

Problem: International students have problem making meals because they don't have easy access to their hometown ingredients.

Interview Questions

In-Depth Interview

For students:

- Do you cook in your daily life? How often?
- When was the last time that you cooked?
Talk me through the entire process.
What goes into your mind before you cook a meal?
- What kind of meals do you often cook?
- Do you cook when you were at hometown?
- Can you tell me the differences between you cook here and at your hometown?
- How do you feel about that?
- Can you help recall what meals did you eat in the last week? (Tell as many as possible)

- What kind of local groceries do you often go to?
- What kind of ingredients do you often buy? (in different groceries)
- Have you ever experienced want to cook something, but cannot find the suitable ingredient? How did you feel about that? What did you do then?
- Can you tell me in what methods you can get your hometown ingredient?

- Have you ever been to the local hometown food restaurant?
- How often do you go to there? Do you like it?

- Why do you want to eat hometown food? What does it mean to you?
- Do you often talk about food with your families?

For parents:

- Do you usually make meals at home?
- What kind of meals your child like?
- Have you taught your children how to cook? How did you do that?
- Did your child often cook at home?
- How often you communicate with your child?
- What do you usually talk about?

For international/local grocery stores:

- Can you describe how you get these ingredients?
- How do you decide import which ingredients?
- Have you ever met some problems when getting these ingredients?
- Do you know what kind of ingredients that local people like?

- How did you decide the price of ingredients?
- How about the operation state of your grocery?
- Have you ever thought some methods to attract people?

Hands-on Activity (10 questions) - [Journey Map](#)

International Students

Scenario: You want to cook a meal that requires an ingredient you can't find at your local grocery store. What steps do you go through to find, purchase, and use that ingredient?

Possible questions:

1. Where do you usually buy ingredients for everyday cooking?
2. What ingredients do you have difficulty finding or purchasing?
3. Where do you find the ingredient?
4. If you get the ingredient from an international store, how did you find out about the store?
5. How much does the ingredient cost compared to your home country?
6. If you get the ingredient online, what website do you use? How long does it take to find the ingredient online?
7. If you can't find the ingredient online or at a store, does someone from home send it to you? If so, how long does it take to receive the ingredient?
8. How do you feel when you can't find an ingredient?
9. If you have to go to an international store, how do you get there and how long does it take? Is it near where you live?
10. Please describe the last time you tried to find or purchase an international ingredient? What was the ingredient and where/how did you purchase it?

Store Owners

Scenario: You're considering selling a new [international] grocery item. What steps do you go through to find, order, and stock that item?

Possible questions:

1. How do you decide what items you stock in your store? How do you know what items are in demand?
2. Is it difficult to import/purchase/supply the items for sale at your store?
3. How do you import/purchase/supply the items for sale at your store? How often do you restock items?
4. What is the last item you ordered for your store? Can you please describe the process.
5. What makes it difficult to order items for your store?
6. How do you decided pricing for your items?
7. Do you take special order requests from customers?
8. What prevents you from ordering certain items? Do you encounter and food regulations, restrictions, fees, or taxes that prevent you from selling an item?
9. How do you advertise your store?
10. How do you advertise the items your sell? How do you advertise new items?

Hands-on Activities (plan activities)

Table to use for journey of international student and store owner.

Possible steps: Ingredient gathering, research, price comparison, ordering, traveling to store, purchasing, receiving, etc.

Steps	Ex. Ingredients Gathering	Ex. Research		
Emotions & Thoughts	"I need X, but I haven't found it at [local store]."	"My friend told me there is X at [international store]."		
Actions	- Checks international section of local store	- Checks online; searches on Amazon for the ingredient - Talks to friends about how they get ingredients - Looks up location of store recommended by friend		
Pain Points	Can't find ingredient at nearest grocery store	Ingredient isn't available online/International store is too far away		

Wrap up and Circle back

For international students

Possible questions:

1. Overall, how do you feel when cooking at home with ingredients from home country? Do you enjoy the process?
2. Based on the above questions, how would you describe your past experience when finding ingredients from home country in the United States?
3. What are the potential changes you would like to see when looking for ingredients?
4. What's some possible solutions you can give about this problem?
5. Do you think your life would become easier if a solution has been provided in regard to the issue? In what ways?
6. How would you describe your relationship with international grocery stores?
7. Any suggestions you want to make to these store owners?

For Store owners

Possible questions:

1. How would you describe your relationship with international students? Are they important and in what ways?
2. Overall, how would you describe your experience when deciding which type of food to import at your store?
3. Could you summarize challenges or barriers when importing ingredients for your store?
4. Overall, what are possible challenges when selling ingredients at your store?
5. Could you provide any possible ideas you can give about the challenge?
6. Do you think your revenue would increase if a solution has been provided in regard to the issue?
7. Do you think your competency with similar stores would increase if you can better meet the needs from international students?

Background Research:

1. Some even had to order ingredients from the hometown. "I could not find the ingredient we eat. They do not have the ones I used to eat. I ordered the food from my country."
https://essay.utwente.nl/60378/1/MSc_Sheng-He_Chen.pdf
2. "In addition to the identified psychological and sociocultural adjustment issues and challenges, food emerged as an important and distressing issue during international students' cross cultural transition (Furukawa, 1997; Pan et al., 1999; Brown, 2009). Food-related issues have been mentioned in previous adjustment studies, for example, differences of local and home country food (Pedersen, 1991; Sandhu, 1994; Lee et al., 2007), difficulties finding familiar food items (Mehdizadeh et al., 2005), difficulties getting used to local food (Tseng et al., 2002; Ward et al., 2004), and finding food that conforms to culture and religious beliefs (Novera, 2004; Sherry et al., 2010)."
<http://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/812093/1/Thesis-Eshaby%20Mustafa%202016.pdf>
3. I found an interesting thing in Wechat group. There is a group, students can communicate about food and meals, as well as go to eat together. Today, the group owner sent the message that she has some ingredients like fish, pork, etc. Someone who are interested can go to her home and pick. They have needs to **communicate and share with other students**. Many students need carpool car go to groceries together.