

Adaptive Stage and Its Effects on International Chinese Students

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ABSTRACT

The number of international students enrolled in US colleges and universities doubled in the last two decades, and the majority of these students now come from China, a proportionate increase of sixfold over the last 15 years. This study addresses international Chinese students as prospective viewers, we will describe the adaptive stage of international Chinese students and the cause of cross-cultural adaptation. After reviewing previous related literature, the main findings of this paper are: When the differences between various educational approaches and systems occur, the discrepancies in examination abilities and educational conceptions across nations contribute to the adaptive stage. Moreover, the language efficiency of international Chinese students in the adaptive stage is closely related to their academic achievements. That means whether Chinese international students can successfully navigate cross-cultural adaptation and integrate their language abilities is the key point for them to get involved in indigenous cultures.

Keywords: *Adaptive stage, Chinese international students, Educational discrepancies, Language Proficiency, Cross-cultural Adjustment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the differences in cross-cultural education between China and the United States (U.S.), this paper investigates cross-cultural conversion faced by Chinese international students in the U.S. Our research highlights why Chinese students have to adjust and alter while studying in a foreign country. In this article, we cite and address some researchers' experimental outcomes and laboratory data. At the same time, as there are differences between Chinese and American culture, Chinese international students need more time to adapt. Poor academic performance will ever occur during Chinese students' need for scholarly cross-cultural adaptation in America [1]. Consequently, our paper has some different views on some gaps from these extinctive studies, which indicates that we can develop more extended points based on their research objects or references. In particular, there are still several gaps in the excessive cross-cultural ability of experimental populations.

In this review, we introduce multiple experiments. This research aims to discuss how Chinese students spend intercultural days when they study abroad for the three

months at the start of their studies. Then, we will summarize the following research gaps in previous studies: 1) education reconstruction; 2) language gap; 3) student adaptive phase; 4) the later direction and suggestions.

2. SCHOOL

2.1. Adaption of Schooling Models

Adaptation situations always happened when Chinese students get cross-cultural academic educational adaptation. Below we will review different education models which lead to educational discrepancies between Chinese international student and American student (local student).

2.1.1. Degree of active classroom participation

Research indicates that the "American education system is rooted in the Socratic tradition where questioning and skepticism are foundational to the teaching-learning process"[2]. On the other hand, he argues that the "Chinese system of education which is

authoritarian and follows in the tradition of memorizing and learning from past significant works". This point also indicated by Zhang that China and America's education discrepancy affect international Chinese students in different ways; One essential part will be educational disparities on students' academic performance in classes [1]. Suppose Chinese students go abroad and pursue their college degrees in the United States. In that case, they will gain more chances to share their thought from different perspectives, answer questions during lectures, or publicly do presentations. However, in such situations, many Chinese students will become embarrassed because they did not have any experience before [1]. The embarrassment reflects the different educational approaches used in class between China and the United States, which means that some Chinese international students will need extra time to adjust to those differences.

In response to these differences in classroom performance, Chinese students will apply various methods to adapt. Some researchers argue that it is always correct to abandon textbooks and teachers, unquestionable concepts, and think for yourself [3].

2.1.2. Critical thinking

Zhang shows that students from China are inclined to receive "a structured learning environment" [1]. That means every student is supposed to gain specific study requirements from their teachers and heavily rely on their teacher's guidance to perform better in standardized exams. Due to the "rote learning" education model, Chinese students should conceal their creativity, which leads to a lack of creativity [1]. When creative and critical thinking is not encouraged in the Chinese classroom, it is easier for instructors to manage many student populations by following unified study guidance of pursuing high exam outcomes.

In comparison, American classes offer students a relatively free learning environment. The advantage is that teachers will provide students with more opportunities for classroom interactions and communications, which enable them to think independently and get involved easily in the new learning environment. The education pattern adopted by almost all-American professors is accompanied by "exploratory", "instructive", and "practical" [4]. Therefore, when interacting with teachers, classmates, and textbooks, with the continuous accumulation of academic discussions, the classroom participation of Chinese students will also increase. In addition, Chinese interviewees indicated that as they find the initiative to participate in student clubs or societies and interact with English-speaking local students, they will have more incentives to blend in the classroom [4]. As a result, they are further connected to their classmates and professors, which will counteract rote learning. And Chinese

international students will be more confident in thinking critically under this circumstance, which is a sign of consolidated classroom adoptions.

2.2. The Differences Between Communication Problems and Educational Concepts

If Chinese students want to study in America, they are required to pass a series of language tests. Two interviewees in Wan's paper also participate in the same kind of exam [5]. In their feedback, it is reasonable to conclude that tests such as school English exams for students in China and TOEFL examination language test are both emphasizing focusing on reading and listening skills [5]. As interviewees said, even though they get higher than the average score in the test when studying in China, they still cannot utilize what they have learned in real life under daily circumstances. Instead, if others write down the meaning, express what they want to express, everything can be understood again effectively [5]. As a result, It means that a good test score cannot represent solid language proficiency that can satisfy the fundamental daily use of international students. In other words, high test scores do not equal high language efficiency.

Some researchers mentioned in the article that "Constant use of English was indispensable to these exchange students' whether in class or out of class." [4] On the other hand, students will face the problem in their adaption that "We will have to use English. Otherwise, we can't survive here". Then, the solution for such students is to attend a diversity of extracurricular activities. It can stimulate Chinese students to improve their oral English skills while at the same time enhancing their understanding of American and American cultures.

Moreover, the relationship between instructor and student had some differences between the two countries. To our knowledge, in the Chinese classroom, students should respect and listen to their teachers whose purposes are boosting students' exam scores [6]. This conventional concept appears in Zhang's paper and Wang and D. U.'s paper. They both mention that Chinese teachers in the subjects they belong to think their duty is "to become an important role for students, transfer basic knowledge and information" [6]. We also extract a part of their review that points out: In most "Chinese classroom, teachers expect students to obey their instructions and rules", if they violate, teachers will treat students as disrespectful. This situation burdens those students who are willing to express their opinions on their learning materials, which might be the starting point of critical-thinking adaption. In addition, in Chinese classes, a teacher should dress formally, and students should wear uniforms [6]. However, in America, there are lots of differences. Wan's interviews support that students and their teachers are in equal status because of the American culture behind; Teachers can "button up a shirt and behave like a

student", and students are allowed to "eat and drink" during regular class period teaching [6]. Such behaviours under Chinese education models will be considered impolite and disrespectful to instructors, which is another reflection of the cross-cultural adaption of international Chinese students as they are supposed to adopt these cross-cultural changes.

3. ADAPTIVE STAGE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

3.1. English Language Proficiency

Although the test score of the language tests of Chinese students meets the requirement of American colleges, they need language adaption and a result of the differences in language proficiency. Linguistics proficiency has its effects on academic performance effective communication in the L2 (Second language), which is important for international students to interact successfully with the local culture, mainly because it is the foundation of many concepts of intercultural adaptation [7, 8]. Without an efficient and smooth linguistic transaction from the first language to the target language, young Chinese international students will have difficulties performing well at the beginning of their higher education experience. Chinese overseas students in the United States have more adaption and social integration issues than their European counterparts, owing to their poorer English proficiency [9]. Moreover, Mental Health issues brought by lousy performance in class will also affect the living experience of Chinese students. And the situation is further complicated by students who are missing their families, which creates more of an unknown environment for new students. Students who use more easily accessed alcohol and drugs from families that do not have a solid understanding of these [7]. The above references indicate that Chinese students face language adaption issues and potential mental problems such as social anxiety disorders, anxieties, and eating disorders because of lower English proficiency and the culture shocks they face in the country where far away from home. Moreover, due to the differences in alcohol and drug policies, these substances will be more accessible in the U.S than in China, which increases the risk of losing the immigrant status as international students.

The adaptive stage is the time when intercultural conflicts between Chinese students and local students happen frequently. This results from Chinese international students engaging in societies with different cultural backgrounds in which mostly English is utilized for daily conversation and social interactions [10]. An interviewee, Lin, proposed that "One of my Chinese friends has an American roommate. It's lucky for her to have someone to talk to in English...I feel tired after classes, so I went straight back to my room after

classes...I don't expect people would come to talk to me... It's fine. I am too busy with my studies." [10] When Lin indicates that not every international Chinese student can blend in the social circle of local peers, it is reasonable to argue that stress comes not only from peers who are good at communicating with local students but also from the academic performance of international first-year students studying abroad for the first time. Active student engagements in the classroom, such as group discussion, presentation, and classroom participation, are closely correlated with students' academic success in college courses [11]. But without a successful L2 language adaption, international first-year Chinese students can achieve neither active student engagements nor effective social communication. Li Gang argues that Chinese international students are inclined to show less skill in utilizing English in studying than international students from other countries like India and Korea [12]. In addition, Chinese students studying abroad appear to follow a less involved and less dynamic learning approach in classroom engagements, and lower English writing abilities of Chinese students explained their comparatively low performance compared to other international students [12].

3.2. Cross-Cultural Adaption of International Chinese Students

A large number of foreign students (those studying outside the country of origin) experienced an inferior quality of life compared to students (those who lived in their country of origin, while the latter had no discernible changes in social or psychological quality of life [13]. Karkour 's research claims that international students enrolled in a pathway-to-college program, which accounts for most students, started their university careers in classrooms with only other international students for a year or more before moving on to regular university courses [14]. And they consider the program as a restriction for international students to engage with American students [14]. After a year or two of being segregated from domestic students in these programs, international students appeared to remain in their cultural learning environments instead of fitting in local cultures.

Unlike the previous viewpoint, cross-cultural encounters occur not just via meetings with fellow students on campuses but also from many forms of communication across courses and places [15]. In collaboration with other international students' clubs, the university's international office and the School of Management's international office should provide more welcome socio-cultural activities at the start of new school sessions to encourage all worldwide students to actively engage in cross-cultural adjustment [15]. In other words, these student organizations, the official student office, and the international campus office need to jointly reproduce cultural capitals in the foreign campus for full-

time international students or the forthcoming Chinese international students. They will be helpless in the adaptive cultural adjustment. On the other hand, there is evidence demonstrating the academic benefits of sophisticated Chinese international organizations in the college. Some researchers illustrate that Chinese students have developed their academic community, an important component of the contemporary education enclave [16]. Through a robust mentorship and peer-support network, the network gives substantial academic capital to Chinese students. These academic capitals consist of knowledge regarding academic standards in the United States, techniques for selecting major and courses, or even what it needs to be a better learner at the Midwest University [16]. Furthermore, the changes in the educational enclave may serve as a buffer between Chinese undergraduate students and campus prejudices, providing social, intellectual, and spiritual supports as the enclave will develop a united learning environment for international Chinese students. Furthermore, the academic group will effectively shorten the adaptive period as international Chinese students can comprehensively understand different courses and majors. Even professors who are more freshman-friendly can help international Chinese students have a smooth transition from Chinese schooling to American Schooling with the help of peers or senior students.

As more international students flock to higher education institutions abroad, the Chinese have increasingly dominated the international community. Market needs drive the revenues universities. The economic advantages gained by attracting Chinese students into the community colleges also need them to provide well-received courses [17]. The research community has closely followed Chinese students at every stage of these students' experiences, from the moment of their arrival through the defining moments when they arrive in a new country and their career goals after having expanded. Accordingly, officials from the host country see these candidates as an opportunity to promote the host country's soft power and China's [17]. By their very presence, international students, to some extent, provide benefits for either the country of origin or the one they're studying in. For example, Yang concludes that one notable aspect that seemed to directly affect the Ph.D. destination of some participants was the long-term research collaboration between their original and host universities [17]. As a result, it is unsurprising that they were largely pleased with their study experiences at host schools and their academic achievements [17]. Therefore, a better study environment for international Chinese students represents better chances for boosting soft power educationally or socially as more research can be done and international Chinese scholars will produce more academic achievements.

4. RESEARCH GAP AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Recently, education reproduction still occupies a large position in the academic area. Our paper analyses how students adapt to changes in cross-cultural education while learning from various angles such as school, literature, culture, etc. Linking with recent literature, we sum these points about why Chinese scholars need to readjust cross-cultural circumstance: 1) Foreign professors will use different special teaching models and ideas than Chinese instructors; 2) Chinese international students need practical applications of English learning materials after taking the required language exams; 3) New international Chinese students' academic performances are closely related to language adaption and cross-cultural adaptive stage; 4) Students with different social backgrounds shift from high school to college at the time, which create cross-cultural fusion.

The experiments in the preceding articles are comprehensive in-depth when outlining experiments, researching data, contrasting phenomena, getting interview data, etc. Based on previous research, there remain some problems that worth studying. The below discussions might value this field and the student group we have discussed: 1) How does an individual's personal ability of development, such as critical thinking, sociability, and leadership, affect the assessment result of their intercultural competence? 2) What aspects of the cross-cultural life of international Chinese students will be affected by intercultural competence developed in the adaptive period?

In addition, it is not easy for cross-cultural learners to adapt to a new culture style because such Chinese students had received a different educational background earlier. Therefore, no matter if Chinese students decide to get involved in cross-culture adaption, they cannot avoid forming long-term determination and durable persistence. Meanwhile, learners need to experience adaptation and re-adaptation, study and re-study and even receive theories that subvert their original cognitive. Every step of students' development signifies levels of knowledge improvement. Therefore, as time progresses, they will face gradually cumulative cross-cultural differences, which indicates that more research can concentrate on when and how to cultivate the sense of adapting cross-cultural differences for international Chinese students. Then Chinese international students can gain experience bone tightness with the future work for the next ideological foundation. Also, we expect that in the nearby decades, more researchers will participate in relevant research fields.

5. CONCLUSION

Since educational discrepancies of students between countries create the adaptive situation for the latest

international students, the periodically growing number of Chinese students are supposed to pay more attention to adaptations. We discuss the obstacles of cross-cultural adaptation that Chinese overseas students will face. Then above these points, we conclude at a theory: the student, under the primary educational reproduction, should pay more attention during the adaptive degree in the academic. Additionally, students must prepare for the future issue of cross-cultural adaptability. Moreover, our following research will concentrate on the circumstances of adapted culture and further analyze the effects of language, psychology, and the social environment.

Ultimately, we render some encouragement to those who find themselves either struggling in the adaptive stage or going to step into a new life abroad: 1) Getting involved in an international student club is a surpassing way to become a part of the international student community. 2) Getting assistance from others nearby or academic community members and enlisting professors and classmates' cooperation. Linguistic puzzles are the first obstacle to the academic success of Chinese foreign students. 3) Studying the school and the city it locates in and its culture. Then use that information to better blend in daily life there.

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