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Influence of Chinese Culture on Intercultural Communication of Chinese Immigrants in Sweden

Abstract:

This paper discusses the influence of Chinese culture on intercultural communication of Chinese immigrants in Sweden. It is based on a survey study as well as interview studies of the Chinese who have been granted permanent residence status by the Swedish government. When the Chinese immigrants initially live in Sweden, which is culturally different, the cultural factors that influence their intercultural communication with Swedes belong to the outer layer of culture, i.e. different languages, food, buildings, art, etc. When they are trying to surmount the difficulties, especially that of language, the middle layer of culture, i.e. Chinese norms and values are still with them, but are gradually changing. The acquisition of Swedish language and the acceptance of Swedish values have made the intercultural communication between Chinese immigrants and Swedes much smoother. However, the core of culture, i.e. the Chinese immigrants' assumption about their existence is not easily changed, although both Chinese culture and Swedish culture are regarded as feminine ones and there are many similarities between them. The paper concludes that only when the influence of the core of Chinese culture on intercultural communication of Chinese immigrants disappears can the Chinese immigrants be really acculturated. This acculturation gives Chinese immigrants both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, their acculturation brings them more opportunities to survive and to blend into a new country. On the other hand, the acculturation is an unfortunate one to them, because they have become acculturated at the cost of losing their own culture and they often feel frustrated and uncomfortable when they go back to China to work or even to live for a short time.

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