

THE DYNAMICS BETWEEN IMMIGRANT STUDENTS INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE/ADAPTATION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF CHINESE
IMMIGRANT STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

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As a part of the immigrant population, the number of English language learners (ELLs) has steadily increased in United States (U.S.) schools. Most of these young immigrants who come to the U.S. with their parents are not prepared linguistically and culturally for the new culture and new school system. Consequently, many of these students arrive as non-English or limited English speakers. Along with the language barriers, immigrant children face issues of cultural adjustment in schools. Low language proficiency and lack of intercultural adaptation strategies can create difficulties that could impact immigrant students' academic learning, leading to low performance and low achievement. This study examines the dynamics of the relationship between first generation Chinese students' intercultural competence/adaptability and English language learning.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Youth immigrants are one of the fastest growing populations in American schools today (Faltis & Arias, 2007). According to a previous study, immigrant students comprise 20% of the total student population in the United States (Fix & Passel, 2003). In other words, one in every five students in grades K-12 is an immigrant (Ruiz-de-Velasco, & Fix, 2000). At the high school level, immigrant students represent 6.4% of the total secondary school population (Capps et al., 2005). Most of these immigrant students are limited or non-English speakers upon entering the schools in the U.S. (Ruiz-de-Velasco, & Fix, 2000). If identified as limited English speakers or non-English speakers, immigrant students may be classified as English language learners (ELLs), limited English proficient (LEP) students, and/or English as a second language (ESL) students. As the term implies, English fluency has “limited” these students in many ways in school. For example, an inability to fluently speak English affects comprehension of daily instruction and interactions with others in school. Consequently, these students may struggle academically, have higher school dropout rates, and underperform on state and national assessments. Immigrant students often enter school with various challenges including second language acquisition and intercultural adjustments (Chao, 2013; Garcia, 2013; Rumbaut, 1997; Snow & Biancarosa, 2003).

From a linguistic perspective, language skill is an important tool that students can use to comprehend academic concepts and contents. Difficulty in English language

impacts the academic performances of immigrant students. Advanced proficiency in English language leads to high academic performances while low proficiency in English can affect and lower academic performance. Many immigrant students tend to have low scores in local and state assessments in core content courses, such as science or technical related courses, because these courses involve scientific knowledge, manipulative skills, and English language skills to demonstrate proficiency. Immigrant students “often lack the language proficiency necessary to understand the test content and academic work” (Aina, Ogundele, & Olanipekun, 2013, p. 356). Immigrant students who are limited or non-English speakers face difficulties in schools due to their lack of English proficiency (Aina, & Olanipekun, 2013).

From an intercultural perspective, the differences between cultural teaching and learning styles may additionally impact the academic learning of immigrant students. For example, class discussions and presentations are not part of the Asian immigrant students’ previous educational experience (Wan, 1999). It takes time for these students to adjust to and feel comfortable participating in these learning activities. Additionally, the difference of cultural norms between host country and home country may create cultural unfamiliarity and difficulties that requires intercultural adjustments for immigrant students to develop intercultural competence. This process further affects the immigrant students’ capacity to achieve academically (Novera, 2004).

Under the given situation, it is important to have answers for questions such as: What can educators do to help the immigrant students accelerate second language learning? Is there an effective way for the immigrant students to learn a second language? Do immigrant students’ intercultural competences impact second language learning? The

answers may reveal how immigrant students with their own culture, who came to the United States with their parents, adjusted culturally, psychologically and linguistically to the host culture without any prior intercultural training, and how this adjustment affected their acquisition of English language. Outcomes could provide insights to school leaders and staff in supporting immigrant students and in working to close the academic achievement gap.

Research Problem

The *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001 has set higher standards for education. Schools are now held accountable for all students' academic achievement. Immigrant students must meet the same academic standards as their English native-speaking peers for high school graduation. Accountability standards require ELLs to test in English before they are fully acclimated to the language (Abedi & Dietel, 2004). Many ELLs fail the tests due to lack of English proficiency rather than the lack of core content knowledge. The current accountability system has placed pressure on both educators and immigrant students (Abedi, 2004). Educators face the dual challenges of providing effective second language literacy instruction, including listening, speaking, reading and writing, while also enabling immigrant students to understand grade-level content and pass state assessments for high school graduation. For the immigrant students, the accelerated acquisition of both social and academic English, the adjustment to a new educational system as well as to other issues of immigration are significant stressors (Hakuta, 2001). Therefore, high quality of second language education with effective methods is necessary to meet the accountability standards.

Teaching and learning English as a second language have gradually become more important in education to close the achievement gap for ELLs. As a result, education policy makers, school leaders, and educators are desperately in need of effective and best practice solutions. The solutions can provide high quality of second language education to ELLs and assist them in accelerating English language proficiency, a process that normally takes students three to seven years (Fry, 2007).

Nationwide, English as a second language has been in schools since the 1960s in the United States due to the increasing numbers of immigrant students in schools. The educational organization Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) was founded in 1966 to respond to the demand for teaching and learning English as a second language at all levels of U.S. schools (Ricento, 1995). During the past 50 years, educators and experts of ESL have developed ESL curriculum and methodologies to meet the needs of a growing population of English learners. English as a second language or second language education has been well established to serve K-12 immigrant students as well as students at the college level. However, in spite of these efforts, the academic achievement of many ELLs has not improved as dramatically as expected (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). Academic achievement gaps still exist between ELLs and mainstream students: for example, less than approximately 30% of ELLs score at or above primary level in reading (Roekel, 2008). In addition, ELLs continuously have low academic achievement scores, among the highest school dropout rates, and low college enrollments nationwide (American Federation of Teachers, 2004). ELLs as a demographic group are still growing and “projected to be 40 percent of the school-age population by the 2030s, and most U.S. schools are currently under-educating this student

group” (Thomas & Collier, 2002, p. 11). Helping ELLs know the English language can enable them to make a smooth intercultural transition into the U.S. school system and culture.

Mastery of English language skills involves resources from multiple disciplines. Similar to the learning of other second languages, English acquisition is a complex process. It involves not only the learners’ cognitive, social, psychological, and linguistic practices, but also the learner’s intercultural practices. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on intercultural and linguistic perspectives. The current literature concerning second language acquisition has mainly focused on motivation, attitude and self-confidence (Krashen, 1982; Schumann, 1978). There is little literature regarding the intercultural competence/adaptation in multiple areas (e.g., intercultural knowledge, skills, and specific attitudes) of high school immigrant students, and the relationship between intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. Thus, additional study to address these issues are needed.

Significance of the Study

The academic achievement gaps between native students and immigrant students have concerned educators, school leaders, and policy makers. Each state has worked in different ways in an attempt to promote immigrant students’ academic achievement to meet the accountability requirements set by NCLB. In addition, the immigrant students’ low academic achievement resulting from language barriers and the lack of intercultural competence causes misunderstanding and confusion among educators regarding the immigrant students’ academic capabilities. When immigrant students are unable to complete academic tasks due to a lack of language proficiency, they may be misidentified

as needing special education services. The acronyms used to describe the immigrant students such as LEP students and ELL students are associated with low performance, low academic achievement, incapability, and a greater risk of not completing high school (Mays, 2008).

Furthermore, local and state assessment data show academic gaps between immigrant students and native speaking students. As a growing group of the school population, the academic achievement of immigrant students is an important part of school accountability. Therefore, second language acquisition and related factors that directly affect their academic achievement need to be addressed in order to close achievement gaps and meet NCLB standards. It is imperative that educators have a clear understanding of second language acquisition and factors contributing to second language acquisition, including linguistic and intercultural perspectives.

Research Purpose and Questions

This research study examined first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. Students were interviewed to obtain their perceptions with regard to intercultural competence/adaptation and to obtain information about what intercultural adaptation strategies they use in school environment. Parents of these students were interviewed to collect data regarding parents' perceptions about intercultural adaptation. The following research questions were used in guiding this study.

Research Question 1: What are first generation high school Chinese immigrant students' perceptions toward intercultural competence/adaptation?

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between first generation Chinese speaking high school students' intercultural competence and their English language learning?

Research Question 3: What are the intercultural adaptation strategies that first generation Chinese immigrant high school students use in a school setting?

Research Question 4: What are the first generation Chinese students' parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation?

Definitions of Key Terms

The following key terms were defined for the purpose of this study:

Academic Language refers to the vocabulary, syntax and sentence structures that students must know and be able to use in academic content classes in order to be successful.

Mastery of academic language for ELLs takes three to seven years (Scarcella, 2003).

Adolescent Immigrant Students refers to high school students who come to the U.S. with their families at ages of 15 to 18 years old (Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Páez, 2008).

Assessing Intercultural Competence Survey is a self-assessment developed by the Federation of the Experiment in International Living (FEIL) to assess an individual's intercultural knowledge, attitude, skills and awareness (Fantini, 1995, 2006).

Chinese refers to the official language spoken in China. It is the language that is used in all schools in China and by the government.

Culture refers to the beliefs, tradition, and behavior pattern that guide members of a group who are attached to it (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952).

English Language Learners (ELLs) refers to limited English speaking or non-English speaking students whose first language are not English and are in the process of learning English as a second language (Genesee, 2006).

Intercultural Adaptation Skills refers to adolescents' cultural adjustment skills in the U.S. (Hannigan, 1990).

Intercultural Competence "...is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, based on specific attitudes, intercultural knowledge, skills and reflection" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 6).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) *Act* is a U.S. federal policy that supports standards-based education reform and sets high standards to improve individual educational outcomes (107th Congress of the United States of America, 2002).

Response to Intervention is a model or an approach that addresses the needs of all students, particularly those who are struggling academically (Sanford, Brown, & Turner, 2012).

Self-Efficacy refers to the belief that individuals are able to control their own learning to a certain degree (Constantine, Okazaki, Utsey, 2004).

Social Language refers to the conversational language that high school ELLs use in social and non-academic settings. It normally takes one to three years for ELLs to become fluent in a social language (Gee, 2004).

TELPAS stands for Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System. It is a state test that assesses ELL students' English proficiency level in reading, writing, speaking and listening (TEA 2008).

Conclusion

Each year school aged immigrants are increasing in numbers in U.S. schools. From linguistic and intercultural perspectives; immigrant students, especially those who are identified as ELL students, face many challenges besides language barriers. They have to learn a new culture and get used to a new school system. As a result, many ELL students struggle academically, leading to underperformance and the possibility of dropping out of high school. Identifying the factors that impact second language learning can provide insights to promote the academic achievement of ELL students. In the next chapter, a review of literature pertaining to intercultural competence/adaptation areas (e.g., intercultural skills and knowledge), second language acquisition and learning, student intercultural strategies, students' perceptions toward intercultural competence, and parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation will be presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As a part of the immigrant population, the number of English language learners (ELL) has steadily increased in United States (U.S.) schools (Faltis & Arias, 2007). Most of these young immigrants who come to the U.S. with their parents are not prepared linguistically and culturally for the new culture and school system. Consequently, many of these students arrive as non-English or limited English speakers. Along with the language barriers, these immigrant children also face issues of cultural adjustment in schools. Low language proficiency and lack of intercultural skills create difficulties that impact immigrant students' academic learning, leading to low performance and low achievement. As a result, state and national assessment results show academic achievement gaps between immigrant students and native English speaking students.

Despite the data, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2002* (NCLB) requires all students meet the same standards to graduate from high school. ELLs must demonstrate proficiency in English-written content exams in addition to showing proficiency in reading comprehension and written composition. Many ELLs either fail the tests or show minimal progress due to lack of English skills and issues related to intercultural adjustment. Is there any relationship between language learning and cultural adaptation? To answer this question, this chapter presents a literature review pertaining to intercultural competence/adaptation, second language acquisition and learning, student

intercultural strategies, students' perceptions toward intercultural competence and parents' perceptions toward intercultural competence.

Intercultural Competence/Adaptation

Intercultural competence is defined as “the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, based on specific attitudes, intercultural knowledge, skills and reflection” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 6). Intercultural competence is also called intercultural communication competence, global competence, multicultural competence, cultural fluency, cultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, cultural intelligence, and cross cultural capability (Deardruff, 2009). No matter the term used, intercultural competence is always associated with culture or culture related concepts. For the purpose of this study, intercultural competence focuses on cultural adaptability, defined as an individual's personal capability to adjust to a new culture by learning, modifying, and managing the cultural differences (Kim, 2002).

Culture

Culture can be a broad concept because “All human behaviors and knowledge are cultural” (Jennings & Waller, 1995, p. 1). Culture also can be a specific concept that has different meaning under different perspectives. For the purpose of this study, culture is defined as value systems, communication styles, thinking and behaving patterns, norms and rules, and traditions within each country or nation (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Culture influences human behaviors because it affects the norms and rules by which individuals behave in their respective cultures (Jennings & Waller, 1995). Individuals follow their cultural value guidelines through the socialization process and produce their own behavioral guidelines for behavior across situations. Individuals also learn different patterns of interaction through socializing with other people based on their cultural rules,

values and standards of behavior (Gudykunst, Kim, Hyman, Matsumoto, Nishida, & Ting-Toomey, 1996). Additionally, culture shapes and forms individuals' values, beliefs, self-view and worldview. It directs individuals' behaviors, organizes experience and provides meaning and coherence to people's lives. Particular cultural environments lead to certain cognitive, emotional, and behavioral consequences (Cross, 1995).

Each culture may not be easily appreciated or understood by people from other cultures since each culture only gives meaning and experiences to people inside of the culture (Hinkel, 1999). Therefore, each culture only makes sense of the world within its culture and culture usually is the center of all contexts (Ferber, 2012). The meaning of the concepts is attached to and shaped by the culture (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2003).

Communication Styles

There are two types of communication styles: low-context communication and high-context communication. Low-context communication requires clear and direct messages. High-context communication style, meanwhile, uses implicit and indirect messages (Hall, 1976). People from individualistic cultures tend to use low-context communication styles and people from collectivistic cultures tend to use high-context communication styles (Gudykunst et al., 1996). Consequently, culture could become a problem due to different communication styles. Culture may also cause confusion, because different things have different meaning to different people in different contexts (Nieto, 1999). Specific examples about a culture's exclusiveness are given by Triandis (1995) on how people from different cultures communicate, think and behave. The differences are summarized as follows:

1. The communication is different.

- Content of communications is more important for people in individualist cultures. Context of the communication is given more attention for collectivist cultures.
- Silence in communication is often considered as not being happy or low competence in individualist cultures.
- Silence in communication is viewed as being wise in collectivist cultures.

2. Though processes are different.

- Thinking progresses in a single sequential series in individualist cultures.
- Thinking follows a circular pattern in collectivist cultures.

Asian Cultures

In order to understand Asian immigrant's adjustment, one must try to understand the value differences between Asian traditional cultures and mainstream values of American culture (Podeschi & Xiong, 1997). Asian cultures are more highly contextual. People from Asian cultures favor body language, which is non-verbal language or verbal hesitancy. "They were more concerned with avoiding hurting others and imposing on others" (Gudykunst et al., 1996, p. 517). American mainstream culture is more low-context. Americans pay attention to verbal expression. They are more affect-oriented and more inclined to talk (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Huang, 1994). "Culture differences lead to difficulties and conflict" (Earley & Ang, 2003, p. xi). Cultural conflict between low context and high context is a big challenge for Asian immigrants in terms of

communication styles. Culture influences an individual's behaviors, thoughts, perspectives, communication patterns and styles because people are attached to rules and norms that guide behaviors in each culture (Gudykunst et al., 1996).

Intercultural Competence Models

There are three models pertaining to the intercultural competence development process including: (a) psychological model, (b) culture shock model, and (c) ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism model. Each model has different stages and characteristics. An individual new to a culture faces some psychological changes when going through each stage.

Psychological Model

The first model is the psychological; it includes three stages. The first stage is acculturation. Individuals at the acculturation stage face cultural changes (Berry, 1997). During this stage, people might have different attitudes toward the use of coping strategies, potentially resulting in different behaviors. Individuals may move from one strategy to another until choosing to remain with a strategy that fits them (Berry, 1997).

The second stage is the psychological acculturation stage. At this stage, people experience some psychological changes. Individuals who pass the acculturation stage start behavior changes. For example, they are willing to learn a new culture and culturally appropriate social skills (Brislin, Landis, & Brandt, 1983; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). Individuals may also experience conflicts and difficulties resulting from incompatible behaviors between cultures (Berry, 1997).

The last stage, adaptation, refers to the individual's psychological and behavioral changes due to demands of the new cultural setting. Individuals may experience different

forms of adaptation. Some may feel they “fit” in the new host culture if they successfully applied assimilation or integration strategies, and they may feel accepted by people from the host culture. Alternatively, they may feel they do not fit due to their application of separation and marginalization (Berry, 1997).

Similarly, Ward, and Kennedy (1992) state that individuals have to cope with two psychological adjustments when entering a new cultural setting. One is internal psychological adjustment which includes identities and other personal or culturally related satisfaction. The other is external psychological adjustment, which includes developing strategies to cope with difficulties and conflicts when going through the developmental process of intercultural competence.

Culture Shock Model

The second model is the culture shock model. Furnham and Bochner (1986) state that culture shock is a psychological reaction to new and unfamiliar cultures. There are four stages of culture shock: (a) exciting stage - being exposed to a new culture, everything is fresh and interesting; (b) depressing stage - experiencing confusion, conflict and discomfort; (c) adjustment stage - figuring out differences between home culture and host culture, having a willingness to learn the host culture; and (d) recovery stage - beginning to feel comfortable about the new culture and trying to fit in. Even though people with different cultural backgrounds and different personal histories have different experiences with the adjustment process, they are more or less expected to experience the stages of culture shock. Movement through these stages usually lasts for about a year (Winkelman, 1994).

Ethnocentrism to Ethno-Relativism Model

The third model is the ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism model. According to Bennett (2004), the ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism model proposes six stages immigrants experience. These stages are the denial of cultural difference, defense against cultural difference, minimization of cultural difference, acceptance of cultural difference, adaptation to cultural difference, and integration of cultural difference into identity. During the denial stage, individuals show no interest in the host culture and have a tendency to ignore the cultural differences. The individuals are not able to recognize the cultural facts. During the defense stage, people start to recognize the cultural differences but choose to discriminate against differences in the host culture. Individuals at this stage explain the cultural differences mainly with stereotypical perspectives. For example, people in this stage may have positive stereotypes about their own culture and negative stereotypes about their host culture. At the minimization stage, “the threat associated with cultural differences experienced in defense is neutralized by subsuming the differences into familiar categories” (Bennett, 2004, p. 66). Individuals might request similarities and have a tendency to expect others to change behaviors to match their standards and styles. People at this stage don’t have the ability to appreciate things as related to other cultures because they are racially and ethnically centered on their own cultures and identities and have no “cultural self-awareness” (Weng, 2004).

At the acceptance stage, people are able to generate similarities and differences among cultures as well as build positive attitudes towards other cultures. “They are curious about cultural difference and actually eager to experience other cultures”

(Bennett, 2004, p. 71). They may not agree completely with people from other cultures, but they have sensitivity and competence to understand other cultures' value systems.

At the adaptation stage, individuals behave or act according to what they think is appropriate in host cultures. Bennett emphasizes that adaptation and assimilation are different. Assimilation involves giving up one's own culture and melting into the host culture. Adaptation involves accommodating adjustment. Individuals can keep their own cultures and in the meantime function effectively in the host culture's contexts. During the integration stage, people start to construct their new identities in the host culture's contexts (Dinges, 1983).

Factors and Issues Contributing to the Intercultural Adaptation Process

Hyman and Beiser (2000) states individuals' intercultural process is influenced by "personal characteristics of both a demographic and social nature, in particular one's age has a known relationship to the way acculturation will process" (p. 21). When the intercultural adaptation starts before students are enrolled in elementary school, the process usually goes smoothly. However, adolescents often experience intercultural problems that may result from development related issues or "cultural transitions" (Aronowitz, 1992; Carlin, 2006; Ghuman, 1991; Phinney, 1990; Sam & Berry, 1995). Personal factors appear to impact the intercultural adaptation process. Personal traits such as introversion or extraversion, self-efficacy skills, stress management, and reaction styles have shown to be related to the intercultural adaptation process (Schmitz, 1994; Schwarzer, Hahn, & Schroder, 1994; Ward & Kennedy, 1992). In addition, various factors can impact the immigrant students' transitions. According to Lucas (2001), the immigrant student's native language, English proficiency, reason for immigrating, age of

arrival in the U.S., and educational backgrounds are factors influencing their transition to U.S. culture.

Native language as a part of the immigrant's culture plays an important role in the immigrant's transition to a new culture (Krashen, 2008). Some languages are closer or more similar to English in grammar and pronunciation. Thus it is easier for immigrant students whose native language is associated with English to learn English. Immigrant students whose native languages differ significantly from English in sentence structure and sounds, such as Chinese, experience more difficulties in adjusting to English language.

In addition to native language, English proficiency is another factor that impacts immigrant cultural transition. English proficiency enables immigrants to interact with people in the host culture and to participate in new lives. In the academic setting, adequate English language proficiency aids students in comprehending instructions and reading materials in content subjects and producing strong academic writing. Additionally, immigrant students need English proficiency to effectively communicate with people in the host culture (Lucas, 2001).

Another significant factor impacting an immigrant's transition is their reason for immigration (Lucas, 2001). Among the many reasons to come to the U.S., one is to seek a better life. Immigrants sharing this motivation are attracted by the U.S.'s economic and educational opportunities. Individuals who came to the U.S. for this reason are prepared for the difficulties or problems that they may face. As a result, they can overcome the problems and adjust themselves easily to American life (Lucas, 2001). Conversely, immigration may be motivated politically or for other economic reasons. Immigrants

who come to the U.S. for these reasons have to leave their own countries due to problems beyond their control. Consequently, individuals within this group face a different process of adjustment (Lucas, 2001). Furthermore, Lucas (2001) indicates that the age of arrival in the U.S. impacts transition. Younger immigrants adapt more easily to a new culture and language because they have not developed deep attachments to their own cultures. Immigrant students, who are 12 years or younger have an easier time transitioning themselves into host cultures. Finally, educational background, including the prior education and schooling of parents and students respectively, influences an immigrant's transition into U.S. culture (Lucas, 2001).

Intercultural Adaptation Strategies

The existing literature reports that intercultural competence or intercultural adaptation strategies can have a positive impact on intercultural adaptation (Fantini, 2000) by increasing effectiveness of living and studying in a host country (Fleming, 2009). The adaptation strategies not only enables individuals to act in a way that is effective and appropriate for each culture but also helps individuals to gain culturally related knowledge and skills. These knowledge and skills can become valuable tools that lead to intercultural adaptation competence (Oberg, 2006). People who possess intercultural adaptation skills or have high cultural intelligence may behave or act effectively in cultural contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003). Therefore, intercultural adaptation competence is a key factor for individuals to experience different cultures in a positive, productive and constructive way (Deardorff, 2006).

According to Bennett (2011), intercultural adaptation strategies include “cognitive, affective and behavioral skills” (p. 3). Bennett lists them as “cultural self-awareness,

culture-general knowledge, culture-specific knowledge, interaction analysis, curiosity, cognitive flexibility, motivation, open-mindedness, behavioral skills, relationship building skills, empathy, and information gathering skills” (Bennett, 2011, p. 3). Shi (2001) had a similar conclusion about the intercultural strategies, stating that awareness of cultures, learning cultural knowledge, positive attitude about the host culture, stress management strategies, and ability to build personal and social relationships with people from host cultures are the factors that impact cultural adjustments. Having an awareness of cultural differences can help immigrant students acculturate and become more tolerant of the host culture while valuing and appreciating their own cultural heritage. Learning cultural knowledge can enable individuals to reduce misunderstandings and increase culturally appropriate behavior.

Berry (1997) has a different theory about the adaptation skills. Berry states there are four acculturation skills or alternatives. The first, assimilation, is used when individuals are not interested in their own culture and want to participate completely in daily activities with other cultures such as the host culture. The second, separation, is used when people want to keep their own cultures but also wish to participate in daily activities with people in other cultures. Individuals apply integration, the third skill, when they wish to participate partially in both their original culture and the host culture. Finally, the fourth skill, marginalization, is used when individuals want to deny both their native and host cultures. Berry (1997) and Berry and Sam (1996) state that among these acculturation skills, integration has proven to be the most successful, marginalization the least effective, and assimilation and separation skills somewhere in the middle in terms of effectiveness.

Additionally, Deardorff (2009) states motivation and attitude are the two important components of intercultural adaptation skills. When individuals are self-motivated to become interculturally competent, they are more willing to increase their cultural awareness and understand host cultures. As a result, these individuals can have better interpersonal relationships, experiences, and adjustment to their host cultures. To ease the challenge, immigrants need to learn about the experiences and perspectives of others as well as their own blind spots and prejudices. They also need to learn about themselves, understanding and appreciating their own cultures. Actively interacting with people from host cultures and learning local languages could be very helpful tools in adjusting to new lives (Moran, Abramson, & Moran, 2014).

Personal Adjustment Strategies in Cultural Contexts

Personal adjustment in a new culture is an individual process that immigrants face. When immigrants arrive in the U.S., they often encounter cultural and psychological changes caused by different languages, foods, social values, lifestyles and communication styles. An immigrant's ability to acquire new beliefs, rules of behavior, communication patterns, and cope with stress and prejudice are the important strategies that can determine if they could overcome the cultural conflicts and adjust successfully (Trueba, Jocab, & Kirton, 1990). When people enter a new culture, they have to learn new information and patterns of behavior, different ways of thinking and behaving, and new culturally appropriate social skills. These people face new challenges from language difficulties to the loss of similar friends and family (Barna, 1983; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Bourne, 1975; Cross, 1995; Furnham, 1988; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Huang, 1977; Kim & Gudykunst, 1988; Stening, 1979). Other adjustment strategies

include building a new ethnic identity, active interaction with people in host culture, and learning a new culture while maintaining one's primary culture (Yeh, Okubo, Ma, Shea, Ou, & Pituc, 2008).

Identity

Adolescents who migrate with their families after the age of 11 suffer particular stress due to the fact that these young Asian immigrants face many challenges such as relocation, new cultural environment, new school system, and new culture. Like adult immigrants, these young Asian immigrants need to deal with adjustment issues in the U.S. culture. Building a new identity in a new culture is one adjustment strategy immigrant youth can utilize (Berry et al., 2006). Asian youth have four identities: Asian, adolescent, immigrant, and Asian American. Among these identities, Asian and adolescent are attached to their original culture, and immigrants and Asian Americans are their new identities. These identities overlap and often create conflict.

To operate out of the four identities, immigrant students have to pass through the developmental stage of "identity formation" characteristic of adolescence (Ascher, 1989). Under one identity, the youth take on the outward cultural traits of American adolescents, such as adopting their peers' clothing, hairstyles and manners. At the same time, their ethnic identity as Asian remains strong and specific. Because of this, these students rarely make friends with American students and have few cross-ethnic friendships with other Southeast Asians. At school, these students have to hide their own cultural heritage to take on the outward cultural traits of those around them to alleviate peer pressure. At home, the students have to behave according to their own traditional behavior standards to satisfy their parents (Ascher, 1989; Nidorf, 1985; Peters, 1988).

Stress Management

Entering into a new culture causes psychological changes and behaviors, such as cognitive fatigue, withdrawal, depression, anxiety, as well as sleeping, eating, and drinking disorders. First generation immigrant individuals who are aged 12 years and older generally experience more acculturative stress than those younger than age 12. Therefore, stress management is an important adjustment strategy for young immigrants (Hovey & King, 1996; Winkelman, 1994). In addition, immigrant students in American schools face a multitude of barriers in their attempts to both succeed academically and to adapt to American society. There are also other factors that cause emotional and psychological difficulties for young immigrants at school. These factors include cultural differences, conflict between school and home identities, social isolation due to language barriers, and the process of assimilation (Friedlander, 1991). In order to overcome stress and succeed in school, adolescent immigrants must overcome three tasks. First, they need to establish a place for themselves in their new circle of peers. Second, they need to gain the acceptance of new teachers. Third, they need to adapt to a new set of school rules and academic standards. Becoming familiar with a new environment, a new culture, a new school system and getting to know classmates and schoolmates within a reasonable period of time are also effective strategies (Holland, Kaplan, & Davis, 1974; Reyes, Gillock, & Kobus, 1994).

Stages of Adjustment

Each child has to experience different stages of adjustment before fitting into the local culture. Adler (1975) and Walling (1990) state that children's adjustment goes through five stages: (a) the child is excited about exploring the new setting; (b) the child

is depressed and isolated due to the difference between the old and new environments; (c) the child dislikes and rejects the new environment, and feels anxious and angry; (d) the child gains confidence and feels less like an outsider; and (e) the child accepts and appreciates the differences between the environments. Even though not every child will follow the same stages through all the adjustment stages, they all have to make adjustment from the uncomfortable beginning to enjoyable stage.

Knowledge of Host Cultures

Knowledge of the host culture can support the learning processes and behaviors of immigrant students. For example, Asian cultures tend to use one way of teaching in the classroom, emphasizing formal instruction in a passive learning style. Teachers are expected to teach and give information, and students are expected to listen and memorize information. Asking questions and being singled out to speak in class are considered showing off and being disrespectful. Therefore, students may have difficulty openly expressing themselves in front of the whole class (Timm, 1999). Also, educators are highly respected and attitudes of respect for authority might inhibit students from expressing themselves. Contemporary teaching methods used in America, such as cooperative learning groups, confuse immigrant students (Bempechat & Omori, 1990). The high contextual communication style, with its emphasis on nonverbal language, is favored in Asian culture; this affects the way students interact with teachers (Huang, 1994).

English as a Second Language

English as a Second Language Theories and Practices

Teaching and learning English as a second language started in the U.S. in 1960s, many second language acquisition theories have been developed. Among these theories, Krashen's *Monitor Model of Language Acquisition* theory has become very famous. The *Monitor Model of Language Acquisition* theory divides the process of second language learning into two categories: language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition is a subconscious process that allows individuals to "acquire" a target language in a way that is similar to first language acquisition. In order for individuals to start the process of acquiring a language, a language environment is required for meaningful conversations. Through participation in this environment, an individual can acquire a second language through natural interaction without being conscious of learning rules and/or correcting errors (Brown & Hanlon, 1970; Brown, Cazden & Bellugi, 1973).

Language learning is a conscious process that individuals have to go through to learn grammatical rules and vocabulary words of a target language (Walz, 1982). In the *Monitor Model of Language Acquisition theory*, Krashen (2008) states five hypotheses for second language acquisition: the acquisition-learning distinction hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. The statements are included in the table below.

Table 2.1

Monitor Model of Language Acquisition Theory

Hypothesis	Statement of the Hypothesis
1. The Acquisition vs. Learning Hypothesis	The subconscious process of first-language acquisition in children from the conscious process language learning in adult.
2. The Natural Order Hypothesis	Morphemes are acquired in a predictable order.
3. The Monitor Hypothesis	Acquisition, not learning, is responsible for fluency.
4. The Input Hypothesis	Language is acquired when students receive comprehensible input that is a tad beyond their level of competence.
5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis	One cannot acquire a language unless one feels confident, relaxed, and diverted.

Source: A Brief History of ELL Instruction (Tebar, 2008)

Many of the hypotheses are confirmed by the ELL teaching professionals and have been used effectively in ELL classrooms (Krashen, 1982). Additionally, ELL environment theory concludes that linguistic environments play important roles in English as a second language learning. Informal linguistic environment gives ELLs opportunities to use real language in communication and it promotes English language acquisition while formal linguistic environment provides learners with encouragements for both language learning and acquisition (Krashen, 1981).

Challenges of Learning English as a Second Language

English language learners face different challenges when learning English as a second language due to “cultural and linguistic differences, socioeconomic conditions,

variability in schooling and experiences, low academic achievement, lack of district or school resources, and lack of qualified teachers” (Grant & Wong, 2003, p. 43). In addition, ELLs face challenges related to literacy. The first reason is:

...the process of becoming literate in English is daunting. Not only are these students faced with the same literacy challenges faced by native English-speaking students, but they are also challenged with extensive diversity issues relating to substantial differences in linguistic, cultural, and academic background experiences (Markham & Gordon, 2007, p. 1).

The second reason is the literacy development methods are not developed for the ELLs originally. Therefore, these methods do not meet the learning needs of the ELLs (August, Shanahan, & Escamilla, 2009).

Factors that Impact Learning English as a Second Language

Identity. Identity refers to social roles, gender, age, languages, and other characteristics that are associated with individual self. For example, individuals who learn the English language as a second language could be categorized as second language learners. Part of this identity is related to language learning (Duff, 2012). According to Berry (1997) and Rubaut (1994), immigrant adolescents also face difficult issues of intercultural adjustment between their original culture and host culture because they have developed an ethnic identity within the world of the ethnic context before entering the host cultures (Phinney, 1990). These young people have been taught and shaped by parents and their original ethnic culture with language, values, and traditions, and they are likely to keep these culture-related characteristics over a lifetime (Phinney et al., 2001). Schumann’s social distance theory (1978) emphasizes the extent to which an

individual is attached to a culture determines their motivation to acquire the culture's language. If the distance between an individual and the culture is greater, the individual will have a difficult time acquiring the target language.

Motivation. An individual's motivation for learning a second language comes from a desire to connect themselves to the cultural group of the target language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The higher the degree of connection, the more successful the second language learning would be. Ricento (1995) summarizes it as follows:

The motivation of second language learners is often measured in relation to optimal models of positive identification leading to assimilation of some type, or to less than optimal models learning to varying degrees of failure to assimilate and, as a result, failure to acquire native like fluency in the target language. (p. 898)

Personality. Personality is an individual's traits that make them different from others (Child, 1981). Personality has been found to relate to communicative anxiety, and communicative anxiety is a contributing factor that affects second language acquisition (Dewaele, 2013; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). For example, it is reported that personality could influence the second language acquisition either directly or indirectly because an individual's personality determines what language learning strategies an individual should choose and in what activities an individual should participate (Bielska, 2006). Ehrman (1996) also states that personality has a clear relationship with second language acquisition because personality affects an individual's behaviors.

Furthermore, personality determines whom an individual interacts with and "what people feel comfortable with" (Ehrman, 1996, p. 117). Therefore, individuals choose to

do what they feel comfortable with and have more opportunities to practice the skills they are comfortable doing. Personality could determine people's willingness to use foreign language (MacIntyre & Charos 1996).

A study by Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu (2004) shows that students who are willing to use a second language have lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of self-confidence. These individuals are reported to have better relationships and experiences with the people in the host culture due to frequent use of the second language to communicate. An individual's personality impacts the second language acquisition process through exposure to the second language by frequently interacting with people in host cultures (Segalowitz, Gatbonton, & Trofimovich, 2009).

Another focus in the literature concerning personality and second language acquisition is extraversion and introversion. Wakamoto (2009) states that an individual's extraversion and introversion personality traits have a direct relationship to second language acquisition because the personality determines if individuals would use certain learning strategies to help second language acquisition. For example, extroverts might use learning strategies such as asking for help or participating in teacher and student interactions. This might not be the case for introverts who feel uncomfortable asking questions in front of the class or in public. Extroverted students who practiced language skills by participating in activities with native speakers or interacting with native speakers become proficient in the given language faster than introverted students who don't use these learning strategies. However, the idea that extroverts learn second language faster than introverts cannot be used to predict outcomes of the second language acquisition process for everyone and every case. Cultural factors should be considered with cultural

perspectives since personality is learned and shaped by each individual's culture. Some cultures encourage people to be silent or not too verbal. For individuals from these cultures, a one-size-fits-all theory doesn't work.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to the belief that individuals are able to control their own learning to a certain degree. Student self-efficacy is an important factor that contributes to an individual's second language acquisition. Higher levels of self-efficacy play a significant role in the level of the student's relational and cognitive engagement. It also can foster student learning which leads to higher academic achievement (Constantine, Okazaki, Utsey, 2004).

Self-efficacy can engage students in three ways. First, it engages a student's learning and academic life with effort and persistence. Second, it engages students' behaviors on which strategy to use to improve learning. Third, it promotes students' motivation for learning interest and utility value (Cubukcu, 2008). Mahyuddin et al. (2006) states that students who have self-efficacy skills believe they could have control of their own learning because the self-efficacy skills provide them with the capacity to feel competent and confident, and helps them determine what to put on a performance or task. A study by Wang and Pape (2007) shows that students with high self-efficacy have three characteristics: "persistence in accomplishing language tasks, self-awareness of English proficiency, and willingness to engage in language activities" (p. 367).

Flexibility. Flexibility refers to psychological adaption to a new environment. Flexibility plays an important role in intercultural adjustment and has been proved to be a useful strategy for immigrants' cultural adjustment (Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985). Tung (1981) stated that people who possess flexibility might adapt to new environments

more effectively and demonstrate high levels of tolerance for new and unfamiliar events. A study by Gentile, Halperin, and Cochran (1993) also finds that flexibility has a significant relationship with the adjustment process. Von Kirchheim & Richardson (2005) summarizes that flexibility supports and improves intercultural adaptation process, and leads to better intercultural adjustment.

Looking for or building common ground. Previous research documents indicate that looking for or building a common ground among students from different culture backgrounds promotes students' interaction. The interaction benefits students in many ways: (a) increasing culture awareness and understanding, (b) providing opportunities for students to practice English language skills, (c) having a sense of belonging, (d) being comfortable to make friends (Dunne, 2009), (e) encouraging students to interact with others who are from different cultural backgrounds, and (f) developing students confidence in intercultural interaction (Arkoudis, Yu, Baik, Chang, Lang, Watty, & Lang, 2010).

Culture and Language

Culture and language interact with and influence each other. Language is symbols created by people from a culture that carry the means of said culture. Culture and language together affect people's thought process, and thinking guides their behaviors. This explains, to some extent, why people from different cultural backgrounds think and behave differently. Therefore, it can be concluded that culture affects language and language learning (Lambert, 1990; Valdes, 1986). Valdes (1986) argues that culture can "help learners observe similarities and differences among various cultural groups and culture helps to raise language learners' cultural awareness about

target language” (p. 3). In contrast, Bada (2000) argues that second culture awareness or knowledge of culture may not connect second-language learners to all cultural values since each individual has his/her own way of learning a second language.

Students’ and Parents’ Perceptions towards Intercultural Competence

The immigrant students perceive that knowledge of host culture, attitude and willingness to learn about host culture; enjoying and appreciating the host culture; being part of the host culture; and building new identities are very helpful for intercultural adaptations. These students believe that it is important to keep their primary culture and learn the new culture at the same time. For example, making friends and socializing with both native language speaking peers and peers from their primary culture, and learning new culture from peers and teachers while sharing their primary culture can lead to successful intercultural adaptation (Yeh, 2004).

Immigrant students’ parents’ perceptions tend to differ from their students. As the immigrant students unconsciously and gradually make linguistic and cultural adjustments in schools and at homes, parents are aware of the changes that happen in their children. It may be emotional for immigrant parents to observe the changes that come with learning a new language and new culture. On the one hand, parents may show concerns about their children’s linguistic and culture adjustments, hoping their children adapt well, as adjustment may affect academic achievement. On the other hand, the shift from first language and home culture to English and mainstream culture may concern parents; to an extent, students are losing their mother tongue and culture. Therefore, parents may make efforts to keep and maintain the first language and culture at home by using the home language and modeling cultural traditions in an attempt to influence the

students. As a result, parents may experience an especial challenge in attempting to find a balance between keeping first language and home culture and learning second language and adjusting to mainstream culture (Barkhuizen, 2006; De Houwer, 1999).

Summary of the Findings

Culture influences an individual's behaviors, thoughts, perspectives, communication patterns, and styles because people are attached to rules and norms that guide behaviors in each culture (Cross, 1995; Earley & Ang, 2003; Ferber, 2012; Gudykunst et al., 1996; Hall, 1996; Hinkel, 1999; Huang, 1994; Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2003; Landis, Bennett, & Bennett 2003; Triandis, 1995). Therefore, everyone who enters a new culture tends to encounter intercultural adjustment and transition caused by different social values, language and behavior standards.

Many factors influence immigrants' adjustment and transition into a new culture (Berry, 1997; Bennett, 2004; Dinges, 1983; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward & Kennedy, 1992; Winkelman, 1994). These factors mainly involve native language, English proficiency, reasons for immigrating, age of arrival in the new country, and educational background (Aronowitz, 1992; Carlin, 2006; Ghuman, 1991; Lucas, 2001; Phinney, 1990; Sam & Berry, 1995; Schmitz, 1994; Ward & Kennedy, 1992).

In order to successfully adjust to a new culture, immigrants need to be aware of these changes as well as cultural differences. Immigrants may need to acculturate and become more open-minded of the host culture while valuing their own culture and learning host culture-related skills and knowledge for appropriate behaviors to reduce misunderstandings. Immigrants also need to have a positive attitude about the new culture, willingness to change, and establish personal and social relationships with people

in the host culture (Bennett, 2011; Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1996; Deardorff, 2009; Shi, 2001).

Asian immigrant youth who come with their families face more challenges than adults in the U.S. Among these, Asian youth have to deal with the stress that results from relocation pressure, language barriers, a new school, new teachers and peers, and the conflict between an American school identity and a traditional identity at home. These individuals need to establish a place for themselves in their new circle of peers, gain the acceptance of new teachers, and adapt to a new set of school rules and academic standards to overcome problems and be successful in school (Adler, 1975; Ascher, 1989; Bempechat & Omori, 1990; Holland, Kaplan, & Davis, 1974; Huang, 1997; Jalongo, 1994; Mcinnis-Dittrich, 1991; Nidorf, 1985; Perters, 1988; Reyes, Gillock, & Kobus, 1994; Timm, 1999; Walling, 1990; Yao, 1985). Due to the differences between Asian culture and American mainstream culture, Asian students' learning styles, listening behaviors, and response patterns are different from their mainstream peers. This affects the way they interact with teachers and their peers (Friedlander, 1991; Podeschi & Xiong, 1992).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the intercultural dimension theory (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002). Learning a language involves not only linguistic competence but also skills, attitude, and knowledge of intercultural competence that are appropriate for the host culture and language. The concept of the theory promotes English language learning practices by helping learners to develop intercultural skills and to develop multiple identities to fit into host cultures in appropriate ways. The

intercultural dimension theory emphasizes the importance of the interactions between linguistic competence and intercultural competence. The learners need to develop linguistic competence in speaking, reading, listening, and writing in culturally correct and appropriate ways. Learners also need to develop intercultural competence to see and understand verbal and nonverbal interactions with people in the host culture. With both the intercultural competence and language competence, learners would be prepared to see and understand the relationship between their own culture and the host culture such as culture related value, belief and perspective. The more language learners know and learn about the host language, the better they can interact with people of other cultures as well as better understand and accept people from different cultures as individuals (Byram et al, 2002).

Conclusion

This chapter presented historic and current perspectives on the developmental process of intercultural competence/adaptations, including competence models, factors contributing to the intercultural adaptation process, and strategies for intercultural adaptation. Additionally, this chapter presented perspectives on Asian immigrant youth identity and adjustment; American schools and young Asian immigrants; challenges of second language acquisition; and intercultural adaptation strategies and languages learning. Immigrant students face many challenges in a new culture and a new school system. In order to be successful, they need to know the host cultures and languages. In the next chapter, the methodology of the study, overview of the problem, operationalization of theoretical constructs, research purpose and questions, research

design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, validity, privacy and ethical concerns, and research design limitations will be discussed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research study examined the dynamics of the relationship between first generation Chinese students' intercultural competence/adaptability and English language learning. Survey, interview, and state assessment data were collected from a purposeful sample of first generation Chinese high school students from a large suburban school district in Southeast Texas. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and Pearson's product moment correlations r , while the qualitative data was analyzed using an inductive coding technique. This chapter presents an overview of the research problem, operationalization of constructs, research purpose and questions, research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, validity, privacy and ethical considerations, and research design limitations.

Overview of the Problem

In U.S. public schools, the population of immigrant students has increased over the last 30 years. Given barriers with language, many immigrant students have struggled in schools, resulting in low academic achievement and higher dropout rate. The accountability set by NCLB requires all students to graduate under the same standards. As a consequence, high school immigrant English language learners (ELLs) must master English language skills in a short period of time to have adequate language proficiency to learn academic content and graduate from high school. Assisting these immigrant students in accelerating their English language skills within a short period of time is a

challenging task for both schools and educators. Effective education of immigrant students through a combination of instructional strategies, programs, and curricula are important to the academic success of ELLs in schools. Therefore, there was a need to identify factors that may influence effective second language learning, assess the relationship between these factors and English language learning, and examine the immigrant students' perceptions toward the contributing factors.

Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs

The study consisted of two constructs: (a) intercultural competence and (b) English language learning. Intercultural competence was defined as a set of cognitive, affective, behavioral skills, and characteristics that supported effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural context (Bennett, 2011). Intercultural competence was measured using the *Assessing Intercultural Competence Survey* (Fantini, 2006). English language learning was defined as social and academic English language development of students who were non-English speakers or limited English speakers when enrolled in the U.S. schools (Genesee, 2006) as measured by the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this research study was to examine first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. Parents of these first generation immigration students were interviewed to collect data regarding parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation. The following research questions were used in guiding this study.

Research Question 1: What are first generation high school Chinese immigrant students' perceptions toward intercultural competence/adaptation?

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between first generation Chinese speaking high school students' intercultural competence and their English language learning?

Research Question 3: What are the intercultural adaptation strategies that first generation Chinese immigrant high school students use in a school setting?

Research Question 4: What are the first generation Chinese students' parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation?

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods case study design. This design was appropriate because of the boundedness of the case study (Yin, 2003). The dynamics between Chinese speaking immigrant students' English learning and the impact of their intercultural competence on English learning could not truly be understood without considering the real life contexts present in the school and classroom settings. Additionally, a case study could serve an exploratory purpose for this research study to develop a better understanding about the immigrant students' English learning process and the contributing factors that impacted English learning. It was the researcher's intrinsic interest to explore and have a better understanding of the immigrant students (Stake, 1995). Third, one of the focuses for this study was to seek answers of "why" and "how" questions; specifically why and how some immigrant students outperformed their peers while others struggled for years (Yin, 2003). Finally, a mixed methods approach

allowed the researcher to use both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to develop a more in-depth analysis.

A purposeful sample of first generation Chinese immigrant high school students and their parents were selected from a large suburban public school district located in the southeastern region of Texas to participate in this study. Quantitative data were collected from responses to the *Assessing Intercultural Competence* survey to measure the intercultural competence of the first generation of Chinese speaking students and students' TELPAS scores to measure their linguistic competence. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and Pearson's *r*. In addition, qualitative data obtained from student and parent interview responses were organized and coded by themes to investigate perceptions of the first generation Chinese speaking students and their parents toward intercultural competence.

Population and Sample

This study was conducted in a large suburban public school district located in Southeast Texas. According to the 2014-2015 school year report, the school district enrolled 47,174 students and employed 3,260 teachers (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2015). Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 provided the district student demographic data, student demographic data of the two sample schools, and staff data for the two high school campuses respectively. The school district had a diverse student body that included a large population of ELL students. The diversity had provided the district with the opportunity to develop ESL programs such as newcomer programs, a regular ESL program, and sheltered core content program. In addition to the ESL programs and services, the hire of highly qualified ESL instructional staff was also a priority for the

school district. The district required all teachers at the different levels to be trained to implement research based ESL teaching methods as well as to be certified in ESL within two years of hire.

Table 3.1

District High School Students Demographic Data

	Students (n) 9 th – 12 th	Students (%) 9 th – 12 th
Gender		
Male	6664	53.0
Female	5908	47.0
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	3,780	30.0
Hispanic	6,022	48.0
White	416	3.3
Asian	1,760	14.0
Pacific Islander	230	1.8
American Indian	349	2.7
Two or More Races	15	0.0
Category		
ED	9,100	72.4
ELL	1,760	14.0
At-Risk	7,669	61.0

Note: ED stands for economically disadvantaged. ELL stands for English language learners.

Table 3.2

High School A and High School B Student Demographic Data

	Students (n) 9 th – 12 th	Students (%) 9 th – 12 th
Total students	7,872	65.0
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	2,533	32.0
Hispanic	4193	53.0
White	238	3.0
Asian	824	10.5
Pacific Islander	5	.06
American Indian	59	.07
Two or More Races	20	.02
Category		
ED	6,054	77.0
ELL	1,319	17.0
At-Risk	5,507	70.0

Note: ED stands for economically disadvantaged. ELL stands for English language learners.

Table 3.3

District High School Staff Data

	Staff (n)	Staff (%)
Teacher	750	82.5
Professional Support	115	12.6
Administration	43	4.9

The well-established ESL programs provided services to ELLs throughout the entire school district. All three of the traditional high school campuses and both of the alternative high schools offered ESL and/or sheltered classes through ESL programs. Sheltered classes were defined as content classes offered to ELL students with English proficiency levels of intermediate or greater. Teachers certified in both their content area and ESL teach these classes. Additionally, there was one newcomers' program within

the school district that offered ESL classes in all core contents and some electives such as art, health, and physical education.

The ELLs were placed in different levels of ESL classes according to their English proficiency levels. First year immigrant students who were identified as non-English speakers or limited English speakers were placed in the newcomer's program to receive one year of intensive English instruction. Second year ELL immigrant students and/or students who knew some English were placed in regular ESL program. The ELL students who had learned "enough" English and were at advanced English proficiency levels but still needed support were placed in the sheltered classes until these students exited from the ESL program.

The district ESL program served 1,766 ELLs at the high school level (TEA, 2015). The ELLs were from different cultural backgrounds including Chinese cultural background. All three traditional high schools had first generation Chinese speaking students. Two of the traditional high schools were included in the study due to their higher numbers of first generation Chinese-speaking immigrant students. From the two selected campuses, a purposeful sample of Chinese-speaking students and a convenience sample of participants' parents were solicited to participate in this study. All these participants were first generation Chinese immigrant students who moved to the U.S. with their parents during their high school year, with ages ranging from 15 to 19 years old.

Many first generation Chinese speaking students chose to take Chinese language courses in high school to receive foreign language credits. Therefore, Chinese language classes had more first generation Chinese students in each class period. The participants

were selected directly from the Chinese classes. Although both selected campuses offered Chinese classes, the schools placed Chinese speaking students in the Chinese language classes differently. High School A placed all native Chinese speaking students who took Chinese class as a foreign language in an Advanced Placement (AP) Chinese class, while High School B placed each of the native Chinese speaking students at different levels of Chinese classes with students from different cultural backgrounds according to the availability of the Chinese classes. Under the given course schedule setup and following the sample selection criteria, the researcher along with the Chinese language teachers solicited participators from the first generation Chinese speaking students during the AP class time for High School A and every class period for High School B.

Instrumentation

Assessing Intercultural Competence Survey (AIC): A YOGA Form

This study employed one section of the *Assessing Intercultural Competence: A YOGA Form* (AIC) survey (see Appendix A). The AIC was developed by Fantini (1995) to assess individual's intercultural knowledge, attitude, skills, and awareness and includes four levels of assessments (Level I for educational traveler; Level II for sojourner; Level III for professional; and Level IV for international/multicultural specialist). Each level rated individual's competence from 0 to 5 (0 = No competence, 5 = Very High Competence).

The AIC was developed in various stages over a several years span: observations were conducted, findings from the observations were compared to findings in pre-existing literature, and finally generated items were crosschecked with similar

assessments (Fantini, 2009). The AIC was later included as part of a research project titled “*Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence*” conducted by Federation of The Experiment in International Living (FEIL) from July 2005 to December 2006 (Fantini & Timizi, 2006). The AIC was translated into three languages (German, Spanish, and English), and piloted with FEIL alumni, volunteers, and host mentors; the project measured the impact of cross cultural experiences on both their lives and work as visitors and hosts. Composite scores ranged from 0-90. The Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was 0.86 for the entire AIC, 0.86 for Knowledge, 0.97 for Attitude, 0.96 for Skills, and 0.98 for Awareness (Fantini & Timizi, 2006).

For the purpose of this study, only the Level I assessment of the *Assessing Intercultural Competence* survey was used. Level I was chosen because it was designed for educational travelers, and the high school Chinese speaking immigrant students were considered educational travelers since they hadn’t been in the U.S. for very long. Level I contains 18-items and is divided into four subscales: (a) Awareness (4 items), (b) Attitude (4 items), (c) Knowledge (5 items), and (d) Skills (5 items). A 4-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree) was used in lieu of the original 6-point rating scale. A Likert scale was chosen based on following two reasons. First, a Likert scale “is one of the most widely used techniques to measure attitudes” (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2013, p. 226). Attitudes could be strong reflections of participants’ perceptions. Second, the researcher also considered the potential language barriers and ages of the participants; simplifying and clearly labeling the survey answer choices made it easier for high school students with limited English proficiency to respond. In turn, the survey responses could be more accurate. Using the

new anchors and composite scores ranged from 18 to 72, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.83 for Level I using first generation Chinese immigrant high school students.

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) is a Texas state required assessment designed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2016) to assess all English learners' annual progress in academic English in four domains which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The reading component is administered online and consists multiple-choice response items. Students' writing samples are collected during the second semester of each school year. Each ELL student is required to have at least five writing samples, one of which must be a past tense narrative and two from other content classes for each writing sample collection. Listening, speaking, and writing components are holistically rated (TEA, 2016).

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System provides proficiency level ratings for each language domain from 1 to 4 (1 = Beginning; 2 = Intermediate; 3 = Advanced; 4 = Advanced High) and an overall composite rating (1 = Beginning; 2 = Intermediate; 3 = Advanced; 4 = Advanced High). The TELPAS was collaboratively developed by a team of professionals, including test development contractors, assessment directors, bilingual/ELL consultants, teachers, directors, campus administrators, and university professors. Reliability of TELPAS was determined through analyses of internal consistency, classical standard error of measurement, conditional standard error of measurement, classification accuracy, and inter-rater reliability. The Kuder-

Richardson Formula 20 (KR20) was used to calculate the reliability; reliability coefficients were reported above 0.90 (TEA, 2008).

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to beginning the data collection, the researcher obtained approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) of the participating school district and the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL). The researcher met with the representatives of the school district during the fall semester to review the purpose of the study, instrumentation, and data collection. Consent and assent forms were provided to the research participants to complete prior to data collection.

Quantitative data were obtained from a purposeful sample of first generation Chinese speaking students based on a set of pre-prepared sample selection criteria. Data from a convenience sample of participants' parents were solicited. The survey was distributed to the participating students in the Chinese language classes of each selected high school during class time. The researcher went over each survey item with explanations in both simple English and Chinese to make sure every student fully understands the survey instructions and survey items. The students were given two weeks to complete the survey. In addition to the survey results, TELPAS results were used to assess the students' language learning.

This study also used qualitative data collection to gather in-depth information through interviews due to the small number of participants. The interview protocol was a 14-item semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included items concerning the subject's personal adjustment in the U.S. mainstream culture; the relationship between

the student's culture and behavior; the strategies used for their adjustment; and perceptions toward intercultural adaptation skills (see Appendix C). The interviews were conducted individually, either face to face or via telephone, on weekends or outside of school hours. Interviews lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. The researcher restated the responses collected from the interviews and present the statements to the participants to probe accuracy of the interview statements. The interview notes and survey data are being kept in a locked filing cabinet for five years before being destroyed.

Data Analysis

Quantitative

Following data collection, all information collected through the surveys and archival documents was transferred from Excel into SPSS for further analysis. To answer Research Question 1, frequencies and percentages were used to measure the perceptions toward intercultural competence of first generation high school Chinese immigrant students using survey responses of the AIC. To answer Research Question 2, a Pearson's product-moment correlation (r) was conducted to examine if a relationship existed between intercultural competence and English language learning. Both variables were continuous in measurement. Effect size was measured using the coefficient of determination (r^2) and a statistical significance value of .05 was used for this study.

Qualitative

For the qualitative portion of data analysis, interview responses from both participating students and their parents were utilized to answer Research Questions 1, 3, and 4. Interview data were analyzed using an inductive coding method. According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996), coding is a process of data simplification and organization. The coding process is "a range of approaches that aid the organization, retrieval, and

interpretation of data” (p. 27). Coffey and Atkinson further state the importance of qualitative data analysis lies in linkages between different elements of data and research ideas, identification of relevant concepts, and generation of ideas from the data. The coding process for this study comprised several steps. The first step was to simplify or reduce the data. To accomplish this goal, the interview data were transferred into an Excel spreadsheet to be sorted and organized into categories related to the research ideas and/or research questions. Patterns and topics of categories corresponding to each individual item were organized into clusters of concepts. The second step was to identify concepts. Meaningful and relevant themes were identified from the concepts, and the key theme analysis was performed for interpretation and conclusion. The last step was to interpret themes and make a conclusion. The interpretation and conclusion were stated using a narrative description and presented in response to the research questions.

Validity

To ensure the validity of the qualitative analysis, the researcher utilized triangulation. Interviews provided the researcher with in-depth data regarding the participants’ perspectives about the intercultural competence and second language acquisition. The researcher also piloted interview questions with ESL teachers to check the validity of the protocols. Piloting questions allowed the researcher to reconstruct the protocols to ensure interview questions elicited results or information the researcher sought (Yin, 2003). In addition, member checking was used. Interview responses were restated to probe accurate responses with the participants, and the participants were allowed to make comments for accuracy (Creswell, 2012).

Privacy and Ethical Considerations

Prior to beginning the data collection, the researcher obtained CPHS approval from UHCL and IRB approval from the participating school district. All consent and assent forms were provided in both English and Chinese to the participants to complete prior to data collection. The participants were informed that they were guaranteed rights to know why this research was being conducted, what educational results might come of this study, how safe their private information would be kept, whom they could contact with concerns, as well as ask questions at any time, and withdraw from participation at any time without penalty. Each participant was assigned a number as a substitute for their real name to ensure confidentiality. Completed survey questionnaires, interview responses, notes, and other related materials were kept in a locked file cabinet for five years after the research is completed.

Research Design Limitations

This study had a few limitations. First, given that there was a small number of eligible participants from one school district for participation in this study, the findings might not reflect the overall perceptions toward intercultural competence of first generation Chinese immigrant students and their parents. Additionally, the impact of intercultural competence on English language learning might also not be generalized in all American schools because of a small sample from a single school district. As a result, generalizability was questionable. Second, the validity of the data was dependent upon the honesty of the participants when self-selecting answers on the surveys and responding during interviews with the researcher. Therefore, data collected from the surveys and interviews potentially contained information that did not fully reflect each participant's

real situations regarding intercultural adaptation skills. Third, the participant's personality, education level, age, culture, and gender affected each participant's openness and interview responses. For example, some participants talked more than others when responding to questions. Therefore, the interviews did not elicit equal responses from all participants regarding intercultural strategies and perceptions; these outcomes limited the results of the findings.

Conclusion

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, this study's purpose was to conduct an examination of first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. This study also looked at first generation Chinese students' parents' perceptions with regard to intercultural adaptation. This chapter presented the research problem, research purpose and questions, operationalization of theoretical constructs, research design, population and sample, instrumentation, procedures for collecting data, data analysis, as well as other issues (e.g., ethical considerations, and research design limitations). In the next chapter, participant demographics, results for all research questions, as well as a summary of the findings, will be presented.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

As stated in Chapter 3, the purpose of this study was to examine first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. This study also examined the students' parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptations. This study used various instruments (i.e., surveys, interviews) as well as student state assessment data from a purposeful sample of first generation Chinese high school students at a large suburban public school district in Southeast Texas. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and Pearson's product moment correlation (r). Qualitative data were analyzed using an inductive coding process to identify themes related to perceptions of participating students and parents' intercultural adaptation. This chapter presents the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis for this study.

Participant Demographics

There were 30 first generation Chinese speaking students from two high schools participating in this study. All participants were first generation Chinese speaking immigrants who had been in U.S. schools for four years or less. The participating high schools were selected because of their diverse student bodies, well-established ESL programs, and relatively higher percentages of Chinese speaking populations. Criteria for selecting the students included: (a) Chinese was the student's first language; (b) the student was enrolled in high school (9th to 12th grades); (c) the student attended a U.S.

school for four years or less; (d) the students' ages ranged from 15 to 19 years old; and (e) the student was a first generation Chinese immigrant. Table 4.1 displays the participant demographics regarding their gender. The female participants comprised of 56.7% ($n = 17$) of the sample, while males comprised 43.3% ($n = 13$). Table 4.2 illustrates the number of years the participants had attended U.S. schools. Ten participants were in their first year of attendance (33.3%, $n = 10$), eleven in their second (36.7%, $n = 11$), and nine in their third and fourth years (30.0%, $n = 9$). In addition, there were 29 parents of the participating students; one parent for each student excluding one. Among these parents, 89.6% ($n = 26$) were females and 10.4% ($n = 3$) were males.

Table 4.1

Immigrant Students' Gender

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1. Female	17	56.7
2. Male	13	43.3

Table 4.2

Immigrant Students' Years in U.S. Schools

Years	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1. Year 1	10	33.3
2. Year 2	11	36.7
3. Year 3-4	9	30.0

Research Question One

Research question one, *What are first generation high school Chinese immigrant students' perceptions toward intercultural competence/adaptation?*, was assessed using frequencies and percentages of responses to the *Assessing Intercultural Competence*, a survey of 18-items. The survey responses were followed by interview analysis using inductive coding process. Of the 18 survey items, eight items measured the students' perceptions towards intercultural competence across intercultural awareness (Items 1-4), and intercultural attitude (Items 5-8) using a 4-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree). Along with survey results, interview responses were grouped into concept clusters and themes based on the type of responses from the surveys and interviews. Overall, survey responses were consistent with the interview responses. The students had positive perceptions toward intercultural adaptations. Five themes pertaining to students' perceptions on cultural awareness, language learning, culture learning, and culturally appropriate behaviors were identified from survey results and interview responses. Identified themes that are related to participants' perspectives with students' statements are presented below.

Perceptions on Cultural Awareness

The first four items of the *Assessing Intercultural Competence* (AIC) measured the students' perceptions on awareness of differences across languages and cultures. All of the students (100.0%, n = 30) responded *Agree/Strongly Agree* to demonstrating awareness of differences across languages and culture. This indicated students were able to identify culture and language differences. However, for the statement "I demonstrate awareness of negative reactions to these differences," only 66.7% (n = 20) students

responded *Agree/Strongly Agree*. Ten students (33.3%, n = 10) selected *Strongly Disagree/Disagree*, which might indicate that more than half of the participants had denial reaction to cultural differences. In addition, the majority of the participants (86.6%, n = 26) selected *Agree/Strongly Agree* in response to demonstrating awareness of how one's culture affects/alters interaction with others in the host culture. Similar to the student responses on cultural interaction, 86.6% (n = 26) of the students responded *Agree/Strongly Agree* to demonstrating awareness of how she/he is viewed by members of the host culture. Table 4.3 illustrates the students' responses to perceptions on cultural awareness.

Table 4.3

Student Responses to Cultural Awareness (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Awareness of differences across languages and cultures	0.0 (n = 0)	0.0 (n = 0)	53.3 (n = 16)	46.7 (n = 14)
2. Awareness of negative reactions to these differences	10.0 (n = 3)	23.3 (n = 7)	56.7 (n = 17)	10.0 (n = 3)
3. Awareness of how a specific context affects interaction with others in host culture	3.3 (n = 1)	10.0 (n = 3)	56.7 (n = 17)	30.0 (n = 9)
4. Awareness of how I am viewed by members of the host culture.	6.7 (n = 2)	6.7 (n = 2)	60.0 (n = 18)	26.6 (n = 8)

Perceptions on Attitudes toward Cultural Adaptations

Of the 18 survey items, items 5 - 8 measured the participating students' willingness to interact with people of the host culture. The majority of the students (93.3%, n = 28) selected *Agree/Strongly Agree* on their willingness to interact with people in the host culture; 90.0% (n = 27) responded *Agree/Strongly Agree* on willingness to learn a host language; 90.0% (n = 27) selected *Agree/Strongly Agree* on willingness to behave in a culturally appropriate manner; and 90.0% (n = 27) responded *Agree/Strong Agree* on willingness to deal with frustration in a new cultural environment (see Table 4.4). This indicated that the majority of the students' attitudes toward intercultural adaptations were positive and optimistic, which was consistent with the responses from the interviews provided below.

Table 4.4

Student Responses to Attitudes toward Cultural Adaptation (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. Willingness to interact with members of the host culture	6.7 (n = 2)	3.3 (n = 1)	60.0 (n = 18)	30.0 (n = 9)
6. Willingness to learn from my hosts, their language and culture	6.7 (n = 2)	3.3 (n = 1)	50.0 (n = 15)	40.0 (n = 12)
7. Willingness to try to communicate in host language and behave in ways judged “appropriate” by my hosts	3.3 (n = 1)	6.7 (n = 2)	63.3 (n = 19)	26.7 (n = 8)
8. Willingness to deal with the emotions and frustrations caused by my participation in the host culture	6.7 (n = 2)	3.3 (n = 1)	70.0 (n = 21)	20.0 (n = 6)

In an attempt to have a better understanding, a semi-structured interview protocol was used to collect data on students’ general perceptions toward intercultural adaptations as well as perceptions specifically pertaining to language learning, culture learning and culturally appropriate behaviors. The interview responses were grouped into concept clusters and themes based on the type of responses.

Similar to the survey responses, the majority of the student interview participants believed that the intercultural adaptation was important for the immigrants to study and live in a host culture. Students’ perceptions toward intercultural adaptations from the interview responses included three different answers which divided the participating

students into three groups. The first group of students (73.3%, n = 22) believed that the intercultural adaptation was important for immigrants in a new cultural environment; the second group (16.7.0%, n = 5) believed that the intercultural competence/adaptation could be either important or not important; and the last group (6.6%, n = 2) considered intercultural adaptation not important at all and one student answered “Do not know”.

Table 4.5 illustrated the student interview responses.

Table 4.5

Student Interview Responses 1 (%)

	Very Important	Important or Not Important	Not Important	Don't Know
Perceptions of Intercultural Adaptations	73.3 (n = 22)	16.7 (n = 5)	6.6 (n = 2)	3.4 (n = 1)

The first group's interview responses indicated that this group of students was able to identify some of the differences between their original culture and host culture both in and outside of school settings. Din, an 11th grader, stated the school differences between China and America:

There are too many differences. The school system between schools in America and schools in China is completely different. The teachers' teaching styles are different. Class sizes are different, my classes are smaller here. Students have to choose classes by themselves and move from one class to another each day and teachers stay in the same classroom. In China, students stay in one room and teachers move from one room to another room. High schools in America do credits and high schools in China do not.

Four students indicated the differences in other areas. For example, Jin compared schools in both countries in school hours, school systems, teacher student relationships and pressure: “American high school hours are shorter. High schools are like colleges, students have to earn credits. Teachers have good relationship with students. Also American schools don’t have too much homework -- less pressure and more freedom.” Won, a ninth grader, compared the school differences in class size and teaching styles between America and China:

Comparing to my classes in China, American schools have less students for each class. Teachers give short lessons and students do discussions and projects a lot. In China, teachers don’t interact with students and students have too much homework in China.

Table 4.6 illustrates students’ responses regarding school differences between America and China.

Table 4.6

Student Interview Responses 2 (%)

	Class Size	Teaching Style	School System	Pressure
School differences between U.S. and China	73.3 (n = 22)	56.6 (n = 17)	66.6 (n = 20)	50 (n = 15)

The interview responses also indicated that this group of students had been through many intercultural adaptation issues in school settings. When asking Din if he

had ever faced any issues that were related to language skills and host culture in schools, he explained he was confused due to different school system in America:

When I first got here, I did not know anything about the school system. I could not understand anything in my classes. One day, I went back to my class after completing a state test, my teacher had marked me absent. I was told later on that I was expected to inform my teacher about the test the day before when the counselor gave me a pass with testing notification, but I did not know that. I was confused with other things such as registering tests and taking tests online. I also didn't know that we could change classes during the school year. As for the culture, I did not know any of the singers, movie stars or sports stars when my classmates talked about them... I became open and independent after I moved here.

Li explained her language issues in American school during her first semester:

I have issues for English. My first semester grades were not good because I could not speak English well. During open house, most of my teachers told my parents I did not want to participate in class activities. It was not I did not want to participate but I could not participate. Now my English is getting better. I can participate in some of the class activities.

Table 4.7 illustrates students' responses regarding language and cultural issues and awareness of self-change.

Table 4.7

Student Interview Responses 3 (%)

	Response One	Response Two	Response Three	Response Four
Language and Cultural Related issues	Language 60.0	Culture 66.6	Language and Culture 53.3	No Issues 26.6
Awareness of Self Change	Being Open 30.0	Being Independent 66.6	Emotional Change 60.0	English Improved 73.3

This group of students considered the intercultural competence as a must have tool that could make their lives easier in new environments. These students further believed there was an urgency to have intercultural competence. For example, Yilin explained the reason why immigrant students needed to adapt to a new environment: “We live in a new cultural environment; we have to adapt the life style of the host culture. I meant to adapt the culture, not be assimilated.”

Two students from this group also believed immigrant students needed to be prepared for intercultural skills. Xiao Liu, a 10th grade student, expressed that she wished she learned more intercultural skills before she came:

I think I have to fit in the host culture to avoid being left out. Chinese culture and American culture are completely different. I need to learn the culture things the way I learn other subjects in class. ...I wish I got prepared for some intercultural skills before I came.

Bin Bin had similar statements:

...If I can speak English, I can communicate with people, I can make friends. ...Before I came to this country, my parents wanted me to watch English

movies, read English books, and listen to English music often... Now I understand their motivations...

Other students shared how a lack of cultural knowledge and intercultural skills affected them. Fan Du expressed:

I think knowing the culture is important. When I first arrived here, I was lonely and I was not happy. My peers did not want me to be in their groups. I guess I was too Chinese. After I was able to speak English, I started to make friends and learn some cultural things.

Lin explained the importance of learning a host culture in a similar way:

“Learning American culture is important. It helps me to understand people and it helps me to communicate well.”

The second group of students believed intercultural adaptation could be either important or not important depending on if an immigrant individual planned to live in the host country permanently or temporarily. Compared to the first group, the second group of students identified fewer minor differences between schools in their home country and schools in the host country. These students expressed that they experienced fewer intercultural adaptation issues. For example, Lin-Pin, a 10th grader, compared the differences in teaching styles between these two countries:

Teachers in America are friendly and encouraging, and teachers in China are strict. Teachers’ teaching styles in U.S. schools are more flexible and facilitating while teachers’ teaching styles in China are more like continuously urging students to take in new knowledge at a strenuous rate.

However, two students did not identify school differences between America and China due to the fact that they had been exposed to Western style school system or Western culture prior to American schools. For example, Qian Guo explained the similarity between two countries: “I don’t think there are too many school differences between America and China. The core courses are the same. It just takes time for people to get used to new things.” Another student, Ma Xiao, described her enjoyable experiences with teachers as well as her adjustment: “I like the relationships between teachers and students in American schools. I like the life style in America. I adjust myself well in America.”

The last group of students believed intercultural adaptation was not important or did not matter because individuals could gradually develop intercultural competence from daily life experiences when interacting with people in the host culture and when being exposed to a host culture for a certain number of years. The responses of this group of students focused more on the similarities between their original culture and the host culture. One student stated the school similarity in content classes between two countries thusly: “My high schools in both countries teach almost the same things in content classes.” Another student also expressed similarity between these two countries, saying, “My schools in both countries don’t have too many differences.”

Perceptions on Language Learning

From the interview responses, participating students believed learning the language in a host culture was very important. Seven students shared that the core content curricula excluding English, such as math and science, were considered easy for them in U.S. schools compared to the school curricula in China. However, due to the

language barrier, they could not participate in many school or class activities and could not understand many test questions and test concepts. Jiahua, a 9th grade student, shared his story about his language barrier and explained the importance of learning English:

My English is not good. Learning English is very important to me. When people misunderstand me, I am not able to make myself clear. I sometime get myself in trouble in some situations because I cannot speak English. ...I got bullied quite often during passing periods, sometimes during class due to my poor English. I try to communicate with teachers about this, but can't make myself clear. I have to ask my Chinese friends to translate. It is frustrating. So learning English is important.

Xian Jan explained that her poor English skills affected her grades and kept her from making friends. "Learning English is important. I did not have motivation to learn it when I first got here. Now I do because my grades are not good. And it is also very difficult for me to make friends with my classmates."

Perceptions on Learning a Host Culture

Similar to the students' perceptions toward language learning, 18 students believed learning a host culture was important. These students stated that learning a new culture helped them adjust to the new cultural environments and be successful in schools. For example, Xiao Min explained the importance of learning a new culture in this way: "Learning American culture is important. Something we do in Chinese culture may not be considered appropriate in American culture. ...My parents keep telling me that I cannot ask people anything private in America."

Qi also had similar statements in regards to learning a host culture:

When I first got here... Many things I saw at school bothered me. For example, it was embarrassing for me to see my classmates kiss each other in classes. Now I got used to it. Seeing many girls got pregnant also surprised me. Now I know it is just culture, I just have to accept it.

Pan also explained the importance of learning a host culture in a similar way: “Learning American culture can help me adjust. I may not be happy, if I don’t adjust well.” Some students believed learning a host culture could be either important or not important. During his interview, Xiao Xian stated the level of importance of learning a host culture directly correlated to the desire of that individual to remain in a host country: “For someone who wants to live here forever, learning American culture is important. Otherwise, it is not that important.”

In contrast, 12 students believed immigrant students should not intentionally learn a host culture because exposure on a daily basis could give an immigrant individual intercultural competence. For example, Hao believed living in a host culture for a number of years could lead to intercultural competence: “I don’t think I need to learn American culture. I believe when I live in America long enough, I will become one of the Americans.” Mao, a 9th grade student, explained that immigrants could learn a host culture by communicating and interacting with people in a host country:

I don’t think we should intentionally learn American culture. We will gradually learn it after we live here long enough. ...When we communicate with people or interact with people in a host culture, we get exposed to the culture and we learn it.

Qin also explained that immigrants should not intentionally learn a host culture in a different way. “I don’t believe I need to learn American culture. I am okay the way I

am. My teachers know I am Chinese. They don't expect me to act exactly like Americans." Table 4.8 illustrates students' responses regarding learning a host culture.

Table 4.8

Student Interview Responses 4

	Response One	Response Two	Response Three	Response Four
Perceptions on Learning host culture	Important	Important/Not Important	Not Important	Not Matter

Perceptions on Culturally Appropriate Behaviors

Four students commented during interviews that mainstream culture in the U.S. was more open, friendly, and straight forward. The students who possessed or learned the cultural traits stated that they did not have any issues and problems with peers and teachers inside and outside of schools. These students claimed that they adjusted well. Twenty students stated they have become open, more independent, and willing to communicate more with people under the influence of the mainstream culture. Da-Wei, a 9th grade student, stated he adjusted well in school because he possessed American people's personality traits:

People here are friendly. You can see strangers greeting each other on the streets. I like the straight forward communication styles here. People address their points directly. I am a straight forward person and I don't have any issues adapting to U.S. culture. Some of my friends do have problems adjusting themselves to the mainstream culture. Learning culturally appropriate behaviors is good for adjustment.

Min explained he adjusted well because he was exposed to Western culture: “I have been influenced by Western culture since I was very young. I don’t have problem adjusting myself in American culture.”

Research Question 2

Research question two, *Is there a relationship between first generation Chinese speaking high school students’ intercultural competence and their English language learning?*, was answered using a Pearson’s Product-Moment correlation (r). Results indicated that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between a student’s intercultural competence and his or her TELPAS scores, $r = .637$, $r^2 = .405$, $p < .001$. As a student’s intercultural competence increases, his or her TELPAS score increases. Approximately 41.0% of the variance in a student’s TELPAS score can be attributed to the level of intercultural competence that a student possesses.

A Pearson’s r also was conducted to assess if there were relationships between each subscale of the AIC (intercultural awareness, intercultural attitude, intercultural knowledge, and intercultural skills) and student TELPAS scores. Results indicated that intercultural awareness ($r = .424$, $r^2 = .179$, $p = .035$), and intercultural skills ($r = .430$, $r^2 = .184$, $p = .032$), had positive correlations with the TELPAS scores. When a student has more intercultural strategies under awareness and skills, his or her TELPAS score increases. Approximately 18.0% of the variance in a student’s TELPAS score can be attributed to the level of intercultural awareness and skills that a student possesses. In contrast, the results showed that intercultural attitude ($r = .169$, $r^2 = .028$, $p = .420$) and knowledge ($r = .240$, $r^2 = .057$, $p = .247$) did not have statistically significant correlations with student TELPAS scores. In other words, having intercultural knowledge and

attitude toward intercultural adaptations has nothing to do with how a student scores on the TELPAS (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

Relationship between AIC Subscales and Language Learning

Subscales	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
1. Awareness	.424	.035*
2. Skills	.430	.032*
3. Attitude	.169	.420
4. Knowledge	.240	.247

*Statistically significant $p < .05$

Research Question 3

Research question three, *What are the intercultural adaptation strategies that first generation Chinese immigrant high school students use in a school setting?*, was assessed using frequencies and percentages of responses to the *Assessing Intercultural Competence*, a survey of 18 items. The survey responses were followed by interview analysis using an inductive coding process. Of the 18 survey items, survey items 9-18 measured participants' intercultural skills, knowledge, and strategies. Overall, survey results agreed with interview responses. Five strategies and skills that were identified from the survey results and interview responses are presented below.

Strategy 1 – Be Flexible for the Differences between Host Culture and One’s Original Culture

The majority of the students (93.3%, n = 28) selected *Agree/Strong Agree* on the flexibility when interacting with people in the host culture and using models appropriate to the culture. However, none of the students stated that they used this skill or strategy during interviews. Twenty-nine students (96.6%) responded on the survey that they contrasted the host culture with their own culture, used strategies to aid adaptation and to reduce cultural stress, and developed strategies for learning the host language (see Table 4.10), which was consistent to what the students’ stated during interviews.

Table 4.10

Responses to Skills/Strategies for Intercultural Adaptation (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. Flexibility when interacting with persons from host culture	0.0 (n = 0)	3.3 (n = 1)	63.3 (n = 19)	33.3 (n = 10)
10. Use models appropriate to the culture and avoid offending the host culture	0.0 (n = 0)	3.3 (n = 1)	56.7 (n = 17)	40.0 (n = 12)
11. Contrast the host culture with my own	6.7 (n = 2)	6.7 (n = 2)	66.6 (n = 20)	20.0 (n = 6)
12. Use strategies which aid my adaptation and reduce cultural stress	0.0 (n = 0)	3.3 (n = 1)	73.3 (n = 22)	23.3 (n = 7)
13. Develop strategies for learning the host language	0.0 (n = 0)	3.3 (n = 1)	70.0 (n = 21)	27.0 (n = 8)

Strategy 2 – Obtaining Intercultural Knowledge

Approximately 93.0% of participants selected *Agree/Strongly Agree* on having cultural knowledge and knowing components of the host culture. Approximately 96.6% (n = 29) of the students responded *Agree/Strongly Agree* on having knowledge of their own language/culture and host language/culture while 90.0% (n = 27) of the students selected *Agree/Strongly Agree* on having essential norms and taboos of the host culture. For the statement “I recognize signs of cultural stress and I know strategies for overcoming them,” 83.3% (n = 25) of the students selected *Agree/Strongly Agree*. More than 80.0% of the students responded *Agree/Strongly Agree* on having techniques to maximize their learning of the host language and culture (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11

Responses to Knowledge for Intercultural Adaptation (%)

Survey Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. I can cite a basic definition of culture and identify its components.	3.3 (n = 1)	3.3 (n = 1)	80.0 (n = 24)	13.3 (n = 4)
15. I can contrast aspects of the host language and culture with my own.	0.0 (n = 0)	3.3 (n = 1)	56.7 (n = 17)	40.0 (n = 12)
16. I know the essential norms and taboos of the host culture.	0.0 (n = 0)	10 (n = 3)	63.4 (n = 19)	26.6 (n = 8)
17. I recognize signs of cultural stress and I know strategies for overcoming them.	0.0 (n = 0)	16.6 (n = 5)	66.7 (n = 20)	16.7 (n = 5)
18. I know some technique to maximize my learning of the host language and culture.	3.3 (n = 1)	6.6 (n = 2)	73.3 (n = 22)	16.7 (n = 5)

Eight students stated during the interviews that living in a new cultural environment increased their culture awareness and understanding for both host culture and their original culture. They believed exchanging cultures such as sharing one's own traditions with people from host cultures could help build good relationships among peers. For example, Zhao expressed learning about other cultures could build a common ground for people to understand each other:

I like to share Chinese culture with my classmates such as showing pictures of Chinese cities and holiday celebrations. These help my classmates to learn

Chinese culture, understand Chinese culture and understand me. ...My friends and I have more topics to talk about when we share our own cultures.

Qin expressed that culture awareness could help cultural adjustment:

...I make friends with people from different cultural backgrounds. We sometime hang out on weekends. I observe them when we are together and gradually learned many things from them. I believe I can fit in now. My friends are interested in Chinese culture and want me to teach them Chinese. We learn cultural things from each other.

Twenty students stated they tried to improve cultural related knowledge and behaviors by observing people in the host culture and trying to behave the way that was considered culturally appropriate as their intercultural strategies. For example, Jin explained immigrants had desires to behave in a culturally appropriate way: "Intercultural adaptation is a process. It is important for me to know what to do and what not to do in a new culture. Observing others from the host culture helps me to do the right thing." Dao, who had a similar opinion expressed immigrant students attempted to behave the way that was considered appropriate: "My classmates talk about sports stars and movie stars all the time. I try to learn who the stars are so I can have something in common with my classmates."

Similar to the survey results, the majority of the students believed they used some intercultural adaptation strategies in school during interviews. Twelve students expressed that frequent interaction and communication with people in the host culture enabled them to learn the host culture and language. These students also indicated that interactions and communications provided them with opportunities to practice culturally appropriate

behaviors and language. For example, Lin described how interactions and communications with different people helped her adjustment:

I communicate with my friends a lot to practice English. I try different foods from different cultures. If I don't like any food, I keep trying it then I like it.

Learning different cultures is important. It helps me to survive in this country.

Max stated making friends helped him with learning English:

I did not adjust myself well in the first year because I did not want to move to this country with my parents but I had no choice. The second year, I realized it was important for me to adjust culturally because adjustment affected my school grades. I started making friends and chatted with them quite often. My English speaking actually improved.

Five students mentioned during interviews that they actively participated in school sponsored activities. They obtained host culture related knowledge and had opportunities to practice English when interacting with people. These students stated the activities helped them adjust well because they were able to fit in with peer groups and make friends. Xin, a newcomer, explained finding a common ground could assist the adjustment process.

I love art and music. I joined two school clubs that were related to art and music right after I got here. There were no Chinese students in these clubs. I had to speak English with the club members. I quickly became a part of them. I learned many cultural related things such as the high school system and clubs from my friends in the clubs. I was able to speak English within one year.

Strategy 3 - Building Relationship

Many students stated that building good relationships with teachers and making friends with people from both cultures were the intercultural strategies they used in schools. These students expressed that building good relationships benefit them in (a) learning host culture and English, (b) avoiding misunderstandings, and (c) getting help and assistance more easily when needed. For example, Mao described building a good relationship was a helpful intercultural strategy. “I make friends with Chinese and American peers. I always ask them to help me with my homework, I also learn English from them...” Zhao expressed friendship was a good strategy that helped her in a new culture:

When I first got here, I did not have any friends. One day, I heard one classmate called me “Chino.” I thought he used a bad word to talk about me. I was very upset... I almost had a fight with him. Later on I became his friend. ...Once in a while, he still calls me “Chino” and we just laugh together.

Min also explained friendships helped him in a similar way: “...One day in gym, someone stole my iPhone. I tried to tell the coach about it but the coach could not understand me. So my friends who could speak English helped me.” Lui explained making friends could be a useful strategy to adapt to a new culture: “I try to be nice and friendly with everyone. I know building good relationships with teachers and classmates can help me avoid troubles caused by my bad English.” Jin stated her friends helped her in a similar way: “I have many friends. My friends push me to learn English. Sometimes just chatting with them helps me practice my English.”

Another example of building a relationship stated by the students was to look for common ground in both cultures that helped them adjust well in schools. For example, computer games are a commonality that all students can bond over. When they talk about or play the games together, it is easy for them to have something in common. Xin had a very positive feeling about how finding common ground helped her adjustment in a new cultural environment:

I am good at art and music. Before I came to this country, my parents hired someone to give me private lessons. I joined art and music clubs after I got enrolled. I felt like I had a lot in common with the clubs and I have a lot to share with the clubs. I didn't feel I was a newcomer. Another similar thing is religion. I am a Christian; it was easy for me to make friends with my Christian classmates. When my Christian classmates know that I am Christian, they come to me and offer help.

Strategy 4 - Self-Motivation

Six students expressed that their motivations to try to be one of the top students by studying hard helped them adjust culturally to a certain degree. They stated being good students could mean more opportunities than other students. For example, Don stated his strategy was to study hard: "I studied very hard to be a good student so I can be close to my teachers and my classmates." Other intercultural strategies students mentioned were improving English by watching English videos, English TV shows, and reading English novels. For example, Don explained his strategy was to watch English movies and read English books: "I learned lots of things from English videos and shows

about American people. The stories in the novels contained American holidays and traditions and how people interacted with each other.”

Strategy 5- Problem Solving Skills/Self-Efficacy

About half of the students stated that using problem solving skills is one of the strategies that they use in a school setting. These students expressed being in a new country and a new school system, they have to deal with things they do not expect in addition to language barrier. The students also indicated they became very independent after moving to this country. Since their parents could not speak English, they had to solve their own problems by using problem solving skills. Guo, a 10th grader, explained her intercultural strategy was to get help using electronic communication devices:

When I have problems, I use Chinese QQ or WeChat to get answers. Most of the time, I ask my teachers or friends to help. If I still don't get solutions, I call Chinese Community Center or a church to ask for help or I may even call the consultants at the Study Abroad in China.

Table 4.12 illustrates students' intercultural strategies.

Table 4. 12

Students Intercultural Strategies

	Strategy One	Strategy Two	Strategy Three	Responses Four	Response Five
Intercultural Adaptation Strategies	Flexibility	Obtaining Cultural Related Knowledge and Behaviors	Relationship Building	Self-Motivation	Problem Solving/Self-Efficacy

Research Question 4

Research question 4, *What are the first generation Chinese students' parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation?*, was answered using a qualitative inductive coding process. In an attempt to have a deeper understanding about the parents' perceptions toward intercultural competence, 29 parents were interviewed regarding their perceptions. Three concepts and themes identified from the interview responses are presented as follows.

Parents' Understanding of Intercultural Adaptation

Each of the parents had a different understanding about intercultural adaptation. Together there were eight different definitions: (a) Intercultural adaptation means to fit in the host society; (b) Intercultural adaptation is having a willingness to adapt into American culture, society, and learn the host language; (c) Intercultural adaptation refers to join the religion of majority so individuals won't be feeling as strangers or outsiders; (d) Intercultural adaptation means to accept people in host culture as the way they are, enjoy their foods and understand that differences and knowing disagreements are due to culture differences; (e) Intercultural adaptation is having an open heart for people from different culture backgrounds; (f) Intercultural adaptation refers to the way people dress, food people eat, living styles; (g) intercultural adaptation means language, living style, and communication styles; and (h) Intercultural adaptation means language, culture, religion, and adjustment in a new environment. Based on their understanding about the intercultural adaptation, parents expressed different perceptions toward intercultural adaptations. For example: Mrs. Chen's understanding of intercultural adaptation was culture and tradition: "My understanding about intercultural adaptation is different

culture, knowledge and tradition.” Mrs. Li’s definition was related to religion: “I really don’t know what intercultural adaptation is but I guess it means different religions or willingness to fit in society.” Mrs. Ma’s definition was about understanding of diversity: “Intercultural adaptation means to accept other people, try to understand that people have disagreements because they are from different cultures.” Mrs. Zhu’s definition was about foods, dresses and people: “I think intercultural adaptation means different foods, dresses and people.” Mrs. Xian’s definition was about language: “Intercultural adaptation means different languages, and living styles.” Mr. Lu’s definition was about language, culture and religion: “I think it means language, culture, and religion, etc.”

Parents’ Perceptions toward Intercultural Adaptation Skills

Similar to the students’ interview responses, all parents believed that intercultural adaptation skills were important for students to adapt to a new culture and to live in a new environment. Mrs. Wang summarized the importance of intercultural adaptation in this way: “Cultural competence can influence quality lives of students in a new environment. In order to adapt, more knowledge and skills about the host culture are better.” Mrs. Zhou expressed the importance of intercultural adaptation skills in a similar way: “Learning both language and culture are important for students’ adjustments. Students can become mature when they are interculturally competent.” Mrs. Li explained that intercultural competence had a positive impact on students’ academics in this way: “Having intercultural adaptation skills can have a positive impact on students’ academic performance as well as self-esteem.” Mrs. Zhang compared differences of both cultures: “Chinese culture is completely different from the American mainstream culture. Students need to learn American culture while keeping Chinese culture.”

Perceptions of Preparing Students for Intercultural Adaptation Skills

Parents had different perceptions regarding if immigrant students should be prepared for intercultural adaptation skills. These perceptions can be categorized into three groups. Three (10.3%, $n = 3$) parents believed students did not need to be trained for intercultural adaptation skills and students could become interculturally competent after years of residency. This group of parents did not want to get involved too much in students' lives. Mrs. Zhou explained it was not necessary to prepare students for intercultural adaptation skills:

I don't think we need to intentionally prepare students for intercultural competence. My child picks up language and culture quickly. I don't need to put too much effort on that. I think my child should be allowed to develop naturally. Natural adjustment is better. Of course, guidance is helpful.

Similarly, Mrs. Zhang also expressed students did not need to be trained for intercultural adaptations skills: "Every child is different in a new environment. I let my child choose his life style and make decisions for himself."

The second group of parents (27.6%, $n = 8$) also did not believe that students needed to be prepared for the intercultural adaptation skills. However, they believed that parents should encourage students to participate in a variety of activities or provide activities for students to participate. Mrs. Lui expressed she encouraged her child but would not force him to do what he did not like to: "I encourage my child to participate in all school activities and to watch English TV shows, but if he doesn't want to follow my directions, I am okay with it. There is no right or wrong choices on these."

The last group of parents (62.1%, n = 18) strongly supported that students should be prepared with intercultural adaptation skills, and they worked very hard to help their children develop intercultural skills. These parents stated the importance of intercultural adaptation and what actions they took to help their children. For example, Mrs. Zhao explained how she prepared her child for intercultural adaptations:

Music and arts are universal. I try to develop my child's talents in music and art so she can be confident and fit in quickly. I also request my child to do part time job so she can learn host culture, language and tradition on her job. I encourage my child to make friends with people from different cultural backgrounds so she can experience culture, and religion when interacting with people.

Mrs. Zhao also explained the importance of preparing immigrant students for intercultural skills:

It is important to prepare my child for intercultural adaptation skills. She needs to know the value of the host culture. I encourage her to participate in extra curriculum to learn intercultural adaptation skills. It is important for her to have an open mind, to accept others, and to easily adapt to the host culture. I encourage her to learn the host culture through extra curriculum activities.

Summary of the Findings

Overall, for both survey and interview, the majority of the student participants expressed positive perceptions and attitudes towards importance of the intercultural competence/adaptation for the immigrant students who live and study in a new culture. The students who were able to notice the difference between their original culture and the host culture indicated during the interviews that they had faced many adjustment issues.

Approximately 17.0% of the students felt the importance of intercultural competence/adaptation should be determined on individual cases, while 10.0% of the students demonstrated *Strongly Dislike* perceptions toward intercultural adaptations. These students believed intercultural competence was not important at all. However, all students expressed positively that learning a host language was important. Compared to the students' responses, the majority of the parents demonstrated favorable perceptions toward intercultural adaptations and language learning. The participating students stated positive attitudes toward using intercultural adaptation skills and strategies. These strategies and skills included being flexible, self-motivated, making friends, building relationships, seeking help from communities, observations, building common grounds, self-efficacy/problem solving skills, and participating in activities. Among these strategies, making friends was mentioned as one of the most important intercultural strategies by the majority of the students. Findings also showed that there was a relationship between intercultural adaptation and language learning.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the participant demographics and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected from surveys and interviews for each research question. In the next chapter, findings will be supported with the existing literature. Implications of this study and future research recommendations will be discussed.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated previously, the purpose of this research study was to conduct an examination of first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural competence/adaptation and English language learning. Intercultural competence and second language learning are well-established research topics in the existing literature. However, most of the research literature pertaining to these two areas have focused on either linguistics or cross-cultural perspectives or on an older age focus group such as international college students and adults. High school immigrant students and their relationships between second language learning and intercultural adaptations are limited in existing literature.

In an attempt to understand intercultural competence/adaptation of first generation Chinese immigrant students, survey, interview, and archival assessment data were collected from a purposeful sample of 30 students in a suburban public school district in Southeast Texas. Interview data were collected from 29 parents of the participating students. In this study, quantitative data were analyzed using percentages, frequencies, and Pearson's product moment correlation (r), while qualitative data were analyzed using an inductive coding process. Implications of this study and future research recommendations are addressed.

Research Question 1

Research question one, *What are first generation high school Chinese immigrant students' perceptions toward intercultural competence/adaptation?*, was answered using percentages and frequencies to the student responses of the *Assessing Intercultural Competence* (AIC) survey. Participant survey responses were compared with corresponding interview responses. Overall, the survey results were consistent with the interview responses. The majority of participating students showed positive perceptions toward intercultural adaptations compared to a small percentage of the students who responded negatively regarding the importance of intercultural adaptations. Based on the survey responses and interview responses, *cultural awareness, cultural attitudes, language learning, cultural learning, and culturally appropriate behaviors* were the identified themes.

Perceptions on Cultural Awareness

For awareness of differences across languages and cultures, all student participants responded positively about demonstrating awareness of differences across languages and culture (Item 1 in the AIC survey). However, for the statement “I demonstrate awareness of my negative reactions to these differences” (Item 2), 33% of the participants indicated that they were not aware of their negative reaction to cultural differences. Similarly, the majority of the student participants (86%) responded that they were able to demonstrate awareness of how their cultures impacted their interactions with others in the host culture (Item 3) as well as to demonstrate awareness of how they were viewed by members of the host culture (Item 4). Survey results and interview responses

suggested that students who had experienced or faced more intercultural issues had positive perceptions toward intercultural adaptations.

These students also were able to identify differences between their original culture and the host culture, and vice versa, students who had not experienced exposure to intercultural issues or those who had experienced it less did not have positive perceptions toward intercultural adaptations and were only aware of fewer differences between their original cultures and host cultures. The students' perceptions varied due to their cultural exposures prior to U.S. schools. For example, some of these students were from very developed areas in China and they were being exposed to Western culture and Western life styles. Others were raised in very traditional Chinese cultural environments or in areas where they were only being exposed to Chinese culture. This indicates that the intercultural adaptation awareness process is influenced by cultural orientations and social contexts that immigrant individuals are raised and attached to, which coincides with the literature that immigrant individual's cultural adjustment process is determined by the social environmental contexts and cultural orientations (Berry, 1997; Tsai, Chentsova-Dutton, & Wong, 2002).

Perceptions on Attitudes toward Cultural Adaptations

AIC Survey items 5 - 8 addressed the participating high school students' willingness to interact with people of the host culture. The majority of students (93.0%) indicated they were willing to interact with people in host culture (item 5).

Approximately 90.0% of the students responded they had a willingness to learn the host language. Conversely, approximately 10.0% of the students had negative attitudes toward language learning because they felt they were forced to move to the host country

with their parents even though they perceived language learning was important. Approximately 90.0% of the students indicated positive attitudes on willingness to behave in a culturally appropriate way and to deal with frustration in a new cultural environment. Overall, the survey data and interview responses suggested that the majority of the students had positive and optimistic attitudes toward intercultural adaptations and host language learning. These results agree with existing literature that individuals' attitudes toward intercultural adaptations have great impact on how much these individuals can maintain contact with people in the host culture, and what level of adjustment these immigrant individuals can demonstrate (Berry, Trimble, & Olmeda, 1986; Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki, 1989; Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1987; Berry, Unichol & Boski, 1987; Berry & Annis, 1974; Sommerlad & Berry, 1970). While existing literature has limited explorations on high school immigrant students' perceptions on language learning, cultural learning and culturally appropriate behaviors, the findings of this study have contributed to literature and added insights in the areas of students' perceptions toward intercultural adaptations.

Research Question 2

Research question two, *Is there a relationship between Chinese high school immigrant students' intercultural adaptation knowledge and skills, and their English language learning?*, was addressed using Pearson's (r). Results indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between student intercultural knowledge and skills and English language learning. The existing research documents support for the finding that culture influences language learning because learning a new language involves learning a new culture in a cultural context (Oxford, 1996; Gardner, 1984). This finding

also agrees with previous literature that intercultural competence and language are closely related to each other and need to be developed at the same time (Valdes, 1986; Byram & Feng, 2004; Kramsch, 1998). Similarly, Halliday's study (1993) also supports that culture and language learning have an evolving relationship, which is further explained by Kramsch (1998) that languages are symbols that reflect cultural contexts and values, and cultures attach the meaning to languages and are carried out through languages. While the previous literature pertaining to relationships between language competence and intercultural competence mainly focus on adults or college students, the finding in this examination has added a new perspective to research literature with a focus on high school students.

Research Question 3

Research question three, *What are the intercultural adaptation strategies that first generation Chinese immigrant high school students use in a school setting?*, was illustrated using percentages and frequencies to student responses to items in the AIC survey. Intercultural strategies and skills were assessed through survey items 9 - 18. Items 9 - 13 measured intercultural skills, and items 14 - 18 measured intercultural knowledge. Research question 3 was also answered using inductive coding process to the responses of interview questions. Based on the survey results and interview responses, five frequently used intercultural adaptation strategies were identified: (a) *flexibility*, (b) *obtaining cultural related knowledge and skills*, (c) *motivation*, (d) *relationship building*, and (e) *problem solving/self-efficacy*.

Flexibility

Based on the survey results, flexibility was identified as an intercultural adaptation strategy by the majority of participant students. This indicated an imperative to possess high level of tolerance for cultural differences when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Flexibility between host culture and one's original culture helped immigrant students reduce stress caused by cultural unfamiliarity. This agreed with previous research studies that stated individuals who demonstrate flexibility in a new cultural environment may experience less frustration and stress caused by unfamiliarity and differences. Flexibility was also found to improve the intercultural adaptation process (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Tung, 1981; Cochran, 1993; Von Kirchenheim & Richardson, 2005). Since the existing literature has limited resources regarding flexibility being used as an intercultural adaptation approach by high school immigrant students, this study has contributed additional research on the value of flexibility in the adaptation process.

Obtaining Culturally Related Knowledge and Skills

Based on survey results and interview responses, developing intercultural knowledge and skills was identified as a frequently used intercultural adaptation strategy. Students expressed that they tried to learn culture related knowledge and skills by observing people in the host culture and trying to behave in a culturally appropriate manner. This indicated exposure to intercultural events could lead to acquisition of intercultural knowledge and skills, which can guide immigrant students through cross-cultural adjustments. Therefore, this finding agreed with Leung, Lee and Chiu's study (2013) that possessing cross-cultural knowledge improves the quality of intercultural

communication. The study by Ward and Kennedy (1992) also supported this finding. Ward and Kennedy argued that intercultural knowledge and skills obtained from interactions with people in the host culture promote sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitioning since knowledge and skills of culture norms and values can help immigrants better understand the culture and make intercultural adjustments as needed.

Motivation

Motivation is another intercultural adaptation strategy identified by majority of the participating students based on both survey results and interview responses. The students expressed motivation was one of the intercultural strategies they used to learn English and the host culture when making intercultural adjustments. This notion agreed with Wan's (1999) study that the immigrant students who are motivated to be successful academically, work hard to improve their lives in a host country. The students worked diligently to learn English and acquire cultural related knowledge in developing a smooth intercultural adjustment.

Relationship Building

Relationship building was mentioned by the students as another intercultural strategy based on the interview responses. The students stated that building relationships with teachers and making friends with people from both original and host cultures were the most useful intercultural strategies. These students further expressed that building good relationships could benefit them from (a) avoiding misunderstandings (b) learning host culture and English; and (c) easily getting assistance when required. Similar findings from the research study by Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2009) concludes that

relationship building is important for immigrant youth in an intercultural transition process. The immigrant students can have opportunities to explore knowledge of academics, culture, and English language through the social networks and connections among peers and school staff members. This research finding in a study of high school immigrant students is a contribution to the research literature since previous research on the value of building relationship as an intercultural strategy has been found predominantly in studies regarding international college students.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was identified as a frequently used strategy that students used in a school setting during interview. The students expressed that they faced many challenges in new cultural environments including language barriers, cultural adjustments, and school system adjustments. Most of the time, they had to take care of their own issues because their parents did not speak English. Therefore, self-efficacy skills were very important to them. Existing research literature agreed with the finding that self-efficacy skills have a great impact on immigrant students' intercultural adjustment (Long, Yan, Yang, & Van Oudenhoven, 2009; Harrison, Chadwick & Scales, 1996). The study by Constantine, Okzazaki, and Utsey (2004) also supported the finding that self-efficacy can be very important in promoting immigrant students' relationship engagement.

In addition to the intercultural strategies identified by the participating students of this study, existing literature documents also argue that stress management is another strategy that immigrants use during intercultural transition or intercultural adaptation. However, none of the participating students reported that stress management was one of their intercultural strategies. Immigrants face many challenges caused by cultural

differences and unfamiliarity which may lead to psychological reactions such as stress and frustration. Stress management can be a useful tool for immigrants to cope with the psychological reactions. This finding did not reflect that the high school immigrant students developed or used stress management as one of their intercultural strategies, which might indicate that this group of students did not have any training on stress management. It might suggest that the students were not aware of the psychological reaction due to their ages or not aware of the stress management skills they have had to use.

Research Question 4

Research question four, *What are the first generation Chinese students' parents' perceptions toward intercultural adaptation?*, was addressed by applying a qualitative inductive coding process. In an attempt to have a better understanding about the parents' perceptions toward intercultural competence, parents were interviewed regarding their perceptions. All parents believed that intercultural adaptations were important for students in new cultural environments and new school systems. Parents' levels of understandings about intercultural adaptation varied. Some of them did not know what intercultural adaptation was, while others had a good understanding of it. Therefore, parents' perceptions on preparing students for intercultural adaptations were influenced by their definitions of intercultural adaptation. Based on the interview responses, the perceptions can be categorized into three groups. Approximately 10.0% (n=3) of the parents believed students did not need to be trained for intercultural adaptation knowledge and skills. These parents believed their children could obtain intercultural

competence after living in America for a long time. This group of parents expressed that they did not want to get involved too much in the students' cultural adaptation process.

Another group of parents (27.6%, $n = 8$) also did not agree that students needed to be prepared for the intercultural adaptation skills, but they believed parents should encourage students to participate in a variety of activities with people from the host culture. The last group of parents (62.1%, $n = 18$), which represented the majority, strongly supported the idea that students should be prepared with intercultural adaptations. These parents attempted fervently to acclimate their children to an acceptable level of intercultural competency. This agrees with research studies by Barkhuizen (2006), De Houwer (1999) and Trudell (1993), each of whom found parents showed concerns about their children's linguistic and cultural adjustments since intercultural adaptation may affect academic achievement. The parents wanted their children to learn intercultural adaptation skills and hoped their children could have a smooth adjustment. This group of participating students' parents did not report that they had concerns about their children losing the primary culture and/or language while learning English and the host culture, which was different from what was stated in the exiting literature.

Implications

The findings of this study indicated that immigrant students face three major challenges: low English language skills, culture unfamiliarity, and school system unfamiliarity. Because of these challenges, students and parents strongly agreed that learning English, being interculturally competent, and possessing intercultural skills are important for immigrant students' cultural adaptations. Based on the results of this study, English learning and intercultural adaptation development are closely related to each

other and influence one another. The participating parents and students consider learning English as an important survival skill for immigrant students in new cultural environments. However, most of the ELLs were not well prepared for English prior to U.S. schools. Consequently, they do not have language skills to fully understand instructions in English and are unable to take in information or process knowledge that teachers deliver during class time. These deficits make it difficult for the ELLs to learn English and content subjects.

Additionally, the majority of parents and students considered intercultural competence to be very important since many of the students had suffered culturally related issues and adjustments due to culture unfamiliarity. Immigrant students will benefit from a comprehensive school program that offers services by key stakeholders', such as collaboration by school leaders, teachers and counselors.

Implications for Instructional Leaders

Instructional leaders play important roles in school success. Instructional leaders can lead schools to be responsive to the learning needs of all students and advocating for all students (Cotton, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). To improve ELL students' second language acquisition and intercultural competence, instructional leaders can influence schools by moving schools directly toward cultural and linguistic responsiveness and by creating programs that benefit ELLs (Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

Culturally and linguistically responsive schools. Instructional leaders can help schools develop visions and missions to advocate equitability. Instructional leaders can also help schools build positive climates for learning communities that promote all staff to work together to make schools equitable for diversity. Messages about school

equitability should be sent to staff members constantly, so the messages can become common language for schools.

Special programs for immigrant students. When designing school programs, especially academic programs, support programs, assessment programs, and counseling programs, ELLs' linguistic and intercultural needs should be emphasized. Academic programs need to be designed to serve ESL students for both language and culture. ELL students who are at different English proficiency levels, different grades, as well as in different levels of schooling and economic status may need to be placed in programs to address their needs. For example, newcomer centers may be needed for students who are new to the host country. ESL alternative centers should be considered for students who have interrupted education or no former education prior to U.S. schools. Additionally, ESL student support centers should be provided for ELL students who are at Advanced or Advanced-High English proficiency and for long-term ESL students who still need academic support. In regards to support programs, ELL students should be provided with a variety of academic, social, and parenting supports, such as homework assistance and tutorials; mentoring across cultural activities, school system orientation, and ESL parenting education. Club related activities and teachers/student buddy activities should also be provided. For assessment programs, ELL students' performances should be measured with alternative assessments that can reflect ELL students' progress accurately before they fully master English skills. For counseling programs, bilingual/bicultural counselors should be part of counseling program and ELL students' cross-cultural training curriculum should be developed and implemented.

High quality of professional development. To better serve ELL students, the best practice ESL models for language learning and cultural competence should be employed for ESL programs. Instructional leaders can influence schools by forming learning communities, and providing workshops and trainings that can improve educators' best practice skills. Instructional leaders can also provide administrative and instructional support for teachers to implement best practices. Teachers can be trained to be culturally and linguistically responsive. When teachers are equipped with ESL instructional skills, they will be able to better address immigrants' linguistic and intercultural needs. In turn, immigrant students' cultural adaptation will have less interference with students' academic learning.

Implications for Teachers

Immigrant students come from different academic and cultural backgrounds. Linguistically, it is possible that students in the same class are at different English proficiency levels for each language domain. Some students may be able to speak but cannot write. Others can read but are unable to write. Culturally, students who are from developed countries or areas might have similar Western living styles/culture or were being exposed to similar cultures before coming to U.S. As a result, this group of students may be able to fit into U.S. mainstream culture immediately. In comparison, students who are from developing countries or areas may have an initial culture shock. Therefore, teachers need to be aware that each individual immigrant student may have different learning needs in terms of English language learning and cultural adjustment. Teachers need to have an understanding about immigrant students' learning styles,

immigrant students' lives and "being socio-culturally conscious" (Villegas & Lucas, 2007, p. 1).

Depending on the immigrant students' prior schooling, family socioeconomic status, and prior exposure to Western culture and host language, students will have different instructional needs. Individualized instructional plans would be helpful especially with newcomer immigrant students. Linguistic accommodations and ESL teaching strategies can help the English and content lessons become more comprehensible, and allow students to learn better. In addition, incorporating intercultural components in content curriculum can be an effective way to get the immigrant students to gain intercultural competence. Furthermore, assisting the immigrant students in building a network with their English native speaking peers by providing activities during class times can ease their "outsider's anxiety" and help them achieve intercultural competence.

Implications for Counselors

The findings of this study indicate that intercultural knowledge, awareness, and skills help immigrant students adjust to new cultural environments. In addition, existing literature shows a low level of intercultural adaptation or adjustment interferes with immigrant students' academic learning (Bennett, 2011). Counselors play an important role in the assistance of immigrant students in overcoming adjustment difficulties stemming from a lack of intercultural adaptation factors (intercultural knowledge and skills) and unfamiliarity with American schools. Guidance curriculum activities such as ESL students/parent orientation, informative school system nights, graduation requirement sessions, and attendance requirements sessions can be used to assist the

immigrant students on intercultural related factors (e.g., knowledge and skills) as well as the expectations of American schools. Small group counseling sessions for cross-cultural effectiveness can also be very helpful. Motivation speeches given by former ESL students would be another way to provide encouragement and ease “uncertain future” feeling. Parent night should have a different session for ESL parents with interpreters to address parents’ language barriers. In addition, counselors need to be aware that some countries, such as China, may not have school counselors due to cultural differences. Consequently, students from these countries may not know they can obtain assistance from counselors. During interview sessions, it was reported that a big concern from many students was the credit system in American high schools, which was not part of their prior school experiences in China. Informing immigrant students about the school counselors’ roles and responsibilities can be helpful to the immigrant students.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are numerous research materials pertaining to immigrant cultural adaptations and cultural competence. However, research documents pertaining to high school level immigrant students’ linguistic, and cultural adaptation factors (e.g., knowledge and skills) are limited. This study focused on the dynamics between immigrant high school students' intercultural competence/adaptation and language learning. Findings of this study indicated that first generation Chinese immigrant students face challenges related to lack of language skills and lack of intercultural preparations. From the study findings, there are several recommendations for future research.

This study had a small sample size within one race/ethnicity. Future research studies can be extended to students from different ethnicities and with a large sample size to allow for comparisons. Additionally, student participants were selected from grades 9-12 with 1-4 years of U.S. schooling. Future study should focus on one grade level and one group of students with the same number of years of U.S. schooling and possibly students' original region and/or family socioeconomic status. Furthermore, some areas are more developed than others. Students who were from developed areas were exposed to Western culture and lifestyles while students who were from developing areas grew up in traditional Chinese cultural environments. Students' family socioeconomic status could determine the levels of Western cultures exposure students receive. For example, students might have travelled to the U.S. prior to moving to America if his/her family could afford it. Therefore, participating student responses to survey items and interview questions were based on experiences influenced by events that occurred prior to the study. Future research studies should take this into consideration and select participants with similar levels of intercultural exposure.

Conclusion

Survey results and interview responses were consistent in indicating the majority of immigrant students and parents had positive, high perceptions toward intercultural adaptations including intercultural knowledge, intercultural attitude, intercultural awareness, and intercultural skills. Survey results and interview responses on intercultural skills students used in school settings were slightly different for one item, which was stress management skills. Overall, the findings revealed a positive relationship between first generation Chinese speaking students' intercultural competence

and language learning. This finding was closely related to the three challenges they faced in school settings: lack of language skills, lack of intercultural preparedness, and unfamiliarity with American school systems.

The findings of this study provide insights to administrators, teachers and counselors about the importance of intercultural competence/adaptation on immigrant students' second language learning and academic achievement. School key stakeholders can work together to promote equity for all students. Intercultural adaptation can be emphasized and included in school program planning, teachers' training preparation and curriculum development. This study contributed to research literature by adding new knowledge pertaining to intercultural adaptation and language learning at the high school level since prior research has largely focused on intercultural adaptation at the college and/or adult levels.

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APPENDIX A

ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: A YOGA FORM

APPENDIX A

*ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE (AIC)

A YOGA FORM

*The AIC instrument was developed by Federation of The Experiment in International Living (FEIL)

The term “YOGA” stands for “Your Objectives, Guidelines, and Assessment” form. This form may be used as a self-evaluation guide. It is designed to help you examine the development of your intercultural communicative competence (ICC, or Intercultural Competence, for short). This pilot document should help you to critically examine your intercultural objectives, serve as guidelines while undergoing an intercultural experience, and provide an assessment tool at various stages of intercultural development. “YOGA”一词代表“您的目标，指南和评估”表格。此表格可用作自我评估指南。它旨在帮助您检查跨文化交际能力（简称 ICC 或跨文化能力）的发展。这个试点文件应该帮助你批判性地审查你的跨文化目标，作为指导，同时接受跨文化的经验，并在不同文化发展的不同阶段提供一个评估工具。

Rate yourself in each of the areas below (from 1 – strongly disagree, to 4 – strongly agree). After doing so, it is useful to have a native of the host culture rate you as well. This will provide you with not only your own perspective, but that of your hosts as well. Normally, the same individual will be perceived differently by the various evaluators (providing, e.g., “emic” and “etic”, or insider/outsider viewpoints that invariably exist across cultures). These different perspectives can spark important discussion, reflection, and learning. 读下面每个句子给自己一个评价。然后选择一个适用于您的数字。(1 = 非常不同意, 2 = 不同意, 3 = 同意, 4 = 非常同意)

AWARENESS 意识

Level I: Educational Traveler

I demonstrate awareness of 我能够意识到

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | differences across languages and cultures. | 1 2 3 4 |
| | 跨越语言和文化的差异. | |
| 2 | my negative reactions to these differences (fear, ridicule, disgust, superiority, etc.). | 1 2 3 4 |
| | 我对这些差异的负面反应（恐惧，嘲笑，厌恶，优势等）. | |
| 3 | how a specific context affects/alters my interaction with others. | 1 2 3 4 |

特定上下文如何影响/改变我的待人接物.

- 4 how I am viewed by members of the host culture. 1 2 3 4

当地国家的成员是如何/怎么样认为我的.

ATTITUDE 态度

I demonstrate a willingness to 我表示愿意

- 5 interact with members of the host culture (I don't avoid them, or primarily seek the company of my compatriots, etc.). 1 2 3 4

与当地国家的人进行互动.

- 6 learn from my hosts, their language, and their culture. 1 2 3 4

从当地人那里学习他们的语言和他们的文化

- 7 try to communicate in the host language and to behave in ways judged "appropriate" by my hosts. 1 2 3 4

尝试设法使用当地人认为“恰当的语言和行为方式沟通.”

- 8 try to deal with the emotions and frustrations caused by my participation in the host culture (in addition to the pleasures which it offers). 1 2 3 4

尝试处理因我参与东道国文化的情绪和挫折（除了它提供的乐趣.

SKILLS 技能

- 9 I demonstrate flexibility when interacting with persons from the host culture. 1 2 3 4

我的行为表明与东道国文化的人交往时我表现出灵活性.

- 10 I use models appropriate to the culture and I avoid offending my hosts with my behavior, dress, etc. 1 2 3 4

我用适当的文化方法, 行为, 礼服等 避免冒犯当地人

- 11 I am able to contrast the host culture with my own. 1 2 3 4

我可以用我自己的文化与当地本土文化比较

- 12 I use strategies which aid my adaptation and reduce cultural stress. 1 2 3 4

我用它帮助我适应和减轻文化的压力

- 13 I develop strategies for learning the host language and about the host culture 1 2 3 4

我制定战略，学习当地文化，语言。

KNOWLEDGE 知识

- 14 I can cite a basic definition of culture and identify its components 1 2 3 4

我可以举出文化的一个基本定义，并确定其组成部分

- 15 I can contrast aspects of the host language and culture with my own 1 2 3 4

我可以比较当地的文化和我自己的文化。

- 16 I know the essential norms and taboos (greetings, dress, behavior, etc.)

of the host culture.

1 2 3 4

我知道当地文化的基本规范和禁忌（问候，穿着，行为等）。

- 17 I recognize signs of cultural stress and I know strategies for

overcoming them.

1 2 3 4

我承认文化的压力，我知道如何克服压力

- 18 I know some techniques to maximize my learning of the host language

and culture.

1 2 3 4

我知道如何使用一些技巧来最大限度地提高我的本地语言和文化的学习。

APPENDIX B

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX B

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where are you from? How long has your child been in the U.S.?
你从哪里来? 你孩子来美国 有多久了?
2. Do you speak English? 你会说英语吗?
3. What grade is your child in? 你孩子上几年级?
4. What is intercultural competence in your opinion?
您认为什么是跨文化交际能力?
5. Do you think it is important for immigrant students to be intercultural competent?
Why or why not? 你认为跨文化交际能力对移民学生重要吗?
为什么或者为什么不?
6. Do you intentionally teach your child to be intercultural competent? Why?
你有意向教你的孩子跨文化交际能力的技能吗? 为什么?
7. Are you aware of any intercultural competence skills your child uses in school or in other settings? Please give examples.
你知道你的孩子在学校或其他地方使用什么跨文化交际能力的技能吗? 请说明。
8. What impact does intercultural competence have on your child academic performance and adjustment in a new cultural environment in your opinion?
在你看来, 跨文化交际能力对孩子学业,并在新的文化环境调整是否有什么影响?
9. Do you think your child should be prepared to have intercultural competence skills?
Why or why not?
你觉得你的孩子应该预备有跨文化交际能力的技能? 为什么或者为什么不?
10. Do you encourage your child to learn local language and culture? Why or why not?
你鼓励你的孩子学习当地的语言和文化吗?
11. What are your perceptions toward your child's intercultural adaptation skills?
你的孩子跨文化适应能力的看法是什么?

APPENDIX C

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX C

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where are you from? How long have you been in the U.S.? 你从哪里来? 你来美国有多久了?
2. Do you speak English? 你会说英语吗?
3. What grade are you in? 你上几年级?
4. What is the difference between American schools and the schools in China in your opinion? 在您看来, 什么是美国学校和中国学校之间的差异?
5. Have you ever face any issues that are related to language skills or culture or both? Explain? 你曾经有面临语言技能或文化问题或两者兼而有之问题吗? 请解释说明.
6. Are you aware of any changes of yourself since you came to this country? Please explain? 来到这个国家后 您是否意识到自己的任何改变? 请解释?
7. How important the intercultural skills and cultural adaptation are in your opinion? Do you intent to learn or use intercultural skills? 你是如何看待跨文化技能和文化适应? 你打算学习或使用跨文化技能?
8. Do you have motivation to learn English or host culture related skills? Do you lose your Chinese language or Chinese culture while learning English and mainstream culture? Please explain. 你有热情学习英语或当地文化相关的技能? 学习英语和主流文化的同时你有失去你的中文或中国文化吗? 请解释
9. How do you like American school? How do you like the school system? 你喜欢美国学校吗? 你喜欢学校系统吗?
10. What are the adaptation skills you use on daily basis with his friends/teachers etc.? 你日常使用哪些调整和适应能力与朋友, 老师和其他人相处?
11. Do you get help from your teachers and peers whenever you need? If yes, please give examples. How does that affect your school performance? 当你需要, 你问你的老师和同学的帮助吗? 如果是请举例说明。这如何影响你的学习成绩?
12. Do you know that communities, organizations etc. can help you and your family? 你知道社区, 组织等, 可以帮助你和你的家人吗?

13. Do you have problems or difficulties at school? How do you solve them? 你在学校遇到问题或困难吗? 你是如何解决这些问题的?
14. What are your perceptions toward intercultural adaptation skills? 你对你跨文化适应能力的看法是什么?

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (STUDENTS)

同意参加研究书（学生）

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (STUDENTS)

同意参加研究书（学生）

You are being asked to participate in the research project described below. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or you may decide to stop your participation at any time. Should you refuse to participate in the study or should you withdraw your consent and stop participation in the study, your decision will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may be otherwise entitled. You are being asked to read the information below carefully, and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

您被邀请参加下面描述的研究项目。您参与这项研究是完全自愿的，你可以拒绝参加，或者你可以决定在任何时间停止参与。如果你拒绝参与这项研究还是撤回同意并停止参与研究，你的决定将没有涉及任何惩罚或损失。你被要求请仔细阅读下列信息，您决定参加与否之前，你可以提问。

Title: THE DYNAMICS BETWEEN IMMIGRANT STUDENT INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION SKILLS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF CHINESE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

标题：移民学生中国文化适应能力与语言学习之间的动态 移民学生案例研究

Student Investigator(s): Li Shi

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kajs, SOE

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study will be to assess first generation Chinese immigrant students' intercultural adaptation skills and English language learning.

研究目的

本研究的目的是评估第一代中国移民学生的跨文化适应能力和英语学习。

PROCEDURES

The research procedures are as follows:

Survey data will be obtained from a purposeful sample of Chinese speaking students and their parents based on a set of pre-prepared sample selection criteria. The survey will be distributed to the participating students in the Chinese classes of each selected high school during class time. The researcher will go over each survey item with explanations in both simple English and Chinese to make sure every student fully understands the survey instructions and survey items. The students will be given two weeks to complete the survey. In addition to the survey results, district archival assessment results will be used.

This study will also use qualitative data collection to gather in-depth information through interviews due to the small number of participants. The interview protocol will be a 14-item questionnaire. The questionnaire will include items concerning the subject's personal adjustment in the U.S. mainstream culture; the relationship between the student's culture and behavior; the student's identity and adjustment at the U.S. schools; and the strategies used for their adjustment. The interviews will be conducted individually, either face to face or through telephone on weekends. Hard copies of the interview questions will be given to the participants one week before interviews so the participants have time to go over all questions. Interviews will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

程序

研究程序如下：

调查数据将根据一组预先准备的样本选择标准，从有意向的华语学生和他们的父母那里获得。调查将在上课期间分发给每个选定高中的参与学生。研究人员将对每个调查项目进行简单的英文和中文解释，以确保每个学生完全理解调查和调查项目。学生将获得两周的时间完成调查。

本研究还将使用定性数据收集，通过访谈收集更深入的信息，因为参与人数较少。面试是一个 14 项目的问卷。问卷将包括有关该主题在美国主流文化中的个人调整的项目；学生的文化和行为之间的关系；学生在美国学校的身份和调整；以及用于调整的战略。访谈将单独进行，面对面或通过电话在周末。面试问题的硬拷贝将在访谈前一周给予参与者，以便参与者有时间讨论所有问题。面试约需 45 至 60 分钟。

EXPECTED DURATION

The total anticipated time commitment will be approximately 12 months. Over the course of a 12-month period, the participants will be asked to complete a survey and participate in an interview. The survey will take approximately 40 minutes and the interview will take approximately 40-60 minutes.

预计持续时间

预计总时间约为 12 个月。在 12 个月的期间内，将要求参与者完成调查并参加面试。调查大约需要 40 分钟，面试大约需要 40-60 分钟。

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION

There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

参与风险

与参与本研究相关的预期风险没有。

BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECT

There is no direct benefit received from your participation in this study, but your participation will help the investigator(s) understand the relationship between the immigrant student social skills and their English language learning.

对主题的好处

您参与本研究没有直接受益，但您的参与将帮助调查者了解移民学生社交技能与他们的英语学习之间的关系。

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. The data collected from the study will be used for educational and publication purposes, however, you will not be identified by name. For federal audit purposes, the participant's documentation for this research project will be maintained and safeguarded by the researcher for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. After that time, the participant's documentation may be destroyed.

记录保密性

将尽一切努力保持您的学习记录的保密性。从研究中收集的数据将用于教育目的。对于联邦审计目的，研究人员将在研究完成后至少三年保留并保护参与者的文档。之后参与者的文档会被销毁。

FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

There is no financial compensation to be offered for participation in the study.

财务补偿

没有为参与研究提供经济补偿

INVESTIGATOR'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PARTICIPANT

The investigator has the right to withdraw you from this study at any time.

调查员参加提名的权利

调查员参加提名的权利 研究者有权随时退出本研究。

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

The investigator has offered to answer all your questions. If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Principal Investigator Dr. Kajs at phone number 281-283-3519 or by email at Kajs@uhcl.edu.

联系信息问题或问题

调查员提出回答你的所有问题。如果您在本研究过程中有关于研究或任何相关问题的其他问题，您可以联系首席研究员 Kajs 博士，电话号码为 281-283-3519 或电子邮件 Kajs@uhcl.edu

{Or, Student Researcher information}

If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Student Researcher, Li Shi. or The Faculty Sponsor Dr. Kajs may be contacted at phone number 281-283-3519 or by email at kajs@uhcl.edu

如果您在本研究过程中有关于研究或任何相关问题的其他问题，您可以联系学生研究员李诗。或教师资助 Kajs 博士。联系电话号码 281-283-3519 或电子邮件 kajs@uhcl.edu.

SIGNATURES: Your signature below acknowledges your voluntary participation in this research project. Such participation does not release the investigator(s), institution(s), sponsor(s) or granting agency(ies) from their professional and ethical responsibility to you. By signing the form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

签字：下面您的签名承认你在这个研究项目自愿参加。这种参与

并不意味着你放弃您的任何合法权利。

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been allowed to ask questions and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You have been told who to contact if you have additional questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Principal Investigator or Student Researcher/Faculty Sponsor. You will be given a copy of the consent form you have signed.

这项研究的目的程序,风险或利益已经向你解释。你已经被允许提问,您的问题已经回答的让您满意。你已被告知与谁联系如果您有其他问题。您已阅读本同意书,并自愿同意参加本研究报告的主题。您可以与首席研究员或学生研究员/教授主办单位随时联系撤回同意。您将获得您所签署的同意书的副本。

Student's printed name 学生名字:

Signature of Student 学生签名:

Student's Parent printed name 学生家长签名:

Signature of Student's Parent 学生家长签名:

Date 日期:

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items listed above with the subject. 使用的语言是可以理解的,适当的,我已经讨论了这个项目.

Printed name and title 名字:

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent 获得同意人签字:

Date 日期:

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (PARENTS)

同意参加研究书（家长）

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (PARENTS)

同意参加研究书（家长）

You are being asked to participate in the research project described below. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or you may decide to stop your participation at any time. Should you refuse to participate in the study or should you withdraw your consent and stop participation in the study, your decision will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may be otherwise entitled. You are being asked to read the information below carefully, and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

您被邀请参加下面描述的研究项目。您参与这项研究是完全自愿的，你可以拒绝参加，或者你可以决定在任何时间停止参与。如果你拒绝参与这项研究还是撤回同意并停止参与研究，你的决定将

没有涉及任何惩罚或损失。你被要求请仔细阅读下列信息，您决定参加与否之前，你可以提问。

Title: THE DYNAMICS BETWEEN IMMIGRANT STUDENT INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION SKILLS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF CHINESE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

标题：移民学生中国文化适应能力与语言学习之间的动态 移民学生案例研究

Student Investigator(s): Li Shi

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Kajs, SOE

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study will be to assess first generation high school Chinese immigrant students' intercultural adaptation skills and English language learning.

研究目的

本研究的目的是评估第一代高中中国移民学生的跨文化适应能力和英语学习。

PROCEDURES

The research procedures are as follows:

Survey data will be obtained from a purposeful sample of first generation high school Chinese immigrant students and their parents based on a set of pre-prepared sample selection criteria. The survey will be distributed to the participating students in the Chinese classes of each selected high school during class time. The researcher will go over each survey item with explanations in both simple English and Chinese to make sure every student fully understands the survey instructions and survey items. The students will be given two weeks to complete the survey. The parent survey will be given to each participating student at the same time when distributing student survey during the Chinese class time to take home for his/her parent followed by phone calls for instructions and confirmation of receiving. In addition to the survey results, district archival assessment results will be used. Data collected from the surveys will be stored in a locked cabinet to maintain confidentiality.

This study will also use qualitative data collection to gather in-depth information through interviews due to the small number of participants. The interview protocol will be a 10-item questionnaire. The questionnaire will include items concerning the subject's personal adjustment in the U.S. mainstream culture; the relationship between the student's culture and behavior; the student's identity and adjustment at the U.S. schools; and the strategies used for their adjustment. The interviews will be conducted individually, either face to face or through telephone on weekends. Hard copies of the interview questions will be given to the participants one week before interviews so the participants have time to go over all questions. Interviews will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

程序

研究程序如下：

调查数据将根据一套预先准备的样本选择标准，从第一代高中中国移民学生及其父母的有针对性的样本中获得。调查将在上课期间分发给每个选定高中的中文课程的参与学生。研究人员将对每个调查项目进行简单的英文和中文解释，以确保每个学生完全理解调查说明和调查项目。学生将获得两周的时间完成调查。家长调查将同时发给每位参加的学生。除了调查结果，将使用区域档案评估结果。从调查收集的数据将存储在锁定的机柜，以保持机密性。

本研究还将使用定性数据收集，通过访谈收集更深入的信息，因为参与人数较少。面试协议将是一个 14 项目的问卷。问卷将包括有关该主题在美国主流文化中的个人调整的项目；学生的文化和行为之间的关系；学生在美国学校的身份和调整；以及用于调整的战略。访谈将单独进行，面对面或通过电话在周末。面试问题的硬拷贝将在访谈前一周给予参与者，以便参与者有时间讨论所有问题。面试约需 45 至 60 分钟。

EXPECTED DURATION

The total anticipated time commitment will be approximately 12 months. Over the course of a 12-month period, the participants will be asked to complete a survey and participate in an interview. The survey will take approximately 40 minutes and the interview will take approximately 40-60 minutes.

预计持续时间

预计总时间约为 12 个月。在 12 个月的期间内，将要求参与者完成调查并参加面试。调查大约需要 40 分钟，面试大约需要 40-60 分钟。

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION

There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

与参与本研究相关的预期风险没有。

BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECT

There is no direct benefit received from your participation in this study, but your participation will help the investigator(s) understand the relationship between the immigrant student social skills and their English language learning.

对主题的好处

您参与本研究没有直接受益，但您的参与将帮助调查者了解移民学生社交技能与他们的英语学习之间的关系。

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. The data collected from the study will be used for educational and publication purposes, however, you will not be identified by name. For federal audit purposes, the participant's documentation for this research project will be maintained and safeguarded by the researcher for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. After that time, the participant's documentation may be destroyed.

记录保密性

我将尽一切努力保持您的记录的保密性。研究中收集的数据将用于教育目的，但是，研究人员将在研究完成后至少三年保留并保护文档。之后会被销毁。

FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

There is no financial compensation to be offered for participation in the study.

财务补偿

没有为参与研究提供经济补偿

INVESTIGATOR'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PARTICIPANT

The investigator has the right to withdraw you from this study at any time.

调查员参加提名的权利

研究者有权随时让你退出本研究。

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

The investigator has offered to answer all your questions. If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Principal Investigator Dr. Kajs, at phone number 281-283-3519 or by email at Kajs@uhcl.edu.

联系信息问题或问题 调查员提出回答你的所有问题。如果您在本研究过程中有关于研究或任何相关问题的其他问题，您可以联系首席研究员 Dr.Kajs 博士，电话号码 281-283-3519 或电子邮件 Kajs@uhcl.edu。

{Or, Student Researcher information}

If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Student Researcher or The Faculty Sponsor Dr. Kajs may be contacted at phone number 281-283-3519 or by email at kajs@uhcl.edu.

如果您在本研究过程中有关于研究或任何相关问题的其他问题，您可以联系学生研究员 or Kajs 博士，联系电话号码 281-283-3519 或电子邮件 kajs@uhcl.edu.

SIGNATURES: Your signature below acknowledges your voluntary participation in this research project. Such participation does not release the investigator(s), institution(s), sponsor(s) or granting agency(ies) from their professional and ethical responsibility to you. By signing the form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

签字：下面您的签名承认你在这个研究项目自愿参加。这种参与

并不意味着你放弃您的任何合法权利。

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been allowed to ask questions and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You have been told who to contact if you have additional questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Principal Investigator or Student Researcher/Faculty Sponsor. You will be given a copy of the consent form you have signed.

这项研究的目的程序,风险或利益已经向你解释。你已经被允许提问,您的问题已经回答的让您满意。你已被告知与谁联系如果您有其他问题。您已阅读本同意书,并自愿同意参加本研究报告的主题。您可以与首席研究员或学生研究员/教授主办单位随时联系撤回同意。您将获得您所签署的同意书的副本。

Subject's printed name 名字:

Signature of Subject 签名:

Date 日期:

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items listed above with the subject. 使用的语言是可以理解的,适当的,我已经讨论了这个项目.

Printed name and title 名字:

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent 获得同意人签字:

Date 日期:

RÉSUMÉ

Li Shi, MS, EdS

EDUCATION

EdD	Educational Leadership University of Houston-Clear Lake, Houston, TX	2016
EdS	Counseling Psychology University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI	2001
MS	Education University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI	1994
BA	English Yunnan University of Nationalities, Kunming, Yunnan	1988

CERTIFICATES AND LICENSURES

School Counselor Early Childhood (EC) to 12th Grade
Foreign Language-Chinese Early Childhood (EC) to 12th Grade
English as a Second Language Early Childhood (EC) to 12th Grade

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2016 to Present	District ESL Coordinator
2005 – 2015	Program Manager
2000 – 2004	ESL Teacher
1996 – 1999	ESL Specialist and Coordinator
1988 – 1993	University Librarian