

Abstract

The theory of intergroup contact maintains that the key to reduce intergroup prejudice is through contacts between the groups under optimal conditions. The main concerns of this dissertation are as following: Would it be possible for Taiwanese to reduce their prejudice toward Chinese through intergroup contacts? And, would the intergroup contacts help Taiwanese immigrants integrate into local community? Grounding on these two questions, this dissertation examines the impacts of intergroup contact between Taiwanese and Chinese through field study in Dongguan and Shanghai from 2007 to 2008. After interviewing thirty Taiwanese immigrants, my empirical research suggests that the contact process can be divided into three stages. First, at the earliest stage, by contacting more and more local residents, Taiwanese immigrants would reduce their prejudice and thus cultivate a sometimes positive and sometimes negative attitude toward Chinese. At the second stage, the attitude cultivated in earlier stage turns into the schema and then plays an important role in conditioning sequent contacts: those who have a positive attitude would open up and get along with local Chinese while those who have a negative attitude would refuse to get in touch with Chinese. At the third and final stage, those who open themselves up would have sympathetic understanding of local culture and adapt to local community gradually while those who refuse to contact Chinese would have difficulties integrating into local community.

Keywords: intergroup contact, localization, social identity, Taishang Study