The academic conference is a great learning experience for me as the concluding remark of my Final Year Project and the start of my postgraduate studies. The main conference activities where I participated ran for four days: the opening plenary session on the first night, and parallel paper presentations on the rests. I had presented in one of the parallel paper session on my paper and selected other parallel sessions to listen.

I believed that these kind of academic conference is about the social networking we could get when we meet face-to-face after presentations sessions, where people who are interested in each others topic get together into one-to-one talks and swap their contacts for future communications. After my presentation, I also gain a professor in Aix Marseille University, France, attention where he introduced himself and told me that he had a PhD study that is doing similar field of study in depth perception error in virtual reality, and that he will contact me later to chat more on it. I believe that these are some experiences/ connections that could not be gained without physically present.

Besides my narrow topic from my paper, I also get the chances to explore other related HCI Human-Computer Interaction topics from others presentation and personal talks, EEG, presence in Virtual Reality, training and evaluation of training, the list can always go on and on. After hearing that, I gain a better perspective on the current state of the research on the related field and what I could do in my own research for PhD. There are things that I can learn from the speakers and I definitely digested them into my mind. I even got some of their contact information so that future communications on the topic may be possible.

Before the conference, I also doubt if my research paper and content is ever meaningful and useful. I went to the conference, I saw different types of researches being presented, I also presented my result without anyone giving negative feedback on my work. I believed that this is a confidence vote to my research work done during my Final Year Project.

In terms of personal development, I would say the conference is a great experience, having your first academic public speech is not easy as you are speaking to a room of expert in your related field but I definitely says that I had a great experience having my first presentation completed smoothly.

Joining academic conference also means to speak to strangers and get to know them really quick as you want to get into contact with them. This is not an easy job for an introvert like me. In fact, I could not actually do it on the first night during the opening cocktail session, perhaps alcohol is not my style as well, but I stand aside and observe how other people managed to do so, and hence I was able to start networking with others on the second day. The process is not easy, its one step at a time, but gradually I learnt more about it via this 4-days conference.

In short, I believe that I had learnt a lot during this short conference time in Toronto, academically and personally.