Bridging the Gap:

Intercultural Friendship between Chinese and Americans

_____

Presented to the Faculty

of Liberty University

School of Communication

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts

In Communication Studies

by

Zhuo Feng (Esther) Li

May 2010

Thesis Committee

_____April 30, 2010
Faith Mullen, Ph.D., Chair   Date

_____April 30, 2010
William Mullen, Ph.D., Co-Chair   Date

_____April 30, 2010
Cecil V. Kramer, Jr., D. Min.   Date

_____April 30, 2010
Lynnda S. Beavers, Ph.D.   Date

This Project is Dedicated to My Dear Parents---

Ding Guo Li and Guo Ying Ning

---Who Have Devoted Their Whole Lives to Their Children

Abstract

This research aims to explore Chinese and American students' intercultural friendship experiences on a U.S. campus. Twenty-five Chinese international students and twenty-five U.S. nationals participated in the study. Q-methodology was adopted in this research. Three of Hosftede's cultural dimensions (low/high power distance, individualism/collective, and masculinity/femininity) and Hall's concept of low/high context culture were used as a theoretical framework for this study. First, qualities that Chinese and Americans consider important in their friendships in each of their own culture were identified. Then this study found out that long-established expectations and understanding of friendship of both Chinese and Americans were challenged while communicating with people from the other culture. In addition, the elements that enhance intercultural friendships and the challenges American and Chinese are facing in their intercultural friendships were discovered as well. Recommendations for future research were also discussed.

Key Terms: intercultural friendship, Chinese, Americans, cultural dimensions, concept, enhance, hinder, Q-methodology

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Faith Mullen for serving as my thesis chairperson. She has graciously spent countless hours guiding and corresponding with me. I am not sure how she was able to deal with me popping in every day with questions for her to answer. However, she managed to answer everything I had to ask with a tremendous amount of patience. I would also like to thank my thesis co-chair Dr. William Mullen and my readers Dr. Kramer and Dr. Beavers. They have provided important advice and numerous comments regarding my thesis work. I hope that this project is a piece of scholarly work to which they can proudly attach their names.

I must also acknowledge that without God's strength, I would never have persevered through the process of this project. I feel that God used this project to teach me more about myself and my relationship with Him. Through it, I became more confident and truly believe that with God all things are possible.

Thanks must also be given to Dr. Kelly and Dr. Schwartz. Dr. Kelly was always available for me and praying for me. Dr. Schwartz's assistance with analyzing Q-methodology data was vital to my study as well. It is also important to acknowledge my mentors Hartmann Bader, Mr. Garber, Mrs. Garber, and Miss Peace. I am grateful for their care and compassion and I can feel the effect of their prayers every day. Further, I also want to acknowledge several of my special friends, Quan Feng, Li Ping Zhang and Jiang Bo. They took the time to lend me a sympathetic ear whenever I was stressed out. They convinced me that I am smart enough to get the project done.

I must acknowledge my family members: my parents, brothers and sister. Their love and support are invaluable. They have always been a source of strength for me. Without their support and encouragement I would not have overcome this task.

Finally, I would like to thank other faculty members, fellow graduate students and friends. Thank for be being there for me and for your constant encouragement.

To all of you, a sincere "Thank you."

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction

This study will look at Chinese's and Americans' understanding of friendship and factors that they perceive are influencing the formation of their intercultural friendships. This study is significant for several reasons. First, with the globalization of the world, the opportunities for people to meet others from variety of national cultures have increased. People are living in a global village where their neighbors, friends, and co-workers will not necessarily share the same norms and values or speak the same native language. Hall (1989) said, "We must be willing to admit that the people of this planet don't just live in one culture but in many worlds and some of these worlds, if not properly understood, can and do annihilate the others" (p. 201). In fact, it is the same case with U.S. More and more internationals come to the U.S. for a short term or long term stay. The likelihood for those individuals to form relationships with U.S. nationals is increasing. They form various relationships in different settings in the U.S., such as universities, companies, and other organizations. Therefore, it is necessary to explore how they relate in face-to-face contexts and how they develop their interpersonal relationships with people in the host culture.

Second, many international students choose to study at U.S. universities. The United States has become the biggest host country of foreign students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The majority of the students are international students from Asia (Chen, 2000). According to the Institute of International Education, during the 2009 academic year, Indian, China, South Korea, and Japan are the four leading countries where most of the international students were from (Institute of International Education, 2009). Therefore, it is crucial to look at those Asian students' perspectives of developing friendships with students from the host culture.

Third, the increasing numbers of international students at universities have provided a productive focus of research in intercultural contact, communication and adaptation. Many studies have revealed the positive outcomes of intercultural contact, especially in helping with international students' social and academic adjustment and in promoting intercultural understanding and learning (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Zimmermann, 1995). There is even an argument that intercultural contact experiences of international students and local students influence future international relations and politics since some international students later become important decision makers in their home countries (Volet & Ang, 1998). Regardless the significance of intercultural contact issues, our knowledge about intercultural friendships is still very limited (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). Therefore, it is important to do more research about the intercultural friendship experiences of international students.

Fourth, although intercultural friendships which represent an intimate interaction between personal and cultural aspects of communication processes have been studied in several disciplines, few studies have focused specifically on students who are from China and study at U.S. universities. Therefore, this study bears significant meaning to study this particular group of students.

Studies that Have Addressed the Problem and Deficiencies in the Studies

In the study of international students, how difficult it is to develop any kind of close relationships with host nationals has become one of the major themes. Although there are a lot of international students in the United States, intercultural friendships at U.S. universities is usually not an ideal reality. Many studies have indicated a lack of contact and relationship development between international and host national students (Furnham & Alibahai, 1985). McKinlay, Burroughs and Marie (1996) conducted a survey at a British university, and they found that

international students' closest friends were the ones who were from the same country instead of

host national students. Moreover, a study done by Trice and Elliot (1993) showed that Japanese

undergraduate students at universities in the U.S spent over 82% of their social time and 88% of

their study time with other Japanese students.

Previous research also reveals that foreign students are disappointed that they do not have

enough American friends. Their existing friendships are often based on academic matters and

activities instead of real intimate personal concerns (Gareis, 1995). Therefore, Gareis (1995)

draws this conclusion based on the reality, "Considering the growing interdependence of the

world's cultures and the desirability of worldwide peace and understanding, the study of

intercultural friendship is of utmost urgency" (p. 2). However, researches who have studied

intercultural relationships such as intercultural marriage and intercultural friendship have been

limited (Chen, 2002). Chen (2002) in his study notes:

> Research on intercultural relationship communication is still in its infancy, with limited
>
> studies on intercultural communication in interpersonal relationships such as intercultural
>
> marriage, dating, and friendship. Interest in intercultural marriages arises mainly from a
>
> practical need to understand marriages between partners of different cultural backgrounds
>
> as a social phenomenon. Research on other intercultural relationships including
>
> friendship grows out of interests in intercultural communication as a whole (p. 241).

Generally, people believe that forming friendships especially close or best-friend

relationships with members of the host culture can largely facilitate and assist adjustment in the

foreign countries (Olaniran, 1996; Ying, 2002). Friendships with host country people can also

provide international students with opportunities to learn more about the culture and develop

social skills. However, developing friendships with Americans can be challenging for most East

Asian students largely because of factors such as their inadequate language, communication skills, academic concerns, cultural differences, social isolation, differences in educational systems, and a lack of understanding of American culture and society (Zhang & Rentz, 1996). Research on intercultural interactions indicates that although Asian international students benefit socially and psychologically from host nationals and would like to make these encounters, the extent of host-sojourner interactions is very limited. Most Asian students are more likely to have friends from the same country (Zhang & Rentz, 1996). Some past research has also revealed that Asian students, especially Chinese students on American campuses, frequently confront more severe cultural difficulties in adjusting when compared to students of other nationalities (Lin & Yi, 1997).

Americans' views of establishing friendship with Chinese international students have been neglected by the previous studies. Three important environmental factors that have great potential influence on cross-cultural adaptation have been identified in Kim's (2001) study. Those three factors are host's receptivity, host's conformity pressure and the sojourner's ethnic group strength. Therefore, it is important to consider both host Americans' and Chinese' notions of friendship and their intercultural friendship experiences.

The connotations of friendship from different cultures and individuals can be culturally specific and subjective. Gudykunst (1984, 1985) indicates that friendship varies from culture to culture in terms of spread, obligation, duration and mutual trust. Ideas and expectations about what friendship is and what friends should and should not do are culturally constructed (Collier, 1996). Therefore, there is a need to expand our understanding of intercultural friendships by specifying friendship notions in both Chinese culture and American culture.

Rational for Qualitative Methods

This research of Chinese and American students' notions of friendship and the impact of these perspectives on their intercultural friendships is a highly subjective undertaking. Choosing a method that allows for the systematic review of subjective opinion is necessary. Subjectivity is a complex phenomenon to measure because it is judgments based on individual personal impressions, feelings, and opinions rather than external factors. However, it is valuable because it represents human perception. This study adopted the Q-methodology because of its unique abilities to meet the criterion.

A qualitative methodology determines the subjective aspects of human behavior by design (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998). Q-methodology combines qualitative strategies with quantitative analysis to allow the articulation of various opinions about any concern (Brown, 1996). Stephen represents the ability of systematically reviewing subjective opinions by stating that the Q-methodology is especially relevant for communication scientists whose research assesses the perceptual world of individuals (1980).

Q-methodology is useful for exploring subjective issues such as human perceptions and interpersonal relationships because it has the potential to provide unique insights into the richness of human subjectivity. It is considered particularly suitable for researching the range of diversity of subjective understanding, beliefs, and experiences. At the same time, it facilitates the identification of similarities, the construction of broad categories or dimensions of the phenomenon under investigation, and the exploration of patterns and relationships within and between these dimensions (Chinnis, Summers, Doeer, Paulson, & Davis, 2001). Therefore, the use of Q-methodology is appropriate for this study, which intends to explore the relationships between cultural environmental and individual factors from both sides of the intercultural

friendship and the impact on it. The purpose of this study is to understand different notions about friendship across Chinese and American culture and to identify the factors that enhance and hinder intercultural friendships between Chinese and Americans.

Research Questions

The current study investigates the influences of cultural differences on concepts of friendship and processes of friendship formation between Chinese and American students. The following research questions were asked:

RQ1: What are Chinese students' concepts of friendship?

RQ2: What are American students' concepts of friendship?

RQ3: How are their intercultural friendships influenced by their different concepts of friendship?

RQ4: What are the factors enhancing the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students?

RQ5: What are the factors hindering the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students?

Terminology

The term "intercultural" represents situations involving two or more cultures. It is usually used to refer to relationships between people from two different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural friendships described in this study are between American students and Chinese students.

Chinese students in this study refer to students who are Chinese citizens and have grown up in mainland China and are currently studying in universities in the United States. Americans students applied in this study refer to United States citizens who have grown up in the U.S.

Although "American" is a broad term and could be used to describe North and South American

countries, in this current study the word "American" is used to refer to U.S. citizens only.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Friendship is a unique and important type of interpersonal relationship. International students in U.S. face great difficulties in the process of establishing good friendships with the host nationals. Intercultural friendships are characterized by differences between individuals' cultures that bring unique rewards as well as challenges. Individuals must negotiate differences in cultural values and languages, and they must also overcome enduring stereotypes.

The literature is categorized into five areas. The first category focuses on explaining what friendship is and how it begins. The second section focuses on explaining intercultural friendship and factors that influence the friendship. The third part examines friendship and communication characteristics in both American and Chinese culture. Since the initiation and formation of friend relationships are largely determined by culture, the fourth and fifth categories discusses cultural variations that can influence the formation and function of intercultural friendships by reviewing three of Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Hall's concept of high context and low context culture.

Friendship

Few people would question the importance of friendship, which constitutes a significant portion of a person's social life from early childhood all the way through to late adulthood (Gudykunst, 1985).

However, friendships are not the same as friendly relations. Kurth (1970) distinguishes the differences between friendly relations and friendship. She states that friendly relations are an outgrowth of a role relationship, and possibly it is a preliminary stage to friendship, and friendship is an intimate relationship involving the two people as individuals.

It is a bold enterprise to define friendship. Wright (1984) gives a definition for friendship. He states that friendship is distinguished from other types of relationships by its voluntary nature of the interaction and by the personalistic focus of the interaction. Not only are friendships entered into voluntarily, they are recognized as such by both participants (Bell, 1981). Voluntary interdependence is a prerequisite for considering a relationship a friendship. Personalistic focus is that individuals come to know and treat each other as whole persons, rather than simply role occupants. Collier and Bornman (1999) describe friendship as "relationships characterized by affective exchange and increasing spontaneity" (p. 136).

Mattews (1986, p.13) notes:

The definition of a friend, the meaning of friendship to individuals, has rarely been the issue addressed. Most researchers have assumed that their own definition of friendship is shared by other members of society, rather than attending to the way respondents defined the term. The variety or ways of being a friend and the meaning attached to the word by various members of society and the same members at different times is largely unexplored.

However, Mattews refers only to the definitional problem in the United States. As far as the U.S. is concerned the term "friend" is used "to describe a variety of relationships ranging from short-term superficial ones to long-standing ones to which the person involved are deeply committed" (Mattews, 1986, p. 11). However, it is elusive to get a clear definition of "friendship" when one includes friendship in other culture. Research has noted that conceptions and patterns of friendship vary from culture to culture (Gareis, 1995, 2000).

"Friendship" in this study refers to face to face traditional friendship. However, this study does not give a definition for friendship. The interviewees are allowed to define "friendship" based on their own natural understanding.

Previous literature indicates that there are three general reasons why friendship begins. These reasons include proximity, similarity and self-disclosure. Friendships seem to begin with a simple element: proximity or personal contact with another person. It provides the opportunity to meet another person, and it is considered a necessary factor for initial contact. Berscheid and Walster (1991) says in their study that proximity is important for friendship development because it makes one feel the presence of the other in one's life, thus increasing psychological closeness.

The second reason why friendships may begin is similarity. Osbeck and Moghaddam (1997) found out that people tend to be attracted to others that are similar to themselves. For instance, similarities in beliefs or values, such as a belief in God or a certain political stance, may help begin a friendship. According to Dodd (1991), those similarities can be variables such as appearance, age, gender, race, marital status, education, residence, social class, economic situation, social status, personality traits, opinions, attitudes, interests, intelligence and values. It has been proving that similarity plays an essential role in the formation of friendship by Bell (1981). When people find similarities, they usually have increased expectations for future interactions. It has been confirmed in Byrne's (1971) study that the more similarities strangers appear to have, the more likely they are to be attracted to each other. On the other hand, the fewer similarities strangers appear to have, the fewer possibilities they have of being accepted by the other person.

The third factor that helps to start a friendship is self-disclosure. Self-disclosure has been defined as sharing information with others that they would not normally know or discover. Berg and Archer (1980) found out in their study that reciprocated self-disclosure during a first encounter results in greater liking. Collins and Miller's study (1994) has shown that because intimate disclosure conveys a message of strong desire to develop closeness, people may be attracted to those who reveal personal information to them. However, revealing too much in the early stage of the relationship has negative effects. It is important for disclosure to be the right amount and be reciprocal. Rubin's (1975) study has shown that too much self-disclosure may result in disliking for the discloser and a failure to reciprocate with equally intimate self-disclosure.

Intercultural Friendship

Research suggests that understanding of the concept of friendship varies as a result of age, gender, region, and cultural background (Adams, Blieszner, & de Vries, 2000). Intercultural friendships are characterized by differences between individuals' cultures that bring unique cultural knowledge and broaden their perspectives. Moreover, various cultural groups have divergent meaning systems that make exchange of information more challenging. Thus, the potential for misunderstanding, uncertainty, frustration, and conflict is increased (Barnett & Lee, 2002).

Previous studies have found that members involved in intercultural friendships have to deal with the challenges that exist with intracultural friendships (e.g., values, interests, personality traits, and changes), In addition to these problems, they also have to cope with problems emerging from cultural differences and possible language barriers between the interactants (Chen, 2002; Gareis, 1995). Therefore, it seems logical that forming intercultural

relationships should be a challenging task. Some people are attracted to and interested in people from other cultures because of a fascination for the exotic. This fact might help the first stages of friendship and perhaps provide motivation for its maintenance and development, but it cannot eliminate problems specific to intercultural friendship.

However, even though these difficulties are existing, people do create and maintain intercultural friendships. Some previous studies investigated what factors have made intercultural friendships possible.

Zhang and Merolla (2007) found that personal contact between differing races has been effective in the development of interracial friendships in desegregated schools. Ellison and Powers (1994) did a study on how interracial contact, especially when it occurs early in life, enhances the probability that African Americans will develop close friendships with European Americans. When individuals are placed in similar spaces with members of other cultures and races, the friendship process may begin.

Gareis (1995) made the attempt to understand intercultural friendship experience of international students. Proximity and similarity are the two factors she agrees influence intercultural friendship formation. Moreover, she suggests that culture, personality, adjustment stage, communicative competence and physical attraction are also important factors. According to Gareis (1995), many obstacles in developing relationships have been created by differences in cultural background. She additionally states that cultural components such as value systems, social structure, sex roles, and status are influential in relationship formation. As for personality, Strom indicates that (1988) probably because of a fear of losing their identities, immigrants with a strong cultural identification tend not to interact with host nationals. Another factor that impacts intercultural friendships is the adjustment stage. Six stages in the process of adjustment

have been listed by Bennett (1986), which are denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration. People in the first three stages take an ethnocentric attitude, which is obviously not helpful for intercultural friendship formation. Communicative competence, which is tied to the interaction process, is another factor that affects intercultural friendship. Chen's (1998) study indicates that communication competence is essential for gathering information about the host culture and facilitates the acquisition of cultural knowledge. Non-native speakers often avoid seeking out and initiating contacts with host nationals because they are afraid of making mistakes due to their lack of language proficiency. The last factor Gareis mentions is physical attraction. Attraction can lead to a friendship or a romantic relationship. Specific standards for physical attraction are individually and culturally based. In the United States, physical attraction may be the most important aspect in the early stages of a relationship. Positive traits that are associated with what is attractive may differ from culture to culture, but the judgments among cultures in favor of what is beautiful are rather consistent (Martin & Nakayama, 1999).

Friendship Characteristics in both Chinese and American Cultures

Friendship Communication Characteristics in United States

How each culture defines the character, function, and form of friendship is determined by different cultural systems. Considering the immense cultural differences between the U.S. and China, such as power distance, level of individualism, level of context, it is reasonable to assume that both American and Chinese cultures have their own unique understandings of friendship.

In general, researchers find qualities mentioned most frequently in U.S friendship studies about personal traits are trust, honesty, loyalty, mutuality, generosity, warmth, supportiveness, and acceptance (Rubin, 1975). Specially, Americans tend to treat friends as primarily for

socializing, activity-sharing and fun-seeking, and they prioritize self-concerns, interests and

long-term reciprocity compared with people from collectivistic cultures (Yum,1988).

Gareis (2000) indicates that although most Americans are friendly and approachable

during initial encounters, they later come to be viewed as remote and unreachable. U.S.

friendships are generally considered to be high speed, low obligation, low duration and high trust.

Some researchers also discovered that friendships in American culture play a more social and

casual role. American friendships usually form on the basis of similarities and shared interests,

and they are more easily terminated compared with other forms of interpersonal relationships

due to fewer expectations, lack of institutional ties, and the availability of alternatives (Bell,

1981).

These qualities of American interpersonal relationships can be explained by American

national traits that have developed over time. Gareis (2000) argues that American friendship

patterns have been gaining attention in recent years because of family crisis and the concurrent

societal void in emotional, social and intellectual need fulfillment. Stewart (1972) explains that

among Americans the high spread of friendship can be considered a function of the wish to be

popular. Friendships are considered by some researchers as matters of social success and not the

conditions for establishing warm, personal relationships. Americans are more open and receptive

to contact with strangers and tend to have many friends of low intimacy. Stewart (1972) also

notes that due to their independence Americans usually prefer professional help rather than help

from friends.

American mobility tendencies can be another reason for their unwillingness to engage in

close involvements and the perceived short duration of American friendships. Bell (1981)

explains in his article that many Americans have grown up in families that might have changed

their residence every few years. They have either not had sufficient practice in forming close

friendships or have developed self-protective habits of keeping relationships casual in order not

to get hurt upon repeated separations. As a result, these traits of American society do not

encourage deep and long-lasting friendships.

Friendship Communication Characteristics in China

Chinese culture emphasizes group, harmony, and other-oriented, which highlight four

major characteristics of Chinese beliefs about communication. These four characteristics about

communication are listening-centered, implicit communication, a communication focusing on

insiders and politeness (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Gao and Ting-Toomey also mentions that

the above concepts about communication do not appear to be assessed by Western personality

inventories. Therefore, these concepts might not be readily understood and appreciated by people

from Western cultures (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Triandis (1995) also states that guided by

the culture, friendship patterns in China are characterized by strong social obligations and

commitment towards friends, indirect communication, implicit mutual understanding and

reciprocity. Also they have few but intimate friendships. According to Cheung, Cheung, Leung,

Ward & Leong (2003), some unique characteristics developed in Chinese culture including

harmony, mutual responsibility, face and thrift.

Chen (2005) suggests that the common contexts shared among individuals are very

important for Chinese people in establishing and developing their friendships because of the

collectivist nature of Chinese culture. Chen also finds the effect of functional and expressive

facets of friendships in both Chinese and American contexts. American friendships attach more

importance to the expressive dimension and the relationship has fewer obligations. In contrast,

Chinese friendships can be initiated from practical helpfulness and later become affective

friendships or the other way around. Chinese people make friends that tend to last longer and each party expects full support of resources, time, and loyalty from the other instead of casual, short-term friendships.

<div align="center">Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions</div>

Every culture has its own systems of rules that direct members to certain behavioral patterns and that distinguish their members from others. Cultural variables usually serve as a key to understanding social behaviors. A lot of research adopts Hofstede's (1991) five cultural dimensions to examine cultural similarity or difference. Hofstede initially developed four cultural dimensions, which are low or high power distance, low or high uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism, and masculinity or femininity, and then he added the fifth one, which is short term and long term orientation. However, only three of the dimensions (low/high power distance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity) were used in this study and each of three dimensions is discussed below in more detail.

Low/High Power Distance

Hofstede (1984) identifies low /high power distance as the extent to which less powerful members in a culture expect and accept unequal power distribution within a culture. The characteristics of cultures with high power distance include many hierarchical levels, autocratic leadership, and the expectation of inequality and power differences. Members of high power distance cultures accept power as a basic fact and part of society. On the contrary, members of low power distance cultures prefer expert or legitimate power. Having high power distance means people prefer to be in a situation in which authority is clearly understood and lines of authority are never bypassed. Therefore, low or high power distance measures the way people perceive power differences instead of a culture's objective, "real" power distribution.

Abubaker (2008) did a study to explore the impact of Chinese core cultural values on the communication behavior of Chinese students learning English at a university in the U.K. He found that Chinese students are highly influenced by power distance in their relationship staff. They do not call teachers by their first names because they are used to using formal titles to address them in their home country. Dawar, Parker and Price's (1996) study looks at the impact of Hofstede's dimensions on interpersonal information exchange. This study provides a direct support in a cross-cultural empirical study. The results show that power distance was one of the factors that influence the relative reliance of consumers on personal versus impersonal approaches to seek information about products. The authors draw the conclusion that, "Jointly, our analyses suggest that countries with high levels of power distance show a greater tendency to seek product information from personal sources rather than impersonal sources such as Consumer Reports" (p. 510) . Pornpitakpan and Francis (2001) derived predictions from the Elaboration Likelihood Model and Hofstede's culture model. They tested the predictions with 76 Canadian and 185 Thai undergraduate students. The resulted indicated that source expertise has a greater impact on persuasion in the Thai culture (high power distance) than in the Canadian culture (low power distance).

Individualism-Collectivism

Individualism/collectivism is one of the most frequently utilized indices for interpreting cultural differences in interpersonal communication (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Yum, 1988). Hofstede (1984) defines individualism-collectivism as the extent to which the individual versus the group is valued in a culture. Individual attitudes, private interests and personal goals govern the behavior of individualists, while group norms, shared interests and common goals govern the behavior of collectivists. People in an individualistic oriented culture tend to be more

concerned about the consequences of one's behavior or one's own needs, interests, and goals. People in the collectivism-oriented culture prioritize group welfare over the goals of the individual and tend to be willing to sacrifice personally to achieve the collective goal.

Trandis and his colleagues note that individualism refers to cultural patterns that promote emotional detachment and independence from others, while collectivism represents cultural patterns emphasizing social integrity and regard for in-group norms. Collectivists use more group-linked social terms such as "family" and "relationships" to define the self. The family's history often has an influence on the way people see an individual; whereas, personal accomplishments will play a minor role. They also tend to be interdependent with others and will usually have built a network of deep-rooted relationships and personal loyal ties. Values in collectivistic cultures include training, physical condition, and the use of skills.

Conversely, individualists define themselves in more personal terms such as achievement-oriented and autonomous (Triandis, McCusker & Hui, 1990). There have been numerous studies using cultural individualism-collectivism to predict various aspects of communication. For example, members of collectivistic cultures are more concerned with avoiding hurting others' feelings. They are not imposing on others than are members of individualistic cultures. Members of individualistic cultures are more concerned with clarity in conversations. They view clarity as necessary for effective communication more than members of collectivistic cultures. Members of individualistic cultures perceive direct requests as the most effective strategies to accomplish their goals, and members of collectivistic cultures perceive direct requires as the least effective strategies (Kim & Wilson, 1994).

In collectivistic societies such as traditional China, the individual's situations are deeply connected with the situation of other ingroup members such as family members and close friends

(Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). In contrast, in individualist societies, such as the United States, people separate their individual situations from others and are perceived to focus on the pursuit of their own defined goals (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Collectivist cultures value group achievement and group harmony, while individualist cultures value the achievement of personal goals and the expression of a differentiated self (Triandis, 1994).

Gudykunst, Yoon, and Nishida (1987) note that the greater the degree of collectivism in cultures, the greater the difference in the intimacy of communication, the synchronization of communication, and the difficulty of communication in in-group and out-group relationships. Michael Bond and a team of Chinese researchers in Hong Kong established the Chinese Culture Connection. They conducted research in cross-cultural dimensions from an Asian perspective. One of the dimensions identified in their research overlapped significantly with Hofstede's dimension of individualism-collectivism (Koch & Koch, 1993).

Studies in intercultural communication (Gao & Ting-Toomey, 1998; Triandis, 1994) have shown that there are important cultural differences in emotional experience and expression as a function of the collectivist-individualist value system. Previous studies have shown that Asians do not encourage showing distress in front of friends. Mortenson's (2005) study suggests that in collectivist cultures such as China, negative emotions within friendship are considered as possible sources of disruption in relational harmony. Therefore, Chinese are more likely to avoid discussing issues such as sadness or anxiety while at the same time valuing people who can skillfully help others manage such emotions and preserve in-group harmony.

Cushman and King (1986) did a comparative study of friendships in the United States and Japan. The study indicates that friend relationships in collectivistic societies are based on common values, mutual liking and attraction, while people from individualistic societies form

friendships with those who have some attributes similar to those contained in their self-concepts. They further conclude that in individualistic cultures as the United States, the formation of friendships contributes most to the achievement of personal interests and welfare "for the time being." In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, people have deep and long-lasting emotional commitments to each friendship partner because they value harmonious human relationships over personal interests.

Masculinity-Femininity

Masculinity-femininity introduced by Hofstede (1980) focuses on how gender roles are distributed in a culture. Members of culture high in masculinity place high values on performance, ambition, possessions, power and assertiveness. Members of cultures high in femininity value people, quality of life, service, caring for other and being nurturing. In addition, masculinity-oriented cultures emphasizes distinct sex roles, performance, ambition and independence, while femininity-oriented cultures are characterized by flexible sex roles, life quality, service and interdependence. Hofstede (1991) points out that in masculine cultures, women are assigned the role of being tender and taking care of relationships. In contrast, in feminine cultures, both men and women are allowed to engage in these behaviors.

Merkin (2005) examines cultural dimension of masculinity-femininity as a possible additional predictor of facework. The result revealed that members of masculine cultures tend to behave more competitively and members of feminine cultures tend to behave more cooperatively.

Gudykunst and Nishida (1986) show that perceptions of communication behavior related to opposite-sex versus same-sex relationships are influenced by different cultural orientations to masculinity and femininity. In societies where sex roles are clearly differentiated because of high masculinity, informal relationships between males and females are not encouraged, and the

content of communication tends to be narrow and shallow. Bahk's study (1993) also found more intimacy and reciprocity in Korean same-sex than in Korean opposite-sex friend relationships. However, there is little difference between the intimacy and reciprocity in American same-sex friendship than in American opposite-sex friendships.

Figures 1 and 2 (Hofstede, 2003) demonstrate Hostede's five cultural dimensions in China and U.S. Those figures reveal that American culture and Chinese culture are very different concerning those five cultural dimensions. Compared with the U.S., China is higher in power-distance, lower in individualism, lower in masculinity, lower in uncertainty avoidance and higher in long term orientation. In this study, only three of Hofstede's cultural dimensions (high/low power distance, individualism/collectivism and masculinity/femininity) are applied as part of the theoretical framework.

Figure 1:
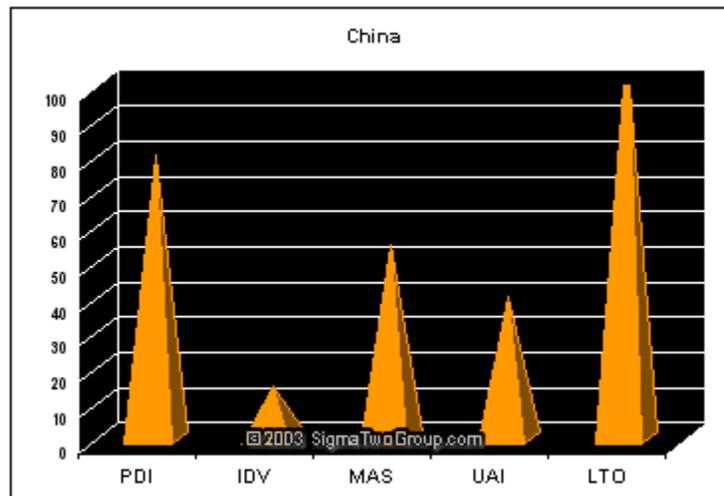
Figure 2:
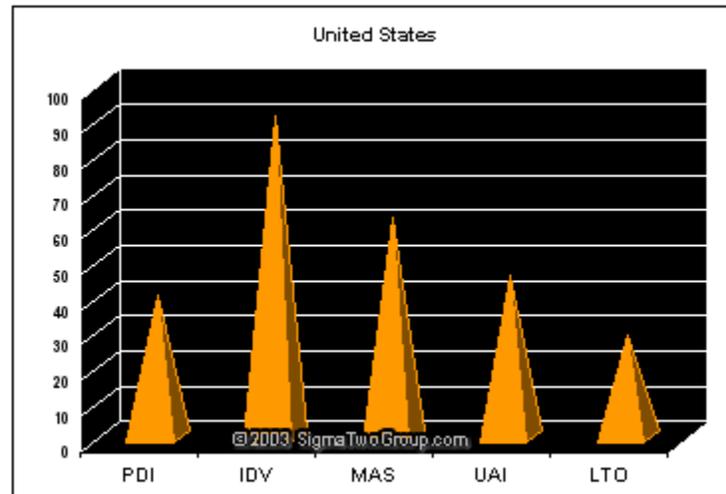
Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Culture

Besides Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Hall (1976) offers another effective means of examining cultural similarities and differences in both perception and communication, which is the concept of high versus low context. In high-context societies, the external environment and nonverbal behaviors are important for understanding and conveying messages. On the other hand, in low-context cultures, a large portion of the meaning is explicitly given in words. This concept is useful because it summarizes how people in a culture relate to one another, especially in communication, conflict and commitment. These three categories proposed by Hall will be further examined.

Communication

By using scales meant to conceptualize the difference between high-context and low-context communication, Gudykunst et al. (1996) identified high context communication to be indirect, maintaining of harmony, ambiguous and reserved. In contrast, low-context communication was identified as direct, precise, dramatic, open, and based on feelings or true

intentions. Hall (1976) adds that those who use low context communication style are ''expected to communicate in ways that are consistent with their feeling;'' whereas, a person from a high-context culture will set the context and the setting and let the message evolve without referring to the problem directly. In order to communicate successfully using high-context communication, listeners must infer speakers' intentions accurately in order to understand utterances correctly. Yum (1988) contends that to be competent high-context communicators, people must hear one and understand ten (384).

Zhang's (2009) study focuses on explaining misunderstanding concerned with the uses of silence in conversations situated in American culture and Japanese culture by using the concept of high-context culture and low-context culture. The results indicate that silence was encouraged and appreciated in Japan, while in the U.S., it was considered as dishonesty or lack of ability.

Conflict

In high-context cultures people try to avoid direct confrontation to maintain social harmony and intimate bonds between people. One reason that high-context people sometimes appear to express themselves in a circle way, especially regarding issues that might be disagreed upon, is to reduce chances of open and direct disagreement (Hall, 1976). People in high context cultures are more likely to repress self feelings and interests to maintain harmony, while people from a low context culture are less likely to avoid direct and open confrontation at the expense of expressing and defending self (Hall, 1976). Criticism is more direct in low-context culture; whereas, in high context cultures criticism is more subtle and verbal. According to Chua and Gudykunst (1987), in low context cultures solution orientation is more often used to resolve conflicts, while in high context cultures nonconfrontation is more often used.

Asian culture places little value on conflict management (Argyle, Henderson, Bond, Iizuka, & Contarello, 1986). It is probably due to a cultural phenomenon that people in high-context cultures use a verbal code that is subtle, indirect, and dependent on contextual cues and adopt a relatively non-expressive communication style (Argyle, et al., 1986). In contrast, members of a low-context culture such as Western culture, rely more on explicit messages. It can be concluded that conflict management skills, which necessarily involve discussion about negative emotions, are not highly regarded by members of high-context cultures.

Dsilva and Whyte's (1998) study confirmed that Vietnamese refugees, who are from a high-context culture, tend to avoid conflict. Wimsatt and Gassenheimer (2000) sampled Americans and Philippines to study the effect of culture on the cooperative problem-solving approach to negotiation. The results suggest that cultural context moderates the relationship between the negotiator's experience and negotiation style. Negotiators experience had a greater positive effect on the cooperative style when negotiators were from the low context culture country.

Commitment

Due to the high involvement people have with each other and their high cohesiveness, people from high-context cultures tend to have a high commitment to complete series of action. A person's word is a promise because in high-context cultures, one is expected to do as one says (Hall, 1976). A first promise or commitment often serves as the beginning of a lifelong relationship. On the other side, this also suggests that people in high-context cultures tend to be very careful and even reluctant to begin something, especially in a new relationship. Americans and other low-context people do not ordinarily feel as bound to complete actions (Hall, 1976).

Ueltschy, Ueltschy, and Fachinelli (2007) surveyed 162 U.S. manufacturers and Brazilian distributors to investigate the importance of trust, personal contact and long-term commitment in global supply chain relationships. They explored the differences found in a low-context culture, the U. S., and Brazil, a high-context culture. Brazilian distributors were found to place greater importance on long-term commitment and trust than did U. S. manufacturers and preferred more personal forms of interaction, but not more frequent interaction.

Ueltschy, Ueltschy, and Fachinelli (2007) surveyed 162 U.S. manufacturers and Brazilian distributors to investigate the importance of trust, personal contact and long-term commitment in global supply chain relationships. They explored the differences found in a low-context culture, the U. S., and a high-context culture Brazil. Brazilian distributors were found to place greater importance on long-term commitment and trust than did U. S. manufacturers and preferred more personal forms of interaction, but not more frequent interaction.

<center>Conclusion</center>

This literature review focused on five areas, friendship and how it begins, intercultural friendships and some influential factors on it, friendship characteristics in both American and Chinese culture, Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Hall's concept of high and low context culture. Chinese and Americans have different connotations about friendship, and they have different communication characteristics between friends due to the cultural differences. Without discussing the conceptualizations of friendship across cultures, one cannot explain the situation of intercultural friendship between people from these two cultures. This study investigates Chinese and Americans' notions of friendships and the factors that they perceive influence the formation of their intercultural friendships.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This research uses the Q-methodology to investigate intercultural friendship between Chinese international students and Americans. Developed by Stephenson (1953), the Q-method is designed to assist in the ordered examination of human subjectivity. It focuses on a rank-ordering procedure in which respondents order statements of potential opinion according to their perceptions and beliefs. It is considered particularly suitable for researching the range and diversity of subjective understanding, beliefs, and experiences "addressing the critical kind of research questions which are concerned to hear 'many voices'". The respondents order the statements according to specific criteria or conditions of interest in terms of value, such as "most like me" and "most unlike me". These ordered responses are a Q-sort. After the items are ordered according to the respondent's perceptions or beliefs, the Q-sort data are correlated and factor analyzed, producing differing factor groups. Individuals who have responded in a similar manner and clustered together statistically on a particular factor define each factor group. Each factor becomes the representation of a specific belief system or opinion. To provide an understanding of the commonly shared opinions and beliefs represented by each factor group, the responses of each factor group are interpreted (Brown and Pirtle, 2008).

There were three different parts to this study. In the first part of this study, the researcher interviewed 15 American students gathered from an introductory communication class and 15 Chinese students randomly selected from a Basic English class about their understanding of friendships. From these 30 interview narratives, statements were compiled to make a Q-sort statements sheet consisted of 30 statements. In the second part of this study, the researcher recruited 10 American students who have close Chinese friends and 10 Chinese students who have close American friends by using snowballing sampling. These 20 respondents were then

asked to order the Q-sort statements in order by which statements they agreed with the most to

the least based on their concept of friendship in their own culture. After this data was collected,

the researcher analyzed this data to determine the significant statements. The third part of this

study was interviewing the 20 participants from the Q-sort. These participants were first asked

to explain why they chose the top five statements they agreed with most and the bottom five

statements they most disagreed with. Since they were the ones who do have intercultural friends,

questions concerning their intercultural friendship experiences were asked as well.

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

Concourse

The first step in Q-methodology is to develop a list of statements that is sufficiently

representative of the "universe of viewpoints" about a topic (Brown, 1993). This list is called

concourse, and the statements are developed using different sources, such as literature,

interviews, expert opinions, talk shows, and newspapers. It is not restricted to words; it might

include collections of paintings, pieces of art, photographs, and even musical selections (Brown,

1996). This current study used interviews to develop concourse.

Fifteen American students and 15 Chinese students enrolled at a large eastern U. S.

university participated in this part of the study. The 15 American students were enrolled in an

undergraduate communication class. The class fulfills a university wide requirement so a wide

variety of majors are enrolled. The 15 Chinese students were enrolled in a required English class

and they are from different majors as well. Students were asked to sign an agreement form

giving their consent to participating in the study.

There are two phases in the concourse development process. During the phase one, 30

participants were asked open-ended questions such as: (a) How do you define friendship?

(b)What considerations are important in developing friendships in your culture? (c) What kind of

person will you call a friend or not call a friend? (See Appendix A for a full list of interview

questions). They were encouraged to brainstorm qualities they consider important for friendships

in their own culture. All of the interviews were audio-taped. In order to get more accurate results,

the Chinese participants were interviewed in Mandarin Chinese. They were able to talk openly

and freely. The researcher listened to the taped interviews multiple times and drew statements

out of the student ideas about friendship. For phase two of the concourse development, the

researcher emailed each of the participants the statements drawn from each of the interviews

respectively. The participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the statements, and they were

also asked to contribute any ideas or beliefs that would better represent their understanding

concerning friendships. In that way, the list of statements was refined to clarify meaning and add

new items. The process resulted in a series of 50 statements regarding the definition of

friendships and important qualities of friendships.

Q-Sample

After creating a representative list of statements, the next step was to condense the list by

clarifying statements to reduce ambiguity of meaning and remove statements to eliminate

repetitions. This finalized list of statements is known as the Q-sample. One independent expert

who is a professor in Communication Studies helped to identify repetition of viewpoints and

remove duplication. She also evaluated the statements to insure that they were related to the

study topic. 30 statements (e.g., "Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each

other", "Friends share very private things including family issues", "Friendship is a life-long

relationship") were chosen after that and those statements were also translated into Chinese.

Then those were ready of the Chinese respondents to sort. Once the statements were selected,

they were numbered randomly and each one was typed on a separate card or piece of paper. The

random number for each statement was printed on the back of the card. The statements were then

ready for Q-sorting.

P-Set

The group of participants who sort the Q-sample in a Q-study is called the P-set

(McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Brown (1980) recommends that 40 to 60 participants are more

than adequate for most studies, and far fewer may be needed for some specific studies. He holds

the point of view that what is of interest ultimately are the factors with at least four or five people

defining each and beyond that, additional subjects add little. Shinebourne and Adams (2007)

used Q-methodology to look at therapists' understandings and experiences of working with

clients with problems of addiction, and there were only 13 participants. Akhtar-Danesh, Baxter,

Valaitis, Stanyon and Sproul examined nurse faculty perceptions of simulation use in nursing

education by adopting Q-methodology and 28 faculties participated in the Q-sorting process.

Papworth and Walker (2008) looked at the needs of primary care mental health service users by

exploring the attitudes of 28 service users through a Q-methodology approach. Thus, the number

of participants is not the key issue. Instead, the important factor is the representation of different

points of view about the theme of the study (Dennis, 1986). The objective in Q-methodology is

to be able to describe typical viewpoints rather than to find a defined proportion of individuals

with specific viewpoints.

Ten American students who have close Chinese friends and ten Chinese students who

have close American friends from the same university were recruited as the P-set who sorted the

Q-sample later by using snowballing sampling strategy. According to Biernacki and Waldorf

(1981), a snowball sampling strategy "yields a study sample through referrals made among

people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest"

(qtd. in Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The researcher started the sampling by having conversations

with Chinese and American students. The researcher asked whether the Chinese students have

American friends and whether Americans have Chinese friends. Once the presence of

intercultural friendship was found, the participants were asked to participate in the research study.

At the end of the interview section with the initial participants, they were asked to provide names

and contact information of other potential participants. Consequently, their friends and those they

referred were also invited into the study to provide further viewpoints of their friendships with

Chinese students or with Americans. With their permission, all the participants were required to

sign the agreement form to participate and choose pseudonyms as a means of maintaining

confidentiality. See appendix B for a list of pseudonyms of both American and Chinese

respondents.

Q-Sort Procedures

Since the Q-sample had been specified, the P-set was made up of 10 American

participants and 10 Chinese participants recruited from the snowballing sampling. The researcher

asked these participants to rank order the 30 statements. How the participants sorted the

statements reflected their connotations about friendship. For the Chinese participants, the

statements had been translated by the researcher into Chinese. Each participant was given a bag

that contained 30 cards, and each card had one of the statements listed on it. This was a three-

step process. First, participants were instructed to read all statements to get an impression of the

range of opinions and then to sort the statements by dividing them into three piles: agreeable,

disagreeable, and neutral. They were told to place ten statements in each pile. Then, participants

were asked to sort the statements in each pile within the ranges from "most agree" which is

presented as 1, to "least agree" which is marked as 10. Third, the participants were required to

record the order of all the statements from 1 to 30. Each participant's data were then recorded

into an Excel document. American and Chinese participants' data were recorded on different

Excel documents. The statements were each labeled with a corresponding letter to represent that

statement in a column of the Excel spreadsheets. After the Excel sheet had been charted, the

distinguished statements that Americans respondents agreed the most, disagreed the most and

which Chinese respondents agreed the most, disagreed the most were found out through the

calculation by using T-test. The distinguished statements are the statements that bear high

probability level.

Q-Sort Participants Interviews

Following the sorting task, each participant who sorted the statements in the previous

study was asked to comment on the statements they most strongly agreed or disagreed with and

to comment on the statements they found particularly difficult to decide on and give reasons.

This part of the interview helped to validate the data found Q sorting. In addition, the

participants were also asked questions about their intercultural friendship experiences. The

Chinese participants were interviewed in Chinese in ordered to make them feel more comfortable

to share. All of those interviews were transcribed and the scripts from the Chinese interviewees

were translated into English. See Appendix C for a full list of interview questions. Since one of

the main purposes for this study was to see how American and Chinese students' different

understandings of friendship impacts the intercultural friendship between them.

By using Q-methodology, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are Chinese students' concepts of friendship?

RQ2: What are American students' concepts of friendship?

RQ3: How are their intercultural friendships influenced by their different concepts of friendship?

RQ4: What are the factors enhancing the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students?

RQ5: What are the factors hindering the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students?

Chapter 4 - Results and Discussion

The 20 participants in the q-sort methodology ordered the 30 statements in the order from 1 to 30. Number 1 represents the statements that they found to be most agreeable and number 30 stands for the statement they found to be least agreeable. Tables 1 contains the statements the participants put in order based on their notions of friendship. Also see Appendix D for the list of statements in Chinese.

_____Friends can depend on each other a great deal.
_____Friends can get along well with each other.
_____Friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life.
_____Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other.
_____Friends have a very high obligation to each other.
_____Friends spend most of the time together.
_____Friends share very private things including family issues.
_____Friends are similar to each other.
_____Friends have similar social status.
_____Friends have similar educational level.
_____Friends are about the same age.
_____It is easier to have friends of the same gender.
_____Friendship can be a temporary relationship.
_____Friends can always forgive each other.
_____Friends can accept everything about each other.
_____Friendship has to be a life-long relationship.
_____Friends should be very direct and straightforward with each other.
_____Friends have mutual respect for each other.
_____Friends have common interests.
_____Friends are always there for each other.
_____Friends are a part of each other's lives.
_____Friends trust each other.
_____A friend is someone who can do something for me.
_____Differences between two friends are good for the friendship.
_____Friends have the same beliefs.
_____A friend is someone I can have a good time with.
_____A friend can be a family member.
_____A friend should be someone my family accepts or likes as well.
_____My own benefit is more important than a friend's.
_____Friends can disagree or argue with each other.

To analyze the Q-sort data, the Microsoft Excel program was used to determine the

statistical significance. Table 2 displays the calculation results of Chinese students' Q-sorting

and Table 3 shows the calculation results for American students' Q-sorting.

Table 2: Q-sort Results of Chinese Students

Statements	Observed	Values	Probability level
A. Friends can depend on each other a great deal.	160	0.63	
B. Friends can get along well with each other.	135	1.67	
C. Friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life.	168	1.93	
D. Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other.	130	3.08	P<.01
E. Friends have a very high obligation to each other.	120	7.5	P<.01
F. Friends spend most of the time together.	166	1.54	
G. Friends share very private things including family issues.	170	2.35	P<.05
H. Friends are similar to each other.	171	2.58	P<.05
I. Friends have similar social status.	125	5.00	P<.01
J. Friends have similar educational level.	169	2.14	P<.05
K. Friends are about the same age.	165	1.36	
L. It is easier to have friends of the same gender.	114	11.37	P<.01
M. Friendship can be a temporary relationship.	160	0.67	
N. Friends can always forgive each other.	131	2.41	P<.05
O. Friends can accept everything about each other.	167	1.93	
P. Friendship has to be a life-long relationship.	110	10.67	P<.01
Q. Friends should be very direct and straightforward with each other.	134	1.71	
R. Friends have mutual respect for each other.	131	2.41	P<.05
S. Friends have common interests.	141	0.54	
T. Friends are always there for each other.	132	2.61	P<.05
U. Friends are a part of each other's lives.	167	1.93	
V. Friends trust each other.	61	52.81	P<.01
W. A friend is someone who can do something for me.	161	0.81	
X. Differences between two friends are good for the friendship.	133	1.93	
Y. Friends have the same beliefs.	168	2.16	P<.05
Z. A friend is someone I can have a good time with.	90	2.40	P<.05
AA. A friend can be a family member.	118	6.83	P<.01
AB. A friend should be someone my family accepts or likes as well.	170	2.67	P<.05
AC. My own benefit is more important than a	239	52.81	P<.01

	Observed	Values	Probability level
friend's.			
AD. Friends can disagree or argue with each other.	140	0.67	

Table 3: Q-sort Results of American Students

Statements	Observed	Values	Probability level
A. Friends can depend on each other a great deal.	133	2.17	P<.05
B. Friends can get along well with each other.	139	0.87	
C. Friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life.	249	39.36	P<.01
D. Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other.	138	1.04	
E. Friends have a very high obligation to each other.	140	0.71	
F. Friends spend most of the time together.	171	2.58	P<.05
G. Friends share very private things including family issues.	136	1.44	
H. Friends are similar to each other.	156	0.23	
I. Friends have similar social status.	265	49.91	P<.01
J. Friends have similar educational level.	240	33.75	P<.01
K. Friends are about the same age.	220	22.27	P<.01
L. It is easier to have friends of the same gender.	247	38.09	P<.01
M. Friendship can be a temporary relationship.	209	23.20	P<.01
N. Friends can always forgive each other.	141	0.81	
O. Friends can accept everything about each other.	161	0.54	
P. Friendship has to be a life-long relationship.	169	2.41	P<.05
Q. Friends should be very direct and straightforward with each other.	88	25.63	P<.01
R. Friends have mutual respect for each other.	131	2.41	P<.05
S. Friends have common interests.	120	6.00	P<.01
T. Friends are always there for each other.	136	1.51	
U. Friends are a part of each other's lives.	139	0.81	
V. Friends trust each other.	39	82.14	P<.01
W. A friend is someone who can do something for me.	171	2.58	P<.05
X. Differences between two friends are good for the friendship.	163	1.13	
Y. Friends have the same beliefs.	169	2.41	P<.05
Z. A friend is someone I can have a good time with.	135	1.50	
AA. A friend can be a family member.	152	0.03	
BB. A friend should be someone my family accepts or likes as well.	152	0.03	
CC. My own benefit is more important than a friend's.	168	2.16	P<.05
DD. Friends can disagree or argue with each other.	137	1.13	

According to the T-test table of degrees of freedom, the statements that bear values more than 2.76 (p<.01) are the distinguished ones. Data analysis identified eight distinguished statements (Table 4 and 5) from the Chinese participants and nine distinguished ones (Table 6 and 7) from the American participants. See Appendixes E and F for the detailed calculation results of the value of each statement.

<div align="center">Chinese Students' Concepts of Friendship</div>

Next part gives an answer to RQ1: What are Chinese students' concepts of friendship? Table 4 indicates the statements Chinese students found the most true to their connotations of friendship. One of the statements they agreed the most is statement D (Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other). Chinese respondents think friends should consider the other side's benefit as more important than that of themselves; thus they are willing to sacrifice their own benefit for each other. An example was given by one of the Chinese respondents to illustrate the statement. He said that if his friends need him, he would go to them even if he is doing something else at that time, such as preparing for a test. Another statement Chinese respondents found the most agreeable is statement E (Friends have a very high obligation to each other). At the moment friendship is formed, the unspoken promise is made between each other. Both sides know the requirements that must be fulfilled between them. Chinese participants also strongly agreed with Statement I, which is "Friends have similar social status". Chinese students also believed that it is easier to have friends of the same gender which is statement L. In their opinion, there is more intimacy between the same gender friendships. Chinese respondents also strongly supported statement P, which is "Friendship has to be a life-long relationship". It did not mean that all of their friends were life-long friends. It just meant that when they started a friendship with someone, they aimed for life-long relationship even

though it did not usually turn out to be the way they expect. The last one they strongly agreed

was statement V "Friends trust each other." Trust is considered by them as the foundation of the

friendship.

Table 4: Statements Strongly Agreed with by Chinese Students

Statements	Values	Probability level
D. Friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other.	3.08	P<.01
E. Friends have a very high obligation to each other.	7.5	P<.01
I.Friends have similar social status.	5.00	P<.01
L. It is easier to have friends of the same gender.	11.37	P<.01
P. Friendship has to be a life-long relationship.	10.67	P<.01
V. Friends trust each other.	52.81	P<.01

Table 5 revealed the statements Chinese students strongly disagreed with based on their

concepts of friendship. One of them is statement AA, which is "A friend can be a family

member." Most of them do not think a family member can be a friend. It is difficult for Chinese

to relate friendship to kinship. They think there are distinguished differences between friendship

and kinship that are intersecting and complementary. Statement AC (My own benefit is more

important than a friend's) is also strongly disagreed by the Chinese students. They consider their

friends' benefits over that of their own, and meanwhile they expect their friends to be the same

way as they are.

Table 5: Statements Strongly Disagreed with by Chinese Students

Statements	Values	Probability level
AA. A friend can be a family member.	16.67	P<.01
AC. My own benefit is more important than a friend's.	52.81	P<.01

Therefore, RQ 1 "What are Chinese students' concepts of friendship" was answered by

analyzing the Q-sort data of Chinese students as revealed in Table 4 and 5. Chinese consider friends

as people who can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other and someone who have

very high obligation and responsibilities for each other. Similar social status and gender are essential

in a friendship. In addition, Chinese expect friendship to be a life-long relationship that has high trust.

Moreover, it is difficult to classify members of their family as friends.

<div align="center">American Students' Concepts of Friendship</div>

The following section answers RQ 2: What are American students' concepts of

friendship?

Table 6 consists of all the statements American students found the most true to their

understanding of friendship one of which says that "Friendship can be a temporary relationship."

American participants consider a friend as someone whom they can hang out with at the moment.

They focus on the present, and time length is not a problem for them. Directness is also an

important friendship quality to the American respondents, which is covered in statement Q

"Friends should be very direct and straightforward with each other." They believe that

directness is related to honesty. Friends should be people who feel comfortable to point out the

perceived faults of the counterpart although it may be difficult for others to speak the truth.

Moreover, if there is a conflict, they should be able to be open with each other and tell their true

feelings. Another statement that American participants found true to their friendship concept is

statement S, "Friends have common interests." Most of them agreed that common interests are

one of the most important reasons why they are attracted to each other and initiate friendships.

Trust, which is mentioned in statement V "Friends trust each other", is also considered essential

in friendship by American students. They think that trust is a prerequisite for friends' sharing

their lives, thoughts and feelings.

Table 6: Statements Strongly Agreed by American Students

Statements	Values	Probability level
M. Friendship can be a temporary relationship.	23.20	P<.01
Q. Friends should be very direct and straightforward with each other.	25.63	P<.01
S. Friends have common interests.	6.00	P<.01
V. Friends trust each other.	82.14	P<.01

Table 7 shows the statements American respondents found the least agreeable. Statement

C, "Friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life", is one statement Americans did

not agree with. American students believe that privacy is very important to them. They want to

keep some secrets from friends instead of sharing everything with them. Additionally, American

participants do not believe that social status, age or educational level has any impact on

friendship (Statement I, J and K). They said that they have friends from all kinds of background

and all ages. They do not see those factors as problems. Another statement that American

respondents found least true to their friendship connotation is statement L, "It is easier to have

friends of the same gender." They said that they do have some close cross-gender friends. The

level of intimacy does not bear much difference between their same gender friendships and cross

gender friendships.

Table 7: Statements Strongly Disagreed by American Students

Statements	Values	Probability level
C. Friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life.	39.36	P<.01
I. Friends have similar social status.	49.91	P<.01
J. Friends have similar educational level.	33.75	P<.01
K. Friends are about the same age.	22.27	P<.01
L. It is easier to have friends of the same gender.	38.09	P<.01

Therefore, RQ 2 "What are American students' concepts of friendship?" was answered by analyzing the Q-sort data of American students as shown in Table 6 and 7. Americans consider common interests extremely important in a friendship. Friends should also trust each other and be direct and straightforward with each other. Temporary friendships are well accepted by Americans. Furthermore, friends should still give each other private space instead of being involved in every aspect of the counterpart's life. According to this research, social status, educational level, age and gender do not play any role in the friendships of Americans.

The Q-sort provides useful insights into how cultural value systems shape people's perceptions of friendship and influence the intercultural friendship experiences of people from the two cultures. There are two parts in this section, cultural influences on concepts of friendship and factors that enhance and hinder intercultural friendships. The following part answers RQ 3 by looking at the cultural influences on Chinese' and Americans' concepts on friendship and how their different concepts of friendship impact their intercultural friendships between each other.

Different Concepts of Friendship Impacting Intercultural Friendships

The following section discusses RQ3: How are their intercultural friendships influenced by their different concepts of friendship?

Individualism/collectivism

The Q-sort results show that Americans strongly agree with statement M, which says that friendship can be a temporary relationship. However, Chinese believe that friendship has to be a life-long relationship. In the United States, which is an individualistic country, individual goals are more emphasized than collective concerns or interests. This leads to the formation of friendships that contribute most to the achievement of personal interests and welfare "for the time being." People from China, a collectivistic country, are socialized to value harmonious human relationships, which may lead to deep and long-lasting emotional commitments to friendship partners.

Bing Bing noted, "I always start a friendship with the goal of keeping it life-long even though it doesn't always turn out to be that way. I just don't think it's worthwhile spending time for temporary friendships. I would rather just keep it as an acquaintance relationship."

The Q-sort results also indicate that Chinese respondents strongly agree with the statement D, which is that friends can sacrifice their own benefit for the goodness of each other. Chinese students did not agree with statement AC, which says "My own benefit is more important than a friend's. For students from China, as a collectivistic country, the groups' goals and benefit are superior to that of the individual's. Chinese people in the collectivism oriented culture tend to be more willing to sacrifice the personal to achieve the collective goals. Peng Ling explained,

"Americans are more self-centered. They usually see themselves first, even with friends. But for us, we see others first, we try to see from that person's viewpoint. However, Americans won't hurt themselves to help friends. Whatever they do for friends will not affect their well-being."

Table 7 shows that American participants strongly disagree with the statement C, which is that friends can interfere with every aspect of each other's life. Because people are more "I" conscious in an individualism oriented culture, privacy is very important. No matter how close they are with a friend, they still want their own space.

The influence individualism-collectivism has on the intercultural friendships is also noticeable in some of the examples the participants gave in the interviews. Xiao Wei described, "I always like to share my food or other things with my American friends because I consider them as friends. However, they will never share things with me. I am not saying that I expect to get anything. It just makes me feel that I am not considered as a friend by them, which is a little hurtful."

Alissa responded, "For Americans, we don't share our food especially with someone outside our families. I went out to dinner with a couple of Chinese friends in a Chinese restaurant. We put the dishes in the middle of the table and ate together. I like the sharing thing, but it's just totally different for me." The reluctance of the Americans to share personal resources can definitely be attributed to the country's individualistic trend. Lu Fan also gave an example concerning American's individualism. "They are too individualistic. They want to hang out together whenever they want to. If they don't want to, they won't. I cannot accept that." When Qian Hua was asked in what ways her friendships with Chinese are different from her friendships with Americans, she said, "When I go shopping with my American friends, they are on their own. They only shop for themselves. With my Chinese friends, we are looking for things for each other."

High-Power Distance/Low-Power Distance

Statement I (Friends have similar social status) bears significance among the statements.

Chinese participants agreed, as shown in Table 4. Table 7 indicates that American participants

strongly disagreed with statements I (Friends have similar social status), J (Friends have similar

educational level) and K (Friends are about the same age). The cause for these different

conceptualizations among Chinese and Americans is the power distance which represents how

much the less powerful members of institutions and organizations expect and accept that power

is distributed unequally. In cultures with low power distance, such as America, people relate to

one another more as equals, regardless of formal positions. Subordinates are more comfortable

with and even want the right to contribute to and critique the decisions of those in power. In

cultures with high power distance such as China, subordinates are aware that the power of others

is based on their formal, hierarchical positions. Therefore, for Chinese participants, friendships

that are based on similar social status are more easily accepted. People from different social

status are less likely to develop friendships due to the hierarchical distance. American

participants strongly disagreed with the view that friendships have to be based on similar social

status, educational level or age because in Americans culture, equality is valued and emphasized.

Different power distance orientation in American and Chinese culture is evident not only

in the Q-sort but also from the interviews of American students and Chinese students'

intercultural friendship experiences. High power distance and low power distance culture

difference also plays a role in the intercultural friendships between people from those two

countries.

When Zhi Qiang was asked whether he had encountered any conflicts with American

friends, he noted, "I think Americans don't have enough respect to the elders including the

teachers. Sometimes, I get really uncomfortable about that and confront them. Also in America,

people emphasize in logical ways. People who are more logical win the way. However, in my

family, even though I am reasonable, I will not try to argue with my parents. They won't listen to me anyways."

One of the respondents explained that age difference is a big hindrance to her friendships with Americans. With Americans who are older than she is, she thinks she should show respect to them while with the ones who are younger than she, she thinks that she has to behavior like an elder to earn the respect. Even though she knows age is not a problem in America, she just cannot change her Chinese way of thinking.

Masculinity-Femininity

According to the Figure 1 and Figure 2 with the five cultural dimension scores of both China and U.S., in the dimensions of masculinity, scores are higher for America than for China. Therefore, theoretically (according to the figures), China is more femininity oriented country and America is a more masculinity oriented country. As stated by Hofstede (1980), masculinity-oriented cultures emphasizes distinct sex roles, things, performance, ambition and independence, and femininity-oriented cultures are characterized by flexible sex roles, relationship, life quality, service and interdependence.

However, as it is evident in the Q-sort result tables that Chinese participants strongly agreed with the statement "It is easier to have friends at the same gender," while American participants strongly disagreed with this statement. According to masculinity-femininity culture dimension, sex roles should be emphasized more in America than in China but the Q-sort result contradicted this. The reason is that traditional Chinese culture is deeply rooted in Confucianism. It has historically denied equality between men and women. There are quite distinct sex roles in China, even if its collectivistic culture simultaneously emphasizes interdependence. This resulted in the avoidance of opposite-sex relationships in China. As it was reviewed before, more

intimacy and reciprocity in Korean same-sex than in Korean opposite-sex friend relationships was found in Bahk's study (1993).

However, there is little difference between the intimacy and reciprocity in American same-sex friendship than in American opposite-sex friendships. An example Jia Hui provided also supports this distinct sex role in Chinese culture. She said, "If I take a picture with a guy American friend and send it back home, my family will all be wondering whether he is my boyfriend or not." Li Ru also stated the thing she likes about being in America is that gender is not a problem between friends.

One difference between America and China in regarding masculinity and femininity is that America emphasizes things and performance, while China emphasizes relationship more. Jia Hui responded, "Chinese like to spend time talking. Emphasis is more on understanding what's going on with each other's life. Many Americans just don't want to spend a whole evening sitting there and talking together; they want to go out to do something."

When Phil was asked in what ways his friendships with other Americans are different from his friendships with Chinese, he replied, "I am a lot more active with my American friends but not with Chinese. They like to stay indoors talking. Sometimes I enjoy friendship with Chinese because I get to slow down my life pace a little bit." A study by Yum (1988) also agreed with this point. Yum noted that when socializing, Americans prefer doing activities together rather than just chatting, and they are perceived to keep personal feelings and thoughts to themselves.

Low-context and High-context

Hall's (1976) concept of high-context versus low-context becomes important when

considering the cultural differences between Chinese and Americans. In high-context

communication cultures, as in China, a small part of the information is communicated in an

implicit way, resting on the interpretation of the context, while in low-context communication

cultures, as in the United States, most of the information is transmitted in explicit forms in order

to avoid the ambiguity and make communication more efficient. These communication strategies

imply that Chinese who were raised in high-context culture will have different expectations from

Americans who grew up in a low-context culture.

Q-sort result tables shows that statement Q (Friends should be direct and straightforward

with each other) is one of the statements Americans most agreed with. It is because Americans,

featured as typically low-context culture people, tend to send explicit messages to avoid

ambiguity. Later in the interview, Ya Bo gave an example, "I just know my friends need. I don't

need them to ask first, I just do for them. Maybe I do secretly; they don't know I try to help them.

However, in America, I have to speak out if I need help."

High-context and low-context culture also influence the way people consider and handle

conflict. People in high-context cultures expect to communicate in ways that maintain harmony

in their in-groups at the expense of repressing self-feelings and interests. However, people from a

low context culture are less likely to avoid direct and open confrontation because they want to

express and defend themselves (Hall, 1976).

While Peng Ling was responding to the question whether she had encountered any

conflicts with her American friends, she noted, "There are still conflicts due to the cultural

differences. Sometimes when we disagree with each other, they are very direct and I got

offended. They are very direct to disagree with you but Chinese people don't." Another example

given by Xiao Wei, "It is almost becoming a habit of mine to hide my real thoughts because I've

been taught to compromise with others' opinions. I am not good at disagreeing with them so

there is seldom any conflict in between us. For example, if they say to eat out somewhere or

hang out somewhere, they are always the ones to decide. I won't say anything to disagree with

them even if those are not the places I want to go."

In Hall's (1976) view, a high-context culture is one in which people are deeply involved

with each other. A low-context culture is one in which people are highly individualized,

somewhat alienated and there is relatively little involvement with others.

Table 4 also shows that Chinese respondents strongly agreed with statement E, which is

that friends have a high obligation to each other. Chinese people are deeply involved with each

other and there is high cohesiveness between each other. That is why they think they have a high

obligation to their friends, and they expect their friends to be the same way.

This commitment difference was also noticeable in some of the interviews. When Lu Fan

was asked in what ways he hopes friendships with American students would be different, he

answered that he wished his friend could devote more time to him and every time he called his

friend, his friend could come to help him right away. In contrast, Sarah described her Chinese

friends, "They expect you to do everything with them. They knock my door to ask me to do

things together with them. Sometimes I get a little annoyed though." Kate also stated a conflict

she had with one of her Chinese friends, "I became really good friends with her. However, I have

a lot of friends. Sometimes, she thinks that I am choosing others before her but that's not my

intention. I think Chinese's idea of friendship is very different. If they are close with you, they

are really close with you and they expect you to commit a lot."

Moreover, because of the high involvement people have with each other and the high

cohesiveness, people from high-context cultures tend to have a higher commitment to complete

the series of actions in a relationship than people from low-context cultures. One example given

by Lu Fan can explain this concept well. He said, "Americans say that let's hang out but they

never do. They are just being polite. They don't really mean it. However, for Chinese, it's that

we are really going to hang out. Sometimes, I get disappointed by them."

<div align="center">Factors that Enhance Intercultural Friendships</div>

Research question 4 is "What are the factors enhancing the intercultural friendships

between Chinese and American students?" In order to answer it, the researcher identified several

through analyzing the Q-sort interviews of the participants about their intercultural friendship

experiences. These factors are cultural differences, frequent contact, prior cultural experiences,

needs, humor and emphasizing similarities. Each of the factors is explained in detail in the

following section.

Cultural differences

Friendships may begin on the basis of the complementary principle. Too many

similarities may not be helpful. People may be attracted to others who are different from

themselves. It creates a sense of balance in the relationship. Intercultural relationships present

differences that both parties bring to the relationship.

Several participants claimed that cultural differences enhance their intercultural

friendships because they find those differences interesting and exciting, and they have been

drawn together by these. Rather than fearing difference, they are not only open, but eager, to

learn about another culture and to develop relationships with people from this other culture.

Cultural differences are especially important for the initiation of their friendships. As Daniel

explained,

"I was attracted to him because he is so different. He came from a different country with a totally different culture background. I was very curious and wanted to know him more and know about Chinese culture more. We had a lot of things to talk about by exchanging information about each of our cultures. This really helped our friendship at the beginning."

Frequent Contact

The majority of the participants reported that frequent contact increased the likelihood of friendship, and it was an essential factor for their intercultural friendship. Several of them noted that they started their intercultural friendship with someone from the same dorm, class, club or fellowship, which provides them chances of meeting. For example, Xiao Wei explained how she got close with her American friend. She said, "I was very lonely when I first came. I met her one day in the dining hall. Then we found out that we were on the same hall, and so we started to meet each other even more often. We go to the dining hall together and have a lot of dorm activities together. We got so close that we decided to move to the same room. Now she is not only my roommate but also my best friend." What Yi Nuo noted in the interview also supported the importance of frequent contact. She said, "Even though both of us are busy, we try to meet each other regularly once a week. Other time we facebook or text each other a lot, which also helps our friendship."

Prior Cultural Experiences

Respondents also stated that prior experiences in China either short or long enhanced their intercultural friendship process. These experiences prepared them. Therefore, they were more familiar with Chinese culture and were more eager to develop friendships with Chinese students. Sarah stated, "I fell in love with China, Chinese people and Chinese food when I was

there visiting. Now I am here and whenever I see Chinese students, I am extremely excited and want to talk to them."

Needs

Several respondents reported that needs motivate them to initiate and continue their intercultural friendships. They all sense that the intercultural friend was capable of fulfilling his or her practical needs in terms of being a help, a fun person to hang out with, or an interesting person with whom to talk. Some Chinese students indicated that they help their American friends with their math homework which has enhanced their friendships with them. Jimmy described, "He has a lot of interesting and deep thoughts. He is an easy and fun person to talk to and we have had a lot of good talks."

Xiao Wei said, "She helped me a lot, especially when I first got here. She helped me academically and prayed for me a lot. She encouraged me when I was homesick. She also tried to teach me English." Qian Hua also commented, "Both of us are prayer leaders. A lot of times we talk about what's going on with our spiritual life and we keep each other accountable as well."

Humor

Several participants mentioned the importance of humor in their intercultural friendships. Lu Fan said, "A lot of Americans connect with each other with humor. Learn their humor. Even if it's not funny, still laugh. Give people the feeling that you are worthwhile making friends with and you are able to be connected." Phil also responded about the Chinese students, "They have very different kind of humor. Sometimes something that is really funny to me is not really funny to them. This is a little frustrating."

Emphasizing Similarities

Although partners of an intercultural relationship may be attracted to one another because of differences, some similarities must be established for the relationship to grow successfully (Hatfield & Rapson, 1992). In the interviews, the participants emphasized that they connected with their intercultural friends because of their shared similarities such as personalities, interests, religion and values. Through identifying their similarities, participants believed that they were close to their intercultural friends because their intercultural friends could understand them in that particular area.

Most of the participants indicated that common interest is necessary in their intercultural friendships as well. They form friendships with people they get along with and hang out to do things together. It is important for friends to have at least one common interest. Zhi Qiang replied, "We both like to play ping-pong so we do that regularly once a week. Then our friendships has been developed through that." Jon described,

When I meet an American, it's easy for us to find a lot of commonalities such as where we are from, the same hobbies we have and so on. We pick up quicker. We become friends quicker but that doesn't mean becoming better friends. With my Chinese friend, a lot of things are different. My friendship with him is based on personality, based on what defines you as a person, and based on something deeper. Therefore, to give American students advice, I would say that it seems easier to talk to and make friends with Americans. However, we should see past that. Don't think that you have nothing in common with someone from a different culture. It may end up with some deeper friendship.

Li Ru also stated,

I am more satisfied with the friendship with my American friends than with my Chinese

friends. My belief makes the difference. I am a Christian, but most of my Chinese friends

are not. Their ways of thinking are very secular and we have a lot of conflicts. I feel more

comfortable being with my American Christian friends because we have the same belief

and I can feel their love for me.

Usually between intercultural friends, differences could be identified just as much as

similarities. However, according to the participants, they are often not concerned about their

differences, and they choose to emphasize their shared similarities instead. Once they were used

to each other in their daily interactions, they tended to overlook differences. Jennifer said, "I

think I am already unconscious about the cultural differences when I am with my Chinese

friends."

Some participants even emphasized that they did not view the differences between them

and their intercultural friends as a negative influence in their friendship. Instead, they think it is

beneficial for them to compare different points of view with respect to the same issue.

<center>Factors that Hinder Intercultural Friendships</center>

Research question 5 is "What are the factors hindering the intercultural friendships

between Chinese and American students?"

The intercultural experiences described by some of the participants are similar to those

identified by research into close intracultural friendships. There are certain contextual

preconditions such as close residential proximity, shared places of contact and shared activities.

There are certain attitude requirements, such as sharing of interests and providing emotional and

social support when needed. There are also certain behavioral requirements, such as acceptable

behavior, knowledge, and communication skills. However, knowing that these factors are

involved does not help us to predict which Chinese or Americans will develop successful

intercultural friendships. This study indentifies several factors hindering intercultural friendships,

which answers RQ5: "What are the factors hindering the intercultural friendships between

Chinese and American students?"

Self-perceived language competences, face concern of being not proactive enough,

limiting themselves in their ethnic group are the factors from Chinese students which hinder

intercultural friendships. The factors that hinder intercultural friendships by American students

are a lack of familiarity with or interest in Chinese culture and a lack of receptivity and tolerance.

Each of these factors is explained in the following section.

Self-Perceived Language Competence of Chinese Students

During the interviews, several of the Chinese participants mentioned that they are not

confident in using a second language, which is English. This language barrier hinders their

friendships with American students. McCroskey, Burroughs and Marie (2003) argue that when

people speak in a language that is not their first language, they are likely to see themselves as

less competent as a communicator, which also results in higher communication apprehension.

They found that second-language speakers perceive themselves as less communicatively

competent and are less willing to communicate than native language speakers.

One of the Chinese participants Zhi Qiang noted, "I think my English proficiency level is

not high and I am afraid of making mistakes while I am speaking so I am usually a lot quieter

than my American friends when I am with them. It is not good though because it makes them

lose interest in talking with me or hanging out with me." Therefore, if Chinese students should

improve their English language proficiency and if they have a higher self-perceived language

competence, thus their chances of initiating communication and creating friendships with native-language speakers could become higher.

Face concern of Chinese Students

Chinese are sensitive to the judgment of the public due to face concerns; thus, they are less likely to be active in communication in a foreign language with people from another culture. Face refers to social image and social worth that are garnered based on one's performance in an interpersonal context (Choi & Lee, 2002). Ho (1976) in his study stated, face may be lost when a conduct or performance falls below the expectation or when certain vital requirements are not satisfactorily met. He also stated that Chinese attach great importance to face and they are very face conscious in social interactions. Therefore, Chinese people tend to avoid communication with Americans because they are not confident in their English language competence or American culture. They are afraid of making language mistakes or doing something culturally improper in American society. They do not want to embarrass themselves and risk losing face.

Chinese Students Not Being Proactive Enough

In addition to language problems and face concern mentioned in the previous section, culture is another reason that results in Chinese students' not being active enough in taking the initiative to make American friends. Chinese people being from a high-context culture, they have high involvement and cohesiveness with each other. Therefore, they tend to have a high commitment to complete the series of actions. Because of that, they are cautious and even reluctant to start a new relationship with someone. They do not identify others as friends as freely as Americans. Jia Hui described during the interview, "At the beginning, I wasn't very open. I shut myself in the room every day. I didn't make any friends. Then I realized that I

should be more open. As long as you don't dislike an American, there is a great chance to be friends with him or her."

Chinese Students Limiting Themselves in Their Ethnic Group

The majority of Chinese participants reported that they feel more comfortable with friends in the same ethnic group because they share the same social norms and rules, and their expectations of friendships are similar. They often do not feel comfortable communicating with Americans. Therefore, they choose to go out with their Chinese friends who are from the same ethnic group. Ya Bo noted, "We are afraid of facing those awkward moments when sometimes we cannot catch others' conversations or get others' jokes. However, if we go out with a Chinese, it is not going to be a problem. After all, we want to be able to relax when we are with your friends." This kind of group effect is a general rule of human beings, but it limits the opportunity for Chinese students to meet American friends. Furnham and Bochner (1982) suggest in their study that international students in the U.S. are more satisfied with the host country if they are more actively involved with people in the host culture. They should get out of their comfort zone and make more efforts to interaction with Americans.

American Students Lacking of Familiarity and Interests with Chinese Culture

Most of the American participants who were successful in making Chinese friends are either the ones who are familiar with Chinese culture because they have been there or the ones who are interested in Chinese culture. A lot of American students don't have adequate knowledge about China. Chinese participant Peng Ling stated, "She is a very nice person and good friend. The only thing I usually get frustrated with her is that she always thinks I am Japanese, no matter how many time I have told her I am Chinese. I know she doesn't mean to offend me, but I really wish she could have more knowledge about China and Chinese people."

Qian Hua also gave an example about one time he got offended by an American who asked him whether Chinese people live in huts in China. Misconceptions about China due to the inadequacy knowledge can be really detrimental to the relationship.

Some Americans are not interested in a foreign culture, which results in their lack of motivation to seek Chinese friends. Chinese participant Lu Fan stated, "If you don't take the initiative, that's the end because they are not interested in your culture, thus, they don't have the desire to make friends with you. They already have their strong bases and have their circle of friends."

Kudo and Simkon's study shows that the host nation's knowledge of and interest in sojourners' cultures help the intercultural friendship formation. The importance of reciprocity of liking in formatting friendships has been indicated in Berscheid and Walster (1978). In most cases people are attracted to people who like them and are interested in them. Collin and Miller's study indicates that people who believe that they are liked actually ended up being liked more than people who thought they were disliked. Therefore, showing interests in the culture either by Chinese or American students might be a helpful way to initiate friendships.

American Students Lacking Receptivity and Tolerance

Intercultural friendships cannot be formed without receptivity of the host people. As it was mentioned before, in her study Kim (2001) identified the importance of the host's receptivity on cross-cultural adaptation. However, some Chinese students indicated that American students are not always receptive and tolerant. When interviewed, Chinese participant Yi Nuo answered, "Some Americans have little tolerance to other cultures. It is not easy for them to accept the cultural differences. They think their ways of doing things or thinking are the only ones. Whoever different from them must be wrong."

American participant Kate described, "Sometimes the Chinese students' behaviors are considered rude and offensive in American culture, but if you consider their cultural background, you will find out these behaviors are actually understandable. We should realize that there will be some differences instead of expecting them to be like us." Kudo and Simkin (1003) indicated that pleasant attitudes and communication accommodation by host nationals can make intercultural friendship formation easier. Therefore, accepting them and learning to live with these experiences can be one of the keys to successful friendships.

<div style="text-align:center">Conclusion</div>

Due to the cultural differences between China and the United States, such as levels of individualism, power distance, masculinity and context, Chinese and Americans have different notions of friendship. Their expectations and understanding of friendships from their own culture are influential in the intercultural friendships between each other. In addition, factors that enhance the intercultural friendships between Americans and Chinese are identified. Those factors are cultural differences, frequent contact, prior cultural experiences, needs, humor, emphasizing similarities and exploring differences. There are also challenges faced by Chinese and Americans. Elements from Chinese students that impede intercultural friendships are self-perceived language in competence of Chinese students, face concerns of Chinese students, Chinese students' not being proactive enough and Chinese students' limiting themselves in their ethnic group. On the other hand, elements from American students that hinder intercultural friendships are a lack of familiarity with and interest in Chinese culture and a lack of receptivity and tolerance.

Chapter 5 - Recommendations for Future Research and Conclusion

Several limitations in this study should be noted. First, convenience sampling was used to recruit Chinese and American students from a university. Therefore, the samples were not representative of general populations in either country. Future research studies should recruit participants from a wide variety of regions in both China and America.

Second, this current study was conducted in a Christian university. Most of the American participants are Christians. Their Christian belief may have played a role in the process of building intercultural friendships with Chinese students. It might also result in the lack of representativeness of Americans and Chinese. Chinese participant Li Ru was aware of this and mentioned it in the interview, "Because it's a Christian school, American students here are less selfish than usual. They are more considerate and generous. They care more about you."

Third, the participants for this study are Americans who have already managed to make some close Chinese friends and Chinese who have been successful in making close American friends. In other words, only successful intercultural friendships have been examined. This study excluded analysis of intercultural relationship that failed to develop into close friendship and stayed at an acquaintance level. Future studies could look at less successful intercultural friendships to identify how and why intercultural friendships were not able to go any further. For example, studies like this could shed lights on the situations in which individuals are unable develop intercultural friendships.

Another limitation of this study is to generalize a country and culture as a whole. This study was conducted on characterizing all Americans as individualists and all Chinese as collectivists. It is true that belonging to a particular group may mean sharing common values and experiences. However, individuals within a group may also differ. People are different even in

the same country. For example, personal attitudes can be a basis for both initial attraction and continuing development of friendships. An outgoing personality is important for Chinese students or American students to overcoming barriers to friendships as well. Therefore, people from similar cultural groups could also be expected to differ widely in terms of their notions about friendship.

This study did not specify gender type of the intercultural friends of the participants. Cross-sex friendship can be complicated, with ambiguity about the potential romantic nature of the relationship that creates uncertainty. As it was reviewed before, Gudykunst and Nishida (1986) show that perceptions of communication behavior related to opposite-sex versus same-sex relationships are influenced by different cultural orientations to masculinity and femininity. The communication styles of cross-sex friendships are different from same-sex friendships. In his study, Chen (2005) also notes that cross-sex friendships happen in China less often than in Western countries. Future studies could examine cross-gender friendship existing between intercultural friends and analyze how gender impacts intercultural friendship development.

Snowballing sampling strategy was used to find participants in this study. Participants who sorted the Q statements and were interviewed afterwards were people who do have Chinese friends or American friends. However, they are not intercultural friendship dyads. Future studies could choose to recruit intercultural friendship dyads to see whether the problems on one side of dyad perceives to have in their intercultural friendship experiences are the same as the other person in the dyad. Such a study might provide insight into comparing their different expectations from their intercultural friendships and their different ways of perceiving each other as a friend.

Intercultural friendships were examined in the current study. It would be interesting to explore intercultural romantic relationships between Chinese and Americans. Communication scholars could design the study to see how culture impacts their intercultural romantic relationship, their different expectations for it, and the factors that enhance and hinder their intercultural friendships.

In this study American participants were the host nationals and Chinese participants were the internationals. As the saying "Do as the Romans do" goes, internationals are usually supposed to conform to the host internationals' ways of doing thing. For example, English is mostly used in the interactions between international Chinese and host Americans. Therefore, competence in English language is important for Chinese, while competence in Chinese language is not important for Americans when they initiate conversations with each other. However, if a study were conducted in China to look at the friendships between Chinese and American students, the results might be different because in that case, Chinese students would be the host nationals and American students would be the internationals. American and Chinese would act differently and have different expectations and thus face different kind of challenges in their intercultural friendships.

Additionally, it is recommended that communication scholars consider the possibility of applying the results of this study to other Asian cultures. The similarities of Asian cultures have been discussed by previous researchers. For example, Hofestede's (1980, 1991) study reveals that Asian countries in general score high in collectivism and power distance. Most Asian countries are classified as high-context cultures by Hall (1976). Therefore, similar studies should be done about intercultural friendships between students from other Asian countries (such as Korea, Japan) and Americans to see whether the results will be similar with the results found

from this current study, thus to helping Asian international students in general to develop

friendships with people from the host culture. Moreover, communication scholars could even

consider exploring intercultural friendships between any other two countries in the world.

"Intercultural friendship" in this current study refers to friendship between Chinese and

Americans. However, intercultural friendships should not be restricted to "friendships between

people across nations." As long as the partners in a friendship consider each other's cultural

orientation to be different, the friendship could be considered as an intercultural friendship. For

example, future research could examine friendships across ethnic, generation groups, gender,

regions, or classes.

Furthermore, the participants in this study provided data based on their retrospective

memories of their intercultural friendships. It is possible that they could not remember every

detail of a certain experience or that they had a totally different perspective about the experience

when they were interviewed. In order to get more accurate, rich and timely information, future

studies might consider using alternative methods, such as ethnography or diary recording, which

would allow for a longitudinal examination of the participants' friendship experiences. Since it is

time consuming to conduct such longitudinal research, future research could provide incentives

to recruit more volunteers to complete these challenging activities.

Intercultural adaption has a significant impact on intercultural relationships. International

students in the U.S. who adapted to the host culture more are more satisfied toward the host

country and have fewer problems establishing friendships with people from the host country

(Furnham and Bochner, 1982). Lysgaard's (1995) W-curve assumption hypothesized that the

process of adjustment to a different culture is characterized by a series of stages, which are

honeymoon, hostility, critical, recovery and reverse cultural shock. The Chinese participants' in

the current study probably were in different cultural adjustment stages due to the different duration of their staying in the U.S., their various personality types, their previous cultural exposure to Americans and so on. Therefore, it would be interesting to see how cultural adaptation impacts the intercultural friendships between Americans and Chinese.

Finally, even though anonymous questionnaires were used, American participants still might have been reluctant to give perceived unacceptable answers for fear of offending the interviewer who was a Chinese. This could skew the results. Slightly different responses may have been given if the researcher was an American. There were also inevitable subjective biases brought in to the study by the Chinese researcher which would affect the interpretation of the interview data, thus affecting the results of this study.

Conclusion

Due to globalization, people are traveling across cultural boundaries more often than before. Individuals have more contacts with people from different cultural backgrounds. Many international students choose to study at U.S universities and China is one of the leading nations where most of the international students were from. Previous literature shows that friendship research, as it intersects with other cultural contexts, is still in its beginning stage. Therefore, it is important to explore the intercultural friendship experiences of the international students. This paper examined the intercultural friendships between host Americans and a particular group of international Chinese students.

In following research questions were posed: RQ 1: What are Chinese students' concepts of friendship? RQ2: What are American students' concepts of friendship? RQ 3: How are their intercultural friendships influenced by their different concepts of friendship? RQ 4: What are the factors enhancing the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students? RQ 5:

What are the factors hindering the intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students? In order to answer these research questions, this study first attempted to identify the variables or qualities that Chinese and Americans consider important in their friendships in each of their own culture by adopting Q-sort methodology. Then by analyzing the Q-sort interviews about participants' intercultural friendship experiences, the results indicate that long-established expectations of friendship of both Chinese and Americans are challenged while communicating with people from the other culture. Furthermore, the elements that amplify the intercultural friendships between Americans and Chinese were discovered. These elements are: 1) cultural differences are extremely important for the initiation of intercultural friendships; 2) frequent contact increases the likelihood of friendship; 3) prior cultural experiences prepare and enhance intercultural friendships; 4) needs motive the initiation and continuance of intercultural friendships; 5) humor is important in intercultural friendships; 6) similarities are necessities for intercultural friendships to successfully grow. In addition, the challenges American and Chinese are facing in their intercultural friendships were also identified. These challenges are: 1) self-perceived language competence of Chinese students affects the Chinese students' chance of initiating communication with native-language speakers; 2) face concern of Chinese students results in Chinese students' reluctance of being active in communication in a foreign language with people from a foreign culture; 3) Chinese students are not proactive enough due to their high-context culture; 4) Chinese students limit themselves in their ethnic group which reduces the opportunity for them to meet American friends; 5) American students lacking of familiarity and interests with Chinese culture can be detrimental to the friendship; 6) American students lacking receptivity and tolerance makes intercultural friendship formation more difficult.

It is a necessary and worthwhile thing to study intercultural friendships between Chinese and American students at universities because it not only provides institutional and personal benefits but also offers unique opportunities to examine the processes of how intimate relationships between them are formed and developed. Although intercultural friendships might seem challenging in the beginning stages, if the dyad is able to understand cultural influences on perceptions of self and others in the process of friendship and identify the factors that influence the formation and maintenance of intercultural friendships, intercultural friendships can be as strong and last as long as intracultural friendships.

Bibliography

Abubaker, A. (2008). The influence of Chinese core cultural values on the communication

behavior of overseas Chinese students learning English. *Annual Review of Education,*

Communication & Language Sciences, 5105-135.

Adams, R., Blieszner, R., & De Vries, B. (2000). Definitions of friendship in the third age: Age,

gender, and study location effects. *Journal of Aging Studies*, *14*(1), 117.

Akhtar-Danesh, N., Baxter, P., Valaitis, R., Stanyon, W., & Sproul, S. (2009). Nurse faculty

perceptions of simulation use in nursing education. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*,

31(3), 312-329.

Allen, J. L., Long, K. M., Mara, O' M., & Judd, B. B (2003). Verbal and nonverbal orientations

toward communication and the development of intracultural and intercultural

relationships. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 32:129-60.

Arasaratnam, L. A., & Banerjee, S. C. (2007). Ethnocentrism and sensation seeking as variables

that influence intercultural contact-seeking behavior: A path analysis. *Communication*

Research Reports 24(4), 303-310.

Argyle, M., Henderson, M., Bond, M., Iizuka, Y., & Contarello, A. (1986). Cross-cultural

variations in relationship rules. *International Journal of Psychology, 21,* 287-315.

Aronson, J. (1994). A pragmatic view of thematic analysis. *Qualitative Report, 2,* 1.

Babiker, I. E., Cox, J. L., & Miller, P. M. (1980). The measurement of cultural distance

and its relationship to medical consultations, symptomatology and examination

performance of overseas students at Edinburgh university. *Social Psychiatry, 15,*3, 109-

116.

Bahk, C. (1993). Interpersonal perceptions of same-sex and opposite-sex friendships in the

United States and Korea. In A. M. Nicotera & Associates (Eds.), *Interpersonal communication in friend and mate relationships* (pp.79-106). Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press.

Barnett, G. A., & Lee, M. (2002). Intercultural communication. In W. B. Gudykunst & B. Mody (Eds.), *Handbook of international and intercultural communication* (2nd ed., pp. 275–294). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bell. R. R. (1981). Friendships of women and of men. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *5 (3), 402-418*.

Bennett, M. J. (1986). A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 10,* 179-196.

Berg, J. H., & Archer, R. L. (1980). Disclosure or concern: A second look at liking for the norm breaker. *Journal of Personality, 48.* 245-257.

Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1978). *Interpersonal attraction* (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addision-Wesley

Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1991). Self-esteem and attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social* Psychology, 17, 84-91.

Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research* 10(2):141–163.

Bogdan, R., & Bilken, S. (1998). Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Brown, R. (1996). Q methodology and qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research* 6: 561–7.

Brown, R. (1993). A primer on Q- methodology. *Operant Subjectivity*, *16*, 91-138.

Brown, R., & Pirtle, T. (2008). Beliefs of professional and family caregivers about the sexuality

of individuals with intellectual disabilities: examining beliefs using a q-methodology

approach. *Sex Education*, *8*(1), 59-75.

Byrne, D. (1971). *The attraction paradigm.* New York: Academic Press.

Chen, G. M. (1998). *Relationships of the dimensions of intercultural communication competence.*

Paper represented at the annual meeting of the Eastern Communication Association.

Chen, L. (2002). Communication in intercultural relationships. In W. B. Gudykunst & B. Mody

(Eds.), *Handbook of International and Intercultural Communication* (2nd ed., pp. 241–

258). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chen, L. (2005). *Western theory and non-Western practice: friendship dialectics among

chinese*. Conference Paper at International Communication Association, 2005 Annual

Meeting, New York, NY.

Chen, Z. J. (2000). International students' preparation for and adaptation to the American

higher education system: a study of cross-cultural communication. *World Communication,

29*, 25-48.

Cheung, F. M., Cheung, S. F., Leung, K. Ward, C., & Leong, F. (2003). The English version of

the Chinese personality assessment inventory. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 34,

433-452*.

Chinnis, A. S., Summers, D. E., Doerr, C., Paulson, D. J., & Davis, S. M. (2001). Q

methodology—a new way of assessing employee satisfaction. *Journal of Nursing

Administration*, *31*, 252-259.

Chua, E. G., & Gudykunst, W. B. (1987). Conflict resolution styles in low and

high-context cultures. *Communication Research Reports, 4,* 32-37.

Collier, M. J. (1996). Communication competence problematic in ethnic friendships.

   Communication Monographs, 63, 314-336.

Collier, M.J., & Bornman, E. (1999). Core symbols in south African intercultural friendships.

   International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 23, 133-156.

Collins, N. L., Miller, L. C. (1994). Self-Disclosure and liking: a meta-analytic review.

   Psychological Bulletin, 116, 457-475.

Cushman, D., & S. King (1986). The role of communication rules in explaining intergroup

   interaction. In W. Gudykunst (ed.), *Intergroup Communication* (39-50). London: Edward

   Arnold.

Dawar, Niraj, Philip M. Parker, & Lydia J. Price (1996), A cross-cultural study

   of interpersonal information exchange. *JournalofInternationalBusinessStudies*,27(3),

   497-516.

Dennis, K. E. (1986). Q-methodology—relevance and application to nursing research.

   Advances in Nursing Science, *8*, 6-17.

Dsilva, M., & Whyte, L. (1998). Cultural differences in conflict styles: Vietnamese refugees and

   established residents. *Howard Journal of Communications*, *9*(1), 57-68.

Ellison, C. G., & Powers, D. A. (1994). The contact hypothesis and racial attitudes among black

   Americans. *Social Science Quarterly*, *75, 385-400*.

Furnham, A., & Bochner, S. (1982). Social difficulty in a foreign culture: an empirical

   analysis of culture shock. In S. Bochner (Ed.), Cultures in contact (pp. 161-198)

   Oxford:Pergamon.

Gao, G., & Ting-Toomey, S. (1998). *Communicating effectively with the Chinese.*

   Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gareis, E. (1995). *Intercultural Friendship: A Qualitative Study.* Lanham, MD: University Press
    of America.

Gareis, E. (2000a). Intercultural Friendship: Five Case Studies of German Students in The USA.
    Journal of Intercultural Studies, 21(1), 67-91.

Gudykunst, W. B. (1985). An Exploratory Comparison of Close Intracultural and Intercultural
    Friendships. *Communication Quarterly, 33 (4), 270-283*.

Gudykunst, W. B., Matsumoto, Y., Ting-Toomey, S., Nishida, T., Kim, K., & Heyman, S.
    (1996). The influence of cultural individualism-collectivism, self-construals, and
    individual values on communication styles across cultures. *Human Communication
    Research*, 22(4), 510–543.

Gudykunst, W., & Nishida, T. (1986). The influence of cultural variability on perceptions of
    communication behavior associated with relationship terms. *Human Communication
    Research*, *13*(2), 147-166.

Gudykunst, W.B. Yoon, Y.-C., & Nishida, T. (1987). The influence of individualism-
    collectivism on perceptions of communication in ingroup-outgroup relationships.
    Communication Monographs, 54, 295-306.

Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. L. (1992). Similarity and attraction in close relationships.
    Communication Monographs, 59, 209-212.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. New York: Doubleday.

Hall, E. T. (1989). *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time*. New York: Anchor Books.

Ho, D. Y. (1976). On the concept of face. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 81, 867–884.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values.*
    Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (1984) *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values.*

    Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology Series. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (1991). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York:

    McGraw Hill.

Hofstede, G. (2003). *Geert Hofstede.s Cultural Dimensions*. Retrieved on February 12,

    2010, from http://www.geerthofstede.com/index.shtml.

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*. Thousand

    Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Imahori, T. T., & Lanigan, M. L. (1989). Relational model of intercultural communication

    competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *13, 269-286*.

Institute of International Education (2009). *Open Doors report 2009.* Retrieved March 13, 2010,

    from IIE NETWORK: Member Website of the Institute of International Education Site:

    http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/?p=150811

Kim, M. S., & Wilson, S. (1994). A cross-cultural comparison of implicit theories of requesting.

    Communication Monographs, *61, 210-235.*

Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and*

    Cross-Cultural Adaptation. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Koch, B., & Koch, P. (2007, June). Collectivism, individualism, and outgroup cooperation in a

    segmented China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *24*(2), 207-225.

Kudo, K., & Simkin, K. (2003, August). Intercultural friendship formation: the case of

    Japanese students at an Australian university. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *24*(2), 91-

    114.

Kurth, S.B. Friendships and Friendly Relations. In C. McNall (Ed.), *Social Relationships.*

Chicago:Aldine,1970.

Lee, P. W. (2006). Bridging cultures: understanding the construction of relational identity in

intercultural friendship. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research, 35 (1), 3-22.*

Lin, J. C, & Yi, J. K. (1997). Asian international students' adjustment: issues and program

suggestions. *College Student Journal, 31*, 473-480.

Lysgaard, S. (1955). Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fulbright grantees

visiting the united states. *Acta Psychologica, 11, 189-190.*

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (1999). *Intercultural Communication in Contexts*. Mountain

View, California: Mayfield.

Matthews, S. H. (1986). *Friendships through the Life Course: Oral Biographies in Old Age*.

Sage library of social research, v. 161. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

McCroskey, J. C., Burroughs, N. F., & Marie, V. (2003). Relationship of self- perceived

communication competence and communication apprehension with willingness to

communicate: a comparison with first and second language in Macronesia.

Communication Research Reports, 20, 230–239.

McKeown, B., & D. Thomas (1988). *Q methodology*. Sage University Paper series on

Quantitative Application in the Social Sciences, ser. no. 07-066. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Mckinlay, N., Pattison, H. & Gross, H. (1996) An exploratory investigation of the effects of a

cultural orientation programme on the psychological well-being of international

university students. *Higher Education*, 31, pp. 379–395.

Merkin, R. (2005). The influence of masculinity-femininity on cross-cultural facework. *Journal

of Intercultural Communication Research*, *34*(3/4), 267-289.

Mintu-Wimsatt, A., & Gassenheimer, J. (2000). The moderating effects of cultural context in buyer-seller negotiation. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *20*(1), 1-9.

Mortenson, S. T. (2005). Toward communication values in friendship: self-construal and mediated differences in sex and culture. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research, 34,* 2, 88-107.

Osbeck, L. M., & Moghaddam, F. M. (1997). Similarity and attraction among majority and minority groups in a multicultural context. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 21, *113-123.*

Papworth, M., & Walker, L. (2008). The needs of primary care mental health service users: a Q-sort study. *Mental Health in Family Medicine*, *5*(4), 203-212.

Pornpitakpan, C., & Francis, J. (2001). The effect of cultural differences, source expertise, and argument strength on persuasion: an experiment with Canadians and Thais. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *13*(1), 77-101.

Rubin, Z. (1975). Disclosing oneself to a stranger: reciprocity and its limits. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 11, 233-260.*

Searle, W., & Ward, C. (1990). The prediction of psychological and socio-cultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 14*, 449-464.

Shinebourne, P., & Adams, M. (2007). Therapists' understandings and experiences of working with clients with problems of addiction: A pilot study using Q-methodology. *Counselling & Psychotherapy Research*, *7*(4), 211-219.

Sias, P. M., Drzewiecka, J. A., Meares, M., Bent, R., Konomi, Y., Ortega, M., & White, C. (2008). Intercultural friendship development. *Communication Reports, 21(1), 1-13.*

Stephenson, W. (1953). *The study of behavior: q-technique and its methodology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Stephen, T.D. 1980. Q-Methodology in communication research. *Communication Quarterly* 33: 193–208.

Triandis, H. C. (1994). *Culture and Social Behavior.* NewYork: McGraw-Hill.

Triandis, Harry C., Christopher McCusker, & C. Harry Hui. Multimethod probes of individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59.5 (1990): 1006-1020.

Trice, A. & Elliot, J. (1993) Japanese students n America: college friendship patterns. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 20(3), pp. 262–264.

Ueltschy, L., Ueltschy, M., & Fachinelli, A. (2007). The impact of culture on the generation of trust in global supply chain relationships. *Marketing Management Journal*, *17*(1), 15-26.

Wright, P. H. (1984). Self-Referent motivation and the intrinsic quality of friendship. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 1, 115–130.

Ying, Y. (2002). Formation of cross-cultural relationships of Taiwanese international students in the United States. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30(1), 45-55*.

Yum, J. O. (1988) The impact of Confucianism on interpersonal relationships and communication patterns In East Asia. *Communication Monographs* 55: 374-388.

Zhang, N., & Rentz, A. L. (1996). Intercultural adaptation among graduate students from the People's Republic of China. *College Student Journal, 30, 321-329*.

Zhang, S. Y., & Merolla, A. J. (2007). A group project on communication and intercultural friendship. *Communication Teacher, 2 (1), 16-20.*

Zhang, Y. (2009). Different uses of silence both in high-context and low-context cultures.

(English). *Sino-US English Teaching*, *6*(12), 42-46.

Zimmermann, S. (1995) Perceptions of intercultural communication competence and

international student adaptation to an American campus. *Communication Education*, 44,

pp. 321–335.

Volet, S. & Ang, G. (1998) Culturally mixed groups on international campuses: an opportunity

for inter-cultural learning. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 17(1), pp. 5–23.

Appendix A

Interview Questions for Developing Q-sort Statements

1. How do you define friendship?

2. What do you think is the definition of friendship in your culture?

3. What are the most important friendship qualities in your culture?

4. What considerations are important in developing friendships in your culture?

5. What kind of person will you call or not call a friend?

6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B

Pseudonyms of the Participants

Chinese Participant Pseudonyms	American Participant Pseudonyms
Bing Bing	Ben
Lu Fan	Sarah
Yi Nuo	Alissa
Ya Bo	Mike
Peng Ling	Phil
Xiao Wei	Jennifer
Qian Hua	Jon
Li Ru	Kate
Zhi Qiang	Jimmy
Jia Hui	Daniel

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. Why do you most strongly agree with those five statements?

2. Why do you most strongly disagree with those five statements?

    (The following questions are based on the fact that the participants have intercultural

    friends.)

3. How content are you with this friendship with your Chinese/American friends?

4. Have you encountered any conflicts with your Chinese/American friends?

5. What are some of the factors that enhance your friendship with Chinese/Americans?

6. What are some of the factors the hinder your friendship with Chinese/Americans?

7. In what ways are your friendships with Chinese/Americans different from your friendship

    with Americans/Chinese?

8. If you were asked to give advice to American/Chinese students about how to make

    friends with Chinese/American students, what do you think your advice would be?

9. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that I did not mention in this

    interview?

Appendix D

Q-Sort 问卷

说明

请先把这 30 个陈述分为 3 类：你很同意的，比较同意的，不是太同意的。每一类都应该有 10 个陈述。然后你把每一类里面的 10 个陈述从 1 到 10 排列，1 代表你最同意，10 代表你最不同意的。你把这些三类里面的陈述都排列好之后，请把结果按 1 到 30 转填在下面的问卷。谢谢你的参与！

_____朋友应该很依赖对方。
_____朋友应该相处得很好。
_____朋友应该能够互相干涉彼此生活的每个方面。
_____朋友应该能够为了彼此牺牲自己的利益。
_____朋友应该对彼此有义务。
_____朋友应该花很多时间在一起。
_____朋友应该能够分享很多隐私的事情包括家里的问题。
_____朋友应该很相似。
_____朋友应该和自己的社会地位和背景差不多。
_____朋友应该和自己受教育水平差不多。
_____朋友应该年龄差不多。
_____跟自己同性的人交朋友比跟异性交朋友更容易。
_____友情可以暂时的。
_____朋友应该能够原谅对方。
_____朋友应该接受彼此的一切。
_____朋友应该是要持续一辈子的。
_____朋友应该对彼此很直接。
_____朋友应该彼此尊重对方。
_____朋友应该有相同的兴趣爱好。
_____朋友应该总是彼此的支持。
_____朋友应该是彼此生命的一部分。
_____朋友应该彼此信任对方。
_____朋友应该能能够给我帮忙。
_____朋友之间的不同点能促进友谊。
_____朋友应该有一样的信仰。
_____朋友应该是彼此在一起能玩得愉快的人。
_____朋友可以是家庭成员。
_____朋友应该是我家人能够接受和喜欢的人。
_____有时候我的利益比朋友的利益更重要。
_____朋友可以不同意彼此的意见。