



# Language Association Journal

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers, Inc.

---

---

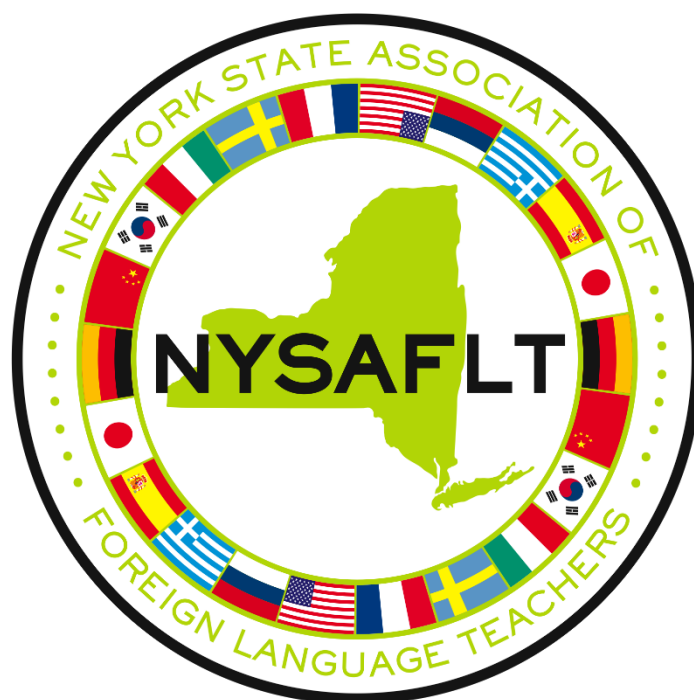
Vol. 69

2020

No. 2

---

---



## **Language Association Journal**

A publication of the  
New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers  
2400 Main Street Buffalo, New York 14214  
716.836.3130 [www.nysaft.org](http://www.nysaft.org)  
Founded 1917

---

### **2020 Executive Committee and Staff**

President: Leslie Kudlack, Greenville Central Schools  
President- Elect: Sally Barnes, Croton-Harmon UFSD  
First Vice-President: Jenny Delfini, New Paltz Central Schools  
Second Vice-President: Marissa Coulehen, Dobbs Ferry School District  
Secretary-Treasurer: Valérie Greer, Bay Shore UFSD  
Executive Director: John Carlino, Buffalo State College

### **2020 Board of Directors**

Anna Collie (2022), Capital-East, Greater Amsterdam School District  
Rose DiGennaro (2020), Western, East Irondequoit CSD  
Daniel Edwards (2022), Mid-Hudson/Westchester, Pine Bush CSD  
David Graham (2020), Capital-East, Clinton Community College  
Brianna Jaspersohn (2022), Central, Lagargeville CSD  
Michael LaPaglia (2021), Western, Kenmore-Tonawanda UFSD  
Wendy Mercado (2022), NYC/Long Island, Bay Shore UFSD  
Stewart Smith (2021), Central, Liverpool Central Schools  
Michele Sennon-Britton (2020), NYC/Long Island, NYCDOE  
Alexis Thornton (2021), Mid-Hudson/Westchester, Putnam Valley CSD

### **Language Association Journal Editor**

Mary Caitlin Wight, Ph.D.  
[mary.caitlin.wight@gmail.com](mailto:mary.caitlin.wight@gmail.com)

### **Editorial Board**

Marium Abugasea Heidt, Ph.D., SUNY, The College at Brockport	Megan Fleck, Mt. St. Mary Academy
Christina Agostinelli-Fucile, Ph.D. Northeastern University	MaryNoel Goetz, Argyle Central School
Carolina Bustamante, Ph.D., SUNY Old Westbury	Bill Heller, Perry SD, Retired
D. Reid Evans, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts	Charlene Sirlin, Pierre Van Cortlandt MS
	Beth Slocum, Genesee Valley Educational Partnership
	Joanne O'Toole, Ph.D., SUNY Oswego
	Ling Zhai, University at Buffalo

**Contact NYSAFLT headquarters for detailed information about advertising specifications.**

---

All rights reserved. No part of the *Language Association Journal* may be reprinted or stored in a retrieval system without prior permission of the editor. Contact [info@nysaft.org](mailto:info@nysaft.org) for further information.

## Letter from the Editor

---



Dear Colleagues,

While we only have one article for this edition of the journal, I am hard pressed to think of an article that would better fit the current needs of our field, our state, and our nation. Dr. Moon and Mr. Hu's work regarding the building of interpersonal relationships across cultures gives us insight into what it is like to create bonds in settings where we are different than one another. They stress the importance of opportunities for conversation and for listening to each other. I am reminded of the insight that we often listen to respond rather than listen to understand. During this time of rebuilding in our country, may we focus on listening to understand from those who are different in language, in culture, and in world understandings than ourselves so that we may rebuild a more just world for our students, our communities, and ourselves.

Wishing you and yours health, peace, and comfort,

Mary Caitlin

# Call for Papers

---

The Language Association Journal is the official peer-reviewed journal of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT). The audience for this journal includes world language educators at all levels, teacher educators, administrators, and others who are interested in world language education. To address the diverse interests, focuses, and needs of this audience, each issue of the Language Association Journal allows for three submission types—scholarly articles, reports, and teacher-to-teacher articles—across multiple categories that are organized by key words, including, but not limited to: advocacy, assessment, culture, curriculum, FLES, instruction, issues in the profession, language development, literacy development, methods, policy, professional development, teacher preparation, technology. While previously the journal was thematic, we now welcome submissions from a range of topics for each edition. The Language Association Journal is published two times per year.

## Submission Guidelines

---

- Publication Status
  - Your manuscript must not be previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- Language
  - Write your manuscript in English.
  - You may include examples written in languages other than English. Italicize these and include the English translation.
- Content
  - Your manuscript may be a scholarly article, a report, or a teacher-to-teacher article.
  - Graphic content such as tables, charts, and photographs, should enhance your written content.
  - Key word categories: advocacy, assessment, culture, curriculum, FLES, instruction, issues in the profession, language development, literacy development, methods, policy, professional development, teacher preparation, technology.
  - Present content that is appropriate for the audience of the Language Association Journal; that is accurate, timely and relevant; that extends or deepens what is currently known on the topic; that represents innovation or new ways of thinking; and that bridges theory and practice.
- Length
  - Limit scholarly articles to no more than 8,000 words.
  - Limit reports to no more than 5,000 words.
  - Limit teacher-to-teacher articles to no more than 3,000 words.
- Writing and Style
  - Write in active voice and with language that can be understood by all audiences of this journal. Define terms that may be unfamiliar to readers.
  - Include only and all works cited in the reference section.

- Use style guidelines outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7<sup>th</sup> edition* (2019). See <http://www.apastyle.org> for style support.
- Replace all references that would reveal your identity in the manuscript with generic terms such as *Author X* or *School X*.
- Proof-read your manuscript to ensure that it is error free.
- Technical Considerations
  - Prepare the manuscript in a word document (.doc or .docx) using Times New Roman font size 12, double-spaced.
  - Assure that any external links included or hyperlinked in the manuscript are active at the time of submission.
  - Indicate the placement of any graphics (e.g., charts, tables, illustrations, student work) or photographs, within the word document. (You will submit these in separate files.)
  - Remove any evidence of tracked changes that were used in the writing of the manuscript.
- Permissions
  - Photographs
    - Your photographs must have high resolution and in a standard file format (e.g., .jpeg) and be the property of the author.
    - Obtain written consent for publication from anyone recognizable in your photographs. (You will submit this in a separate file.)
  - Graphics
    - Obtain written consent for any graphics (e.g., charts, tables, illustrations, student work) that are not your own or that are not copyright free. (You will submit this in a separate file.)

### **Manuscript Submission Guidelines**

- Submit your manuscript and any additional files (e.g., graphics, photographs, consent forms) that have been prepared according to the above guidelines through the submission form on the NYSAFLT webpage.
- In your manuscript submission, provide a brief biography to include at the end of your article or report if it is published.
- Upon receipt of your manuscript submission, the Editor will send you an acknowledgement email and an approximate timeline for review of your submission.

### **Manuscript Review**

- After the Editor has received your manuscript and completed on-line information form, he or she will do an initial review to assure that your submission abides by the stated guidelines.
- If the submission abides by the guidelines, the Editor will forward the manuscripts to one or two members of the Editorial Board for anonymous evaluation and publishing recommendation. If the submission does not abide by the guidelines, the Editor will communicate this information to you.
- When all reviews are returned to the Editor from the Editorial Board, the Editor will make the final decision regarding the manuscript's publication and will notify you about the submission's status.
- All manuscripts accepted for publication are subject to editing.

# Table of Contents

---

Factors Influencing Chinese International Students' Friendships with American Students

So-Jin Moon & Zhengqi Hu .....[7](#)

# Factors Influencing Chinese International Students' Friendships with American Students

So-Jin Moon & Zhengqi Hu

---

**Abstract:** Chinese international students in American colleges experience a difficult time interacting with American peers (Leong, 2015; Yan & Berliner, 2013). This study investigated the factors affecting Chinese international students' friendships with American students. A survey with quantitative and qualitative questions was distributed to Chinese international students in a college in New York. The results showed that Chinese international students have little interactions with American students with cultural factors as the major hindrances over a language barrier, which contrasts previous research. Suggestions for educators to help Chinese international students better interact with American students are also discussed.

**Keywords:** Chinese international students, American students, friendship, social interaction, peer interaction, adjustment, language barrier, cultural experience

Increasing numbers of international students are coming to the United States to study (He & Huston, 2018; Will, 2016), and Chinese students represent the largest body of international students in the United States (Institute of International Education, 2019). Interactions with host nationals are critical for international students because social interactions are highly correlated with their adjustment and academic success (Hausmann, Ye, Schofield, & Woods, 2009; Longerbeam, DeStefano, & Lixin, 2013). However, many researchers have revealed that there is not much interaction between international students and domestic students in and outside of the classroom (Cruickshank, Chen, & Warren, 2012; Kimmel & Volet, 2012). Previous literature indicated that cultural differences, educational differences, and language barriers are the main factors that prevent international students from having a close relationship with American peers (Longerbeam et al., 2013; Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Yan & Berliner, 2009; Yuan, 2011).

Leong (2015) claimed that "students with familiarity and knowledge of the English language and with American ways of doing things were more prepared to handle both institutional and societal-wide demands and expectations. They also developed more friendships" (p. 460). For this reason, Asian international students tend to experience greater stresses and difficulties in developing friendships with host nationals compared to European students, who have greater English proficiency and familiarity with American culture (Fritz, Chin, & DeMarinis, 2008; Trice, 2007; Yan & Berliner, 2013; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, and Roy (2014) argued that Chinese international students experienced more difficulties than other Asian countries because China and the United States have maximum cultural distance. Students from collectivistic cultural backgrounds such as China may prioritize a close relationship and may feel a disparity when interacting with American peers, who have individualistic cultural beliefs such as independence and self-reliance (Cross, 1995). Therefore, those students from collectivistic backgrounds may perceive social relationships with American students as superficial (Cross, 1995;

Ra & Trusty, 2017; Yan & Berliner, 2013) and feel disappointed because of the Americans' individualist belief in friendship (Mori, 2000; Xiong & Zhou, 2018; Yan & Berliner, 2013). Furthermore, Chinese international students often encounter host nationals' indifference or prejudice when they try to build a relationship with them. In turn, they choose to avoid developing a relationship with them (Hail, 2015; Tian & Lowe, 2009). Therefore, they tend to remain exclusively in the group of their co-nationals (Yeh & Inose, 2003; Yuan, 2011) because they believe the interaction with their co-nationals is more beneficial for their social and emotional needs (Yan & Berliner, 2013).

Segregation or minimal interaction between Chinese international students and domestic students is also frequently observed in the classroom because of their different educational backgrounds (Cruickshank et al., 2012). Chinese international students are unlikely to participate in class discussions, raise questions, and engage in critical reflections and arguments because they were taught to be passive in class (Durkin, 2011; Huang, 2012; Ross & Chen, 2015; Yuan, 2011). Silence is considered an act of respect for their teachers and politeness towards their classmates by not wasting their time in the Chinese classroom (Liu, 2002). However, in the American classroom, students actively participate in class and ask questions directly. Chinese international students' disengagement and silence in classrooms remains a problem because "classroom silence is perceived as a lack of communication and preparation by both domestic students and teachers" (Ross & Chen, 2015, p. 18). Due to their educational background, Chinese international students may feel uncomfortable in the classroom with American students (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009) and isolate themselves by choosing to stick together with other Chinese students (Cruickshank et al., 2012).

A number of scholars have argued that international students' insufficient English is the most challenging factor for the majority of international students including Chinese students when they adjust to an American culture (He & Hutson, 2018; Huang, 2006; Leong, 2015; Lin & Yi, 1997; Mori, 2000; Yan & Berliner, 2009, 2013; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Yuan, 2011), and this hinders Chinese international students' friendships with American students because a lack of English proficiency negatively affects the quality of their communication (Leong, 2015; Liu, 2009; Xiong & Zhou, 2018).

The extant research is generally on academic performance and acculturation issues of international students, but research on the friendship between the two major groups on campus, American students and Chinese international students, has not gained much attention despite interaction being the most important factor in reducing international students' transition stress (Moores & Popadiuk, 2011). In this study, we will investigate the frequencies of Chinese international students' interactions with American students and the factors that influence their friendships. Results of this study provide insight for higher education professionals to better understand Chinese international students' relationships with American students and to support their friendships.

### **Research Questions**

To examine these relationships, this work aims to answer two research questions that follow:

1. How often and in what ways do Chinese international students interact with American students?
2. What, if any, are the hindrances for Chinese international students' friendships with American students?



## **Method**

### **Participants**

Nine undergraduate Chinese international students enrolled in an intermediate or advanced Korean language course at a university in New York in Fall 2019 participated in this study. They were all born and raised in mainland China, and thus their first language was Chinese. Only female students participated because there were no male Chinese international students enrolled in the courses. Two students were seniors, five were juniors, and the other two were sophomores. Their length of stay in the United States ranged from 2 to 5 years, with an average of 2.9 years.

### **Data**

Before data collection, the researchers of the study obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at their institution. The participants were recruited to participate in the survey by their language teacher. Data were collected from a survey designed to investigate the factors affecting Chinese international students' friendships with American students. There were 12 items in the survey, 10 multiple choice and 2 open-ended questions. The survey questionnaires consisted of four parts: demographic information, self-evaluated English proficiency, and frequency of activities with American students as well as the opened-ended questions such as participants' self-stated reasons for likes or dislikes of spending time and building friendships with their American peers and obstacles of developing friendships with them on campus (Appendix A). The researchers developed the survey questions based on the survey form of the "Preliminary Questionnaire" which conceptualized the friendship between American and Chinese international students (Huang, 2008) as well as the researchers' prior experiences regarding the relationships with American students. The participants were allowed to write their qualitative responses in Chinese in order to allow for more accurate descriptions, and the written data were translated into English by the native Chinese author. The survey was conducted during the participants' class time, but their language teacher was not present while the survey was conducted. The survey was not part of their course requirements.

### **Data Analysis**

The SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was utilized to analyze the quantitative data, and descriptive statistics were used to report quantitative findings such as the frequency of the participants' activities with American students. As for the qualitative data obtained from the opened-ended questions in the survey, the participants' answers written in Chinese were translated into English by the Chinese researcher, and then the participants were asked to review the English translation of their descriptive data because a member check is an essential part to improve the accuracy, credibility, validity, and transferability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process provided the participants with an opportunity to correct any wrong interpretations. The researchers read through the participants' answers to get an overall impression of various reflections in the responses. After that, the qualitative data were open-coded, synthesized into common themes, and analyzed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), according to the research questions such as cultural differences that hinder their friendships and different interests and concerns that affect their friendships with American peers.

### **Results**

All of the participants' first language was Chinese, and their average daily language use was Chinese 63.3%, English 28.9%, and other 7.8% (mostly Korean since the participants were Korean language learners). According to the self-assessment of the participants' English proficiency, all the abilities of speaking, writing, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension were average or above average (good or excellent), except that one student marked

below average in her listening comprehension. All their speaking and listening comprehension are equal or better than their writing and reading comprehension, except for one participant.

Figure 1 demonstrates that almost all the participants engaged in their daily activities (eating out, hanging out, talking about their life, having activities, etc.) with American students 1-2 times a week or less. A higher number of students had interactions 1-2 times a week with American peers in studying school subjects, compared to the other activities, because they often have group work from the classes they take.

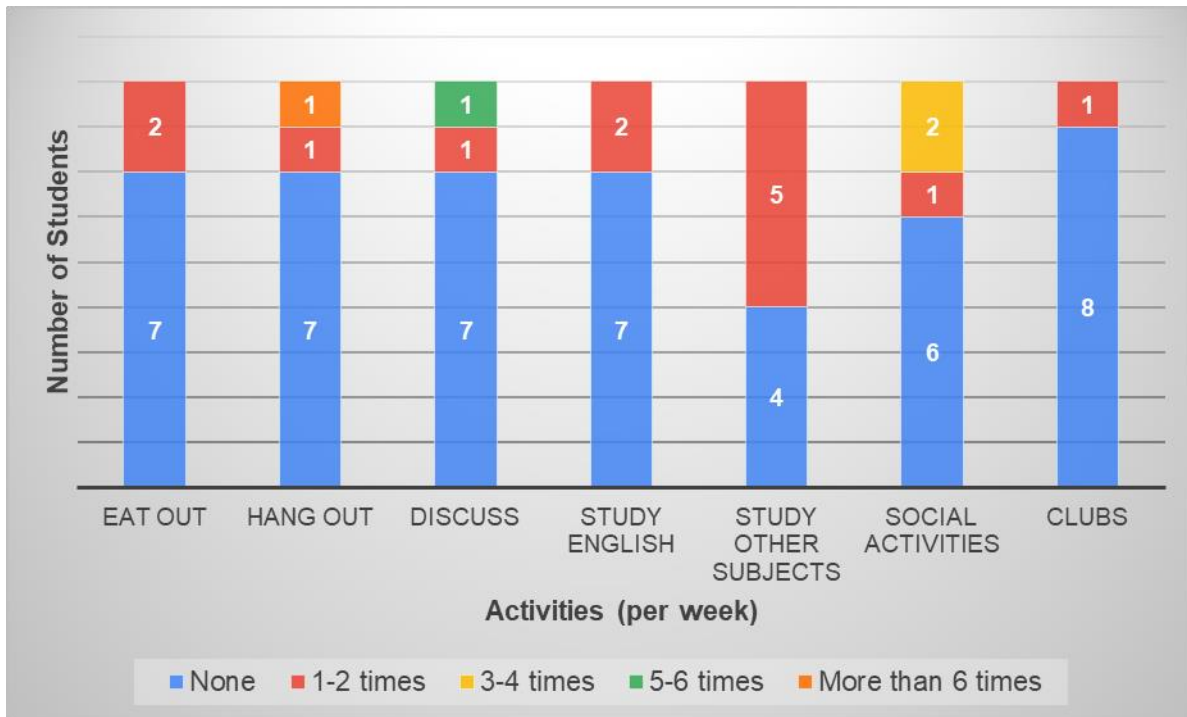


Figure 1. Frequency of activities of Chinese international students with American students

The qualitative data indicated that different cultural backgrounds, different interests, and language barriers are the factors that make the participants reluctant to interact with American peers. The biggest reason for few interactions with American students was cultural differences. Six participants reported that the cultural differences between the two countries disrupts their friendships with American students. For instance, some participants indicated that Chinese and American people are different in many ways such as how they think, how they view life and the world, how they behave, and even what they eat. For this reason, many of the participants said that they do not want to build a relationship with American peers and just wanted to spend time with other Chinese or Asian international students, rather than facing the conflicts. One participant said that it is somewhat useful to get used to the local life and culture but did not want to adopt cultural practices.

Another reported reason for the limited contacts between the two groups was different interests. Five participants stated that their personal interests and concerns were different from American students, so they hardly shared their interests or concerns with American peers. One student mentioned that she preferred hanging out with Chinese friends, and sometimes Korean friends since they have similar interests, unlike with American peers.


Two participants reported the language barrier as one of the factors that hinders their friendships with American students. However, both of them also mentioned that language was a

hindrance mainly when they first came to America. One student said when she came to the U.S. for the first time, it was hard to communicate with American students because of the language barrier, but it is better now.

### Discussion

A number of scholars have suggested that Chinese international students struggle with developing friendships with American students due to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and clashes in values (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Leong, 2015; Yan & Berliner, 2013). Aligned with the previous research, most of the participants reported that the different cultural backgrounds and different ways of thinking between Chinese and American students make communication difficult in developing their friendships. Cross-cultural differences in a social relationship may affect the relationship between international students and American students (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992; Xiong & Zhou, 2018). For example, Chinese people value the ideology of collectivism (Cruickshank et al., 2012; Triandis, 1995); thus American values of individualism and their tendency for self-centered behavior are not well accepted by Chinese students (Yan & Berliner, 2013). Yum (1988) also argued that East Asian communication patterns and that of North Americans' are very different because East Asians value social relationships mainly based on Confucianism, which emphasizes human and interpersonal relationships, while North Americans value individualism more. Although some Chinese students desired to develop more relationships with American students, they often failed to make American friends because it is difficult to develop close or meaningful friendships with them (Xiong & Zhou, 2018; Yan & Berliner, 2013). Therefore, they spend little time with Americans (Xiong & Zhou, 2018) and end up sticking with co-national students due to the conflicts (Chen & Ross, 2015; Pettigrew, 1998; Will, 2016; Xiong & Zhou, 2018; Yan & Berliner, 2011, 2013). Chen and Ross (2015) claimed that Chinese international students feel more comfortable within co-national groups because their friendship provides more social, academic, and psychological support than American students. For instance, while Chinese international students often experience loneliness when studying abroad (Longerbeam et al., 2013) and need emotional support from friends, most East Asian international students feel a lack of emotional support from American students, which negatively impacts their psychological adjustment (Xiong & Zhou, 2018).

One interesting finding from the qualitative data was that the cultural difference and values are greater hindrances than the language barrier for impeding the participants' friendships with American peers, while a number of previous research has found that language is the most challenging factor for Chinese international students' friendships with American students (He & Hutson, 2018; Huang, 2006; Leong, 2015; Lin & Yi, 1997; Mori, 2000; Yan & Berliner, 2009, 2013; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Yuan, 2011). The results of the participants' self-evaluated English proficiency also showed that the participants still had difficulty interacting with American students



*... the cultural difference and values are greater hindrances than the language barrier for impeding the participants' friendships with American peers, while a number of previous research has found that language is the most challenging factor...*

despite being confident with their English ability. Additionally, some researchers maintained that international students have a hard time interacting with American peers because their listening and speaking proficiency is low compared to their writing and reading proficiency (He & Hutson, 2018; Huang, 2006; Yan & Berliner, 2013). The obtained data, however, showed that the participants were more confident in their speaking and listening comprehension than writing and reading comprehension. These findings showed that, at least for the participants in this study, English proficiency is not a major factor that hinders the participants' relationship with American students.

Another critical factor that affected the participants' relationship with American peers was different interests and concerns. Most of the participants indicated that they are different from American students in terms of interests, thoughts, personalities, and even food preferences. This is aligned with previous literature. Scholars have argued that Chinese international students' interests and concerns are different from American students because they have to deal with not only linguistic barriers (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Will, 2016; Xiong & Zhou, 2018) and cultural differences (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Thakkar, 2011; Xiong & Zhou, 2018) but also legal status (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Yan & Berliner, 2013), financial support (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Xiong & Zhou, 2018), different educational system (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Thakkar, 2011; Will, 2016; Xiong & Zhou, 2018), job opportunities (Yan & Berliner, 2013), and food selection (He & Hutson, 2018). For example, legal status is one of the Chinese international students' biggest concerns, and often obtaining a green card is their interest in the United States (Huang & Rinaldo, 2009; Yan & Berliner, 2013) whereas American students are free of this concern.

### **Implications**

A good relationship between Chinese international students and host nationals is beneficial not only for Chinese international students to better adapt to the host culture (Yuan, 2011), but also for domestic students to enhance the campus diversity experience and to contribute to global citizenship (Longerbeam et al., 2013). Friendship for international students starts from the classroom, but it is not an easy job for many Chinese international students to make American friends or build up a friendship with them in the classroom (Xiong & Zhou, 2018). Some scholars argued that the biggest barrier to meaningful relationships between international students and host students is the lack of opportunities to interact with each other (Talbot, Geelhoed, & Ninggal, 1999; Yang, Teraoka, Eichenfield, & Audas, 1994). This is aligned with Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis. Allport argued that one of the best ways to relieve the conflicts between groups is interpersonal contact. Especially when majority and minority group members are involved, properly managed interpersonal contact can offer not only a chance to understand each other but also reduce any prejudice, stereotypes, and discriminations and greatly benefit international students' learning (Pettigrew, 2008). Longerbeam, DeStefano, and Lixin (2013) also argued that the increase of interaction between international students and host nationals positively influences the perception of the classroom climate, and in turn, affects international students' successful transition and academic success. In this sense, teachers can play an important role in improving the two groups' relationship by increasing the contact between the two student groups in the classroom through peer collaboration or group work (Abe, Talbot, & Gellhoed, 1998; Cruickshank et al., 2012; Westwood & Barker, 1990). Some researchers found that international students in the peer programs with host nationals rated significantly higher social adjustment than the non-participants (Abe et al., 1998; Westwood & Barker, 1990). In addition, Valdez (2015) claimed that peer collaboration between international students and domestic students can also reinforce international students' language development and cultural understanding. Therefore, teachers

should include activities and opportunities into the formal curriculum for international students to increase student interaction with American students so that they can adjust to the new culture and educational environment more easily (Valdez, 2015) while also obtaining more social, academic, and psychological support from American students (Chen & Ross, 2015). Additionally, providing activities or opportunities to share each party's interests is necessary because friendship is developed based on their mutual interests (Xiong & Zhou, 2018).

Host nationals are also responsible for diminishing the segregation with international students in the classroom, but the role of domestic students' attitudes and behaviors toward international students has often been neglected (Brown, 2009; Dunne, 2009). One participant of this study said that she did not want to build a relationship with American students because she did not have a good experience of group work with American students. Therefore, it is important for teachers to provide domestic students with some guidance to reduce any prejudice or conflicts toward international students, which results from the different cultural backgrounds before implementing peer collaboration. For instance, teachers need to teach domestic students that Chinese students' silence is not a lack of communication or preparation but an act of respect for their teacher and politeness to classmates (Ross & Chen, 2015).

*[I]t is important for educators to be alert that our goal for international students is not assimilation, but integration.*

Lastly, it is important for educators to be alert that our goal for international students is not assimilation, but integration. Kim (2001) suggested that we need to look at cross-cultural adaptation through the lens of integration because cross-cultural adaptation is an interactive process between newcomers and the host environment as well as between the new culture and the old culture. He and Hutson (2018) also argued that interactions with American students should be encouraged while international students' cultural identity is maintained (i.e., integration). Teachers should understand the background ideologies of Chinese international students to respect their identity. At the same time, teachers need to help Chinese international students to

incorporate different cultures and friendships by creating some activities that engage them in working with other ethnicities in order for them to be able to build a variety of relationships with others. More practically, when they sit by themselves, teachers can intentionally ask the students to sit by other domestic students to break Chinese international students' tendency to confine their relationship to co-nationals, which may increase their isolation from American culture and society and negatively influence their English proficiency improvement and adjustment to a new environment (Yan & Berliner, 2013).

### **Future Studies**

In future research, a greater number of Chinese international students should be recruited to obtain a complete picture of their friendship patterns and hindrances with American students. Due to the small scale of this study, the findings should not be generalized, although this study provided meaningful findings of Chinese international students' friendship with American students. To enhance the validity of the research, the diversity of participants, such as male students and different proficiency levels of students as well as participants from other universities because campus differences can be a significant factor due to different campus climates and attitudes toward foreigners in different regions, should be included (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Future studies should utilize large scale surveys to obtain a broad understanding of Chinese international



students' friendship as well as the real language proficiency test for more complete results, rather than self-evaluation. This study can be expanded to other Asian international students because they may have similar friendship patterns with American students. American students' perspectives about their friendships with Chinese international students could also be an interesting study.

### **Conclusion**

Today, more than ever before, increasing numbers of Chinese international students come to American universities, but not much attention has been paid to their friendships with domestic students despite social interaction being a critical factor for international students' adjustment and academic success. This study found that, at least within this particular context, Chinese international students' social interaction with American students is considerably low, and the greatest hindrance for the little interaction was cultural differences rather than language proficiency, which contrasted much previous research. Teachers can and need to be of assistance by employing peer collaboration through formal curricula and providing its instructions for both groups in order to reduce any prejudice or conflicts due to the different cultural backgrounds while working together. The findings and recommendations provide higher education professionals with a better understanding of and support for Chinese international students.

## References

- Abe, J., Talbot, D. M., & Gellhoed, R. (1998). Effects of a peer program on international student adjustment. *Journal of College Student Development*, 39(6), 539-547. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.464.510&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Brown, L. (2009). A failure of communication on the cross-cultural campus. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(4), 439-454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315309331913>
- Chen, Y., & Ross, H. (2015). "Creating a home away from home": Chinese undergraduate student enclaves in US higher education. *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 44(3), 155-181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810261504400307>
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.
- Cross, S. E. (1995). Self-construals, coping, and stress in cross-cultural adaptation. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 26(6), 673-697. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002202219502600610>
- Cruikshank, K., Chen, H., & Warren, S. (2012). Increasing international and domestic student interaction through group work: A case study from the humanities. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31(6), 797-810. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.669748>
- Dunne, C. (2009). Host students' perspectives of intercultural contact in an Irish university. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(2), 222-239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315308329787>
- Durkin, K. (2011). Adapting to western norms of critical argumentation and debate. In L. Jin & M. Cortazzi (Eds.), *Researching Chinese learners* (pp. 274-291). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230299481\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230299481_13)
- Fritz, M. V., Chin, D., & DeMarinis, V. (2008). Stressors, anxiety, acculturation and adjustment among international and North American students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32(3), 244-259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.01.001>
- Hail, H. C. (2015). Patriotism abroad: Overseas Chinese students' encounters with criticisms of China. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 19(4), 311-326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315314567175>
- Hausmann, L. R., Ye, F., Schofield, J. W., & Woods, R. L. (2009). Sense of belonging and persistence in White and African American first-year students. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(7), 649-669. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9137-8>
- He, Y., & Hutson, B. (2018). Exploring and leveraging Chinese international students' strengths for success. *Journal of International Students*, 8(1), 87-108. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i1.153>
- Huang, J. (2006). English abilities for academic listening: How confident are Chinese students? *College Student Journal*, 40(1), 218-227.
- Huang, J., & Rinaldo, V. (2009). Factors affecting Chinese graduate students' cross-cultural learning. *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies*, 4(1), 1-13. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2346/18587>
- Huang, Y. (2008). *Conceptualizations of friendship between Chinese international students and U.S. nationals* (Unpublished master's thesis). Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX. Retrieved from [https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2346/18587/Huang\\_Yijia\\_Thesis.pdf?sequence=1](https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2346/18587/Huang_Yijia_Thesis.pdf?sequence=1)

- Huang, Y. (2012). Transitioning challenges faced by Chinese graduate students. *Adult Learning*, 23(3), 138-147. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1045159512452861>
- Institute of International Education. (2019). Top 25 places of origin of international students, 2012/13-2018/19. *Open Doors Report on international Educational Exchange*. Retrieved from <http://www.iie.org/opendoors>
- Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kimmel, K., & Volet, S. (2012). University students' perceptions of and attitudes towards culturally diverse group work: Does context matter?. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 16(2), 157-181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315310373833>
- Leong, P. (2015). Coming to America: Assessing the patterns of acculturation, friendship formation, and the academic experiences of international students at a US college. *Journal of International Students*, 5(4), 459-474. Retrieved from <https://ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/download/408/325>
- Lin, J. C. G. & Yi, J. K. (1997). Asian international students' adjustment: Issues and program suggestions. *College Student Journal*, 31(4), 473-479. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-00065-007>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newberry Park.
- Liu, J. (2002). Negotiating silence in American classrooms: Three Chinese cases. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 2(1), 37-54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708470208668074>
- Liu, M. (2009). Addressing the mental health problems of Chinese international college students in the United States. *Advances in Social Work*, 10(1), 69-86. <https://doi.org/10.18060/164>
- Longerbeam, S. D., DeStefano, T. J., & Lixin, Y. (2013). "We cannot reach them": Chinese undergraduate student perceptions of the US campus climate. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 50(3), 326-344. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jsarp-2013-0023>
- Mallinckrodt, B., & Leong, F. T. (1992). International graduate students, stress, and social support. *Journal of College Student Development*, 33(1), 71-78.
- Moore, L., & Popadiuk, N. (2011). Positive aspects of international student transitions: A qualitative inquiry. *Journal of College Student Development*, 52(3), 291-306. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2011.0040>
- Mori, S. C. (2000). Addressing the mental health concerns of international students. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 78(2), 137-144. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2000.tb02571.x>
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual review of psychology*, 49(1), 65-85. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65>
- Pettigrew, T. F. (2008). Future directions for intergroup contact theory and research. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32(3), 187-199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2007.12.002>
- Ra, Y. A., & Trusty, J. (2017). Impact of social support and coping on acculturation and acculturative stress of East Asian international students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 45(4), 276-291. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12078>
- Ross, H., & Chen, Y. (2015). Engaging Chinese international undergraduate students in the American university. *Learning and Teaching*, 8(3), 13-36. <https://doi.org/10.3167/latiss.2015.080302>
- Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., McDaniel, E. R., & Roy, C. S. (2014). *Intercultural communication: A reader* (14<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.



- Talbot, D. M., Geelhoed, R. J., & Ninggal, M. T. H. (1999). A qualitative study of Asian American international students' attitudes toward African Americans. *NASPA Journal*, 36(3), 210-221. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.1081>
- Thakkar, D. (2011). Social and cultural contexts of Chinese learners: Teaching strategies for American educators. *Multicultural Education*, 19(1), 51-54. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ986897>
- Tian, M., & Lowe, J. (2009). Existentialist internationalisation and the Chinese student experience in English universities. *A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 39(5), 659-676. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920903125693>
- Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Trice, A. G. (2007). Faculty perspectives regarding graduate international students' isolation from host national students. *International Education Journal*, 8(1), 108-117. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ841723.pdf>
- Valdez, G. (2015). US higher education classroom experiences of undergraduate Chinese international students. *Journal of International Students*, 5(2), 188-200. Retrieved from <http://ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/download/434/351>
- Wang, C. C. D., & Mallinckrodt, B. (2006). Acculturation, attachment, and psychosocial adjustment of Chinese/Taiwanese international students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53(4), 422-433. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.53.4.422>
- Westwood, M. J., & Barker, M. (1990). Academic achievement and social adaptation among international students: A comparison groups study of the peer-pairing program. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 14(2), 251-263. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(90\)90008-k](https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(90)90008-k)
- Will, N. L. (2016). From isolation to inclusion: Learning of the experiences of Chinese international students in US. *Journal of International Students*, 6(4), 1069-1075. Retrieved from <http://ojed.org/index.php/jis/article/download/434/351>
- Xiong, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2018). Understanding East Asian graduate students' socio-cultural and psychological adjustment in a US Midwestern University. *Journal of International Students*, 8(2), 769-794. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i2.103>
- Yan, K., & Berliner, D. C. (2009). Chinese international students' academic stressors in the United States. *College Student Journal*, 43(4), 939-960.
- Yan, K., & Berliner, D. C. (2011). An examination of individual level factors in stress and coping processes: Perspectives of Chinese international students in the United States. *Journal of College Student Development*, 52(5), 523-542. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2011.0060>
- Yan, K., & Berliner, D. C. (2013). Chinese international students' personal and sociocultural stressors in the United States. *Journal of College Student Development*, 54(1), 62-84. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2013.0010>
- Yang, B., Teraoka, M., Eichenfield, G. A., & Audas, M. C. (1994). Meaningful relationships between Asian international and U.S. college students: A descriptive study. *College Student Journal*, 28(1), 108-115. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1994-39278-001>
- Yeh, C. J., & Inose, M. (2003). International students' reported English fluency, social support satisfaction, and social connectedness as predictors of acculturative stress. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 16(1), 15-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0951507031000114058>

- Yuan, W. (2011). Academic and cultural experiences of Chinese students at an American university: A qualitative study. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 20(1), 141–157. Retrieved from <https://web.uri.edu/iaics/files/11WenliYuan.pdf>
- Yum, J. O. (1988). The impact of Confucianism on interpersonal relationships and communication patterns in East Asia. *Communications Monographs*, 55(4), 374-388. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637758809376178>

---

So-Jin Moon is a Korean language program coordinator in the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies at SUNY Binghamton and has taught the Korean language for ten years. She received her MA in Linguistics (TESOL) at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. She is currently researching in the doctoral program of Teaching, Learning and Educational Leadership at SUNY Binghamton. Her specialty is Korean education and English education. The area of her research interest is foreign/second language and culture.

Zhengqi Hu holds a Master of Education Degree from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania and two Bachelor's Degrees from Shenyang Normal University and Fort Hays State University. He has taught in various classroom settings including teaching in Caesar Rodney School District, W.B. Simpson Elementary as a 4th-grade Chinese immersion teacher as well as co-teaching in Older Adult Learning Center from East Stroudsburg University. Zhengqi Hu is dedicated to becoming a life-long educator and currently pursuing a Doctor of Education degree as a full-time student at Binghamton University. Hu is also the co-founder of Zhengdao Productions that committed to producing educational videos.

## Appendix A Survey

### **The purpose of the survey:**

The purpose of this survey is to understand Chinese international students' friendship patterns with American college students.

### **Definition of “American”:**

Someone who is a native or citizen of the United States and their native language is English.

### **Participant Background Information:**

Please read the following statements and **circle** the most appropriate response for each statement that best reflects your information.

#### **A. Gender:**

1. Male            2. Female            3. Other

#### **B. School year:**

1. Freshman    2. Sophomore    3. Junior    4. Senior

#### **C. Your native language:**

1. Chinese        2. English        3. Other language (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

#### **D. How long have you been in the U.S.?**

1. Less than 1 year    2. 1-2 years    3. 2-3 years    4. 3-4 years    5. More than 4 years

#### **E. Please rate your English abilities based on your own judgment:**

1) How well do you speak English?

1. Excellent    2. Above Average    3. Average    4. Below Average    5. Very Poor

2) How well do you write English?

1. Excellent    2. Above Average    3. Average    4. Below Average    5. Very Poor

3) What is your reading ability (comprehension) in English?

1. Excellent    2. Above Average    3. Average    4. Below Average    5. Very Poor

4) What is your listening ability (comprehension) in English?

1. Excellent    2. Above Average    3. Average    4. Below Average    5. Very Poor

◆ Please read the following statements and provide Arabic numbers.

**F. Approximately what percentage of your daily language use falls in the following (total of 100%):**

English \_\_\_\_\_%      Chinese \_\_\_\_\_%      Other (name: \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_%

**G. How many American friends do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ people**

**Instructions:**

Most of the questions in this survey can be answered by circling the response that best reflects your relationship with American students. For some of the questions, you are asked to provide in-depth answers.

**1. How important do you think your friendship with American students is while you are in the U.S.?**

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Moderately important
4. Somewhat important
5. Unimportant

**2. How do you rate your knowledge about American students before coming to the U.S.?**

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very Poor

**3. How do you rate your knowledge about American students now?**

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very Poor

**4. Activities with American students:**

1) How many meals a WEEK do you eat with American students?

1. Never
2. 1-3 times
3. 4-6 times
4. 7-9 times
5. More than 9 times

2) How many times a WEEK do you hang out with American students?

1. Never
2. 1-2 times
3. 3-4 times
4. 5-6 times
5. More than 6 times

3) How many times a WEEK do you discuss your concerns with American students?

1. Never    2. 1-2 times    3. 3-4 times    4. 5-6 times    5. More than 6 times

4) How many times a WEEK do you study English with American students?

1. Never    2. 1-2 times    3. 3-4 times    4. 5-6 times    5. More than 6 times

5) How many times a WEEK do you study subjects other than English with American students?

1. Never    2. 1-2 times    3. 3-4 times    4. 5-6 times    5. More than 6 times

6) How many times a WEEK do you have social activities with American students outside the classroom?

1. Never    2. 1-2 times    3. 3-4 times    4. 5-6 times    5. More than 6 times

7) How many campus clubs or organizations (where American students are included) do you belong to?

1. None    2. One    3. Two    4. Three    5. Four

**5. Do you wish to spend more time with American students? If yes, in WHAT activities among the 7 activities above (in #4) and WHY? Please explain in detail.**

**6. Do you have a hard time making American friends or hanging out with them? If yes, what are the things do you think make it difficulty? Please explain in detail.**

**Thank you very much for your assistance!**