ACCULTURATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS THROUGH FOREIGN NAMES

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Abstract. It is a common phenomenon in Asian society to have Western names for at least two reasons: (1) a willingness to integrate into Western culture; and (2) it is easier for foreigners to use them. This paper studies why most of Chinese/Taiwanese students in the sample of foreign language departments investigated had at least three identities - German, English, and Chinese - which they change depending on their different study courses and situations. Using a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis based on the results of a questionnaire conducted on Taiwanese students, this study analyzes students' divergent choices of their names, the motivation and the scope of their use, as well as their frequency of use, and the students' attitude towards their names through a cultural prism. The study provides substantiation for a hypothesis that the acculturation process can start with the adaptation of a foreign name of the target culture, but this is not a prerequisite.

Keywords: acculturation; anglicizing; identity inconstancy; identity switch; impression management.

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