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HOME LANGUAGE LITERACY AND THE ACCULTURATION OF RECENT CHINESE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

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Abstract

The implications of an emerging cross-group identity and the acquisition of second language and culture by bilingual and bicultural students is explored in this study. The results of this research detail the importance of home language and culture as it affects the social adaptation of new Chinese American immigrants. As these new immigrant students become part of the main society, the cultural similarities and differences characteristic of their native culture and language become evident to them. Students' understanding of the cultural and linguistic similarities and differences between their first and second backgrounds is essential. This understanding affects how students learn about the new culture and how they interpret, acquire and produce English. The findings of the study have broad implications about the bicultural and bilingual experiences of individuals across cultures.

Introduction

For well over a century, the Chinese have come to the United States with the hope of finding a different, and a better life than they had in their home country. In 1990, 1,673,020 individuals of Chinese heritage made up 23% of the total Asian population in the United States (US Bureau of Census, 1990), a group which itself grew by 107% between 1980 and 1990.

Sociologists studying Asians have focused primarily on generalized group characteristics such as filial piety and obligation. Studies of such generalized characteristics have made important initial contributions to understanding Asians; however, these studies do not provide a complete sense of the acculturation process of Asians. The social adaptation of new Chinese immigrants to America is a complex phenomenon requiring attention not only to the social and psychological adjustments the group experiences, but also to how the use of Chinese and English languages is used to signal the degree of acculturation.

The relationship between language and culture is important in determining the degree of acculturation. Schumann (1978, 1986) describes acculturation as the social and psychological integration of second language learners with the target language (TL) group. Within his acculturation model, Schumann points out that social adaptation is an integration strategy which involves second language learners' adjustment to the lifestyles and values of the target language group while maintaining their own lifestyle and values for intragroup use. From a different perspective, Padilla (1980) defines the connection between language and acculturation as the degree of acculturative change measured by the extent to which a group shows familiarity and use of the target language. Fishman (1989) extends the definition of language use to mean that a group's choice of language used for communication represents a code of identity for the group. Using a group's home language (Chinese) as a way of connecting individuals to the culture is evident in Yao's (1983a) study of 86 Chinese parents of middle-class background. That study attempted to determine the effect of the family environment on a child's second language development. Ninety percent of the parents were college educated in China. More than half were limited English proficient, speaking Chinese with their children at home and with friends, while using their English skills to teach their children the English alphabet prior to entry into kindergarten. Yao concluded that use of Chinese became a way for parents to maintain a connection with their children.

It seems that choice of language and its use solidifies group identity by establishing and maintaining social networks (Fasold, 1984). This sense of social networks, Milroy (1987) explains, enables a group to resist linguistic and social pressure. The increasing number of Chinese

immigrants making their lives here and developing their social networks has drawn attention to a need to explore how the group becomes linguistically, socially and psychologically adjusted to the American culture (Ito and Tashima, 1981; Lue and Malony, 1983; Yao, 1986). Schumann's (1986) research on acculturation may offer an explanation about the degree of second language acquisition based on the social and psychological distance or closeness the group experiences with the major culture. Schumann concluded that second language learners will acquire the TL to the degree they acculturate to the host society. Similarly, Acton (1979) investigated social distance, but from a different perspective in which he examined not the actual, but the group's perceived social distance from the larger society when encountering a new culture. The results of Acton's research may shed light on how a group's perception of social distance influences the quality and degree to which the group acculturates to the mainstream society. The present study sought to find an answer to the broad question of what roles first and second languages play in the complicated process of acculturation.

Purpose

This investigation was intended to extend the sociological research of Yao (1978, 1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1987), and the anthropological perspectives of Sung (1967, 1987, 1990). It was conducted from a sociolinguistic perspective (Fishman, 1972) which emphasizes the interaction between the use of language and the social organization of behavior. Specifically, the study looked at the social context of language use by immigrant Chinese who recently arrived in the US. The bicultural aspect of the study incorporated ideas from research regarding cultural interdependence (Hamers & Blanc, 1989) and cultural awareness and ethnic loyalty (Padilla, 1980). The primary focus of this study was to analyze the relationships between the levels of first and second language literacy, and the social adaptation of new Chinese immigrant students as they explore the first steps in becoming part of US society. For purposes of this study, literacy is defined as the interactive quality between reading and writing (Vacca & Vacca, 1986; Weinstein, 1984). The study investigated what relationships, if any, existed among Chinese literacy,

English literacy, and social adaptation. Determining the level of students' Chinese and English literacy and how these languages are used by them may provide some answers about whether and how language influences social adaptation. Examining the factors related to acculturation may suggest insights about the way the group becomes socially adapted to the larger society.

Methodology

Subjects

The 190 respondents in the study were newly arrived adolescent Chinese immigrants living in a large metropolitan area. The group attended an alternative high school that addressed the special linguistic and affective concerns of older non-acculturated students. In this setting, the student-to-teacher ratio was smaller than average, allowing for more focused attention to the students' learning needs.

Participants were selected by checking school records in order to compile a sampling frame of students who had been in America from one to three years, spoke Chinese as their dominant language, and were connected to the Chinese community for essential activities (e.g., work, dining). A random digit table (Beyer, 1968) was applied to the sampling frame of students to identify a potential list of participants. Potential subjects were interviewed for possible selection as participants for the study. A schedule was then arranged to administer the research instruments to the volunteers. Sixty of the 250 potential participants were disqualified after administration of the instruments because of incomplete data. This resulted in the final sample size of 190 students.

Student demographic sheets yielded information on nine variables: gender, age, grade, native country, languages spoken, length of residence in the US, academic preparation, amount of English studied in native country, and place of work. Data on these variables can be found in Tables 1 through 4.

Table 1 *Respondents' Gender, Age, and Grade Placement*
 N = 190

<i>Variable</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Male	100	52.6
Female	84	44.2
Missing Data	6	3.2
Age		
16	2	1.1
17	8	4.2
18	18	9.5
19	28	14.7
20	61	32.1
21	33	17.4
22	6	3.2
23	2	1.1
Missing Data	32	16.8
Grade Placement		
9th	37	19.5
10th	53	27.9
11th	45	23.7
12th	37	19.5
Missing data	18	9.4

Table 2 *Respondents' Native Country, Language and Length of Residence in US*

N = 90

<i>Variable</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Country		
China	158	83.2
Hong Kong	13	6.8
Vietnam	2	1.1
Missing Data	17	8.9
Language		
Cantonese		
Yes	158	80.5
No	33	17.4
Missing Data	4	2.1

Mandarin		
Yes	102	53.7
No	84	44.2
Missing Data	4	2.1
Toison		
Yes	63	33.2
No	123	6.7
Missing Data	4	2.1
Fukien		
Yes	19	10.0
No	167	87.9
Missing Data	4	2.1
Hakka		
Yes	1	3.0
No	185	96.3
Missing Data	4	2.1
Vietnamese		
Yes	2	2.0
No	184	96.1
Missing Data	4	2.1
Spanish		
No	186	97.9
Missing Data	4	2.1
Shanghainese		
Yes	1	.5
No	185	97.4
Missing Data	4	2.1
Burmese		
No	186	97.9
Missing Data	4	2.1
Residence in US		
0-6 mos.	16	8.4
7-L2 mos.	26	13.7
1-3 years	113	59.5
3-5 years	25	13.2
5-7 years	3	1.5
Missing Data	7	3.7

Table 3 *Education of Respondent and Amount of English Studied*

N = 190

Variable	n	%
Education		
L-6 grade	1	.5
7-9 grade	42	22.1
10-L2 grade	143	75.5
Missing Data	4	2.0
Amount of English Studied		
0 - 6 mos.	46	24.2
7-L2 mos.	23	12.1
1-3 years	67	35.3
3-5 years	20	10.5
5-7 years	7	3.7
7+ years	16	8.4
Missing Data	11	5.8

Table 4 *Respondents' Place of Work*

N = 190

Variable	n	%
Place of Work		
Chinatown	84	44.2
Elsewhere	13	6.9
Missing	93	48.9

Instrumentation

Three instruments were utilized - two instruments measured literacy, the Chinese Literacy Instrument and the *Language Assessment Battery* (LAB) (New York City Board of Education, 1982) for English. The third measurement, the Social Adaptation Questionnaire, identified students' initial stages of acculturation. Only the Chinese language instrument and the social adaptation survey were administered during this investigation; data on the LAB were taken from school records. The LAB was entirely written in English; the Chinese Literacy Instrument and Social Adaptation Questionnaire were available in three language

versions: English, traditional Chinese orthography, and simplified Chinese orthography. The different language versions gave students the option of responding to each instrument in the language version with which they felt most comfortable.

First Language Measurement. First language literacy was assessed by the Chinese Literacy Instrument in two parts, reading for 190 students and writing for 140 students (with the difference due to 50 missing or incomplete student essays). Students were assessed on their ability to answer comprehension questions based on five classical literature passages and write a 300 character essay on a selection of topics provided. A frequency distribution of the reading scores was tabulated to determine the mean, median, and standard deviation of the data.

Second Language Measurement. Second language literacy was measured by the Language Assessment Battery. The LAB measures proficiency in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. A frequency distribution was generated to summarize the reading and writing percentile scores of students.

Social Adaptation Measurement. The *Social Adaptation Questionnaire* gathered data on students' language use, social networks, and lifestyles. This questionnaire included a total of 81 items divided into two sections. The first part contained 26 questions that assessed language choice and how first and second languages were used in everyday situations at home, school, and the workplace. The second part contained 55 questions on the social networks and lifestyle of the respondents. The 81 items were designed to tap various hypothesized dimensions of acculturation such as language use, social networks, and lifestyle as per the model of Olmedo (1980). A frequency distribution was tabulated to assess how often students spoke Chinese compared to English. An exploratory factor analysis was computed to identify factors that explained the correlations among the set of questions.

Supporting Documents

The Chinese Literacy Instrument and social adaptation survey were accompanied by a student consent letter, a student demographic data form, a student information consent sheet, and a parent consent letter.

Each of these forms was available to students in English, and the traditional as well as the simplified Chinese forms.

Results

First Language Data

A frequency distribution of the reading and writing scores was tabulated to determine the mean, median, and standard deviation of the data. The lowest possible reading score was 0, and the highest was 26. As a whole, students in this study scored a mean of 20.31. The writing samples were evaluated independently by three Chinese language experts who rated each essay based on a scale ranging from the lowest score of 1 to the highest score of 6 as described by Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, & Kuehn (1990). The mean score was 3.3. The interrater reliability for the three evaluators for Chinese writing was .70. For statistical data on the Chinese Literacy Instrument, see Table 5.

Table 5 *Mean, Median, and Standard Deviation for the Chinese Literacy and Writing Instrument*

N= 190

Variable	n	Mean	Median	SD
Chinese Reading	190	20.31	21.00	3.02
Chinese Writing	140			
Evaluator 1	136	4.93	5.50	1.29
Missing		4		
Evaluator 2	140	2.27	3.00	.81
Missing	0			
Evaluator 3	140	2.31	2.00	1.2
Missing	0			
Evaluator 1,2,&3	129	3.30	3.30	.87
Missing	11			

Second Language Data

For reading in English, all students scored below the 25th percentile with 136 students scoring at the 1st percentile. Regarding writing for English, ninety percent (160 students) scored below the 25th percentile.

Writing data indicated only slightly better variability compared to reading for English. In general, students scored better on the Chinese Literacy Instrument than on the LAB. Their relatively short attendance in the American school system may have limited their ability to gain English proficiency, and students' better performance in Chinese reading and writing probably reflected years of Chinese language preparation. This difference might have influenced data results, especially the English data variability.

Table 6 *Language Assessment Battery (LAB) Reading and Writing Mean, Median, Standard Deviation*

N = 190

<i>Variable</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>
English Reading	176	2.31 of 99	1.00	3.35
Missing	14			
English Writing	177	9.11 of 99	3.00	15.96
Missing	13			

Social Adaptation Questionnaire Data

In the first part, information about the use of Chinese ranged from the lowest possible score of 0 to the highest possible score of 26. Student scores ranged from a low of 4 to a high of 26. English language use scores had a range from the lowest possible score of 0 to the highest possible score of 26. Students scored a minimum of 0 (no English) to a maximum of 20. Students' scores indicated more frequent use of Chinese over English. Table 7 presents data on language use.

Table 7 *Mean, Median, and Standard Deviation for Frequency Use of Language: Chinese and English*

N = 190

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>
Chinese	21.66 of 26	22.00	3.90
English	4.17 of 26	3.00	3.54

The second part of the questionnaire collected information about students' lifestyle and social networks. An exploratory factor analysis

was computed to identify factors which explain the correlations among the set of questions in the second part. Results of the factor analysis identified 18 factors with an eigenvalue of 1 or more which related to the social adaptation variables. To reduce the number of factors, a scree test was applied. A scree test is a criterion for determining the number of significant factors to retain (Kim & Mueller, 1978). From the 18 factors, a three factor model most parsimoniously explained the data. Data analysis yielded results different from the originally hypothesized dimensions of social adaptation (i.e. language use, social networks, lifestyle) and suggested a new interpretation: language use; social commitment to the American culture (Factor 1); Chinese preference (Factor 2); and social exploration of the American culture (Factor 3). See Table 8 for statistical data on this factor analysis.

Table 8 *Results of Varimax Rotation for the 3-Factor Model (Social Commitment, Chinese Preference, Social Exploration)*

N = 190

Factor 1: Social Commitment to the American Culture

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>
1 Participate in Activities Outside of Chinatown	.64
2 Participate in American Activities	.58
3 Participate in Chinatown Activities	.54
4 Involved in Chinatown Activities	.53
5 Use Credit Cards	.51
6 Spend Leisure Time Outside Chinatown	.49
7 Americans Understand the Chinese Culture	.46
8 Friends Are Other Than Chinese or American	.46
9 Like American Food	.42
10 Willing To Go to American Theater	.42
11 Have American Driver's License	.40
12 Understand American Ways	.39
13 Feel Safe Outside Chinatown	.35
14 Willing To Work Outside Chinese Community	.34
15 Willing To Take a Taxi	.32
16 Plan To Buy a Car	.30
17 Enjoy American Television	.30

Factor 2: Chinese Preference

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>
1 Like Chinese Friends	.60
2 Friends Now Are Chinese	.53
3 Enjoy Chinese Movies	.52
4 Willing To Date Chinese	.49
5 Willing To Meet Chinese Friends	.48
6 Prefer To Shop Chinatown	.47
7 Can Find Happiness in Native Country	.47
8 Prefer Watching Chinese Television Programs	.45
9 Feel Part of My Native Country	.44
10 Like Chinese Friends	.43
11 Willing To Go To Chinese Theater	.43
12 Listen To Chinese Music	.39
13 Succeed In Native Country	.30

Factor 3: Social Exploration

1 Willing To Make New American Friends	.63
2 Go To New Communities Other Than Chinatown	.54
3 Willing To Travel Outside of Chinatown	.51
4 Like Chinese And American Friends	.50
5 Friends Are Chinese and American	.47
6 Take A Taxi or Bus Outside my Neighborhood	.43
7 Willing To Date Chinese and Americans	.42
8 Listen To American Music	.37
9 Like Having American Friends	.33
10 Feelings of Success in America	.32
11 Willing To Date Americans	.30

Internal Consistency Reliability. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated to estimate internal consistency reliability among items on the Social Adaptation Questionnaire (Language Use and Factors 1, 2, 3). These results confirm the strength of the internal consistency for items of part 1 of language use, and also confirms the strength of the part 2 loadings on the factors. Table 8 illustrates the data for the factor analysis.

Interpreting Reliability Among Variables. The strength of the relationships among the major variables (Chinese literacy; Language Use, and Factors 1, 2, 3) was explored using a Pearson product moment correlation. There were statistically significant correlations among all three factors. Correlations occurred between social commitment (Factor

1) and Chinese preference (Factor 2); social commitment (Factor 1) and social exploration (Factor 3); and between Chinese preference (Factor 2) and social exploration (Factor 3). Language use, specifically English use, had a statistically significant correlation with social exploration (Factor 3). Use of English had a significant correlation ($p < .05$) with social commitment to the American culture. This finding might have predicative value about students' attitudes and tendency toward the US. See Table 9 for statistical data on the findings for language use and the factors related to social adaptation.

Table 9 *Correlational Coefficients for Social Adaption, Language Use, Factor 1, Factor 2, and Factor 3*

N = 190

Variable	Name	Factor 2	Factor 3	Language Use: Chinese	Language Use: English
Factor 1	Social Commitment	.46***	.49***	-.05	.18*
Factor 2	Chinese Preference		.52***	.10	-.02
Factor 3	Social Exploration			.03	.21** -.74***

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Discussion

In the following discussion, the nature of the findings in this study is such that there will be overlap in the interpretations of the relationship between first and second language and social adaptation. Data on language were collected from several sources: the Chinese Literacy Instrument for first language literacy, the LAB for second language literacy, and from part one of the Social Adaptation Questionnaire for language use.

First and Second Language

Several trends were noted in the analysis of this study's data concerning Chinese and English languages. First, respondents clearly indicated a preference for using Chinese most of the time in everyday

situations. Interestingly, this preferred use of Chinese, McKay and Wong (1988) observe, is a result of continued immigration by other speakers of Chinese. What is important to note for this study is the language choice made by the group which reflects how and who they want to be identified with (Fasold, 1984), and this in turn creates the basis for the group's social networks. Additionally, of interest to the present study is how the strength of the social networks enabled the group to resist linguistic and social pressure to acculturate to the larger society. This resistance suggests that the respondents were able to maintain their native culture and language while becoming acquainted with a new second culture and language. In effect, the group's social adaptation is characterized as being bicultural and bilingual in nature and is defined by the group's language loyalty to Chinese and ethnic loyalty to their Chinese heritage.

Second, the results regarding language use showed attempts by the respondents to use English to a minimal degree during their adjustment to being in the US. For this study, the minimal extent of respondents' English use was, however, unanticipated. This may signal the beginning stages of the group's identity (Fasold, 1984) with the US culture, suggesting an added dimension to their social adaptation, a new "cross-group" identity. Cross-group identity refers to respondents' willingness to use both languages and participate in both cultures. The use of English for school, work, or every-day encounters with members of the larger society reveals a motivation on the part of students to integrate into the mainstream culture. However, they also remained closely connected to their native language. Students used their preferred native language with family members and friends, and at native-culture activities. This phenomenon explains Schumann's (1986) notion of social adaptation, when a group uses an integrative strategy to negotiate between two cultures. The group accepts to varying degrees the lifestyle and values of the larger society, but maintains its own lifestyle and values for intragroup use. The employment of the integrative strategy described could be interpreted as preliminary steps taken by the respondents when they become socially adapted to the larger society. What is suggested is a connection between the group's social adaptation and the extent to which they acquire a second language.

Third, in general, students in this study scored better on the *Chinese Literacy Instrument* than on the *LAB*. Their relatively short attendance in the school system no doubt limited their ability to gain English proficiency. However, students' better performance in Chinese reading and writing reflected years of Chinese language preparation in their own country. The difference in preparation and exposure might have influenced data results, especially the English data variability. This result may be characteristic of the group's stage of social adaptation (Schumann, 1986) or integration (Hamers & Blanc, 1989) where the native language is preferred. The group's language loyalty to the Chinese language clearly limited respondents' desire and opportunities to use and speak English and this may also account for students' performance. Another factor explaining the different literacy performances may be the two different test purposes. The *LAB* was designed to measure assumed English proficiency and the *Chinese Literacy Instrument* measured the existing Chinese language proficiency of students.

Social Adaptation

In addition to the social adaptation data on language use, a three factor model emerged from the data analysis. The data describe a group that is willing to integrate to the larger society while retaining its original identity, including language. Seemingly, the blending of students' first language and culture and second language and culture creates a new cultural identity for the group. Interpretation of the data on the three factors helps to construct a definition of social adaptation of the respondents. The first factor, social commitment to US culture, describes how respondents see themselves getting involved with the main culture. Their responses reveal ways they see becoming a part of the main culture - for example, by getting a driver's license, buying a car and getting credit cards.

The second factor, Chinese preference, describes feelings of cultural loyalty. Respondents' answers revealed their emotional attachment to their native culture - for example, by expressing a desire to interact with Chinese friends, and by finding happiness in their native country. The third factor, social exploration, describes a willingness by students to reach out and explore the host society. Responses reveal a

desire to begin friendships with non-Chinese persons, and visit communities outside their own.

The results of the survey provide a snapshot of the group's social adaptation process. The study's findings clearly describe the early stages of social adaptation of the group as evidenced by their connection economically, socially, psychologically, and linguistically to the Chinatown area of the urban center for socialization, employment, shopping, dining, and other essential activities. Perhaps in some ways the close bond with Chinatown slowed down or prevented the group's full integration with the lifestyle of the larger society. This "Chinatown factor" could be a temporary mediating element in their acquisition of English and acculturation to mainstream USA. While respondents are becoming socially adapted to the main culture, they are still loyal to the Chinese language and culture until they assimilate.

These findings explained the seemingly divergent directions the group took, suggesting the avenues to social adaptation for the group can be both helpful and hindering. Specifically, close association with their native culture and language was helpful because it encouraged a sense of security which provided some respondents with the confidence to explore the main culture. On the other hand, close association with respondents' culture and language was hindering because the developed confidence delayed their acculturation to the host society. Analysis of the data revealed a cultural tension present in the way the group behaved as members of both their native culture and the host culture. Respondents wanted to be identified with their native language and culture, yet were seeking ways to connect with the larger society. Ethnic identity, Ellis (1994) explains, can have a strong influence on attitudes toward the second culture and language. For the respondents, the Chinese language represents a way of affirming their own identity while socially adapting to the majority culture. Social adaptation takes on a new dimension of cross-group identity characterized by Chinatown factor variables and continued use of Chinese. This may have implications for the group's eventual success with social adaptation and second language acquisition.

Conclusions and Implications

This study revealed the importance of a strong home culture identification in students' successful adaptation to a second language and culture. Results pertaining to students' preferred use of Chinese and better performance on the Chinese assessment instrument reflect a greater sense of comfort with the Chinese language. These findings coupled with the group's desire to explore and participate in the US mainstream suggest the bicultural and bilingual nature of their social adaptation. The students' decision to maintain their first culture and language is a key to understanding how we as educators can support them as they adapt to the mainstream culture and learn English. There is a need to understand not only the group's second language acquisition experience, but also the role students' first language and culture play in their successful acculturation (Hamers & Blanc, 1989).

Our educational attention often focuses on the process of second language acquisition, sometimes to the exclusion of how students' first language and culture may influence the way they understand, interpret and produce English. For meaningful and successful communication, our students need to be aware of the subtle and obvious differences between their first and second cultures. The importance of interpreting speech styles and speech acts appropriately to communicate effectively is a critical component in second language teaching and learning. Interpreting speech styles and speech acts of English can be difficult because of differences between their native language and English. Our understanding of sociolinguistics has influenced our thinking about the way we teach a second language by emphasizing the importance of knowing the relationship and the purpose of the exchange between speakers (Bachman, 1989; Canale, 1983). As educators, we need to appreciate not only our students' native culture and language, but also how and why their background might influence their second language interpretation, acquisition and production. Educators need to consider the social and affective aspects of learning a second language. As a result, a new and better way for students to relate to second language learning may be provided.

For bilingual students, two languages and backgrounds can create what Simoes (1991) describes as cultural tension and conflict stemming

from new experiences in an unexplored environment. A central point in the discussion on biculturalism is the way first and second language is used, and especially how, as Mayher (1990) states, it reveals the thinking of the individual about their ethnic preferences and values. Further study about how students cope with the embedded nature of ethnic loyalty within biculturalism might also yield interesting and useful findings.

Our students' bicultural and bilingual experience is worthy of closer examination regarding the way they perceive how others view their experience; what this experience means to them; how they balance two cultures and two languages in response to the challenges of society; and what excites them about learning a second language and adapting to a host culture. From a broader perspective, different ways of thinking by students of diverse cultures may influence their approach to learning (Reid, 1987). ESL students' unique learning styles, Reid notes, may cause them to spend most of their time making adjustments to their new learning situations. One implication of the findings of the study is that the cultural identity of the respondents is indeed complex and may affect their perception of learning. Cultural identity in this sense may provide a direction toward exploring how students' first culture may influence the unique learning style of the group. The importance of reexamining research on learning styles should also include cultural styles as a clue to the way students learn. Cultural styles would reflect the cultural identity of the group by reflecting the blending of two cultures to influence students' learning. For students to achieve communicative competence they need to be able to recognize linguistic cues so they can respond meaningfully and appropriately within different social settings. Creative ideas stemming from our pedagogical reevaluation about students' learning styles and their acquisition of a second culture and language may change what and how we teach our students.

In essence, from a broader societal context for further research, the following questions are raised; their answers may give us a fuller picture of the bicultural and bilingual experience of individuals across cultures:

1. How is biculturalism resolved by individuals from different groups?
2. How does the role of first language and culture affect social adaptation in different ethnic/cultural groups?

3. What are the motivating reasons for first language use related to language loyalty (e.g., language maintenance)?

4. What motivates second language learners from different ethnic groups and cultures to study English?

5. What impact do different ways of thinking by culturally divergent students have on their learning styles?

The questions raised have not been answered fully in the present study. However, the study has attempted to highlight questions related to the bicultural and bilingual nature of social adaptation. These issues may also apply to individuals from different ethnic groups and cultures. Findings from future investigations may reveal whether sociolinguistic phenomena differ across cultures, thus contributing to new knowledge paradigms.

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