East Meets West: Bridging Two Languages, Cultures and Educational Arenas

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The Institute for International Education (2007) reports that “over the past decade, the number of U.S. students studying abroad has more than doubled” yet, at the same time, finally, after a 3-year decline in international student enrollments, U.S. graduate schools are experiencing an increase (Bollag, 2006, A45). This is good news, indeed, as expressed by the keynote speaker at a recent conference plenary session, “International students have become a hot global commodity. Governments and institutions of higher education worldwide have begun putting in place policies and programs to draw the very brightest international students” (Pandit, 2007, p.156). How can this be accomplished? Specifically, how can these students be best identified and recruited? How can their entry as *sojourners*, that is “…people who visit or reside temporarily in another country” (Chaney & Martin, p. 63) be facilitated? How can their adjustment to their new host country be made as seamlessly as possible to ensure their successful stay? What challenges does this population meet in their new environment, on and off-campus? Finally, how can the domestic student population at the host country’s post-secondary institutions benefit from interacting with these academic sojourners in the U.S.? These were some of the underlying questions that inspired the authors to conduct this research study.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the personal experiences of six Korean teacher-scholars in an effort to discover how they perceived their new learning and living environments in the U.S. and to explore the challenges they met, and the strategies they employed to adjust to and manage their new living and learning situations. A qualitative group interview methodology was used in the collection of data for this research study and a review of relevant published literature on the topic was conducted.

Significance of the Study

Whereby there exists a corpus of literature that has well documented the experiences that American students have and the benefits they glean from their living/study abroad sojourns (Douglas & Jones-Rikkers, 2001; Kiely & Nielson, 2003; Sowa, 2002), there is a paucity of published research chronicling these same experiences that international students have. There are little data, in fact, reporting the experiences of international teacher-scholars in their travels to host countries, and in particular, to the United States. Thus, it is hoped by the researchers, that the results of this present study will serve as a resource for others committed to the goals of internationalization in U.S. higher education.

Limitations of the Study

There are several inherent limitations to this study. There were only 6 participants, 5 females and 1 male. All were seasoned teacher-scholars from the same country and graduate degree-seeking program, who were interviewed in a semi-structured group setting, on one afternoon, using one set of interview
questions. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to a greater population, but, due to the rich nature of qualitative inquiry, the results may still add to the relevant literature on the focus of the present study.

Research Setting and Background

This paper was written in order to document the personal journey of six teacher-scholars from South Korea and chronicles their rationale for selecting a specific master’s program at a particular U.S. university; the challenges that they encountered during their stay in the host country; the support systems that they identified and utilized; and the new information that they will take back with them upon their return home, and ultimately implement in their classrooms upon their return to Korea. Their comments and perspectives will be reported under Results, which follows a brief review of pertinent literature and the Methodology section of this manuscript. Discussion and Implications follow Findings.

Issues Related to International Students Who Study Abroad:

What the Literature Says

Recruitment of International Students to the U.S.

In the aftermath of 9-11, when “the workload of the international student service professionals significantly increased in order to comply with the new federal policy and regulations, many [institutions] did not receive additional human resources” (Starobin, 2006, p. 66) to deal with international students then on their campuses and to concurrently continue recruitment efforts for new students. Thus, given these constraints, it stands to reason that successful recruitment of the best and the brightest international students to U.S. post-
secondary institutions along with the facilitation of their successful transition from their home countries to a new cultural and linguistic environment are critical issues that need to be researched. Following 9-11, there have been numerous changes which have impacted the ease with which international scholars can gain access to higher education studies in the U.S. (Starobin, 2006).

Homeland Security and SEVIS

With the creation of DHS (the Department of Homeland Security), and the implementation of SEVIS (the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System), which is a “Web-based data collection and reporting system that monitors how colleges and universities comply with federal regulations” (Starobin, 2006, p.63), international students have been more carefully scrutinized prior to being allowed access to non-immigrant student visas. As a result, the number of international students enrolled in U.S. higher education understandably dropped during the academic year 2003-2004, according to data collected by the Institute of International Education (Chin & Gallup-Black, 2004). Why is a decline in international student visitors significant and why should the U.S. strive to attract students from abroad?

The Importance of International Students on U.S. Campuses

Major findings from a study called the International Initiatives Program (sponsored by the American Council on Education, 2001), reports that Knowledge about international issues is important in our ever more global society, especially for future generations….Colleges and universities should provide students with international skills and
knowledge…. [and] International education is an important consideration when selecting a college or university. (¶ 1;3;4)

What a better way to ensure the above than by having a globally and culturally-diverse student body matriculating in U.S. higher education institutions?

Some reasons for recruiting talented international students to the States include

…the advancement of scientific research and technology [which has heretofore relied on]…foreign-born talent;….the feeling that international students [upon their return to their native countries]….will become excellent ambassadors of American culture [which, as an extension]….is an important step in enhancing the image of the U.S. overseas and…[impacts]…U.S. security. (Pandit, 2007, p. 156)

Other reasons for attracting these students to the U.S. include the desire of American research universities to enhance their “global competency” (Pandit, 2007, p. 156), by establishing research linkages with higher education institutions in other countries. Thus, having a robust population of international scholars serves to benefit the countries of the visiting scholars and the host countries. However, in order to ensure that these international academic sojourners experience success in their new environment, certain factors must be addressed.

Preparing International Students for Success in Higher Education

Despite having diverse linguistic, cultural, political and social backgrounds, international students may share certain characteristics (Thomas &
They are a special population in transition, separated from their family, cultural, and social support networks, who are visiting a host country for a relatively short period of time, and in the U.S. to pursue higher education which will advance them in their careers upon return home (Sakurako, 2000). Due to the fact that they are essentially out of their familiar home environment, they must, by necessity, learn to establish an entirely new personal support system while adjusting to a new way of life, often to a new language and a new culture in a country other than their own.

**Cross-Cultural Adjustment Theories**

There is a rich variety of theories concerning the stages and types of cultural adjustment (Giordano & Giordano, 1976; Goldlust & Richmond, 1974; Hoffman, Dana, & Bolton, 1985; Knight & Kagan, 1977; Mendoza & Martinez, 1981; Olmedo, 1979; Rosenthal & Hrynevich, 1985) that international visitors tend to experience in a new country. These research theories deal with various issues which may impede the acculturation process and may include, but are not restricted to the following: proficiency in the host country’s main language; length of residency in the new country; personal, social and ethnic values; and psychological readiness. Most visitors or sojourners to a new host country, however, do tend to experience a phenomenon known as *cultural shock* which is “the trauma you experience when you move into a culture different from your home culture” (Chaney & Martin, 2000, p. 62).
According to the aforementioned researchers, there are five stages: “excitement or initial euphoria, crisis or disenchantment, adjustment, acceptance, and reentry” (p. 65).

Essentially, the initial excitement or first stage occurs for a brief period of time and may last from a few days to a few months. During this stage, all new experiences are wonderful and the sojourner is in a state of euphoria. The second stage, the disenchantment or crisis period, also called the “honeymoon” (Chaney & Martin, 2000, p. 65), has ended and the visitor’s level of excitement may turn into disillusionment/disappointment with the new environment as exponentially more differences between the home and host country’s culture are encountered. Included in this period are challenges dealing with language, customs, foods, transportation, and general living conditions. during which the visitor may find the new culture a “constant source of irritation” (p. 66). Some deal with the new culture in a confrontational way by making “disparaging remarks about the culture” and exercising a “‘fight back’ technique” (Chaney & Martin, p. 66). Still others, report the researchers, decide to return home and retreat physically; others may remove themselves psychologically. Not uncommon during this stage is for the newcomer to “refuse to learn the language” (p. 66) and possibly develop unfavorable behaviors (i.e., drinking or drug use) to cope with elements in the new culture. “Some individuals [however]…actually deny differences and will speak in glowing terms” (p. 66) about the culture encountered in the new culture.
The third stage, also known as the adjustment phase, is a time during which the sojourner starts to actually embrace the new culture and learns to make behavioral adjustments to it. He/she may “see humor in situations,” which were previously a source of irritation, and “realize that a change in attitude toward the host culture will make the stay abroad more rewarding” (Chaney & Martin, 2000, p. 66).

The acceptance or adaptation phase, the fourth stage, is a time during which all is well with the world and the international visitor learns the language, and may adopt and regale in the host country’s new customs.
The fifth and final state is reentry shock, and “is experienced upon returning to the home country” (Chaney & Martin, 2000, p. 66) when the sojourner returns to his/her home country and experience the same stages as initial cultural shock.

Methodology

Participants

In the U.S., the state of Tennessee is ranked in 27th place for its number of international students (5,995 in 2005/2006), and UT (The University of Tennessee, Knoxville), and the home institution of the researchers, holds first place in the state for its enrollment (1,052 in 2005/2006) of this population, according to Open Doors 2006 data, released in November 13, 2006 (Institute of International Education, 2007). In the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences, there has been a steady increase over the years in the population of international scholars (from Asian countries), who have chosen to study in the Department of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education, and pursue a master’s
degree in Teacher Education, with a concentration in Foreign Languages and English as a Second Language (FL/ESL) Education.

Participants in the present study consisted of 6 South Korean teacher-scholars whose identities will remain confidential in this paper by the use of pseudonyms personally selected by each scholar. One participant (Sue) matriculated at The University of Tennessee with her own personal financial resources. The other 5 participants (Patty, Kristen, Lydia, Cat and Larry) are recipients of a national competitive fellowship in South Korea and were granted a 2-year fellowship from their government’s Ministry of Education to pursue a master’s degree at UT with an ESL Education focus. Four of the 6 participants (Patty, Cat, Sue and Larry) completed their 2-year sojourn and earned their M.S. in the summer of 2007, and the remaining 2 scholars (Kristen and Lydia) will complete their degrees in the summer of 2008. Five of the 6 participants are female and all but 1 participant (Sue) had children living in the states with them while studying at UT. In addition, 5 of the 6 participants (all but Sue) are here in the U.S. without their spouses, who remained in Korea.

All of the teacher-scholars have a wealth of teaching experiences in their home countries. Cat taught 10 different subjects including English in elementary schools for 15 years; Patty taught on the same level for 20 years, including teaching English for 9 of those years. Kristen taught middle school English for more than 21 years, while Sue taught English grammar, reading and conversation to first and second year university students for 8 years. Finally,
Lydia and Larry taught English (as a Foreign Language) for 10 and 18 years, respectively on the high school level.

Due to their immediate involvement in the academic program area of one of the study’s researchers, it was easy to recruit the six teacher-scholars for participation in the present research.

Research Focus Objectives

The interview protocol (see Appendix A) was developed based on the following research objectives:

*To have Korean teacher-scholars share:*

- their perceptions of their past and present lives.
- their experiences as newcomers to the U.S.
- their experiences as graduate students in the U.S., and,
- their ideas regarding how they may implement what they learned in their graduate programs back home in Korea.

Procedures

After developing a list of research questions for the study, constructing the protocol for the qualitative focus group, and identifying its potential participants, permission to conduct the research was requested by and granted to the researchers from UT’s committee for the Review of Research Involving Human Subjects. The questions to be used in the group interview were then Emailed to the 6 participants 1 week ahead of the actual interview date to ensure that all the non-native-English speaking interviewees would have time to prepare for the group interview. Even though all the participants have a superior level of English proficiency (ACTFL, 2007), the highest level on this scale, the researchers felt
that allowing the participants to view the interview protocol ahead of time would yield more valid results than if the interview were conducted without the teacher-scholars being able to collect their thoughts and organize their responses---in English, which is a second language for all of them.

The interview room was a seminar-style, private conference room in the College of Education, and the participants gathered a few minutes ahead of the scheduled commencement of the interview in order to get settled-in and feel comfortable. After the audio-cassette tape recorder was tested and the omnidirectional mike adjusted, phase one of the interview began and continued, uninterrupted for approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes. The group then moved to a second room following a brief break, for phase two. Since one of the interviewees (Patty) had to leave to pick up a young child from school, the remaining questions on the interview protocol were asked of her so that she would have the opportunity to complete all of the questions. After Patty left the room, the researcher resumed asking questions on the interview protocol of the remaining 5 teacher-scholars, at the place where the group had previously left off prior to Patty’s departure. The completion of phase two of the group interview lasted approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Data Analysis

The tapes recorded during the focus interview were duplicated and the original set was stored and locked in a file cabinet in the interviewer’s office, and the second set was given to transcribers who typed the contents of the tapes and subsequently gave a hard and soft copy to the researchers for analysis. The
transcribed interview was then analyzed qualitatively by one of the researchers to identify commonalities and themes.

Findings

The 6 Korean teacher-scholar graduate students participating in the group interview articulated a variety of feelings and ideas about the process of being an international student at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee. They described critical resources associated with their housing and personal affairs and others that were essential to their academic work. Concurrently, they defined challenges they encountered, both personally and academically. The students could identify specific ways in which they had changed, the memories they had created while engaging in international study, and advice they have for future international students.

The data are presented below in two formats. First are the findings organized into 6 themes found within the data. Second are 5 guiding principles that reflect broader ideas and concepts that cut across the themes.

Themes

A total of 6 themes emerged from the data. Each of these themes is listed and described below. Supporting quotes from the Korean students are provided for each theme.

Program Selection Criteria

The students identified the criteria they used in selecting The University of Tennessee as their destination for international study. They mentioned the nature of the academic program as one that emphasized practicality for the practicing
classroom teacher and offered a good balance between theory and practice. They identified the sources of this information as from personal recommendations from friends and acquaintances as well as program descriptions found on the web. Several mentioned the fact that they knew people living in Knoxville or had relatives already living in the community. Weather was another factor mentioned several times. The following quote from Cat provides a nice summary of participant perspectives regarding the selection of the program.

Cat: While I was searching for a university to apply to, I found the UT website where a teacher had posted an article about UT and I became interested. Another reason was one of my previous teachers said that UT had a very practical program especially good for elementary teachers. Another reason I came is because of the living conditions and weather.

Useful Resources

Websites were a consistent resource for the students. They relied heavily on the UT Housing website as well as the Korean Student Association website before and after they arrived. Several relied on critical people with whom they were already acquainted who were already in the community or people who had lived in the community in the past and were now back in Korea. They identified the church as a strong resource that they relied upon. Some also mentioned the help they received from strangers in the community, including neighbors and other Good Samaritans they encountered in the community. Resources on-campus that were critical included professors, the International House, the American host family assigned to them by the International House, major language partners that were assigned to them in a class, classmates, and the UT website. The participants also mentioned opportunities to visit ESL classes in
metropolitan area schools as a resource for their use in developing their own knowledge and understanding of second language instruction. The selected quotes below reflect the various ways in which they relied on these resources, ranging from the selection of schools for their own children to attend, to sorting out housing matters, to working out their academic affairs.

Cat: Relied on Kristen who gave me all the info for schools.

Lydia: Friend gave me information and schools were located close to apartment.

Patty: When I moved to a private apartment, some neighbors approached me to offer help. I was impressed.

Kristen: I got so much help from friends that my transition was easier. Even my church helped me so much spiritually.

Unidentified: The professors are so kind. They answer questions and repeat them again and again—not just English but computer questions.

Patty: The International House match up international students with American families, which helped me a lot. I had an American host family here and they have made the transition easier.

Kristen:. . .The professors are really nice and supportive and they are really willing to help us. It seems that the professors are considerate of the ESL students and the English language barriers and are really trying to help us.

Challenges

The interview participants described the challenges that they experienced while engaged in international study. Some of these challenges were temporary and transitional in nature, while others were more persistent. Some were an inevitable part of moving to a new location, such as needing to learn one’s way around town, while others included unanticipated cultural adjustments, such as the unexpected addition of taxes to the cost of a purchase or the expectation of
tipping in restaurants. Some relate exclusively to their personal affairs while others were just associated with their academic work.

**Personal Challenges**

Specific challenges mentioned by the participants included the fact that the housing provided by The University of Tennessee was inadequate and required relocating after the initial move into university housing. They found policies about car repair and other services confusing, time consuming and costly. Phrases such as *cash back* held different meanings. They had to accept an emotional dependence on others that had not been necessary in Korea. They mentioned encountering rude clerks, having to pump their own gas, small signs and difficulty understanding directions and reading maps. The lack of public transportation was also a challenge for them. For those with children in school, they found it challenging to complete shopping and cooking. The children experienced trouble with some teachers and making friends in the US public schools. The lunches provided by the schools were not up to the standard they expected and were accustomed to in Korea. The following quotes from the group interview provide documentation of these findings.

**Kristen:** I was shocked because apartment did not look like photo. I came without my husband and it was difficult to hang things, etc. I had to replace run-down furniture and ask maintenance to do things. It was difficult for me.

**Lydia:** Reading directions and getting lost was the biggest problem to me.

**Lydia:** I am very independent in Korea but became emotionally dependent on other people here.

**Sue:** In Korea there is no tipping—it is already included. Also, Americans charge more for car repairs and service. All extra services are free in Korea and included in the retail price such as cars. Here everything is charged separately.
Lydia: Street signs are too small and it took a long time to find my way around.

Sue: Grocery shopping and self-checkout counters were challenging. The Korean ‘cash back’ system means something entirely different than the U.S. The pumps at gas stations are all different and are very nerve wracking. First semester fees were a challenge.

Cat: No big trouble but personal challenges had to do with my children. My son and daughter had trouble with schools and teachers and making friends. School lunches were not up to standard.

Lydia: I had to give my children a ride everywhere rather than the easy use of public transportation in Korea.

Academic Challenges

Challenges associated with their academic lives included making arrangements for the payment of first semester fees. They had to make adjustments when changes were made to the timetable after their schedules were already set. They had to learn how to use the Vol Card (a campus-specific debit card available to all registered UT students) for on-campus expenses. Within their classes they were challenged to keep up with discussions by “fast-speaking Americans” as well as understanding speakers with southern accents. They also mentioned the challenge of reading textbooks and searching for publications in the library. At the beginning of their studies they had no American friends with whom to create a social network. The quotes below provide specific illustrations of these challenges.

Lydia: I could not understand Southerners.

Sue: Searching for published articles in the library was hard. At the first of the semester, I had no American friends for a social network.

Larry: Had the same personal challenges such as discussions, fast-speaking students. Another thing—when I speak English to Americans they think I can understand everything they say back but that is not true.
Memories

The participants reported that they have many memories associated with their international study in the U.S. They mentioned special events, such as holidays and nice dinners prepared by friends. The unique international experiences they had at both their churches and in their student housing arrangements broadened their experience far beyond U.S. culture as they became friends with persons from around the globe. They also mentioned travel to many other states. Experiences studying have also produced good memories as has time with their host families. Some mentioned that they had been able to spend more time with their own children here. Below are supporting quotes for this theme.

Lydia: I would like to add something else. I felt a little bit lonely staying here. Even though there are a lot of people around me, it is quite different from Korea. I was busy there. But even though I am busy here, everything was up to me. I felt very lonely so I started to attend ESL at church. There I started to meet people from other countries. I made a lot of friends from China, even India and Africa. Now I feel I am internationalized. This has been a big benefit for coming to America. In Korea I cannot have those kinds of experience, but here I can meet everybody from other countries. Americans stay here but every country comes to America. I really like that experience.

Lydia: I have visited 21 states. I spent a lot of money, but I don’t think it was wasted. We visited lots of cities because my husband is a teacher and most of the time we visited historical places. We learned a lot—how America became a country and how people react to certain things. Another good experience is that I have made a lot of church friends. They gave me unconditional love and have helped me emotionally and spiritually. We email and I ask them to pray for me. They invite me to their house for dinner and to their events. I think Knoxville is a spiritual city and it has been a very good experience to me.

Lydia: When I was in Korea I was always busy. I went to work at 7:00 in the morning and came home sometimes at 11:00 at night. Once my daughter said to me, “Mommy, we only see you on Sunday.” During the week days, they did not see me. When I came home, my daughter was already sleeping. This year, I
have more time with my kids and my husband. I realize how I did not know my kids or my family. I now know their habits and the kinds of things they like and want to do. This is one of the most precious memories.

Personal Change

The 6 participants in the study noted how they had changed in several ways during their sojourn in the U.S. Most spoke of their improved skills in writing, reading and understanding spoken English. Many realized that their English speaking skills were not as strong as they thought they were before coming to the U.S. They mentioned specific academic content that they had learned, including research methodology, teaching methodologies, and computer technology. One noted that she had developed a self-awareness of teaching style and the ability to critique her own teaching based on methods she observed in use by U.S. teachers. They mentioned changing attitudes toward Americans.

Patty: I have learned a lot, for example research methodology, quantitative research. I can use it when I go back to Korea and do research by myself. Also, teaching methodology is practical and hands-on things. I learned content based, theme based, and task based. I can integrate all these things to make my own teaching method and apply them in the classroom.

Lydia: Before coming here I actually have a lot of foreign friends at church and they were around and were ready to listen to me. I thought my English was really good. I came here and realized my English needed to improve a lot. I am still working on it, but I think my English has improved a lot.

Cat: My English has improved a lot but I still have a problem with my speaking ability. When I first came here I couldn’t speak very well. But, whenever Americans understood me, I was satisfied. But the more I improved, the worse I felt about my mistakes when I speak. I think it has to do with my anxiety. It is very difficult to overcome those feelings. One of my goals is to overcome these negative feelings.

Larry: In my case, my speaking, writing, reading and listening skills have all improved quite a bit. In America I have to write, I have to speak, I have to read, I have to listen.
Kristen: I was really excited to study in the U.S. At first, the classroom was quite different from Korea. Many students showed a very relaxed behavior. Students put their legs on the table, ate in the classroom. I was really shocked at first, but now I am accustomed to it.

Sue: I can say three things. AT UT, I learned how to accommodate students’ needs differently. For instance, in one class there are students from low level to high level. Before studying here I just tried to focus on the average level. But here I learned how to accommodate slow learners and also high performing students. I learned manageability. And I like that idea. I learned to give students lots of flexibility to follow their own interest. Choose some article that they really want to read.

Sue: I learned how to make lesson plans for my students and not just to use one textbook. I published a textbook, so I learned how to make lesson plans and I learned a lot of technology. Before I came here I didn't know PowerPoint. I am computer illiterate. But now I feel more confident about computers. All this is new information to me. I like all the individual activities. I learned a lot.

Sue: I have been lucky to study here because I met wonderful classmates and professors. I heard lots of bad comments about American students by a senior colleague who studied abroad. They said that Americans treat international students like they are dumb or stupid. If internationals did not participate in class that much, they think we are not very intelligent. But here, the atmosphere was very caring and I liked that. Meeting my host family was also very special to me.

Unidentified: The people in Knoxville are really friendly and nice. I changed my opinion about American people while I was here. I met so many nice people. My attitude toward Americans has totally changed and the program is really good.

Patty: I have learned a lot—research methodology, quantitative research. I can use it when I go back to Korea and do research by myself. Also, teaching methodology is practical and hands-on things. I learned content-based, theme-based, and task-based. I can integrate all these things to make my own teaching method and apply them in the classroom.

Lydia: I learned a lot from professors. I have been a teacher for a long time. Reflecting on my experiences as a teacher, I realized that I was very authoritative and perhaps very boring. Most of the time I think that I re-read everything. Now I will follow the example of my professors when I go back to Korea and will try to approach my students like the professors do here. I like the attitude that professors approach students first and not students first approach professors.
Advice for Future Scholars from Abroad

When asked what advice they had for future international students, the study participants focused equally on relationships and attitude. They recommended being happy, being active, being positive and being brave. They suggested volunteering, interacting more with local people and being less hesitant to speak.

*Patty: What you get is totally in your attitude. Be active, positive, brave to try new adventures. Try as many new experiences as you can. Speak English as much as you can. Be happy while [you are] here.*

*Unidentified: I like to say to the future visiting scholars—make friends with the local people and then take opportunities to interact with them.*

*Kristen: I volunteered so many times. It is required for my younger daughter because she is in kindergarten. I met so many people and learned how children behave there and how teachers treat the children here. It was a very good experience.*

*Cat: I would like to tell them to be more confident in their English abilities. One of the main goals is to improve their English ability. Koreans think that they are not as good at speaking English, but I observed that other international students are not as good as we expected. They also made mistakes.*

*Patty: What you get is totally in your attitude. Be active, positive brave to try new adventures. Try as many new experiences as you can. Speak English as much as you can. Be happy while [you are] here.*

Guiding Principles Derived from the Findings:

Discussion

In general, the themes identified above and the guiding principles (below), derived from the findings of the data analysis, appear to corroborate the published literature on the topic.
The match between the teacher-scholar-students’ interests and goals and the selected program is a key to satisfaction with the program. *This is essential for successful recruitment efforts by U.S. higher education institutions.*

There must be attention provided to both personal and academic matters in order for the international student to succeed in academic matters. *This is both a recruitment and a retention tool.*

Previous connections create a powerful link for new international students coming into a community. *This principle and the one above ensure a successful post-secondary academic experience.*

Personal guidance and assistance is needed in matters ranging from car repair to directions from one location to another to planning course schedules. *This is a testimony to the Chaney and Martin (2000) cultural adjustment model.*

Interest in the international student and sensitivity to his or her perspectives as demonstrated by both professors and classmates enhances the learning experience for these students. *This guideline, when followed, can attract potential students, assist in their successful matriculation and retention in both a new academic and cultural environment, and serve as a conduit to support linkages for recruiting new students.*

**Implications**

There are many implications that can be drawn from this study and include the following:
Benefits to the University and Community From Hosting International Scholars

There are numerous positive outcomes associated with the invitation to campus and the hosting of scholars from universities around the world. In particular, the opportunity to learn from one another the cultural underpinnings of each culture's educational programs and how one goes about preparing students for success in the global economy is of great import in this era of internationalization.

Learning about ideas and educational philosophies from international partners informs both sides about how one goes about the preparation of educators (i.e., teachers and administrators).

The Exposure of Domestic Students to Their International Peers

Perhaps the most exiting and important activity that underlies educational partnerships between overseas institutions of higher learning is the opportunity to expose students to each other and their philosophies vis-à-vis culture, society and education.

All those involved in the educational arena much to learn from each other and the exposure to people from other countries around the world aids in expanding global understanding, and ultimately serves as a conduit to attaining *global competency*.

In addition to the above, there are also discipline-specific benefits to be accrued by these relationships. In the primary field of education, one learns about best teaching and learning practices from others, while developing a richer
understanding of the importance each respective society’s places on the education of their youth.

**Challenges Associated with Hosting International Students and Scholars**

While it would be preferable to focus on *opportunities* afforded by the hosting of international students and scholars, there are some challenges that must be addressed in order to provide for a successful experience on both sides.

Certainly, language barriers present challenges for the productive exchange of ideas. The fact remains, however, that most international educators are global citizens themselves, and thus speak one of the world Englishes.

Another challenge is that of building a *culture of cooperation* along both fronts of the relationship. This may be impeded by team members that are not as facile in the art of relationship building and cultural understanding as others.

In summary, there are indeed more benefits than challenges involved in the engagement of international colleagues in the important business of educating tomorrow’s youth, and every effort must be made to bring both sides together. JUSTEC is but one important example of how this is accomplished to the benefit of all partners involved.
References


Bibliography


Appendix A

Interview Protocol

I. Rapport Building

A. Pseudonym Chosen By Participants
   1. I will explain that a pseudonym is and why it will be used.
   2. What would you like your pseudonym to be?

B. Background Information
   1. Tell me about your teaching assignments in Korea.
   2. How long have you taught?
   3. On what levels have you taught?
   4. What did you teach in Korea?
   5. What academic degrees do you hold? From where?

C. Deciding to pursue an advanced degree in the U.S.
   1. When did you become interested in coming to the U.S. to study?
   2. Describe the process involved in getting funding to travel abroad.
   3. Why did you want to pursue an advanced degree in FL/ESL Education?
   4. Why did you select UT instead of another institution?
   5. What was it about the master’s degree program at UT that made you decide that you wanted to study here?

D. Your Move to the U.S.
   1. Describe the preparations you had to make prior to coming to the U.S.
   2. How did you find your living accommodations?
3. How did you find schools for your children?

4. Describe setting up your household in your new home.

5. How did you find your neighbors around your new apartment?

6. How long did it take you to settle in to your new life?

7. Describe any cultural shock you may have encountered.

8. What were some of the personal challenges that you encountered off-campus?

9. What were some of the personal challenges that you encountered on campus?

10. Are there any things that could have made your transition from your country to this one easier?

11. Your English is at an ACTFL Superior level. How has it been impacted by your stay here in the U.S.?

E. Your Academic Experiences Here in the U.S.

1. How did you find the registration process at UT?

2. How have your experiences been in the classroom here at UT?

3. How have your experiences been working with professors here at UT? (Do not mention any names.)

4. What new pieces of information did you learn in your coursework at UT that you feel will make you a better teacher when you return home?

5. What new information would you like to try in your classroom when you return home?

F. Overall Impressions

1. Looking back at the time you’ve spent here in the States, what have been some of your best memories?

2. What would you like to tell future visiting teacher-scholars who would like to come to the States to study?

3. Other comments?