

Culture Shock of Sojourners and the Implications for Higher Education Performance

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Abstract

The advent of globalization and international educational exchange has enabled a large number of foreign students have been studying in the USA, the UK and Australia, etc. simultaneously, more and more foreign teachers have come to teach in Chinese universities and colleges. This has made intercultural communication inevitable and important to the teaching quality and culture shock has exerted a direct on teaching, learning and research. Therefore, identifying intercultural differences and managing culture shock should be a prerequisite to quality classroom teaching and higher education performance. This paper analyzes the relevant theories, stages and causes of culture shock, interviews Chinese students and sojourn scholars in foreign countries, investigates foreign teachers in China and explores the various countermeasures to manage culture shock to enhance higher education performance.

Key words: Culture shock; Sojourners; Higher education performance

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INTRODUCTION

Research Background

With the process of globalization and international educational exchange accelerating and developing, the increasing number of Chinese students and scholars in the UK, the USA, Australia, etc. has contributed to a diversified, heterogeneous and international environment. The length of transition adjustment period varies due to personal background and other supportive networks while everyone is sure to experience a certain degree of culture shock such as daily adjustments including food, transportation and shopping. However, the awareness of staff and the solutions are insufficient to the culture shock those Chinese students and scholars have encountered in classrooms and academic system. In contrast, more and more foreign teachers have become an important part of human resource in Chinese universities and colleges with the responsibility for teaching English, other languages or subjects and conducting joint research. However, the results turn out to be unsatisfying and unfavorable due to a wide range of factors, one of which is rooted in intercultural differences and culture shock. A small proportion of foreign teachers are more likely to be upset and uncomfortable both physically and mentally or even encounter and experience a varying extent of culture shock. Since intercultural communication between foreign teachers and students characterizes the classroom teaching while successful communication determines the effective transfer of knowledge and skills in classroom, systematic review and critical application of intercultural theories such as cultural shock and intercultural management should be grounded. The intercultural communication process in Chinese university and college classrooms has involved the students, foreign teachers and the staff managing foreign affairs as well. Thus, the investigations including interviews, meetings and classroom teaching observation should

be integrated to identify the problems in a qualitative method. Barriers to effective and efficient intercultural communication such as stereotypes and ethnocentrism ought to be explored. Whether a university or college can improve the level of intercultural management and successfully overcome intercultural barriers is of great practical significance to the enhancement of classroom teaching. The ability to effectively and successfully communicate culturally depends on the acquisition and adaptation of knowledge and understanding of cultural factors such as values, attitudes, beliefs and behavior. The specific research questions which derive from this hypothesis and which will be addressed are: What are the main barriers arising due to intercultural communication issues? How significant are these barriers? What are the countermeasures to be used to overcome them in practice?

Structure

With regard to theoretical underpinnings and methodology, this study is based on some intercultural communication theories and conducting a comprehensive analysis of culture shock, culture difference and cultural conflicts and examines the actual influence of this issues on the implications for higher education institutions. The structure of this paper is presented as follows: next a literature review is conducted, exploring the topic of intercultural communication in more detail and then the methodology is explained with the following findings. The findings of this paper are interesting and significant because it is of theoretical and practical significance to analyze the reasons and influencing factors of managing culture shock and figuring out the effective countermeasures to enhance the foreign teachers teaching and academic quality. Meanwhile there are some conditions that limit this research, for example, the samples, interviews and classroom teaching observation might not be large enough. But this new perspective is worth further exploration and research both in foreign countries where Chinese students study and China where foreign teachers undertake the teaching regularly.

1. CULTURE SHOCK

1.1 Relevant Theories of Culture Shock

The anthropologist Oberg (1960) coined culture shock, which refers to psychological and behavioral consequences of changes under the circumstances when immersed in a new and unfamiliar culture experiencing the feelings of anxiety, bewilderment, confusion, disorientation, and perplexity, along with a desire to be someplace else.

Taft (1977) summarized culture shock as a feeling of impotence from the inability to deal with environment owing to unfamiliarity with cognitive aspects and role-playing skills. Culture shock derives from both the

challenge of new cultural surroundings and the loss of a familiar cultural environment (Rhinesmith, 1985). This unfamiliar environment seems to rob an individual's identity of all protection, as previously familiar cues and scripts are suddenly irrelevant and inoperable in this new culture, which relies and functions on an entirely new, and as yet unknown, set of cues and scripts. This can occur to both shorter-term sojourners, such as exchange students and foreign teachers, as well as long-term expatriates or immigrants along various stages ranging from honeymoon, hostility, adjustment and biculturality. The first stage is the honeymoon or tourist stage when new arrivals feel thrilled and euphoric by the novelty they've encountered and experienced. The second stage is a culture shock stage, a difficult and painful stage for those who suffer from disappointments, frustration, anxiety and depression together with lack of energy and loss of appetite originating from homesickness and loneliness. The impact of this hostility stage on sojourners and the duration vary from each person but people have to take the initiative to recover, making a transition to the third stage, namely the adjustment stage. The greater exposure to host culture will contribute to more understanding, better evaluation and increased appreciation which will reinforce the positive feelings. Finally, when the expatriates become integrated to the new culture, identity is ascertained and biculturality is achieved.

1.2 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Dutch scholar Hofstede in 1984, 1991 had published a monograph "Cultural Influence", "Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind", and he was the founder of different cultural comparative studies, applying the theory on a world wide scale. Through the analysis, summarization and refinement of employee survey results, he found that there are five factors that can help us to differentiate the impact of national culture on employee work values and work attitude. These five factors are called five cross-cultural dimensions. These five cross-cultural dimensions are as follows: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long or short-term orientation. Power distance illustrates the degree to which people react to that power is distributed unequally. The distance of power is defined as the extent to which people at the disadvantaged position of national governments and organizations expect and accept inequality. In other words, it suggests the level of inequality is supported by subordinates as much as by supervisors. Individualism and collectivism means the degree of interdependence that society maintains in its members. This is related to whether the person's self-image is defined by "I" or "we". In an individualistic world, people should only take care of themselves and their immediate family members. In the collectivist society, people belong to the "collective" to take care of them in exchange for distrust of loyalty.

Masculinity suggests that this society is a competitive society that, under the driving of success, is defined by “winner” or “best field” with high score on this dimension (male) while femininity involves that the main value of society is to take care of other people and the quality of life. Uncertainty Avoidance is when a society is exposed to uncertain events and unconventional environmental threats, to what extent people will avoid and control uncertainty. Highly evasive culture emphasizes power, social status, eligibility, age, and attempts to provide greater occupational safety, the establishment of more formal rules, intolerance of extreme views and behavior, and belief in absolute knowledge and expert assessment. This means avoiding these scenes. The low evasive culture is more tolerant of different acts and opinions, rules and restrictions are less, allowing different views and opinions to exist on some related issues. Long-term orientation values perseverance and short term orientation emphasizes tradition and the significance of “face”.

Hall's High-context and Low-context Cultures

Hall (1990) presented high--context and low-context cultures to state that the communication vary according to the degree of field dependence. High-Context Communication is indirect and nonverbal cue, diplomatic, self-humbling, and receiver-sensitive, which requires the receivers to shoulder the responsibility to infer the hidden or contextual meanings of the message. The role is to build relationships rather than exchange information with the emphasis put on harmony and agreement. Low-Context Communication is direct, explicit verbal communication with a matter-of-fact tone in a transparent, assertive, and sender oriented way. The role is to exchange specific information with focus on the results.

1.3 Sojourners Culture Shock in Foreign Countries

The following interviewee's sojourning experience is limited to the countries of the USA, the UK, Australia, Germany and Malaysia and the sample is not large enough to draw a general conclusion. But the findings can be transferred to similar settings. S1, S2, S3, S4, S5 represents individual student or scholar.

S1: The professor-student relationship is so informal and students can call the professors' names directly without any academic titles in American universities. Also, the instruction in the classroom is mainly discussion, seminar or workshop rather than a lecture-based teaching style and this means students should take the initiative to engage themselves to a variety of activities while the academic standard is different from that in China. The way we work on assignments in home country might be considered as a kind of plagiarism or cheating. What worries me every day is the limited public transportation in my city, you know, the bus runs every one hour and it's unavailable on Sundays so I'm like a caged bird.

S2: Once when I was having dinner in a café in the UK, I was called by a local old man “my love,

sweetheart”. My first thought was that the man was not nice and he might want to flirt with me but it turned out that it was just a normal way of greeting people in local culture. What made me more surprised was that there were so many heavy drinkers especially some girls and they could get drunkard and fall down on the floor.

S3: I found it would be a tough thing to make friends with local youngsters of my age when I first came to Australia. I recalled my first tutorial class, the tutor allocated two of local students to my group and asked us to discuss one topic, the two students had their opinions and they didn't give me the chance to express my opinion. They gossiped the affairs among their friends and I didn't hear very clearly what they were talking about as I was not accustomed to their accent at that moment. Also I didn't appreciate their attitudes towards their study and work. They always wait for the last minute to do the assignments and go to pub every Friday evening, getting drunk and back home on the early Saturday morning. I felt it is quite hard to make friends with those guys.

S4: One day, I popped into one of the most well-known telecommunication stores and asked the staff to do the transfer service for me. I would like to transfer my current account to another operator. I realized it would be a simple process and could be accomplished by clicking the button on the computer. However, the staff told me it would be a complicated process and they had to do the identity verification first due to security purpose and it will take at least two working days to complete that. I felt totally annoyed and did not understand why they could make a simple thing so messy! In my country, the same thing may take only one hour but here all you had to do is waiting! I felt the Germans are so clumsy and inflexible, they are not flexible and only follow the normal routine to solve problems.

S5: The first day I arrived at the university apartment in Malaysia, when I was told that the internet was inaccessible, I was just like fish out of water. I was woken up by the morning pray at around 5:40 and it took me nearly one week with early morning's sleepless to adapt to it.

Though feelings of excitement exist, students and scholars are also influenced by symptoms of culture shock including disorientation, dissatisfaction with aspects of life in a new country, homesickness, loneliness and academic adjustments.

2. ACADEMIC CULTURE SHOCK IN CHINA

2.1 Methodology

This investigation combines interviews, meetings and classroom observations to identify culture shock of foreign teachers in China.

Interviews: The nine participants are selected randomly and they are all teaching in the university in China ranging from Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan to Hefei. Five of them come from the USA, the other four come from the UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa respectively. Four of them teach English courses and the rest teach economics, finance and accounting. Two of them have got PHD and four teachers have a Master's Degree while the other three have a Bachelor. The following questions are supposed to be answered by using wechat or email: What kinds of cultural shock have you come cross when teaching in China? What are the intercultural conflicts you've encountered? What is the biggest challenge of teaching in China and how do you deal with it?

Meetings: Meetings with students will be conducted in five different universities in Hefei by raising three questions: When do foreign teachers get uncomfortable in class and why? When do you get uncomfortable in class and why? Generally speaking, are you satisfied with foreign teachers' teaching? Meetings with staff from international affairs put emphasis on one question: What are the common issues in managing foreign teachers?

Classroom Observation: This focuses on foreign teachers teaching methods and students' participation in classroom. Researcher will take notes, pictures and small videos of the actual teaching from five different universities, with one in Beijing, one in Shanghai and the other three in Hefei.

2.2 Findings

2.2.1 Findings of Interviews: F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8 and F9 Stand for Different Foreign Teachers

F1: okay so basically the move from south Africa to China was a bit on a drastic level because of the lifestyle, it is completely different than mine, for instance the types of food isn't something that I would usually eat, I believe that Chinese people have a very fast lifestyle compared to south Africa, and in terms of feeling safe I'd give China a thumbs up. I haven't really encountered any cultural conflicts from my students because I'm very open-minded and enthusiastic about learning more about the language and culture, so I learn from my students just as much as they learn from me, overall this is one amazing experience and I'd definitely encourage anyone else to try it if they have the opportunity too.

F2: Perhaps the biggest culture shock or intercultural difference I have faced teaching university courses is different expectations with regards to how information is communicated between students and teachers, as well as among teachers and administrators. In the U.S., typically detailed information is given well in advance (for example, courses almost always have detailed syllabi and students are expected to consult them when they have questions that are answered in the syllabus) and communication is often directly between teachers and students. However, I've found in China that it is normal

to give only partial information (either to teachers or from teachers to students) and then provide additional details at later times; it is also normal for these details to change suddenly and even at the last minute. For example, even the date of the final day of classes can change very late in the semester from what was told at the start of the semester. One way I've dealt with this is to anticipate changes as much as possible, though they cannot always be anticipated. Additionally, I still provide students detailed information in advance, but often redirect them to the syllabus or other students when they ask me questions I've already answered. Also, communication from teachers is often directed to students through class monitors and study commissaries, roles which do not exist in U.S. universities. To some extent, I've gotten used to this process and it can be helpful, but it also creates the issue of miscommunication at times; as such, I will often forgo this option for a more direct teacher-to-class communication of important information.

F3: I have appreciated the fact that in Chinese university education system the same students in each class move together thru the semesters and years of study. This system creates the opportunity for students to develop deep and strong friendship during these years especially that they are mostly required to live on campus together in dormitories. This contributes to even more meaningful friendship which frequently last their life time. Teaching conversational English, I have had the opportunity to present many different topics for discussion in class. In the exchange of the ideas and comments it has been very exciting for me to observe how eager and open Chinese university students are in learning and truly seeking new knowledge and understanding, striving to improve themselves and acquire the skills to contribute to the betterment of the society. The challenges I have faced, to mention a couple: the large number of the class especially for practicing and improving conversational English does not provide a fair opportunity for students to this aim. So I do my best to make sure that the majority of students in each class speak at least once during the class time. The fact that there is no actual failing system in university to require the students to repeat the course for another term was very surprising to me!!! This system does not persuade the passive students to work hard. Therefore, I try even more to encourage these students to make the best of their time in class and even require that they attend the English corner activities in School.

F4: The biggest shock I had when I first taught Chinese students was their lack of class participation, their desire to remain quiet and not to question what they were being taught. Western students are encouraged to debate, to disagree and to formulate and clearly state their own point of view. I would suppose that their reticence to answer questions stems from their cultural fear of getting answer wrong and from their unwillingness to voice an opinion that might differ from the norm.

Sadly, Western teachers have to adjust to this unwillingness to participate by changing their teaching methods. We stop asking questions of the students because we cannot accommodate the long silences that follow our questions. So we resort to the old-school type of teaching, that is, I talk, you listen.

F5: Personally, I have not had any cultural shock primarily because Chinese cultural has always been appealing to me. Buying clothes and shoes has been slightly difficult so I use taobao. Additionally, I have had extensive teacher student interaction with many international students in the U.S. therefore; allows for me to either embraced and or reject China's environment, people, laws, regulations, restrictions s well as academia. I must make an honest choice to be fulfilled. In my opinion, respectfully, when selecting a potential teacher to enter China this teacher should love the culture therefore should be anxious to adapt. They just can't say they love, they must feel it. Unfortunately, it is your job to determine if their feelings are genuine. Having a genuine love for any culture minimizes shock. This is easily done by observing the potentials teacher's responses, actions, flexibility, comfort zones background knowledge and so forth. It has been my observation that many foreign teachers (not all) come here for an apartment and a salary and that's it. This is abundant in training centers but also exist in the private sector as well. In most cases conflicts are very rare and if they surface usually a genuine and friendly smile can thwart or defuse conflict or discomfort. I will reiterate what most seasoned English teachers with multiple degrees in English, Organizational leadership, TESOL, Psychology has echoed. Teaching a second language to culturally linguistic diverse learners is nothing like teaching the cultures native subjects. Implementing TESOL methodology in order to bridge Language1 with Language2 resulting in acquired proficiency, must be understood at the highest faculty level of the teacher's place of employment. A confident and equipped instructor can implement multiple strategies which support the many dimensions of personalities that make up classroom which can minimize complex challenges. Dealing with the resistance of these methods is when the teacher must take a step back and take a deep breath. For example, Chinese culture prides itself on high scores ie. 96 – 98 -100. With the Chinese it' more about the number rather adequate comprehension this is frustrating but what is more frustrating is the lack of confidence in the culture to experiment with having both comprehension together with high scores.

F6: The biggest cultural shock would definitely be the language and food. The food is delicious by the way but very different to what I am used to. Eating with chopsticks instead of a knife and fork is different. Having no Chinese language skills I have found not being able to communicate with people as I normally would

a challenge. I have not experienced any intercultural conflicts to date. The biggest challenge in the classroom is definitely language. The students are also much quieter and much more reserved than my students at home. They don't interact with me as the teacher in the same way. When I ask a question in class no one answers which is a challenge. Their pride in their country is refreshing to see in young people. The students are also well dressed and respectful this is also refreshing. Out on the streets pedestrians not having right of way has taken some getting used to and the constant sound of car horns is also different.

F7: Not so much cultural shock. I was prepared for what I should expect. The only point I found that was a little difficult to understand at first was a lack of preparation for many events which could have been easily planned but were not. After reflecting on the reasons, there are too many changes or issues that could occur, so the lack of planning is flexibility to deal with the unexpected. At the very beginning, students have a different understanding of the meaning of plagiarism and they know little about academic writing such as APA format. After my explanation and lectures, gradually, students are honest about what they expect and I am honest with what I expect from them. Some students were trying to bully another student, so we solved the problem by meeting with the Principal. I have worked in Asia for many years. Just as with teaching in any country, having students take their homework serious and complete it on time. Chinese students are not so much different because many of them want to study less and enjoy life more.

F8: In the first lesson of a course on Human Resource Management in China I asked all the students to tell something about themselves and the problems of HRM they were familiar with as managers. After this session, one of the students came to me in private and complained about this assignment: 'how can you ask us to give answers before you have taught us what we need to know to give a good answer? We are not used to this style of teaching.' I had to change my approach drastically. I began with presenting a theoretical framework and a method to solve cases. Then I presented the case and made them solve it according to clear norms that were explained to them. In a Confucian style of education, the teacher is seen as an example to be followed. This central role of 'learning from examples' may also lead to a need from students for success stories, preferably stories where the teacher plays a positive role. This principle contradicts the Socratic assumption in much Western education, which assumes that the knowledge is already in the student, and that the role of the teacher is to help make this explicit. In this education we want students to speak, present their own cases and ask questions, even criticize the teacher. We tend to see dependence on the teacher as a weakness. Applying such Socratic methods in the Chinese

context requires sensitivity to the different assumptions many students may have. In the Confucianism view, the teacher-pupil relationship is like the father-son relationship. There is an old, but still popular, Chinese saying: 'once a teacher, always a father.' In this view the pupil depends on the teacher and the teacher cares for the pupil. Pupils who violate this dependency relationship must be punished. Teachers must not abuse their power position; they must show moral quality. Developing a good relationship between teacher and pupil is a basis for learning everywhere, but in the Chinese situation the vertical 'filial piety' dimension is important. The teacher can only build a good relationship with the students, if he is prepared to accept the role that students give him. This is an authority role which does not need a legitimation from below as in the democratized universities of the West. Students will easily make themselves dependent on the teacher if he cares for them, shows his expertise, is a strong person and has the necessary moral qualities as an example. Horizontal relationships with the teacher – the teacher as friend or colleague – can be confusing for many Chinese students.

Part of this vertical relationship is also that the teacher must accept the ritual in which this position is affirmed: sitting at the most favorable position at the dinner table, being honored as an important person etc. This vertical relationship may come into conflict with learning teaching modes in which the teacher does not have the authority role. It may still be very useful to use these more participative models, but they should be introduced carefully, in a secure context. Much traditional Chinese education consists of listening to the teacher. In my experience Chinese are good listeners. While listening they try to find out what the teacher wants from them and they try to please him. In traditional Chinese education they are not supposed to start discussions with the teacher. Asking questions may even be 'not-done', because it would imply that the teacher is not teaching well. This listening should not be misinterpreted as passive behavior: it is an active process in which the student tries to understand what is taught. In this 'absorptive' learning style, the learner assumes a sequential learning process: memorizing, understanding, applying, questioning and modifying (Tweed and Lehman, undated). Western teachers who ask the student to question knowledge in the early stage of learning, disrupt this process and may confuse the student.

F9: when dealing with Chinese students, it is not my advice that Western teachers try to become Chinese. Apart from the fact that they will never manage to do that, it would make them less interesting for the Chinese student. On the other hand, if the teacher does not succeed in bridging the cultural gap between himself and the class, he also loses his attractiveness and effectiveness as a foreign teacher.

The problem the teacher must solve in this situation is a special case of how to create communication where difficult barriers exist. It has everything to do with creating 'rapport'. Understanding the way that the Chinese student is likely to see me as a teacher, enables me to go along with this definition as far as I need to create that rapport. If this means creating a greater power distance than I generally feel happy with, so be it. If it means bringing more structure to my lessons than I like, this is the cost I have to pay. If students assume that they must first memorize and understand and then discuss, don't involve them in early discussions. So just move along as much as you need to avoid unnecessary insecurity or a fight over who is defining the situation.

This moving along with accepted cultural definitions, rather than fighting them, should clear the way for introducing innovations like participative groupwork, experiential learning etcetera. These innovations should be carefully (re-) framed in culturally acceptable terms. Then the Western contribution to teaching and learning will be more effective than when the teacher – as I unwillingly did sometimes – creates a cultural conflict. Innovation is more about seducing than about forcing people to learn differently.

The most crucial factor in this whole process is the teacher. He must be sensitive enough to cultural differences and especially to his own cultural assumptions to be able to combine his innovative approach with the context. These assumptions cannot be traced to one single origin, but most Western teachers seem to share a number of assumptions which go back to Greek antiquity, German rationalism and American pragmatism. From Socrates, whose ideas were brought to us by Plato, we learned that asking difficult questions is the core of the task of the teacher. In the 'Socratic dialogue' we help the student to discover his own knowledge and to question the knowledge of others, including authorities. From European rationalism we have the ideal of the Enlightenment: that knowledge makes people free, creates morally better people. So seeking the truth is good in itself. And from American pragmatism – especially Dewey - we have learnt that people have to discover their own knowledge by experimenting with the world. In the form of constructivism it is very much at the basis of official educational ideologies at the moment. It emphasizes the role of the individual who constructs his own knowledge and fits in very well with the individualism and low acceptance of power of the Western student. The teacher teaching in China must become aware of these philosophies and how they shape his attitudes and behaviour. He must be prepared to see the limits of their applicability in a specific context, regard them as valuable ideas to solve the problem of education rather than the 'one best way'. Coming back from China, and still in my jet-lag, I had to introduce a subject to a group of students.

My usual approach in such a session was a relatively short introduction, followed by discussion. This time I decided to do 'old-fashioned teaching' and I gave them a well-prepared long lecture without any discussion and no break, in which I tried to give maximum clarity about the subject, its main research themes and approaches. Later I heard from some students that they loved this approach: a good story in which the teacher shows his expertise. They were a bit tired of all this discussion and wanted new ideas. Afterwards I realized that I had applied to them what I rediscovered in China: that students want to learn from a teacher.

Our Western educational models with their emphasis on active individual learning, group work, reduction of power differences, the role of the teacher as a counsellor rather than an authority, little time spent on memorizing facts and maximum freedom for the expression of opinions and debate, are not always effective even at home. They work better for some types of learning tasks than for others, they work better for some students than for others. Often they are based on motivational assumptions which

are not valid for large groups of students. My experience with Chinese students with their different assumptions and motivations pointed at the necessity to be also very critical about our own assumptions in designing and delivering (management) education at home. Elements from the Chinese tradition, like following good examples and learning from persons, memorizing facts and postponing discussion, might exactly be elements which need some more attention in Western (management) education.

2.2.2 Findings of Meetings

According to the meetings with students, foreign teachers tend to feel uncomfortable when asked about privacy such as salary, marital status, age and religious belief. Also, lack of motivation and interaction in class, together with those free riders in teamwork often frustrates foreign teachers. The biggest barrier for students is their English language proficiency and a large proportion of the respondents stated that they would be more likely to lose the interest and motivation when they don't comprehend foreign teachers in class.

The following table is the 8 most frequent responses:

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- 1 Language is a more important factor influencing the teaching and learning compared to intercultural difference.
 - 2 Classroom silence and passive listening permeate the class.
 - 3 Foreign teachers speak little Chinese so that they can't explain an abstract theory or difficult question to make students understand.
 - 4 Foreign teachers tend to value independent thinking and interaction more by raising many questions while Chinese students are accustomed to listening to instructors' lecture.
 - 5 Chinese students are tired of teamwork assignments so this result in many free riders. Therefore, they don't think the parts of the assessment are fair.
 - 6 The equipment is not user-friendly, for example, chairs and desks in some classrooms can't be moved, which has a direct influence on the designing of classroom teaching for foreign teachers.
 - 7 When we adapt to foreign teachers' culture and teaching methods, should they also make adjustments to ours?
 - 8 Some foreign teachers lack classroom management skills, for example, when students sleep or play with mobile phones, teachers need to put an end to it.
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Meetings with administration staff reveal that the recruitment of quality foreign teachers and the high turnover rate are the two most challenging problems. Also, there is no systematic monitoring policy for foreign teachers' teaching due to the lack of key performance indicator to evaluate performance. Most foreign teachers follow laws, rules and regulations strictly but a tiny proportion of them might violate the code of ethics such as having a relationship with students, which is forbidden in Chinese universities. An interesting example is that one Australian teacher tried to give a student 100 Yuan as a reward the first time when she taught in China, which was stopped by the administration staff because it was culturally inappropriate. Overall, foreign teachers have more freedom and less responsibility in classroom teaching while the administration staff have to spend more time in taking care of their life to handle problems they come across in daily life rather than in the classroom.

2.2.3 Summary of Classroom Observation

The observation of 5 different foreign teachers' classroom teaching shows that all foreign teachers have tried a wide range of teaching methods and activities to motivate students to study but students from a large size class tend to be more silent and passive. For those students whose language proficiency is higher, they are more confident and comfortable in participating the activities such as teamwork, case study, presentation, role play, debate and public speaking. Some foreign teachers are not really good at timing the specific teaching procedures, which will have a direct effect on the teaching objective, teaching plan and the efficiency and effectiveness of actual teaching.

3. IMPLICATIONS AND COUNTERMEASURES

The findings from this study are relevant and additive to the existing literature because they provide a practical,

evidence-based approach to manage cultural shock. First, in western universities faculty and staff have provided insufficient support for international students when they have to adapt to new academic culture and western lifestyle while the academic culture shock for foreign teachers in China is that most students remain silent either because of language proficiency or cultural differences. Language is the key to accessing the influence of intercultural differences because understanding a culture without speaking its language is shallow and superficial. This is because the values and worldview of a particular cultural group are embedded within their language use. The better intercultural communication is often constructed and reinforced through the language, and proficiency of that language, one masters. In a high-context culture, silence holds strong contextual meanings such as self-humbling and politeness by downplaying oneself via modest talk, restraint, hesitation, and self-deprecation concerning one's performance or effort. But English, a lingua franca, is a dominating language in foreign teachers' class and this determines a certain degree of language and culture inferiority for Chinese students. Accordingly, students should improve linguistic competency and pay much attention to the content meaning while foreign teachers should be patient enough to employ empathy for students by slowing the pace, avoiding using jargons, idioms or complex expressions, consciously pausing, and trying to paraphrase classroom languages when necessary so as to convey intended meanings. Both the language and cultural pragmatic rules should be understood and incorporated into the realm of appropriate communication. The differences between low context and high context communication patterns should be made be aware of to counteract our own ethnocentric tendency to negatively evaluate those with communication characteristics different from our own. Second, cultural sensitivity should be developed for both foreign teachers and students. Understanding and accepting differences do not mean that we have to agree with another culture's viewpoint, or that we have to adopt another culture's values. Instead, foreign teachers and students should examine priorities in teaching and learning and determine how they all can best work together, being different to achieve the objectives. When foreign teachers are sensitive to Chinese culture and knowledgeable about it, they adjust their thinking and behavior so that they are capable of applying theories and teaching methodologies to the practical teaching in classroom. In order to better enhance the learning outcome, Chinese students should actively practice public speaking, coordinate teamwork and cultivate critical thinking without reducing academic standard. Third, the source for recruitment of high quality foreign teachers should be explored and relevant experts should be involved to the exact recruitment process by screening out the resumes, serving interviewers or observing demo teaching class. The orientation, training

and developing should be planned and done regularly to enable foreign teachers to follow the policies and standards. Foreign teachers teaching performance evaluation should be managed in an ongoing process by having regular meetings, class observations, workshops, academic presentations and even joint research programs.

CONCLUSION

Culture shock has an effect on high education performance both in foreign countries and China. Personal preparation and social supportive network are effective to address the side-effects. Despite the fact that the privacy of foreign teachers, students and international affairs administrators is highly protected, bias does exist and the sample is not big enough in terms of demographic and academic differences. Blended research can be applied with quantitative and qualitative methods.

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