

## **The Relationship between Chinese Identity, Friendship, and Language Skills for Ethnic Chinese International Students in China**

An Ran, South China University of Technology

This paper is a pilot-study examination of the relationship between the Chinese self-identity of international students of Chinese ethnicity and their Chinese language skills, their ability to develop friendships with local Chinese people, and their academic and social adjustment when studying at a Chinese university. Ninety-one international students of Chinese ethnicity at a large university at South China completed a questionnaire and answered additional open-ended questions about these factors. The results show that feelings of dissatisfaction with not having Chinese friends is significantly correlated with the desire to make Chinese friends; Chinese language skills are positively related to whether or not a student had Chinese friends; but valuing Chinese identity is not correlated with Chinese language skills; and there is no significant correlation between having Chinese friends and valuing Chinese identity. A framework of psychological and social adaptation is used to identify the characteristics of adaptation by these ethnic Chinese international students. This study notes that host institutions and societies need to improve their sensitivity to multiculturalism, if they are to assist international students of Chinese ethnicity to complete their adaptation as soon as possible and thus have satisfying academic and social experiences. These responses need to be guided by more comprehensive research on the needs of such students at universities in China.

Growing international interest in Chinese language and culture has followed the rapid development of the Chinese economy and global political influence. Confucius Institutes are being established worldwide at an ever-increasing rate and it is clear that Chinese language and education soon will occupy a prominent place on the international education platform. According to the yearbook of the Ministry of Education, China (2007), there were 162,000 international students in China in 2006. Altbach, the comparative educational expert, estimates in his article, "Higher Education Crosses Borders" (2004), that there will be 800 million internationally mobile students worldwide in 2025. Altbach also mentions the pull and push factors affecting this mobility. Pull factors attract students to a particular study destination and push factors refer to the domestic factors that motivate people to study abroad. If Chinese universities want to recruit more international students, they will need to identify and address the pull factors that are within their control. One of the most important of these "pull factors" is the perceived welcome international students receive from the host institution reflected in the actual assistance provided to them to adjust as quickly as possible to new academic and social demands. Providing such assistance is an effective way of quickly increasing the attractiveness of an institution as a destination for international students. In the paper, "Needs Analysis of Different Areas of Asian students in China" (An & Zhang, 2008), the authors point out that Chinese universities must become aware of the difference in the cultural backgrounds of international students and, in particular, the values underpinning

these differences, Institutions must use this knowledge to adjust the traditional or unsuitable responses to the needs of international students if they are to participate effectively in, and benefit from, the upsurge of international student mobility. [A model of intercultural communication competence for staff in Chinese universities has been provided by An's team (An, Zhang, & Hao, 2008).]

Staff who deal with international students at Chinese universities, notice that a large portion of international students are ethnic Chinese and that they exhibit some differences from other international students in their self-identity and adaptive behavior. However, there is an absence of research by Chinese universities about these students. Using the keywords in the phrase "students of ethnic Chinese," a search of Chinese academic journals was conducted, and only 61 references were found; half of those were news reports. There is only one substantial study by Wang Ai Ping (2000, 2005, 2006), who has nine papers about ethnic Chinese from Indonesia. The lack of research in China about ethnic Chinese international students suggests that Chinese universities may not be aware of the special needs of such students and that they have no policy framework for responding to those needs. Research on these matters is important and urgent for the following reasons:

1. Chinese universities need to develop a deeper appreciation of the different educational and social needs of international students of Chinese background and have a research-based framework for assisting their intercultural adaptation
2. Such research will also guide Chinese government decision making about policies and programs aimed at encouraging ethnic Chinese to study in China and assisting in their adaptation.
3. This research will contribute to the body of knowledge about these unique students and to theories of intercultural adaptation.

#### Literature Review

Intercultural adaptation refers to a process of a group or a person altering their habits, attitudes and points of view in order to meet the needs of a change in the social environment (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Searle and Ward (1990) point out that there are two forms of intercultural adaptation: psychological adaptation and social adaptation. Psychological adaptation relates with emotional well-being and satisfaction; while social adaptation relates to acquisition of cultural skills, in order to participate comfortably in a specific social cultural environment. Both psychological and social adaptation forms are aspects of two perspectives on the process of acculturation. Psychological adaptation emphasizes feelings of human beings in the process of acculturation, as categories of pressure and adaptation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Social adaptation mainly refers to behavior levels of acculturation, and can be understood as social skills and interaction capability. Berry (1997, 2003) talks about psychological/individual acculturation and cultural/group level acculturation. The strategies used by immigrants to maintain their culture while adjusting their attitudes and behavior to the host-group culture can traverse assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Assimilation refers to the process in which immigrants replace their old cultural habits and customs with those of the host culture. Separation occurs when immigrants strongly prefer their own customs and habits and refuse to use those of the host culture; their activities are

restricted within their own group. On the other hand, when immigrants are not able to mix with the host culture and in addition have lost their own cultural forms, the process is known as marginalization. Keeping both one's own culture and the host culture is thought of as integration. With almost no exception, researchers discover that immigrants usually adopt a strategy of integration, and least prefer a strategy of marginalization (Berry, 1997; Sam, 1995; Van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998). For effective psychological adaptation, integration is the best state and marginalization is a sign of difficulties in adaptation (Berry & Sam, 1997). During the process of adaptation, assimilation is better than separation, but it also depends on environmental factors (Birman, 1994).

Researchers also examined two variables, environmental and individual, to map the factors that influence effective individual intercultural adaptation (Berry, 1997; Matsumoto et al., 2001; Ward, 2001). Environmental factors refer to characteristics of the society of origin and the society in which an individual settles and has to adapt; individual factors refer to socio-demographic and personality characteristics. Berry (2003) analyzed these two variables and discovered a generally consistent pattern. The success of psychological adaptation is predicted by individual difference, personal adaptation strategy, and social support. Effective social adaptation is determined by the level of social knowledge, the degree of contact with the host culture, and inter-group attitude. Effectiveness in both dimensions of adaptation could be predicted by the acculturation strategies applied by the individuals studied. Bochner (1982) presented studies on psychological adaptation. These studies try to find resolution of the pressure on immigrants and attempt to explain how to solve the problems. Studies on social adaptation pay attention to the communication process between immigrants and people of the host culture. Based on the thought that a social link connects psychological adaptation and culture study, people of different culture could help each other to finish the process of psychological adaptation. The overall proposition is that psychological adaptation is easier to achieve among intercultural groups, while social adaptation needs immigrants to communicate with people of the host culture.

In this paper, the relationship between Chinese identity, friendship, and language skills is identified to show how ethnic Chinese adapt themselves in the two perspectives of psychological and social adaptation. The first and prior psychological adaptation by ethnic Chinese is about their identification and social adaptation displays in communication with local Chinese students.

## Research Method

### *Participants*

The questionnaire had two parts. The first part was targeted toward 91 ethnic Chinese international students. It recorded demographic information such as age, gender, major area of study, country of origin, to which expatriate Chinese generation they belonged, their level of identification with their Chinese heritage, and their Chinese language skills. These students attended a large comprehensive university in South China where the researcher works and is familiar with students' identities, cultural backgrounds, and adaptation problems.

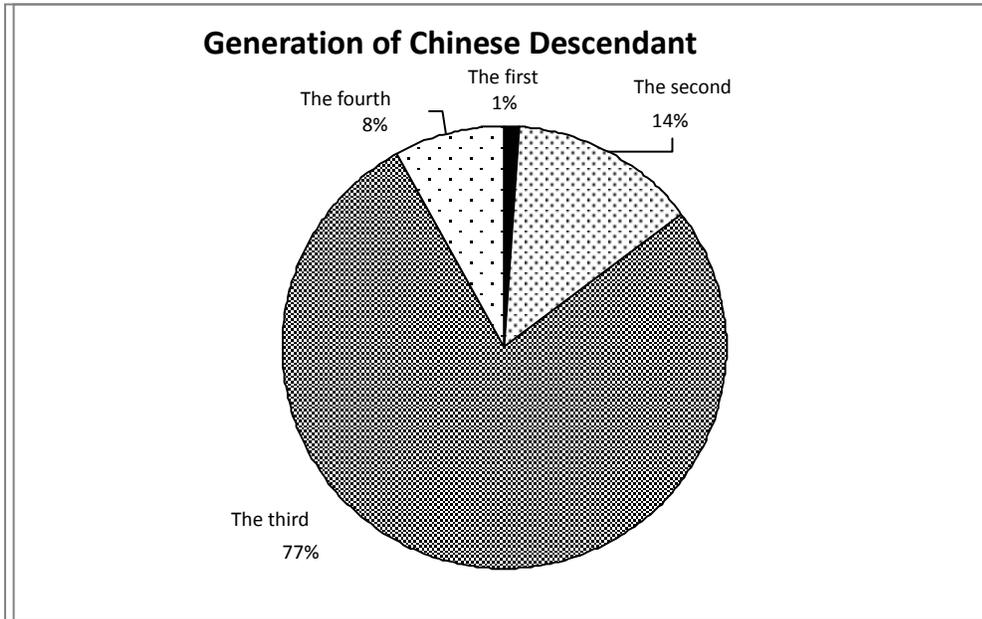


Figure 1. Generation of ethnic Chinese (p.29)

[Note: 77% of students are third generation, 14% of students are second generation, 8% of students are fourth generation, and only 1% of students are first generation.]

Most international students of ethnic Chinese overwhelmingly come from third generation expatriate ethnic Chinese.

Six students who had stayed in China for an extended period of time and were accustomed to university life in China were then selected for in-depth interviews about (inter alia) their feelings of intercultural adaptation, their reasons for choosing to study in China, who decided (parent or student) that they would come to China, and problems in communication with Chinese students. (The results of these interviews have been explored in another paper.) These interviews formed the design of the second part of the questionnaire (see Appendix).

#### *Procedure*

The questionnaire used in the current study looked at the relationship between Chinese identity, friendships, and language skills. It focused on identifying the situation of crossing, mixing, and separation between the two dimensions of psychological and social adaptation during the process of intercultural adaptation. In order to collect more reliable information and feedback, the questionnaire was designed in two parts, one part containing multiple-choice questions and the other with open-ended questions from which the authors hoped to obtain more unpredicted information. The questionnaire was produced as a Chinese version

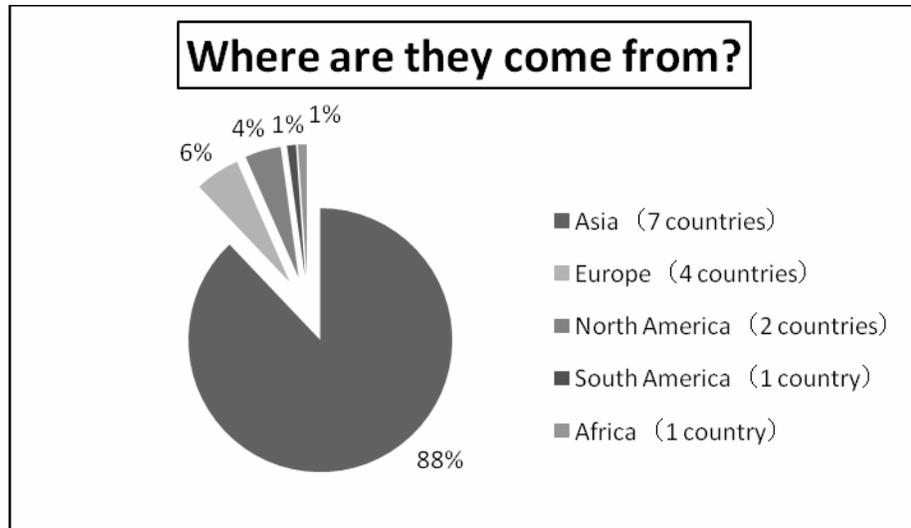


Figure 2. Region of Origin (p. 30)

[Note: 88% of students come from countries in Asia where most expatriate populations of ethnic Chinese are located. Only 6% of students come from Europe, and 4% of students come from North America. Data source are rare from countries in South America and Africa.]

and translated into English for those who were not able to read Chinese. Students chose one of the language versions to complete the questionnaire and also to answer the open-ended questions by themselves.

The total number of students who participated was 91; the number of collected questionnaires was also 91, and all were suitable for analysis. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to each of the students and made sure students completed it individually.

The questionnaires were categorized into two groups according to multiple choice and open-ended questions. The percentage of each item was calculated for the answers in all multiple-choice questions. The responses to the open-ended questions were categorized according to the similarity of content. This was done by one researcher and two assistants respectively according to the set categories. Each choice was given a specific point. The point is based on the degree of closeness to Chinese, the highest point is 4, the lowest point is 1. The following is an example:

Do you have best Chinese friend in your class? 1) yes (4 points); 2) yes but not very close (3 points); 3) no (2 points); 4) other (1 point).

## Results

Through the first questionnaire, some information such as the generation of ethnic Chinese was collected.

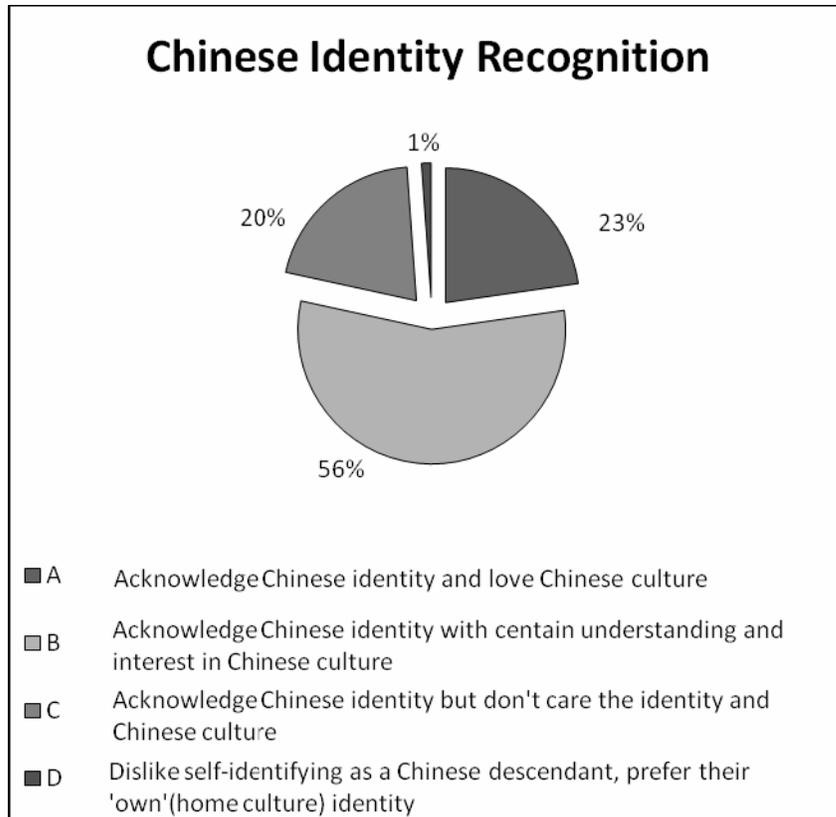


Figure 3. Recognition of Chinese Identity

[Note: Almost all students in the study group acknowledge their Chinese identity and value Chinese culture, although to varying degree.]

All but one student agreed that they had a Chinese identity. If their parents are all ethnic Chinese, these students think “I am Chinese”, but this varied in degree, as some think “I am half Chinese”. If one parent is Chinese, and the other is not Chinese, students (only one in the statistics) will think “I am not Chinese”. But generally, from collected data, almost all students have a Chinese identity. Chinese identity here refers to ethnic Chinese whose forbears were Chinese and emigrated abroad.

Through correlation analysis of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) to whole items, the results of the second questionnaire are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation analysis results for the second questionnaire.

		Whether have Chinese friends	The best friends ?	If without best Chinese friend, I will ...	Do you really want to have Chinese friends?	Agree Chinese identity?	Which period do you feel very lonely?	Whom do you want to talk when feeling lonely?	Generation	Chinese language skill
Whether have Chinese friends	Pearson Correlation	1	.218*	.154	.194	.130	.012	-.137	-.066	.280**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036	.148	.063	.216	.909	.194	.547	.007
	N	92	92	90	92	92	92	92	86	90
The best friend is ...	Pearson Correlation		1	.222*	.141	-.023	.050	-.043	-.012	.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.036	.182	.831	.636	.685	.910	.977
	N			90	92	92	92	92	86	90
If without best Chinese friend, I will ...	Pearson Correlation			1	.539**	.034	.055	.152	.030	.089
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.748	.607	.153	.786	.406
	N				90	90	90	90	85	89
Do you really want to have Chinese friends ?	Pearson Correlation				1	.151	-.078	.091	-.067	.202
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.151	.459	.386	.540	.057
	N					92	92	92	86	90
Agree Chinese identity	Pearson Correlation					1	.090	.102	-.086	.160
	Sig. (2-tailed)						.393	.334	.429	.132
	N						92	92	86	90
Which period do you feel very lonely?	Pearson Correlation						1	-.013	.106	-.185
	Sig. (2-tailed)							.902	.333	.081
	N							92	86	90
Whom do you want to talk when	Pearson Correlation							1	.086	-.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
	N									

	Sig. (2-tailed)								.429	.944
	N								86	90
Generation	Pearson Correlation								1	-.156
	Sig. (2-tailed)									.152
	N									86
Chinese language skill	Pearson Correlation									1
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
	N									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).										
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).										

1. “No Chinese friend, hence will be very sad” is significantly correlated with “really want to have Chinese friends” (.539).
2. “No Chinese friend” is correlated with “Chinese language skills” (.280), while Chinese language skills are not correlated with Chinese identity.
3. There is no significant correlation between Chinese identity and having Chinese friends, nor between Chinese identity and “not feel loneliness.”

The results of open-ended questions:

1. How do you define “good friends”?

Results show the following responses:

They...

- 1) Help you when you are in difficulty
- 2) Can communicate when you are sad or happy, sharing pain and joy.
- 3) Can be trusted, respectful and faithful.

2. Do you think you need to make good Chinese friends and why?

The first three responses were represented by most of the students, the fourth and fifth are individual opinions:

- 1) Yes, it can help me to improve my Chinese.
- 2) Yes, we can ask them for help in life and study.
- 3) Yes, we can learn Chinese culture by communication.
- 4) I don’t know, I feel Chinese are not polite and cunning (3 people).
- 5) I don’t need to, I feel it is difficult to communicate with them, I feel that I have enough friends from my own country (4 people).

3. In your opinion, what’s the benefit of making Chinese friends?

There are two kinds of responses:

- 1) To improve Chinese.
  - 2) To learn Chinese culture and the environment.
4. How can you make Chinese friends? What are the difficulties in making Chinese friends?  
The first two were responses from most of the students; the last two responses were from a few students:
- 1) Try to find chances to communicate with Chinese, live with them. The difficulties are the poor level of Chinese language, which makes it hard to communicate with them.
  - 2) Try to participate in Chinese activities, but actually we are involved in very few.
  - 3) It is not difficult (6 people).
  - 4) I don't want to make friends with Chinese (5 people).
5. While communicating with Chinese, what is the most satisfactory and unsatisfactory aspect?  
The responses are mainly in two forms:
- 1) The most satisfactory aspect is that we can learn Chinese and Chinese culture; the unsatisfactory aspect is that they just want to learn English and not use Chinese while communicating with us.
  - 2) The unsatisfactory aspect is we cannot understand their Chinese language and experience difficulty in communication.

From the results of the above open-ended questions, one can see that Chinese language proficiency is highly correlated with whether or not one has Chinese friends.

#### Discussion

- 1) International students of Chinese ethnicity show evidence of needing to adapt themselves psychologically.

Chinese identity is not correlated with making Chinese friends, nor does recognition of Chinese identity mean the acculturation will be quicker. According to correlation analysis, the feeling of having no Chinese friends is significantly correlated with wanting to have Chinese friends. That is, students of Chinese ethnicity recognise their Chinese identity, and would like to join and mix with local Chinese groups, and have more Chinese friends. From the results of open-ended questions, it can be seen that these students actually do not have many Chinese friends. Recognizing their Chinese identity does not appear to help them make local Chinese friends. While adopting Chinese identity means the psychological distance to the host culture is shortened, in the actual process of making friends, these students of Chinese ethnicity still appear to lack the practical adaptive behavior to build local friendships. Students who had set a clear target of making Chinese friends and pursued this with determination were able to speed the development of their skills in intercultural communication, and to make Chinese friends. In the process of psychological adaptation, students of Chinese ethnicity should be at an advantage in that they have identified their Chinese identity. This means they do not need to significantly change their perception of identity; rather they appear to need more direct support in practical adaptation processes.

The concept of self-monitoring was first introduced to the psychology literature by Snyder (1974). It has been elaborated on by Wolfe, Lennox, and Cutler (1986). Self-

monitoring refers to the ability to regulate oneself in social interaction. It involves one's behavioral adaptation and thought adjustment. It requires a capacity to empathize with those in the host culture and develop appropriate communication and behavioral styles. Those who are good at self-monitoring demonstrated high sensitivity to behavioral and communication signals in the social environment. They would analyze different indicators in order to decide a proper way to respond (Snyder, 1987). They are quick in learning new ways of reacting. They are not only able to adjust themselves according to the feedback of social interaction but also have a higher tendency to control the conversation and context while communicating with strangers (Graziano & Waschull, 1995). These people are able to extend their knowledge by obtaining new information, and adjust themselves based on it. In contrast, those who are not good at self-monitoring were slow to react to the new social environment. Their behavior remains consistent with their existing feelings, attitudes, and values (Clark & Reis, 1987; Snyder, 1974). Facing the new social environmental demand, these people are not very sensitive and less conscious of the need to modify their behavior (Snyder & Kendaierski, 1982).

Kosic, Mannetti, and Sam (2006) analyzed the relationship between acculturation strategies, self-monitoring and adaptation by immigrants. Using adaptation indices as criteria in moderated multiple regression analysis, they found the mutual effects of assimilation, integration and self-monitoring. They noticed that self-monitoring is closely related to psychological and social adaptation in all the regressions.

- 2) Both ethnic Chinese students and Chinese students should realize that social adaptation needs two-way communication.

Kashima and Loh (2006) examined five adaptation dimensions (psychological adaptation, social adaptation, acquirement of host culture and knowledge, original culture, university student identity) and interactions with the form of established social networks (mono-cultural network, the bicultural network, and the multicultural network). They found that the adaptation process for Asian students in Australian universities was influenced by their personal interaction with other international students, their original culture, and host culture. They pointed out that international students who have frequent contact with host culture students will reduce adverse pressures and speed psychological adaptation. All of this suggests that Chinese universities should help students of Chinese ethnicity to understand that Chinese identity is not enough for intercultural adaptation; they need to develop self-monitoring capabilities; they need to have the sensitivity and skills to identify the differences in the host culture; and they also need to adjust themselves by adopting appropriate behavior and communication.

The ideal state for the adaptation process of international students of Chinese ethnicity should be: the recognition of their Chinese identity and having Chinese friends. However, the reality is that: Chinese identity—Chinese language proficiency—having Chinese friends. The correlation analysis shows, “no Chinese friend” and “really wants to have Chinese friends” is significant in indicating dissatisfaction with psychological adaptation. Analysis of the open-ended questions shows that there are two kinds of motivations to make Chinese friends: one is the route to improve Chinese language, and the other is to learn Chinese culture. Both are very positive attitudes, and display the basic requirement and cognition towards intercultural

adaptation. As it is pointed out, intercultural adaptation is not a simple one-way flow; host culture attitude also decides the speed of intercultural adaptation. In fact, choosing an acculturation strategy will involve several factors. It includes social factors (e.g., culture distance, immigration policy in host country); social-demographic (e.g., age, gender, level of education, length of residence), and individual (e.g., cognitive and personality characteristics). It is not only the will of immigrants that could finish the process of acculturation; it is also constrained by the host society. In other words, the host society could control the process and degree of acculturation (Kosic, Mannetti, & Sam, 2005; Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006). Liu (2007) carried out a comparative research between Australian White and Asian immigrants to learn their attitudes towards multiculturalism, and the impact of these attitudes on acculturation. Liu argues that acculturation is a two-way process. Actually immigrants adapt themselves in host society easily, quickly and naturally. However, for those in the host society, they find it more difficult to adapt their own concepts and behavior to accept immigrants, because they do not have such sense or psychological preparation. From the open-ended question category analysis, it also shows that Chinese students are not well-prepared cognitively or psychologically to accept international students of Chinese ethnicity. Chinese primarily look at the one-way benefits of interacting and communicating with international students. For example, while answering questions about what causes the most happiness and sadness when communicating with Chinese, many responses are similar to: “the most happiness is we can learn Chinese and Chinese culture, the sadness is they just want to learn English and not use Chinese while communicating with us.”

The limitation of this research is that the number of participants is not large enough for effective correlation analysis. Two language versions of the questionnaire might influence the meaning equivalence. A larger scale and comprehensive research on international students of Chinese ethnicity should be undertaken to extend this pilot research to better understand factors influencing their thinking, attitude, motivation, and adaptation to studying in a cross-cultural environment.

From the analysis of the questionnaire, the sense of making friends and attitude towards learning Chinese, by students of Chinese ethnicity, are positive and correct. However, some Chinese students' exploitative approach to interactions with these students hinders the success of their acculturation. This appears related to the Chinese students' attitude towards multicultural interactions, i.e., cognition of multiculturalism by Chinese students. Several decades of economic openness and development should be paralleled by a growing awareness in Chinese society of the implications for its own cultural openness. Zhang (2008) explains that the political base of Tang dynasty in China is harmony and tolerance. The characteristic of Tang tolerance and openness is shown as easily and calmly coming in and out of cultures. Now, when Chinese think about “take it as mine to use,” “use Western ways in Chinese practice,” etc., they should also adopt and show the unique style and dignity of Tang dynasty in embracing tolerance. Du (2008) emphasized that “strong culture should own its strong capability in adaptation” (p. 68). It is very important to educate Chinese university students with a sense of multiculturalism, openness, and tolerance. We should realize that a sense of multiculturalism can be trained. First, one should have a sense of surpassing all culture forms. That is, the sense of multiculturalism is built on the concept that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” This is similar to what Kim (2008) states, “Intercultural identity is an open-ended, adaptive, and transformative self-other orientation” (p. 364). In fact, obtaining the

attitude of being open towards other cultures expands the awareness of the culture of origin. This expansion is to enrich the knowledge of human beings. It is the contribution to human society.

Further research is needed to more definitively identify the attitude of Chinese staff and students towards international students of Chinese ethnicity, and to provide insights into their opinions and reactions to the process of intercultural adaptation by those students. This would provide a more comprehensive assessment of both points of view.

- 3) It is necessary to identify the intercultural adaptation attitude and motivation of students of Chinese ethnicity undertaking Chinese language study.

The data show that there is a significant correlation between Chinese language proficiency and making Chinese friends; Chinese language proficiency is not correlated with Chinese identity. Learning a second or new language, especially for study mobility is very complicated and is confounded by challenges to culture and identity. Schumann (1976) raises two concepts: social distance and psychological distance. Social distance refers to distance from one culture to another, in the view of an individual learner. The larger the distance between two cultures, the more difficult it is for one to learn the second language. Sakuragi (2006) examines the relationship between the attitude of language study and intercultural study attitude. He cites four intercultural attitudes, which relate to language study. The first two are based on results of Corbin and Chiachier (1995). The last two are based on the results of Gardner and Lambert (1972). The first attitude is the general recognition of learning a foreign language from an educational point of view. The second attitude is the special interest in a specific language. The third is the instrumental attitude, which refers to obtaining advantages through foreign language study, such as a good job or a social position. The fourth is integrative attitude, which refers to the idea that through foreign language study, one can become a member of a cultural group and also involves the desire to establish interpersonal relationships with others in the target cultural group. As Sakuragi further points out, the general recognition of the value of learning a foreign language is significantly correlated with global and social distance; special interest in a specific language is significantly correlated with global and social distance; instrumental attitude is not related with global and social distance.

Whether the results of this research support these assumptions or not needs further exploration. For example, there needs to be studies to identify whether Chinese proficiency of ethnic Chinese students are related to social distance and their integrative attitudes as well. Further, it should be asked how the instrumental attitude interacts with the integrative attitude among students of Chinese ethnicity.

### Conclusion

Through a questionnaire, this paper examined international students of Chinese ethnicity, the relationship between their Chinese identity, language skills, and capacity to establish Chinese friendships. Ninety-one international students of Chinese ethnicity at a large university at South China completed a questionnaire and answered additional open-ended questions about these factors. The results show that feeling sad about not having Chinese

friends is significantly correlated with the desire to make Chinese friends; Chinese language skills are positively related with whether or not one has Chinese friends; Chinese identity is not correlated with Chinese language skills; and there is no significant correlation between having Chinese friends and Chinese identity. Analysis from two factors of psychological and social adaptation identifies the characteristics displayed by students of Chinese ethnicity in the intercultural adaptation process. The study points to the need for the host society to improve its sense of multiculturalism and assist these international students of Chinese descent to successfully adapt as quickly as possible. Even without the cultural identity problems facing other international students, students of Chinese descent still have difficulty in Chinese language study which forms the main hindrance to effective communication with Chinese students. This phenomenon is worthy of further study by researchers in intercultural communication.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire for International Students

Dear international student:

Thank you for filling this Questionnaire, it's valuable to our research that you finish this paper seriously and independently. This paper is used for the research only.

For the open questions, please fill up the line and write clearly. For the single-choice question, please make (√) on the preferable option.

School of International Education of SCUT

2008-05-23

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. Single-choice questions

1. Do you have some good Chinese friends at this university: yes I have, but not good enough no other
2. Your best friends are: Chinese schoolmates fellow countrymen at university other international students other
3. If you don't have good Chinese friends, you will: unsatisfied make friends with fellow countrymen make friends with people from other countries it doesn't matter
4. Do you really want some Chinese friends? very in some degree it doesn't matter no
5. You identify yourself as: Chinese half Chinese your passport nationality Other
6. In which period you feel most lonely while studying in China: always first year the first six months never
7. The one you want most to talk with when you are in lonely, painful or joyful situation:

Chinese friends  International friends  fellow countrymen  family members or just myself

## II. Open-ended questions

1. How do you define “good friends”?
2. Do you think you need to make good Chinese friends and why?
3. In your opinion, what is the benefit of making Chinese friends?
4. How to make Chinese friends? What are the difficulties while making Chinese friends?
5. What are the most satisfactory and unsatisfactory things when communicating with Chinese friends?