**Transcript of interview with Max, 29th November 2019** *(this is a pseudonym)*

The researcher’s speeches, actions and summaries are in roman text, the interviewee’s speeches are in italics.

1. I remind Max that I sent him the interview questions in advance, and show him what he said in reply to the question:

What do you think "critical thinking" is? Please explain below.

*It is important to our further education and logical thinking.* [Max]

1. Kathy: So, have you changed your idea about what critical thinking is after the workshops, do you think?

Max: *Yeah, I guess it’s totally changed my mind.*

Kathy: OK!

Max: *Yeah, yeah, and before I attended the lessons, your sessions, and I just think that critical thinking, I just focus on critical thinking, on my studies, on my pre-Master’s degree courses and my Master’s degree courses, and after I attended these courses I guess and it’s a different way to think about it, yeah.*

Kathy: OK. So what was different, do you think?

Max: *I guess it’s more objective?* [Kathy: OK] *And more logical? And use different thinking it in different angles* [Kathy: Right] *different angles and different ways. We can accept [unclear] other opinions, even though we disagree with it.* [Kathy: Yes.] *Yeah, yeah. And we should think more about the, mmm, the truth? The truth or the issue itself.* [Kathy: Right.] *Yeah, yeah, yeah. And we, we don’t have, like um - In the lesson, and the two sentences in um – its encourage me a lot. Yeah, yeah, like, uh, pick cherry? Cherry picking.*

Kathy: Cherry picking. Or confirmation bias.

Max: *Cherry picking. And the elephant in the room* [Kathy: OK]. *Yes, it’s very interesting* [Kathy: OK]. Yeah, yeah. And, so, I guess, and uh it give me a basic theory I my mind. [Kathy: Right]. *Yeah, yeah, yeah.*

Kathy: OK. Can you tell me a bit more about that theory? In your mind?

Max: *Yeah, yeah, I guess, and uh, um, as you can say before, and you can say, maybe, and I guess the Eastern people and the Western people have different thinking and values, so we think about specific topical? Or the issues. Maybe - in my opinion, or in my past experience, I just think about in one way thinking.* [Kathy: Yeah]*. Yeah, yeah, in one way thinking. I don’t know how to explain my opinion or my thinking* [Kathy: Yeah] *but in this lesson, you give us specifical topic and mixed with the video, and the theory and the specifical cases* [Kathy: Yeah] *so I can understand the, it’s, uh, a lot, yeah.*

Kathy: Which cases can you remember?

Max: *I guess, like, the climate change* [Kathy: Yeah] *the climate change for the different people, they have different angles for the* [unclear, sounds like “sentence”], *for the students and the policeman and for another peoples in the society, they have their different understanding about this issue*.

Kathy: About which issue?

Max: *About climate change.*

Kathy: About climate change. Yeah.

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah*. [Kathy: OK]. *Maybe for the lawyer, maybe the climate change is illegal behaviour*. [Kathy: Yeah]. *Yeah, yeah, yeah. And for the students, maybe for the doctors it is a serious problem which is harmful to our health* [Kathy: Yes*]. For the – like, for the farmers, maybe the climate change means like uh less yield in their farmland, yeah, yeah.*

Kathy: That’s interesting, because in the lesson we didn’t talk about farmers or lawyers.

Max: *Yeah, yeah, I just imagine it, but I can’t remember that* [Kathy: Yeah, yeah] *the* [unclear: characters?] *in your ppt*.

Kathy: Yes, that’s fine, it means you – I didn’t have this in the lesson, but you thought by yourself about what would farmers think and what would lawyers think So that shows you are beginning to look at issues in different ways by yourself, [Max: *Yeah*] without my help.

Max: *So, before the lesson, if the teachers ask me or the tutors ask me, “How do you think about climate change?” maybe we can just think about the carbon emission* [Kathy: Yeah*] and it’s harmful to the earth, but we can’t think another ideas about that topic.*

1. Kathy: OK, that’s useful, yeah. So um, um the next question I’m going to ask you sounds like the same question, but it’s not really, so I asked you before about what is your definition of what is critical thinking, and so my next question’s about, what about your own thinking how has that changed and you told us a little bit about that before. So, if we look back at your pre-course task, I asked, “Do you think you are a good critical thinker, and you said “*I don’t know*”; “*I think reading with critical thinking is different from the general reading*” was your reason. So do you think- so you told me about one way in which you think your own thinking has changed, that you can look at something from different points of view, you say, so that’s a change in your own thinking. Are there any other changes in your own thinking that you’ve noticed?

Max: *Uh, can you repeat it?*

1. Kathy: Yeah, so we were talking before about what is critical thinking, and has your definition changed, and my question now is about your own thinking. So you told me one way in which your own thinking has changed. Now you say you are able to look at an issue from many points of view. So that’s a change in Max’s thinking, right? [Max: *Yeah, yeah*] So, are there any other ways in which you think your thinking has changed because of the workshops?

Max: *Other ways?*

Kathy: Yes, is there anything else about you thinking that has changed, do you think?

Max*: I guess that sometimes, if when we face the specific issues, and we need to focus on the bias, and focus on – when we assess the risks, and we should be more care about the factors, like the optimism, and future discounting, and availability bias, and bystander effect. Yeah, and it’s one of the lessons. Yeah, yeah, one of the lessons and I understand it. And in addition, I guess the different positions. Sometimes when we think about issues, maybe some people – maybe, we are easily make the mistakes about the cultural bias, which is based, which is according our own culture, or the political positions, or the taboos* [Kathy: taboos, yes, things you can’t talk about*], taboos, yeah, yeah. Maybe this would be affect our thinking, not objective. Yeah, and I guess we should avoid making these mistakes* [Kathy: Yeah, OK], *those mistakes.*

Kathy: So you’re thinking about Workshop 5 in particular, oh, you’re thinking about 4 and 5. [Max: *Yeah, yeah*]. The one about culture and the one about risk [Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah*] and probability .

Max: Yeah. *And it has be root in my heart, I guess*. [Kathy: OK!] *Really, really, it influenced me a lot. And positive influence.*

Kathy: OK, OK. Can you tell me a little bit more about that? How it’s changed your thinking?

Max: *At first, and we should focus on the resource itself* [Kathy: Yeah] *and we should consider the reliability of the resources we focus on* [Kathy: OK] *Yeah*.

Kathy: Resources, you mean like sources?

Max: *Yeah, uh, sources*.

Kathy: You mean like, things that we read?

Max: *Yeah, things what work we read. We should make in the – as you can say – on the website? On the internet, we can touch a lot of the new resources or informations, yeah, but we need to have our, own objective judgements, about this resources, so we should consider what’s the origin of that, of the sources and how* [unclear: wrote it?] *and -*

Kathy: The origins and how -

Max: *And how, uh, who -*

Kathy: Who wrote it?

Max: *Yeah, who wrote it* [Kathy: Yeah]. *And does it – reliability?* [Kathy: Is it reliable or not] *reliable or not, reliable or not.*

Kathy: Yeah. OK. So, did you, ‘cos you didn’t come to the one about sources, did you? But maybe you read the materials in the folder?

Max: *I revised the email, the tasks, and you send it, the emails to us*.

Kathy: Yeah, but you were taking about sources [Max: *Yeah*]. So sources, we talked about that in Workshop 1. [Max: *Yeah*]. But you didn’t attend Workshop 1.

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah*.

Kathy: You did?

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah, I didn’t, I didn’t attend the Workshop 1.*

Kathy: So did you look at the materials on Google Drive?

Max: *Yeah, yeah*.

Kathy: You found them on Google Drive, and you read them?

Max: *Yeah, I read them*.

Kathy: OK, that’s fine. Good! Maybe you are the only person who read them.

Max: *Yeah. And the other part of the confirmation bias and the framing*. [Kathy: OK]. *Yeah, yeah, yeah, and for the confirmation bias, just I have mentioned before, the cherry picking, yes the cherry picking, and it means like, if we need to analyse the specific issues or the topics in* [unclear: objective?] *way, objective way, and so we need to reject which we are agree or which we are disagree, and we should, if I write a article, and if I write some works to the public, I need to use more objective or more logic way to tell us* [Kathy: OK], *and avoid bias*.

Kathy: Yeah. So I think that was another one - you didn’t come to the workshop, but you must have read the stuff on Google Drive.

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I check he email and revised, so it, uh -*

Kathy: So I sounds like being like being objective is a very important part of critical thinking for you.

Max: *Yes, I guess it’s more important for you, uh, for me, for me, and I guess, and I don’t know if I can talk about the, myself, my experience, in my past, I don’t know if I can talk here, and -*

Kathy: yes, yes, of course you can!

Max: *Oh, yeah, maybe , and in fact I’m more interest in talk about our thinking, and uh the Western people’s thinking, yeah, yeah, and I guess objective is more important for us, but you can say -*

Kathy: You mean for people in China?

Max: *In the world* [Kathy: OK] *I guess, in the world, not only in China* [Kathy: Right] *Yeah, yeah, yeah, just, I guess, in the world, and I maybe it’s objective value. And if you can tell some tell some* [unclear], *in objective way, I’m sorry. My English is not very good* [Kathy: It’s OK], *yeah, yeah, yeah, so maybe have some mistakes, and grammar mistakes* [Kathy: Don’t worry, don’t worry, it’s not important]. *So I guess in the world, the people can’t control their self, and can’t manage can’t control their work, their life and their social status, so if sometimes if they want to reach goals for their self, so maybe they can’t stick at the objective, yeah, yeah, so some people for the economic, for the financial factors, and some people for other factors, yeah, yeah, maybe they can’t stick at the objective.*

Kathy: Sorry, I think there are two meanings of “objective”, I wonder if we’re talking about the same thing. So one meaning of objective is “without bias” [Max: *“without bias”, yeah*], and the other meaning of “objective” is a “goal”. [Max: *Yeah*]. So, what do you mean? Do mean a goal, or do you mean no bias?

Max: *Yeah, I guess I mean, the final purpose is goal* [Kathy: right], *yeah, for the people. And the bias is just from our experience or our values, or the other things.*

Kathy: Yeah. Sorry, you were talking about being objective when you were talking about critical thinking, so for some people, when you say, “be objective”, that means, “don’t have any bias”. Is that what you mean?

Max: *Yes, don’t have any bias*.

Kathy: Yeah. OK. So, you think that’s important for critical thinking, yeah?

Max: *Yeah, I think that’s important for us*.

Kathy: Yeah, OK. OK. OK. So, you talked about framing, that was the third workshop. And you talked about culture and taboos. You mentioned the elephant in the room. You said that was an important idea. Do you want to tell me more about the elephant in the room?

Max: *Yeah, I guess just – I guess the elephant in the room is related to the bias* [Kathy: Yeah] *yeah, related to the bias, and the, sometimes if the authors, they want to, if they like wrote article to the public, and in order to approve their ideas, and it’s more convincible?* [Kathy: Mm-hm] *Convincible so they just focus on, the evidence that can approve their ideas, but ignore the disadvantages or the negative effects.*

Kathy: That’s conf – that’s cherry-picking. The elephant in the room is something you can’t talk about.

Max: *Oh, OK. Let me say – maybe like, we can’t say the apparent negative effect of the specific issues.*

Kathy: Yeah, so an elephant in the room is, when you have a group of people, there’s something they all know about, but they don’t talk about [Max. *Ah. Yeah, yeah*]. So, for example, Vivi and Yaling were telling us about – well, Vivi was telling us about how she went to dinner with some other Chinese friends in London, and some of those Chinese friends were from Hong Kong, and no-one talked about what’s happening now in Hong Kong, with the protests [Max: *Yeah*], no-one talked about it. Everyone was thinking about it, but nobody mentioned it, no-one talked about it. So that’s an elephant in the room.

Max: *Yeah, just like the cases in the Hong Kong, the people in Hong Kong, there’s a protest?* [Kathy: Yeah]. *Yeah, and in fact I think it’s the truth, and in the BBC news, or the YouTube, we can just see the, see the scenery, which is that the policeman arrest the protesters, but we can’t see any of the scenery that the protesters, they attack the police, and they destroy the public facilities, and yeah, so I guess maybe it* [laughs] *can belong to the elephant in the rooms, I guess. But maybe this issue is political, but I’m not a political person* [Kathy: No] *I’m not a political person, but I guess this situation can be described or can be defined as elephant in the –*

Kathy: Well, an elephant in the room is something that everyone knows is true, and everyone knows about, but no-one talks about. That’s an elephant in the room. [Max: *Oh*]. For example, imagine – well, nowadays, now in the UK, people talk about cancer quite easily. But in the past, it was something you didn’t talk about. So, imagine a family meal, big – uh, family meal with the grandparents and the parents and the grandchildren, and maybe one of the grandparents has got cancer, and is going to die, and everybody knows it, no-one talks about cancer. [Max: *Oh!*] That’s an elephant in the room. [Max: *Oh, yeah!*] Everybody’s thinking, oh, Granddad’s going to die soon, he’s got terrible cancer, but no-one wants to talk about it. So everyone’s thinking about this thing, but nobody talks about this thing. That’s an elephant in the room. [Max: *Ah*] So I don’t know if maybe if you misunderstood that that was - it’s not the same as cherry picking, it’s a different issue. But don’t worry. OK.

Max: *I will revise this issue, I will revise the definition*.

Kathy: Well, have a look at the Workshop about, I think it was Workshop 4, an elephant in the room is something that everybody knows about, and no-one talks about, and this is not good for OUR critical thinking because we are not being honest or open about this thing. OK, well let’s move on. Thank you very much for all of that. So-

Max*: It’s my pleasure*.

5. Kathy: It’s OK, we haven’t quite finished. So, I’m going to ask you about climate change now, so I asked in the Pre-Course Task, how do you feel about climate change, and you said, *“To some extent it's an obvious signal to reflect the environmental issues. In addition climate change would affect our life seriously. What's the worst is that it would lead to the waste of public funds”.* So you probably noticed that a lot of my workshops had climate change in there, as part of the – one of the topics. So, do you feel any differently about climate change now, after the workshops? Or about the same?

Max*: I guess before the lesson, I guess in terms of the climate change, maybe I just concentrate the climate change on the carbon emissions and the environmental problems.* [Kathy: Mm-hm]. *Because these ideas, and we need to add in our writing, in our writing, and because we need to take the IELTS test, and USEPT test, so I have no any ideas, I have no more ideas about like critical thinking, just want to complete the writing, and get the good scores* [Kathy: yeah, mm-hm], *yeah, yeah, yeah. But now I guess, I just talk about the climate change in my own opinion. And I guess at first we should consider the causes, what the climate change lead to, and how we can improve it, how we can solve it, and the solutions. Yeah, and the - and this include the governments and the specific action and laws. And another things is the co-operation between the different countries, and for the three main parts, and we need to consider it in different way.* [Kathy: Mmm]. *Just I have learned in your lessons* [Kathy: OK] *that we should consider more factors, like, avoid the bias and assess different solutions, assess different solutions that can cause the risks. And this is my ideas about this, the climate change. But I can’t, I’m not* [unclear] *very clear about, all about the issue in details* [Kathy: right] *yeah, yeah, yeah, but if I write an essay, maybe I can use this angle to think about it, yeah, yeah.*

Kathy: Yeah, you mentioned about framing [Max: *Yeah*]. You came to the one about – that was the first one you came to, number 3, about framing, about looking at climate change in different aspects, you said [Max: *Yeah, yeah*,] so now I guess, I hope -

Max: *Yeah, yeah, I guess - when I think about the three main parts of the factors, the three parts, yeah, I need to – I also need to think about the related, the potential issues, yeah, if we need to make – we should refer to the problems, the solutions and the, like, government action and the individuals’ effort. Maybe this include another related problems.*

Kathy: OK, so what were the three main parts? [Max: *Mmm*?] What were the three main parts? You said three parts, what were they?

Max*: I guess and we need to* [unclear: climate?] *the real, the real causes* [Kathy: the causes] *why, why, which factors, or which situations lead to like, climate change. Yeah. And the causes. And the threat to the – which threat to the society or the earth, yeah, and this is one angle.*  [Kathy: OK]. *And another angle is, how can we solve these problems?* [Kathy: Mm- hm]. *Yeah. And this includes the global treaty, and global co-operation* [Kathy: Yeah]. *Yeah, yeah, yeah. And the, how can we think about it. And especially, for example, in the co-operation, or the global treaties. Maybe sometimes there’s a lot of conflicts between the developing country and the developed country. And for the* [political?] *countries, even they have different understanding of the climate changes? Yeah, yeah, we should think a lot about the issues* [Kathy: Yeah*]. Like, different countries have its own positions, and their own understanding of this issue.* [Kathy: Quite]. *So we need more mature understanding, and more mature recognition, then we can control the purpose, or the goals*.

Kathy: So before the course, before the workshops, you didn’t have this -

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah, I didn’t have this* [Kathy: yeah*] I can just think about the carbon dioxide, C02, and the global warming, and the* [unclear], *and like this, and yeah, and so I guess we should more mature understanding as to why, what’s the - developed countries, they think all the world they should do that, blahblahblah, and at the same time, I think why, developing countries they said why, we can’t use the same standard because of their own shortages or their own difficulties in the development. Yeah, so for this issue we need to think about the sustainable and acceptable solutions to face the climate change* [Kathy: yeah], *yeah, yeah, yeah.*

Kathy: So you’re saying it’s different for each country [Max: *yeah, yeah, yeah*] what that solution would be [Max: *yeah, yeah, yeah*]. Yes, yes, that’s a good point, yeah. OK. Well, is there anything else you ‘d like to say about the workshops, that you haven’t already said?

Max: *Yes, and I want to say, many many appreciation or thanks for Kathy. Really, in my heart.* [Kathy: Awww! Thank you!] *And before, my past education, and all the university experience I don’t have opportunities to take this lesson, like this, and give us the video, and give us specific cases, and the objective way to think some issues, and all the topics, and no bias. This is good way.*

Kathy: So you enjoyed the activities that we did? [*Yeah, yeah, yeah*]. In the workshops – excuse me, I’m just going to lower that blind, because it’s shining right in my face! [Some kerfuffle as Max does this for me and I thank him]. So you enjoyed the activities that we did? [Max: *yeah, yeah, yeah*]. So which ones were your favourites? Which ones did you like the most?

Max*: I guess it’s a very open-minded atmosphere?* [Kathy: OK]. *And we can talk about anything, anything in the lessons* [Kathy: yeah, good]. *Yeah, yeah, yeah, and we don’t reject any disagree, disagreed point, yeah, yeah yeah, I guess it’s very good.*

Kathy: So if you disagreed with the other people on your table, it was OK.

Max: *Yeah, yeah, yeah. No angry!*

Kathy: No anger [*Max: Yes. Yeah*]. Yes, that’s what I want. No anger, yeah.

Max: *No anger. So I guess it’s good. And I guess it can give us a basic theoretical knowledge, in our mind. In fact, for the reference book, it includes some chapters about the critical thinking. In fact, before the lesson, I don’t understand it, and I just have the concepts, and not clear concepts, but I can’t really say I understand it* [Kathy: Yeah*]. I guess it’s it’s a good way to improve, our, yeah.*

Kathy: I just remembered that you asked me for some references about critical thinking and I forgot to bring anything but if you look at the slides, if you look at any of the slides [sound of mouse clicking] I’ll just show you [I show Max some references and links to other sources on the last slide of one of the Workshop power-points and talk through them. [Max says he has kept the materials in his workshops; he hasn’t had time yet to revise them but will do so in the Christmas vacation. We exchange thanks]. THE END.