

S&R Essay 1

by He Zhang

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Dr. Murphy

Reading and Writing in StepUp Program

19th September, 2018

The Mystery of Culture Shock

What will happen if you plant a chestnut tree in a tropical forest? How about planting a cactus into temperate deciduous woods? Some plants would ~~have no opportunity to~~ survive in a totally different environment, while some others would adapt and become a member in the new flora. Just as plants change to ~~adapt~~ the new community, people stepping into a new culture would encounter various levels of mental challenges ~~changing in certain degrees~~. Therefore, what factors matter ~~in these degrees~~? One author proposes a “culture-baggage theory” to explain the phenomenon, but his or her perspective is wrong; international students on American campuses should analyze culture shock from the differences of cultures and differences among individuals, seeking answers for its origin.

In the informative essay, “Culture Shock and Adaptation”, the author draws readers’ attention to ~~the phenomenon~~, culture shock, and provides ways to accommodate the western culture. Culture shock happens because “invisible culture baggage will play a major role in the adaptation abroad (Culture Shock and Adaptation, 2016).” Then, some obvious things happen: losing sleep, becoming angry and even being depressed. The author also suggests ways to become used to a different culture: sharing feelings with locals and making friends in the new environment. Last but not least, adaptation to a new culture would enhance culture awareness of self-identity rather than losing one’s original identity.

It is true that everyone travelling to another country has his or her own native culture but, in the author’s opinion, this original identity is a burden for travelers wishing to adopt a new environment, causing problems in their new social setting. However, this does not explain why

some students may suffer greatly from culture shock, experiencing severe mental issues, such as depression and anorexia, while others suffer slightly. More importantly, scholars cannot distinguish a “light culture baggage” from a “heavy one” as everyone would build up their own social image by immersing into their own culture. Therefore, the theory of culture baggage proposed by the author is not sufficient and two other factors, the difference between the two cultures and that between individuals, contributes to culture shock.

The difference between the original culture and the culture a person steps into is a key element in determining the degree of the culture shock. Every culture has its own roots, growths, and derivations. These histories inside and outside a certain culture provide connection and communication between two different cultures, resulting in that international students suffer from relatively fewer culture shock. For example, in the history of Chinese immigration to the US, during 1861-1890, the apex of immigration, 77% of new immigrants concentrated in California (Takaki, 1999), building ingrained connection between Chinese culture and the American culture. Therefore, according to the 2010 Census, California maintains the greatest number of Chinese Americans (1,253,100). With large number of Chinese immigrants on campus, University of California, Los Angeles has well established Chinese culture around campus. Therefore, Chinese international students find clubs and study groups with almost all Chinese students and integrate into the local community by firstly establishing friendship with some American born Chinese. These newcomers would find they could speak Chinese to discuss homework in libraries, satisfy their stomachs with food from K-town restaurants, and use Wechat to say hello with classmates. Therefore, this historically created culture landscape on campus provides little handicap for Chinese international students to become numbers community. Although international students on campus have their own baggage, the items inside their baggage are almost no different from those in the culture environment, providing a contradiction to the culture baggage theory.

Besides the gap between two different cultures, the difference between individual adaptability would also contribute to the culture shock. The phenomenon that some Chinese international students in UCLA adapt local culture effortlessly, integrate into the society comfortably, and even succeed at the first quarter academically should not make us fail to remember that still a few students suffer from serious nostalgia and culture shock. It is sociologically and psychologically important for the researchers to inquire into the condition that some Chinese international students receive serious culture shock even in Chinese-culture-dominated American college campuses, such as UC Irvin. Besides, it should be remembered that even some students who know how to integrate into local society more or less consciously avoid doing so. Therefore, the author would not explain all these phenomena without paying more attention to the difference between individual students but just saying “the culture baggage”.

The author does present us an excellent topic for international students to learn but, without considering the difference between either two cultures or two individuals, the author does not provide a solid foundation for the rest of the argument. Consequently, with careful consideration on the difference between the two cultures and among single students, the immigrated flora will thrive in and contribute to the new community

Reference

plural

Culture shock and adaptation. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.oru.edu/current-students/my-campus-life/international-center/orientation/culture-shock.php?locale=en>

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PAGE 1



Comment 1

Don't turn in papers with this line.

Strikethrough.



Comment 3

not



Commonly Confused

Commonly Confused Words:

Words that have similar sounds but different meanings often cause trouble for student writers. Please watch for such confusions in your writing.

Some of the more common of these common confusions include:

Accept (to receive) and except (to leave out)

Affect (to influence) and effect (result or to accomplish)

Allusion (an indirect reference) and illusion (a false perception)

Its (possessive form of "it") and it's (contraction of "it is")

Their (possessive form of "they"), there (indication of location, and they're (contraction of "they are")

Then (next or at that time) and than (used in comparisons)

To (toward), too (also or excessively), and two (number)

Your (possessive form of "you") and you're (contraction of "you are")

Additional Comment

adapt vs. adopt



Comment 4

This is a great word choice.

Strikethrough.

Strikethrough.



Comment 7

Very clear first paragraph. It could possibly have been improved by giving the reader a preview of exactly why the author of the article is wrong.

Strikethrough.

Strikethrough.



Comment 10

Very clear and objective summary of the article.

PAGE 2



Comment 11

I don't understand this.



Comment 12

Good, clear thesis.



Comment 13

suffering

Strikethrough.



WC

Word choice error:

Sometimes choosing the correct word to express exactly what you have to say is very difficult to do. Word choice errors can be the result of not paying attention to the word or trying too hard to come up with a fancier word when a simple one is appropriate. A thesaurus can be a handy tool when you're trying to find a word that's similar to, but more accurate than, the one you're looking up. However, it can often introduce more problems if you use a word thinking it has exactly the same meaning.

Additional Comment

lesser, or less severe

QM

article error

Additional Comment a

QM

article error

Additional Comment

the

Strikethrough.

QM

plural

QM

WC

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Additional Comment

homework

QM

WC

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Additional Comment

members?

PAGE 3



Comment 16

Interesting conclusion! I really like how you brought it back to the flora metaphor from the opening paragraph.

PAGE 4

QM

plural



Comment 17

Good job finding sources to back up your argument!



Comment 18

I already told you that his last name is Takaki. It should be: Takaki, Ronald.