Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

KE TIAN

BA (Hunan University of Science and Technology, 2004)

“International Students’ Experience of Using Online Resources for
Academic Writing”

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Monday, December 5th, 2016
1:00 p.m.
MacLaurin Building
Room A341

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. James Nahachewsky, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria
(Supervisor)
Dr. Kathy Sanford, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Gina Harrison, Faculty of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Mihai Sima, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This qualitative descriptive case study investigates four Chinese international students' use of online resources for academic writing in a western Canadian university. This study has direct implications for English as a Foreign Language/English as a Second Language writing instruction as well as international students' use of the university library. Methodological triangulation was used to collect data. This included two semi-structured interviews, a computer-based writing task, and a think-aloud activity. Data was coded and analyzed within cases and re-analyzed across the four cases. The salient themes that emerged from this analysis include: the indispensable role of online resources in academic writing; solving language problems; evaluation ability; using online resources to avoid plagiarism; influence of searching habits; differences between undergraduate and graduate students; and the importance of professors. Four major findings from the study include important uses of online resources for solving language problems, students' searching skills for online databases, students' uses of the Library's online database, and the importance of professors' instruction. These findings will be helpful for educators to consider as they work to integrate online resources for international students' writing instruction, and as academic libraries work to understand services that they can provide to assist EFL/ESL learners.