have been confirmed to positively influence their intention to

purchase (see Lo & Qu, 2015; Yu & Littrell, 2005), whether tourists walk the talk, and if not, how to bridge the gap, are still questions waiting to be addressed in the tourist shopping context.

### 2.5.2 Theoretical bases

The lack of theoretical foundations is a notable problem within the body of tourist shopping knowledge. Overall, only 22 out of 88 reviewed journal articles refer to specific theories, models or paradigms as the basis for their research. Instead, most studies have applied foci and fall into the category of “data analyses devoid of theoretical content” which Dann, et al. (1988) have cautioned against. Given the frequency of use of satisfaction and attitudes as concepts, it is not surprising to find that the two most commonly mentioned theories were the expectancy disconfirmation paradigm and the theory of reasoned action. The expectancy disconfirmation paradigm, developed by Oliver (1980), is the most widely used approach to the interpretation of customer satisfaction. A positive disconfirmation between customers’ pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase evaluations arouses satisfaction, otherwise dissatisfaction occurs. The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) has been commonly applied to explain customers’ attitudinal issues. As mentioned above, this theory postulates that people’s behavioural intention depends upon their attitude towards the behaviour and subjective norms. These are models adapted from social psychology and this is also not surprising as current tourist shopping studies are predominantly conducted from the marketing perspective.

Shopping as a common and distinct tourist activity can be explored from multiple theoretical bases, although other disciplines have rarely been added to the research field. If tourist shopping is seen as a form of consumption, there are numerous other theories that deserve attention, both within marketing and psychology, but also from an extensive literature on consumption in sociology and anthropology. Even a brief examination of the wider literature on shopping and consumption suggests a number of areas that could be useful, including work on experiential learning and flow from the area of consumer experiences (Schmitt,

Brakus, & Zarantonello, 2015; Schouten, McAlexander, & Koenig, 2007), models of choice and cognitive load from cognitive psychology (Chernev, Böckenholt, & Goodman, 2015), links between consumption/shopping and well-being from positive psychology (Gilovich, Kumar, & Jampol, 2015), theories of personal values, materialism and consumption from social psychology (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006), work on self and social identity from sociology (Soron, 2010), social practice theory from sociology (Warde, 2015), and consumer culture theory from anthropology (Joy & Li, 2012).

### 2.5.3 Methodological issues

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies have been employed to investigate the tourist shopping phenomenon. However, quantitative studies continue to be dominant, with approximately 70% of the reviewed articles conducted in this way (Table 2.1). Further, quantitative data gathering includes two modes: official statistics (see Law & Au, 2000; Saayman & Saayman, 2012) and questionnaires. Based on the particular research context, questionnaires can be distributed on site (the most commonly used approach), by mail (see Fairhurst, et al., 2007; Littrell, et al., 2004) or more recently online (Choi, et al., 2016a). A number of statistical analysis tools, mainly analysis of variance, factor analysis, regression analysis and structural equation modelling, have been used to explore the dimensions of specific constructs, to assess the validity of constructed scales, or to examine the associations between independent and dependent variables.

Quantitative approaches have intuitive appeal in rigour, yet qualitative ones are more flexible and constructive. More researchers have started to employ qualitative methods in recent years, which to some degree add depth and detail to tourist shopping research. For these researchers, semi-structured interviews and participant observations are preferred data gathering methods (see Kwek & Lee, 2013; Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2015; Shim & Santos, 2014). Similar to web-based questionnaires mentioned above, the Internet, especially social media, is also opening up new avenues for qualitative data collection, such as tourists' travel blogs (Torabian & Arai, 2016) and online reviews (Wu, et al., 2014). As for data analysis

techniques, content analysis is commonly used to identify the themes or to construct the meanings hidden in collected materials.

In addition, a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods within one study, has recently been adopted by some researchers (see Lloyd, et al., 2011; Tsang, et al., 2014; Wilkins, 2011; Wong & Wan, 2013; Xie, et al., 2012). Williams, Hall, and Lew (2014) pointed out that in this new methodological orthodoxy, qualitative methods can be utilised either to inform quantitative research design, or to scrutinise in more depth the issues identified in quantitative research. In the tourist shopping area, when two kinds of methodologies are used conjointly, the role of qualitative methods to date is typically to provide information for developing further quantitative investigations, but their power in constructing meanings has been largely neglected. Hence, the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods deserves greater emphasis, and particularly, more research needs to be conducted using qualitative techniques to dig deeper into the tourist shopping phenomenon.

## **2.6 Conclusions and future research directions**

Three terms – shopping tourism, tourism shopping and tourist shopping – frequently appear in the shopping-related tourism research. Although a consensus has been reached on shopping tourism, the other two terms have not yet been consistently defined and deployed. Noticeably, shopping as a tourist activity has been acknowledged and highlighted in most of the existing research, regardless of the usage of the term tourism or tourist shopping. Also, these two terms have not been used to describe distinctly different phenomena, but rather have functioned as two varied names for the same phenomenon. Taking shopping as a tourist activity as the starting point, the term tourism shopping is not essentially distinct from, but can be understood as a variation of, the term tourist shopping. In order to avoid confusion, the current chapter used the term tourist shopping and defined it as a recreational activity in which tourists browse, select and purchase goods to take home during their travel. It is suggested that consistent use of the term tourist shopping may allow for easier reviews of this area in the future.

This chapter reviewed tourist shopping literature from 2000 to 2015 identified from four major databases – ScienceDirect, Sage Journals, Taylor & Francis Online and Emerald Insight. To systematically analyse the literature, a “4W2H” framework was developed dividing prior research into six key areas: who (segmentation), what (product), why (motivation), where (setting and service), how (experience and behaviour) and how much (expenditure). Further analysis of the reviewed research found that four generic concepts – customer satisfaction, motivation, culture and attitude - were the most commonly referred to in the articles evaluated, with a number of concepts being employed only once. A lack of theoretical foundations was also identified as a significant problem for the field. Similarly, while both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been utilised, quantitative studies were dominant. These conclusions are similar both to reviews of other areas of tourism (cf. Sharpley, 2014) and reviews of consumer psychology research in general (Alba & Williams, 2013; Pham, 2013). Combining these knowledge gaps with current tourist shopping practices provides five major suggestions for future research opportunities.

Firstly, the influence of technological developments on tourist shopping is in need of more research attention. Technological progress markedly impacts almost every part of tourists’ travel processes as well as that of tourism operations and marketing (Buhalis & Law, 2008), with various applications – such as social media and smart devices – in the tourism industry having been widely discussed (Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2014; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Given the deficiency of tourist shopping investigations in this respect, there should be more concern about the extent to which the digital era has reshaped tourists’ shopping selection, participation and related issues (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Timothy, 2014). At the same time, Web 2.0 technologies provide unprecedented opportunities for researchers from a methodological point of view. “Big data” (McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2012) calls for, and is also conducive to, harnessing more data collection/mining methods to translate information into knowledge.

The second research direction lies in the shopping activities of tourists from emerging tourism markets. This could be illustrated by taking China, the world's biggest spender in international tourism (UNWTO, 2014b), as an example. Chinese tourists are becoming well known for their shopping power and their enthusiasm for high-end products (Xu & McGehee, 2012). Although the shopping phenomena of Chinese outbound tourists have been investigated by some researchers, the majority of existing studies are conducted in specific places, such as Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Much progress is to be made in examining Chinese tourist shopping in Western countries, given the extent and economic importance of this activity. Research into Chinese tourist shopping has tended to follow the same path as that conducted in earlier times with Japanese and Korean tourists where it is often assumed that shopping behaviours result from cultural factors rather than from the outbound travel experience and opportunities offered by economic change and growth. Tourists from emerging economies are generally situated in a context of rapid change and potential destabilisation, under the mixed influences of globalisation versus localisation and modernity versus tradition. Thus, examining their shopping issues could be a challenging, but fruitful, area of research.

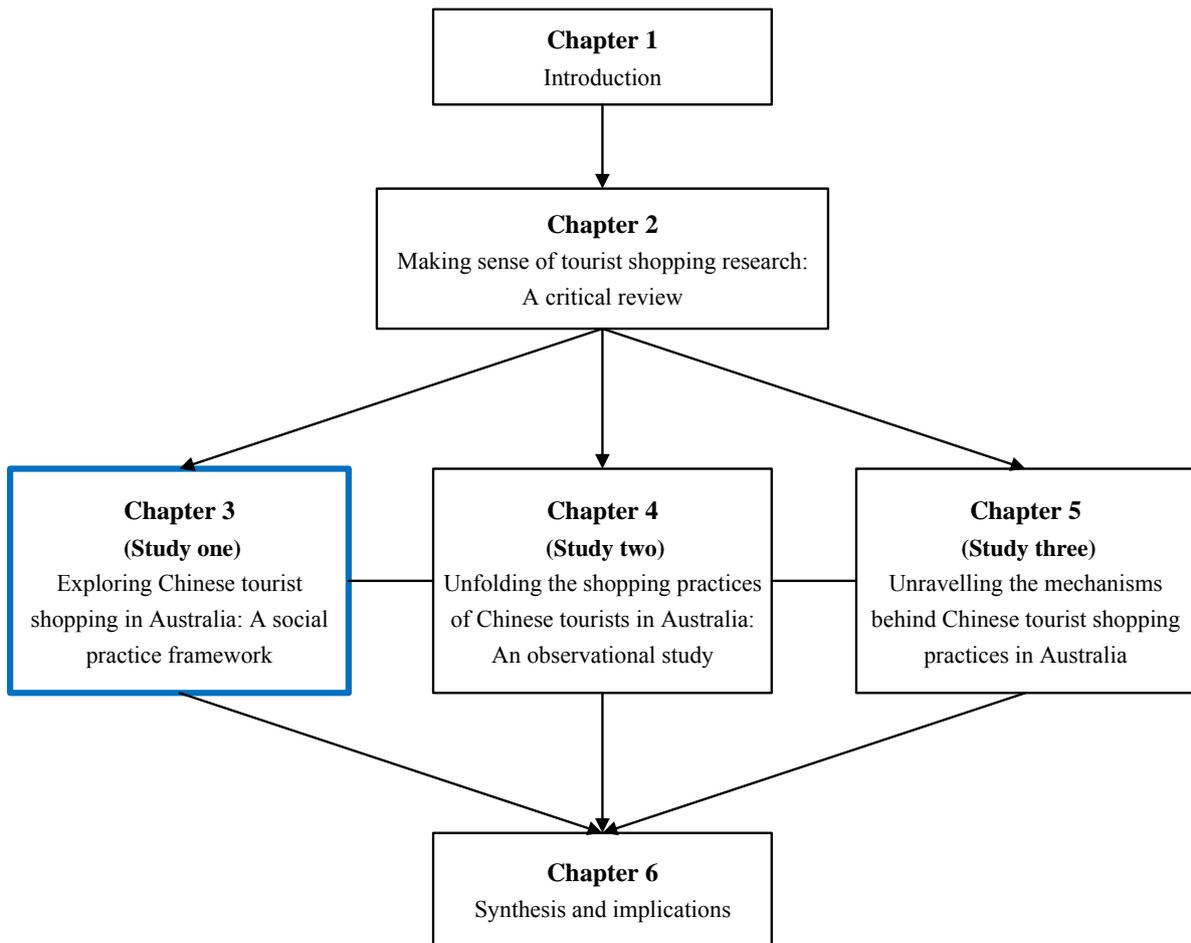
Sustainability is the third key area that is worthy of attention in tourist shopping research. In a global report published by UNWTO (2014a), shopping was deemed as having significant potential for destination promotion, and a series of successful cases were provided to encourage and guide destinations to boost shopping tourism. Similarly, many prior tourist shopping explorations were intended to help attract more tourists to shop and maximise their spending in destinations. All these have risked steering practitioners towards an uncritical celebration of tourist consumption. In this sense, the economic implications of tourist shopping can be overemphasised, while the environmental, cultural and social issues involved are seldom taken into account. Is tourist shopping for a better self? Is it contributing to a sustainable community or society? Future tourist shopping research needs to address these questions, especially given the increased global concern over sustainability (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014) and a push for the ethical consumption (Cohen, et al., 2014).

Fourthly, future tourist shopping research needs to be carried out from multidisciplinary perspectives. Shopping is a complex phenomenon that is laden with economic, cultural, social and political meanings (Timothy, 2005). Yet tourist shopping studies from a marketing perspective (rooted in psychology) dominate current scholarship, resulting in a dearth of sociocultural explorations in this area. That shopping has become such a common aspect of tourism is not just due to individual functioning, to which much work in psychology is confined, but is also closely interconnected with the wider social and cultural contexts within which tourists are embedded. Other pertinent disciplines, such as anthropology and sociology, are therefore fruitful ways to enrich and extend current tourist shopping research and there is extensive research into consumption and shopping in general in all these disciplines (cf. Joy & Li, 2012; Miller, 1998; Warde, 2015). Furthermore, investigations along the marketing or psychological line should be continued, but improved to engage with progress in parent disciplines and contribute to more systematic knowledge advancement.

Widening the range of disciplines used to consider tourist shopping will also support the final required research direction proposed for tourist shopping. Last but not least, conceptual research should be a fundamental and significant strand for the future scholarly agenda. Although a number of studies have focused on tourist shopping, assembling the findings into a coherent body of knowledge is not easy. As mentioned before, conceptual and theoretical discussions are generally rare in terms of tourist shopping and related topics. Instead, most existing studies are conducted at a practitioner level, which while useful in particular situations do little to advance the area as a whole. Definitions should be explicitly provided no matter which term or concept used. The intension and extension of the term tourist shopping deserve further discussion, even though one operational definition has been proposed in the present chapter. Echoing the appeal from Xin, Tribe, and Chambers (2013) for general tourism research, conceptual issues require much reflection and elaboration within future work on tourist shopping.

The stock take of recent tourist shopping studies unveils a picture that not only helps us appreciate what has been painted, but also reminds us which pieces are missing. Although 88 articles related to tourist shopping have been identified from 2000 to 2015, the accumulated scholarship still lacks clear conceptual elucidation and robust underpinning of empirical work by appropriate theories. According to the indicators of maturity for an academic field developed by Weed (2009), the tourist shopping research is, arguably, still at an early stage. Tourist shopping, as a multidimensional phenomenon (Moscardo, 2004), requires improved conceptualisation and theorisation that contributes to generating a coherent system of knowledge. As tourism continues to diversify and globalise, so will tourist shopping practices (Timothy, 2014). These potentially provide fertile grounds in which future research can develop and flourish.

Overall, the present chapter functions as a general literature review of this thesis. It not only shows what has been done in the tourist shopping research, but also suggests new areas and approaches for future research. This review inspired the conduct of the three studies in the thesis, which are presented in detail in the following three chapters.



## **Chapter 3 Exploring Chinese tourist shopping in Australia: A social practice framework**

This chapter is a modified version of a paper submitted to the Journal of Travel Research:

Jin, H., Moscardo, G., & Murphy, L. (2018). Exploring Chinese outbound tourist shopping: A social practice framework. *Journal of Travel Research*, accepted for publication

This chapter presents the first study of the PhD research. It aimed to address the first research question in this thesis: What are the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia? The chapter is organised as follows. Section 3.1 sets the scene and raises the research question to be answered. Section 3.2 outlines the theoretical background of this study, and highlights the social practice framework proposed by Shove, et al. (2012), on which the study is based. Then the methods of, and the procedures for, data collection and analysis in this study are described in Section 3.3, with the findings being presented in detail in Section 3.4. Finally, Section 3.5 summaries the findings of this study and discusses its implications, limitations and the directions for future research.

### **3.1 Introduction**

China has transformed in the last 40 years from an ascetic to a consumer society (Wang, 2009a). Consumerism is no longer contrary to the dominant political ideology (Zhao & Belk, 2008), and has become a new ideology shaping the nation (Yu, 2014). The consumer revolution in China is not, however, just a replication of the Western consumer culture (Davis, 2000), but the outcome of rapid transformations in Chinese economic, social and technological structures (Yu, 2014). Contemporary Chinese consumers choose certain values from their cultural repertoire – which contains both Western and traditional Chinese values – to legitimise their spending decisions (Zhang, 2017). As a noticeable consumption practice, COTS is a mirror reflecting this new Chinese consumer culture.

According to UNWTO (2017), China has been the top spender in international tourism across the world since 2012, with Chinese tourists spending a record of USD261 billion abroad in 2016. Shopping continues to make up the highest proportion of their travel expenditure (China Tourism Academy, 2017). It is reported that Chinese tourists are keen on a large variety of products ranging from luxury brands in Europe (Clark, 2014) to toilet seats in Japan (Silbert, 2015). Shopping-led consumption of Chinese outbound tourists generates about 13% of global tourism receipts, benefiting many destinations around the world (UNWTO, 2015). Accordingly, tourism organizations in many countries are developing strategies to take advantage of this aspect of Chinese tourism (see Clark, 2014; Pash, 2016).

Despite the recognition of its prevalence and importance, COTS remains underexplored in the tourism literature. Only 23 relevant journal articles could be identified from searches of four databases – ScienceDirect, Sage Journals, Taylors & Francis Online and Emerald Insight – between 2000 and 2017 (see Appendix A for details). Most of these studies were quantitative, based on a consumer behaviour perspective, and focused on explaining satisfaction, motivation or perception. Very few explicitly used any theoretical concepts, but most borrowed from the Western literature and mostly applied it to the Chinese scenario without taking into account China's social and cultural background. This reflects the, often

unstated, assumption that shopping behaviour is solely the result of individual agency with little consideration of wider social forces. While this tension between individual agency and social forces in explaining behaviour has been given considerable attention in the social sciences in general (cf. Elder-Vass, 2010), with a few exceptions (cf. Aitchison, 2005; Sedgley, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2011), this theoretical change has largely been ignored in tourism. Also, academic attention to COTS has mainly focused on Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. Opportunities, therefore, exist to examine COTS in Western countries based on the sociocultural contexts in China using relevant theoretical frameworks from the wider social science literature (Jin & Wang, 2016).

Australia was one of the first Western countries to be granted ADS in 1999 (Tourism Australia, 2017). Chinese visitor arrivals to Australia have experienced a large increase since then, with faster growth than any other market in recent years (Tourism Australia, 2012). In 2016, China remained Australia's second largest (1,199,000 visitor arrivals) and the most valuable (AU\$9.2 billion) inbound tourism market (Tourism Australia, 2017). As with their shopping enthusiasm in other countries (Xu & McGehee, 2012; Zhu, et al., 2016), Chinese tourists spend a sizeable amount on shopping when traveling in Australia (Tourism Research Australia, 2017). According to Tourism Research Australia (2015b), more than 40% of Chinese tourists' total expenditure comes from shopping, which is identified as a key driver for creating their positive travel experiences (Tourism Research Australia, 2014). Nevertheless, there exists little, if any, tourism research focusing on COTS in Australia.

This study seeks to fill these research gaps by investigating COTS in Australia from a sociological perspective. It incorporates the broader consumption landscape in China into the analysis rather than just examining individual functioning as in most previous COTS research. The overall aim of this study is to use SPT as a framework for exploring COTS in Australia. Tourist shopping is thus seen as a social practice that is carried out by tourists. More specifically, the study attempts to answer the research question: what are the key features of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia? By doing so, the present study seeks to

shed new light on understanding COTS in a more holistic manner. It moves tourist shopping research forward by translating SPT into this area. From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study could contribute to practice-oriented policy making related to tourist shopping development.

## **3.2 Theoretical background**

### 3.2.1 Social practice theory

SPT provides a distinctive account of the social world and how it changes. SPT *per se* is not a unified theory (Nicolini, 2012; Postill, 2010; Schatzki, 2001). Rather, it is a collection of accounts about the workings of social life that centre on social practices (Schatzki, 2011). Based on the extensive work of Schatzki (1996, 2001, 2002), Reckwitz (2002), Warde (2005, 2014, 2016) and Shove, et al. (2012), a brief history of SPT, definitions of social practice and key affordances of SPT can be presented as follows.

SPT has roots dating back at least to Wittgenstein and Heidegger (Shove, et al., 2012). The evolution of SPT can be distinguished into three waves. The first wave, led by Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Giddens (1984), among others, primarily employed the concept of social practice to bridge the agency-structure dualism in the social sciences. The second generation (e.g., Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996, 2001, 2002) formulated a more coherent approach to the analysis of social practices (Røpke, 2009). Schatzki (1996, 2001, 2002) provided the most thorough and sustained body of work that put social practice at the core of social order and personal conduct (Warde, 2016). The seminal review by Reckwitz (2002) characterised an ideal type of SPT by contrast to other forms of cultural theory. In the third and current wave, academic attention has been directed less to advancing theory, and more to applying the existing theory to diverse domains (Warde, 2014). Importantly, the work of Warde (2005) can be seen as the first programmatic piece examining the potential of SPT for the study of consumption (Halkier, Katz-Gerro, & Martens, 2011) and the book written by Shove, et al. (2012) illuminates the dynamics of social practice with real-world examples.

Variations exist in defining social practice. Schatzki (1996) described social practice as:

A temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings ... To say that the doings and sayings forming a practice constitute a nexus is to say that they are linked in certain ways. Three major avenues of linkage are involved: (1) through understandings, for examples, of what to say and do; (2) through explicit rules, and principles, precepts, and instructions; and (3) through what I will call “teleoaffective” structures embracing ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods. (p. 89)

He also indicated that the linked doings and sayings constituting a social practice are only evident in performance (Schatzki, 1996). In other words, the carrying out of a practice actualises and sustains the practice in the sense of a spatio-temporal entity. These two notions of social practice have been interpreted as practice-as-entity and practice-as-performance respectively (Røpke, 2009; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005).

In Reckwitz’s (2002) work,

A practice is a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to each other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. (p. 249)

The use of the phrase – “a routinized type of behaviour”, as Shove, et al. (2012) commented, does not mean that social practices equate with the habits of individuals. A social practice “represents a pattern which can be filled out by a multitude of single and often unique actions reproducing the practice” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250) and the existence of the practice depends on the existence and interconnectedness of its elements (Reckwitz, 2002). In this regard, Reckwitz (2002) seems to have reached an accord with Schatzki (1996).

Warde (2005), following Schatzki (1996), argued that a social practice involves both practical activity and its representations. He renamed the three elements as understandings, procedures

and engagements (Warde, 2005), but did not explain the reasons for this split in detail. More recently, Shove, et al. (2012), mainly influenced by Reckwitz (2002), proposed that a social practice is made of three elements – materials, competences and meanings. Specifically, materials refer to “things, technologies, tangible physical entities, and the stuff of which objects are made”; competences encompass “skill, know-how and technique”; and in the meanings element, “symbolic meanings, ideas and aspirations” are included (Shove, et al., 2012, p. 14).

Taken together, the interpretations of these researchers share much common ground, although there seems no single agreed depiction of the elements at first glance. Basically, Schatzki (1996) and Reckwitz (2002) elaborated social practice in a philosophical manner. Their abstract accounts have been inherited and developed by Warde (2005) and Shove, et al. (2012) to promote the application of practice theoretical tools. Notably, the works of Warde (2005) and Shove, et al. (2012) have been employed in a large variety of empirical studies, with followers selecting and emphasising the most relevant elements for their research contexts (cf. Blue, Shove, Carmona, & Kelly, 2016; Gram-Hanssen, 2011; Keller & Ruus, 2014; Schau, Muniz Jr., & Arnould, 2009).

The increasing popularity of SPT lies in its affordances that can help understand and explain social phenomena differently. First, SPT situates the social in social practices. As Reckwitz (2002) argued, “The social world is first and foremost populated by diverse social practices which are carried by agents.” (p. 256) Schatzki (2001) held a more radical view by stating that “The social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organized around shared practical understandings.” (p. 12) It is at this fundamental level that SPT affords a new vista on the operation of the social world. To say social practices take centre stage means that they are presented as the basic units of analysis. In Giddens’ (1984) words, “The basic domain of study of the social sciences... is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of societal totality, but social practices ordered across space and time.” (p. 2) Since social practices consist of both doings and sayings

(Schatzki, 1996), analysis from SPT perspective explains both bodily actions and the linked mental activities.

Second, SPT attempts to bridge the agency-structure dualism (Røpke, 2009; Schatzki, 1996; Spaargaren, 2011). In the vocabulary of SPT, individuals are no longer at the centre of analysis, but are seen as carriers of social practices (Reckwitz, 2002; Shove, et al., 2012). Rather than existing as personal attributes (Shove, et al., 2012), meanings, know-how and purposes are “elements and qualities of a practice in which the single individual participate.” (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 250) As the practitioner of different social practices, an individual locates at a very precise place – the unique crossing point of these practices (Reckwitz, 2002). However, looking beyond the individual does not imply that SPT reverts to the structuralist paradigm (Spaargaren, 2011). Social structure does not exist outside or above individuals. Instead, it is constituted by and reproduced through a multitude of social practices, which are carried out by individuals. SPT thus affords a middle path to reinterpret the relationship between agency and structure, and accordingly, could avoid both the trap of methodological individualism and that of holism.

Moreover, SPT offers an alternative approach to comprehend, and intervene in, the dynamic processes of social change (Shove, et al., 2012; Strengers & Maller, 2015). For the time being, public policy making is typically based on a behavioural paradigm, which is informed by theories from psychology and economics such as theory of planned behaviour and rational choice theory (Shove, 2010). The responsibility for social change is always placed on the choices that individuals make and focuses on the motivators and barriers that are thought to drive behaviour (Scheele & Papazu, 2015). This paradigm is less effective when dealing with systemic issues like sustainability challenges, which are to a large extent beyond individual control. Practice-oriented policy making shifts the focus from individuals to socially shared practices (Strengers & Maller, 2015). Sites of intervention then lie in the dynamics of social practice: the range of elements in circulation, the careers and trajectories of practices, the

connections between practices and the circuits of reproduction (Shove, et al., 2012). SPT in this way provides a more holistic approach to understand and instigate social change.

### 3.2.2 A framework for applying social practice theory to tourist shopping research

The notion of social practice has been drawn upon by a rising number of tourism researchers in recent years. A broad range of research topics has been examined from a social practice perspective, including backpacking (Iaquinto, 2015), gap year travel (Luzecka, 2016), food tourism (James & Halkier, 2016) and sustainable tourism mobility (Verbeek & Mommaas, 2008; Verbeek, Bargeman, & Mommaas, 2011). Especially, some neglected areas, such as sleep in tourism (Rantala & Valtonen, 2014; Valtonen & Veijola, 2011), the forest (Rantala, 2010) and weather (Rantala, Valtonen, & Markuksela, 2011) as tourism environments, have been introduced into tourism literature under the auspices of SPT. These applications do not follow a single template, with different tourism researchers having used SPT in context-specific ways based on its general affordances. Overall, it is suggested that SPT could offer a fresh way of understanding touristic phenomena that is distinct from, and often alternative to, traditional approaches (de Souza Bispo, 2016; Lamers, van der Duim, & Spaargaren, 2017).

Tourist shopping is an activity in which tourists browse, select and purchase goods to take home during their travel. The significance of shopping has been widely recognised both from the tourist and the destination perspective. Moscardo (2004), for example, demonstrated that shopping is a pivotal aspect of tourist experience. Rabbiosi (2015) emphasised the importance and the process of urban tourism branding through leisure shopping in Paris. Most recently, Jin, et al. (2017) conducted a critical review of tourist shopping research, in which not only the main themes, but also the associated conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues within this area were examined. Specifically, a framework was developed in this review that divided tourist shopping studies into six themes: who (segmentation), what (product), why (motivation), where (setting and service), how (behaviour and experience) and how much (expenditure) (Jin, et al., 2017). Examination of the available research in each of these themes revealed a dominance of quantitative studies

focused on generic topics such as satisfaction. It was noted that most of the studies reviewed had applied foci and fell into the category of “data analysis devoid of theoretical content” which Dann, et al. (1988, p. 4) cautioned against. The lack of theoretical foundations is still a significant problem within the body of tourist shopping knowledge.

This study attempts to apply SPT to tourist shopping research. Tourist shopping is seen as a social practice with constitutive elements. It is the basic unit of analysis, while tourists are decentralised as carriers of this practice. In the widely cited book of Shove, et al. (2012), the dynamics of social practice have been articulated based on a scheme where a social practice consists of three interconnected elements – materials, competences and meanings. The present study uses this scheme as a preliminary framework to interpret tourist shopping from a social practice perspective. As Røpke (2009) suggested, each of the three elements should be understood as a broad category covering different aspects. The emphasis of this study is not on providing a full list of these aspects, but rather examining the aspects that are most pertinent to the research context. Bearing this point in mind, the three key elements of tourist shopping as a social practice can be stated in more detail as follows.

- Materials include products that tourists buy to take home during their travel and information and communication technologies (ICTs) that are used by tourists to facilitate their shopping enactments.
- Competences encompass knowledge and skills needed to perform tourist shopping. Some knowledge may also be codified in rules, regulations and instructions formulated by destinations (Røpke, 2009).
- Meanings refer to the purposes, beliefs and significances of tourist shopping. Meanings are social as they are shared understandings belonging to tourist shopping rather than emerging from self-contained tourists (Røpke, 2009).

### **3.3 Methodology**

This exploratory study employed netnography as a research technique for identifying the key features of Chinese tourists’ shopping practices in Australia. Netnography, conceptualised by

(Kozinets, 2010, 2015), refers to a specific set of related data collection, analysis, ethical and representational research practices, conducted using the data that people share through the Internet. In spite of its limitations, such as the narrow focus on online communities and the inability to identify informants, this method is deemed to be faster, simpler and less expensive than traditional ethnography, and more naturalistic and unobtrusive than surveys or interviews (Kozinets, 2002). Concomitant with the growing importance of the Internet on tourist travel planning and reflection, netnography is emerging as a valuable research method in increasingly more tourism studies (e.g., Mkono & Tribe, 2017; Wu, 2015).

Travel blogs were selected as the appropriate data to collect in this netnographic study. Blogging is a popular online activity that Chinese people undertake to record and share their travel experiences. The blogs of Chinese tourists have been used to investigate various research questions, such as the safety concerns of recreational vehicle driving (Wu, 2015) and tourist scams (Li & Pearce, 2016). As archival data (Kozinets, 2015), travel blogs do not bear the imprint of the researchers. They are similar to online diaries where tourists spontaneously portray their travel stories in detail mainly in chronological order. Travel blogs thus could provide rich shopping narratives of Chinese tourists for the author to explore.

The present study focused on two Chinese online platforms – Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn – for data collection by reference to the site selection guidelines (Kozinets, 2015). Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn are the two most popular online travel communities in China (Shen & Liu, 2016). Founded in 2004, Qyer.com is the first and largest website that specialises in Chinese outbound travel (Wu & Pearce, 2014). It provides users with a wide range of outbound travel guides, tips, and forums as well as destination services. Mafengwo.cn positions itself as a leading tourism social networking website, taking free independent travel as the core. It pays attention not only to Chinese outbound travel, but also to their domestic trips. Notably, both websites are well-known for their massive user-generated content (UGC), which is freely available and open to everyone, and have been the sites chosen in other tourist research (cf.

Cheng, 2017; Wu & Pearce, 2014). As a type of UGC, the ever-updating travel blogs constitute an active section in the online communities.

The data collection and analysis were completed in two phases from September 2015 to January 2016. All the travel blogs were collected by the author who is a registered member on and familiar with Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn. In the first phase, the author chose “Australia” in the destination catalogue after logging in to each website and sorted all the travel blogs posted in the Australia section in reverse chronological order. Then the included travel blogs were read. If the blogger was from Mainland China and posted detailed information on shopping when travelling in Australia, the shopping-related texts were copied and pasted into a Word document and the shopping-related images were saved in a separate folder. Consistent with guidelines for exploratory qualitative research, the study used purposive sampling focused on generating sufficient elements to reach theoretical saturation (Suri, 2011). To begin 20 travel blog entries, 10 each from the two selected websites, were retrieved, with QSR NVivo 11 being used to code and categorise the text data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The coding process followed Braun and Clarke’s (2006) guide to performing theory-driven thematic analysis, which was guided by the preliminary social practice framework stated above. Table 3.1 presents some examples of data extracts with codes, categories and themes applied. The second phase of data collection and analysis was designed to check whether more travel blogs could offer new insights into Chinese tourists’ shopping practices in Australia. In this phase, the author repeated the same process to collect and analyse data as that in the first phase. Another 20 travel blogs, 10 each from Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn, were retrieved, and then coded by using QSR NVivo 11. The author saw similar instances repeatedly as the coding process continued, without any new categories emerging and it was concluded that the theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) had been reached and further data collection and analysis was unnecessary.

Table 3.1 Data extracts with codes, categories and themes applied

Data extracts	Codes	Categories	Themes
I bought a set of AESOP skincare products at DAVID JONES (A close friend recommended these products to me). (Aesop) is an Australian brand, and is produced in Melbourne. (M-01)	① Cosmetics; ② Department store; ③ Friend recommendation; ④ Australian brand; ⑤ Country of origin.	1. Purchased products (①④⑤); 2. Shopping venues (②); 3. Source of product knowledge (③).	Materials (1); Settings (2); Competences (3).
There is a chemist discount opposite the Cairns Central. Chemist is a pharmacy chain in Australia, selling both cosmetics and healthcare products... I bought a Grape Seed and an Evening Primrose Oil for myself, except the (healthcare) products I purchased on behalf of others. (Q-07)	① Pharmacy; ② Knowledge of pharmacy; ③ Healthcare products; ④ Purchasing products requested by others.	1. Shopping venues (①); 2. Knowledge of shopping venues (②); 3. Purchased products (③); 4. <i>Guanxi</i> maintenance (④).	Settings (1); Competences (2); Materials (3); Meanings (4).

In total, the shopping-related texts and images from 40 travel blogs were collected and analysed. More specifically, 20 travel blogs elicited from Qyer.com were coded as Q-01 to Q-20, containing 23,787 words and 151 images; 20 travel blogs generated from Mafengwo.cn were coded as M-01 to M-20, comprising 15,647 words and 78 images. It is important to point out that the shopping-related words were used as the main sort of data in this study, while the complementary images were employed to triangulate the text data (Denzin, 1989). It is also worth noting that the shopping-related texts and images from 40 travel blogs not only consisted of the shopping practices of the bloggers, but in most cases also comprised that of their travel group members. The analysis focused on the shopping practices revealed in the blogs, rather than on the characteristics of individual tourists. In addition, all the

collected travel blogs were originally written in Chinese. Whenever quoted, the blog contents were first translated from Chinese to English by the author and then back translated by a translator fluent in both Chinese and English (Chen & Boore, 2010). The final English version of quotes was reached by agreement between the translator and the author (Chen & Boore, 2010).

It can be stated that two strategies were adopted to ensure the quality of this study. The first strategy is data triangulation. As mentioned above, both the shopping-related texts and images from the two selected websites were collected and analysed in the study. This use of multiple data sources and types contributes to increasing the credibility of the present study. Secondly, the procedures of data collection and analysis are explained in great detail. This transparency of the research process also helps to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings presented in this qualitative study.

### **3.4 Findings**

This section presents the findings on the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia in two parts. The first part illustrates the key features of materials, competences and meanings of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia on the basis of the preliminary framework stated above. The second part elaborates the necessity of adding settings as a fourth element of shopping practices in the tourism context and describes the key features of the settings element of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia.

#### **3.4.1 Materials, competences and meanings**

##### **3.4.1.1 Materials**

Products that are bought by tourists to take home are essential materials of their shopping practices. According to the 40 travel blogs, a wide variety of products were purchased by Chinese tourists when travelling in Australia. The variety of purchased products can be illustrated by an image posted by Q-17 (Figure 3.1). As shown in Figure 3.1, the items that Q-17 got ranged from Tim Tam biscuits and chia seeds, to goat soap and a Cartier watch.

This finding is not surprising in the sense that the diversity of products that Chinese tourists seek when traveling in other countries has been revealed in previous research (e.g., Xu & McGehee, 2012; Zhu, et al., 2016). This pattern is, however, very different to that reported for other international tourists in Australia who focus on buying crafts, wine, art, homewares and clothing (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benckendorff, 2013) and reviews of products bought by tourists summarised in Lehto, et al. (2014).



Figure 3.1 An image of products that Q-17 displayed

The products that Chinese tourists favour in Australia can be grouped into five main categories based on the frequencies that they were mentioned in the blogs: clothing and accessories, healthcare products, cosmetics, souvenirs, and food and drinks. Notably, souvenirs in the conventional sense, as described by Swanson and Timothy (2012) and Cave, Jolliffe, and Baum (2013), only account for a small percentage of the total products chosen by Chinese tourists, while a number of products that are more utilitarian have become the target purchase of Chinese tourists. Moreover, these utilitarian goods are purchased by Chinese tourists in large quantities. This feature provides a clue to understand why more than 40% of Chinese tourists' total expenditure in Australia comes from shopping (Tourism Research Australia, 2015b). The amount of products that Chinese tourists purchase is not only shown in the images that they posted (e.g., Figure 3.1), but also reflected in their

descriptions of baggage weight in the blogs. As Q-10 wrote, *“Because I shopped a lot in Brisbane, my baggage was seriously overweight. I was shocked when checking in: I purchased a 20kg baggage allowance, but my baggage was 33kg...”* While most previous COTS research highlights the amount of money spent on shopping, there has been no overt acknowledgement in the existing literature of the large quantities of Chinese tourist purchases. Anecdotally this appears to be unique to Chinese consumers.

A majority of the products purchased by Chinese tourists are well-known branded ones, at least within their categories. This proposition is consistent with Zhu, et al. (2016) where brand admiration was reflected in the shopping experience of urban Chinese who travelled to Europe. Different in part from Kwek and Lee (2013), the brands that are referred to in the 40 blogs are not necessarily luxury, but to a large degree can be labelled as premium. The Australian brands are connected to being Australian made, which for Chinese tourists is a guarantee for clean and genuine products, while the international brands purchased are often associated with lower price compared to that in China. For example, M-01 described Aesop skincare products as, *“produced in Melbourne”, “pure plant”* and *“safe to use during pregnancy”*. When Q-14 bought an iPhone 6 plus, she emphasised, *“It is more than RMB1,000 cheaper than that at home including the tax refund.”* This connection between brands and safety rather than luxury is an important one as previous discussion about Chinese consumers has tended to focus on luxury and conspicuous consumption (Sun, et al., 2014). The current research suggests instead that brands purchased in Australia may be driven more by a desire to access safe, clean and authentic products. This drive for safety and authenticity reflects the current context of multiple product safety failures in China and widespread counterfeiting of goods (Ross, 2012).

ICTs constitute an indispensable part of the materials of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia. According to the 40 travel blogs, shopping websites and mobile apps are two main types of ICTs that are used by Chinese tourists to facilitate their shopping enactments. Online shopping is a booming phenomenon in China, with the number of users having risen

to 413 million by December 2015 (China Internet Network Information Center, 2016). Interestingly, there are increasingly more overseas products available on Chinese shopping websites via *Daigous*, who are essentially shopping agents that purchase products at the request of Chinese customers and ship them to China (Battersby, 2016). These products from shopping websites are often used by Chinese tourists as references to guide their shopping enactments on site. The attributes of these products, especially their prices, are commonly compared to, and contrasted with, that of products displayed in the shopping venues. For example, Q-16 described, *“There was a so-called Australia’s cheapest chemist opposite the Cairns Central. I did not know whether it was cheapest or not, but the products there were cheaper than that from Daigous on Taobao (a Chinese website for online shopping).”*

Mobile apps are also integrated into the shopping practices of Chinese tourists. For instance, M-07 and his wife decided to shop at Direct Factory Outlets (DFO) South Wharf, Melbourne. He searched the venue via Google map app and found it *“not far from the Federation Square. There are only three stops in between if (we) catch the free bus. (We) would arrive with a short walk after (we) get off the bus.”* (M-07) Apart from the navigation apps, the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) app is frequently referred to, and recommended for use in the travel blogs. The TRS app allows passengers travelling on international flights departing Australia and international cruises to enter the information required to lodge TRS claims, according to Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)(2017). If the passengers successfully enter their claim details using the app, they will be able to use a dedicated queue at the TRS facility and should spend less time queuing (DIBP, 2017). The TRS app has been well received by Chinese tourists, which can be exemplified by the following quote: *“I suggest that you download TRS app. It is very good and easy to use. Plus, there were only two people in the queue before us.”*(Q-05) This use of mobile technology in shopping decision making and purchase behaviours is a phenomenon recognised in the wider retail literature and referred to as multichannel shopping (McGoldrick & Collins, 2007). While multichannel shopping is a growing phenomenon amongst all consumers, not just the Chinese, it has not been discussed in either the tourist shopping literature (Jin, et al., 2017) nor in the

reviews of mobile technology use in tourism (Huang, Goo, Nam, & Yoo, 2017; Wang, et al., 2014).

#### 3.4.1.2 Competences

The competences mainly cover the knowledge and skills needed to carry out the practice, with some of them being codified in formal rules, regulations and instructions (Røpke, 2009). Since shopping is one of the most basic practices in daily lives, the relevant competences in general are learned by practitioners through extensive experience over time and become activated when conducting the practice on site. However, tourist shopping is not just a transplanted practice of daily shopping into the tourism context. It requires not only the general shopping competences of tourists accumulated at home, but also the knowledge and skills associated with shopping in the destination. With regard to the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia, the competences that are mostly referred to in the 40 travel blogs include the knowledge of products, shopping venues, TRS and language skills.

Chinese tourists conduct shopping practices in Australia with a good knowledge of what to buy. They have made pre-travel preparations such that their purchases of some products can be more planned than improvised. For instance, Q-12, who travelled with family and friends, wrote that *“All mums had prepared shopping lists before our travel.”* More specifically, brand and price are two product attributes that seem to be of most concern to Chinese tourists. Brand awareness and price comparison can be found everywhere in the blogs. As illustrated by Q-16, *“Kiehl’s in Australia is much cheaper than that at Terminal 3 in Beijing Capital International Airport. For example, the 125g ultra facial cream is RMB366 at Terminal 3, while it is only a bit more than AUD50 in Sydney Airport. Jurlique in these two places is at similar prices, but it is still a little bit cheaper (in Sydney Airport) than that in Terminal 3.”* It can also be identified that in addition to personal experience, *Daigous*, friends and celebrities function as major product information sources from which Chinese tourists learn about what to buy in Australia.

To learn where to shop is also an integral part of the pre-travel preparations of Chinese tourists. As M-14 described, *“Coles and Woolworths are two leading supermarket chains in Australia. I read some travel tips on Australian supermarkets beforehand. <http://www.aozhou123.com/1-1844.html>. I thought this article was good. After reading it, I wanted to shop in Coles. So I did not go to Woolie.”* From the 40 travel blogs, it is not difficult to find that Chinese tourists generally have acquired basic knowledge of what a specific shopping venue, for example Queen Victoria Building (QVB), is, where it is located and what products are sold there before their travel. Interestingly, the business hours in shopping venues are easily overlooked by Chinese tourists. As a result, Chinese tourists sometimes cheerfully go shopping only to find the door closed. For example, M-09 wrote that, *“(We) got off the subway at QVB station and found many stores were already closed, although it was only 4:30pm. (We) could only have a look outside the UGG flagship store and need to come here earlier tomorrow.”* As the travel of Chinese tourists in Australia goes, so goes their knowledge of shopping venues. In other words, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists conducted in one venue would dynamically become the knowledge base for their subsequent shopping practices. M-09 went to QVB again with his wife the next day and continued, *“With the experience yesterday, we visited QVB as soon as we came back to the city centre (Sydney).”*

The competences in TRS, not surprisingly, have been repeatedly highlighted in the travel blogs, given the large variety and quantity of products that Chinese tourists purchase in Australia. As part of the Australian Government’s tax system, the TRS allows Australians and overseas visitors to claim a refund of the goods and services tax and wine equalisation tax paid on goods bought in Australia and then taken out of Australia in checked luggage or carry-on bags (DIBP, 2017). Besides the knowledge of using the TRS app stated above, Chinese tourists should know what can (not) be claimed, when to go to TRS facility and how to claim a tax refund, especially on liquids, aerosols or gels. Otherwise, to make a TRS claim can become an unpleasant experience. For example, Q-01 got into trouble when she went through the Customs at Brisbane Airport. As Q-01 stated, *“The products on which I intended*

*to claim tax refund included a small Aesop facial masque and a large Jurlique hand cream. I did not check them in with my luggage as I wanted to make a claim for them. But it turned out that the Customs did not allow me to take them on board. They could be either confiscated or checked in.”* Likewise, M-02 and M-19 mistakenly believed that the TRS claim could only be made for products in carry-on baggage.

Language environment for Chinese tourists is a big difference between their shopping practices in Australia and that at home. The performance of shopping practices in Australia may well require a certain level of English reading and speaking skills, which many Chinese tourists do not have. It can be argued that a language barrier is still an obstacle to Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. A similar statement has been made by Xu and McGehee (2012) where the shopping venues in America are suggested to have Chinese signs and Chinese-speaking shop assistants to improve the shopping experience of Chinese tourists. In fact, to shop in venues where Chinese-speaking shop assistants are available has been used by Chinese tourists as a way to bridge the language barrier. As instantiated by Q-10, *“Xiaoqingxin (Q-10’s wife) compared the prices in different pharmacies and finally bought several bags of healthcare products in a pharmacy where there were Chinese shop assistants ... Honestly, it is more convenient to have a Chinese-speaking person to assist you when you shop. It would kill me to have to understand so many professional terms in English.”*

#### 3.4.1.3 Meanings

The element of meanings, simply put, is about making sense of a social practice (Røpke, 2009). Meanings include the purposes, beliefs and shared understandings, which represent the social and symbolic significance of participation in the practice (Shove, et al., 2012). Generally speaking, shopping in Australia is a pivotal and pervasive activity for Chinese tourists. It is common that quite a few preparations for shopping, such as writing shopping lists and reading shopping tips, have been made by Chinese tourists before their travel. Also, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are commonly carried out all the way through their travel in Australia, with sometimes the last few days being purely used for shopping. More

specifically, the meanings of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia can be divided into four categories as below.

Firstly, memento hunting is a basic and universal meaning of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists. Souvenirs are the most ubiquitous items purchased by tourists throughout the world (Timothy, 2005). Chinese tourists in Australia are no exception. Although souvenirs such as koala toys, only occupy a small part of what they purchase in Australia, Chinese tourists return home with souvenirs to help them preserve and commemorate their travel experience (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). As explained by Q-10, fridge magnets are *"evidence showing that I have been here and reminders of my travel."* Accordingly, there is a shared understanding among Chinese tourists that part of their shopping practices is carried out to hunt for mementos of their travel. To search for mementos in this context is not to accomplish specific tasks, but for the most part, is to explore and experience unfamiliar shopping venues. The intention to purchase can arise as the shopping practices unfold, with the process involving fun, surprise or a bit of disappointment. For example, Q-02 and her boyfriend caught a bus to the Rocks Markets in Sydney and described, *"(We) were pleasantly surprised after getting off the bus. The whole Markets roughly stretched over two streets. There were a large variety of products, many of which were Australian made souvenirs. We wandered around the whole Markets and bought some small items related to kangaroo. They were relatively of (Australian) characteristic."*

Seeking brand value is the second category of the meanings of Chinese tourists' shopping practices. The brand value here can be understood in two senses. One is that brands *per se* play an enormous role in the shopping practices of Chinese tourists. For example, M-11 and her friend went to a DFO and then left without buying anything, because *"there are no high-end brands that the beauty (M-11's friend) wants. What are available are mainly Australian local brands like Cotton On."* Brands represent new ideologies that structure daily lives in China (Yu, 2014). The shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia can be treated as an extension of brand ideologies to an unusual environment. Outbound travel becomes an outlet

for Chinese tourists to express their favour towards Western brands. The other sense of brand value lies in the price advantage of brand-name products in Australia in contrast to that in China. To purchase upscale products at relatively low prices is commonly counted by Chinese tourists as good value for money. Not surprisingly, price-related information, such as discount and price comparison, is frequently referred to in all 40 travel blogs. An extreme example is Q-14, who bought 15 pairs of branded shoes and explained, *“The cheapest pair is about RMB300. Women’s shoes are mainly between AUD60 and AUD120. There are extra discounts from the stores. What’s more, we can claim tax refund if we spend over AUD300. Who would not buy?”*

Thirdly, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists reflect their pursuit of product quality and authenticity. The existence of this meaning to a large extent is a consequence of the rampancy of counterfeit and substandard products in China. For instance, a string of food safety incidents in China has been exposed by the media or on the Internet in the last decade or so. The contaminated baby formula stands out as one of the worst incidents, causing the death of six infants and the hospitalisation of 52,000 with a further 250,000 children suffering from mild kidney and urinary problems (Pei et al., 2011). The frequent exposure of food-related scandals has triggered a nationwide panic on food quality and safety, and contributed to the wider scope of a social trust crisis in contemporary China (Yan, 2012). Chinese consumers hold sceptical attitudes towards domestically produced daily commodities, whereas show admiration and trust towards the counterparts made in the West (Zhu, et al., 2016). In pursuit of quality and authenticity, increasingly more Chinese customers turn their attention to purchase utilitarian products when travelling abroad. As can be illustrated by M-01, *“I feel that we people that live in China sometimes are quite poor. Both medicine and food are not safe, not to mention the polluted air. Even if I have to wait more than 10 days for ocean shipping, I would like to buy the safest products for my baby and family.”*

Last but not least, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists can be conducted as a way of maintenance and reinforcement of *guanxi*. *Guanxi* is a Chinese concept that refers to a

network of personal connections and social relationships one can use for professional or other advantage (Oxford English Dictionary, 2016). The manifestation of *guanxi* on the shopping practices of Chinese tourists lies in two main aspects: gift buying and purchasing products requested by others. The former means that Chinese tourists voluntarily buy products on their own expenses as gifts for others at home. Q-14 and her husband, for example, shopped on their last day in Sydney primarily because “*Today (we) need to buy gifts for relatives and friends.*” The latter connotes that Chinese tourists act as shopping agents to purchase specific products at the request of others at home. For instance, M-01 described herself as “*bearing a heavy responsibility for purchasing various products requested by close friends.*” Despite the differences between them, these two aspects share the same basis – to maintain and reinforce *guanxi*. From the standpoint of Chinese tourists, buying gifts for, and/or purchasing products requested by *guanxi* parties, can function as a way to not only repay obligation and indebtedness accumulated before travel, but also lay the foundation of future favour exchanges and open up new doors for reciprocity in the long run (Gold, Guthrie, & Wank, 2002). Although purchases for gifts have been acknowledged in some previous COTS research (Gao, et al., 2017; Lin, 2017; Zhu, et al., 2016), this extension of *guanxi* to include purchases made at the request of other, rather than simply as gifts for others has not been described previously in the COTS literature.

#### 3.4.2 Settings as a fourth element of tourist shopping practices

Besides the three elements proposed by Shove, et al. (2012), a noticeable theme that has emerged from the travel blogs can be labelled as settings. The term settings in this study broadly refer to the places where tourist shopping takes place. Settings in the tourist shopping context can be applied at multiple scales. Taking Chinese tourist shopping in Australia as an example, the settings can include the destination – Australia, the cities listed in the itinerary and the specific shopping venues such as department stores. Based on the present analysis, it can be argued that settings should be added as a fourth element of tourist shopping practices.

First, tourist shopping practices in essence are carried out in unusual environments. Spatially, tourism involves a person moving from his/her usual place of residence to a destination where most tourist activities occur (Leiper, 1979). The non-ordinary settings mean that the shopping practices conducted in the tourism environment are different from that in daily routine. This is especially true in the case of Eastern tourists shopping in Western countries, or vice versa. The differences between home and destinations in, for example, culture, language and regulations, require tourists to have a certain level of knowledge and skills to enact shopping practices, and sometimes can become obstacles to the completion of shopping processes. For instance, language barriers and limited payment methods have been found to negatively impact the shopping experiences of Chinese tourists in America (Xu & McGehee, 2012).

Also, destinations function as core consideration filters for tourist shopping decisions. Every destination has its iconic products, which constitute important sources of the destination image formation among tourists (Beerli & Martin, 2004). For example, France is the home of some famous vintage wines; Switzerland has a reputation for producing some of the world's best watches. Accordingly, tourists in general would be more likely to purchase wines from France and watches from Switzerland rather than vice versa. This statement is confirmed in Zhu, et al. (2016) where French wines and Swiss watches are commonly bought by Chinese tourists in Europe, with the associated destination images and meanings shared within their social networks. Destination matters in tourist shopping practices. The selection of destinations to a certain degree indicates the direction for consequent shopping preferences.

In addition, tourist shopping practices differ across different shopping venues. For example, British tourists commonly bargain in independent shops and local markets in Turkey whereas far less evidence of bargaining activities is reported in more formal commercial outlets such as shopping malls (Kozak, 2016). Different kinds of shopping venues couple with the availability of different variety of products and different streetscapes and servicescapes (Murphy, Benckendorff, et al., 2011), which provides an essential clue for explaining the

differences in tourist shopping practices. Night markets, for instance, are spaces bustling with noise and excitement where tourists relax with others while they explore and browse for unique items at the right price (Ackerman & Walker, 2012). Shopping malls, however, act as a medium for the contemporary dynamics that serve to create an ambience of placelessness, while at the same time offer new appeal for tourists, such as the latest fashion and passing time (Shim & Santos, 2014).

Based on the 40 travel blogs, the key features of the settings element of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia can be described as follows. Australia on the whole is not perceived as a shopping paradise by Chinese tourists. Products in Australia do not necessarily have price advantages over that in other destinations, especially when it comes to international brands. Nevertheless, Australia is the country of origin of diverse products that Chinese tourists like to purchase. The image of Australia as a country "*riding on the sheep's back*" (M-20) has been deeply ingrained in the mind of Chinese people. This image might explain why Australia is commonly associated with superior wool and related products. Also, products made in Australia are associated with safety, trustworthiness and good quality by Chinese tourists. For example, M-05 listed healthcare products as must-buys in Australia and explained, "*(Australia) is far away from other continents. No pollution. Various products like naturally derived fish oil, are absolutely pure natural.*" It is no surprise that the Australian-made label was one of the main criteria for Chinese tourists to choose products.

The major Australian cities where the shopping practices of Chinese tourists took place included: Sydney (27)<sup>3</sup>, Melbourne (27), Cairns (10), Gold Coast (9) and Brisbane (6). These cities can be further grouped into two tiers based on their frequencies of occurrence in the travel blogs: Sydney and Melbourne clearly stand out as the first-tier shopping cities, while the others can be treated as second-tier. Considered in conjunction with their travel itineraries posted in the blogs, it can be argued that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists occur in

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<sup>3</sup> The number 27 in the bracket represents that 27 out of 40 travel blogs mentioned Sydney as a city where shopping practices were conducted.

almost all the cities they visit in Australia, with the last stop being considered as the most important and convenient place to conduct shopping practices. A whole day or even several days in the city from which Chinese tourists fly back home are often devoted to accomplishing shopping tasks. As Q-06 wrote for his last day in Australia, *“Today we have a clear target. It will be a shopping day.”* But to reserve the stay in the last Australian city as shopping time is not always a wise choice. As can be exemplified by M-17, *“We chose Sydney as our last stop so that we would shop a lot there, but it turned out that Sydney was not a shopping paradise at all. Probably because there were too many Chinese tourists there, many popular products were out of stock. We regretted very much that we did not buy them before travelling to Sydney.”*

As with the variety of products Chinese tourists purchase, so do the shopping venues they patronise. According to the 40 travel blogs, popular shopping venues for Chinese tourists in Australia cover: tourist attractions/precincts, pharmacies, supermarkets, department stores, airports, shopping malls/ centres and local markets. These venues are not mutually exclusive sometimes. The Queen Victoria Market, for example, is not only a notable local market in Melbourne, but also a well-known tourist attraction. It is also obvious that some places seemingly irrelevant to tourism have become primary shopping venues for Chinese tourists. As shown in Figure 3.2, M-06’s wife was selecting vitamins in a Coles supermarket. The favour of Chinese tourists towards Australian utilitarian goods might explain why the shopping practices of Chinese tourists have expanded into retail sectors that conventionally are not included in the tourism industry. Further, different shopping venues have different meanings for Chinese tourists. For instance, China Town might be a good choice to look for souvenirs, but is not seen a trustworthy place to purchase healthcare products.



Figure 3.2 M-06's wife was selecting vitamins in a Coles supermarket

### **3.5 Summary and discussion**

#### **3.5.1 Summary**

COTS is a mirror that reflects the new consumer culture in contemporary China. Despite its prevalence and importance, COTS in general, and COTS in Western countries in particular, has received little attention in the tourism literature. Where COTS has been examined, there is a dominance of understanding it quantitatively from a consumer behaviour perspective without taking China's social and cultural background into account. The present study seeks to fill these research gaps by applying SPT to the exploration of COTS in Australia. More specifically, this study uses a social practice scheme developed by Shove, et al. (2012), where a social practice consists of three elements – materials, competences and meanings, to answer the research question: what are the key features of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in Australia? Netnography is employed to collect and analyse the shopping-related texts and images in 40 travel blogs from the two most popular online travel communities in China – Qyer.com and Mafengwo.cn, with the texts as main sort of data being coded and categorised in QSR NVivo 11.

Besides the three elements proposed by Shove, et al. (2012), this study argues that settings, which refer to the places where tourist shopping occurs, should be added as a fourth element of tourist shopping practices. Firstly, tourist shopping practices are in essence conducted in unusual environments. Tourism involves a person moving from his/her usual place of residence to a destination. The non-ordinary settings entail that the shopping practices in the tourism context are different from that in daily routine. Also, destinations function as core consideration filters for tourist shopping decisions. Every destination has its own iconic products, which constitute important sources of the destination image formation among tourists. The selection of destinations indicates the direction for consequent shopping preferences. In addition, tourist shopping practices differ across different shopping venues. Different types of shopping venues connect to the availability of different variety of products and different streetscapes and servicescapes, which can explain the differences in tourist shopping practices.

Therefore, the present study holds that a tourist shopping practice consists of four elements: materials, competences, meanings and settings. These elements are not independent, but are interconnected and mutually shape each other (Shove, et al., 2012). In Reckwitz's (2002) terms, tourist shopping practice forms "a 'block' whose existence necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, and which cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements." (p. 250) Specifically, materials include products that tourists purchase to take home during their travel and ICTs that are used by tourists to facilitate their shopping enactments; competences encompass knowledge and skills that are needed to perform tourist shopping and the relevant rules, regulations and instructions; meanings comprise the purposes, beliefs and shared understandings that represent the social and symbolic significance of participation in the practice; and settings involve the countries, visited cities and specific venues where tourist shopping take places. Accordingly, key features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia can be interpreted as follows (Figure 3.3).

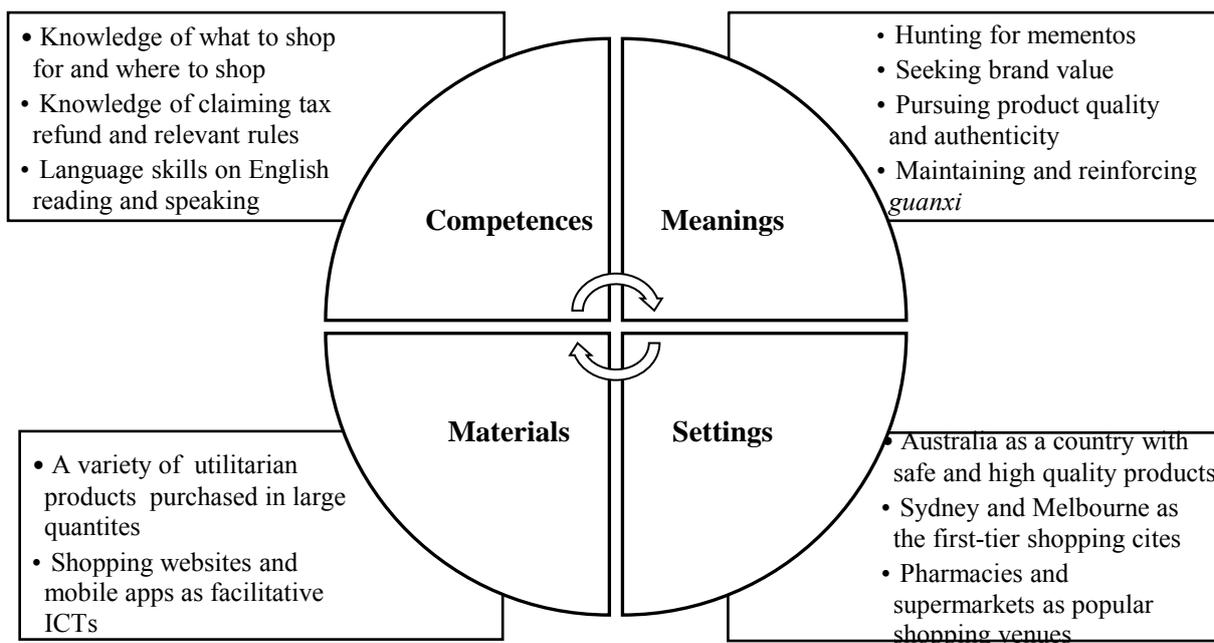


Figure 3.3 Key features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia

### 3.5.2 Discussion

#### 3.5.2.1 Theoretical implications

The present study applies SPT to tourist shopping research by exploring Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. Tourist shopping as a social practice is the basic unit of analysis, while tourists are decentralised as carriers of this practice. This stance is in stark contrast to that in most of the existing tourist shopping studies, where tourists are at the centre of analysis and their satisfaction, motivation and attitude (towards shopping) are primarily examined (Jin, et al., 2017). Accordingly, SPT opens up a new set of research questions, such as what tourist shopping practices constitute, how they change over time and space and how they connect to other practices. To address these practice-based questions helps to understand tourist shopping phenomenon differently. For example, previous research often assumes that tourist shopping is solely the result of individual agency with little consideration of wider social forces. This assumption overestimates the autonomy that individual tourists have in their choices and relevant behaviours, while underestimating the extent to which shopping behaviour is influenced by socio-technical systems. The practice-based inquiries into tourist

shopping shift the focus from the choices and values of individual tourists to the organisation and dynamics of the actual shopping activities. As shopping practices reflect both individual agency and social structure, these inquiries are of great value in understanding the complexity of tourist shopping in a holistic manner.

Key features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in this study are uncovered based on a framework in which a tourist shopping practice consists of four interconnected elements – materials, competences, meanings and settings. In the vocabulary of SPT, each element is an integral part that makes tourist shopping practices into the basic unit of analysis. These elements and their features, for example, pursuing brand value and product authenticity, are not seen as qualities of individual tourists but as attributes of tourist shopping practices as recognisable entities. Since these defining elements can be interpreted as nexuses of both doings and sayings (Schatzki, 1996), using SPT to analyse tourist shopping needs to take routines and bodily actions, such as the use of mobile technology in this study, into the front stage to balance what tourists say with what they do (Warde, 2005). In this way, SPT contributes to rectifying the overemphasis on attitudinal and perceptual aspects of tourist shopping under the dominance of psychological and marketing investigations. As shown in this study, Chinese tourists commonly make shopping preparations before their travel and use mobile technology to facilitate their shopping enactments on site. It is also found that, although Chinese tourists hunt for souvenirs, the majority of products they purchase are utilitarian, not only for themselves but also for *guanxi* maintenance. These are distinct features of Chinese tourist shopping practices, but have rarely been examined in the previous research. The use of SPT thus helps to broaden the spectrum of what Chinese tourist shopping is.

#### 3.5.2.2 Methodological implications

Examining the Chinese travel blogs in this study raises methodological questions worthy of attention in cross-cultural tourism research. Travel blogs in the Western context are commonly deemed as manifestations of personal travel experience (Pan, MacLaurin, &

Crotts, 2007). Lee and Gretzel (2014) provide both a literature review and evidence that travel blogs in non-Western cultures may be used for different functions and have different contents related to social identity within a collective. The present study found a pattern similar to that reported by Lee and Gretzel (2014) in that the 40 travel blogs examined in this study were much instrumental than expressive. The amount of practical information, such as suggestions and recommendations, indicates that these Chinese tourists blog with the goal of informing others more than expressing their own individual identity. This highlights the need for tourism researchers to pay greater attention to the equivalence of research methods in cross-cultural research.

### 3.5.2.3 Practical implications

The findings of this study have implications for tourism marketing and management. Firstly, Chinese tourist shopping deserves more attention from destination marketing organisations. Shopping is a pivotal and pervasive practice that Chinese tourists carry out, but it is often overlooked under the shadow of other destination attractions. For example, in Australia world-class nature based attractions dominate tourism marketing (Tourism Research Australia, 2013), whereas the value of tourist shopping is to some extent underestimated. As there is a great volume and variety of Australian products purchased by Chinese tourists to take home, shopping could be promoted as an attraction tailored for the Chinese market.

Second, the four elements and their features provide directions for intervening in the shopping practices of Chinese tourists. Again in Australia the practice framework indicated that the utilitarian products oriented shopping practices of Chinese tourists are much influenced by technology and concern about product safety and brand authenticity. This suggests that greater information on product ingredients and production processes and the cleanliness and quality assurance of Australian systems could be provided to support Chinese tourist purchase decisions. The widespread use of mobile apps directs Australian retailers to pay attention to these apps and to consider direct partnerships with the app providers to provide information about shopping opportunities while in Australia. The large quantities of

some purchases made also provide an opportunity for Australian retailers to explore packaging and transport support options for Chinese tourists.

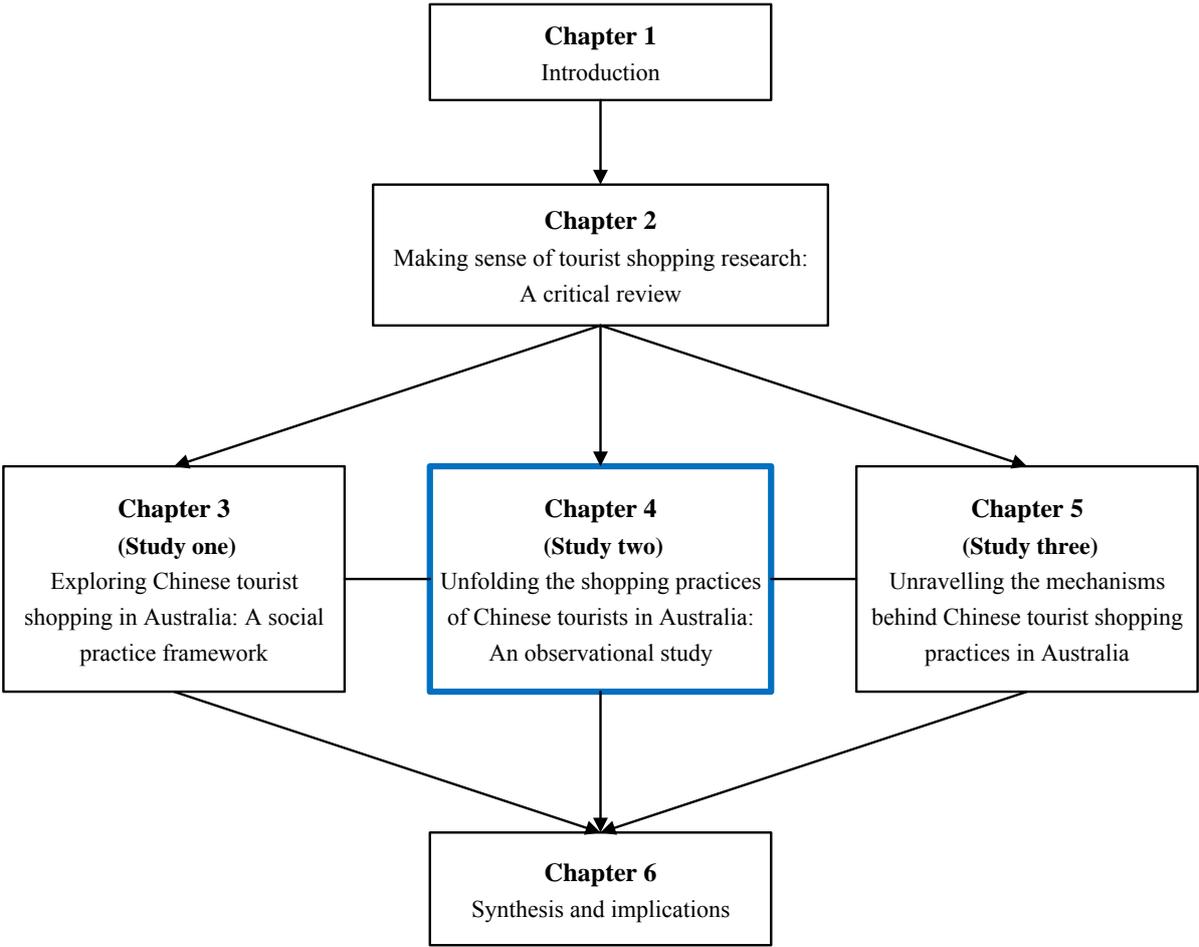
#### 3.5.2.4 Limitations and future research directions

This study has certain limitations. It should be kept in mind that the findings of this study are based on examining the shopping-related texts and images excerpted from 40 Chinese travel blogs. Although these blogs contain rich shopping narratives of both the bloggers and their group members, caution should be taken when extrapolating the findings to Chinese tourists to Australia as a whole. For example, the shopping practices of group tourists may have not been fully covered in the blogs. Also, travel blogs only represent one source of archival data that can be collected and analysed by using netnography (Kozinets, 2010). The findings of the current study are to some extent confined to what this specific data source can provide, with some features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists possibly missing. More research, therefore, needs to be conducted to examine whether there are any other key features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia not included in the findings of this study.

The current study provides some initial experiences of the use of SPT, which provides a new theoretical foundation for understanding tourist shopping phenomenon. A social practice not only figures as an entity, but also exists as performance (Shove, et al., 2012). As Warde (2005) stated, the coordinated entity requires performance for its existence. Based on the key features of their four elements identified in this study, it would be interesting to explore how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are performed on site. For example, a range of shopping venues could be selected to investigate the embodied actions of Chinese tourists and the involved social interactions when the shopping practices are carried out. The connections between tourist shopping and related practices also deserve further research attention. It can be noticed in this study that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are interwoven with other popular practices in China, such as online shopping and gift giving. To understand how these practices affect each other contributes to unravelling the prevalence of

Chinese tourist shopping and identifying innovative ways of managing tourist shopping development.

Overall, this chapter addressed the first research question in the thesis. Key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia were identified by employing the social practice scheme put forward by Shove, et al. (2012) as an analytical framework to analyse 40 travel blogs of Chinese tourists. Based on the findings of this study, the next chapter will reveal how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold in a range of shopping venues in Australia.



## **Chapter 4 Unfolding the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia: An observational study**

As highlighted in the thesis outline diagram, the present chapter reports the second study of the PhD research. This chapter sought to answer the second research question in the thesis: How do Chinese tourists carry out shopping practices on site? Specifically, Section 4.1 describes the background of the conduct of this study. Section 4.2 provides an abridged literature review on tourist shopping, especially COTS, and on SPT and its applications in tourism research, with the aim of this study being further highlighted. After that, the chapter provides detailed information on the processes of data collection and analysis and the findings of this study in Section 4.3 and Section 4.4 respectively. Finally in Section 4.5, a summary of the findings and the limitations and implications of this study are presented. The chapter is presented as a journal article as the intention is to submit it to the *Annals of Tourism Research* once the overall thesis is under examination.

## 4.1 Introduction

Chinese outbound tourism has been growing dramatically over the last decade. According to UNWTO (2017), China continues to lead global outbound travel, with a record 135 million Chinese outbound tourists spending USD261 billion in 2016. Notably, shopping makes up the highest proportion of their travel expenditure (China Tourism Academy, 2018a). This shopping-led consumption of Chinese outbound tourists has become a key source of global tourism revenue, and has benefited many destinations around the world (UNWTO, 2015).

However, despite the recognition of its prevalence and importance, COTS remains insufficiently researched in the tourism literature. The majority of the existing studies on COTS were conducted in Hong Kong, Macao or Taiwan, leaving Chinese tourist shopping in Western countries poorly understood. This is a pressing issue as China has become a key tourist source market for many Western countries (China Tourism Academy, 2018b). A further examination of previous studies also suggests an overreliance on using self-report methods, such as questionnaires, to investigate individual motivation, satisfaction and perceptions of COTS. These studies place emphasis on answering what Chinese tourists say and feel about shopping but, to a large degree, neglect to examine what they actually do within the process of shopping.

The present study seeks to fill these research gaps by zooming in to examine the shopping performances of Chinese tourists in Australia based on SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005). Tourist shopping as a social practice is thus treated as the basic unit of analysis, while tourists are decentralised as carriers of this practice. The overall aim of this study is to elucidate how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold on site. More specifically, the present study attempts to employ participant observation (Spradley, 1980) to identify the embodied actions involved in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists in a range of shopping settings in Australia. By doing so, this study contributes to enriching the application of SPT to tourist shopping research. It is expected that the findings of this study can add supplementary information to the current tourist shopping knowledge

which is primarily based on self-reports, and accordingly, can provide an additional perspective to inform shopping related tourism policy-making.

## **4.2 Literature review**

### 4.2.1 Tourist shopping

Shopping is one of the most common activities that tourists engage in during their travel (Timothy, 2014). The importance of shopping has been widely acknowledged from both the tourist and the destination perspective (e.g., Moscardo, 2004; Murphy, Benckendorff, et al., 2011; Rabbiosi, 2015; Timothy, 2005). Jin, et al. (2017) recently defined tourist shopping as an activity in which tourists browse, select and purchase goods to take home, and conducted a critical review of tourist shopping studies from 2000 to 2015. Although shopping is a multidimensional phenomenon that is laden with economic, cultural, social and political meanings (Timothy, 2005), the reviewed tourist shopping studies were predominantly conducted from a marketing perspective and rooted in psychology, where the individual is the main agent of action. A framework was developed in this review that divided tourist shopping research into six themes: who (segmentation), what (product), why (motivation), where (setting and service), how (behaviour and experience) and how much (expenditure) (Jin, et al., 2017).

Research on COTS fits well into the framework proposed by Jin, et al. (2017), with shopping satisfaction having attracted much attention. For example, Lin and Lin (2006) and Liu, et al. (2008) assessed Chinese tourist shopping satisfaction in Taiwan and Hong Kong respectively. Despite the differences of shopping attributes evaluated, both of the studies indicated that Chinese tourists are unsatisfied with price and product quality (Lin & Lin, 2006; Liu, et al., 2008). Wong and Wan (2013), taking Chinese tourists in Macau as the research object, conceptualised tourist shopping satisfaction as a four dimensional construct that reflects tourist satisfaction with service product and environment, merchandise values, staff service quality and service differentiation. Further, it was identified that Chinese tourist satisfaction with the service product and environment is the most important predictor of positive

shopping experience (Wong & Wan, 2013). More recently, Wong and Lam (2016) pointed out that tourism research commonly defines tourist shopping satisfaction as a general destination attribute, failing to account for the differences among retail stores. In their study, the shopping satisfaction of Chinese tourists in specific stores in Macau were found to mediate the effects of shopping motives and store loyalty programmes on both store loyalty and destination outcomes (length of stay and frequency of visit) (Wong & Lam, 2016).

Another main stream of research on COTS lies in tourist shopping motivation. Tsang, et al. (2014) applied Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to understand the shopping motivations of Chinese tourists in Hong Kong, and found that Chinese tourists with more shopping experience do not necessarily place more emphasis on higher levels motivational factors. Both Chan, et al. (2014) and Correia, Kozak, and Kim (2018) examined Chinese tourist motivations for luxury consumption. Interestingly, Chan, et al. (2014) identified a segment of Chinese tourists who purchase luxury goods to express individual differences, while in the study of Correia, et al. (2018), conformity with others was found to be the most important driver of Chinese tourists' luxury shopping. In contrast to the emphasis of Western tourists on purchasing souvenirs as evidence of travel experiences (Wilkins, 2011), Lin (2017) stated that Chinese tourists mostly shop for food souvenirs to acquire gifts for family, friends and colleagues. This feature of extensive gift giving is also highlighted in Li and Ryan (2018), where the souvenir shopping motives of Chinese tourists in North Korea is examined.

It can be argued that research on tourist shopping in general, and on COTS in particular, predominantly emphasises the perceptual and cognitive aspects of this activity, leaving the black box of other aspects, such as the process of tourist shopping, unopened. Although tourist shopping has continued to attract the attention of tourism researchers since 2016 (e.g., Brida & Tokarchuk, 2017; Li & Ryan, 2018), the majority of the new studies do not contribute to extending tourist shopping knowledge in the gaps identified above. That shopping has become such a common tourist activity is not due just to individual agency, which dominates existing tourist shopping research, but is also closely related to the socio-

cultural contexts within which tourists are embedded. Tourist shopping thus needs to be examined from multidisciplinary perspectives, with SPT from sociology being recognised as one of the fruitful ways to explore this activity differently (Jin, et al., 2017).

#### 4.2.2 Social practice theory and its applications in tourism research

SPT is a collection of accounts about the workings of social life that centre on social practices (Schatzki, 2011). As there is no unified SPT (see Nicolini, 2012), it should be noted that the review of SPT in this study is mainly based on the extensive work of Schatzki (1996), Reckwitz (2002), Warde (2005, 2014) and Shove, et al. (2012). A social practice can be simply defined as “a temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings.” (Schatzki, 1996, p. 89) In the vocabulary of SPT, social practices are presented as the basic units of analysis, whereas individuals are decentralised as carriers of the practices (Reckwitz, 2002). Accordingly, the responsibility for social change should be placed neither on individuals nor on social structure, but on the dynamics of social practices (Shove, et al., 2012). SPT has been applied to a large variety of research areas such as marketing (Nairn & Spotswood, 2015), human geography (Watson, 2012), sustainable consumption (Gram-Hanssen, 2011) and public health (Blue, et al., 2016).

There are two central notions of social practice: practice as entity and practice as performance (Røpke, 2009; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005). A social practice figures as an entity, meaning that the nexus of doings and sayings exists as a recognisable conjunction of elements. In the widely cited book of Shove, et al. (2012), a practice is understood as consisting of three interconnected elements: materials, competences and meanings. The existence of a practice depends on the existence and interconnectedness of these elements and cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements (Reckwitz, 2002). At the same time, a social practice exists as performance, which refers to the carrying out of the practice (Schatzki, 1996). The coordinated entity requires performance for its existence (Warde, 2005). As Shove, et al. (2012) argued, it is only through successive moments of performance that the nexus provided by practice as entity is filled out and the interdependencies between its

constitutive elements are sustained over time. The use of performance here is thus different from that in Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical analysis of the presentation of self in everyday life.

SPT has been applied to a rising number of empirical studies in tourism (e.g., Bargeman, Richards, & Govers, 2016; Iaquinto, 2015; James & Halkier, 2016; James, Ren, & Halkier, 2018; Lamers & Pashkevich, 2015; Lepoša, 2018; Luzecka, 2016; Rihova, Buhalis, Moital, & Gouthro, 2015). These applications do not follow a single template, with different tourism researchers employing SPT in context-specific ways based on its general affordances. Some researchers have shed new light on established tourism topics by using SPT. For instance, James and Halkier's (2016) examination of food tourism as a cross-sectoral development platform identified producing food, retailing, catering and promoting tourism as major practices and analysed the changes in these practices that are required for policy initiatives to succeed. Meanwhile, some neglected areas, such as sleep in tourism (Rantala & Valtonen, 2014; Valtonen & Veijola, 2011), the forest (Rantala, 2010) and weather (Rantala, et al., 2011) as tourism environments, have been introduced into tourism literature under the auspices of SPT.

The differences in the use of SPT in tourism research can be further elaborated from two aspects. First, as SPT is not a unified theory, different versions of this theory have been manifested in the empirical tourism studies. For example, Rantala (2010), drawing on Schatzki (2001), examined how the forest is produced as a suitable environment for the tourism industry by analysing the embodied and materially mediated tourist practices in the forests of Finnish Lapland. Differently, when investigating the informal tourism entrepreneurial practices in Thailand, Çakmak, Lie, and McCabe (2018) applied Bourdieu's concepts of field and capital to identify the capitals possessed by informal tourism entrepreneurs and to locate their value within the field relations with other stakeholders. Also, each version of SPT contains rich explanations of social practices and how they work. It can be identified that, even if some tourism researchers are inspired by the same practice theorist,

the parts of SPT, on which their studies are based, can be different. As shown in the studies of Lamers and Pashkevich (2015) and Lepoša (2018), although both of them are inspired by Shove, et al. (2012), the former used the notion of “circuits of reproduction” to reveal the integrated practices in the production of cruise tourism; the latter applied the social practice scheme to explain how the changes in material setups contribute to transforming leisure boating practices.

More generally, SPT has been deployed for (re)theorising tourism as a whole (de Souza Bispo, 2016; Lamers, et al., 2017). de Souza Bispo (2016) proposed that tourism should be rethought from a practice perspective by introducing the notion of “tourism as practice”. However, this notion was presented in a rather fragmented manner without a relevant analytical framework being provided. Moreover, a mixed group of theoretical approaches (i.e., mobility, performativity and actor network theory) was radically subsumed under the umbrella of SPT leaving the relevance of SPT for tourism research neither concise nor clear. In contrast, Lamers, et al. (2017) offered a comprehensive review of SPT, its core concepts and propositions, and used expedition cruising as an example to illustrate the implication of SPT for tourism studies. They further pointed out that the application of SPT in tourism research can be advanced in three ways: by analysing the performed tourism practices in depth, by investigating change in tourism practices over time, and by unravelling the embeddedness of tourism practices in broader practice networks (Lamers, et al., 2017).

In summary, SPT has the potential to offer a fresh perspective to understanding touristic phenomena in general, and tourist shopping in particular. Echoing the call by Lamers, et al. (2017) for in-depth analysis of performed tourism practices, the present study draws upon the notion of practice as performance (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005) to examine how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists unfold in Australia by focusing on the embodied actions involved. Embodied actions here refer to a level of action that is bodily performed and from which the intent, likely precursors, and possible consequences can be reasonably inferred. More specifically the study aims to:

- identify overall embodied actions involved in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists; and
- compare the identified actions across different categories of shopping venues and products.

### **4.3 Methodology**

This study employed a mixed methods approach, i.e., a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Qualitative data were collected via participant observation at a range of shopping venues in Cairns, Australia. Quantitative techniques were then used to analyse the data. The selection of research sites and the processes of data collection and analysis are presented in detail as follows.

#### **4.3.1 Research sites**

Cairns is a major tourist destination located in north-eastern Australia. This destination was selected as the research field for the current study because it is one of the most popular places that Chinese tourists visit in Australia (Tourism Australia, 2017), and it has an abundance of shopping locations. The region also has a relatively small Chinese population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017), which helps to avoid the confusion between the shopping practices of Chinese tourists and of Chinese immigrants.

Specifically, the present study was conducted in five shopping venues in Cairns: a duty free store, a national grocery chain, night markets, the domestic terminal of the airport and a local market. More detailed information on the selected shopping venues can be seen in Table 4.1. These research sites were chosen mainly on the basis of three criteria: relevance, diversity and accessibility. Chinese tourists shop in a variety of settings in Australia, ranging from tourist attractions, pharmacies and supermarkets, to department stores, airports, shopping centres and local markets. Support was obtained from the five shopping venues for the research.

Table 4.1 Descriptions of the five selected shopping venues

Name	Descriptions
Duty free store	The duty free store offers fashion, accessories, watches, jewellery and local gifts, food and wine. It is located in the city centre, and the majority of shop assistants are fluent in Chinese, or at least can speak some terms in Chinese. It is also common to see the information on product, promotion and payment methods written in Chinese.
National grocery chain	The national grocery chain is located in the city centre. It specialises in selling groceries, but also offers a range of Australian souvenirs in this location. There is no Chinese speaking shop assistant but the layout of some products, like fish oil and milk powder, is specifically to meet the needs of Chinese tourists.
Night markets	The night markets are one of the most popular tourist attractions in the area, with over 70 shops that feature souvenirs, crafts, clothing and jewellery. They are located in the city centre. Some of the stalls have Chinese-speaking shop assistants and product information written in Chinese.
Airport (domestic terminal)	The domestic terminal of the airport houses an array of stores for travellers to shop, such as Australian Made and Purely Merino. Some shop assistants are fluent in Chinese, or at least can speak some terms in Chinese. Chinese liaison officers are also available for translation assistance during peak times.
Local market	The local market offers local products including jewellery, leather work, homewares, pottery, clothes and skincare. It operates every Saturday on the esplanade. Most of the stall owners are locals and cannot speak Chinese.

#### 4.3.2 Data collection

This study employed participant observation as the data collection method because it allows researchers to work directly in the field studying natural social processes as they happen (Flick, 2006; Schutt, 2009). The observational data were collected by the author in August 2016, one of the peak travel periods for Chinese tourists to visit Australia (Tourism Australia, 2016). Pilot observations were carried out to check when and how to collect data effectively and efficiently.

Passive participation (Spradley, 1980) was adopted to capture the shopping performances of Chinese tourists as unobtrusively as possible. The author is from China and was present, but

acted like a spectator in the selected shopping venues (Spradley, 1980). He revealed his identity as a researcher to the shop assistants involved, with explanations of the project being conducted and the approvals obtained. When doing observations, the author posed as an ordinary Chinese tourist shopping and the tourists were neither disturbed nor asked any questions during their shopping processes. In other words, covert observations were conducted in this study, where the tourists were unaware that they were being observed. This technique has been widely used in general shopping investigations. For example, Sinha and Uniyal (2005) developed a segmentation of shoppers by observing their behavioural cues. Nadeau and Bradley (2012) acted as shoppers in grocery stores to record parent-child interactions and purchase decision making. Three kinds of clues – the appearances of tourists, the language they spoke and the features of clothes they wore (e.g., Chinese brands and characters) – were used to judge whether or not the tourists being observed were Chinese. Upon perceiving the subjects as Chinese tourists, the observer started to watch their shopping processes and, if possible, to listen to the relevant conversations.

It should be mentioned that the unit of observations in this study was not individual tourists, but the shopping performances. Depending on how these performances unfolded on site, they could be carried out by a single tourist or a group of tourists. Also, to remain unobtrusive, the subjects were not followed around the entire shopping venues. An observation generally referred to the shopping performances of the subject(s) recorded from entry into to departure from one or two aisles/stalls/ stores within each selected venue. Moreover, careful ethical considerations were made before the start of observations. It was deemed acceptable not to ask for consent from the subjects as the selected shopping venues are common public places (Angrosino, 2007). To observe the behaviours of tourists without their consent at a distance in these situations was not expected to cause any harm or discomfort. This was approved by the relevant institutional human research ethics committee.

Taking field notes was the primary means for recording the observational data (Schutt, 2009). This was facilitated by using a semi-structured observation form, in which some tourist

information, including genders and estimated ages, and the shopping performances were recorded in as much detail as possible. When field notes were written, tourists involved in each observation were coded as Ta, Tb etc., shop assistants as SAa, SAb etc., and non-present friends and relatives as FRa, FRb etc. In addition to observations, the author had conversations with shop assistants about, and took photos of, the shopping performances of Chinese tourists when it was appropriate to do so. Accordingly, research diaries were written to record additional information on the subjects and make fresh reflections on data collection. It should be noted that the field notes were used as the main source of data in this study, while the diaries and photos were employed to triangulate the notes.

In total, 110 observations were carried out, with the field notes amounting to 71,407 words, and 22 research diaries (12,059 words) and 41 photos were kept during the fieldwork. Maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2002) was utilised to examine the shopping performances of Chinese tourists across a range of variations. A set amount of time was allocated to each shopping venue to do as many observations as possible. Meanwhile, two demographic characteristics – gender and estimated age – were used to ensure the heterogeneity of tourists being observed. As a consequence, 30 out of 110 observations were conducted in the duty free store, 25 in the grocery store, 21 at the night markets, 26 at the airport and 8 at the local market. These observations consisted of the shopping practices of 356 Chinese tourists, 233 (65%) of which were female, with the remaining 123 (35%) being male. The number of tourists at the estimated age of 30 and below, 31 to 50 and 51 and above were 123 (34%), 175 (49%) and 58 (17%) respectively.

#### 4.3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis in this study employed Leximancer 4.5 to explore the embodied actions in Chinese tourist shopping performances contained within the 110 observations. Leximancer is “a text analytics tool that can be used to analyse the content of collections of textual documents and to display the extracted information visually.” (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017, p. 3) It uses content analysis as the theoretical underpinnings, and provides a means of

quantifying and displaying the concepts in the text, as well as how they are interrelated, via conceptual maps (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017). This study chose Leximancer software because of its strength in using word proximity and correlation to create concept and network visualisations, and also because it provides tagging options for making comparisons among groups within the data. These strengths of the Leximancer system have been acknowledged in a growing number of tourism studies (e.g., Li & Pearce, 2016; Wu, et al., 2014).

Analysis in Leximancer consists of four major stages of data processing: selecting documents, generating concept seeds, generating a thesaurus and generating concept maps (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017). As Leximancer cannot process text in Chinese, the author translated all 110 field notes from Chinese to English, with a person fluent in both Chinese and English double checking the translations. The author also discussed the meaning of English expressions with his supervisors to make sure the translations are clear and accurate. The field notes folder was grouped into four subfolders – airports, duty-free shops, markets and supermarkets – in order to compare Chinese tourist shopping performances across different types of shopping venues. After that, the field notes folder was uploaded to, and analysed in Leximancer (see Appendix C for more details on data analysis decisions). In addition, based on the categories of products that Chinese tourists purchased, the author grouped the field notes folder into five subfolders: clothing and accessories, healthcare products, cosmetics, souvenirs, and food and drinks. Similar to the comparisons across shopping venues, the shopping performances of Chinese tourists across product categories were also examined in Leximancer.

## **4.4 Findings**

### **4.4.1 Overall embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances**

Figure 4.1 is a Leximancer concept map that shows the overall embodied actions within the shopping performances of Chinese tourists. Concepts in Leximancer are collections of words that generally travel together throughout the text, with the identified concepts being clustered into themes when the map is generated (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017). As shown in Figure 4.1, there are 25 concepts (grey nodes) identified that are grouped by six themes (coloured circles).

If the author interprets Figure 4.1 by starting with the concept ‘browse’, it would be apparent that there exist two distinct modes of Chinese tourist shopping performances: ‘browse – leave’ and ‘browse – pick – n’ (n stands for a range of embodied actions). The first mode indicates that some Chinese tourists just browse and leave without purchasing anything. The second mode contains a variety of actions ‘browse’, ‘pick’, ‘look’, and so forth. This mode reveals much more detail in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists with (the intention of) purchase. As argued by Bloch, Ridgway, and Sherrell (1989), browsing can be a precursor to an anticipated purchase, but can also be conducted for recreation and be free of purchase intentions. The existence of two modes of performances shows that Chinese tourist shopping is not necessarily always purchase-oriented.

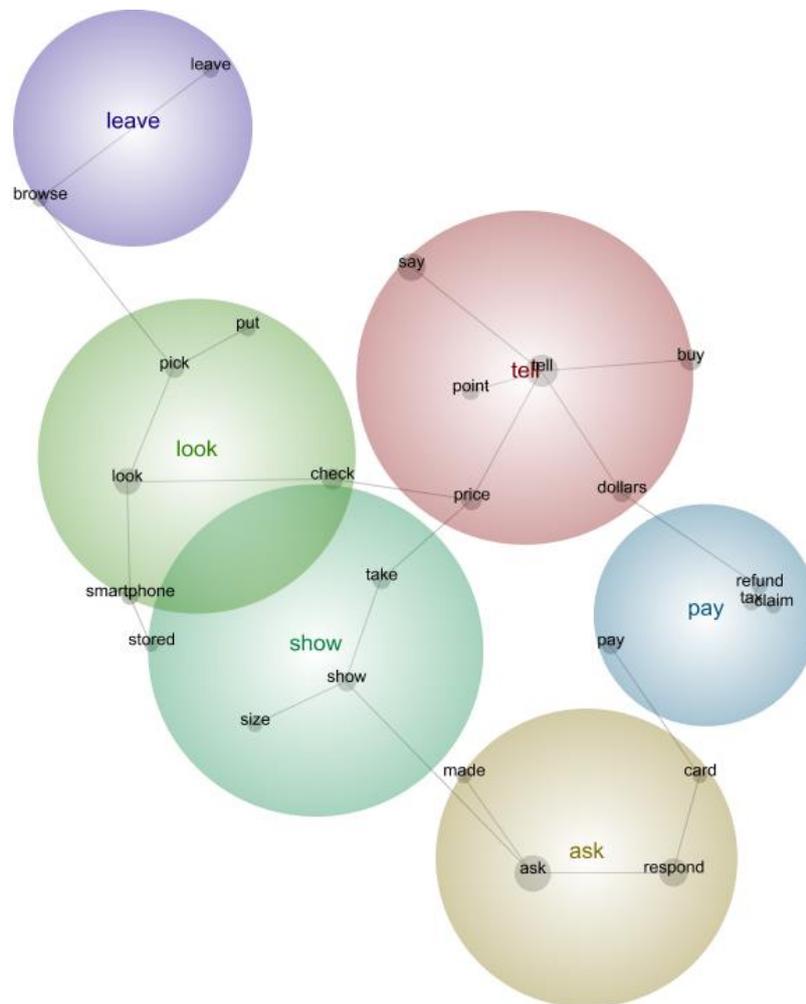


Figure 4.1 Overall embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances

(Visible concepts: 100%; Theme size: 40%; Rotation: 0)

The themes in Leximancer are heat-mapped to indicate importance, which means that the hottest theme appears in red, and the next hottest in orange, and so on according to the colour wheel (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017). It can be seen from Figure 4.1 that the six themes of overall embodied actions in order of importance are: ‘tell’, ‘ask’, ‘look’, ‘show’, ‘leave’ and ‘pay’. The most important theme is ‘tell’, which reveals pervasive communication via spoken words within Chinese tourist shopping performances. Further, the concepts ‘price’ and ‘dollars’ are closely relevant to ‘tell’ reflecting the price consciousness of Chinese tourists when conducting shopping practices. For example, *“Ta and Tb come to the lanolin cream section. Ta points at the price label of lanolin cream and tells Tb, ‘6.99 dollars’.”* This finding is consistent with Zhu, et al. (2016), where Chinese tourists were found to be very concerned about product prices when shopping in Europe. The shop assistants’ impression of Chinese tourist shopping also support this finding. The observer asked a Japanese shop assistant, *‘what do Chinese tourists care about most?’* and she responded *‘price’* without hesitation.

The second most important theme ‘ask’, and its strong connection with ‘respond’, show the prevalent information exchange involved in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists. As displayed in Figure 4.1, the shopping information exchanged in the ‘ask’ and ‘respond’ context is mainly related to the product attribute ‘made’ and payment related ‘card’. In addition, the theme ‘show’ indicates the common existence of the information passing through non-verbal communications in the process of shopping performances, which can be complementary to verbal communications. This can be illustrated by the following excerpt:

*...Ta uses his smartphone to take a photo of the bag and sends the photo to FRa via Wechat (a Chinese social media mobile app). Ta shows SAa another bag image stored on his smartphone and asks SAa, “Do you have this?”*

The three themes ‘tell’, ‘ask’ and ‘show’ analysed above can be described as inter-personal actions. These actions are performed between people in order to deliver or exchange information via verbal or non-verbal communications. In contrast, the other three themes

'look', 'pay' and 'leave' identified in Figure 4.1 can be understood as intra-personal actions, which are conducted by individuals without much communication. The theme 'look' denotes that Chinese tourists direct their gaze in a specified direction mainly to obtain more information on products and their suitability. For example, *"Ta stops at an earring display rack in another store. She looks at the earrings on the display rack, picks a pair of earrings and puts the earrings against ear to check in the mirror."* The theme 'pay' is a step further than 'look' towards the accomplishment of shopping performances. To carry out the 'pay' action means a purchase decision has been made, which often comes with a discussion on claiming tax refunds as seen in Figure 4.1. Finally, the theme 'leave' marks the end of shopping procedures either after payment or following a quick 'browse'.

#### 4.4.2 Embodied actions across different types of shopping venues

After identifying the overall embodied actions, it is interesting to examine whether the actions are performed differently across different types of shopping venues. Figure 4.2 displays the comparisons of embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances across airports, duty-free shops, markets and supermarkets. The most prominent concept for the setting of airports is 'made'. 'Made' here refers to two aspects of product attributes: country of origin (where a product is made) and material composition (what a product is made of). A typical example is:

*Ta looks at a sweater and asks Tb, "What is the sweater made of?" Tb wears his glasses and looks at the sweater. An English-speaking SAa comes and tells them, "It is made of wool." SAa also says wool in Chinese. Then Ta tells Tb to ask SAa in English where the sweater is made. Tb asks SAa, "Where is the sweater made?" SAa responds, "It is designed in Australia and made in China." Then Tb puts the sweater back on the display rack. SAa shows Ta and Tb where the sweaters made in Australia are in the store. Then Ta and Tb go to that section.*

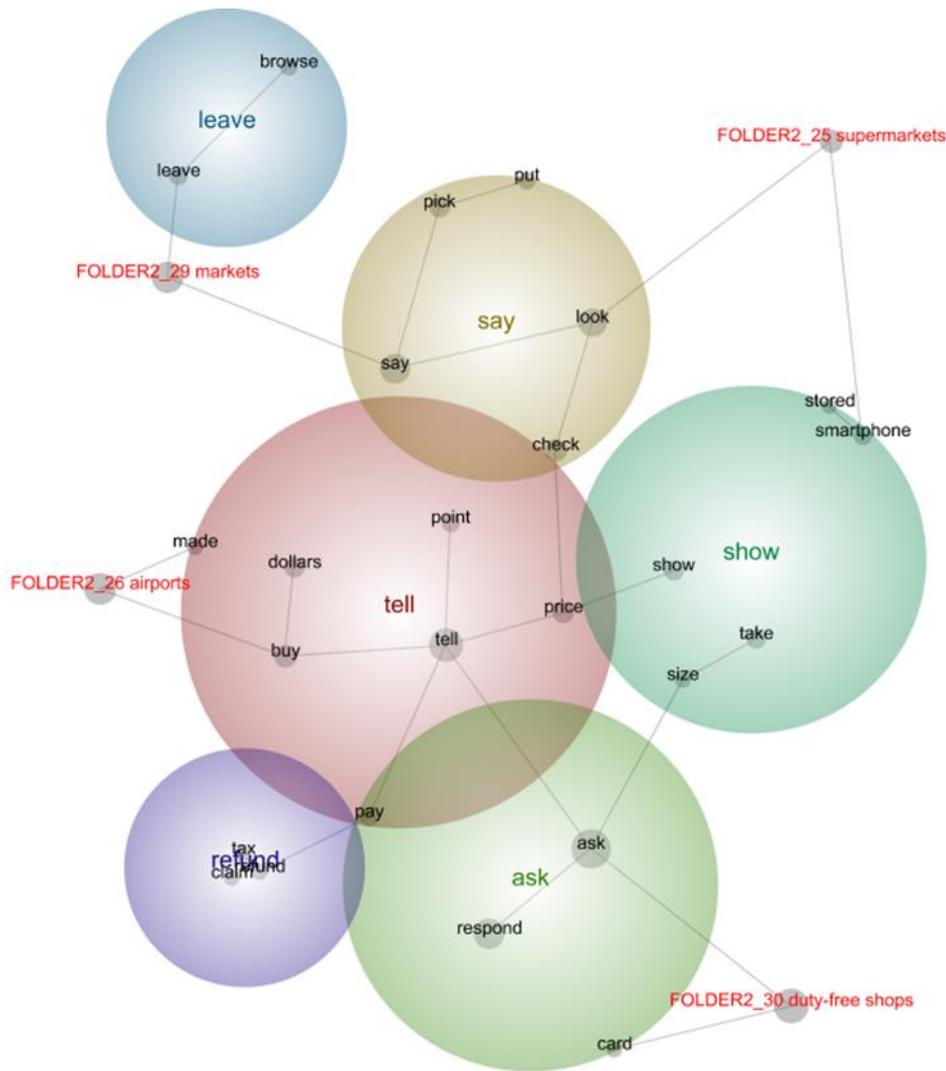


Figure 4.2 Embodied actions across different types of shopping venues

(Visible concepts: 100%; Theme size: 40%; Rotation: 0)

In duty-free shops, ‘card’ becomes the most noticeable concept. The ‘card’ here firstly refers to membership shopping card. It is obligatory for Chinese tourists to become a member of this company to purchase duty-free brands. Not surprisingly, conversations about the membership shopping card, including whether or not a customer has a shopping card, how to get the card and the benefits of becoming a member, occurred frequently between Chinese tourists and shop assistants before payment. For instance,

*Ta decides to take a black belt. SAa asks Ta, “Do you have a shopping card?” Ta responds, “Do we need to get a shopping card?” SAa responds, “Yes. You need to*

*provide your passport and the flight ticket back to China and go to the front desk to get the shopping card.”*

The concept ‘card’ also relates to credit card, especially the UnionPay card. This is because of a promotion activity targeting Chinese tourists jointly conducted by this company and UnionPay International. As can be seen on the promotion banner in Figure 4.3, Chinese tourists would earn an exclusive offer of AUD40 if they shop with their UnionPay cards starting with “62” with a purchase of AUD800 or more on selected products per single transaction. This information attracted the attention of some Chinese tourists and stimulated their usage of UnionPay card for payment.



Figure 4.3 A promotion banner in the duty free store

Interestingly, the most important concept within Chinese tourist shopping practices in supermarkets is ‘smartphone’. The ‘smartphone’ functions as a versatile tool that is used by Chinese tourists to facilitate their shopping performances. It is observed that the usage of smartphones in the process of shopping is mainly to fulfil four purposes. The first purpose is storing images of products. Chinese tourists commonly look for products based on images

stored on their smartphones. If a product on site is found to be the same as the image stored on smartphone it is very likely that the product would be chosen without hesitation. Otherwise, discussions, or even debates on whether or not to purchase the product occur. These actions suggest that Chinese tourists have made pre-travel preparations such that their purchases of some products are more planned than improvised in supermarkets.

A second use of smartphones is for searching product information through mobile Internet. As there are increasingly more Australian products available on Chinese shopping websites, relevant product information in Chinese like price, basic introduction and benefits becomes the key reference for Chinese tourists to know more about and purchase products while shopping on site. Notably, product price is often checked and compared in different places online especially to that on site and at home. A typical example is:

*Ta holds a box of lanolin cream. Tb uses a smartphone to scan the barcode on the box and checks the price of the lanolin cream on Taobao (a Chinese website for online shopping). Then she tells Ta, Tc and Td, "The lanolin cream is RMB88 per box on Taobao with RMB12 postage. In other words, a box of lanolin cream is RMB100 on Taobao." Ta then says, "Let's buy many boxes of lanolin cream here."*

A third function is converting unfamiliar information into the familiar. This feature is reflected in Chinese tourists looking up words in English-Chinese dictionaries online or through mobile apps, and converting product price from Australian to Chinese currency to make better sense of it. Last, but not least, is communicating with important others via social media. For example, when Ta is selecting pawpaw lip balm, she *"uses her smartphone to take a photo of pawpaw lip balm and sends the photo to FRa via Wechat"* for confirmation before purchase. This feature further substantiates the importance of the collective through social media for Chinese customers to make purchase decisions (Goodrich & de Mooij, 2013).

In markets, the most prominent concept is 'browse'. This finding confirms the statement made by Moscardo (2004) where shopping at markets is more a way to experience the destination rather than to purchase. As exhibited in Figure 4.2, the 'browse – leave' mode of

Chinese tourist shopping performances is most applicable to this kind of setting. This suggests that, compared to other settings, Chinese tourists are more likely to look at products for sale in a casual or leisurely manner in markets. In this sense, to ‘browse’ in markets for Chinese tourists is not to accomplish specific tasks but, to a large extent, is to explore and experience unfamiliar shopping venues and products. This argument is in accordance with Ackerman and Walker (2012) where night markets are found to be places, in which shoppers relax with others while they explore and browse for unique items. As observed in the night markets:

*Ta, Tb and Tc browse in the markets. Ta sees a kind of necklaces and suggests Tb buy one, “I have seen many boys wearing this kind of necklace.” Tb responds, “I am not interested in that.” Then Ta, Tb and Tc look at opal jewellery in a display case and discuss. Then they leave and continue to browse.*

In addition to the concepts discussed above, it can be seen from Figure 4.2 that actions such as ‘tell’, ‘say’ and ‘ask’ frequently occur in all four kinds of shopping settings. This suggests a single underlying practice that has some minor venue specific variations. It can also be found from Figure 4.2 that claiming tax refunds is predominantly relevant to the settings of airports and duty-free shops. According to the TRS in Australia, only if tourists spend AUD300 or more from a single business with the same Australian business number are they eligible to claim a refund (DIBP, 2017). It is likely because the purchases of Chinese tourists are often over the AUD300 threshold in the airports and duty-free shops that the concepts related to claiming tax refunds are more connected to these two settings rather than the markets and supermarkets in Figure 4.2.

#### 4.4.3 Embodied actions across different categories of products

After comparing the embodied actions across different shopping settings, this study further investigated whether or not these identified actions were carried out differently across different categories of products that Chinese tourists purchase. Figure 4.4 is a Leximancer concept map that exhibits the comparisons of embodied actions within Chinese tourist

shopping performances across clothing and accessories, cosmetics, healthcare products, food and drinks, and souvenirs. The action ‘try’ is of most prominence when Chinese tourists purchase clothing and accessories such as jackets and ugg boots. In this context, Chinese tourists ‘try’ on products to test the fit or style, and check if they ‘like’ them when actually putting them on. It is evident from Figure 4.4 that the product attributes ‘size’ and ‘made’ are particularly relevant to this action as can be illustrated by the following excerpt:

*Ta goes to look at hats. He picks a hat, tries it on and has a look in the mirror. He asks SAa, “Is there the hat in a bigger size?” He also asks SAa, “Where the hat is made? Is it made in China?” SAa responds, “Yes.” He repeats, “Made in China.” Then he puts the hat back on the display rack.*

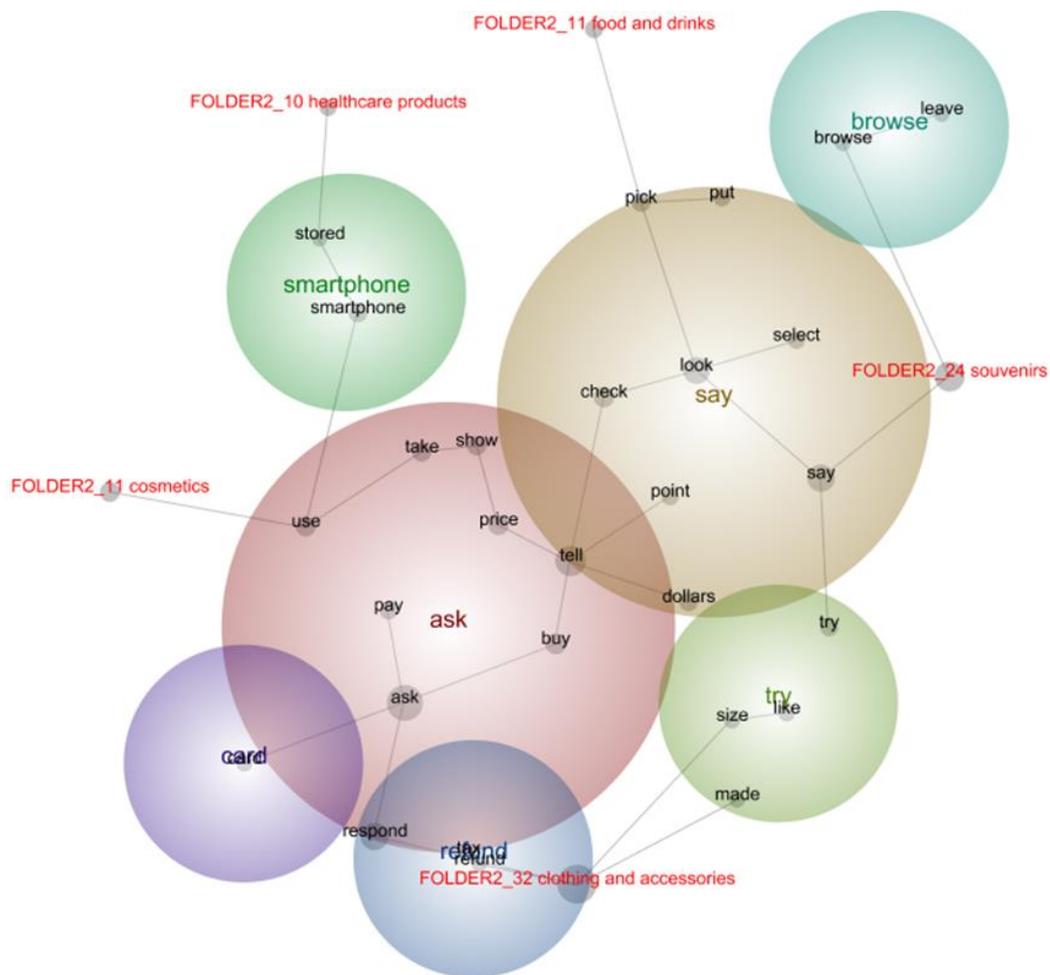


Figure 4.4 Embodied actions across different categories of products

(Visible concepts: 100%; Theme size: 40%; Rotation: 5°)

When it comes to buying cosmetics, ‘card’ becomes the most important concept. This is because the observations focused on cosmetics purchase were primarily conducted in the duty free store where, as discussed above, the membership shopping ‘card’ is an inevitable topic in the process of shopping performances. In addition to ‘card’, it can be noticed from Figure 4.4 that the concept ‘use’ is also closely connected to cosmetics purchase. ‘Use’ here mainly refers to the purposes or benefits of different kinds of cosmetics. For instance, *“Ta tries on a lipstick and asks SAa, ‘Which lipstick is used for moisturising?’”*

It is clear from Figure 4.4 that the concept ‘stored’, with a tight connection to ‘smartphone’, is most important in the context of purchasing healthcare products. What are ‘stored’ on the ‘smartphone’ are mainly the images of healthcare products that Chinese tourists intend to purchase. Language barrier is still an obstacle to Chinese tourist shopping in Australia in general (Tourism Research Australia, 2014). This is especially true for the selection of healthcare products that involves a range of professional terms. Accordingly, the images of healthcare products ‘stored’ on the ‘smartphone’ are used by Chinese tourists as crucial references to ensure that what they choose is the same as what they want. It can be identified that an explicit feature of Chinese tourists purchasing healthcare products is that they keep their smartphones in their hands in order to look for and select products according to the stored images.

As for food and drinks such as chocolate and milk powder, ‘pick’ is found to be the most noticeable concept. The action of ‘pick’ can be understood as a result of the process of choosing a product from alternatives. To ‘pick’ a specific kind of food or drink while a Chinese tourist is shopping has three connotations. Firstly, it means that the product has attracted the tourist’s attention and the tourist wants to know more information about it. The product information here mainly includes price, country of origin, expiry date and ingredients. For example, Tb *“picks a jar of honey, looks at the label on the jar and says, ‘29 dollars.’ Ta asks, ‘Where is it made?’ Tb responds, ‘Made in Cairns.’”* Secondly, to ‘pick’ one product is to show the product to others. Tb, for instance, *“picks a pack of biscuit and asks Ta, ‘Shall*

*we buy this?'*” In addition, to ‘pick’ a product refers to the tourist having decided to make a purchase.

Both the concept ‘dollars’ and ‘browse’ are of most importance when Chinese tourists buy souvenirs. The prominence of ‘dollars’ reflects that the price of souvenirs is of major concern to Chinese tourists. As described in one case, *“Ta points at a ring in a display case and asks SAa, ‘How much is it?’ SAa responds, ‘15 dollars.’”* It is interesting to notice that the sentence *“How much?”* is commonly used by Chinese tourists to start their conversations with shop assistants or owners. Also, it is common that Chinese tourists convert the product price from Australian to Chinese currency. In this way Chinese tourists can have a better perception of whether or not the product is good value for money. Meanwhile, the prominence of ‘browse’ to a certain degree reflects the leisureliness and casualness of the souvenir purchases of Chinese tourists. As shown in Figure 4.4, the ‘browse – leave’ mode of Chinese tourist shopping performances is most applicable to this product category. The intention to purchase a specific souvenir can arise as the shopping practices unfold. This can be illustrated by the following excerpt:

*Ta, Tb and Tc browse at a shelf close to the entrance. Then they go to a postcard rack. Ta suggests Tb, “Buy a postcard. Great Barrier Reef.” They open a book of postcards and have a look. Tb says, “A postcard is 1 dollar. A book of postcards is 14 dollars.” They discuss and choose a book of postcards.*

Apart from the above-discussed concepts, it can be noticed from Figure 4.4 that actions such as ‘ask’, ‘say’ and ‘tell’ are frequently carried out when Chinese tourists purchase all five categories of products. As is the case for different shopping settings, this suggests that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists involve specific inter-personal actions no matter which categories of products are purchased. Also, it can be seen from Figure 4.4 that claiming a tax refund is tightly connected to the purchase of clothing and accessories. To some extent, this reflects the high-spending of Chinese tourists in this product category. Notably, tourist refund policies are often used by shop assistants in this context to arouse the shopping interests of

Chinese tourists. As a shop assistant at the airport commented, “*Chinese tourists would like to purchase more, if you tell them that they can claim tax refund once they spend AUD300 or over.*”

## **4.5 Summary and discussion**

### 4.5.1 Summary

The shopping-led consumption of Chinese outbound tourists has benefited many destinations around the world. However, COTS, especially that in Western countries, remains understudied in the tourism literature. Where this phenomenon has been examined, there is a dependence on using self-report methods to investigate Chinese tourists’ motivation, satisfaction and perceptions of shopping. These investigations place emphasis on what Chinese tourists say and feel about shopping but, to a large degree, neglect what they actually do in the shopping processes. The present study attempts to fill these gaps by employing participant observation to unfold Chinese tourist shopping in Australia based on SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005). More specifically, it draws from SPT upon the notion of practice as performance to identify embodied actions within the shopping performances of Chinese tourists in range of shopping settings in a popular destination. A total of 110 observations were carried out during 22 days of fieldwork, with the field notes as the main source of data being analysed in qualitative data analysis software Leximancer 4.5.

This study provides a three-layer analysis of Chinese tourist shopping performances in Australia. Firstly, it depicts a picture of overall embodied actions involved in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists. These actions, which can be divided as inter-personal and intra-personal actions, reflect the habit and routine (Warde, 2014) of Chinese tourists when they perform shopping practices. In particular, the frequency of inter-personal actions reflects the importance of social interactions and communications in the shopping processes of Chinese tourists, with some of them being conducted with non-present people via social media. The two distinct modes ‘browse – leave’ and ‘browse – pick – n’ (n represents a range

of embodied actions) consist of the flow or sequence (Warde, 2014) of how the shopping performances are unfolded. Although individual actions in the sequence may look trivial at first glance, the links and patterns they constitute show some unique features of Chinese tourist shopping performances such as the intention to avoid products made in China.

The second layer of analysis shows that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are performed somewhat differently across different shopping settings. This analysis provides a richer and more nuanced understanding of Chinese tourist shopping performances by “zooming in on the accomplishments of practice” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 213). It offers a clear identification of which embodied action is of most prominence for each type of settings. Interestingly, it is common to see that smartphones are embedded in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists in supermarkets. Smartphones are not only used by Chinese tourists to store product images and search product information online, but also to communicate with non-present, important others on product selection and purchase through social media. In contrast, smartphones are rarely used by Chinese tourists to facilitate shopping performances in markets, where shopping is more a way to experience the destination than to purchase. These findings illustrate how settings matter for Chinese tourists in the procedures of performing shopping practices.

Last but not least, this study finds that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are carried out differently across different categories of products. It shows that products that Chinese tourists (intend to) purchase affect the procedures of how they purchase them. For instance, ‘try’ is the most noticeable action when Chinese tourists buy clothing and accessories, but when selecting healthcare products, they rely very much on the images stored on their smartphones. The third layer of analysis, compared to that in the second layer, provides a supplementary dimension to zoom in on the shopping performances of Chinese tourists. Ideally speaking, if a setting is given, comparison analysis at the product level is a further reification of shopping performances. To combine the findings from analysis in all three

layers helps to understand the shopping performances of Chinese tourists more comprehensively.

#### 4.5.2 Discussion

This study enriches the application of SPT to tourist shopping research. It opens up the black box of the onsite processes of COTS by drawing upon the notion of practice as performance (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005), which echoes the appeal from Lamers, et al. (2017) for in-depth analysis of performed tourism practices. The study provides a new perspective to comprehend COTS other than the shopping motivations and satisfactions of Chinese tourists that are commonly examined in the previous research (Kong & Chang, 2016; Wong & Lam, 2016). Further, the embodied actions identified in this study, especially the differences of these actions across different shopping settings and product categories, presents a rich and detailed picture of how the shopping performances of (Chinese) tourists flow on site, which is missing in the tourist shopping research in general. The emergence of social interaction with others, both present in the shopping setting and elsewhere, and the importance of smartphone usage are also key elements of COTS that have not been identified in the previous literature. In the parlance of Bourdieu (1977), the flow of these shopping performances is structured by, and at the same time structures, the *habitus* of Chinese tourists as carriers of the shopping practices. This dialectical and dynamic relationship is embodied within the shopping performances of Chinese tourists over time and space.

At the same time, Chinese tourist shopping practices as bounded entities only exist and endure through recurrent performances, each reproducing the interdependencies of which the practices are comprised (Shove, et al., 2012). In the words of Schatzki (1996), “Each of the linked doings and sayings constituting a practice is only in being performed. Practice in the sense of doing...actualises and sustains practices in the sense of nexuses of doings.” (p. 90) Taking smartphones as an example, this ICTs based device functions as a distinctive material element of Chinese tourist shopping practices because smartphones are embedded in the processes of Chinese tourist shopping as a way of storing product images, searching for

information or communicating through social media, as discussed in Section 4.4. Social practice as entity and as performance are mutually configured. That is to say, the change of constitutive elements of shopping practices affects Chinese tourists' onsite performances, and vice versa. Identifying the embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances thus not only brings forward the process aspect of COTS that is rarely discussed in the existing literature, but also offers a new way to change Chinese tourist shopping practices if needed.

From a methodological perspective, the use of participant observations in this study contributes to rectifying the dominance of self-reported data collection methods employed in tourist shopping research (Jin, et al., 2017). Self-reported methods are commonly utilised to investigate tourist attitudes towards, and motivation and satisfaction in, shopping (Jin, et al., 2017). This leaves other dimensions of tourist shopping phenomenon, such as what actually happens when tourists shop, often ignored or oversimplified. The embodied actions revealed in the present study thus could add supplementary knowledge to the existing tourist shopping literature. Further, self-reported measures are subject to significant cognitive bias and socially desirable responses (Li, Walters, Packer, & Scott, 2017). It is well documented that there exists inconsistency between what people say and what they actually do (e.g., Caruana, et al., 2016; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2014). The observational approach can avoid this gap by recording what takes place on site without rational filtering and the actual memory of research subjects. In spite of its limits, for example, the lack of access to all dialogue taking place, the strength of observation is to report what happens without the bias of social desirability and the social relationships involved, making it feasible to deal with the complexities at stake (Gram, 2010). In addition, the findings of this study have practical implications for shopping related tourism marketing and management. First, the flow of Chinese tourist shopping performances should be emphasised by tourism marketers and retailers. For instance, shopping is identified as a key driver for creating positive travel experience for Chinese tourists to Australia, but unfortunately, is also rated as a trip attribute with the lowest level of satisfaction (Tourism

Research Australia, 2014). The shopping actions identified in this study provide a reference for marketers and managers to think about how to make the procedures of Chinese tourist shopping smoother. Also, interventions to optimise Chinese tourist shopping performances need to be carried out differently across different settings and product categories. For example, information on membership card and its benefit in duty free shops, the same as that on claiming tax refunds at airport, could be delivered through mobile apps such as Wechat, or be concisely written on flyers or shown in diagrams to help Chinese tourists understand without completely relying on the oral explanation of shop assistants. At the product level, for instance, healthcare products retailers need to adjust their product supplies to meet the demand of Chinese tourists. To achieve this, the popularity of Australian healthcare products among Chinese customers on shopping websites in China could be a key source of information to collect. Differently, the priority for souvenir retailers is to consider how to transform tourist browsing to actual purchase. In this case, sales may increase if the retailers provide more souvenir options, which are not mass produced and not made in China.

#### 4.5.3 Limitations and future research directions

The present study has certain limitations. First, possible shopping venues for Chinese tourists are not fully covered in the selection of observation sites in this study due to cost and accessibility related reasons. This possibly leaves some features of Chinese tourist shopping performances missing. For example, although it is observed that Chinese tourists purchase souvenirs in the night markets, their performances of souvenir purchases in souvenir shops at tourist attractions may be different. Also, the results in this study need to be interpreted with caution. The analysis at the setting level depends upon the composition of observations conducted at the product level, and vice versa. The subjectivity of the author partly affects the shopping performances of which products in which settings are observed. More research, therefore, would be warranted to examine and extend the findings in this observational study.

Inter-personal actions produce social interactions. The frequently occurring inter-personal actions in this study indicate the prevalence and importance of social interactions in the

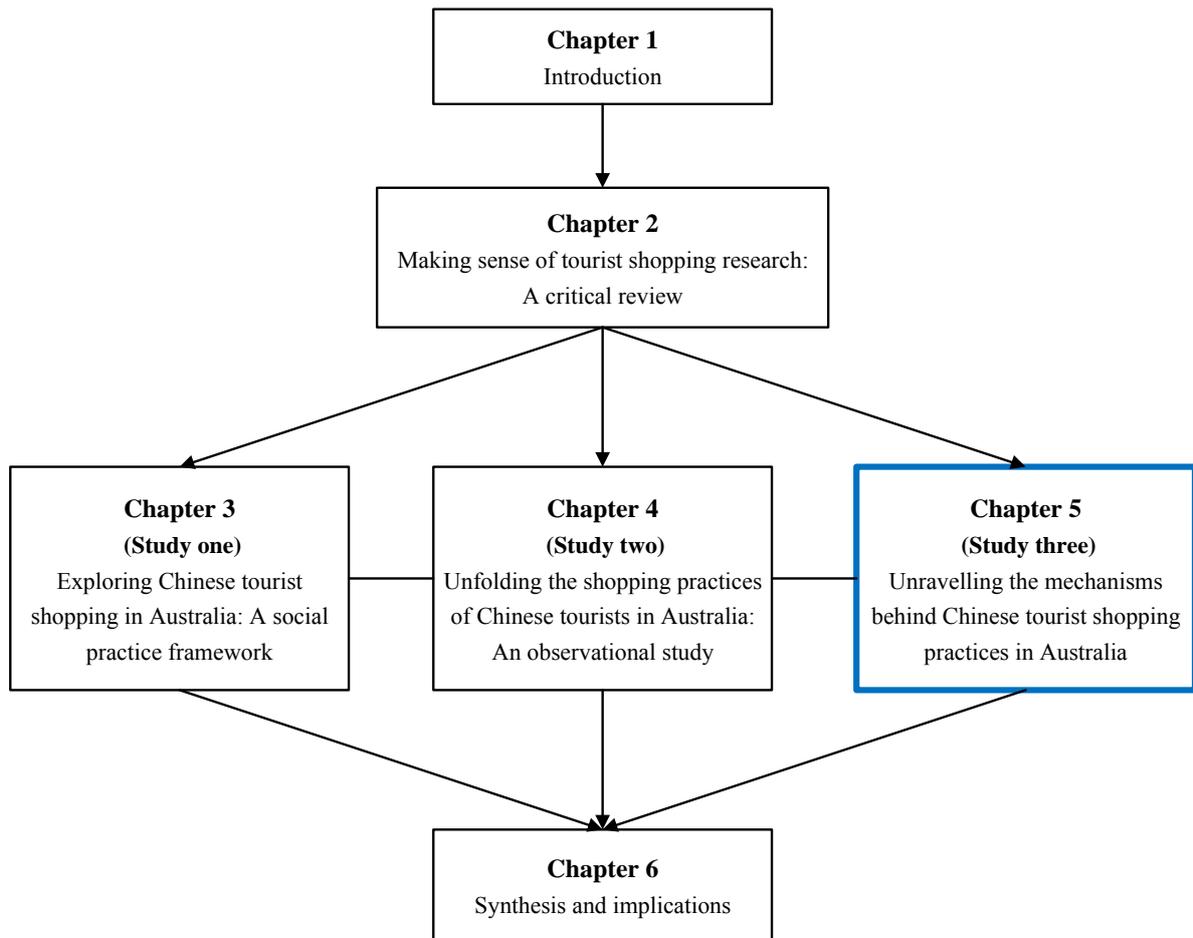
shopping performances of Chinese tourists. The shopping related information held by individuals, for example Chinese tourists and shop assistants, is communicated, delivered or discussed via social interactions, which can function as “productive habitual social processes” (Halkier, 2010, p. 31) to move the enactments of shopping practices forward. The Leximancer concept maps generated in this study show the ubiquity of social interactions existing in Chinese tourist shopping performances, but cannot provide as many detailed analyses as Keller and Ruus (2014) conducted for parent-child interactions during co-shopping. Social interactions within the shopping performances of Chinese tourists thus deserve further investigation by using other complementary approaches. This echoes the appeal from Halkier and Jensen (2011) for more explicit conceptualisation of social interaction in the applications of SPT to consumption research.

Social practices should be examined not only through zooming in on their accomplishments, but also by zooming out to trail them and their relationships in time and space (Nicolini, 2012). China, as a source market, was not emphasised in the UNWTO Tourism Highlights until 2007, when China was described as one major exception that continued to rise up the ranking of the world’s top spenders in international tourism (UNWTO, 2007). In 2017, the UNWTO Tourism Highlights presents that “China continues to lead global outbound travel, following ten years of double-digit growth in spending, and after rising to the top of the ranking in 2012.” (UNWTO, 2017, p. 13) It thus would be interesting to investigate the historical trajectory of Chinese tourist shopping practices over time. Also, in addition to shopping while travelling abroad, there are other popular practices that Chinese customers carry out to get access to overseas products, such as online shopping and *daigou*, which refers to a channel of commerce in which shopping agents outside of China purchase products at the request of Chinese customers and ship them to China (Battersby, 2016). The relationships between COTS and other related shopping practices are in need of more research attention.

The current study sheds new light on COTS by deploying the notion of practice as performance. Tourist shopping is the result of a combination of usual shopping and unusual

tourism environment. This is especially true for Eastern tourists shopping in Western countries and vice versa. COTS reflects the specificity of tourism environment for engaging in shopping activities, and meanwhile, is embedded in economic, cultural and social development and change in contemporary China. The ubiquitous shopping activities of Chinese outbound tourists merit more research attention from multidisciplinary perspectives and in more depth. To understand these activities could not only help to figure out how shopping is connected to travel, but also provide a window into Chinese consumer culture in general.

Overall, this chapter answered the second research question in the thesis. The embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances were examined by drawing upon the notion of practice as performance (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012) to analyse 110 participant observations conducted in a major tourist destination in north-eastern Australia. The findings of this observational study confirmed the importance of social interactions and technology use as elements that also emerged in Study one on travel blogs. Both this chapter and the previous one zoomed in on Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia to obtain detailed insights, while the next chapter will zoom out to investigate why the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are dominant in their travel.



## **Chapter 5 Unravelling the mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia**

This chapter presents the third and final study of the PhD research. It aimed to address the third research question: Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel? The chapter is structured as follows. Section 5.1 provides a brief introduction to the research question, with SPT as the theoretical foundation and its applications to tourism research being reviewed in Section 5.2. Section 5.3 outlines general consumption practices in China, in which COTS is embedded, and highlights the specific research aims that this study seeks to achieve. The chapter then reports the processes of data collection and analysis, and the findings of this study in Section 5.4 and Section 5.5 respectively. Finally, the findings of this study and its limitations and implications are summarised and discussed in Section 5.6. As with the previous two chapters this report on the third study is presented as a journal article.

## 5.1 Introduction

Shopping is a crucial part of tourism. It is one of the most common activities that tourists engage in during their travel (Timothy, 2014). In some cases, shopping functions as a factor affecting tourist destination choice (Moscardo, 2004); in others, it is the primary reason for travel (Lehto, et al., 2014). Given the significance of shopping as a tourist activity, examining tourists' shopping motivations, behaviours and experiences has become the focus of most of the existing shopping research in the tourism context (Jin, et al., 2017). From the destination perspective, shopping can be used as a strategy for place branding (Rabbiosi, 2015). It also contributes to creating a variety of job opportunities (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007), and boosting the local economy as a major source of tourism revenue (Reisinger & Turner, 2002). Not surprisingly, the UNWTO (2014a) has recommended shopping be incorporated into tourism policy initiatives and promotion campaigns.

The prevalence of COTS has also been widely recognised. Japanese media, for example, coined a new term “*bakugai*” – which translates as “explosive buying” – to describe the shopping sprees of Chinese tourists in Tokyo (Ryall, 2015). According to Tourism Research Australia (2017), “Chinese visitors love going shopping. Almost 1 million visitors went shopping for pleasure, spending AUD1.1 billion on items to take home.” (p. 1). However, a review of previous research on COTS shows that academic attention has primarily focused on Chinese tourists in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, with only a few studies conducted in other destinations. A further examination of the available studies also reveals that, similar to tourist shopping research in general (see Jin, et al., 2017), quantitative methods have dominated investigations of individual Chinese tourists' shopping motivations, perceptions and satisfactions (e.g., Correia, Kozak, & Kim, 2017; Kong & Chang, 2016). In this way, previous studies are to a large degree confined to addressing “what” and “how” questions related to COTS. It can be argued that there exists little, if any, tourism research that examines in depth why shopping dominates the tourist experience of Chinese travellers.

The present study aims to fill these research gaps by unravelling the mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012) is used as the theoretical foundation for this study. The overall research question of the current study was: Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel to Australia? More specifically, this study is based on the ‘zooming out’ metaphor employed by Nicolini (2012) in discussions of SPT to examine the connections between COTS and other pertinent practices. It is expected that key practices leading to the dominance of Chinese tourist shopping will be identified. The findings of this study may also contribute to a deeper and more thorough understanding of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists and thus provide guidelines for retail businesses in the tourism industry and destination managers to develop policies tailored to this valuable market.

## **5.2 Social practice theory and its applications in tourism research**

SPT is a new theoretical perspective in the sociology of consumption that promises an alternative to models of both individual choice and cultural expressivism (Warde, 2015). SPT is not a unified theory (see Nicolini, 2012), but a collection of accounts about the workings of social life that centre on social practices (Schatzki, 2011). Reckwitz (2002) defined social practice as:

“a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to each other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.” (p. 249)

These elements were later conceptualised by Shove, et al. (2012) as materials (things, technologies, tangible physical entities, and the stuff of which objects are made), competences (skill, know-how and technique) and meanings (symbolic meanings, ideas and aspirations). Schatzki (1996), Reckwitz (2002), Warde (2005, 2014) and Shove, et al. (2012) argue that social practices are the basic units of analysis, and individuals are the carriers of the practices. SPT situates the social in practices, which is fundamentally different from both

individualistic and holistic views. SPT in this way offers a middle path to reinterpret the relationship between agency and structure. Accordingly, the dynamic processes of social change need to be understood through social practices, including the range of elements in circulation, the careers and trajectories of practices and the connections between practices (Shove, et al., 2012).

Nicolini (2012) used a zooming metaphor to show how to examine social practices: zooming in on the accomplishments of practices, and then zooming out of practices to the wider social picture. The first movement is to capture and convey the elements that constitute practices, the trajectories of practices, and how practices are performed. Empirical studies in this vein often build on a social practice framework to obtain detailed insights into the practice under scrutiny, such as co-shopping of parents and children (Keller & Ruus, 2014) and cycling (Larsen, 2017). As the primary focus is on practices *per se*, these investigations challenge the (over)emphasis on individual attitudes and behaviours dominant in the psychological and marketing approaches. The “zooming out” movement seeks to uncover the connections between practices and to understand how practices are connected to, and embedded in, extensive networks of practices. One case in point is Gram-Hanssen’s (2011) study where relationships between three practices (indoor climate regulation, standby consumption and computer use) were analysed for understanding household energy consumption. As Nicolini (2012) put it, all practices are involved in a variety of relationships and associations that extend in both space and time, and form an intricate texture of dependencies and references. To understand the relationships that exist in time and space among practices is of particular relevance for unravelling institutional changes in contemporary societies (Lamers, et al., 2017).

SPT has been adopted in tourism research in two strands. First, SPT has been employed to (re)theorise tourism in general (de Souza Bispo, 2016; Lamers, et al., 2017). de Souza Bispo (2016) attempted to rethink tourism ontology from a practice perspective by introducing the notion of “tourism as practice”. However, despite the rejection of dualisms (e.g., home and

away) in tourism knowledge (Cohen & Cohen, 2017), de Souza Bispo (2016) presented the notion of “tourism as practice” in a fragmented manner without providing a relevant analytical framework. Further, a mixed group of theoretical approaches, such as mobility and performativity, was subsumed under the umbrella of SPT leaving the relevance of SPT for tourism research neither concise nor clear. In contrast, Lamers, et al. (2017) offered a more comprehensive review of SPT, its core concepts and propositions, and used expedition cruising as an example to illustrate the implications of SPT for tourism research. It was argued that theorising tourism via SPT could deepen our understanding of conventional tourist behaviours, and could also provide a more sophisticated starting point for tourism management and governance (Lamers, et al., 2017). Following the idea of zooming in and out (Nicolini, 2012), Lamers, et al. (2017) proposed that the application of SPT in tourism research should be advanced in three ways: by analysing the performed tourism practices in depth, by examining change in tourism practices over time and by revealing the embeddedness of tourism practices in broader practice networks.

Second, SPT has been applied to a rising number of empirical studies in tourism (e.g., Alonso, Kok, & O'Brien, 2017; Iaquinto, 2015; Luzecka, 2016; Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, & Moital, 2018). These applications do not follow a single template, with different tourism researchers having utilised SPT in context-specific ways. Some researchers have shed new light on established tourism topics from a social practice perspective. Iaquinto (2015), for example, used the notion of everyday practices to discern how sustainability is (not) performed by backpackers. It was found that backpackers perform a range of practices in regards to economic, social and environmental sustainability without intention and, compared to home, backpacking provides opportunities for the performance of more sustainable practices (Iaquinto, 2015). Also, some neglected areas, such as sleep in tourism (Rantala & Valtonen, 2014; Valtonen & Veijola, 2011), the forest (Rantala, 2010) and weather (Rantala, et al., 2011) as tourism environments, have been added into the domain of tourism research under the auspices of SPT. As argued by Rantala and Valtonen (2014) in the analysis of tourist sleeping practices, the emphasis of SPT on embodied and routine social doings helps broaden

the scope of analysis in tourism inquiry. In general, it is suggested that SPT could offer a fresh way of understanding touristic phenomena that is distinct from, and often alternative to, traditional approaches.

Despite the rise of applications of SPT in tourism research, a further examination of these applications reveals room for improvement. Most of the existing empirical studies only employed the notion of social practice, without much reference to the analytical frameworks contained in SPT. For instance, the scheme developed by Shove, et al. (2012) has been utilised to examine the constitution of a wide range of social practices (e.g., Larsen, 2017; Supski, Lindsay, & Tanner, 2016). Nevertheless, this scheme has rarely been used in tourism investigations. In other words, tourism researchers have not zoomed in close enough to analyse the elements that consist of the practices under consideration. It can also be argued that, to a large extent, the empirical studies tend to identify and describe the features of tourism practices. These applications can enrich our understanding of the existence of specific practices, but cannot provide much information on why the practices exist as the way they are. More research thus needs to be conducted by following the “zooming out” movement (Nicolini, 2012) to examine the mechanisms behind tourism practices in broader practice networks. The present study attempts to achieve this by locating Chinese tourist shopping practices within broader consumption practices in China.

### **5.3 Consumption practices in China**

China (referring to the People’s Republic of China) has transformed from an ascetic to a consumer society since its establishment in 1949 (Wang, 2009a). Under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the state controlled nearly all aspects of what people consumed in order to concentrate efforts on developing heavy industry (Wang, 2009b). The consumption patterns of Chinese people at that time were largely moulded by egalitarianism, frugality and anti-bourgeoisie lifestyles, with these ideologies being considered as necessary in the course of socialist construction (Zhang, 2017). After launching the reform and opening-up policy in 1978, China underwent a consumer revolution (Davis, 2000). Consumerism was no longer

contrary to the dominant political ideology (Zhao & Belk, 2008), and was viewed as an engine for both economic growth and social stability (Yu, 2014). Especially after the 2008 financial crisis, the stimulation of consumption was used by the Chinese government as a main approach to boosting domestic demand. In 2017, consumption contributed to 58.8% of economic growth in China (Lu, 2018). The World Economic Forum (2018) predicts that China will transition to a consumption-driven development model, and will continue to be the largest contributor to the growth of global consumption.

Shopping, as a key form of consumption, embodies China as a consumer society. According to Smith (2017), China is the most active market across the globe for shopping mall development. Spending time in shopping malls, which combine shopping, dining and entertainment experiences, has become a significant type of leisure in China (Yu, 2014). In the words of Ritzer (2010), these malls function as “cathedrals of consumption” that enchant and entice Chinese people to consume for salvation (p. 7). In addition to the brick-and-mortar spaces of consumption, e-commerce websites have been popular online spaces where Chinese people release their shopping enthusiasm. A good example is the Double Eleven shopping festival that takes place in China on 11<sup>th</sup> November every year. In 2017, Alibaba, one of the biggest Chinese e-commerce companies, sold US\$25.3 billion worth of merchandise during the 24-hour festival, exceeding the combined sales for Black Friday and Cyber Monday in the United States (Lavin, 2018). In accordance with Baudrillard (1998), exuberant celebrations of consumption indicate that the “drive to buy” has been liberated in China. (p. 134)

Chinese people, especially urban Chinese, have adopted some materialist behaviours similar to their Western counterparts. For instance, China leads in global luxury consumption, generating significant demand for global luxury brands in every segment (Horton, 2016). McKinsey & Company (2017) estimated that 7.6 million Chinese households purchased luxury goods in 2016, with an average spending of RMB71,000 per household. As Zhu, et al. (2016) pointed out, the modernisation of China began in the mid-nineteenth century with an increased desire to learn about the Western advanced goods and technologies. Western

commodities are commonly perceived by Chinese people as prestigious and modern (Hulme, 2014). Ownership of these commodities represents desired tastes and lifestyles. The rampancy of counterfeit and substandard products in China, as demonstrated by the contaminated baby formula exposed in 2008, has also triggered a nationwide crisis of trust (Hanser, 2010). Chinese customers hold sceptical attitudes towards domestically made commodities, whereas they show admiration for, and trust in, the versions produced in developed countries.

Consumption practices in China cannot, however, be divorced from traditional Chinese culture and values. Although Chinese consumers associate their identities with brands, as do their Western counterparts, it has been found that brand meanings in China are socially constructed amongst important others, rather than created at the individual level (Eckhardt & Bengtsson, 2015). Similarly, Zhan and He (2012) found Chinese middle-class consumers perceive luxury brands as highly valuable possessions and pursue these brands primarily to conform to the social expectations of reference groups. Further, it cannot be taken for granted that Chinese people consume brands just for themselves. To a large extent Chinese society is *guanxi* (relationship) based, where interactions between people, in either business activities or personal lives, are commonly conducted in the form of *renqing* (asking for and returning favours) achieved through gifts (Yang, 1994). Accordingly, it is not uncommon to see that in China the socially recognised brands are purchased as gifts to build or maintain *guanxi* rather than for identity display.

Overall, consumerism has become a new ideology in China influenced by its political system (Eckhardt, 2016). The consumer revolution in China is not just a replication of the Western consumer culture (Davis, 2000), but the outcome of rapid transformations in Chinese economic, social and technological structures (Yu, 2014). As Zhang (2017) stated, Chinese consumers choose certain values from their cultural repertoire – a melting pot comprising both Western and traditional Chinese values – to legitimise their consumption practices. COTS, as a noticeable practice, reflects this new consumer culture and is embedded in the

socio-cultural contexts in contemporary China. Inspired by the “zooming out” movement proposed by Nicolini (2012), the present study locates COTS in the extensive networks of consumption practices in China to answer the research question: Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel to Australia? More specifically, this study aims to:

- identify the major social and consumption practices that affect the shopping practices of Chinese tourists, and
- reveal how the identified practices contribute to the dominance of Chinese tourist shopping practices.

## **5.4 Methodology**

This study takes a qualitative approach to gather an in-depth understanding of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia. Semi-structured interviewing was used by the author, who is from China, to collect data. Thematic analysis was then employed to analyse the collected interview data. The processes of data collection and analysis are presented in detail as follows.

### **5.4.1 Data collection**

Semi-structured interviewing was considered suitable as the data collection method, because it allows researchers to ask a set of open-ended questions related to the topic of interest with the flexibility to explore particular responses further (Bryman, 2016). To facilitate the conduct of interviews, the author developed an interview guide that listed the questions to be addressed and possible probes (see Appendix D for the final guide). Also, four pilot interviews were carried out with Chinese scholars who had overseas shopping experiences as tourists, with relevant revisions being made to optimise the interview guide.

The author employed a purposive sampling method (Bryman, 2016) with three criteria to select participants. The first criterion was about where to sample. According to Tourism Australia (2017), the major provinces and municipalities of residence of Chinese visitors to Australia include: Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shandong. These

places were considered as priority regions from which to recruit participants. Second, Chinese citizens who have travelled to Australia at any time since January 2015 were treated as the target group. This inclusion criterion was used to get up-to-date information on Chinese tourist shopping practices. Moreover, when sampling, maximum variation was utilised as a principle to ensure the heterogeneity in the participants. For example, demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, and mode of travel (independent travel or group tour) were used to make sure the participants covered a mix of Chinese tourists.

The sampling process started by using social networks to look for participants who met the three criteria. Specifically, the author introduced this study to his friends via Wechat (the most popular social networking app in China) and asked them to recommend potential participants. Then the recommended people were contacted by the author through Wechat with an electronic version of an information sheet about the study being provided. After confirming their willingness to be involved in this study, the author discussed with the participants when and how (e.g., face-to-face, phone call) to carry out interviews. The author travelled to five cities in China – Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou (the capital city of Zhejiang province), Jinan (the capital city of Shandong province) and Xi'an (the capital city of Shaanxi province) – for data collection. If the participants were from these cities, the interviews were mostly conducted face to face. Meanwhile, phone interviews were arranged for the participants from other locations such as Guangzhou (the capital city of Guangdong province). In all cases, informed consent was obtained prior to the start of the interviews.

Each semi-structured interview consisted of two main parts (see Appendix D for the interview guide). In the first part, general information on participants' travel to Australia, such as the time and purpose of their travel, was collected to establish rapport with them. The second part proceeded by asking the participants more detailed questions focusing on their shopping practices in Australia. For example, the participants were requested to provide examples of the products they bought and tell the author why they bought these products and for whom. Also, photo-elicitation was employed as a supplementary method to ground the

author's interview questions and to stimulate the participants to remember products that they purchased but might otherwise have forgotten (Bryman, 2016). The photos used in this study (see Appendix E) were chosen based on the findings in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, and included images of products that Chinese tourists favour in Australia, such as lanolin cream and fish oil, and images that show the great volume of products they purchase.

A total of 32 semi-structured interviews were conducted by the author during a 22 day fieldtrip in China. These interviews lasted from 35 minutes to one hour and 10 minutes with an average length of 49 minutes. The profile of participants, who were coded from I-01 to I-32, is presented in Table 5.1. As can be seen, the sample covers a heterogeneous group of Chinese tourists with respect to both demographic characteristics (gender, age, occupation and geographic location) and travel type (mode of travel and time of visit). It should be noted that the sample size in this study was not set in advance. The author continued interviews until he found that no new information was generated. It was therefore concluded that data saturation (Bryman, 2016) had been reached with the 32 interviews and further data collection was not needed.

Table 5.1 Profile of the participants

Information	Categories	Frequencies	Information	Categories	Frequencies
Gender	Male	15	Occupation	Manager	7
	Female	17		Professional	19
Age	20-30	9		Student	2
	31-40	12		Retired	3
	41-50	7	Resigned	1	
	51-60	2	Mode of travel	Independent travel	20
	Above 60	2		Group tour	12
Place of residence	Beijing	10	Year of travel	2015	8
	Shanghai	10		2016	12
	Hangzhou	6		2017	12
	Jinan	2	Time of visit	First time	27
	Other	4		Repeat	5

#### 5.4.2 Data analysis

The data analysis in this study was conducted by following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guide to performing thematic analysis. First, the interview data were transcribed verbatim into written form and the author familiarised himself with the data by repeatedly reading the transcripts and noting down initial ideas. Then, the data were imported into, and coded in, QSR NVivo 11 (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). In this phase, the author used the coding stripes in NVivo to check the areas of text that had been coded and the codes applied to them. After identifying and collating codes, the author started to sort them into different levels of themes. The codes were organised in a hierarchical manner in NVivo. A thematic map was also used to visually present the relationships between the codes and themes. Then the candidate themes were reviewed and refined based on two criteria – internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Patton, 2002). Finally, a complete thematic map was generated with accompanying data extracts demonstrating relevant themes.

It should be noted that despite the phases described above, the data analysis in this study was a recursive rather than linear process. In addition, all the interview transcripts were originally written in Chinese. Whenever quoted, the contents were first translated from Chinese to English by the author and then back translated by a translator fluent in both Chinese and English (Chen & Boore, 2010). The English version of quotes was reached by agreement between the author and the translator.

Taken the data collection and analysis together, it can be said that the quality of this qualitative study were ensured in two ways. First, a range of techniques, including maximum variation sampling, data saturation and back translation, were employed to strengthen the rigor of the research process. Also, a detailed description of the procedures of both data collection and analysis were presented. This transparency of the research process contributes to enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings of this study.

## 5.5 Findings

The thematic analysis of responses identified three key social and consumption practices that affect the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia: Chinese consumerism, *guanxi* maintenance and outbound travel. Chinese consumerism can be defined as a way of life in which Chinese tourists are preoccupied with the desire to consume. *Guanxi* maintenance comprises the activities in which Chinese tourists engage to maintain or consolidate social relationships. Outbound travel here refers to the travel of Chinese people outside Mainland China. How these practices contribute to the dominance of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia is discussed in detail below.

### 5.5.1 Chinese consumerism: Western brands and high quality

This study found that, while on holiday in Australia, the participants bought a large variety of products for themselves, including clothing and accessories, healthcare products, cosmetics, and food and drinks. Chinese consumerism is primarily reflected in the description of the purchase and use of these products. Two key features of Chinese consumerism can be identified through the interviews. The first one is the desire for Western brands. For example, when I-32 talked about handbags, she said,

*“I use MK (Michal Kors). Can I afford to buy brands like LV (Louis Vuitton), Gucci and Prada? Yes, I can. But I think it is not necessary (to buy them), because your salary, that is, your income, is there. It actually does not match them, but match brands such as MK and Coach. This is not to say you cannot afford them. You usually use things (handbags) that match your income.”*

Later, I-32 further stressed,

*“What is the purpose to use brands? You want to match your identity. (You use brands) not to raise your identity, at least to match your identity and income. However, there are not such kinds of domestic brands that can either raise or match your identity. There indeed are not!”*

Like I-32, most of the participants referred to Western brands to express their social affiliation and identity. They rarely associated themselves with domestic brands, but could list, and comment on, different levels of Western brands without much hesitation, and describe which level matches them. It should be kept in mind that the participants in this study, who could afford to travel to Australia, at least belong to the middle class in Chinese society. This group of Chinese people are accustomed to using Western brands, including luxury brands, and these brands are integrated into their daily life. Their consumption practices are heavily influenced by Western aesthetics and values, with Western brands generally being perceived as advanced, reliable and prestigious. At the same time, they attach great importance to possessing these brands to signify their identity, taste and quality of life.

The second feature of Chinese consumerism is the pursuit of high quality products. High quality is a fundamental reason why the participants purchased Australian products, especially food, drinks and healthcare products. Products in Australia are commonly associated with safety, authenticity and trustworthiness. On the contrary, the participants described the counterparts made in China as low quality, unsafe and untrustworthy. For instance, I-16 perceived the fish oil capsules he bought in Australia as “good”, “authentic”, “pure natural” and “reliable”. He had never used Chinese produced fish oil capsules and explained,

*“I think maybe they are fake. Maybe they are not safe. I think the raw materials that are used to make them could have been polluted. The fish oil capsules must be made of fish oil. I think the fish could be polluted, artificially reared or injected with hormones. So (I) do not trust them.”*

To a large extent I-16’s suspicion and distrust of Chinese made fish oil capsules is caused by series of food safety incidents that occurred in China over the last decade. One of the worst incidents is the 2008 Chinese milk scandal, which was frequently mentioned by the participants to express their concern over the quality of Chinese made food. Some participants even treated this scandal as the beginning of their distrust of products made in

China in general. As Yan (2012) argued, food safety problems have not only triggered a nationwide panic about the quality of Chinese made food, but also led to a wider social trust crisis in China. Meanwhile, severe environmental pollution in China further aggravates the insecurity that the participants felt in consuming Chinese made products. The participants do not trust that products produced in such a polluted environment can be good quality. As explained by I-28, *“You constantly see and hear about such poor air quality and such poor water quality. How could you be confident to trust the products that are made in such an environment?”*

It can be argued that there exists a tension between the participants’ demand for consumerism and the relevant supply in China. Participants desire Western brands but if available, these brands are much more expensive in China compared to other places around the world. At the same time, some products made in China do not meet the needs of participants for high quality. Accordingly, the consumption of the participants to some extent is restricted in China, even though they have strong purchasing power. This tension can be reduced when the participants shop while travelling in Australia. Both the Western brands and perceived high quality products in Australia that the participants demand, are much cheaper than in China. Under these circumstances, the focus of the participants is less on how much a product costs in Australia, but more on how much they would save if they purchase the product in Australia instead of China. ‘To shop is to save’ becomes the logic of their actions. This is why the participants commonly said that they would have lost if they did not shop while travelling. Australia, as their travel destination, functions as a new consumption space where the participants’ demand for consumerism can be satisfied or further stimulated.

#### 5.5.2 *Guanxi* maintenance: Gift buying and request shopping

The participants not only purchased products for themselves as discussed above, but also shopped for others at home. The latter can be further divided into two types of shopping practices: gift buying and request shopping. Gift buying means that the participants voluntarily bought products at their own expense as gifts for others, whereas request

shopping connotes that the participants acted as shopping agents to purchase specific products at the request of others who paid the participants the cost of the purchases. Despite this difference, both shopping practices were carried out as a way of *guanxi* maintenance.

The participants generally provided a long list of people for whom they bought gifts. The recipients of gifts include: family, friends, colleagues, classmates, and so on. Compared to Western tourists (see Wilkins, 2011), it can be argued that the participants bought gifts for a much wider range of people at home. Also, the family here incorporates both nuclear family members and other extended family members. For example, besides his wife and daughter, I-20 bought gifts for his parents, parents in law, his brother, sister in law and also several cousins. All these family members, together with close friends and colleagues, constitute the core of *guanxi* networks, of which I-20 is part. As I-20 described, *“I spend around three to five thousand RMB on big/little gifts every time I travel abroad. Inevitable! Just on gifts!”* Chinese people are collectivistic with a predominant emphasis on social relationships (Mok & Defranco, 2000). Although the participants were temporarily away when travelling in Australia, they perceived themselves as part of *guanxi* networks. Bringing back gifts serves as the passport for re-entering social groups after having been away (Pearce, Wu, & Osmond, 2013). It is an unwritten social convention in Chinese society that people who travel abroad purchase gifts for significant others at home. If the participants do not do so, it would be deemed as inappropriate or unacceptable. For instance, I-28, who travelled to Australia with three colleagues, commented,

*“I went to Australia leaving my husband and daughter behind. If I only enjoyed the scenery and took photos, but did not buy anything back home, you would not think that is acceptable. For me, these products I bought [gifts for family and friends] are equally important as the scenery I saw.”*

The participants purchased a wide range of products as gifts, including: healthcare products, food and drinks, cosmetics, clothing and accessories, souvenirs and so forth. It can be noted that souvenirs comprise only a small part of the gifts purchased, with most purchases

belonging to utilitarian product categories. This is very different from Western tourists (see Kim & Littrell, 2001; Murphy, et al., 2013). More specifically, the participants commonly used two criteria – closeness and appropriateness – to decide which products they would purchase for whom. Closeness is a measure of the degree to which a gift recipient is close to the participants in their *guanxi* networks. The closeness here is based not just on blood ties (e.g., family members), but also on geographical (e.g., neighbours) and occupational (e.g., work colleagues) relations. Appropriateness is used to decide whether a product is appropriate for the gift recipient. I-21 bought a set of MK handbags for his wife, Penfolds wine for his father in law and lanolin cream and papaw ointment for his friends and colleagues respectively and explained,

*“They [MK handbags] were on sale at that time. Quite cheap. The backpack with studs was approximately RMB1500-1800. I think it was at least RMB3000-4000 at home.”*

*“He [I-21’s father in law] likes drinking. I bought two bottles that are relatively good. Such good wine may not be available at home. Even if there are good wines [at home], they are not as tasty as these [Penfolds wines]. Just let him have a taste.”*

*“You need to consider guanxi. If [a product] is too expensive, it is not good. Not appropriate...If you give it [to friends or colleagues], they would think it is not appropriate to accept it. Too expensive. The prices of these [lanolin cream and papaw ointment] are good. They are specialties and well known. I think, in Australia, things like papaw ointment are particularly appropriate gifts for friends and colleagues. ”*

Like I-21, most of the participants selected gifts for immediate family members based on what the family members like or need. The gifts that the participants gave to general friends and colleagues, however, are chosen with consideration of multiple factors such as price, utility and Australian characteristics. In general, gift price is a clear manifestation of how close or important a recipient is to the participants in *guanxi* networks and a chief consideration in deciding whether the gift is appropriate for the recipient. The closer or more

important the *guanxi* between gift recipients and the participants is, the greater amount of money participants would like to spend on gift buying.

Compared to gift recipients, a smaller group of people at home requested the participants to shop for specific products. These people mainly include extended family members, friends and colleagues. Again in comparison to the gifts stated above, the requesters only asked the participants to purchase Western brands and utilitarian products, including healthcare products, food and drinks, cosmetics and clothing and accessories. These products are either not available in China or much more expensive in China as compared to Australia. The requesters thus could save money and get the products they want by asking the participants for a favour. Further, the requesters trust the authenticity of the products purchased in Australia, which is a big concern if they buy the same products in China. This is exemplified by I-02, who was requested to buy A2 baby formula for her former teacher:

*“There are more counterfeit products at home [compared to abroad]. It was said before that some people recycled the baby formula tins and then made counterfeit baby formula in Foshan [a city in China]. So many mums at home say, ‘The baby formula you bring back for me from abroad is authentic.’ ”*

From the perspective of participants, their responses to the requests largely depend on the closeness of *guanxi* and the size and weight of the target products. If a requester is within the social circle of close friends and colleagues and the target products are small and light, the participants were happy to grant the favour. The request is deemed as normal and as a chance to maintain or even enhance friendship. The participants grant a favour to the requester on this occasion, and similarly, may ask for a favour from the requester on other occasions. However, it is unlikely that the participants would refuse directly, even if a requester is outside the social circle of close *guanxi* or the target products are too large or heavy. To refuse the requester means that the participants break *guanxi*. This action is not sensible as *guanxi* functions as a cornerstone of Chinese society (Gold, et al., 2002). As illuminated by I-27,

*“China is indeed a society based on renqing. That is to say, guanxi is involved in everything. You do not want to freely break any guanxi. This is why you would not refuse with ease if someone requests you to buy things. Even if you think these things are too many for you to carry, you would negotiate [with the requesters] whether you could buy less. But you would not directly refuse to buy. Because you do not want to break guanxi, even though it is not important guanxi. On the contrary, it would be better if it is close guanxi. You are not afraid that it would be broken. Like us [I-27 and his close friend], we always argue and complain about each other. This does not matter. Chinese people subconsciously think if I can help [the requesters] I would. Maybe I need their help in the future. ”*

It can be claimed that outbound travel has become a social occasion where the participants shop to maintain or even extend *guanxi* either by way of gift buying or request shopping. According to Tourism Australia (2018), there were 1.36 million Chinese visitors coming to Australia in 2017. It should be noted that these people only make up a small fraction of the total population in China, given its large population base. That is to say, the participants in this study are very likely to get access to various products, which are new to and/or meet the demands of many significant others at home who have not travelled to Australia. Further, with limited baggage allowance, the products that the participants brought back from long haul destinations like Australia count regardless of their actual monetary worth. These factors largely add to the value of these products as the material carriers of *guanxi* maintenance. As Gold, et al. (2002) maintained, the notion of reciprocal obligation and indebtedness is central to the system of *guanxi* in China. Whenever a gift or favour is accepted, there is the obligation to reciprocate (Yang, 1994). The participants are gift givers or grant favours on this occasion. Similarly, they receive gifts or ask for favours on other occasions. Outbound travel as a social occasion is integrated into the participants’ *guanxi* maintenance in daily life.

### 5.5.3 The interplay between Chinese consumerism and *guanxi* maintenance

Chinese consumerism and *guanxi* maintenance not only contribute to the prevalence of the participants' shopping practices separately, but also interact with each other. The interplay between them is primarily reflected in two aspects. First, Chinese consumerism provides a direction for product selection in *guanxi* maintenance. Chinese consumerism is not confined to the participants, but is generally shared by their *guanxi* networks. For example, I-28 bought a Hugo Boss belt and a Lacoste shirt for her husband as gifts because her husband likes these brands and is used to wearing these brands. Furthermore, I-28 could get these brands at much cheaper prices in Australia in comparison to China, which makes it worth her while to bring them back home as gifts. This logic is also applicable to the gift purchase for I-28's other immediate family members. During the interview, I-28 showed the author a photo on her phone, which vividly depicts the sizes of different clothes for her husband, daughter and parents (Figure 5.1). Once seeing desired brands, she used this photo as well as a measuring tape to select the suitable sizes of clothes for her family. Although these brands *per se* are not necessarily connected to Australia, the recipients' desire for them and their attractive prices in Australia make them appropriate gifts for beloved ones at home in I-28's case.

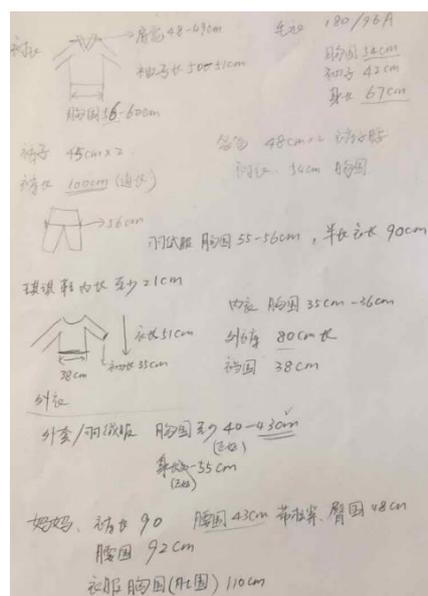


Figure 5.1 A photo on I-28's phone used for selecting clothes for family members

Second, *guanxi* maintenance can further stimulate the participants' demand for consumerism. I-04, for instance, bought Blackmores vitamin E cream and clarified,

*“One of my college classmates sent me a photo [of it] before I went [to Australia]. She told me, ‘It is said that this product is very popular in Australia.’ I responded, ‘Really? I would have a look then’. As a result, I bought many tubes. Three for myself and five for her.”*

In this case, I-04 was originally requested to purchase the cream for her classmate. This request became an information source from which I-04 learnt about a new product that was not on her shopping list. The purchase of the cream for herself is derived from the task to buy it on behalf of her classmate. Given its tension with relevant supply in China, the participants' demand for consumerism becomes very active when travelling in Australia. *Guanxi* maintenance, either gift buying or shopping upon requests, presents an additional chance to know more products, which are likely to meet the participants' demand. In a sense, the interest of the participants to purchase some products is not directly created by marketing communications from businesses, but is stimulated by the need to maintain *guanxi* as a social convention in Chinese society.

#### 5.5.4 Outbound travel: A golden opportunity for shopping

Outbound travel, for most Chinese tourists, remains an activity with low frequency. According to a study conducted by China Tourism Academy (2017), 52.5% of the surveyed tourists reported that it was their first time to travel abroad (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan). It can be expected that the frequency of Chinese tourists to the same long haul destinations such as Australia could be much lower. As I-29 commented, *“I am not like people who do business in Australia; they often travel there. I guess, if there is no special reason, I would not travel there in the following five or even ten years.”* The low-frequency nature of travel to Australia encourages the participants to take full advantage of the trip for shopping. It is noticeable that their purchase of some products was not only to meet current needs, but also for future use. For instance, I-13 bought Clarins cosmetics and explained,

*“I have got used to this [brand]. I buy [Clarins cosmetics] anyway. Even if I do not travel abroad, I would buy them at home when they are on sale on May Day or National Day. But I happened to be abroad, so I stocked up on the cosmetics for the whole year. Plus, they were cheaper [in Australia than in China].”*

Similarly, I-07 reflected,

*“Chinese people tend to think that they should shop while travelling abroad. They generally think that they only come once in a lifetime anyway, especially to long haul international destinations. It is a rare opportunity. They also think they could get the same or similar products by spending less money [in the destinations than in China]. So their purchasing power is liberated. It is common that many people purchased the shoes that they would need in the next few years, isn't it? It is also common that people bought piles of healthcare products to take home and they could not finish them before their expiration dates.”*

It can be said that outbound travel to Australia functions as a golden opportunity for the participants to shop. Australia as a consumption space meets their requirements for high quality Western brands with lower prices in comparison to China. Their shopping power is largely stimulated, if not liberated as I-07 claimed. The participants make the most of their travel as an opportunity to shop, although shopping is rarely seen as a major purpose of it (cf. Choi, et al., 2016a). Australia as a long haul destination is not a place where the participants are able to travel whenever they wish. Rather, their travel to Australia involves preparation, planning and coordination beforehand, in both life and work. The participants commonly reported that they shopped for more than they needed at the point of purchase. As exemplified by I-13 and I-07, the participants' shopping practices to some extent are future-oriented. Since they would want Western brands after returning to China, the Clarins cosmetics in the case of I-13, the participants chose in advance to purchase those products at a lower price while traveling in Australia. In other words, given the low frequency of

outbound travel to Australia, the participants incorporated the notion of forward planning into their shopping practices in the destination.

Meanwhile, the destination image of Australia in terms of shopping affects the participants' product selection behind the prevalence of their shopping practices. As a whole, Australia is perceived by the participants as a destination that provides a reliable shopping environment. For example,

*“There are no fakes in Australia. So we, from psychological aspect, can shop with peace of mind. Say, if you find an item you bought is fake, the seller would face heavy fines or something like that. The regulation in Australia is stricter [than that in China].” (I-24)*

When shopping in Australia, they do not worry about whether their target products are fake or substandard. This positive image lays the foundation for the participants to engage in shopping practices. More specifically, Australia is frequently perceived as a representation of high quality healthcare products, wool-related products (e.g., ugg boots and lanolin cream) and milk powder/baby formula. These products are synonymous with Australian specialties and are commonly purchased by the participants for both self-use and *guanxi* maintenance.

A typical example is lanolin cream. Lanolin cream is described by the participants as characteristically Australian, cheap, small (easy to carry) and suitable for everyone. This product is repeatedly seen as one of the must-buys in Australia and is also widely circulated in the participants' *guanxi* networks as gifts. As I-25 mentioned, *“All those who travelled to Australia gave lanolin cream as gifts after they came back. Anyway, I had received two before I travelled there.”* The must-buys in Australia like lanolin cream can be construed as part of a “circle of representation” (Jenkins, 2003, p. 305), through which the destination image of Australia regarding shopping is (re)produced. These products, though different from conventional souvenirs, are captured as compelling evidence of the participants' travel to Australia. The purchase of these particular products by participants was influenced by the

products circulating among people in their *guanxi* networks who had travelled to Australia, and, in turn, affects the product selection of others who would visit Australia.

## **5.6 Conclusion and discussion**

Shopping is an indispensable activity in which Chinese tourists engage during their outbound travel. The significance of COTS has been widely recognised in both tourism academia and industry. However, a review of tourism research in this area suggests that most of the existing studies examined Chinese tourists' shopping motivations, perceptions and satisfactions in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. The mechanisms behind COTS have rarely been addressed. Inspired by SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012), the present study aims to reveal why the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are dominant in their travel to Australia. The results indicated that Chinese tourists see travel to more distant and foreign differently to these closer to home confirming the value of extending COTS research into a wider set of destinations. More specifically, this study, following the "zooming out" movement proposed by Nicolini (2012), locates Chinese tourist shopping within the extensive networks of consumption practices in China to identify and analyse the key practices that influence the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in Australia.

This study argues that Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia result from a combination of Chinese consumerism and *guanxi* maintenance under the condition of outbound travel (Figure 5.2). Chinese consumerism is shaped by global consumer culture and the modernisation of China and can be construed as a modern practice featuring desire for Western brands and pursuit of high quality. Nevertheless, Chinese tourists' demand for consumerism is not matched by relevant supply in China, because Western brands and/or high quality products are either much more expensive or not available in China in comparison to other countries. Outbound travel provides Chinese tourists new consumption spaces where their demand for consumerism can be met and further stimulated.

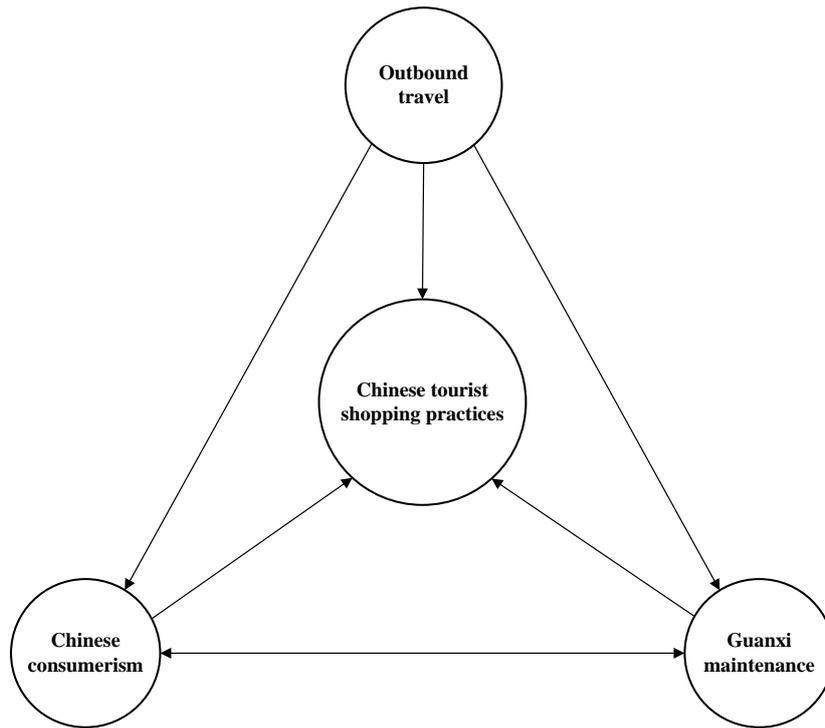


Figure 5.2 The mechanisms behind Chinese outbound tourist shopping practices

Meanwhile, Chinese tourists shop not only for themselves, but also for maintaining *guanxi* through gift buying and request shopping. *Guanxi* maintenance is a traditional and group-oriented practice in Chinese society. Although outbound travel means temporary absence from *guanxi* networks at home, the emphasis of Chinese tourists on *guanxi* maintenance continues. The products that are brought back by Chinese tourists, either as gifts or as per requests, function as material carriers of *guanxi* maintenance. Outbound travel becomes a social occasion that is integrated into Chinese tourists' *guanxi* maintenance in daily life. Chinese consumerism provides a direction for product selection in *guanxi* maintenance, and interactively, *guanxi* maintenance can arouse Chinese tourists' demand for consumerism. Further, the low frequency of outbound travel, especially to long-haul destinations like Australia, makes Chinese tourists shop not only to meet their current needs but also for future use. The destination of outbound travel couples with particular products that circulate among Chinese tourists constituting a circle of representation.

Notably, request shopping is a common practice among Chinese tourists but has never been mentioned in the existing tourist shopping research. The existence of this practice manifests

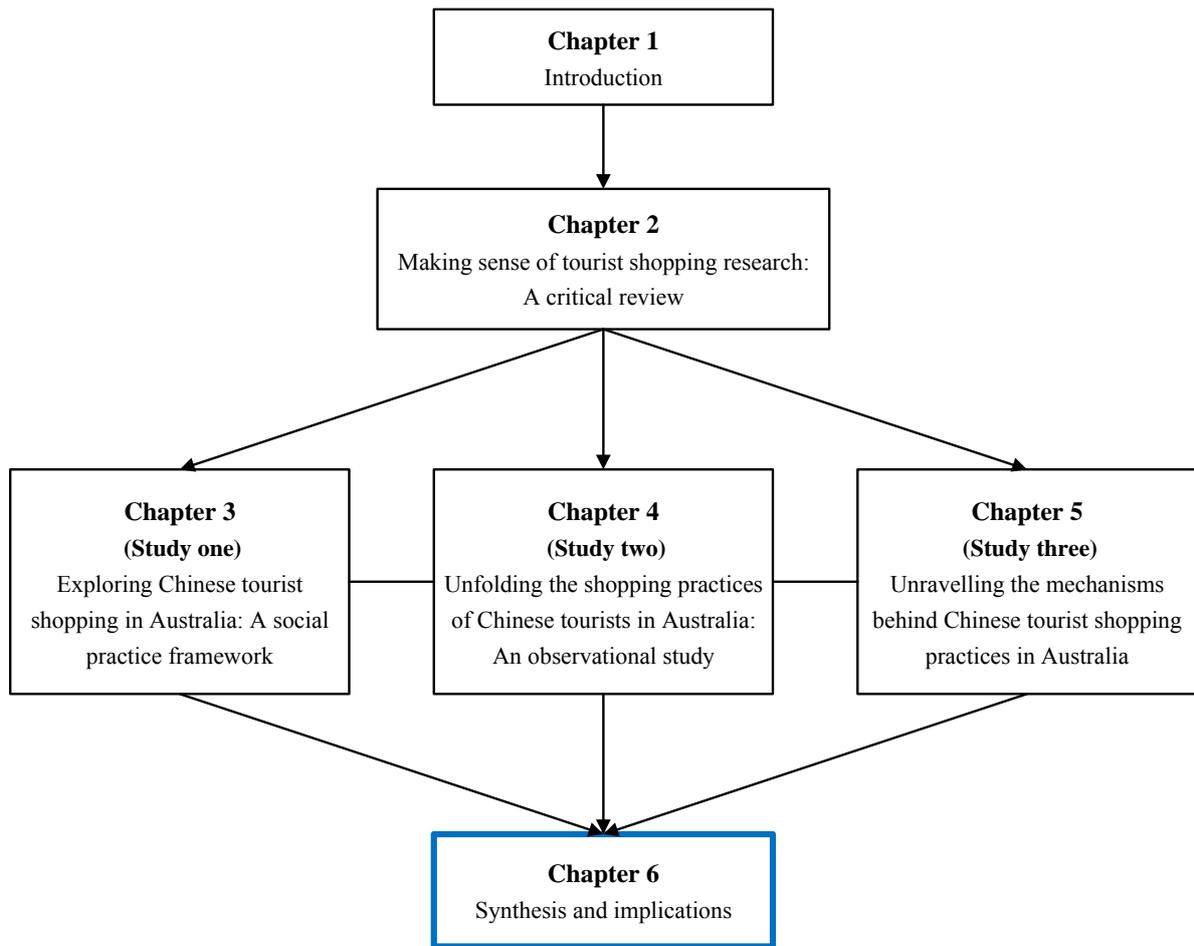
the importance of *guanxi* and reflects how *guanxi* works in Chinese society (Gold, et al., 2002; Yang, 1994). Requesters use the *guanxi* with tourists in order to save money and get desired products without presence. Tourists spend time and effort to purchase the products on behalf of requesters without pecuniary benefits, but create favourable conditions for future request making. In other words, this practice is reciprocal to requesters and tourists, in which requesters reduce economic costs, and meanwhile, tourists increase their social capital. The current study only provides a brief picture of the practice of purchasing products as per requests. More research needs to be conducted to investigate this practice in more depth and detail. For example, it can be imagined that the performance of this practice involves communications, confirmations and even negotiations. It would be interesting to know which and how information is exchanged between tourists and requesters. Several participants in this study mentioned that the requested products sometimes can be converted into gifts. It is also worthwhile to examine in which conditions this kind of conversion occurs.

More generally, this study helps to rethink the relationship between tourism and shopping. Tourists from Western societies predominantly purchase products, in particular souvenirs, which are not functional but are connected to the destinations where they travel (Zhu, et al., 2016). Their shopping practices are carried out in search of products that can serve as evidence and/or reminder of their travel experience, and thus are largely irrelevant to daily shopping at home. Nevertheless, the shopping practices of Chinese outbound tourists are significantly different from those of Western tourists. Chinese outbound tourists shop for a wide variety of utilitarian products, which do not necessarily have a regional connection. Their shopping practices in the destinations are influenced by their daily shopping, and may well affect future shopping at home. Also, although outbound travel generally means temporary absence from the home-based social relations, these relations clearly exert influence on the shopping practices of Chinese outbound tourists as analysed in this study. It seems that outbound travel to a certain extent liberates the shopping enthusiasm of Chinese people but shopping during their travel is far more than an individual matter. The intricate

link between Chinese outbound travel and the accompanying shopping merit further research attention.

The present study unravels the mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective. As Warde (2016) puts it, “A principal effect of any theory is to emphasize some features of the world at the expenses of others.” (p. 18) It should be kept in mind that the explanation provided in this study is neither exclusive nor all-inclusive. It highlights how the identified consumption practices lead to the dominance of shopping practices in Chinese outbound travel, but exclude other possible factors for example at the individual and institutional level. Meanwhile, it is apparent that the prevalence of COTS is closely related to the *status quo* of Chinese outbound tourism, which is restricted to a minority of the population with infrequent outbound travel. It would be interesting to see how COTS will evolve as Chinese outbound tourism continues to grow.

Overall, this chapter addressed the third and final research question in the thesis. The mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping in Australia are unravelled by zooming out to identify the major social and consumption practices that affect the shopping practices of Chinese tourists, and to reveal how the identified practices contribute to the dominance of their shopping practices. After answering the three research questions in this thesis, the next chapter will provide a synthesis of the findings and their implications in a holistic manner.



## **Chapter 6 Synthesis and implications**

This final chapter aims to summarise and synthesise the thesis in a holistic manner. This chapter is organised as follows. Section 6.1 provides a general review of the thesis, reiterating the overall research aim, the three research questions and how these questions were addressed in the three studies. The key findings of the three studies are then summarised in Section 6.2. Section 6.3 synthesises the three studies in this thesis, and offers a comprehensive understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective. Based on the synthesis, Section 6.4 highlights the research contributions of this thesis and the relevant practical implications for shopping related tourism marketing and management. Then in Section 6.5, the chapter describes the limitations of this thesis and future research opportunities, finishing with some concluding comments provided in Section 6.6.

## 6.1 Overview of the thesis

COTS is prominent in, and important to, many destinations around the world. However, research on this phenomenon is piecemeal and fragmented. A further examination of the existing studies on COTS reveals that most of them are quantitative and focused on explaining satisfaction, motivation and perception from a consumer behaviour perspective. Also, research into COTS has predominantly been conducted in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, leaving COTS in Western countries poorly understood. To address these research gaps, the thesis employed a mixed methods approach to systematically examine COTS in Australia from a sociological perspective.

The **overall aim** of this thesis was to use SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005) as a theoretical foundation to understand Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. In this research, the social practice of Chinese tourist shopping is the basic unit of analysis, while Chinese outbound tourists are decentralised as the carriers of this practice. Following Nicolini's (2012) "zooming in and out" approach to SPT, the overall aim was achieved by answering three research questions:

**Question 1:** What are the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia?

**Question 2:** How do Chinese tourists carry out shopping practices on site?

**Question 3:** Why are the shopping practices of Chinese tourists dominant in their travel?

As shown in the thesis structure diagram (see Figure 1.3), three studies were conducted to address the three research questions respectively. Both study one and study two zoomed in on Chinese tourist shopping practices to obtain detailed insights, whereas study three zoomed out of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists to a wider picture. Specifically, the first study (Chapter 3) based on the social practice framework proposed by Shove et al. (2012) explored the key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia by collecting and analysing 40 travel blogs of Chinese tourists. In the second study (Chapter 4), a mixed methods approach was taken to examine how the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are

performed through 110 participant observations conducted in a major tourist destination in north-eastern Australia. The third and final study (Chapter 5) identified the major social and consumption practices that affect Chinese tourist shopping in Australia, and revealed how the identified practices lead to the dominance of Chinese tourists' shopping practices in their travel based on 32 semi-structured interviews.

It is clear that the research subjects of this thesis are Chinese tourists to Australia who engaged in shopping activities. Although different sampling methods were employed in the three studies, these samples were selected from the same population, that is, the research subjects of this thesis. The samples collected in the three studies were used separately to investigate the shopping practices of Chinese tourists from three different yet related perspectives. The findings of these investigations are summarised in the next section.

## **6.2 Summary of the findings**

This section is composed of three subsections. The main findings of the three studies in this thesis are summarised in these subsections in sequence.

### **6.2.1 Key features of Chinese tourist shopping practices**

Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia consist of four interconnected elements: materials, competences, meanings and settings. It can be argued that Chinese tourists purchase a wide variety of utilitarian products in large quantities (materials). These products mainly include clothing and accessories, cosmetics, healthcare products and food and drinks, with souvenirs in the conventional sense only accounting for a small percentage of the purchased items. Accordingly, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists not only occur in tourist attractions, but also expand into pharmacies, supermarkets, department stores, airports and local markets (settings). Also, Chinese tourists commonly engage in extensive pre-travel preparation learning what to buy and where to shop such that their purchases of most products are much more planned than improvised (competences). Although language is an obstacle for many Chinese tourists shopping in Australia (competences), a range of ICTs such

as shopping websites and mobile apps are used by Chinese tourists to facilitate their shopping enactments (materials and competences). The significance of their participation in shopping practices is multifaceted, including hunting for mementos, seeking brand value, pursuing product quality and authenticity, and maintaining and reinforcing *guanxi* (meanings).

### 6.2.2 Embodied actions within the shopping performances of Chinese tourists

Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia are performed on site through a range of intra-personal and inter-personal embodied actions, mainly including tell, ask, look, show, pay and leave. The frequency of inter-personal actions reflects the importance of social interactions and communications in the shopping processes of Chinese tourists, some of which are conducted with people not present in the settings through social media. The embodied actions link in sequence consisting of two distinct modes of Chinese tourist shopping performances: “browse – leave” and “browse – pick – n (n represents a range of embodied actions)”. Also, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are performed somewhat differently across different shopping settings. It is common to see that smartphones are embedded in the shopping performances of Chinese tourists in supermarkets. Smartphones are not only used by Chinese tourists to store product images and search product information online, but also to communicate with family and friends not present in the setting on product selection and purchase. Differently, Chinese tourists rarely use smartphones to facilitate their shopping performances in markets, where shopping is more a way to experience the destination than to purchase. Further, the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are carried out differently across different categories of products. For instance, ‘try’ is the most noticeable action when Chinese tourists buy clothing and accessories, but when selecting healthcare products, they rely very much on the images stored on their smartphones.

### 6.2.3 The mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping practices

This thesis contends that Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia result from a combination of Chinese consumerism and *guanxi* maintenance under the condition of outbound travel. Chinese consumerism can be construed as a modern practice featuring a

desire for Western brands and the pursuit of high quality. However, the demand of Chinese tourists for consumerism is not matched by relevant supply in China, because Western brands and/or high quality products are either much more expensive or not available in China in comparison to other countries. Outbound travel provides Chinese tourists a new consumption space where their demand for consumerism can be met and further stimulated.

Meanwhile, Chinese tourists shop not only for themselves, but also for maintaining *guanxi* through gift giving and request shopping. *Guanxi* maintenance is a traditional and group-oriented practice in Chinese society. Although outbound travel means temporary absence from *guanxi* networks at home, the emphasis of Chinese tourists on *guanxi* maintenance continues. The products that are brought back by Chinese tourists, either as gifts or as per requests, function as material carriers of *guanxi* maintenance. Outbound travel becomes a social occasion that is integrated into Chinese tourists' *guanxi* maintenance in daily life. Chinese consumerism provides a direction for product selection in *guanxi* maintenance, and interactively, *guanxi* maintenance can arouse Chinese tourists' demand for consumerism.

Further, the low frequency of outbound travel, especially to long-haul destinations like Australia, makes Chinese tourists shop not only to meet their current needs but also for future use. The destination of outbound travel links to particular products that circulate among Chinese tourists constituting a circle of representation. The product purchases of Chinese tourists are influenced by the products circulating among people in their *guanxi* networks who have travelled to the destination, and will affect the product preference of others who would visit the destination. Shopping, therefore, has become a new circle of tourism representation.

### **6.3 A synthesis**

The three studies in this thesis can be synthesised in Figure 6.1. These studies connect with each other contributing to an integrated understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective.

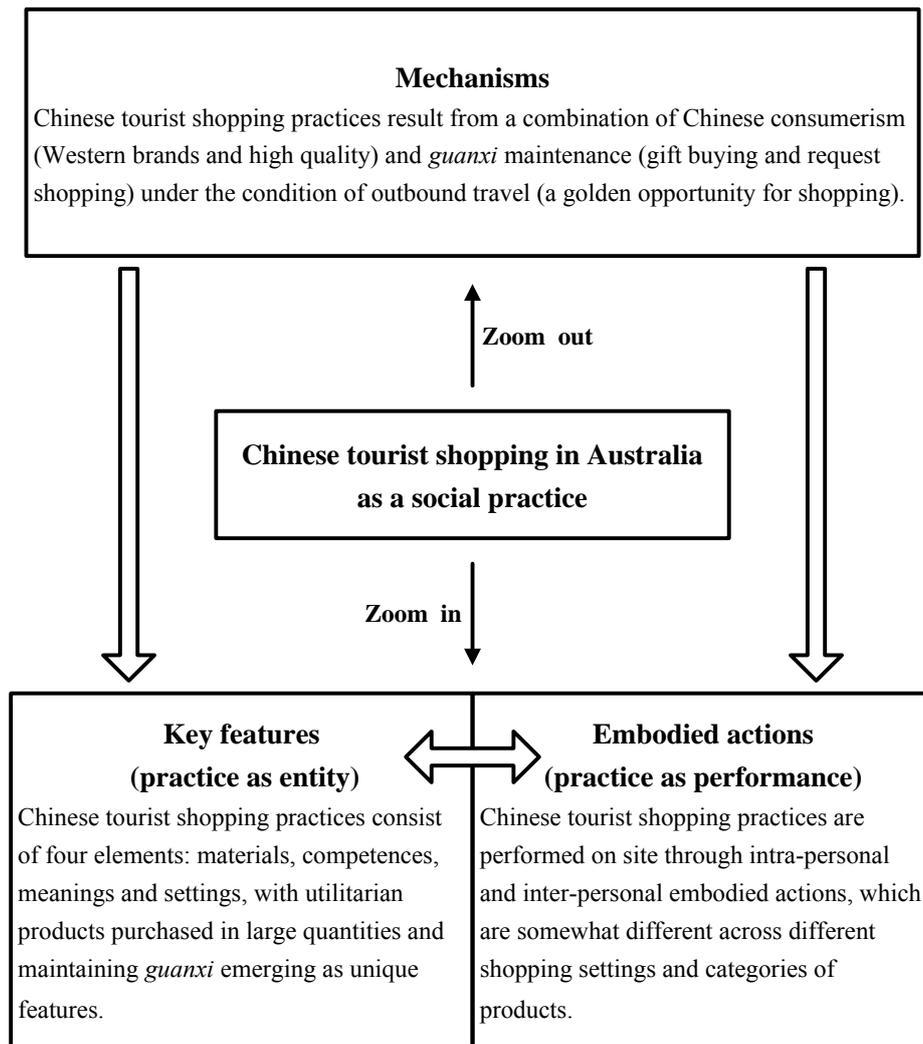


Figure 6.1 An integrated understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective

As shown in Figure 6.1, the research object of this thesis is Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. More specifically, the thesis, employing SPT as its theoretical foundation, treats Chinese tourist shopping in Australia as a social practice, which is the basic unit of analysis. Nicolini’s (2012) “zooming in and out” approach to SPT is taken to understand Chinese tourist shopping practices from different but supplementary aspects. The key features of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists as entities and the embodied actions within their shopping performances are captured through the “zooming in” movement to gain detailed insights into Chinese tourist shopping practices *per se*. The mechanisms behind Chinese tourist shopping practices are unravelled through the “zooming out” movement to examine

how Chinese tourist shopping practices are connected to, and embedded in, extensive networks of practices. It is through these alternating “zooming in and out” movements that we get a comprehensive understanding of what Chinese tourist shopping practices are and why they are the way they are.

A social practice exists both as an entity and as performance (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005). The elements and their features described in Section 6.2.1 constitute Chinese tourist shopping practices in Australia as entities; the embodied actions summarised in Section 6.2.2 show the characteristics of Chinese tourist shopping practices as performances. Chinese tourist shopping practices as performances actualise and sustain the recognisable nexuses of elements (Schatzki, 1996). It is only through successive moments of performances that the nexuses provided by Chinese tourist shopping practices as entities are filled out and reproduced (Shove, et al., 2012). That is to say, Chinese tourist shopping practices as entities and as performances complement each other as shown in Figure 6.1. For example, the performance of Chinese tourists using apps on smartphones to facilitate their purchase of healthcare products is reflected in the existence of healthcare products (materials), apps on the smartphones (materials) and the relevant knowledge and skills to use them (competences) as important features of Chinese tourist shopping practices as entities. If Chinese tourists do not purchase healthcare products in this way, their shopping practices as entities may have different features. To some degree, Chinese tourist shopping practices as entities, which can be spoken about, can be understood as the abstractions of shopping performances, and in turn, the latter are the specifications of the former, making the former explicit and tangible.

The mechanisms proposed in Section 6.2.3 show how Chinese consumerism, *guanxi* maintenance and outbound travel lead to the dominance of the shopping practices of Chinese tourists in their travel. As can be seen in Figure 6.1, it is certain that the mechanisms influence the *status quo* of Chinese tourist shopping practices. For instance, *guanxi* maintenance as a pivotal practice in Chinese daily life results in maintaining and reinforcing

*guanxi* being integrated into Chinese tourist shopping practices as one of the unique features of the meanings element. Also because of *guanxi* maintenance, it is interesting to note that Chinese tourists commonly communicate with family and friends not immediately present via social media on site in order to make requested purchases. The constitutive elements and the embodied actions identified in this thesis are all descriptions of Chinese tourist shopping practices, while the mechanisms explain why the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are the way they are. If interpreted from a philosophical perspective, the former are the “effects” in different formats, with the latter being the “causes”. That is to say, the constitutive elements and the embodied actions are dependent upon the mechanisms, and meanwhile, the mechanisms are responsible for the constitutive elements as well as the embodied actions.

## **6.4 Contributions**

### 6.4.1 Research contributions

This thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia from a social practice perspective. It contributes to bridging the gap between the prominence of Chinese tourist shopping in Western countries and the lack of relevant research. Based on SPT, this thesis for the first time reveals the key features and procedures of, and the mechanisms behind, Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. Specifically, following Nicolini’s (2012) “zooming in and out” approach to SPT, the thesis not only provides detailed insights into Chinese tourist shopping practices *per se*, but also explains how social and consumption practices contribute to the dominance of Chinese tourists’ shopping practices in their travel. The findings of this thesis accordingly enrich and extend current COTS knowledge that is predominantly based on the investigations of Chinese tourists’ shopping motivation, perception and satisfaction in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. For instance, the use of a SPT approach in the present thesis reveals a number of distinct characteristics that have not been identified or discussed at all in the previous literature. These features include the very large quantities of purchase made, the extensive and structured planning and organisation of shopping, and the critical role of ICTs in facilitating the shopping enactments. Further, while

*guanxi* was mentioned in some of the more recent studies (Gao, et al., 2017; Li & Ryan, 2018), this thesis uncovers more dimensions to this concept. *Guanxi* is not only involved in gift buying, but also manifested in purchasing products requested by others.

More importantly, the use of SPT contributes to understanding tourist shopping phenomenon differently. In this thesis, Chinese tourist shopping in Australia as a social practice is the basic unit of analysis, while Chinese outbound tourists are decentralised as the carriers of this practice. This stance is in stark contrast with that in most of the existing tourist shopping studies, where tourists are at the centre of analysis and their satisfaction, motivation and attitude towards shopping are primarily examined from a marketing perspective (Jin, et al., 2017). In this way, SPT helps to open up a new set of research questions for understanding tourist shopping, such as what tourist shopping practices constitute, how they change over time and space, and how they connect to other practices. As shown in this thesis, to address these practice-based questions contributes to uncovering other aspects of tourist shopping than attitude and behaviour (cf. Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The spectrum of what tourist shopping is thus broadened. For example, the use of mobile technology has not been discussed in the previous tourist shopping research, but in this thesis, it is found that mobile technology is a key material element of Chinese tourist shopping practices, and smartphones function as versatile tools used by Chinese tourists not only to search product information online but also to communicate with family and friends not present in the shopping settings on product selection and purchase through social media.

The use of SPT to analyse tourist shopping not only brings up new research questions, but also contributes to enriching the research methods employed in this area. The mixed methods approach taken in the thesis helps to rectify the dominance of questionnaire measures in the existing published tourist shopping research, and echoes the appeal from Jin, et al. (2017) for using qualitative techniques and/or mixed methods approach to examine tourist shopping in greater detail and depth. For instance, participant observations were utilised in this thesis to investigate the shopping performances of Chinese tourists on site, with the field notes being

quantified to identify the patterns of embodied actions within them. The use of participant observations contributes to uncovering what actually happens when tourists shop, which is often ignored or oversimplified in previous tourist shopping research. For example, this thesis finds that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are performed differently across different shopping settings. It is common to see that Chinese tourists compare the images stored on their smartphones to the products in supermarkets to facilitate their purchase decision making, while they rarely use smartphones in the processes of shopping in markets, where shopping is more a way to experience the destination rather than to purchase. Accordingly, the embodied actions identified could add supplementary knowledge to the existing tourist shopping literature.

#### 6.4.2 Practical implications

The findings of this thesis provide guidelines for destinations and retail businesses to develop policies tailored to the valuable Chinese market. Firstly, COTS deserves more attention from destination marketing and management organisations. Shopping is a pivotal and pervasive practice that Chinese outbound tourists carry out, but it is often overlooked under the shadow of other destination attractions. For example, in Australia world-class nature based attractions dominate tourism marketing (Tourism Research Australia, 2013), whereas the value of Chinese tourist shopping to some extent is underestimated. As there is a great volume and variety of Australian products purchased by Chinese tourists to take home, shopping could be integrated into tourism marketing programmes that specifically target the Chinese market, and could be added and highlighted in the relevant travel itineraries. Meanwhile, tourism management policies and regulations need to be updated to prevent business malpractices such as the “zero-fare” tours in which tourists purchase tour services at extremely low prices but are coerced into shopping at designated outlets (e.g., Keating, 2009; Tse & Tse, 2015).

Also, the findings of this thesis have practical implications for intervening in the shopping practices of Chinese tourists. Again in Australia the utilitarian products oriented shopping practices of Chinese tourists are much influenced by the concern about product safety and

brand authenticity. This suggests that greater information on product ingredients and production processes, and the cleanliness and quality assurance of Australian systems could be provided to support Chinese tourist purchase decisions. The widespread use of mobile apps directs Australian retailers to pay attention to these apps and to consider direct partnerships with the app providers to offer information about shopping opportunities while in Australia. The shopping actions identified in this thesis also provide a reference for marketers and managers to think about how to make the procedures of Chinese tourist shopping smoother. For instance, information on membership card and its benefit in duty free shops, the same as that on claiming tax refunds at airport, could be delivered through mobile apps such as Wechat, or be concisely written on flyers or shown in diagrams to help Chinese tourists understand it without completely relying on the oral explanation of shop assistants. For souvenir retailers, if Chinese tourists could know the processes of how the souvenirs are made and the relevant stories, their browsing would be more likely to turn into actual purchase.

In addition, it is recommended that retail businesses provide options for Chinese tourists to conduct post-travel purchase. The findings of this thesis indicate that the utilitarian products oriented shopping practices of Chinese tourists are influenced by their daily shopping, and to a certain degree, would affect their future shopping preferences at home. Given the prominence of purchasing utilitarian products as gifts and upon requests, it can be seen that the demand for these products is not limited to Chinese tourists, but is also shared by their *guanxi* networks such as family, friends and colleagues at home. Further, there are a number of barriers that could discourage Chinese tourists from (more) onsite purchasing such as time constraints and limited baggage allowance (Murphy, et al., 2013). Options, such as online ordering available in China or setting up Chinese shopping websites, have the potential to increase Chinese tourists' consumption after their travel and to promote the products of retail businesses to more Chinese customers.

## **6.5 Limitations and future research directions**

### 6.5.1 Limitations

This thesis has certain limitations. Although the limitations of the three studies have been described in the relevant chapters, it is important to state the major limitations of this thesis as a whole. First, it should be kept in mind that all the data in the thesis were collected and analysed by the author himself. Despite the criteria used in the research processes, the background and subjectivity of the author inevitably influences the details of data collection and interpretation. Taking study three as an example, the author started the sampling process by using his social networks to look for participants. Although criteria were employed to select eligible participants, the idiosyncrasy of the author's social networks partly affects the composition of samples, possibly leaving some information on the dominance of COTS undisclosed. Also, cautions should be taken when generalising the findings of this thesis. It should be noted that the data collection in the thesis were conducted at specific locations within a certain period of time. Some of the findings may be specific to the research locations in this thesis and not apply to other settings. Given the fast growth of Chinese outbound tourism, it is also possible that Chinese tourist shopping practices might develop and change in a short time. More research, therefore, needs to be conducted to examine and extend the findings of this thesis.

### 6.5.2 Directions for future research

Some suggestions for future research on COTS can be provided through the conduct of this thesis. Firstly, Chinese tourist shopping in international destinations is in need of more research attention. It is reported that the shopping practices of Chinese tourists are dominant in their travel to many international destinations other than Australia, such as Europe (Clark, 2014) and Japan (Silbert, 2015). Nevertheless, research on COTS in these destinations is still rare. The present thesis also demonstrates how to apply SPT (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; Shove, et al., 2012; Warde, 2005) to obtain an integrated understanding of Chinese tourist shopping in Australia. The research processes in this thesis could be replicated to explore

COTS in other destinations, and thus, to examine the extent to which COTS varies across space.

The second research direction lies in investigating the historical trajectories of Chinese tourist shopping practices over time. China, as a source market, was not emphasised in the UNWTO Tourism Highlights until 2007 (see UNWTO, 2007). In 2017, the UNWTO Tourism Highlights presented that “China continues to lead global outbound travel, following ten years of double-digit growth in spending, and after rising to the top of the ranking in 2012.” (UNWTO, 2017, p. 13) Longitudinal studies are warranted to figure out how Chinese tourist shopping practices have persisted or changed over the last decade. For example, lanolin cream continues to be purchased by Chinese tourists as one of the iconic products in Australia, while the lavender bear, which was a hit product at one point in time (see Atkin, 2014), has almost disappeared from Chinese tourists’ shopping lists. It would be interesting to understand how and why these two products evolved in such different ways within Chinese tourist shopping practices.

The relationship between COTS and other emerging shopping practices, such as *daigou* shopping, overseas online shopping and request shopping, is the third key area that is worthy of further investigation. The emergence of these new shopping practices was accompanied by the growth of Chinese outbound tourism, with some of them being interwoven with the shopping practices of Chinese outbound tourists. For instance, some Chinese tourists may have purchased overseas products through *daigou* shopping prior to their outbound travel. The product information from *daigous* (e.g., price, brands and benefits) is often used by Chinese tourists to compare and contrast the products on site to facilitate their purchase decision making. The shopping experience of Chinese tourists in the destination in turn may influence on whether or not they would continue to engage in *daigou* shopping after outbound travel. To investigate the connections between COTS and relevant shopping practices helps to understand the complexity of COTS and to identify innovative ways of managing tourist shopping development.

Last but not least, COTS, as a noticeable consumption practice, provides a window into Chinese consumer culture in general. This practice is embedded in the economic, social, and cultural development and change in contemporary China, and embodies a range of Chinese social facts and phenomena especially in the field of consumption such as trust. Some researchers state that food safety problems in China have resulted in a crisis of social trust (e.g., Yan, 2012). If we consider the decline of trust as a given social fact in China, it would be intriguing to notice that how social trust could possibly be strengthened or reconstructed in the shopping practices of Chinese outbound tourists. These shopping practices not only reflect the existing social facts, but could also contribute to transforming them or even building new ones. It is thus suggested that more research on COTS be conducted with incorporation of the broader consumption landscape in China into the analysis rather than just examining COTS for its own sake, and in this way, the knowledge spillover of tourism research into other relevant disciplines could be expected.

## **6.6 Concluding comments**

COTS is a prominent, complex and dynamic phenomenon in the development of Chinese outbound tourism. It is affected by, and in turn, has the potential to affect, the economic, cultural and social forces both in China and in the destinations. This thesis sheds new sights into what COTS is, how it unfolds and why it is the way it is in Australia from a social practice perspective. By doing so, the thesis enriches and extends current knowledge on COTS, and at the same time, opens up new questions for future research. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote in *Faust*, “All theory, dear friend, is grey, but the golden tree of life springs ever green.” As COTS goes, so should the knowledge of it and how to research it.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A A review of literature on Chinese outbound tourist shopping (2006-2017)

Publication	Research objective	Theory/model used	Data collection (sample)	Data analysis	Destination
Lin and Lin (2006)	Assess Chinese professional group tourists' satisfaction with shopping	Expectancy disconfirmation theory	On-site questionnaires (185)	Paired <i>t</i> -test, Factor analysis, Multiple regression analysis	Taiwan
Liu, et al. (2008)	Explore the satisfaction level of Chinese tourists towards fashion retailers		On-site questionnaires (130)	Paired <i>t</i> -test	Hong Kong
Choi, Liu, Pang, and Chow (2008)	Examine the shopping patterns and in-store shopping experiences of Chinese tourists		On-site questionnaires (136)	Hypotheses testing	Hong Kong
Guo, et al. (2009)	Explore the shopping behaviours of Shanghai outbound tourists		On-site questionnaires (65)	Factor analysis, Correlation analysis	n/a
Wang, et al. (2010)	Examine Chinese consumers' propensity of shopping abroad from a culture perspective	Hofstede's cultural dimensions	On-site questionnaires (175)	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), Multiple regression analysis	n/a
Liu, Choi, Au, and Hui (2011)	Investigate the factors that affect Chinese tourists' attitudes towards parent fashion brand and extended products		On-site questionnaires (208), Interviews (10)	Pearson correlation analysis, Linear regression analysis, <i>t</i> -test	Hong Kong

(continued)

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Research objective</b>	<b>Theory/model used</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Lloyd, et al. (2011)	Create an expanded measurement scale of customer perceived value and investigate the difference in service evaluation between local and Chinese tourist shoppers		Focus group interviews (5), On-site questionnaires (1317)	Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), Structural equation modelling (SEM)	Hong Kong
Xu and McGehee (2012)	Explore Chinese tourists' product preference, shopping motivations and their evaluation on shopping experiences		Phone interviews (10)	Content analysis	the United States
Yeung and Yee (2012)	Explore the motivation and segmentation of Chinese cross-border shoppers		On-site questionnaires (194)	Cluster analysis, Cross-tabulation analysis, Discriminant analysis	Hong Kong
Kwek and Lee (2013)	Explore the consumption behaviour of Chinese corporate travellers		Participant observations, In depth interviews (6)	Content analysis	Australia
Wong (2013)	Investigate Chinese shopping preference and service perceptions		On-site questionnaires (210)	Independent sample <i>t</i> -test, Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), Zero-order correlation analysis, Multiple regression analysis	Macau

(continued)

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Research objective</b>	<b>Theory/model used</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Wong and Wan (2013)	Develop a scale that conceptualise tourist shopping satisfaction and examine a model linking tourist facilities to shopping satisfaction and experience		In-depth interviews (54), On-site questionnaires (499)	EFA, CFA, Parallel analysis, Latent mean analysis; Pearson's correlation analysis; SEM	Macau
Chan, et al. (2014)	Investigate the shopping motivation of Chinese tourists on luxury goods and the relevant segments		On site questionnaires (284)	EFA, Cluster analysis, ANOVA	Not mentioned
Chang (2014)	Examine the effect of tour guide performance, tourist trust, tourist satisfaction and flow experience on tourist shopping behaviour		On-site questionnaires (486)	Factor analysis, CFA, SEM, Analysis of variance (ANOVA), Regression analysis	Taiwan
Tsang, et al. (2014)	Understand the shopping motivation of Chinese tourists	Maslow's hierarchy of needs	Focus group interview (1), On-site questionnaires (200)	Content analysis, EFA, ANOVA	Hong Kong
Lo and Qu (2015)	Examine the impact of the determinants (e.g., service quality and perceived value) on tourist visiting and shopping intentions	Theory of reasoned action	On-site questionnaires (778)	EFA, CFA, SEM	Hong Kong

(continued)

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Research objective</b>	<b>Theory/model used</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Tse and Tse (2015)	Compare the legal approaches adopted by Mainland China and Hong Kong to tackle “zero-fare” tour in shopping tourism		Archival research	Thematic analysis	Hong Kong
Choi, et al. (2016a)	Develop a typology of Chinese shopping tourists	Schwartz model of universal human values	Online questionnaires (511)	Factor analysis, Cluster and discriminant analysis, Chi-square test, ANOVA	n/a
Kong and Chang (2016)	Examine relationships between travel motivations, souvenir shopping and travel experience		On-site questionnaires (414)	Factor analysis, Correlation analysis	Macau
Wong and Lam (2016)	Investigate relationships between cross-border shopping motives and store loyalty, frequency of visit and length of stay through the mediating roles of store loyalty program benefits and store shopping satisfaction		On-site questionnaires (320)	EFA, CFA, Zero-order correlation analysis	Macau
Zhu, et al. (2016)	Explore the shopping behaviours of Chinese tourists in Europe and examine the meaning behind their behaviours		In-depth interviews (17)	Thematic analysis	Europe

*(continued)*

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Research objective</b>	<b>Theory/model used</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>	<b>Destination</b>
Gao, et al. (2017)	Examine the influence of face on Chinese group tourists' gift purchase behaviour		On-site questionnaires (354)	EFA, CFA, SEM, Multiple-group analysis	Australia
Lin (2017)	Investigate food souvenir-purchasing behaviours and the relationship between purchasing motives and product attributes		On-site questionnaires (318)	EFA, Pearson correlation analysis, MANOVA, Canonical correlation analysis	Taiwan

## Appendix B Summary of all reviewed articles on tourist shopping (2000-2015)

Authors (year) <sup>4</sup>	Concepts	Theories	Data collection (sample)	Data analysis
Heung and Cheng (2000)	Consumer satisfaction, Shopping attribute	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm	On-site questionnaire (220)	Paired mean <i>t</i> test, Factor analysis, Multiple regression analysis
Law and Au (2000)		Rough set theory	Official statistics	Rough set model
Park (2000)	Culture		Postcard report (100) Open-ended questionnaire (44)	Content analysis
Hobson and Christensen (2001)	Culture			
Kim and Littrell (2001)	Attitude		Mail questionnaire (277)	Factor analysis, Multiple regression analysis, Fishbein's attitude model
Turner and Reisinger (2001)			On-site questionnaire (480)	Principal component analysis, Structural equation modeling (SEM)
Reisinger and Turner (2002)	Product importance, Product attribute, Satisfaction		On-site questionnaire (662)	Factor analysis, SEM
Revilla and Dodd (2003)	Authenticity		On-site questionnaire (139)	Analysis of variance (ANOVA), Factor analysis
Snepenger, et al. (2003)	Lifecycle		On-site questionnaire (486)	Chi-square test, One-way ANOVA
Wong and Law (2003)	Customer satisfaction	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm	On-site questionnaire (610)	<i>t</i> -test, ANOVA

<sup>4</sup> All reviewed articles are displayed in chronological order based on when they were first accessed, with their publication details having been updated as released.

(continued)

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Yu and Littrell (2003)	Attitude, Tourism typology		Mail questionnaire (182)	Fishbein's attitude model, Factor analysis, <i>t</i> -test, Multiple regression analysis
Lehto, et al. (2004)			On-site questionnaire (1064)	Chi-square test, One-way ANOVA Student-Newman Keuls (SNK) test, General linear modelling (GLM)
Littrell, et al. (2004)			Mail questionnaire (146)	<i>t</i> -test, chi-square test, factor analysis, K-means cluster analysis, ANOVA
Moscardo (2004)	Motivation		On-site questionnaire (1630)	One-way ANOVA
Oh, et al. (2004)	Trip typology, Gender, Age		Mail questionnaire (5912)	Cluster analysis, Logistic regression analysis
Swanson and Horridge (2004)	Motivation, Product attribute Store attribute		On-site questionnaire (398)	Factor analysis, SEM
Wang (2004)	Motivation		On-site questionnaire (400)	Negative binomial model
Yuksel (2004)	Service perception, Culture		On-site questionnaire (729)	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i> -test, Chi-square test
Josiam, et al. (2005)	Involvement, Motivation	Push-pull theory	Focus groups interview (2) On-site questionnaire (485)	Factor analysis, ANOVA, Chi-square test, Multiple regression analysis
Lau, et al. (2005)			On-site questionnaire (1004)	Factor analysis, Chi-square test

(continued)

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Rosenbaum and Spears (2005)	Culture		On-site questionnaire (1047)	Games-Howell test, One-way MANOVA, ANOVA
Yu and Littrell (2005)	Attitude, Subjective norm Shopping value, Behavioural intention, Product orientation, Process orientation	Theory of reasoned action	Mail questionnaire (182)	MANOVA, ANOVA, Pearson correlation test, Multiple regression analysis
Chang, et al. (2006)	Motivation, Satisfaction		On-site questionnaire (428)	Pearson correlation test, Hierarchical regression analysis
Hsieh and Chang (2006)	Motivation		On-site questionnaire (572)	Factor analysis, Chi-square test <i>t</i> -test, Scheffe analysis
Lin and Lin (2006)	Customer satisfaction, Shopping attribute	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm	On-site questionnaire (185)	Paired <i>t</i> -test, Factor analysis Multiple regression analysis
Rosenbaum and Spears (2006)			On-site questionnaire (416)	One-way MANOVA ANOVA, Binomial logistic regression analysis, Cluster analysis, Contingency table analysis
Fairhurst, et al. (2007)			Mail questionnaire (540)	Factor analysis
Hu and Yu (2007)	Involvement, Craftsmanship, Sensuous appreciation, Cultural linkage, Artisan linkage		On-site questionnaire (199)	Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), Hierarchical cluster analysis, K- means cluster analysis, Chi-square analysis, ANOVA, SNK test
LeHew and Wesley (2007)	Customer satisfaction		On-site questionnaire (578)	<i>t</i> -test, Chi-square test

(continued)

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Tosun, et al. (2007)			On-site questionnaire (378)	Analysis of means
Yüksel (2007)	Tourist shopping habitat, Shopping environment, Shopping emotion, Shopping value	Stimulus-Organism- Response model Pleasure-Arousal- Dominance model	On-site questionnaire (259)	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), SEM
Yüksel and Yüksel (2007)	Perceived risk	Pleasure-Arousal- Dominance model	On-site questionnaire (259)	EFA, CFA, SEM
Choi, et al. (2008)			On-site questionnaire (136)	Hypotheses testing
Li and Cai (2008)	Attitude		On-site questionnaire (135)	Factor analysis, One-way ANOVA, SNK test, Importance- Performance analysis
Kemperman, et al. (2009)		Random utility theory	On-site questionnaire (176)	Multinomial logit model
Park and Reisinger (2009)	Culture, Luxury		On-site questionnaire (275)	MANOVA, <i>t</i> -test, One-way ANOVA, Tamhane T2 post-hoc test, Principal component analysis
Park, et al. (2010)	Luxury		On-site questionnaire (275)	Cross-tabulation analysis, One- way ANOVA, Tamhane T2 post- hoc test, Paired samples <i>t</i> -test
Bojanic (2011)	Family life cycle, Cohort, Life course		On-site questionnaire (328)	General linear model, Cluster analysis
Kim, et al. (2011)			On-site questionnaire (300)	Factor analysis, Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detection (CHAID)

(continued)

Authors (year)	Concepts	Theories	Data collection (sample)	Data analysis
Lloyd, et al. (2011)	Customer perceived value, Product quality, Service quality, Price, Perceived risk, Shop environment, Lifestyle, Effort		Focus group interview (5) On-site questionnaire (1317)	EFA, CFA, SEM
Luo and Lu (2011)			On-site questionnaire (402) In-depth interview (24)	Independent sample <i>t</i> -test, One- way ANOVA, Cross tabulation analysis, Content analysis
Murphy, Moscardo, et al. (2011)			On-site questionnaire (506)	One-way ANOVA, Factor analysis, Discriminant analysis
Rabbiosi (2011)			Interviews Public statements	Content analysis
Tsang, et al. (2011)	Bargaining, Motivation, Acquisition utility, Transaction utility		On-site questionnaire (203)	Factor analysis, Independent <i>t</i> -test, Regression analysis
Wilkins (2011)	Motivation, Gender		Focus group interviews (3) Online questionnaire (3231)	Content analysis, EFA, CFA, MANOVA, Hierarchical regression analysis
Ackerman and Walker (2012)	Culture		Participant observation Interview On-site questionnaire (109)	Grounded theory, Factor analysis, Linear regression analysis
Alegre and Cladera (2012)			On-site questionnaire (2464)	Principal component analysis, Heckman model
Chang (2014)	Tour guide performance, Trust, Flow		On-site questionnaire (486)	Factor analysis, CFA, SEM, ANOVA, Regression analysis

(continued)

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Hurst and Niehm (2012)	Service quality, Satisfaction		On-site questionnaire (194)	<i>t</i> -test
Kattiyapornpong and Miller (2012)			On-site questionnaire (5070)	Binary logistic regression analysis
Meng and Xu (2012)	Planned behaviour, Impulse purchase, Experiential consumption	Theory of reasoned action	Conceptual research	
Saayman and Saayman (2012)			Official statistics	Granger causality test, Augmented Dickey-Fuller test, Johansen cointegration test
Sullivan, et al. (2012)		Input-output model	Interview and On-site questionnaire (103)	Content analysis, Least squares regression, Input-output model
Swanson and Timothy (2012)			Literature review	
Way and Robertson (2012)			On-site questionnaire (721)	ANOVA, <i>t</i> -test
Xie, et al. (2012)	Authenticity		Semi-structured interview On-site questionnaire (318)	Two-way ANOVA, Scheffe post-hoc test
Xu and McGehee (2012)			Phone interview (10)	Content analysis
Brida, et al. (2013)	Authenticity		On-site questionnaire (1275)	Double-hurdle model, Chi-square test, ANOVA, <i>t</i> -test
De Juan-Vigaray, et al. (2013)	Acculturation		On-site questionnaire (367)	One-way ANOVA, <i>t</i> -test
Kwek and Lee (2013)	Consumerism, Culture, Tourist gaze		Participant observation Interviews (12)	Content analysis

(continued)

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Lin and Chen (2013)	Motivation, Time pressure, Impulse buying		On-site questionnaire (600)	EFA, ANOVA, Hierarchical regression analysis
Torabian and Arai (2016)	Authenticity		Travel blogs (14)	Constructivist grounded theory
Wong and Wan (2013)	Tourist shopping satisfaction		In-depth interview (54) On-site questionnaire (499)	EFA, CFA, Pearson's correlation analysis
Wong (2013)			On-site questionnaire (210)	Independent sample <i>t</i> -test, MANVOA, Zero-order correlation analysis, Multiple regression analysis
Yüksel (2013)	Store environment, Inference	Cue utilization theory Stimulus-Organism- Response model	On-site questionnaire (280)	CFA, SEM
Lehto, et al. (2014)		Consumer style inventory	On-site questionnaire (212)	EFA, One-way ANOVA, MANVOA
Li, et al. (2015)	Impulse buying, Experiential marketing	Pleasure-Arousal- Dominance model	On-site questionnaire (323)	ANOVA, Regression analysis
Oviedo-García, et al. (2016)	Shopping satisfaction	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm	On-site questionnaire (267)	EFA, Multiple linear regression
Shim and Santos (2014)	Place, Placelessness		Semi-structured interview (26)	Content analysis
Tsang, et al. (2014)	Motivation	Maslow's hierarchy of needs	Focus group interview (1) On-site questionnaire (200)	EFA, ANOVA
Wong and Cheng (2014)	Destination image, Attitude, Culture	Theory of reasoned action	On-site questionnaire (304)	EFA, CFA, SEM

(continued)

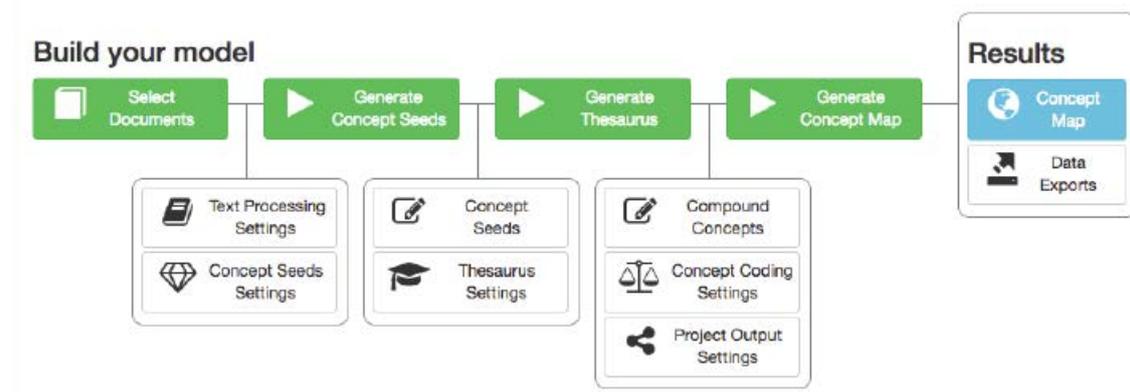
<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Data collection (sample)</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
Wu, et al. (2014)			Tourists' online review (149)	Content analysis, Independent samples <i>t</i> -test, ANOVA, Cross tabulation analysis
Choi, et al. (2016a)	Schwartz values		Online questionnaire (511)	Factor analysis, Cluster and discriminant analysis, Chi-square test, ANOVA
Choi, et al. (2016b)			Literature review	
De-Juan-Vigaray and Garau-Vadell (2015)	Motivation	Consumer styles inventory	On-site questionnaire (400)	Factor analysis
Han, et al. (2015)	Age, Overall image, Satisfaction, Commitment	Theory of repurchase decision-making	On-site questionnaire (377)	CFA, SEM
Kozak (2016)	Bargaining		Open-ended questionnaire (120)	Content analysis
Lin and Mao (2015)	Sensory appraisal, Utility appraisal, Symbolic appraisal		Food specialties (192)	Content analysis
Lo and Qu (2015)	Attitude, Service quality, Perceived value, Customer satisfaction	Theory of reasoned action	On-site questionnaire (778)	EFA, CFA, SEM
Paraskevaïdis and Andriotis (2015)	Use and exchange value, Sign-value, Spiritual-value	Labour theory of value	Semi-structured interview (20)	Content analysis
Rabbiosi (2015)	Urban branding		Secondary sources Observation Interview	Discourse analysis

(continued)

Authors (year)	Concepts	Theories	Data collection (sample)	Data analysis
Régi, Rátz, and Michalkó (2016)			Leaflet (339) Interview (168)	Content analysis
Sharma, et al. (2015)	Customer perceived value, Perceived product quality, Service quality, Perceived risk, Store environment, Lifestyle congruence, Perceived effort, Value for money, Customer satisfaction, Word of mouth, Repeat purchase intention		On-site questionnaire (802)	Chi-square test, Correaltion analysis, CFA, SEM
Sirakaya-Turk, et al. (2015)	Shopping value, Overall shopping satisfaction, Destination loyalty, Destination word of mouth		On-site questionnaire (345)	SEM
Vega-Vázquez, et al. (2015)	Shopping value, Word of mouth, Tourist shopping satisfaction, Tourist satisfaction	Expectancy disconfirmation paradigm	On-site questionnaire (408)	SEM
Wang, Weaver, and Kwek (2016)	Power		Autoethnography (2) Travel blog (12)	Thematic analysis
Zaidan (2016)			On-site questionnaire (527)	Chi-square test, Tamhane T2 post-hoc test, One-way ANOVA
Zhu, et al. (2016)	Tourist gaze		In-depth interview (17)	Thematic analysis

## Appendix C The procedures of data analysis in Leximancer

The data analysis in Leximancer generally follows the sequence of the stages as represented in the control panel below (Leximancer Pty Ltd, 2017). As the author focused on identifying the embodied actions within Chinese tourist shopping performances in this study, a few Leximancer settings were adjusted to create more tailored concept maps:



1. The ‘merge word variants’ option in the text processing settings was turned on to identify the headword for initial thesaurus items.
2. The stop-list in the text processing settings was adjusted, as some default stop words, such as ask and made, were relevant to the present study and thus were considered as possible concept candidates.
3. The ‘percentage of name-like concepts’ was set to 0 because the author was not interested in names in this study.
4. Some automatically extracted concepts, such as milk and bag, were deleted in order to eliminate the distraction of product details and reveal more information on embodied actions.

After making a couple of adjustments as listed above, the author run the analysis and generated the concept maps. The dashboard reports were also generated to facilitate the interpretation of these maps. Some excerpts from the reports are shown below.

Category: FOLDER2\_25 supermarkets

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
smartphone	13	39	 2.5
put	14	37	 2.4
pick	17	28	 1.9
take	11	24	 1.6
check	12	19	 1.3
say	24	18	 1.2
look	21	17	 1.1
tell	16	11	 0.7
ask	21	10	 0.7
respond	13	9	 0.6

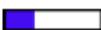
Category: FOLDER2\_26 airports

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
made	9	50	 2.0
pick	12	34	 1.4
check	12	30	 1.2
buy	13	30	 1.2
pay	9	30	 1.2
tell	26	29	 1.2
respond	23	27	 1.1
say	22	26	 1.1
look	18	24	 1.0
ask	29	23	 0.9

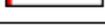
Category: FOLDER2\_29 markets

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
browse	11	50	 1.9
dollars	11	41	 1.5
leave	11	40	 1.5
pay	9	34	 1.3
look	20	30	 1.1
say	22	28	 1.1
buy	11	26	 1.0
tell	21	25	 0.9
ask	29	25	 0.9
respond	17	22	 0.8

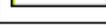
Category: FOLDER2\_30 duty-free shops

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
card	9	81	 2.5
ask	39	40	 1.3
respond	26	40	 1.3
take	8	36	 1.1
price	9	35	 1.1
show	8	35	 1.1
tell	24	34	 1.1
buy	9	27	 0.9
look	16	27	 0.9
say	17	26	 0.8

Category: FOLDER2\_10 healthcare products

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
stored	20	63	 9.0
smartphone	29	34	 4.9
take	15	14	 2.0
pick	14	13	 1.9
check	13	9	 1.3
say	25	8	 1.2
buy	13	8	 1.2
look	22	8	 1.2
ask	25	5	 0.8
tell	15	4	 0.6

Category: FOLDER2\_11 cosmetics

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
card	12	36	 2.9
use	13	21	 1.7
buy	15	18	 1.5
select	8	16	 1.3
tell	28	15	 1.2
ask	35	13	 1.1
price	8	12	 1.0
respond	21	12	 1.0
look	15	10	 0.8
say	11	6	 0.5

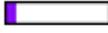
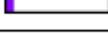
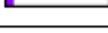
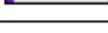
Category: FOLDER2\_11 food and drinks

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
pick	19	24	 2.5
put	12	21	 2.3
point	11	17	 1.9
leave	9	16	 1.7
check	16	15	 1.7
say	25	11	 1.2
look	18	9	 1.0
tell	18	7	 0.8
ask	23	6	 0.7
respond	14	6	 0.6

Category: FOLDER2\_24 souvenirs

Concept	Rel Freq (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
dollars	11	48	 1.7
browse	8	48	 1.7
pay	9	38	 1.3
say	23	32	 1.1
look	21	32	 1.1
tell	23	29	 1.0
buy	10	28	 1.0
check	9	28	 1.0
ask	29	26	 0.9
respond	18	24	 0.8

**Category: FOLDER2\_32 clothing and accessories**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Rel Freq (%)</b>	<b>Strength (%)</b>	<b>Prominence</b>
try	10	60	 1.5
respond	28	53	 1.3
ask	36	47	 1.1
price	9	44	 1.1
use	8	44	 1.1
tell	24	43	 1.0
say	20	40	 1.0
look	17	38	 0.9
check	9	38	 0.9
buy	9	36	 0.9

## **Appendix D Interview guide**

### **Section 1**

1. When did you travel to Australia?
2. Whom did you travel to Australia with?
3. Did you visit Australia as independent traveller(s) or group tour member(s)?
4. What was your purpose of the travel (leisure/meeting/business/VFR)?
5. Thinking about your trip to Australia. What sort of things did you buy to take home?

### **Section 2**

6. Could you please pick one product that you bought for yourself and tell me why you bought it in Australia?
7. Could you please pick one product that you bought for families and tell me why you bought it in Australia?
8. Could you please pick one product that you bought for your friends and colleagues and tell me why you bought it in Australia?

Possible probes and follow-up questions for 6-8:

- This product is also available in China. Why did you choose to buy it in Australia?
- Why this brand?
- What does the brand mean for you?
- Healthcare products need long-term use.
- How did you know (healthcare) products in Australia are good?
- Why do you think the healthcare products in Australia are of better quality?

- Was the product a gift for him (her) or did (s)he ask you to buy the product for him (her)?
- We have many families/relatives/friends/colleagues. How did you decide for whom you should buy products? What to buy?
- When you selected products, did you check where it was made? Why?
- Daigou.

9. Had you known what to buy in Australia before your travel? How?

10. There is a lot of news saying that Chinese tourists love shopping. It seems that Chinese people “buy, buy and buy” no matter where they travel. Why do you think we shop so much?

11. If you travelled to Australia and did not shop. It seems that you have not been to Australia. What do you think? (Can you imagine a situation where a Chinese tourist travelled to Australia and did not shop/bring back souvenirs and gifts?)

**Appendix E Photos used in interviews**









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