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ESL 118

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Paper 1 Proposal

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International Students in US: Writing in the American Way?

My paper will focus on the barriers for the international students to write in the American way. In the current US campus, there are growing numbers of international students and thus some specific problems for them may appear. One big thing is, the writing. As a student, they must deal with a huge amount of writing work every day, such as online texting, academic writing, etc. International students, like me, sometimes feel hard to get all those things done. I meet so many problems of how to convey my thought through the text properly, and my friends often complains to me that, “Why they just assume everyone knows how to write in such a weird way?” That problem inspires me. Thus, my research questions are: How the language, seeming to be the most important factor, affect international students communicate via text? Does the culture also play a role in the negative effects? What are the feature of foreign students’ writing, and how that prevent them writing in the U.S. way?

The international student in US, also known as the English as Second Language (ESL) students, face a big problem is the language barriers, meaning that they need to develop their English skills while studying for their degree (O’Loughlin & Murray, 2007; Arkoudis & Starfield, 2007; O’Loughlin & Arkoudis, 2009). An obvious problem is, is their English skills proficient enough to deal with the both academic and non-academic writing? International students used to complain about that: nobody told them how to improve the writing skills in English (Angelova & Riazantseva, 1999). Thus, so many institutions have launched the Language and Support programs for the international students to help them with writing (Arkoudis & Tran, 2010). Researchers also find that the culture is a big deal for the communicating, and adapting to the US culture is also vital for communicating better (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping and Todman, 2008). Except those articles I already found, I think I need more souce for the culture reason for the writing problem, such as “Conservative culture makes trouble for understanding”. Or, there are some features that prevent them convey their ideas being conveyed directly and properly. I believe that international do face problems of communication via writing in the U.S. way, for the reason of language, conservative culture features, and writing style difference.

My paper will analyze that the three aspects that I just list. I will try to prove that, at first, the problem does exist, by citing research results. After that, I will cite the evidence for the first barrier, the language proficiency, and then prove the influence of that. I will include the data, like international average essay grade, to prove that they do have trouble with writing. I might try to explain what is “Culture Shock” or similar words for the definition section.