
How Cultural integration affects the academic performance of Chinese students taking the IELTS preparation course during their overseas studies: A comparison study.

1 Introduction and background

Culture has a huge influence on students' learning styles. Eilisha (2007) stated that students from different cultures have different patterns of learning behavior. Kim and Bonk (2002); Ramburuth and McCormick, (2001) and Teng (2007) also share the same views on this point. Therefore, understanding of one's culture is essential when teaching them as it would affect their learning styles. Seo and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) pointed out that without understanding a student's cultural background the main goal of higher education as a high-quality education cannot be delivered.

Over the last five to seven years, the number of Chinese students who chose to study in UK, USA, or other Western societies have increased massively under China's huge economic growth. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is the most widely used test of English for entering top universities in English -speaking Counties like UK, USA, Canada or Australia and achieving the required score in each band of the IELTS is extremely important for Chinese test takers.

According to IELTS British council China Date shows there are over 300,000 Chinese test takers among over 150 million candidates around the world in 2011 (in mainland China) This figure keeps growing at a high speed some applicants even have to wait in lines for a long time to register despite the factor that China has the most IELTS testing Centre in Asian. Therefore, more and more private language schools provide IELTS preparation courses for candidates, after school Training institutions have sprung up in China for teaching Chinese students EAP (English for Academic Purposes) in particular The International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The Chinese students perform better scores in the IETLS examination but when they start to study in the universities, their results from the IETLS examinations are not reflected in their university studies, such as subject specific assessments and examinations, their performance are relatively low. Thus, some UK university constantly increase the requested IELTS entry score from 6.0 in 2001 to 6.5-7.0.

Table 1 Distribution of IELTS Scores of Chinese Students in 2017-2018

Score Echelon	Percentage
Less than 4.5 points	10.43%
5 points	16.6%
5.5 points	25.15%
6.0 points	23.12%
6.5 points	14.66%
More than 7.0 points	10.04%

Table 1 shows that there is only 10.04% the Percentage of Chinese students score 7.0

point in IELTS in 2017-2018. In 2024 in some subjects like Media study or psychology they require a band level of 7.5, no less than 6.5 for each Section: IELTS It consists of four key parts: reading, speaking, listening and writing. From the recruitment rates of the university for Chinese students indicates that there is without doubt+ more and more Chinese students obtain 7.0 or 7.5 points in IELTS. Despite the fact that Chinese students achieving high points in IELTS examination their academic performants are lower than they are expected. Bodycott P. (2009) has found international students underperform in academic integration and academic performance.

Russell et al. (2010) found that 41% of international students experience huge amount of stress combined with homesickness, cultural shocks, or perceived discrimination.

According to Tinto (1975, 1998), students are not only studying to graduate in academic terms also need to participate with the culture where student studying in and adopt the learning environment.

In this study hypotheses will be developed and research methodology will be presented. After analyzing the research findings, the article ends with a discussion of the contributions and limitations of the study.

1.1 Research questions

Based upon the issues identified above, the following research questions are addressed in order to assess the hypotheses whether Chinese students' academic performance are majorly influenced by their IELTS score or other factors have impacts influence on their academic performance while studying abroad.

- Is IELTS a determinate factor to Chinese oversea students' academic performance?
- Is the higher IELTS score the students get led to a better further academic performance in Oversea universities?
- To what extent if the IELTS language training school provide culture integration course in the IELTS training curriculum would improve students' academic performance when they studying overseas?

2. Aim and objectives

Most westerners stereotype Chinese students as passive and quiet learners (Chuah, 2010), they hardly challenge teachers or ask questions. Chinese traditional ruling class respecting and obey teachers' instruction are very important influence for generations, China's exam-oriented methods are also part of reason cause students lack of discussion

in the class but spent more time on memorizing materials silently. Therefore, it is very important to understand the Chinese learning culture, this study will also have lecturer review to explore the Chinese learning culture.

In this study will aims to provide a critical review of various reasons analyzing Chinese international students holding high IELTS scores but have low academic performance in their university study.

It will help students to improve their ability and compacity to study aboard. The implications of this study can provide valuable insights on Chinese student for academic language learning and other academic purpose to not only IELTS teachers but educators from universities internationally, curriculum developers even educational technology designers as well.

For university teachers they would be able to have better understanding of Chinese student's learning habits, and understand how culture influence their learning behaviors, help them understand Chinese students better in order to help them gain better academic achievements.

For ILETS training institutions, they can improve their curriculum by creating western Cultural materials in English in addition to the concentration ILETS preparation training course.

3. Proposed methodology

3.1 Overview Of the Research Process:

Academics distinguish two main areas: Quantitative research and Qualitative research. Quantitative research sometimes referred to as positivist, is scientific in approach, it aims to be objective and collects and uses numerical data. With this type of research, the results are given numerical values and the researcher uses a mathematical and statistical treatment to help evaluate the results.

Qualitative research takes the view that it is very difficult for researchers be objective, since they are really part of the process being researched. This type of research is sometimes called relativist or phenomenalist.

In Educational study this approach is used to study the way organizations, groups and individuals behave and interact

Approaches that are also frequently used in research are the laboratory experiment, the field experiment, the cause study and the survey. Howard and Sharp (1983).

3.2 Settings

This study will conduct in two private English language training institutions specialized in IELTS examination training courses.

3.2 Participants

There will be around 40 participations to contact this study. 36 of them who are preparing for the IELTS test and 4 of them are teachers who are specialized in the IELTS teaching for academic writing, listening, speaking and reading sub-test.

36 of the Chinese students' participants will be divided into two groups, each group contains 18 student members, one group will have a focus on IELTS Score-oriented curriculum, another group of students will use the IELTS plus culture integration study-the combined curriculum.

Ethical consideration will be considered, in this research involving the collection of data from participants who should be fully informed about all relevant aspects of the research, before they agree to take part.

3.3. Procedures

The study will begin with the completion of a pilot study with six Chinese English learning students to check the questionnaire's content and how long takes them to finish the questionnaire.

One academic teacher will complete a pilot study for teachers' questionnaires.

Minor changes will be made after both pilot study to improve the validity of the questionnaire before then main study conducted.

3.4 Research Methods

- Questionnaire
26 volunteer students will agree to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire will contain 15 questions divided into 5 sections, every section has 3 questions and 5 answers per question, single choice answers with scores arranged from 1-5 with the variable answers identified the influences will be pointed out in the previous literature review which determine Chinese students' academic performance.
- Student's Interview
26 students will be interviewed after completing the questionnaire. The student's interview will comprise 8 questions which will be constructed to gather more details about student's self-perceptions in the questionnaire.
- Teacher's Interview
All the four IELTS teachers in that institute participated voluntarily in a focus group interview. The teacher's interview will contain 12 questions to elicit their views concerning the influencing factors on student performance, and what actions teachers could take to improve student performance in the academic IELTS sub-test.
- Observation

There are two ways the observation can be carried out: Participant observation refers are defined as a technique where the researcher involved in the situation completely.

non-participant observation (sometimes termed structured observation) is where the observer remains from the situation, but record what is happening.

There are two popular ways of recording the observations: the diary method, which was recommended by Robson (1993) that the keeping diary is an excellent way to record participant observation. The use of checklist sometimes referred to as an observation schedule. The schedule includes the type of features the researcher want to record, which may include particular events, their frequency and duration. There are a number of problems with observation methods.

One problem is that the researcher may so involve in the situation that the research takes second place. Other problems are concerned with ethics, objectivity, visibility, and technology for recording and the problem of observer bias may rise.

There are some advantages of observation: It is cheap; it does not need expensive complex technology.

In this study, the researcher will set in the classroom observe four classes per week for three months period Give the researcher a better insight though interpreting the data Duo to the distance of the researcher may use classroom CCTV monitor to observe the class process.

- Case study

Case study is not a single qualitative technique, since a number of methods are used. A case study may be defined as an extensive study of a single situation such as an individual, family or organization. Johnson (1994) defines a case study as 'an enquiry which uses multiple sources of evidence. It investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.' These are different forms of case study.

In this study Multiple case studies will be used this allows for This allows for a comparative treatment and helps build and confirm accepted theory. In this study will need one and half years to following the Chinese students who contact the study after the entry of their university to find out their performance. Therefore, cause study will be used in this research.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis of the quantitative date gathered from the students and teachers' questionnaires will be analysis by using SPSS, the Students and teachers interview notes will be sorting according to their answers finding out the similarities and differences respectively. Then to combine the results of the quantitative and qualitative approaches to draw the final conclusions.

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