

Culture Shock for Chinese students when they arrive to study university in Australia

They were 23,000 international students study in Adelaide. They think it is the opportunities to be had in modern Western metropolis, earning internationally, respected qualifications, and learning the ways of an English-speaking culture. This research basic on the two interviews, one is Lisa liner, an experienced teacher in Flinders University; another is a Chinese student who study accounting in Adelaide University. These two interviews through the difference in entrance and graduate; the difference in learning methods; the difference in assessment methods and living in Australia these for parts to represent the culture shock for Chinese students when they arrive to study university in Australia,

Firstly, the difference between entrance and graduation .China has got a different education system with Australia. China has 9 years compulsory education, it means student must finish grade 1 to grade 9 before they could proceed to their social life. Everyone has a chance to choose whether they go to University or not. China has a large population living within 34 provincial-level administrative units. Universities in different province have their own standard admission requirement, which including cumulative grade average point (CGPA). Lisa Lines agrees that it is a keen competition for people who live in other province except Beijing and Shanghai to enter highly ranked universities in China. In addition, Xiaolin also points out that if you did not enter a highly ranked university, it means you have less opportunity to find a good job than other competitors. The degrees of highly ranked universities are very useful for student to find a suitable job in the future. The grade 12 national exams at the end of the semester are very important for students who want to continue their study in a post-secondary school. After the admission of the university, everything goes well comparing to entrance, the process leading to graduation will be much easier. However, in Australia, it's more difference because of their small population. It is a much easier process for students to enter the gate of university. Schools don't just have grade 12 courses, but also have foundation course and Tafe course for students who want to go to university. Tafe and foundation are all the bridges for university. For example, when you finish Tafe courses, you can transfer to the second year of university. These courses depend on student's study level. Another difference between Chinese university and Australian university is when student enter Australian university, it is a hard way to go. In Australia, you can learn different writing styles than high school, and learn more about academic knowledge to focus on the course that you choose in university. In addition, it can be even more difficult for some international students studying in a foreign language background.

Secondly, the difference in university's "learning methods" between China and Australia. Xiao lin said that the similar learning methods between studying in these two countries are there are all self directed learning in university. She also mentioned in china, it is easier that all the learning is to focus on the textbook. Xiao lin also gave an example to demonstrate the difference in learning methods. Students who study in Chinese university need to study more subjects like Principle of Marxism, College English, Microcomputer Control Technology and others. If they want to apply for master, they need to have a master exam including Advanced Mathematics, English and other subjects, even for students who do not study Math and English course in the future. That means the universities in China are focusing broadly on all field of study. Because the university wants student to develop in every field of education, furthermore, the timetable are made by the university about when they have class and the schedule of subject are all the same with students who study the same major. On the other hand, in Australia, the learning methods are more specific comparing to Chinese university. Lisa Lines and Xiao lin all agreed that the learning style in Australia is more flexible; Student can choose their own timetable and subject (except the major subject) by themselves. They can depend on the schedule of their biological clock and part-time job. It is better for some students who get up late to schedule class in the afternoon. It is really flexible. They only need to focus on these subjects after they have selected them. For example, if you studied history, you would not need to study Math and physics.

Thirdly, compare the difference in university's "assessment methods" between two countries. Xiao Lin mentioned that in China, nearly 90% of the grade are from the final exam, but when students do their homework it is more easier, because all the works are focusing on their textbook, if student understand the book clearly, they will know how to do well on their assignment. The most important assessment in the university is the final major Graduation thesis. That is a paper to show how students do with their course which includes the research and academic skill. In Australia, Lisa liner points out that they have attendances marks, participant marks, exercise marks, major paper marks, exam marks etc., all of them adding together to make your final grade. "Sometimes, when student done Reference very bad or organize not suitable, I won't give them a high marks, I need to look the whole paper." Said Lisa, she thought as a teacher, when they marked student's paper, they always look the different part of the paper, like spelling, grammar, argument, organize, and References. Xiao Lin also talked about her own experience for the exam. She said when she studied accounting in Australia, the focus were on the essay, short answers and analysis. However, in contrast, her friend who did accounting in China had her study focusing on calculation.

Last one is Chinese student living in Australia compare Australia with China. In China, when students go to university, they usually have two ways of living. One is living with their family, which is for student who attends school at their hometown. Another is living at school. Chinese universities always have accommodations for student, which people call it dormitory, and most of them have male dormitory and female dormitory located separately from each other. Not only have dormitory but also have canteen for students and teachers. Student may have three meals in there. All students do not need to worry about the different fees like internet fees, electricity fees, their no matter they live in school or home because their parents and university will help them on that. But in Australia, when they study in a foreign country, they need to find a room to rent, and connecting the telephone, electricity and cooking by themselves. All of the housework needs to be finished by themselves. Xiao Lin said she had moved 5 times during her 5 years of study in Adelaide. She also said most of her Chinese friends also do the same thing. "I found it is difficult that living by myself, when I first arrive, here I can not live as comfortable as in China. "Said Xiao lin. She also found that in Australia, the traffic is not very good, most shopping center are far away from her house and she had to wait 30 minutes to 1 hour for the bus on weekend and holidays. It is very hard for a student without a car, especially when the shopping centre is far away from their home. Although she had these problems, she pointed out she spent a very happy time during her life in home-stay. She stayed with a very friendly Australia host family, and earned a lot experiences for her life. She thinks that most of Adelaide' people are very friendly, and the environment are very suitable for people to live.

In addition, it will have a lot of culture shock when people into a foreign country, and for Chinese student study university in Australia, most of them have targets are want to find better English – environment to study, find a top university to study. No matter the difference in entrance and graduate, learning methods, assessment methods, living problems, the target never change, because study in Australia will take the benefit for their experience and life.