



NATIONAL CHENG KUNG UNIVERSITY

**LEARNING SERVICE SCRIPTS IN INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS: A STUDY OF  
INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMERS IN TAIWAN**

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## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background and context

In the bustling city of Tainan, Taiwan, a world of cultural diversity thrives among the historical landmarks and tantalizing scents of local dishes. One traveler, let's call her Nguyen, from Vietnam, found herself immersed in this rich culture, eager to explore. At a quaint local eatery, Nguyen faced the menu in the front door, its characters swirling in a language unknown to her. Sensing her confusion, an international student from France, named Oliver, noticed her dilemma. Oliver, familiar with the complexities of navigating new cultural settings, kindly offered guidance in this service encounter. This simple yet profound act sparked Nguyen's curiosity about how international visitors like her learned to navigate these cultural nuances.

Nice start

Throughout her journey in Tainan, Nguyen encountered more intercultural service encounters (ICSEs) like these - A typical inter-cultural service encounter is given if a foreign customer (of culture B) consumes a service of a domestic provider (of culture A) (Stauss & Mang, 1999a). Each interaction illuminated the significance of learning "service scripts", as defined in this study, is the steps to follow in these intercultural service encounters. Inspired by stories like Nguyen's happening all over the world, we realized the profound impact of these service interactions on the cultural journey. Need to make clearer "scripts" here

We seek to delve deeper into this realm, aiming to understand how international customers adapt to service scripts in new cultural settings. As role theory (Solomon et al., 1985) suggests, customers and employees from different cultures have distinct role expectations and service scripts stored in memory. And in these situations, intercultural competence is required. In general terms, intercultural competence is the ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennett, 1993).

Inspired by these experiences and academic insights, our research embarks on a journey to explore the challenges and strategies of international customers as they navigate intercultural service encounters. Through this exploration, we aim to shed light on the role of "learning

Here motivate more on the absence of understanding - what do we not know? service scripts" in enhancing cross-cultural service delivery and customer satisfaction, contributing to both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the service industry.

**1.2. Problem statement/research problem**

The research problem central to this study is understanding how international customers learn and adapt to service scripts as they navigate service encounters in a new cultural context, specifically international customers in the cultural setting of Tainan, Taiwan. There is various research on the customers who directly interact with the service providers and their employees, and also from the viewpoint of the service provider’s employees. However, there is a lack of research investigating how customers learn service scripts in international culture settings.

Yes - but more above needed

**1.3. Research rationale**

This research holds significance for both the academic community and practitioners in the service industry. Theoretically, it contributes to the understanding of intercultural communication dynamics, customer learning processes, and cultural adaptation. Different from previous literature in researching from the customer’s perspective or the service provider’s point of view. This research investigates the future customers’ point of view who have not yet been directly involved in the service encounter and indirectly participated by learning the service script. Practically, it provides valuable insights for businesses and service providers to tailor their services script, training not only their current customer but also the future customer to enhance customer satisfaction.

**1.4. Research questions**

culturally distant would be better scripts yes

How do international customers perceive and learn service scripts in the intercultural context in Taiwan?

redundant

learn = complex :D

intercultural service encounters

chapter for long report so not here  
literature review ugh... using headings to  
communicate ideas to tell the reader something  
useful

## CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

good

The service encounter holds a pivotal position within the realm of service marketing, being conceptualized as a specialized form of goal-oriented dyadic interactions (Solomon et al., 1985). Solomon delineated various definitions regarding service encounters, including their dyadic nature, human interactions, and role performances. According to Shostack (1985, as cited in Bitner et al., 1990) a service encounter is a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service". This definition encompasses all aspects of the service which the customer may come in contact with. Not only the interactions with the staff, but all contacts with different elements are also part of the service encounter: physical facilities (building, equipment), service systems and other customers.

Yes - good for digging this up.  
However this is now more of a "classical"  
service literature which is supersede e.g., by  
service logic from Vargo and Lusch

There is hardly any prior discussion about the fact that customers with different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations toward service encounters and that they may perceive these situations differently. In recent years, service has come to be a more and more global business. International trade in services has - in terms of growth since the mid-1980s. With this increasing globalization, we find a growing number of service companies who conduct their business with customers of different cultures (Stauss & Mang, 1999b). Service encounters are called intercultural if the service provider and the customer involved belong to different cultures (Stauss & Mang, 1999b; Vrontis et al., 2020).

The word 'script' conjures up the idea of a precise set of words to be used in a service encounter (Johnston et al., 2012). Much of the research has been based upon script theory and the application tends to differ by discipline. (cited in Victorino et al., 2013). The script does not deal with all the scenes or the plot, but rather with the individual's rules for predicting, interpreting, responding to, and controlling a magnified set of scenes (Tomkins, 1928). Firms meticulously construct customer scripts for each stage of a service encounter and synchronize them with employee scripts to orchestrate optimal interactions and enhance the customer experience (Shostack, 1984; Giebelhausen et al., 2014). Over the years, extensive research has delved into service scripts, which serve as a mechanism for managing customer interactions (Kirsch, 1996).

While past studies primarily focused on how organizations shape service scripts for front-line service employees (FSEs), recent perspectives emphasize customers' engagement with service scripts. A service script guides FSEs through service encounters, aiming to standardize interactions (Sands et al., 2020; Victorino et al., 2013). However, there's a dearth of research on how customers learn service scripts, whether through firm guidance or prior customer experiences. This is where you NEED citation -- right here before this period

Customers' comprehension of organizational processes and service delivery is imperative for effectively enacting their scripts, necessitating firms to facilitate this informational transfer (Hibbert et al., 2012). Thus, firms need to train their customers, which can occur proactively or reactively. Proactive training, though uncommon, involves educating customers before they seek assistance, while reactive training addresses specific problems encountered during coproduction (Nicod and Llosa, 2018). Moreover, various authors are in agreement that the service provider must train customers so that they are able to play their role correctly (Nicod & Llosa, 2018). By learning their roles, customers enable the service to be produced (Kelley et al., 1990). Learning is an individual process. It may be defined in psychology as “an enduring change in behavior, or in the capacity to behave in a given fashion, which results from practice or other forms of experience” (Schunk, 2012). Hibbert et al. (2012) also conceptualize learning as an individual process controlled by the customer. Through this process, he becomes able to be an effective resource integrator. Customers progressively understand how to use the resources available to them. By improving the actions, they perform and they create benefits both for themselves and for the company.

Get some sub-headings into the flow for ease of reading

Although stranger interaction has been observed in many social settings, research on such interactions, especially in service encounter environments, has been unexplored to date. The research question that led to this article focuses on whether and how such influences exist between persons who are not acquainted. McGrath & Otnes (1995) used qualitative techniques to explore the phenomenon of influence between unacquainted consumers in the market setting in the USA. From there, McGrath & Otnes (1995) identified three roles of customers: help-seeker, who actively seeks information by questioning other shoppers whom they visually assess might

possess information or advice about products; reactive helpers, a group of customers who often emerge as a direct result of solicitation from help-seekers; and proactive helper, a distinctly separate helping role that emerges without any prompting from others.

A few years later, (Parker & Ward, 2000) applied a similar research model in the UK. This research conducted a study measuring the frequency of interaction and the propensity of 467 garden center customers to adopt roles identified in the literature, namely help-seekers and help providers. It can be seen that customers can find the information they need when interacting with other customers during service encounters. However, the two studies above have not addressed the issue of intercultural settings in their research. All customers surveyed were from a specific country, such as the USA or the UK.

In other empirical research, the customer's perspective is also discussed. The research contributes to the study of customer training by comparing the influence of reactive training with the influence of proactive training on retail service outcomes. They conceptually distinguish these two types of training and test their influence on script proficiency, measured by observations of customer scripts, from the company's point of view. Proactive training aims to explain scripts to customers before their experience and before they ask for it (Retana et al., 2016). Scholars have demonstrated the positive influence of proactive and reactive training on co-production and service outcomes (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Nicod & Llosa, 2018; Retana et al., 2016). From this research, they also mention the term coproduction. Coproduction is defined as the set of tasks that the customer must perform to produce the service (Nicod et al., 2020). During a store visit, customers use trolleys, find and pick up products, self-scan products, check out themselves, use their mobile apps, etc. In the service field, all these tasks refer to coproduction, which defines the set of roles that customers perform to contribute to service production (Solomon et al., 1985). Consequently, companies should explain to customers how to enact their scripts so that they can become proficient (Goodwin, 1988). However, the influence of the characteristics of training on the customer's learning process is an unexplored field of study that needs to be further developed (Hibbert et al., 2012).

While there is a substantial body of literature focusing on the application of service scripts for employees or service providers (Sands et al., 2020; Victorino et al., 2013), there is a noticeable gap in the research regarding how customers learn service scripts when they encounter a service provider for the first time. Existing studies predominantly examine the effectiveness of service scripts in guiding employee behavior and enhancing service quality (Sands et al., 2020; Victorino et al., 2013). However, there is limited exploration into the process by which customers acquire and internalize service scripts to navigate their interactions with service providers (Nicod & Llosa, 2018). This research gap is particularly salient in intercultural service settings, where international customers may face unique challenges in understanding and adapting to local service norms and expectations (Stauss & Mang, 1999b).

Exploring this uncharted territory can provide valuable insights into enhancing the customer experience, promoting intercultural competence, and optimizing service delivery strategies for diverse customer segments. Recognizing this lack of understanding, this study aims to investigate how international customers perceive and learn service scripts in the intercultural context of Taiwan.



## CHAPTER THREE - METHOD AND ANALYSIS

### 3.1. Method

which issue - lay it out

Due to our lack of understanding about this issue, we will adopt qualitative methods to study how international customers learn and adapt to service scripts in distinct cultures. Grounded theory (Glaser et al., 1968) will be used as a strategy of inquiry. This adopts constructivist principles aiming to foster the construction and development of new insights and theoretical frameworks. Grounded theory as a methodology emerged from the discipline of sociology, an area of enquiry that is focused on society and the individual. However, given the broadening of the marketing discipline over the last two decades to incorporate such issues as ethical marketing, social marketing, green issues and experiential consumption, all of which have significant behavioral implications, the application of grounded theory would seem appropriate (Goulding, 2005). As much of business and management is about people's behaviors, for example consumers' or employees', a grounded theory strategy can be used to explore a wide range of business and management issues (Mark Saunders et al., 2009). Constructivist grounded theory attends to researchers and research participants' language, meanings, and actions (Charmaz, 2017). Therefore, it is appropriate to apply it in this research study as human behavior and their first experiences are the target areas.

### 3.2. Sampling approach

Non-probability sampling provides a range of alternative techniques to select samples based on subjective judgement. This approach would provide an information-rich case study to explore research questions and gain theoretical insights (Saunders et al., 2009).

Ok

From the range of non-probability sampling techniques available, purposive sampling is the most appropriate sampling technique to answer the research question of this study. Purposive sampling enables this study to use researchers' judgement to select cases that will best answer the research question(s) and to meet the objectives. This form of sample is suitable for small samples and selected cases that are particularly informative (Saunders et al., 2009).

Among the various purposive sampling strategies, homogeneous sampling stands out as the most suitable for this study. Directly contrasting with heterogeneous sampling, homogeneous sampling focuses on one particular sub-group in which all the sample members are similar, allowing for an in-depth examination of that group (Saunders et al., 2009).

### 3.3. Data collection method

The research focuses on international customers in Tainan City, Taiwan, employing homogeneous sampling to select approximately 14 interviewees who meet the following two criterias:

- **International Customers:** This criterion ensures that the participants are engaged in "intercultural service encounters" (ICSEs), which occur when a foreign customer (from culture B) interacts with a service provided by a domestic provider (from culture A) (Stauss & Mang, 1999b).
- **Residence in Taiwan:** Participants must have resided in Taiwan for less than two years to ensure their experiences reflect those of relatively recent arrivals, providing contextually relevant insights for the study.

#### 3.3.1. Interview

##### a. The interview goal:

The goal of the interview is to understand how international customers perceive and acquire service scripts within the cultural setting of Tainan, Taiwan.

##### b. The interview process:

Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes. Each group member conducted around five interviews, totaling 3 group members conducted 14 interviews for this research. One group member led the discussion while another observed for later analysis. The interview locations were chosen flexibly based on the interviewees' preferences. 4 interviews were conducted online via Google Meet, and 10 were conducted offline at the NCKU campus. The locations were kept quiet to ensure high-quality audio recordings. Consent was obtained from all interviewees for recording, and their identities are kept confidential. Two phones in airplane mode were used to record the audio, ensuring there were no

disruptions. During the interviews, the interviewer listened actively and noted down key words to aid memory and highlight points for follow-up questions. Yes

**c. Transcription process:**

Add citation

Each interview was audio recorded and subsequently transcribed using TurboScribe. Transcriptions were done either on the same day of the interview or at a later time. It is highly recommended to transcribe the recordings on the same day to prevent work from accumulating and because the interviewer retains more contextual information immediately after the interview. Yes - key

We employed a semi-structured interview format, allowing for flexibility based on the flow of the respondent's story. This approach enabled us to probe further based on the research questions, with a particular focus on understanding the 'how' and 'why' behind their responses. Full interviewer questions were included in the transcriptions to provide a comprehensive record of the conversation.

Each transcript was saved as a separate word processing file, such as a Google Drive document, to ensure easy access and organization. The filenames were formatted to maintain confidentiality while being informative, using a structure like 'date of interview\_interview\_number from 1 to 14\_first letter of interviewee's name'. This system was effective because the small sample size made it easy to remember who each respondent was. Prior to conducting the interviews, potential interviewees were asked if they would be willing to participate. Once they agreed, we provided them with a list of questions and explained the purpose of our research in detail. This process helped to ensure that the participants were well-informed and comfortable with the nature of the study, facilitating more open and honest responses during the interviews.

### **3.4. Coding and Analysis of Data**

The coding process starts with open coding followed by breaking down data into discrete dimensions and properties (Goulding, 2002). Line-by-line coding is conducted and then each line is analyzed by asking this study research question: “How do international customers perceive and learn service scripts in the intercultural context in Taiwan?”

This study employed a manual approach to coding the interview data. Each interviewer created a separate code word file for each interviewee. After completing the coding for their assigned interviews, the interviewer consolidated all newly created codes into a master list that contained all the codes generated from all the interviewees. Once the master list of codes was compiled, all 3 group members engaged in an extensive discussion to evaluate the appropriateness of certain codes within the same category. This collaborative process involved critically assessing and refining the codes to ensure they accurately represented the data. Additionally, the group discussed and determined the most appropriate category names to effectively organize and interpret the data.

Good direction

**3.5. Manual coding** Repeat heading?

After transcribing the interviews, we used a manual approach to coding the data. We engaged in line-by-line coding as a group, which allowed us to collaboratively analyze and categorize the data in real-time.

Hmm yes :D Happiness

Throughout this process, we created self-memos to document our thoughts and ideas about the codes, including how they might fit with other codes and any overlaps we observed. These memos were essential in helping us track our analytical thinking and ensure that our interpretations remained consistent and grounded in the data.

We held extensive discussions to evaluate the appropriateness of certain codes and their inclusion under specific categories. These discussions were critical in ensuring that our coding framework accurately reflected the nuances of the data. We also deliberated on the most suitable names for each category to encapsulate the themes effectively.

Excel :(

for numbers

Once we established our main categories, we organized all the codes into an Excel spreadsheet. This step was crucial for maintaining a well-organized and accessible coding system, enabling us to easily retrieve and analyze the data during subsequent stages of our research.

Excel spreadsheet  
limit on each cell meaning data  
can/does get lost!

## CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Findings

From our fourteen individual interviews, we identified 94 codes. The first step was to compile all the codes. After consolidating many of them and further categorizing, we identified 10 main categories.

Yes - good direction - I would put this part in the method  
This will bring more sharpness to the description of your analysis

#### 4.1.1. Use body language

In Taiwan, international customers might rely on body language as one of the crucial communication tools, particularly in situations where verbal communication is hindered by language barriers. This non-verbal approach involves gestures, facial expressions, and other physical cues to convey intentions and understand service providers. Body language serves as a universal language that transcends linguistic differences, enabling customers to navigate diverse service encounters effectively. Whether pointing at specific items to indicate preferences or using gestures to express confusion or agreement, international customers adapt their communication methods to ensure mutual understanding with service providers. In examining international customers' strategies for navigating service encounters in Taiwan, the effective use of body language stands out as one of the key factors in overcoming language barriers and enhancing communication with local service providers.

Select one or two at most

One interviewee, in particular,

#002P: *"I just pointed out to a vendor that I want this one."*

highlights, . . .

Drop the numbering

The first code, *use body language*,

refers to how customers rely on body . . .

Drop everything after the fourth line

#003S: *"try to use my body language and like, you know, for sometimes and then they will eventually understand what I mean"* (003S).

#005T: *"Also with the body language, I just shake my head and say, I don't understand. So they say: "okay, okay" and they just move on."*

#011V: *"Just some easy sentences and I also use some non-verbal language. In situations where I cannot use my phone, I can use something like body language to show that I want to buy one or two things. And they also use body language to show me the cost of the thing I want to buy."*

#014A: *"I use my hand to let them know I need something."*

*"I will show my head and say, oh, I feel pain."*

#### 4.1.2. Learn service script from friends

Beyond non-verbal cues, international customers might seek the advice and insights from friends or acquaintances who have previously managed service interactions. This informal learning process involves observing how friends navigate service interactions, from ordering meals to understanding payment procedures. By learning from peers who have prior experience, customers enhance their confidence and competence in engaging with the new cultural service providers. By learning from those with firsthand experience, customers can effectively adapt their behaviors and approaches to align with local norms, enhancing their overall service experience.

*#002P: "Because my friend is able to speak Chinese and it helped me a lot to understand in that restaurant. I am able to go by myself next time."*

*#003S: "My Thai friends have been here before. So I just like, follow them. And like, just learn by how they order for us."*

*#004J: "I have friends who like being here before me and they pick me up and bring me to the restaurant, to the shop to buy things. And I just follow them because my friends know how to use Chinese so they can guide me and we just do like that and next."*

*"But it's not in every supermarket. But I learned it from my friends because I went to the supermarket with my friend and my friend taught me step by step how to take the trolley and then how to get back the trolley."*

*"And I also learned from my friends, and I know that we need to pay first."*

*"I met one of my friends who has already been here for more than six months. So she knows more than me."*

*#005T: "And when we go to that shop, she tells me in advance in front of the shop, she tells me that you have to choose what you want to eat based on the menu. You have to mark it on the menu and you have to pay first. She collects money for me and she gives the money and also the menu with the chosen dishes to the shop owner. I think if there's someone to teach me, it will be better and faster because learning from other experiences is the best way to learn for me."*

*#007L: "And before that, of course my friend because it's more convenient. You know, the person you don't have to talk to somebody you don't know."*

*#008A: "I have some German friends who came before me and they actually taught me a lot about what to do, and I've also some experience from South Korea because I lived there before for one year and they have a similar system."*

*#009K:*

*"If i'm with other people like friends i'm asking my friends."*

*“So I was with a friend so my first restaurant was with a friend, so I will try to memorize and not be lost for the next time.”*

*#010L: “If I cannot see anyone to help me, maybe I could call my friend.”*

*#011V: “I learned the words from my friends. They told me how to order in Taiwanese. They took me to some stores, some shops and guided me in the direction to go there.”*

*“I usually look at my friends when we go together.”*

*“My friend told me. My friend explained to me that they are asking me about a bag, so I know that.”*

#### **4.1.3. Learn Chinese would make the service encounter more successful**

Recognizing the importance of effective communication in service encounters, some international customers proactively learn basic Chinese phrases and expressions. Learning Chinese can enable customers to interact more confidently with vendors, navigate menus effectively, and overcome language barriers during service encounters. Participants express that language proficiency reduces confusion, facilitates clearer communication, and enhances their overall ability to engage with local service providers. Those perspectives emphasize the importance of linguistic competence in navigating and improving intercultural service encounters within a multicultural environment.

*#002P: “I think if I know more Chinese language, Chinese words, I will try to interact more with vendors and order more difficult dishes or menus.”*

*#005T: “Sometimes I feel that it's quite difficult for people to understand me. But I think that's one of the motivations for me to learn Chinese because I'm here to study.”*

*#012N: “When I know the language, I'm less confused. And it's easier to communicate.”*

*#013J: “Because if I cannot speak and I cannot even remotely read the writing, the language, then I will not be able to ask the employees what I should do in the restaurant or in the shop. Of course, observing the customers and the surroundings of the shop has served me very well. It usually serves a purpose.”*

#### **4.1.4. Using technology to translate**

Moreover, International customers in Taiwan might rely heavily on technology, particularly Google Translate, to facilitate communication in unfamiliar service settings. This pre-service use

of translation tools allows customers to overcome language barriers by translating conversations, menus, and written information in real time. Participants highlight the practical benefits of using Google Translate, such as capturing images for instant translation or typing out phrases to communicate effectively with service providers. By leveraging translation tools while engaging with service providers, customers mitigate language barriers and enhance their ability to communicate effectively.

#002P: *“Google Translate helped me a lot in unfamiliar situations. Before I came to Taiwan, I'm thinking about buying a new Samsung S24 Galaxy that has AI to translate the conversation in real time.”*

#003S: *“I think I, you, me or the store owner will use Google Translate to like, you know, sometimes communicate.”*

#005T: *“I think Google Translate helps me a lot. I use Google Translate a lot because it can help me to translate my voice, also translate the menu and the sidebar or something like that.”*

#006M: *“So when I come to the, when I am ordering food, I always capture the picture and put it in the Google Translate and it's much easier for me to take the order. “*

#008A: *“Because obviously my Chinese is not perfect, so one time I had the problem that my credit card wasn't working, so I asked the staff what I can do but they tell me in Chinese and I don't understand. So we need to put it in translation and then I understand better.”*

#009K: *“ i think translators and for example google translate and some some tools eventually some some i will take pictures and i will try to to ask yeah in order to communicate with pictures”*

*“I was taking a picture with my iPhone and then using the translate directly with the copy paste and put it on google translate from the picture”*

#010L: *“If I didn't see anyone, I will use Google Translate to ask the owner of the shop. Sometimes it is English, but most of the time it is in Chinese. And it is so difficult because I have to use Google Translate all the time.”*

*“Chinese is everywhere. If we don't know it, we have to depend a lot on our mobile phone.*

*“I use Google Translate. I type in Google Translate and show them my phone.”*

#011V: *“In that situation, the staff didn't understand me. Maybe I will use my Google Translate to help me. It's just the final choice when I can't find other help from other people.”*



*"I will use Google Translate to make them know what I want to buy or what I want to say to them."*

*#014A: "The best tool I have is Google Translate. Just if I don't understand something, if it's only written in Mandarin, I open my Google Translate app and I take a picture and it would translate automatically."*

#### **4.1.5. Asking staffs for learning the service script**

When navigating service encounters in a new culture internationally, customers might also seek guidance from service staff to clarify procedural details and ensure smooth transactions. This reliance on direct interactions with staff members enables customers to handle unfamiliar service settings confidently and efficiently. Interviewees also emphasize the crucial role of staff in offering essential information and helping them navigate the complexities of local service protocols.

*#004J: "If I cannot think of myself. Just in case I need help from them."*

*#007L: "I think mainly the staff and my friends. I'm usually not asking strangers here. I think that's a bit strange because you can ask the shop people who have the better knowledge."*

*#009K: "If I'm alone or I mean If I'm alone I'm asking the people like serving and the owner."*

*#010L: "If they don't have guidelines, I go ask them."*

*"I think maybe in the supermarket, if I want to buy something and I cannot find it, I will ask the staff there."*

*#012N: "I would probably ask the staff how to order and whether I should pay first or I use their service first. for the hospital, sometimes, yeah, for services like hospital, it's a little confusing. I would just go straight to the customer service desk to ask for the procedure."*

*#013J: "If, let's say, I'm not familiar with the ordering process or how the shop works, I might find an employee and ask them how the shop works. And there was this, usually it works very well if I observe, but sometimes if I'm unsure and there are not a lot of customers around and because the employees are free and around, I will just, I have asked them before, how does this work? Am I supposed to pay first? And the employees usually will say, oh, how many people are you dining in or are you taking out? And then I can answer them and they will just guide me through the process."*

#014A: *“When I let them know that I'm interested in the product, they will just take it to the cashier. So, I just follow them everywhere.”*

*“I don't know what I should do or I can't find what I want, then I just go to see them and try to communicate with the staff.”*

*“The staff will try to help me to go to the place where I can actually find the product I'm looking for. So, the staff is really helping me with this.”*

#### **4.1.6. Avoid using verbal communication due to lack of language**

International customers perhaps refrain from engaging in verbal communication due to challenges with the local language. This avoidance stems from a perceived difficulty in effectively conveying their needs and understanding responses from service providers. Instead of attempting verbal exchanges that may lead to misunderstandings, customers tend to use alternative communication methods or minimal verbal interactions to navigate intercultural service encounters.

#003S: *“I just try to use my body language to point out the thing I want to eat before I know some Chinese.”*

#004J: *“Scared to have a conversation of reaction and connection with them because I am not confident with my Chinese.”*

#010L: *“If they can speak English, it's easy for me. But if they don't know English, it's so difficult for me. That's why I'm too lazy to talk to them.”*

#014A: *“I don't say anything. I just say good morning or something.”*

*“I try to say something in English. But if I notice they cannot understand, which is the case most of the time, then I don't communicate with words.”*

*“Yeah, but not using words because I cannot speak any Chinese.”*

#### **4.1.7. Learn from observation others people**

In navigating the diverse service landscape, international customers can use observation as one of the strategic tools. By attentively watching locals, fellow customers, and service staff, they learn unspoken norms, communication styles, and operational procedures. This approach may not only help overcome language barriers but also fosters cultural understanding and enhances

adaptability in unfamiliar service settings. Observational learning can empower customers to navigate interactions confidently, contributing to smoother service encounters and enriching cross-cultural exchanges.

#003S: *"We have to observe the locals and do what local people do. It's just like following the state that they do."*

#004J: *"I observe first just stand out in the front door and stay on the sidewalk and just stay there for a while and see what happens inside."*

*"To observe how things are going in the shop and they give me time not to rush to learn and they have some people who are available there."*

#009K: *"I observe people and how they act and i try to imitate them"*

*"I didn't know the character for pork and i wanted to know if it was with pork or not and then they they told me not and it was just like regular customers ordering things at the restaurant"*

#010L: *"I will observe other people when they go to the restaurant before me."*

*"I will look at everyone because if my friend is also their first time to go, maybe they are not really used to it. And then I will observe staff, strangers and also other people. All the people, I could say that."*

*"Then I could observe strangers and also previous customers. I could ask them or I could follow the new people coming."*

#011V: *"I will observe other customers to know what is the right way to order or to pay money."*

*"I think the guidance of my friend actually works for me. But I also need to observe other customers when I come to some stores or some restaurants."*

*"If I go alone, I will look at other customers to see what they do or what they say. Because they are in the same situation as me so I think when I look, when I observe how they do, I can apply for me and it can help me to resolve my issues."*

#### **4.1.8. Utilizing pictures of that place to make orders**

Pictures of dishes displayed in menus or on restaurant walls may also serve as effective communication tools, bridging language barriers and ensuring accurate food selection. By

pointing to or showing pictures of desired items, international customers may convey their preferences efficiently, enhancing their dining experience without extensive verbal communication. This method may not only simplify the ordering process but also underscores the adaptability and resourcefulness of international customers in navigating unfamiliar dining environments.

*#004J: "I often try to look at the pictures, some of the restaurants have pictures. So, I just come to the picture and I put my hand in the picture and I let the owner know"*

*"I think pictures is the most useful for me"*

*#010L: "Like if I go to a new restaurant and they have signature things, like really huge pictures on the wall. Yeah, definitely I go see that and I go tell them that I want the food in this picture."*

*"Then I go to a lot of Taiwanese restaurants with a lot of pictures, a lot of people eat this. And then I just order because everyone eats it."*

*#011V: "Maybe sometimes when I come to a new restaurant and I don't know what I should order, I will look at some pictures to see what the special dishes are in that restaurant and then I can just point in this picture."*

*"If they don't have the English menu but the menu has something like pictures of the dishes, I will paste on the picture of the dishes to know that I want to eat or drink or buy the food."*

*#014A: "So, most of the time, I will just have a picture on my phone and I'm ready for what I want."*

*"I go straight to see the staff and show them the picture and ask them if they have it."*

*"If I want to change my way now by interacting in Chinese, it will be a very long process, I think. So, I'm thinking that my way of just showing a picture is not so bad."*

#### **4.1.9. Quickly realize what to do**

International customers demonstrate a remarkable ability to swiftly understand and engage with service protocols. When faced with new environments such as restaurants or shops, customers adeptly observe their surroundings and make quick decisions on how to proceed. This rapid adaptation involves a concise process of observation and decision-making, allowing customers to navigate service encounters efficiently.

#009K: *"After 30 seconds, it doesn't mean you learn very quickly, I mean it's about observation and remembering, so it's more about memory."*

*"I observe before and then I make a decision how long uh it could take one minute to observe."*

#010L: *"I think it takes around one to two minutes to see how everything works for me, maybe around that time."*

#011V: *"It will take me some minutes to be confident to realize what I should say or how I can do anything."*

#014A: *"Usually, very fast, actually. Maybe I will wait. In the beginning, I'm shy. So, I don't do anything. But then I just go to the shop, wait for one or two minutes or walk in the shop."*

#### **4.1.10. Suggestion for service provider in Taiwan**

Based on feedback from international customers in Taiwan, there is a clear suggestion to improve service by offering more English menus and providing English guidance. These enhancements may significantly ease communication and enhance the overall experience for international visitors.

#009K: *"I think they should make more English menus."*

#010L: *"And I hope that every restaurant in Taiwan has an English menu."*

#011V: *"My suggestion will be that the restaurant or the shop need to have an English menu."*

#014A: *"One small paper with English information, it would be very useful."*

## CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS

Start more incisively - Our research is informed by a search for an answer to the following important question, ....

### 5.1 Conclusion

In answer to this question we find . . .

This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing semi-structured interviews to explore how international customers perceive and learn service scripts when navigating intercultural service encounters in the cultural context of Taiwan. Through strategies like body language, learning from friends, and using technology such as Google Translate, customers navigate language barriers effectively. Observational learning and interactions with service staff also play crucial roles in helping customers understand local service practices.

Lots of fluff here.

Get back to your literature here

The findings underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity and effective communication tools in enhancing customer experience. Suggestions for service providers to offer more English-language support, like menus and guidance, could further improve communication and customer satisfaction.

### 5.2 Other reflections

Building on the findings of this study, further research could delve into exploring additional strategies to facilitate international customers' learning of service scripts and their subsequent impact on customer satisfaction. One avenue for future investigation could involve conducting comparative studies across different cultural contexts within Taiwan or extending the research to other countries with diverse service industries. Such studies could inform practical recommendations for enhancing service quality through tailored communication strategies and culturally sensitive approaches, thereby fostering more positive and inclusive service experiences for international customers.

Overall, this research proposal presents a compelling and well-structured plan to investigate an important and underexplored aspect of intercultural service encounters. The findings are expected to contribute to both theoretical development and practical applications in the service industry, making it a valuable and timely research endeavor.

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## APPENDIX I: THE INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

### Opening:

“Hello! Thanks for being here today. My name is ... I'm doing some research on how people from different countries learn what to say and do in places they're not familiar with, such as ordering food, drinks, and services. At home we know what to do smoothly, but in the new places we might not know and need to learn and we are trying to understand it. (explain to interviewee)

Before we begin, would you mind if I make the recording for this conversation? The recordings will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. Your participation and responses will remain anonymous, and your privacy will be respected throughout the study.

Please be assured that your identity and any personal information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared with any third parties.”

### Warm-Up Questions:

1. How long have you been in Taiwan?
2. Is Taiwan the first foreign country you've visited, or have you traveled to other countries before?
3. Where are you originally from? Actually, I'm asking this question because I am also a foreigner here in Taiwan. And I have the experience when shopping in my country. I already know what to do. So when I come here, it's quite different when I want to buy a service here. And what about you?

### Main Questions:

1. When you're in a shop, restaurant, using or buying goods and services in Taiwan:
  - How do you know what to say?
  - How do you know what to do?
  - When do you notice what to do or say?
  - How long does it take for you to figure out what to do and say?
  - Who do you look at to figure that out? (friend/stranger/staff/others customer)
  - What do you look at to figure that out? (pictures/decorations/queuing)

- Did the things you do usually work? If not, how did you know that? And what do you do next?
2. How do you learn what to do when getting service/goods in Taiwan?
    - Did you notice how many steps that you need to do in that situation?
    - How many steps?
    - From who?
    - For how long?
    - Did you miss any step in between? How do you figure all the steps out?
    - Did you skip any step in between? Why do you skip that step?
  3. Are there any similar services from other countries that are similar compared to Taiwan?
    - Did those past experiences help you to figure out what to do here?
    - If not, what are the differences?
    - How can you notice those differences?
    - How do you learn what to do in those differences?
  4. Can you share an experience where you learned something new about getting service in Taiwan? What was it? From who? For how long?
  5. What is your Chinese level?
    - Do you think Chinese play an important role?
    - If you don't know Chinese, what will you do to make other people understand you?
    - How does technology help you understand how to get service here?
    - Can you give a detailed example?
    - Are there any other apps?
    - If you don't have a phone, or it's out of battery, what will you do?
  6. Can you describe a time when you didn't know what to do in a shop or restaurant here? What did you do in that situation?
  7. Who/which one do you prefer to get help when using services/ buying things here? (for example, from staffs, from other customers, from friends)
    - Can you give a detailed example?
    - Why did you choose that way?

8. Do you think when you learn what to do, then you can apply those steps to other situations?
- Can you give a detailed example?
  - Why do you think so?
  - If you think you cannot apply those steps? Then, why do you think so?

**APPENDIX II: OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWEE**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Residence time</b>	<b>Length of interview (mins)</b>
1	Vietnam	2 months	16:52
2	Thailand	2.5 months	29:35
3	Thailand	2 years	21:30
4	Vietnam	3 months	36:32
5	Vietnam	4 months	24:58
6	Vietnam	4 months	29:48
7	German	10 months	25:23
8	German	3 ½ months	26:56
9	Switzerland	4 months	35:02
10	Vietnam	4 months	26:51
11	Vietnam	4 months	28:10
12	Vietnam	9 months	33:20
13	Malaysia	6 months	23:01
14	France	12 months	33:01

**APPENDIX III: TIMESCALE**

No.	TASK NAME	ASSIGNED TO	March		April				May				June			
			W 1	W 2	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 4
1	Team weekly meeting	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
2	Proposal preparation	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
3	Introduction writing	Jade														
4	Literature review writing	Michelle														
5	Methodology writing	Tu														
6	Drafting research proposal - 1st version	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
7	Proposal revision	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
8	Developing interview guidelines	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
9	Doing pilot interview	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
10	Drafting research proposal - 2nd version	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
11	Collecting data	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
12	Analyzing data	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
13	Drafting research proposal - 3rd version	Michelle, Jade, Tu														
14	Final report	Michelle, Jade, Tu														

**APPENDIX IV: EXPENSES AND RESOURCES**

No expenses were anticipated in conducting our research. We can use equipment we already have, such as our smartphones, for audio and video recordings. Additionally, the interviews can be conducted on campus.

**APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**Date:** May 07<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Start time:** 17:00

**Location:** NCKU Campus

**Interviewer:** Jade - VWW

**Interviewee:** 001\_K

---

**Interviewer:** (0:00) Hello

**Interviewee:** (0:01) Hello

**Interviewer:** (0:08) Thank you for being here today. My name is Jade. I'm doing some research on how people from other countries feel about their experience in another country. Today I would like to talk to you about how international customers perceive and learn service script in the cultural context in Taiwan. We would like to understand how people know what to say and what to do in places they are not familiar with, such as ordering food, drink, and services. We also want to learn how people from different countries learn these steps when they visit new places.

(0:53) At home country, you know, we know what to do smoothly, but in the new places, we might not know and may need to learn, and we are trying to understand it. Before we begin, would you mind if I make the recording for this conversation?

**Interviewee:** (1:07) No problem.

**Interviewer:** (1:08) Thank you very much. The recordings will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. Your participation and response will remain anonymous, and your privacy will be respected throughout the study. Please be assured that your identity and any personal information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Your response will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared with any third parties. How long have you been here in Taiwan? I've been here for more than two months. And is Taiwan the first foreign country you have visited or have you traveled to other countries before?



**Interviewee:** (2:12) Actually, I'm Korean-Vietnamese, so I have been living in Vietnam and Korea, and I also lived in Denmark for a year, and I also traveled to some other countries in Asia and also in Europe.

**Interviewer:** (2:33) Wow, so interesting! Imagine when you are in a shop or in the restaurant or using the service here in Taiwan, how do you know what to do or say or like what to do in these places?

**Interviewee:** (2:54) I usually look at how Taiwanese people react and what they do and then I follow them.

**Interviewer:** (3:06) Wow, so can you describe a time when you didn't know what to do in the shop or in the restaurant here?

**Interviewee:** (3:17) When I first arrived here, in every restaurant, you have to pick your order, like write down your order, and you have to pay the money first. But at first, I didn't know that we have to pay first when you order, so it was difficult for me.

**Interviewer:** (3:30) So how long have you known that you need to order like that?

**Interviewee:** (3:38) I think for after three days, my friend took me to a restaurant and then I knew.

**Interviewer:** (3:46) Okay, and what differences have you noticed between the way services are provided in (3:53) here in Taiwan compared to back to your home country?

**Interviewee:** (4:01) Like for example, in restaurants here, most of the restaurants you have to like take the order kind of yourself and you have to pay everything first. But in my country, in Vietnam and also in Korea, we usually there will be a person go to you and take to take the order and then after you finish your meal, you will pay the money.

**Interviewer:** (4:31) Yes, and have you encountered any challenges due to the differences in service practice between Taiwan and your home country?

**Interviewee:** (4:46) Not really difficulty, but it was a bit uncomfortable at first. Yeah, and there was one time I was in McDonald's and I chose to pay by cash and I thought that they will call my number and then I pay the money and then I get my food, but then I ended up waiting for like 30 minutes and then I knew that I had to go to the counter to pay first and then I can get my food.

**Interviewer:** (5:19) Ah, so like when you don't know the process, sometimes it makes something happen and it's a little bit uncomfortable, but I look at your face and you feel quite kind of like

happy and funny when you recall the memory. So during your travel, have you encountered a country where the service was similar to here in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** (5:51) Oh no.

**Interviewer:** It's like it's quite unique here?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think so. I think it's quite unique here.

**Interviewer:** (6:05) What has been the hardest thing you to understand or do when you're shopping and (6:13) eating in Taiwan? What is the hardest thing to understand?

**Interviewee:** (6:19) The hardest thing is the language because I cannot read Chinese character so it's hard because most of the menu are in Chinese. So yeah, that's it.

**Interviewer:** And how did you overcome this challenge?

**Interviewee:** (6:40) I tried to learn how to read the name of the food by Chinese characters and I also downloaded Google Translate app to my phone.

**Interviewer:** Okay, yeah. So now with the technology everything is going to be easier, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** What do you think are the most important factors for successfully understanding how the step goes when you come to the unfamiliar environment, culture?

**Interviewee:** I think you should go out like often and then you observe what people do and then you can learn from them and you can try to like do what they do.

**Interviewer:** (7:34) Oh. And do you think your experiences have changed how you feel about like using service here?

**Interviewee:** (7:47) I'm not sure. I think at first it was a bit uncomfortable for me so I tried to eat at 7-Eleven but then now I think it's fine. I got used to it.

**Interviewer:** (8:31) It's like, I mean, if you already know, like no have any barrier or no have any challenges based on the new culture setting such as, as you said is about the Chinese character, about the like the order of the process. So all of this. Do you think that that kind of experience you already like go through, how did they change and how do you feel when you have that kind of experience to affect the service? For example, when you are in the normal setting, you use the normal service when you know everything with the exactly a similar service and with the similar service. But in the setting of Taiwan, it's like the McDonald's in Vietnam or

McDonald's in Taiwan. So do you think your experience have changed how you feel when you're using the experience like the service here?

**Interviewee:** (9:17) Not really.

**Interviewer:** (9:27) And have you noticed any positive change in your experience over time?

**Interviewee:** (9:34) Yeah, because now I got used to everything and I feel more comfortable like going out to restaurants or go shopping.

**Interviewer:** (9:51) I heard about uncomfortable to comfortable. So can you tell me more about what comfortable means to you?

**Interviewee:** (9:58) It means I don't have to think too much and I just can't go out and go to restaurant, order things or go to a shop and just like buy things.

**Interviewer:** (10:13) And how about uncomfortable?

**Interviewee:** (10:16) When I was uncomfortable, I tried to avoid going to any kind of restaurant that I feel like it's uncomfortable for me or it's so hard for me to order things.

**Interviewer:** (10:34) Sounds interesting. And do you have any suggestion for the service provider to make you easier to understand how things going?

**Interviewee:** (10:43) I think they could provide English menu for the foreigners who don't speak Chinese. And maybe they can have English instructions like how to order, how to pay, when to pay.

**Interviewer:** (11:09) And anything else?

**Interviewee:** (11:10) I think no.

**Interviewer:** (11:12) Thank you very much for sharing your experience with us. Your insights are incredibly valuable to this study. Would you be opened to being contacted in the future for future clarification or follow-up questions?

**Interviewee:** (11:29) Yes.

**Interviewer:** (11:38) Thank you. If you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experience just like you, could you share their contact details or can you connect them to us?

**Interviewee:** (11:50) Okay.

**Interviewer:** (11:51) Do you think about anybody now?

**Interviewee:** (11:56) I think I can introduce my roommate to you.

**Interviewer:** (12:00) Thank you. Thank you very much. And thank you again for your time. If there's anything else you would like to share, please feel free to share with us. And I will be in touch if there are any more questions. Thank you.

**Interviewee:** (12:06) Okay. Thank you.

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*Additional recording right after the interview:*

**Interviewer:** (0:02) So, do you have anything to share? It's like because you are talking about maybe some other people who maybe don't have any experience like traveling or living in another country, maybe give the longer answers. I want to know more about what you are sharing.

**Interviewee:** (0:30) I think for people who haven't traveled to any country besides Vietnam, they may have difficulty when ordering food, because in Vietnam there is no paper menu where you can choose your dish and write down the number of the table. And then you have to take the paper to the counter and then pay the cash. It's kind of unusual.

**Interviewer:** (1:05) It's quite significant difference to what happened in Vietnam, right?

**Interviewee:** (1:10) Yeah. When I went out with some Vietnamese friends, I was always the one who go and order things for them because it was unusual and they didn't really know what to do with the paper ordering thing. So, the paper ordering things and the order of the staff in the process is the most challenging in your opinion. Yeah, and also the way Taiwanese people write numbers. For example, the stroke, the order of the stroke, like five, they have different types of way of writing. And I think it's difficult for people or foreign people.

**Interviewer:** (2:14) So, I understand that the difficulty is not only by reading the letters, the different kind of letters like Chinese traditional letter also come from the way we write, right? and the letter. So, I guess it's like you talk about the way we write the numbers. It's different to the way that the people in Taiwan write the number into the menu, right?

**Interviewee:** (2:42) Yeah, that's right.

**Interviewer:** (2:42) So, what happened? Did you face any kind of this situation?

**Interviewee:** (2:50) Yeah, one time I went to a restaurant with my friends and we ordered three dishes of the same dish. And we just write three, like how people write the number three in Chinese. And then the staff there told me, no, it shouldn't be written this way. And they showed me how to write it in the correct way.

**Interviewer:** (3:17) It's interesting. Even you know how to write, you already learn how to write the letter. Because at the beginning I heard that you have difficulty at reading and writing the letter. But now I understand that you know how to write the letter. But it's still not the right thing to do, right?

**Interviewee:** (3:38) Yeah.

**Interviewer:** (3:38) So, the staff is helping you?

**Interviewee:** (3:46) Yeah, she showed me how to write it correctly.

**Interviewer:** (3:50) So, the staff showed you how to write correctly the letter?

**Interviewee:** (3:54) Yeah.

**Interviewer:** (3:55) Sounds interesting. Anything else you want to share?

**Interviewee:** (4:04) When I go shopping or when I go to fast food restaurants, most of the time they ask so many questions like, do you need invoice, do you need receipt? And something else I don't understand. And they spoke in Chinese. And when I said, can you speak in English? And they always keep silent, no problem. So, it's kind of frustrating for me.

**Interviewer:** (4:29) So, maybe we are missing something, right?

**Interviewee:** (4:33) Yeah.

**Interviewer:** (4:33) Okay, thank you, thank you very much. Anything you want to share? Because I feel that it's very interesting when you give a lot of real-life experience.

**Interviewee:** (4:46) Thank you

**Interviewer:** (4:46) Thank you very much for your sharing again.

**Date: May 07th, 2024**

**Start time: 19:00**

**Location: NCKU Campus**

**Interviewer: Tu - VWW**

**Interviewee: 002\_P**

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**Interviewer:** Hello, thanks for being here today. My name is Tu. I'm quite curious about how you handle things when you are in unfamiliar places, like ordering food, drinks or getting services.

Back home, we usually know, right? But when we go somewhere new, for example, in Tainan, it's like starting from scratch. And I'm really interested in how you figure it all out. Before we begin, I would like to record our chat for research purposes.

The recordings will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. Your responses will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared with any third parties. Is this okay for you?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sure.

**Interviewer:** Okay, let's start our interview. Can I ask how long you have been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** I have been in Taiwan for two and a half months.

**Interviewer:** Okay, is Taiwan the first foreign country you ever visited or have you travelled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:** I have been to Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. Can I ask where are you from?

**Interviewee:** I'm from Thailand.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so the first question I want to ask you is, so let's remember back when you first entered a shop in a foreign country.

So, when you're in a shop, a restaurant or using services in Taiwan, how do you know what to say or do in a different culture?

**Interviewee:** I told my friends that I will be studying in Taiwan. So, my friend taught me some simple words, that is “這個” (Zhege - This), that means this one, to order some food. And also, “多少錢” (Duoshao qian) that means how much to ask for the price of the food.

So, these are the two most simple words that I have to know before entering Taiwan. So, I can order some food that is well prepared and like it's ready to eat.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. So, can you describe a time when you didn't know what to do in a shop or restaurant here?

**Interviewee:** Because most of the menu in restaurants in Taiwan is in the Chinese language. So, I usually use my Google Translate to capture the picture of the menu and translate it to English. And I just point to a vendor that I want this one, and they will prepare me that food that I point it out.

**Interviewer:** So, I will repeat my question again and give you some scenarios so you can understand the question. My question is what you will do, like the steps you will do when you enter a shop here in Taiwan. So, let's remember back from the moment that you step into the shop door what you will do until you get food.

**Interviewee:** I will separate it into two kinds of restaurants. The first restaurant is the random restaurant that I see and I'm interested in it. And the second kind of restaurant is the restaurant that I researched on the Google map and read the review before I go to that restaurant.

For the restaurant that I randomly go to. For the restaurant that I randomly go to, I will be interested in the restaurant that has a menu, like, stand out, shown in front of the restaurant. So, I will not interact much with the vendor and I can capture the menu and translate it into English with my Google Translate. And then I can prepare myself before entering that restaurant and order some food quickly, as fast as I can.

For the restaurant that I researched on before I go to it, I will prepare for the menu that I will like for the dishes that I would like to eat. And I would like to have as few steps as possible in that restaurant.

**Interviewer:** So basically, you will try to minimize the steps when you want to go to eat in a place that you are unfamiliar with, right?

**Interviewee:** [nod]

**Interviewer:** So, we have two scenarios here. The first is that you said the shop that you randomly go to, so you will just like you said, you just look at the menu and translate it and use the similar words of Chinese to order. And how about the shop that you find on Google Maps? What's different between those two experiences?

**Interviewee:** I think I am quite sure that I will have a good experience in that restaurant that I will prepare before I go to it. Because I researched that restaurant many times and I will make sure that restaurant will make me satisfied with it. And for the random restaurant, maybe I faced some disappointment in that restaurant. So that's the difference between the two kinds of restaurants.

**Interviewer:** So, it means that it will limit the percentage of disappointment, right?

**Interviewee:** [nod]

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you.

**Interviewer:** So, can you tell me what differences have you noticed between the way services are provided in Taiwan compared with your home country?

And could you please provide an example of a specific difference you have encountered?

**Interviewee:** In Thailand, at most restaurants, when we step in the restaurant, we will take the table first, and the service provider will bring us a menu, and we can take time to read the menu and make the decision what kind of dishes that we would like to take that day.

And after making a decision, we will order them at the table, just call them, and they will come to our table, and we order it. After the food is served, we have that food, and after we finish it, we just stand out and go to the service provider counter and make a payment.

But in Taiwan, we also have to take a table first, and we have the menu that we have to write on it with a marker, and have to write by ourselves, and write the table number and bring that menu to the counter. And after ordering it, we have to wait for them to call us and stand out and take that food to our table again.

The most important thing that makes it different in Thailand and Taiwan is that in Taiwan everyone has to pay for the food first, and after we finish it, we have to bring that empty dish to the counter. That makes the difference.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, we have been talking about what the difference is between Thailand and Taiwan services, right? So, I want to ask more, I want to dive deeper into the situation that you have encountered before.

You're talking about the differences. So, when you first enter a shop, a new shop that you don't know, how can you learn from those experiences? Can you tell me about the first time when you



go into a Taiwan shop, when you don't know those steps? How can you know what to do, like just now, when you already have some experiences?

**Interviewee:** I think I can know from the way that shop decorates it. Like for some fast-food restaurants, they will have a kiosk by the decoration.

When we step into the restaurant, they will have a line to the ordering counter or kiosk machine and we can make orders in that area. And after that, it has a waiting area for the food. We can stand there and wait for the food. It has clear steps by the decoration of that shop.

So, it makes a clear sense to me what I have to do in that restaurant. And for the local restaurant, for example, most Taiwanese restaurants in Yule Street, they will have a kitchen outside the building, and it means that it makes sense that I have to order in that area. And after that, I have to step in the eating area. Yeah, that makes me know what I have to do in that restaurant. That makes the difference.

**Interviewer:** Thank you.

**Interviewer:** Have you ever had to rely on others for help or guidance in unfamiliar situations? If so, how did that experience go?

**Interviewee:** I have an experience that I have to bring my friend to some restaurant that is a Mala restaurant that have to pick the ingredients by ourselves, and like, it's have to wait and calculate the price by the weight of the ingredients that we put in that dish. So, my friend brought me that and taught me how to do it in that restaurant. Because my friend is able to speak Chinese and it helped me a lot to understand in that restaurant, and I am able to go by myself next time.

**Interviewer:** During your travels, have you encountered countries where the services were similar to Taiwan's?

Can you share any experience you have from those countries?

**Interviewee:** I never experienced anything like Taiwan, because most of the countries that I have been to, they never collect the money before eating.

**Interviewer:** So, what has been the hardest thing for you to understand or to do when you are shopping or eating out in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** I think the hardest part for me in the restaurant is some vendors, when they see that I am a foreigner, because Taiwanese people are friendly, so they will try to speak with me in

Chinese and I can answer some simple questions. But if I answer that simple question, they will ask harder and harder questions and I was like, please stop, please stop, okay?

I do not like to interact with vendors much.

And also, the hardest part for me is when they call me to collect the food, they will call it in Chinese, the number of orders. And I have to prepare that Chinese number in my head and repeat, repeat again to know what number that is mine.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you.

So, for all of those experiences you have encountered, what do you think is the most important factor for successfully understanding the steps to go through unfamiliar environments or cultures?

**Interviewee:** I think the most important factors that make me successfully understand the steps in that restaurant is how well organized that restaurant is in decorating that shop.

Like, if they will organize that restaurant, where to order the food, the area to eat and the area to have some sauces, fork and spoon, things like that. It will make me understand the restaurant more.

**Interviewer:** Do you think your experiences have changed how you feel about using service here?

**Interviewee:** So, because I have to be here for two years, I have to adapt to that culture. So, I think I took about one month to adapt to Taiwanese culture. And I think I feel more understood in Taiwanese culture that has to collect the money before eating.

And I adapt myself to the culture and that makes me less and less interact with people.

And I think if I know more Chinese language, Chinese words, I will try to interact more with vendors and order more difficult dishes or menus.

**Interviewer:** How do you think technology like translation apps, Google Maps or online reviews has impacted the way people navigate unfamiliar situations?

**Interviewee:** I think that Google Translate helped me a lot in unfamiliar situations.

Before I came to Taiwan, I'm thinking about buying a new Samsung S24 Galaxy that has AI to translate the conversation in real time. And it's a two-way conversation. It helps me to take less time to translate and have a conversation. It provides more natural conversation. I was thinking

about it, I think Google Translate is enough here to translate the menu or translate the conversation, it might take time, but it's okay.

And also, the Google Map helped me a lot to read reviews of that restaurant that I would like to go. And I can make sure that the restaurant is reviewed by local people.

And also applications in Taiwan are convenient, like transportation applications and Uber can help me in ordering the food. I never tried, but I would like to try.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much for sharing your experience with us. Your insights are incredibly valuable for this study.

Would you be open to being contacted in the future for further clarification or follow up questions?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sure

**Interviewer:** Thank you again for your time. If there's anything else you would like to share, please feel free to contact me, and I will be in touch if there are more questions.

**Interviewee:** Thank you.

**Interviewer:** Yes, goodbye.

**Date: May 08<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 11:00 AM**

**Location: Online**

**Interviewer: Michelle - VWW**

**Interviewee: 003\_S**

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**Interviewer:** (0:00) So hello, thanks for being here today. My name is Michelle and I'm doing some research on how people from different countries learn what to do and what to say in places they're not familiar with, such as ordering food, drinks, and services. You know that at home country we know what to do smoothly, but in new places we might not know and need to learn. We are trying to understand it. (0:35) And before we begin, would you mind if I make a recording for this conversation?

**Interviewee:** (0:42) Okay, no worry, you can record it.

**Interviewer:** (0:49) And the recordings will only be used for research purposes and they will be kept confidential. Your participation and responses will remain anonymous (0:57) and your privacy will be respected throughout the study. And let's begin. So can you tell me how long have you been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** (1:16) So basically I came here since like the end of August, so it should be like almost two years.

**Interviewer:** (1:22) So is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:** (1:33) Yeah, I've been to other countries before, like Germany, the U.S., Japan, Korea, Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** (1:42) Yeah, you travel a lot.

**Interviewee:** Taiwan is like the latest country I've traveled to.

**Interviewer:** (1:55) Okay, so where are you originally from?

**Interviewee:** Okay, so I'm from Thailand.

**Interviewer:** (2:04) Mm-hmm. Actually, I'm asking this question because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan (2:11) and I have the experience when shopping in my country. I already know what to do, (2:18) so when I come here it's quite different when I want to buy a service here and what's the value?

**Interviewee:** (2:28) So yeah, for sure. When I'm here, because I don't have any Chinese language skill before, and to be honest, this city is like a small city, not like in Taipei. And most of the local stores, like most of the restaurants I went to, they are all sometimes like the old people (2:55) that they cannot speak English. So sometimes I don't really know what to do, (3:06) so I just try to use my body language to point out the thing I want to eat before I know some Chinese. (3:17) But these days, I get better and I can order things more smoothly because I

can speak more Chinese. And yeah, because I get used to the culture right now after being here for like two years.

**Interviewer:** (3:43) And as you mentioned before, when you go to the shop or restaurant or using service in Taiwan, at the very beginning you use some body language and then you can order by yourself. So can you explain how you figure that out or are there any signals or clues you look for? (4:05) I mean like are there any clues or the things that you look for and do the order by yourself?

**Interviewer:** (4:20) Sorry, you're turning off your microphone.

**Interviewee:** (4:28) Okay, so I think it's reconnected. Can you repeat what you asked me again?

**Interviewer:** (4:36) Okay, you mentioned before when you're in the shop or using the service in Taiwan, you do the body language and then you can do the order by yourself with a Chinese. So are there any clues or signals that you look for and learn from it?

**Interviewee:** (4:55) To be honest, a Taiwanese restaurant is a little bit different from Thai restaurant, (5:02) which is like the benefit is like they have the menu and we can order by tick or check. (5:10) And so that's how I learned Chinese from the menu. And it's easier for me to order than in Thailand, which is like most of the time we have to say to the store owner what I want to get and or even I have to write by myself. But here, after I spend time for a while and I know the Chinese character. And so like, yeah, it's easier for me to order the food because I just like to take what I want and then give it to the owner. (5:51) Yeah, so it's more like I just what I know more is just like a little bit response to the store owner. But I mean, the process of ordering the food itself is not that difficult to me.

**Interviewer:** (6:20) So let's think about a time when you didn't know what to do in a shop or a restaurant here. And what did you do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** (6:37) I just like, you know, try to use my body language and like, you know, for sometimes and then they will eventually understand what I mean, (6:45) or even use the Google Translator. Yeah, I think I you me or the store owner will use like the Google Translate to like, you know, sometimes communicate. But I would say like most of the time.

**Interviewer:** Yes. Okay, keep going.

**Interviewee:** (7:16) And I like most of the time when ordering food, I actually don't really have like the very big problem because as I told you, like, in here, we can just take the menu that we want to get.

**Interviewer:** And how did you feel in that situation?

**Interviewee:** (7:31) Hmm, frustrating. And okay, so the nature of the store owner in Taiwan, sometimes they are a little bit rude, you know, and like, they're not really friendly sometimes. And when I, you know, I feel I'm so stupid that I cannot communicate to them. And like, they always like have this kind of like, (7:56) you know, angry expression to me. And like, I just feel bad that I don't know what to do. (8:06) And so, yeah.

**Interviewer:** (8:13) Have you ever had to rely on others for help or guidance in unfamiliar situations? I mean, (8:23) have you tried to ask other customer to for the help or guidance?

**Interviewee:** (8:32) Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And so like, there was one time I was gonna buy the boba milk tea. (8:40) And actually, I don't know, because like, in the menu of the store, they don't have any picture. (8:46) And so I just like, open the menu on my Google Maps, and like ask the people nearby that if I want to order this glass, which one should I order?

**Interviewer:** (9:06) Yeah. So before I heard that you mentioned some differences between the way services are provided in Taiwan compared to your home country, Thailand. And now can you

**Interviewee:** (9:21) Michelle, Michelle, Michelle? Yeah, I'm sorry. Because like, the zoom keeps reconnecting again.

**Interviewer:** (9:31) So okay, so I will mention this question again.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, yeah, sorry.

**Interviewer:** (9:41) Okay. Um, so before I heard that you mentioned some differences between the service in Taiwan and your home country, Thailand. And can you give me some more examples about our specific differences that you encounter compared between Taiwan and Thailand?

**Interviewee:** (10:07) Their service. (10:12) I don't think it's much different. The only difference for us to feel is because we cannot speak Chinese. I mean, if we can speak Chinese, I think everything would be pretty the same. (10:26) Yes. But yeah, and plus, (10:29) uh, this one is just like in restaurants or other places as well. (10:42) Oh, I asked you like you mean this one like in the restaurant or?

**Interviewer:** (10:48) Or you can talk about our the shopping, the shop, or yeah, or their drink shop, (10:59) something, everything, everywhere that you use their service.

**Interviewee:** (11:04) Yeah, I think, oh, it's pretty the same. Yeah, but just like only difficulties like (11:13) we cannot speak Chinese.

**Interviewer:** (11:23) So are you talk before you travel to many countries? So did you apply any strategies or experiences from those countries when using service in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** (11:38) How is the universal thing that we try to first, we try to use our body language. (11:48) And second, if they still don't understand, we use Google Translate. (11:53) Yeah, this is just only two things that I've been using from other country to like Taiwan. (12:00) And it's like really works. And the last one is like to ask the local, how can I do this?

**Interviewer:** (12:10) Okay. And I want to ask, what do you think are the most important factors for successfully understanding their step to go through unfamiliar environments or cultures?

**Interviewee:** (12:31) Okay, so I would say this is very important. It's because like we have to observe the local (12:38) and do what local people do. It's just like follow the state that they do. Yeah, simply that.

**Interviewer:** (12:49) So do you think your experiences have changed how you feel about using service here?

**Interviewee:** (13:00) Like from the first day I step here and right now?

**Interviewer:** (13:05) Um, just in a sense, you can talk about both when you first come here and until now, or is it the experience change your feel about using service? (13:25) Or have you noticed any positive change in your experience over time?

**Interviewee:** (13:36) Um, actually, maybe it's just like I get used to, for example, I say like most of the time, (13:46) the store owner, like the local owner, they will be like very mean to people. But because like, (13:55) I'm from the country, which is like very, you know, prioritize the service minded thing. So (14:01) everyone tried to be very nice. But when I came here, I feel a little bit culture shock, (14:06) because like, everyone is like rude to me. But when I'm here, like for two years, (14:11) and I get used to it. It's just like that nature. You know?

**Interviewer:** (14:20) I'm sorry. (14:22) Sarah.

**Interviewee:** Okay, Michelle, Michelle.

**Interviewer:** Yes. Yes. I'm here.

**Interviewee:** Okay. Do you see if you keep disconnecting?

**Interviewer:** (14:40) Um, just just a few seconds. I cannot hear you.

**Interviewee:** (14:46) Okay, so I have a question. Like, from your side, do you see that it's reconnecting? (14:54) It's reconnecting. (14:57) Oh, okay. Because I'm not so sure if like, it's my problem or not.

**Interviewer:** (15:08) Yeah, I'm at the library, and it's quite stable.

**Interviewee:** (15:15) Yeah, I'm also in the room. So I'm not so sure. But it's fine, right?

**Interviewer:** (15:22) Okay.

**Interviewee:** Okay. So can you ask again?

**Interviewer:** (15:27) Okay, let's back to the questions that are like, have you noticed any positive changes (15:32) in your experience over time?

**Interviewee:** (15:36) So, so it's just like, I more get used to people here. And I understand the service people more. (15:44) Yeah. And so I not really get like, more positive, but I just get used to it. (15:52) And so I don't feel frustrated anymore. And so my screens to me, you know? (16:00) Okay. And I think this is our so their last questions that I have for you.

**Interviewer:** (16:09) And thank you so much for sharing your experience.

**Interviewee:** (16:15) It's all yes.

**Interviewer:** (16:18) Or do you want to share anything else?

**Interviewee:** (16:24) Anything else? (16:27) Um, I actually the things like, I'm not so sure if I go to the big city, will the service is like (16:37) different or not. Because I would say like, most of the time the service I encounter is from the (16:44) local stores. And like, it's just like everything I say right now, maybe like seem negative sometimes. (16:52) Sometimes, but oh, yeah, no, I have one. Yes. So as I told you, that I go to a lot of locals. (17:04) And it's more like, at first they are mean to me, but because I keep going to the store and like, (17:12) eat like almost every

week. And they're just like, you know, very, very kind to me. And they see me as like, you know, that kid or something. Sometimes they will just like, give me, you know, a free stuff, like the free snack to me, the orange, the fruit to me, you know, and it's like, not just only one store, it's like two or three stores that I keep going there. And they always like, give the gift, like small, you know, fruits or food to me, even like, at first they are mean to me. But I would say like, when we have the good relationship to them, they're more kinder and (17:49) kinder. So because like, actually, if Professor James will say, I would say like, because Chinese service, they have the thing called guanxi. You have read about that. Guanxi is like, you know, (18:08) to build a relationship together, like between people, the relationship between people. And like, (18:15) when we have at first, because like, we're strangers, we don't have any guanxi. But like, (18:20) later, we like, you know, kind of build the relationship. And I would say like, (18:27) yeah, after we know each other, they are like nicer to us. Which is like, maybe it's like, (18:36) the very uniqueness of like, Taiwanese or Chinese like environment in general.

**Interviewer:** (18:43) Okay, I think I can get to your point. And I also have questions. You know, when I come here, (18:51) there is a lot of stuff that I need to do when ordering the food. Like when I go to the (18:58) restaurant, I have to take out the paper and I have to write the thing that I want and give it to the (19:06) shop owner. Yeah, I get to the laoban. So for the very first time that you used to go to the restaurant in here, how can you realize this step? How do you know the step?

**Interviewee:** (19:25) Actually, because at first,

**Interviewer:** S\*\*\*, I cannot hear you.

**Interviewee:** (19:46) Hello. Okay, I'm back. I'm back. Okay, so the very first time I'm here, there's like, (19:55) my Thai friends have been here before. So I just like, follow them. And like, just learn by how they order for us. So it's just like, because I'm not here alone. So I don't need to like, learn everything by myself. I just like, follow them first. And later, I just like, know how to do it by myself.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. I can get it. And let me think.

**Interviewee:** (20:31) But it's okay. Because like, you ask a lot, you write a lot, right?

**Interviewer:** (20:40) Yeah, I think that's almost the time. And yeah, I think we can end up here.

**Interviewee:** (20:48) Okay. And I hope my response is useful to you.

**Interviewer:** (20:54) Yeah, your insights are incredibly valuable to this study. And if you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experience like yours, could you share their contact details?

**Interviewee:** (21:12) Okay, sure. Sure. Okay.

**Interviewer:** (21:18) And thank you again for your time. If there's anything else you like to share, feel free. I will be in touch if there are more questions.

**Interviewee:** (21:24) Okay, sure. Thank you.

**Interviewer:** Thank you.

**Interviewee:** You're welcome. Bye bye. **Interviewer:** (21:30) Okay, you can leave now.



**Date: June 06<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 17:00**

**Location: NCKU Campus**

**Interviewer: Michelle- VWW**

**Interviewee: 004\_J**

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**00:00:00 Interviewer**

Before we begin, what you mind if I make a recording for the conversation.

**00:00:02 Interviewee**

Yes, yes.

**00:00:10 Interviewer**

So can you tell me how long have you been in Taiwan?

**00:00:12 Interviewee**

I have been here for 3 months

**00:00:20 Interviewer**

Have you traveled to other countries before?

**00:00:25 Interviewee**

Yes, I have traveled to different countries before.

**00:00:28 Interviewer**

So where are you originally from? Actually, I'm asking this question because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan. So where are you from?

**00:00:30 Interviewee**

I am from Vietnam

**00:00:40 Interviewer**

And I have the experience when shopping in my country, I already know what to do, but when I come here, it's quite different. When I want to buy a service here. And what about you?

**00:00:56 Interviewee**

Yes. Actually, I think the way they run the service is quite different compared with what happened in my country.

**00:01:09 Interviewer**

So when you're in a shop, restaurant or using service in Taiwan, how do you know what to say or what to do?

**00:01:22 Interviewee**

Actually, at the beginning I have ... I have no nothing I have. I know nothing about it. Like I don't know the language. I cannot speak. I cannot read. I cannot understand anything they said to me, so at the beginning I have friends who like being here before me and they pick me up and bring me to the restaurant, to the shop to buy things. And I just follow them because my friends know how to use Chinese so they can guide me and we just do like that and next. If I want to buy something, I try to go to the same shop and then I Yeah, I tried to go to the same shop, but

actually I feel like that. I don't know what to do because at that time I don't have any friends anymore. So I remember when I went to the, I went to the shops to buy something to use in the daily life, so I just picked the thing I was given. The cashier and then they just, like, say, a lot of things. But yes, yes, yes, things like that. And when they say something in. I assume that the at the end they said what the total amount that I should pay and then I look at the machine. Because in the machine it will have the number, so I can read the number and then I give them the amount bigger than that number. So I pretend that they will give me back some of the amount of things like that. So that's how I learned how to survive at the beginning.

**00:03:43 Interviewer**

OK. So can you tell me what the differences are? Have you noticed the way services are provided in Taiwan compared to your home country?

**00:04:00 Interviewee**

I think it's quite different, but not like not at every service. I think it's quite similar if we go to the supermarket. Like We take the troller, and then we go inside. We take what we want and then we go to the cashier, and we take it down and we pay and then we give back the children. And the only thing different in shopping, shopping in the supermarket, I think sometimes I remember that I need to take the coil into the stroller to take the stroller and then use the stroller.

**00:05:05 Interviewee**

But it's not in every supermarket. But I learned it from my friends because I went to the supermarket with my friend and my friend taught me step by step how to take the stroller and then how to get back the trailer. But for long I think it's way different to be comparing Vietnam because in Vietnam we should. We take a seat, and we order and they will bring anything to us and everything like the spoon, the chopstick and the seasoning is already on the table and after we finish everything we can. Which the waitress comes to us, and we will pay on the table or maybe we will come to the checkout or the cashier to pay at the end. But in Taiwan, I think most of the restaurants are near my place. I need to buy food and, I need to take the spoon, chopstick and the seasoning myself and bring it to the table. So at the beginning I didn't know about that. And I also learned from my friends, and I know that we need to pay first, but like. But it's funny that I assume that we always need to pay 1st and then when I go with my friends to wait with other friends to other places that maybe with higher price Or higher than my normal basis, I do not need to pay first for some time, but actually most of the restaurant here I find out that we need to pay first. So it's way different from Vietnam.

**00:07:17 Interviewer**

So I can see that most of the time you go with your friends and they know what to do and teach you. So are there any situations that you go along and your friends haven't taught you about that situation? So how do you deal in that situation?

**00:07:42 Interviewee**

Actually, I don't like that situation like I sometimes go alone, and I need to find out the way on my own and. I have a feeling of a little bit of fear that I will not know what to do and. I am

scared that sometimes people will say a lot of long sentences that I cannot understand, and they ask a lot of questions that I don't know. So, if I am not with my friends, I would like to try to choose the restaurant. I've already been there because I have already been there, so I know what to do. Or sometimes I don't really know what to do, but because I have the experience in that place before. So I feel more comfortable. But if I go alone, I often do not choose the new one, and if I must choose the new one, I always try to point it out with my finger. And like I often try to look at the pictures, some of the restaurants have pictures. So, I just come to the picture and I put my hand in the picture and I let the owner know and they will give me what I want to do or. If the restaurant don't have or the place don't have the picture, I will just randomly choose one thing in the menu, I don't know what to do, but like just try and see what I going to take. And sometimes I take the real thing, but I think it is a good experience or interesting sometimes.

**00:09:42 Interviewer**

So are you mentioned you use some? Simple treasures to the picture and you use your experience before to apply in those situations. So are there any things that you choose to learn? You just know when you come to? I mean the experience that you often have before you just know about that when you come to that place.

**00:10:21 Interviewee**

I actually I'm not sure but I think I can know the new way of doing things. And sometimes I learn a few times and sometimes I know I come to a new place. I go to the new place and I try to and I know that maybe there are new things that I do. So I observe first just stand out in the front door and stay on the sidewalk and just stay there for a while and see what happens inside. And when door and stay on the sidewalk and just stay on the sidewalk and just. From the black fellow customer. They do some stuff and go here and there, and I try to figure out the similarities between like for two or three people and then if I feel comfortable I will go inside and copy them. And if I was just curious and I didn't see anybody. Like are you using the service aside time? Maybe I will not step inside the shop.

**00:11:53 Interviewer**

So I heard that before you mentioned you can read some Chinese numbers. So do you know Chinese before or what is your Chinese level? I mentioned the number because like in here they are using Chinese characters.

**00:12:13 Interviewee**

But the number is still in the environment, so I mentioned that the number is the number that I can read, not the Chinese one.

**00:12:25 Interviewer**

So do you think the Chinese level affects you a lot when you do other or your service here? Yes, definitely because I was learning Chinese in the university for a few months.

**00:12:44 Interviewee**

But now for like almost more than 10 years, I have forgotten everything. But sometimes I still understand just a little bit because I'm not confident. Like, sometimes they talk a long, long

sentence, talk a lot, a lot, and I catch the idea. And I know what they're saying. But like, I don't know how to react because like. I think it's because I don't have any like. I don't know what to react to them and I wonder if I was in Vietnam before I. Come here. If I go back to studying Chinese just a little bit and try to have some simple practice, some simple conversation in advance, I think I will feel more interested into that conversation. But because I have nothing in my mind like, having Chinese conversation. So, for me, the Chinese proficiency level is very important.

**00:14:05 Interviewer**

So before I heard that you mentioned when you go to some restaurant alone, you usually prepare something before that. So can you share with me some steak or something that you prepare at home?

**00:14:24 Interviewee**

Hmm. Actually I do. I do prepare, but like uh. I often think first like, What should I eat today? Where should I eat today? Which one I eat today and all the answers are the answer. I already know that the job I've already been there for a few times already and I never think that I will try the new one. If I prepare I often try the new one with my friends, but if I go alone I will prepare to go into the targeted place.

**00:15:17 Interviewer**

So why don't you want to go to new places?

**00:15:24 Interviewee**

Because I'm afraid of having a conversation with them. They talk a lot. They say a lot of different things and I feel like I am an idiot because they say a lot and they are so friendly. But I don't know what to do, what to say and I. I even don't know how to explain to them why I cannot like to react, because if I. Totally do not understand anything. I think it's better because sometimes I understand what they say, but I cannot know. I don't know how to react and I feel if I only say the simple word like I don't think it's the polite way to react to them so it makes me feel scared. Scared to have a conversation of reaction and connection with them because I am not confident with my Chinese.

**00:16:31 Interviewer**

So you share that you usually visit the same place many times because you're familiar with this. So are there any differences when you visit that place for the first time?

**00:16:48 Interviewee**

Yes, when I go to the places that I have already been to a few times. Firstly, I already know what to do and I already have the thing I want to eat? And sometimes they all know me in advance so It's so much easier for me to know what to do and to order the thing and to save my time, and I feel comfortable to stay there and enjoy the service more.

**00:17:33 Interviewer**

So for some place that you feel hard to wear your service or will you visit that place again or you try to learn and then you visit?

**00:17:46 Interviewee**

Uh. I think if it's difficult to figure out what to do, I will not come there again because I will not go there again. I am a foreigner here and sometimes it is difficult to find out the people who can speak English here and to get help so I don't feel comfortable, and I feel awkward when I fall into that situation and I don't feel comfortable and will feel interested. To learn and to enjoy and to try the new place, if I know that in the place I can find the people who can speak English or if I can go with my friends, I will be excited to try. But if I go alone I will not like myself like that because for me, I want to have the good service experience, I don't want to waste my time and feel uncomfortable.

**00:19:10 Interviewer**

So you share that for some place that you will easily adapt to and your service there, but there is also some place that you. To know what to do, can you describe the steps that you feel are easy when you come to the place and what are some steps that you find hard to learn?

**00:19:37 Interviewee**

I think it's not about the staff. I think it's about the place. Last time, two days ago I went to a noodle shop, an automatic noodle shop. And at the beginning. I don't know what to do because I see the noodles. I see the machine and everything and everything in Chinese and I and nobody there and I am a little bit afraid but like because I go with my friends and my friends also don't know what to do but like we want to try. And then we go inside and then we go inside and we go around and see everything. And. And I found a very big board. What in the world they say, step one, step 2-3, they write in Chinese, but actually Chinese together with the simple. And I can know all step one, Step 2, step three. They have the word and they have the image, the picture, the icons together. And I choose to follow the steps. I recognize what to do and how to do it. And finally I figured, oh, it's very interesting and maybe I will go there next time because I feel like it. Nobody likes judging nobody, judging me because you don't have any staff there. Nobody there. Just me and my friends. And they have. They have the guideline with the pictures and the machine and everything. And I just like the machine they like. That one payment machine that we can choose from, but for the other machine they are in Chinese. But I just like to try to put the button randomly because nobody is there, only the camera. If I do wrong I do it again and nobody will trust me and I feel comfortable to try and to learn the thing. But like some like sometime when I went to a little mid the crowded place or a place a little bit. Like luxury or things like that. If I don't know what to do, I feel very uncomfortable. So I think nobody looks, nobody likes to watch. I feel more comfortable. And the more cats will make me feel more comfortable. And the luxury base is so.

**00:22:32 Interviewer**

OK, I see. So can you share with me what you think are the most important factors for successfully understanding the steps to go through unfamiliar environments or cultures like the most necessary? Factors that affect How you understand the state?

**00:22:56 Interviewee**

I think the environment is like, I mean a friendly environment too. Having people who friendly and like they willing to have but not to like. They are willing to help, but like not pursuing, not forcing to have us. They give us sometime to learn myself and be more comfortable and they are available there and be friendly with us and the space is like more quiet and they have the I don't want to talk with the. I can look at the machine, look at the guideline and look at the picture. And like, I think the environment mean I have time for myself to adapt to. To observe the how things going in the in the shop and they give me time not to rush to learn and they have some people who are available there. They can speak English. If I cannot think of myself. Just in case I need help from them. And they already have, like, or maybe the decoration? Because I can see how things go, how things go by seeing the other customers do and the way they arrange things. So I think finally I think the comfortable environment. And the friendly environment that welcomes new people to learn and give us time and not to rush is the key thing for me to learn. If the restaurant is too crowded, the people are forcing us to choose the forcing us to know what to do. I think it's quite uncomfortable and. They only have the Chinese character and don't have any pictures. I think it's also like uncomfortable and difficult to learn.

**00:25:30 Interviewer**

So many times you mentioned that you are always afraid when people look at you. So does that mean you want to? Learn everything by yourself.

**00:25:46 Interviewee**

It's not about learning everything by ourselves, because I cannot speak Chinese, so I'm not sure that they can speak Chinese or not. I assume that most of them cannot speak English, so I know if I approach them. It will be like uncomfortable and it's like waste that time because like Taiwanese people, very friendly and supportive and helpful. So they are trying to help, but we cannot communicate. So I don't want to fall into that. Like the difficult situation like that. So I try to. I tried to look at the picture. Actually I most of my friends use like Google Translate but my phone is not quick enough so the technology. It took me more time. It will take me more time, so I decided to use the traditional way of like observe and look at the pictures. I think pictures is the most useful for me is the shop, the restaurant, the service provider. The pictures and like the in the noodle shop the instance noodle shop sales service I mentioned before. They have the step by step like with they don't have English, but they have the icon and they have a picture. So I don't know what to do and I feel it's easier for me.

**00:27:39 Interviewer**

OK, so you've been here for three months. So have you noticed any positive change or negative changes in your experience over time here?

**00:27:54 Interviewee**

I think now I can handle it. I know I know. Like let's say I know the common thing like common step will happen and most of the shop will need to pay first if we do not need to pay first, they will tell us and it's OK to pay. For the and I know a few shops that they already have the picture and they avoid the difficult situation for me, and sometimes when I go to the. Like to buy the

notebook or pen or things like that. People don't know people there. The cashier do not, do not speak English, but like they ask me like I figured out that they often ask me about. Two or three or four questions, and I assume that it's about like membership or invoice or like thing like that so I know it's not important question so I do not to worry and I just say thing like that and they will not speak English. I cannot speak Chinese well, so they will just do whatever they need to do and then repay and then finish. So I feel more comfortable and I just like ignore the situation. Or sometimes I still say what input. I cannot understand from the very beginning and they will not like speak a long Chinese sentence to me anymore.

**00:30:01 Interviewer**

So you mentioned that the staff argued some Chinese questions and you assumed that about membership or plastic bag or something. So how do you know the meaning of those questions?

**00:30:18 Interviewee**

Because one of my friends said Yeah, that. Why? Why are you in the membership? So when I heard that keyword and they will ask things like that, things like that or maybe three questions. I will say no, no, no. So they will understand because my friend teach me about "Hua Yuan". But for other sentences I feel like I come to the same shop from different times of day. Seeing the same thing all the time, all the time, and they know that. It's not important and something is like because the employer asks them to say, and this kind of their like standard process. So I do not need to care about that. So I just say no, no, no, no. And then then then pass. And I don't know what it is, but like. I hear the same thing the time over and over and over, and I know it's just a standard process that the employees require them to to do because they are cashier.

**00:31:35 Interviewer**

Are there any situations? Understanding about those questions and they keep asking you and not the right answer. So you just stand there for a long time. So are there any situations like that?

**00:32:07 Interviewee**

I think that people will notice that I am not the the people who can speak Chinese, so they're not like. Put me into that situation. However, I think that they already know that I cannot understand, but they are trying to have some time. I cannot remember but like. They ask for the flavor, they ask for the detail because they want to give me the better service, but like. But like I still don't know anything, so they will not put me into a very long conversation about the feel like two or more questions that I still know, I don't know. That when I say that if somebody know how to speak English or somebody know just a little bit, they will. Where you from and then at that time I know how I would say. To each other and they know false. After the few more questions like friendly question like that, they will know that I have no idea about Chinese, so they don't ask anything like complicated for me and try and I feel that. Because Taiwanese people is so friendly, so they will offer me the best they can based on their opinion. So so for some more complicated questions like for example about the flavor or something.

**00:34:16 Interviewer**

After that situation, do you learn? Try to learn the meaning of those questions and use for the next time, or you just skip it.

**00:34:30 Interviewee**

Actually, now I am serious, more serious about learning Chinese. I think it will be fun, but currently I'm quite a little bit busy, so I think I will spend the time in summer to study. The daily Chinese to be more enjoyable the time I am living here better than. Because I think that the thing they they say is interesting, but I cannot understand. So if I know more about Chinese is not about, I can be more comfortable in the using the services. But also I can enjoy the life here in Taiwan more if I know if my Chinese proficiency is better.

**00:35:27 Interviewer**

So I think that's some of the questions that I want to ask you today. So are there anything that you want to share?

**00:35:36 Interviewee**

Thank you very much for the interview. I think I think I can be more like enjoyable to stay here and I have more determined in learning.

**00:35:56 Interviewer**

Thank you so much for sharing your experience with us. Your insights are incredibly valuable to this study. What you'll be open to be in contact in the future for further clarification or follow up questions.

**00:36:00 Interviewee**

OK

**00:36:21 Interviewer**

So if you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experiences like yours, could you share their contact details?

**00:36:22 Interviewee**

Yes. I'm thinking about introducing my roommate.

**00:36:32 Interviewer**

Would like to share, feel free. I will be in touch if there are more questions. Thank you. Thank you.



**Date: June 06<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 20:00**

**Location: NCKU Campus**

**Interviewer: Michelle- VWW**

**Interviewee: 005T**

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**Interviewer:** (0:00) So before we begin, would you mind if I make the recording for this conversation?

**Interviewee:** (0:07) Okay.

**Interviewer:** (0:08) Okay, this recording will be only used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. (0:16) And can you share with me how long have you been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:**(0:21) Uh, I think it's less than four months.

**Interviewer:**(0:25) Okay, so is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:**(0:34) I have traveled to some countries before. Do you need a detail of it?

**Interviewer:**(0:39) Okay, can you list out some of the countries? (0:42)

**Interviewee:**I think it's Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea. Yeah, some countries like that.

**Interviewer:**(0:50) Okay, you travel a lot. So can you share where are you originally from?

**Interviewee:**(0:57) I'm from Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** (0:59) Actually, I'm asking this question because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan (1:04) and I have the experience when shopping in my country. I already know what to do, (1:10) but when I come here, it's quite different when I want to buy a service here. So what about you?

**Interviewee:**(1:18) I think Taiwan is the most different country that I have been to. It's so different from Vietnam, (1:28) my original country, and also different from other countries that I've been to.

**Interviewer:** (1:34) So can you list out or give me some example that you feel (1:39) difference between the service in Taiwan and in your home country?

**Interviewee:**(1:44) I think in Vietnam, it does not depend on how much you pay for the service or food. (1:52) For example, when you go to just like a local shop to buy food and for dining there, it's just like a little money, but they will treat you equal with like you (2:07) go to a very big shop. For example, you go there, they will have like staff to take your order (2:16) and you enjoy your meal.

After that, staff will come to collect the dirty dishes and you pay (2:23) after that. And it's so different in Taiwan because in Taiwan, I noticed that if I go to (2:30) some restaurant with higher quality, and of course, I have to pay more money, then it will be (2:37) the same as the service in Vietnam. But if I pay a little money for like less than, I think it's (2:46) less than like 400 NTD, I think that's amount, then you have to do a lot of things by yourself.

**Interviewer:** (2:55) So you listed a lot of differences between service in Taiwan and Vietnam. So can you tell me how (3:04) do you notice the difference?

**Interviewee:** (3:10) You mean the first experience that I noticed the difference?

**Interviewer:** (3:17) Yes, I mean, for the first time you come here, how do you notice the difference? (3:22) And how do you know what to do and what to say in the first time? (3:28)

**Interviewee:** Actually, for the first time, when I just came to Taiwan, I met one of my friends who has already been (3:35) here for more than six months. So she knows more than me.

And when we go to that shop, she (3:42) tells me in advance in front of the shop, she tells me that you have to choose what you want to eat (3:49) based on the menu. You have to mark on the menu and you have to pay first. She collects money for (3:56) me and she gives the money and also the menu with the chosen dishes to the shop owner.

(4:05) And then she took me inside. So I figured out those steps, the guideline that I should follow (4:12) if I go to other small shops like that. And I thought that all the shops in Taiwan will be the same (4:20) same.

But when I go to a different kind of restaurant, it's actually quite an embarrassing moment (4:27) because I try to pay first. But they said to me that just sit at your table, we serve and take (4:35) money later. So it's quite an embarrassing experience for me.

**Interviewer:** So you mentioned that you (4:43) go with your friend to some place and your friends know what to do and teach you, right? (4:50)

**Interviewee:** Yes, correct.

**Interviewer:** So are there any situations that you have to pay for service by yourself? (4:59)

**Interviewee:** Many. After that time that my friend teach me how to do in the shop and after that I have to (5:08) go to, for example, supermarket or 7-Eleven or some small store here.

So I have to do everything (5:16) by myself. And I learned how to do, what to do in those store based on the first experience. (5:24) Because I have like a very basic guideline for my friend.

So now I can apply it to many. (5:33) And I learned from my mistake also. As I told you, I applied that guideline to a more luxury (5:41) restaurant.

I got a mistake. So you mentioned that you already know the guideline and you (5:50) apply that for some of the service. So are there any service situation that this guideline (5:57) is not works well? Yeah, I just share with you the experience when I try to pay money first (6:05) in a more luxury restaurant. So I try to apply the guideline that I go directly to the counter and told them what I (6:23) want to eat based on the menu and try to pay first. But the staff told me just get back to your seat (6:31) and enjoy your food and we take money after.

So I think it's the correct guideline for a specific (6:41) situation, but it cannot apply to every situation. And for other situations, I have to (6:49) learn by myself.

**Interviewer:** So not just about restaurants, so how about shopping or supermarket here? (6:59)

**Interviewee:** For shopping here, compared with Vietnam, for example, supermarket, there is one big difference (7:07) because in Vietnam, the plastic bag that the supermarket gives you for free.

But here, (7:16) you have to pay for that. So at the first time, I didn't know. So when the staff asked me if I want (7:24) to buy a bag, a shopping bag, and I say yes, it's quite surprising for me that we have to buy it (7:31) here.

And also, in Vietnam, the staff in the supermarket, they will put the groceries you buy (7:43) into the shopping bag for you. But here, you have to do it by yourself. And because the staff doing (7:50) it very quick, so you have to be quick also to put everything in the bag.

If you do it slow, (7:56) all the customers behind you will have to wait. So I have to learn how to do it faster.

**Interviewer:** (8:05) So it's definitely going to happen that the staff will ask you some questions at the counter, (8:12) right? So they will ask you by Chinese.

So do you know Chinese before?

**Interviewee:** (8:21) I have zero knowledge in Chinese, actually. So I have one tip, a very polite tip. (8:30) When I go to a counter for every shop, supermarket, or even 7-Eleven, I will say (8:37) good morning, good afternoon, good evening to them first.

So they recognize directly, (8:42) immediately, that I'm a foreigner. And actually, sometimes they will ignore that (8:49) and speak to me in Chinese. And I always answer in English, that I don't understand.

(8:58) And also with the body language, I just shake my head and say, I don't understand. So (9:03) they say, okay, okay, and they just move on.

**Interviewer:** So how do you realize that they want to, (9:11) they ask you about the plastic bag or something? How do you know that? (9:17)

**Interviewee:** I know that because in Korea, a country I visited before, I also have to pay for a plastic bag.

(9:25) But the staff in Korea, they even better English than me. So I don't have any trouble to understand. (9:34) But here in Tainan, sometimes the staff cannot speak English.

So when they ask me, (9:40) do you want to buy a bag? I don't understand. So they will point to the shopping bag many times. (9:47) So I figure out, I just compare it with my past experience and I, oh, I figure out, oh, (9:53) they asked me, do I want to buy a bag or not? Something like that.

**Interviewer:** (9:58) And how do you feel in some situation that you don't know what to do? (10:06) How I feel? What I will do? (10:09) How do you feel

**Interviewee:** (10:14) In the situation that I don't know how to do, how I feel? I think I feel nothing, actually, (10:20) because I'm a foreigner and I know that I cannot speak Chinese and I need time to learn that. So I (10:28) have to accept that I'm not fluent or know anything about Chinese. I have to accept that.

(10:36) I think someone, another person, maybe they will feel embarrassing or feel stupid in that moment. (10:42) But I just think that the staff cannot speak Vietnamese also. So we're just different people (10:48) from different backgrounds.

So I just accept that and try my best for them to understand me. (10:54) If they don't, I will, what I do in that situation that I will use Google Translate.

**Interviewer:** (11:01) So you share that you're quite new in here and you also don't know Chinese well.

(11:08) So you prefer to come to the place that you're familiar with or you want to explore new place? (11:17)

**Interviewee:** I really like to eat. So actually, I will go around the campus, the dorm, (11:26) anywhere that I can walk by myself. I just want to try the food.

That's why I just (11:33) follow the Google Map and the Google search suggestion for the place that have good food and (11:39) also the like acceptable expenses for those food. So actually, I go around and eat food in (11:49) different places a lot. Sometimes I feel that it's quite difficult for people to understand me.

(11:57) But I think that's one of motivation for me to learn Chinese because I'm here for study, (12:03) but also for study Chinese also. That's why I don't think that I should avoid those situations (12:09) like that. So do you visit a restaurant many times? I almost eat out every day, three meals a day.

**Interviewer:** (12:22) So are there any restaurants that you visit there many times?

**Interviewee:** (12:31) Actually, I just go to the restaurant depend on what I want to eat that day. So if I visit (12:38) that restaurant many times, it means that I want to eat. It's not like I got familiar to one place, (12:46) something like that.

I don't go to familiar places. I just go to place I want to eat.

**Interviewer:** (12:53) So you mentioned before for the first time you come here, your friend took you around.

(13:01) So they taught you how to do. But besides your friend, are there any (13:10) factors that affect your study in the service step here?

**Interviewee:** ((13:17) I think one that affect how I study the step here is because I eat out a lot and I try many (13:25) different places. So every places, I think I can put them into categories.

For example, (13:33) for local shop, they will have the same guideline, the same step I need to do in the shop. (13:39) For example, many shops, they will have the kitchen outside and they will in the counter, (13:45) they will have, they will place a pen, pencil, marker and also the menu, many menus for you. (13:55) So you can mark on the menu.

So you know, try right away that you have to order before enter (14:02) the shop and you have to pay at the counter also. And other places, for example, the shop that (14:12) with better decoration like a restaurant, I will just act like in Vietnam. I just go there, (14:20) sit there, take the menu, wait for the staff to serve and then pay money later.

And for other (14:26) shops, more like franchise style, for example, like McDonald's, for example, those shops, (14:33) they have a very convenient like menu and I can like, because McDonald's is the same everywhere. (14:45) So I know how to do in those kind of shop. So I just put like three kind of shops in my category (14:53) to know how to act.

**Interviewer:** So have you ever had to rely on the stranger for help or guidance in (15:03) unfamiliar situation?

**Interviewee:** In the shop, in the supermarket, I think I have never asked the stranger (15:15) to help me because I don't know that they know English enough. So it's quite (15:20) awkward to ask someone in English first. So I don't have any experience like that.

**Interviewer:** (15:28) So in that situation, you don't ask someone for guidance. So how do you know what to do?

**Interviewee:** (15:39) I think Google Translate helps me a lot. I use Google Translate a lot because it can help me (15:46) to translate my voice, also translate the menu and the sidebar or something like that.

It can (15:54) help a lot. I think I depend most on the Google Translate.

**Interviewer:** So can you describe for me how do you (16:04) use Google Translate in the specific situation

**Interviewee:** For example, last week, I remember that I went to (16:14) a supermarket and they sell some electronic stuff and I buy a rice cooker.

So in the rice (16:24) cooker, they put a paper, a note on the box of the rice cooker. I think that it's like (16:37) the warranty note for the rice cooker. It means that if something happens with the rice cooker, (16:44) I can bring there to exchange to a new one.

I think so. But when I ask, the staff is correct (16:52) and they cannot understand me because they don't speak English. So I captured the picture of that (17:00) note on the rice cooker and I was correct because it's the warranty note.

So I know that it's (17:09) important. So I bring the rice cooker home and keep the note, not throw it away with the box.

**Interviewer:** (17:16) So compare with the situation that you learn by yourself and the situation that you were (17:26) touched by other person, which one is better?

**Interviewee:** I think if there's someone teach me, it will be (17:36) better and faster because learning from other experience is the best way to learn for me.

(17:41) Because if I learn by myself, it takes more time. If I learn from other, they will tell me step by (17:48) step. You need to do this, you need to do that.

I just remember the step and apply it. It will be (17:54) much more easier.

**Interviewer:** So some of the respondents that I interviewed, they usually prepare something (18:05) before they go to some place. Do you have the same experience? (18:12)

**Interviewee:** I don't have the same experience because I think go out to eat is the time for enjoy. So I don't (18:18) want to spend more time and more stress on those kind of joyful moments like that. I don't want to (18:30) prepare.

Actually, I use the google map to find a shop that have the highest score from (18:40) local people and near me. So I just walk to that shop and in front of that shop, I will think that (18:47) what kind of step I need to do before to enter. For example, I told you that I divide the shop by (18:57) three categories, right? So in front of the shop and I read the comment in the google map also.

(19:04) So I figure out which kind of shop it is. For example, it's just a small local shop. I know I (19:10) have to order first and to pay money first.

Even before I enter and sit down, I have to pay first. (19:20) And if it's a more higher quality restaurant, I know that I can go straight inside and wait for (19:26) the staff. And if it's a franchise like McDonald's, I know that I have to look for the menu.

**Interviewer:** (19:38) Okay, so can you tell me what's been the hardest thing for you to understand or (19:49) do when you shopping or eating out?

**Interviewee:** The hardest thing for me to understand or to do when eating (19:57) out? I think to figure out what to do step by step is the most difficult thing (20:06) because it's learned. I'm learned by my experience. So I make a lot of mistakes also.

Just like the (20:13) experience that I told you that I went to a more high quality restaurant and try to pay first. (20:19) Something like that. I think learning is quite hard but it's quite funny and joyful also.

**Interviewer:** (20:26) Okay, so let's back about the Chinese language. (20:35) So the staff will ask you some of the complicated Chinese questions. (20:44) So most of the time, you don't understand due to your Chinese level.

So after those situations, (20:51) do you try to learn to understand those questions at home or just skip it

**Interviewee:** (20:59) Actually, I just skip it because at the moment, if I don't understand, (21:04) the staff can know what they want to do next. For example, I know there are many times when I (21:12) go to a store, for example, a washroom or for example, like a supermarket. The staff will ask (21:21) me for the loyal customer cost, something like that.

And the first time that I didn't know what (21:31) I'm talking about and I just shake my head and say I don't know. So they just pass it and it (21:38) takes me like a full ride to pay for just an item. I just ignore that.

But later when I meet a staff (21:47) that can speak English and she told me about the loyal customer cost to have a discount. (21:56) So I know that I need to show my cost in question. So I just like when I, for example, when I go to (22:05) the counter with my stuff and if they say something I don't understand, but I just show them my cost.

(22:12) So I get sure that I will have a discount. So it's enough for me even if they're talking about other (22:17) things, it's okay.

**Interviewer:** So have you noticed any positive change or negative change during (22:26) four months you live here?

**Interviewee:** I think the positive thing here is I got to go to many strange places (22:37) and meet other different kind of people than me.

And it's fun. Some kind of situation that (22:46) is not like usually happens in my life. So it's quite fun.

For example, (22:51) I just told you that I learned I have to pay first here. It's quite fun. And (22:57) for the negative side, I think that because just learning the steps here (23:05) make it easier to live here.

So you know, I think Taiwanese people, they follow the logic very good. (23:14) So it means that if you know the steps, you can live here without learning any Chinese. (23:21) So when I know how to do here, I don't think it's necessary for me to learn Chinese.

So it's like (23:29) lower the possibility for me to boost myself to learn Chinese. It's a negative thing for me.

**Interviewer:** (23:38) So why do you think the service steps in Taiwan are logical?

**Interviewee:** Because I think the staff is not (23:51) talk too much with the customer.

If the customer follows the step in the shop, for example, (23:57) I just told you about the local shop that I know the step I need to do like order first, (24:04) pay the money first, go to my seat, then waiting for them to call my number, and then take the (24:11) food, eating the food, and take the dirty dishes, go to the counter again, say xie xie and go out. (24:19) Something like that, just follow that, then I can live here. So I think they're quite logic.

**Interviewer:** (24:25) Okay, so I think that's all of the questions that I (24:29) have for you. So are there anything else that you want to share?

**Interviewee:** (24:34) I think it's okay. If you need more, you can text me and I can answer you by text.

**Interviewer:** ((24:42) Okay, thank you so much for sharing your experience with us. I think your insights are (24:47) valuable to our study. So would you be open to be in contact in the future for further (24:54) clarification of follow-up questions?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, you can message me.

**Interviewer:** (24:58) Okay, thank you.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, bye-bye.

**Interviewer:** Goodbye

**Date: June 06<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time:**

**Location: NCKU Campus**

**Interviewer: Jade - VWW**

**Interviewee: 006M**

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**Interviewer:** (0:00) Thank you. The recordings will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. (0:07) Your participation and responses will remain anonymous and your privacy will be respected (0:14) throughout the study.

Please be assured that your identity and any personal information you provide (0:22) will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will only be used for research (0:30) purposes and will not be shared with any third parties. So thank you very much for being here (0:36) today again.

How long have you been here in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** Actually, I've been here almost four months. (0:47) How do you feel the life here in Taiwan? Compared with my home country, (0:54) Taiwan is more peaceful. I love the life here.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Where are you from?

**Interviewee:** I'm from Vietnam. (1:03)

**Interviewer:** Actually, I am asking this question because I'm also Vietnamese here in Taiwan and I have the (1:12) experience when like shopping in my country, I already know what to do. But like when I come (1:18) here, it's quite different for me. And when I want to buy things or want to use a service here, (1:27) what about you

**Interviewee:** Actually, Taiwan is the first country that I go abroad. So I have to face with (1:37) many different situations when compared with my home country.

**Interviewer:** Yes. So tell me more about the (1:47) different situation that you mentioned about.

**Interviewee:** Actually, the big thing that I find is when I (1:56) go to the restaurant here, compared with my home country in Taiwan, I have to do more steps.

Like (2:06) when I go to the small restaurant, I have to take the paper and the pen and then I have to take to (2:15) the meal that I want to eat and collect all the money, all of the coins and go to the counter (2:24) and give it back to the shop owner and go to the table and wait for the meal, wait until (2:35) wait until they call my number and take my meal to the table again. Actually, I have to do more. (2:42) Yes.

**Interviewer:** Wow. Interesting. Like how do you know what to do here? Like all the steps that you mentioned, (2:52) how do you know that

**Interviewee:** Actually, my roommate, my roommate, she came here before me a few days. (3:02) So she already knows what to do here and then she took me to those restaurants and (3:10) she taught me how to do. I look at her and follow her. Yes.



**Interviewer:** Oh, you are very lucky to have that (3:20) roommate to guide you here in Taiwan. Do you have any experience of the differences when using (3:31) service here? Not only in like you mentioned about restaurant, any other places? (3:40)

**Interviewee:** Not just a restaurant. I go to the supermarket or some 24-hour store.

The first thing that (3:52) I think this is the language, the Chinese. The step in the shopping store is quite (4:03) similar with Vietnam. But I think the big difference in the shopping is the language.

(4:11) I don't know Chinese. So the staff asked me when I take the payments, the staff asked me (4:19) some of the questions about plastic bag or something membership. First time I don't know (4:26) what does it mean and I just stay there and don't know what to do.

**Interviewer:** Yes. (4:36) Can you tell me more about the situation and how did you finish that situation? (4:43)

**Interviewee:** They speak Chinese and I don't know what does it mean. So when they realize that I'm not Taiwanese, (4:52) so they skip that step and they just give me the thing that I buy and I finish that.

**Interviewer:** (5:02) Besides the language barriers, have you encountered any other challenges due to (5:12) the difference between the service practice here in Taiwan compared to your home country? (5:19)

**Interviewee:** You mean some of other examples?

**Interviewer:** Yes. (5:23)

**Interviewee:** Let me see.

**Interviewer:** Any other challenge or any experience that you've been through and you (5:35) feel difficult to adapt and difficult to understand how it's going?

**Interviewee:** (5:42) I think this is also related to the language.

Here in Vietnam we don't use coins anymore (5:50) but in Taiwan they still use coins and this takes me more time to collect the coins and the staff (5:59) have to wait for me and I realize that they're quite angry, a little bit angry with me and I (6:07) feel uncomfortable in that situation. When I take the payment, they inform me the price by Chinese (6:18) also and it takes time for me to think in my mind what is that number and it takes time for (6:28) me to prepare the coins and the money. So from my understanding, the most challenging (6:37) thing is about the language barrier and the second thing is about the payment and (6:44) like the familiarity with the coin.

**Interviewer:** The difference between your country don't have coin and here (6:53) have coin and the third thing is about the rushing. I understand that you feel the rushing (7:07) feeling, right? Am I understand right?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I feel like this is a long queue, right, So many people (7:16) wait behind me so this makes me more rush and I have to finish this quickly. So what makes the (7:26) rushing, only the queue, The queue and what makes the rushing (7:35) feeling related to the staff of the

learning, like the staff of knowing how things go or just (7:45) because it's a final step of the process so it takes time for you and they feel angry and you (7:54) feel uncomfortable.

I think when I'm queuing, I look at the front people. I look at them (8:06) what they do and they do everything very quickly and actually I also look at the attitude of the (8:13) staff. Some of the staff quite friendly but in the peak time like lunch or dinner there's a lot (8:22) of customers so I think the staff is also busy at that time so they're more uncomfortable.

If I (8:33) take more time, yes. Is it the reaction and the feeling of the staff related to the (8:46) the selling, the service process or not? I think it's not related. I think for all of the (8:58) situation when we see someone that uncomfortable, I will tend to complete the encounter quickly (9:07) and I don't want to face with them anymore.

**Interviewer:** (9:13) what has been the hardest thing for you to understand when you are shopping (9:33) or eating here or buying things in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** As I mentioned many times before, the first thing I (9:40) think this is the languages, yes. And for the staff, I think when I go along, (9:53) this is a bit interesting because I'm feeling like I'm exploring something new but sometimes (9:59) I'm also afraid because there's no friend go with me so I'm always afraid that am I doing (10:06) the right things or something, yes. So like the attitude of the staff is like make you feel like (10:20) that you are doing the right thing or the wrong thing.

**Interviewer:** What is the right and the wrong thing that (10:26) are you mentioned about?

**Interviewee:** So right thing or wrong thing, I think the right thing is (10:37) I have to understand all of the things that they speak like when they ask me do I want (10:44) plastic bag or do I want membership, I have to give them the correct answer like (10:52) yes or no. And when they ask me the price, I have to give them the correct amount of money. (11:01) Before I have very bad experience that when the staff of 7-Eleven, they inform me the price of (11:10) the snack but I give them the wrong amount of money and then they very rude with me. So I feel (11:17) that if I know the language, I know the staff, I know what to do, they will feel more, the staff (11:27) feel more comfortable with me. And one more time I want to top up my easy card, I don't know how (11:36) to, where can I put my card and the staff they don't know English so they just speak Chinese (11:44) with me and I still don't know what to do in that situation. So yeah at that time I feel so (11:52) uncomfortable because I don't know the staff before.

So after that I try to observe other (12:04) customers in their convenience store. I try to notice what they do and for the next time I don't (12:13) want to face the same mistake before.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. So I know, I have learned that for you, (12:26) the language is the most hardest and challenging factor. And any other important factor, (12:35) what do you think, any other important factor for successful understanding step to go to (12:43) the unfamiliar environment or culture like this?

**Interviewee:** I think this is the ability to, (12:54) the ability of observation. When you come to the unfamiliar places, you need to have the ability to (13:04) look around and notice what to do. This is going to be easy for you. Yeah, sometimes they (13:13) in that store or in that restaurant, they already have the guidelines, the decoration, (13:20) on their decoration or on the table or pictures, they already show the guidelines for the (13:28) foreigners. But sometimes we don't pay attention too much, so we don't realize that.

So (13:37) we still ask them for the guidelines. Yeah, so I think we should use our eyes more.

**Interviewer:** (13:47) Okay, so the first thing is about the communication by the Chinese, by the language. (13:54) The second thing is about the observation. For my understanding, observation for you is (14:02) not only observation the other customer observation, but also observation the (14:10) service providers and also pay attention into the decoration and the guideline. Am I right about it?

**Interviewee:** (14:20) Yes, you're correct.

**Interviewer:** (14:26) I heard that you get help from your friends when you come here. Do you rely on other (14:36) help or guidance when you come to the unfamiliar situation beside your friends?

**Interviewee:** (14:46) You mean stranger?

**Interviewer:** No, I mean have you ever had to rely on other than your friends to get help or (14:56) get the guidance in the unfamiliar situation?

**Interviewee:** One time that I go to the ATM machine, but this ATM (15:06) is not work. So I saw the stranger there.

So I actively go to him and talk English with him. (15:21) So he, yeah, he do some, he not know English. His English is not good, so he try to (15:32) demonstrate by gesture.

For me, this ATM is not work, so I can try another one. Yeah, I think (15:42) just my, yeah, for me, I usually actively touch some stranger to ask, yeah, in unfamiliar situation. (16:00) Yeah, I think it's very interesting because at the beginning you mentioned that (16:06) the service provider talk to you a lot in Chinese and you don't understand, but now you are (16:16) approach the stranger and you speak in English and they don't understand.

**Interviewer:** And I feel like you are like (16:24) more confident and speak to them even they may not know English. And I think it's quite funny. (16:37) How do you think about technology like the apps or like online service or online review that, (16:47) how do you think the technology like translation apps or online review has impacted the way people (16:53) navigate unfamiliar situation?

**Interviewee:** Actually, I think Google Translate is one of the best (17:01) application that in the foreign country.

I use Google Translate most of the time when I (17:10) go to the shop or restaurant or ordering food or drink around my university, even though there are (17:20) some restaurants, they provide English menu, but some of them also don't have. So when I come to (17:29) the, when I ordering

food, I always capture the picture and put it in the Google Translate and (17:40) it's very more easy for me to take order. Yes.

**Interviewer:** And can you describe any cultural differences (17:51) you have noticed in terms of ordering or using a service here?

Interviewee: Let's see. I think this is the way (18:04) they write the promotion in convenience store. So many times that I got a mistake when in the 7-Eleven, (18:16) they write the promotion on the products, like buy one, get one or something.

I just assume that (18:26) if I buy two of this, I will get a discount, but I don't use Google Translate to confirm. So I just (18:37) assume that and then I buy two products, but I misunderstanding and then I have to pay more than (18:45) I think. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So what, based on all of your experience with the learning how to buy things (19:00) and how the staff to use the service here, do you have any recommendation for the service providers (19:07) to have the better service for the customer?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. I think my most barrier is the language. (19:22) So I think the foreigner, when you join the intercultural service, you should prepare some (19:29) simple conversation.

Yes. For Chinese, you can prepare some simple sentence to order food (19:43) and some common word that they use. And another thing that when you come to the new place, you (19:53) should try to look around and let's see, are there any pictures or guidelines on the wall or (20:04) something and follow this? I mean for the service provider, right? The first thing I heard that (20:13) maybe have the guideline, right? And you mean they should have the guideline on the wall for the (20:20) customer, right? Those things I just shared is based on the customer view. So for the provider (20:29) view, in the crowded place like Taiwan, I think the provider should prepare the English (20:38) guideline and English menu. That is more easy for the international customer like me here. Yes.

**Interviewer:** (20:50) And can you remember and describe for me and share with me the best like experience you've (20:59) been through when you're using a service or buying things here in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** (21:08) I think this is when I go to the big supermarket. Yes. There is no more different when compared with (21:23) my home country.

I feel familiar with most of the staff. So I think in that situation, (21:31) I've done everything easily. Yes.

So I think when I go to somewhere that's familiar with my (21:40) home country and I don't have to do a lot, I think this is the best for me. (21:49) Hmm. Any other experience other than the supermarket experience? (21:58) I think go to the Vietnamese restaurants in Taiwan.

Yeah. You know, there are some Vietnamese (22:08) restaurants in Taiwan. So I come there and everything there, I feel like I'm in Vietnam.

(22:14) I don't have to pay money first. Even though they have the paper for people to take the order, (22:25) but because we are Vietnamese, right? So I just tell the thing that I want to eat with the owner (22:31) and go to my table. That's it.

Interviewer: Hmm. Yes. (22:34) Right.

So from my understanding, the familiar staff of providing and taking the service is one (22:49) of the most factors that make you feel comfortable to use the service. Is that right?

**Interviewee:** Yes. But (22:58) actually now I already learned Chinese, so I want to speak more.

So I want to explore. So when (23:08) I go to the restaurant, the Chinese restaurant, Taiwanese restaurant, I try to speak more with (23:17) the owner to order food. Yeah.

More than before to practice my Chinese.

**Interviewer:** Oh, interesting. And (23:26) if imagine now you don't have any language barrier, what do you think you will try (23:36) when you use the service? Or what do you try or make different or do differently (23:45) when you use the service or buy things here in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** So you mean without the language (23:54) barriers? Yes.

**Interviewer:** What are the difficulties? Yes. Like you are master the Chinese.

**Interviewee:** So I think (24:05) this is the technology because sometimes I have to go to some, I have to use some automatic machine.

(24:17) Yeah. You know, before I'm not hang out a lot, so I have the very lack of experience to use some (24:30) automatic machine. So I think without language barrier, using automatic machine is one of the (24:38) hardest thing for me.

Interviewer: Yes. What is the example of the automatic machine that you mentioning about?

Interviewee: (24:46) I think this is a Shopee Express store. When I go there, I have to take my shipments by myself (24:57) and I have to use the machine. I have to put my money inside before I don't know which (25:06) hole that I put my money. Yeah. And where can I take my order? Because there are lots of (25:17) yeah, a lot of shelves there and I don't know what is the exact place that I have to go to.

**Interviewer:** (25:26) Yes. I think. Where did you learn that like step from?

Interviewee: One time I come after the old man (25:38) and before I take my shipment, I have to input my phone number.

But before I come there, (25:47) I don't know what number should I input in that machine. So fortunately at that time, (25:54) one of the old man, he come first and he said that he will show me and then I can do. So I (26:06) look at all of, I look at him and see what he do during the, what procedure that he have to do.

(26:14) And then I can take my shipment by myself.

Interviewer: So what did you communicate with that guy, (26:22) that old man? I speak Chinese with him. Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Just a simple sentence. I said that (26:32) this machine is not work. Yeah.

And he said, no, he will show me. Yeah. And I just step (26:40) behind and look at him.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So very interesting. So you, I, I, from your, (26:51) from your example, I learned that the staff of providing the service is not only from the (26:59) restaurant, from the people, also from the machine.

Interviewer: And for you, the most difficult part is (27:08) about Chinese, the language barrier. And do you prefer to get help from the, (27:17) the staff or fellow customer or just stranger? If you have choice to, to get help from like (27:27) service providers, staff, employees. The second one is fellow customer.

The third one is just (27:33) stranger. Or the final one is that the guideline, like the material guideline from the provider, (27:41) what, what you prefer?

**Interviewee:** So actually for me, I will try to, my priority, I will try to observe by (27:54) myself first, look around and yeah, look at the picture around. If are there any thing to, if, (28:04) if I, if I can find any solution when observed by myself, I will reach some of the, any person (28:15) nearest me.

Yeah. I think talking with the stranger is not the hard thing for me. Yeah.

**Interviewer:**(28:22) So what makes you choose observation as a first choice?

**Interviewee:** Because I'm not sure I care about the, (28:34) the react of other persons on me. I'm not sure that they're willing to help me or not. So I, (28:43) I will try to do by myself first.

And I also, I don't want to lose face because if are there (28:53) any thing, are there any guidelines around, but I don't try to, to, to look around and then just (29:01) try to ask other people. They will, I scared that they will, they will think why are there, (29:09) why there's still the guideline, why you don't look at that and ask me. Yeah.

Interviewer: So I try to (29:16) look careful first. So like you want to observation first because you, you, you afraid you are like, (29:29) you afraid that maybe the people will think that you are not like look around first before asking,

**Interviewee:**((29:38) um,

**Interviewer:** do you have any others like, uh, experience or example that interesting you want to share?

**Interviewee:**(29:48) Um, let's see. I think no.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much for your

**Date: June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 13:10**

**Location: Online**

**Interviewer: Jade - VWW**

**Interviewee: 007\_L**

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**00:00:02 Interviewer**

Today I'm doing some research on how people from different countries learn what to say and what to do in places they are not familiar with. Services, ordering food, drinks and services at your home country. We know what to do smoothly. But in new places, we may, we might not know and need to learn, and we are trying to understand what to do in new place. Yes. Before we begin, I would, would you mind if I make the recording for this conversation?

**00:00:41 Interviewee**

No, it's absolutely fine.

**00:00:43 Interviewer**

Thank you. Thank you very much. The recording will only be used for research purpose and will be kept confidential. Your participation and responses will remain anonymous and your privacy will be respected throughout the study, please be assured that your identity and any personal information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Your response will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared with any other third party.

**00:01:18 Interviewer**

OK. So the first question is, how long have you been here in Taiwan?

**00:01:27 Interviewee**

It's not a full year yet, so maybe around 10 months.

**00:01:32 Interviewer**

Ohh, about 10 months in Taiwan. Is this the first foreign country you have visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**00:01:44 Interviewee**

It is definitely not my first country, and I've already lived abroad in different countries, so I lived abroad in Peru for one year and in China for half a year. Ohh wow. Well, can I ask where you are originally from?

**00:02:05 Interviewee**

Oh. I'm from Germany.

**00:02:06 Interviewer**

Actually I'm asking this question because I am also a foreigner here in Taiwan and I have the experience when shopping in my country and when in my country I know what to do. But when I come here it's quite different. Uh, when I want to buy service here. And what about you?

**00:02:32 Interviewee**

It's a bit hard for me to say because I already went abroad a lot, but I would say compared to Germany there are some differences. For example, we don't go out for eating so much or we don't have so many services. Because everything which is manpower is quite expensive in my country. So we are reducing it a lot.

**00:02:59 Interviewer**

Ohh. So it means in your country normally using services like outside or like eating outside or eating outside is not frequently happen in your country compared with here in Taiwan, right?

**00:03:19 Interviewee**

Yeah, especially dining outside. Not because it can easily be five times or 10 times the price of the food in Taiwan.

**00:03:28 Interviewer**

Well, it's very nice to know. And when you are in a shop or restaurant or using or buying goods or servicing in Taiwan. How do you know what to say?

**00:03:44 Interviewee**

I speak Chinese.

**00:03:46 Interviewer**

Oh yeah.

**00:03:46 Interviewee**

So. I would just try to communicate where it's mainly getting the difficult is when I have to read something. Then. Sometimes I can't read, but sometimes I need to use Google Translate which takes the picture directly translated. For me that makes it a lot of easier.

**00:04:10 Interviewer**

So for you, like speaking Chinese is not, it's not difficult, but reading sometime you need the support from Google Translate.

**00:04:23 Interviewee**



Yes, like speaking. Usually brush with most Taiwanese. I had one or two cases where I had the feeling that they don't have a lot of interaction with foreigners usually, so they were not confident in speaking Chinese, and then they also started using Google Translate because they thought they didn't understand me correctly. But the main time, actually, people just talk with me in Chinese. They even start talking with me in Chinese instead of English. And that's kind of really convenient, but right.

**00:04:58 Interviewer**

Yeah, OK. And how do you know what to do?

**00:05:04 Interviewee**

Coming to a restaurant, yes. The first time I did not know, I had to ask. Actually, you know, the “Pana Tang” where you get to several places where you can choose the food by yourself on the street and then you hand it to the seller. I really had no idea how to do it, so I actually took my Taiwanese friend for the first time and asked him: “How are you doing this? You have to show me.”

**00:05:29 Interviewer**

Ohh OK. And at the first time your Taiwanese friends show you what to do?

**00:05:36 Interviewee**

Yes, often, but always if they don't show me I. Either I will skip to the shop if I'm unsure how to do it, or I will ask the seller how do you do it if it really looks tasty and I really want to try it.

**00:05:53 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah. And when do you know this? What to do or to say?

**00:06:05 Interviewee**

Usually you don't have to say so much. Usually you have, like, the list where you can just put in what you want to eat and then you just give it to the people, OK, so. The only time I really have to talk is when you have a shot. And they don't put the prices. Then I have to. I'm usually asking them before I buy something like how much it is and then I'd like: “It's to be not too expensive oh yeah, it's OK.”.

**00:06:35 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah. It's been fruitful information to me because you have the different perspective, like you know Chinese and you are, like, easier to contact with the service provider here compared with my own experience. How long do it take for you to figure out what to do and what to say here? like when you feel comfortable and familiar here? For how long?

**00:07:09 Interviewee**

It took me a week, I think. Like, the first week was like trial and error, but afterwards I noticed a lot of similarities before from mainland China. They also sell a lot of food in the streets and. Then you just learn, you just copy.

**00:07:29 Interviewer**

Umm so it takes you about a week to like to learn how to do and what to do and what to say here, right?

**00:07:38 Interviewee**

I would say yes.

**00:07:40 Interviewer**

OK, thank you. Who do you look at to figure all that out in the first week? you mentioned like normally a friend, a stranger, a staff or other customer or any other thing or maybe decoration or thing like that?

**00:07:58 Interviewee**

Decoration? Oh. I think mainly the staff and my friends. I'm usually not asking strangers here I think that's a bit strange because you can ask the shop people who has the better knowledge, but sometimes strangers will come to you as they see that you are not convenient in a situation and then they will like to help you and try to give you some advice and what you should do in this situation.

**00:08:32 Interviewer**

Hmm. So most of the time you normally learn by approaching staff because they are the most knowledgeable person that we can ask for.

**00:08:47 Interviewee**

Yes. And before that, of course my friend because it's more convenient. You know, the person you don't have to talk to somebody you don't know, so. That's the order.

**00:08:57 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah. And. And then, beside the staff and your friends, any other choice, if you don't, you don't find staff or like for example the stores don't have staff or don't have friends around. Who do you look at to figure that out?

**00:09:22 Interviewee**

Sometimes there are descriptions like there's one shop nearby which completely operates without any staff. It's like a ....., fast noodle shop. And there are some Chinese, partly, English descriptions. So you try to read the Chinese descriptions or use your application to read them.

And if you don't understand. Ohh well then. That's a complicated part that you might really skip out the shop because you feel like I'm unsure how to do it.

**00:10:02 Interviewer**

OK, so if you do, I understand that if it's too difficult to understand what to do and what the process is, maybe you will, you may skip that shop into another one, right?

**00:10:20 Interviewee**

Yes, I would say so. I mean you cannot do it in every situation because sometimes you need something specific. But if you have several options, you would of course go for one which is more convenient for your side.

**00:10:37 Interviewer**

OK. And how do you learn what to do when getting the service in Taiwan?

**00:10:44 Interviewee**

Just do it. For example what I needed to learn is that you pay at the beginning, even if you sit inside the restaurant. In my country, you sit inside. But uh, usually often you pay at the end. Not always, but mostly. So it was like trying out and the people will tell you what to do or if you stand up, restaurants retire you. Or you can. Can you bring your dishes to this place so we can clean?

**00:11:09 Interviewer**

Oh, OK.

**00:11:14 Interviewee**

It is more easily.

**00:11:17 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah. It's mean, just do it and we will know it, right.

**00:11:22 Interviewee**

Yeah, I think so.

**00:11:24 Interviewer**

And let you notice how many steps that you need to do in this. If you're getting the service or good here in Taiwan.

**00:11:38 Interviewee**

I think it starts with. I have to decide what kind of service I want. Then I go on a second step and right to the side on the shop. When I decided on the shop, I will see for their specific offer and

decide on the specific offer and then it depends a little bit. It might be that I am 1st for example, for eating, I first get to service and then I pay or my first pay and then get to service. And in the last step, sometimes you have like. Clean up then.

**00:12:14 Interviewer**

So how do you figure all that steps out?

**00:12:23 Interviewee**

I think. OK, it also means that you don't have like a complete skill service, but if we consider that the service is quite cheap and the food or the stuff you get is also quite cheap. So it's I think it's quite OK to also like put your dishes somewhere else or like follow the rules of the store on how you should behave in the store.

**00:12:55 Interviewer**

So Have you ever missed any of that step or skipped any of that step in between during using the service?

**00:13:14 Interviewee**

I think despite the one with the cleaning up on the end, it's quite consistent, like trying to shop, get what you want and the place that and I would not say that there are any steps you can really skip at this point because you have to pay your servers.

**00:13:29 Interviewer**

Yeah, for sure.

Yes, yeah, maybe figure out what should we eat and pay is the most important step, right? For the other step sometime maybe we can skip or maybe we forget or thing like that, right?

**00:13:52 Interviewee**

Yes, sometimes we forget and then the owner calls you back. Or sometimes you're about like, all my friends already paid and they're not. Something you forget about what you eat part. Maybe it's not the most important, because usually if we don't know the store, we are guessing what we getting.

**00:14:18 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah. And are there any similar services from other countries that I see that you find similar here in Taiwan?

**00:14:37 Interviewee**

Well, that's a good question. I think yes, of course that you have like a person who's coming, who's standing there and like doing the cashier or something. That's, like, similar. Yeah, but I feel

it's much more service than, for example, in my country, for example. Also, if you go to a shop, a drug store, people will give you some small samples and they will try to or you can test this and test that. And they will be direct and also sometimes a little bit pushy. I had that last week that I went to a drug store, where I just wanted to buy a brush and they were like, put cream on my hand. I wanted to tell them, like, no, I don't want this treatment and. That's something you would not find in Germany. Often people in Germany don't like it if they are getting a dress, doing shopping or it's just OK in specific shops. Which are more personalized or family owned? But usually it's not so nice. So in our generation, we skip out the shops if we feel pressured and talk too, because then we feel like ohh, they just want us to buy something and maybe we don't want to.

**00:16:00 Interviewer**

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So it's a different right? It's different like the people here. Sometimes when you give the it's that sample that you will come to the drug store just for the brush. But like somebody a push you and give you some like hand creams or like things like that to your hand and you doesn't feel comfortable about that, right?

**00:16:25 Interviewee**

I mean it's nice until a specific border. It's like gives me like a sample, it's OK, but it's a like directly apply the cream on my hand and then I need them to wash it up. So it's like kind of like catch me and they push me to go to the next washing opportunity no, then I don't appreciate it.

**00:16:47 Interviewer**

Maybe it added more the unnecessary step in your expectation of the step because you just want to go in the store, buy what you want and then pay and then go back. But because of the that lady, you add more like unnecessary step in your buying process. So it's make you feel uncomfortable, right?

**00:17:03 Interviewee**

Yes, actually you can really formulate it like this.

**00:17:18 Interviewer**

Yes, thank you. And can you say any experience where you learn something new about getting service here in Taiwan?

**00:17:30 Interviewee**

Something new? Ohh. Maybe, for example, the opening hours. You have 7-11 here which operates like 24/7. So let's write the name and you can go there at 2:00 AM in the morning and get your ice cream or your coffee. And that's also really convenient. But this is really Germany. Germany closes shops on Sunday. Like. All shops are closed, just restaurants are allowed to open and it's like a regulation we still have due to our church. So they say people need to go to church.

So we close the shops. You could go to church, but that's the regulation. So I think to learn that this can work differently is and that. Yeah. Yeah, I think that's quite nice.

**00:18:33 Interviewer**

Like the convenient the store is very convenient here?

**00:18:36 Interviewee**

Yes.

**00:18:38 Interviewer**

And can I, can you say some? Like, what is your Chinese level?

**00:18:47 Interviewee**

My Chinese level?, yes. Ohh it's a bit hard. I didn't do a test. Yes I did my bachelors with Chinese background so I studied now.

**00:19:00 Interviewer**

Oh wow.

**00:19:02 Interviewee**

If you can't, yeah. I was in Taiwan. I think it. I skipped out sometime, but maybe around five years that I study Chinese. So I'm I think at a good level. I'm not getting up with every conversation. I can't watch fluently a movie in Chinese, but if I'm concentrating, I can slowly read the book or something.

**00:19:26 Interviewer**

Ohh wow do you think Chinese level play an important role to adapt with the new like service process here? to learn the new process?

**00:19:40 Interviewee**

I think it's really helpful. But I think a lot of shops, maybe the people don't speak English, but I have like English cards for you, so you can check what you want to eat. They already translated it and you can do a lot with signing. So using your hands gestures and to show what you want and of course having Chinese food is more easier, especially in situations that are really abstract. But for daily life, I think Taiwan is already quite good in the Asian context when it comes to communication with foreigners.

**00:20:36 Interviewer**

So for me, I understand that the Chinese level is is important, but not, even we if we don't have, don't know Chinese, we still use like gesture or body language or the people here is still willing to support and still have the translated version for us, right?

**00:20:52 Interviewee**

Yes, it's like it's a positive thing to have, but it's not necessary to live in Taiwan.

**00:20:58 Interviewer**

Hmm, yeah. And how does the technology help you understand how to get service here? Because you mentioned about Google Translate before.

**00:21:08 Interviewee**

Yeah. Uh, Google Translate is the most important tool in this kind of respect. Other services, other technology. Other technology to use is often quite difficult if you. Go for example. On the application, like shopping and just service there or you're trying to communicate with the bookstore in Chinese. That's us tracking. Because there for me a huge issue is I had to, I wanted to refund.

**00:21:46 Interviewee**

And they first put me in a checkbox system and the checkbox system can just speak Chinese, but the checkbox is not really good and identifying what I mean is I'm not really a native speaker in that language.

**00:21:46 Interviewer**

Umm.

**00:22:01 Interviewee**

So I had. I needed a long time to figure out which buttons I have to press until I got a supplier and then this like a service person and then this service person was also kind of not really knowledgeable in English and then explaining him what my issue was and then what I wanted was also complicated. And and so if it's not the personal communication or like online on the website of service then. Technology is, I think, more a barrier that we support this tool.

**00:22:36 Interviewer**

So you mean that for example, if in the daily life conversation we can use Google Translate, it's quite helpful, but it's in more complicated system ocean like using shopping app or an another shopping app that we cannot or we we are in the more like complicated situation like want to refund or get help from the service provider or customer service so it the app become. A barrier barrier, not a not a helpful tool, right?

**00:23:13 Interviewee**

Yes. Yes, it's just like the app has programmatic algorithm and these are specific specified for specific words and if you don't know these words which you don't know as not being a native speaker, the technology is more barrier, so maybe we go back to the like Chinese buffet and see

here right? Like for the reading and writing is placed more important role here for more complicated situation by using the...

**00:23:51 Interviewer**

By using other app right?

**00:23:54 Interviewee**

Yes.

**00:23:56 Interviewer**

Can you describe the time when you didn't know what to do in the shop or restaurant here?

**00:24:04 Interviewee**

Wow. No, I don't think so. Like usually the best solution is talk to people. People have answers. So if I like, don't know what to do, I will directly try to talk to somebody or ask my friend to talk and then I think the situation that's solved already.

**00:24:35 Interviewer**

Oh OK yeah, it's very useful to talk to you today and I think so far so good for my research question. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences. We with me and your insight are incredibly valuable to my study. Would you be open to being contacted in the future for further clarification or follow questions?

**00:24:59 Interviewee**

Sure.

**00:25:01 Interviewer**

Ohh thank you if you know any anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experience like yours, could you share their would you introduce them for me?

**00:25:15 Interviewee**

That you're asking for Lukas.

**00:25:23 Interviewer**

Yeah. Ohh. Thank you again for your time. Yeah. If you think maybe if I go further with this topic, I need to interview more and more, but actually you're the interview you are very fruitful for me because I got a lot like quite different aspect to be compared with with other interviewee I interviewed before.



**Date: June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 14:05**

**Location: Online**

**Interviewer: Jade - VWW**

**Interviewee: 008\_A**

**Gender: Female**

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**00:00:02 Interviewer**

And the recordings will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential, and your participation and response will remain anonymous, and your privacy will be respected throughout the study. Please be assured that your identity and any personal information.

You provide will be kept strictly confidential. Your responses will not be used for. Will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared with any other party.

Thank you very much. Again the 1st question I want to ask is how long have you been here in Taiwan?

**00:00:48 Interviewee**

So, I came in February, at the end of February. So, it has been like 3 1/2 months.

**00:00:55 Interviewer**

Oh yeah, Nice is Taiwan is your first foreign country you have visited, or have you traveled to other countries before?

**00:01:07 Interviewee**

It's not the first country I've visited or lived in. I've traveled to pretty much all the European countries and also some American and Australian countries.

**00:01:19 Interviewer**

Oh, nice. Can I ask where you are originally from?

00:01:26 Interviewee

Originally, I'm from Germany.

**00:01:28 Interviewer**

Oh, nice. Actually, I'm asking this question because I am also a foreigner here in in Taiwan and I have experience when shopping in my country. So, when in my country I know exactly what to do and but when I come here it's quite different for me when I want to buy a service. And how about you?

**00:01:52 Interviewee**

Yeah. It's the same. It's very different compared to back at home.

**00:01:57 Interviewer**

Yeah. And like, can you give him more information about that? Like when you are in the shop or restaurant or buying good or service here in Taiwan, what happened and how do you know what to do?

**00:02:14 Interviewee**

So, the biggest difference is the restaurant, because usually here you go, you know you go order by yourself and then you sit down. Like most restaurants, they don't have the waiter. And even if you go to a more, more famous restaurant, you will still go to pay for yourself. But in Germany you would never do that. Usually, you sit down and when you want to order, you look at the waiter. You don't raise your hand, or you don't shout IE or something. You just look at the waiter and the waiter will come and take your order. And when you want to pay you also look at the waiter. And the waiter will come and help you pay. You don't stand up to pay, so that's a really big difference.

**00:02:56 Interviewer**

Oh, oh, well. Yeah, interesting. And how do you know, how do you know what to say to them, in here in Taiwan?

**00:03:09 Interviewee**

So actually, I have some German friends who come before me and they actually taught me a lot about what to do, and I've also some experience from South Korea because I lived there before for one year and they have a similar system. So, I think in Asia, it's more common to just take the menu like cross what you want and go pay 1st and then sit down. I think it's in general more common in Asia compared to in Europe.

**00:03:40 Interviewer**

And how do you know what to do in using service here?

**00:03:47 Interviewee**

It depends. Sometimes I depend on my friend to tell me, like my Taiwanese friends will tell me what to do, and if I don't know what to do, I will have to ask the person what I need to do because I don't know.

**00:03:54 Interviewer**

Yes. OK. Yeah. And so, you're just gonna go to the staff, right?

**00:04:08 Interviewee**

Yeah,

**00:04:09 Interviewer**

OK. And when do you notice what to do or say?

**00:04:15 Interviewee**

So, I observe my Taiwanese friends doing it. And I just try to do the same as my Taiwanese friends.

**00:04:26 Interviewer**

OK, so like you have been here for like 3 months and a half. So how long did it take for you to figure out what to do or what to say here, when you go into a shop or restaurant or buy food here. How long it take you to be familiar with all the process?

**00:04:52 Interviewee**

I think like for just ordering and like restaurant and or saying maybe like two weeks or three weeks, but when I go to a new city, I still don't know. So, I think it's like a work in progress.

**00:05:07 Interviewer**

Oh so it means for like for Taiwan it's take you like two or three weeks, right?

**00:05:17 Interviewee**

Yeah, two or three weeks. But like when I go to Taipei, sometimes Taipei is different than Tainan. And then then I, Yes.

**00:05:24 Interviewer**

Oh. OK.

**00:05:28 Interviewee**

I'm still confused, so for some two or three weeks, but other cities, I don't know.

**00:05:33 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah, I got it. So I understand that you know this like city may have different like serviceable.

**00:05:42 Interviewer**

Yes. So here for Tainan, where you are living now is take you to or three weeks, but you are also aware of that if you go to other city, maybe you need more time to learn the like the process there.

**00:06:04 Interviewee**

Yeah.

**00:06:06 Interviewer**

Like what? I'm wondering what do you look at to figure that out? Like for example, do you figure that out by looking at the decorations or things like that because you mentioned that you observe your friends and beside your friends. Anything you, you know, got to figure out the process.

**00:06:31 Interviewee**

So mainly my friends, but I also look at how the shop is built. Because you know, if the kitchen is outside most time, we need to go outside to order so you can look at how the shop is built sometimes.

**00:06:45 Interviewer**

Oh. Hmm. And like, be beside your friends. Who do you look at to figure that out?

**00:06:59 Interviewee**

Also, the other people in there like, you know, the strangers.

**00:07:05 Interviewer**

All the strangers?

**00:07:05 Interviewee**

Sometimes.

**00:07:07 Interviewer**

The stranger is the other customer or?

**00:07:12 Interviewee**

Yeah, the other customers.

**00:07:14 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah, let you like. You went, did you do the thing you do usually work like you go to the shop, a restaurant and you buy good or service. So, you follow the process that you think this right? So does that work or any time it doesn't work or it works every time?

**00:07:39 Interviewee**

Ah. Sometimes it doesn't work because, but since they I look European, so, sometimes the staff will help me with what to do because they obviously know I'm foreign. I look like foreigner.

**00:07:49 Interviewer**

Yes. OK. Yeah. So can you give me an example when it doesn't work?

**00:08:04 Interviewee**

And the next, for example, I went to a different hot pot restaurant than we normally go, and you have to order using a machine or tablet. But it's only in Chinese, so I cannot, like you know, normally you go outside and order outside with the staff, but here you have to order on the tablet. So, we need to ask the person to help us order because we the tablet is in Chinese and we cannot read everything.

**00:08:38 Interviewer**

OK. So and like sometime you like the example is like it doesn't work because you know what to do in one hotspot shop before but the same process you already learn cannot, like, apply for the other hot pot shop, right?

**00:09:03 Interviewee**

Yes.

**00:09:04 Interviewer**

Thank you. And how do you, well, how do you learn what to do when getting the service here? Like I, I heard that you learn from your friends, you learn from how the restaurant like organize their furniture and also from like the fellow customer, the other customer. So how did you notice that? How many steps that you need to do here in Taiwan? Normally, how many steps?

**00:09:41 Interviewee**

Normally, like I say like 3 steps like 4. First when I go into the restaurant at the entrance, I look if they have the menu to, you know, to cross. Then I translate the menu too. Then I look at other people to see if they go outside to order and pay outside, or if they just go to order but not pay because sometimes you pay directly and sometimes you pay later and after I observe the others, I go to order myself.

**00:10:19 Interviewer**

Ah OK, so I heard that you look at the restaurant and see what they have and then you notice at the, like, the other customer that where they do and how they do inside or outside or first or like first or later, right and then you follow them and then you enjoy your meal and then you are finished, right.

**00:10:49 Interviewee**

Yes, OK.

**00:10:54 Interviewer**

Have you like have a ever you skip or miss, any step in between?

**00:11:06 Interviewee**

Oh miss, any step in between?

**00:11:10 Interviewer**

Or maybe skip?

**00:11:10 Interviewee**

Sometimes. Yeah, sometimes I don't order. You know, you usually go eat food in groups sometimes. Sometimes it's some European or like me and my friends. And we also have Taiwanese people coming together with us. Then I will not do anything and let Taiwanese person order.

**00:11:18 Interviewer**

Yes. OK, so it's make everything simple, right?

**00:11:37 Interviewee**

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**00:11:38 Interviewer**

And actually you do not need to learn anything.

**00:11:42 Interviewee**

Yes. So Taiwanese person is there nothing.

**00:11:46 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah.

**00:11:50 Interviewer**

Is there any similar service from other countries that are similar compared to be here in Taiwan?

**00:12:03 Interviewee**

I think like when you go shopping like to the shopping mall, when you go to the shopping mall and you buy like clothes, I think everything is very similar all over the world. Because it's also like the same shops everywhere, like it doesn't matter if I go to H&M, in Taiwan or in Europe or in Australia, it's always the same like pink clothes try on pay. So, I think like the shopping mall is easy but it's more difficult. It's like the marketplace and the small shop.

**00:12:38 Interviewer**

Oh OK, so maybe the for the international brand is it's like easier. Like because they have the similar standardized process but for the local ones, the small one or the traditional one like you said that the market or the small shop, maybe the process is different. And did your past experience you help you to figure out what to do here?

**00:13:19 Interviewee**

I would say no. Because, like maybe it helped me to know that I need to observe people too, and then copy what they do. But the process is different in every country, so I cannot like if I order food in Europe, it's like 100% different than order food in in, in Taiwan. So, it doesn't help me, but I know that I need to look at other people to know what I need to do so. My past experience won't help me to order, but my past experience helped me to get to know how to order.

**00:14:06 Interviewer**

Ah. Oh. It's like it's not help you to know the step, but you have you to know how to learn the step right?

**00:14:17 Interviewee**

Yes, that's right.

**00:14:17 Interviewer**

Yeah, interesting. And how can you notice the differences? What is the sign that you know that is different?

**00:14:30 Interviewee**

Well, a sign is because I think like what I consider personally what I think is normal here nobody do it, so I know what I think is normal, not normal here.

**00:14:47 Interviewer**

Can you give me like the example or or more detail about that for example any that normal?

**00:14:55 Interviewee**

Yeah, like for example, when you when you go to in Germany, each person order one dish and you don't share, but here people. If I go eat with my Taiwanese friend, they will ask me what I want to eat. And if I want to share. Uh. So that's different. Like if we are not every shop, but sometimes it happens and they will ask you, but I would not ask in Germany because everybody just order one meal. OK. Yeah. Yeah, I think it's like the culture different, right? Can you share an experience where you learn something new about getting service in Taiwan?

**00:15:45 Interviewee**

Yes, when I needed to buy like to have something repaired on my tablet, my Samsung tablet. So, in Germany I go to Samsung store, and I will buy the because my pen tip broke. So, in Germany I just go to the store, I buy the pen tip and I change it myself. Here I go to Samsung store. They tell me to go to the maintenance part. So, I had to go up some stairs. They asked me. So when I arrived there they asked me to leave my tablet with them and they will change it for me and I will just come back one hour later. So it's super different because it take me one. In order to change it because they do it for me and in Germany, I just go by and change myself.

**00:16:36 Interviewer**

Oh, OK yes. And what is like I think it's the issue is quite unique like what do you feel do you prefer? Do you prefer the normal the similar process in Germany? Like you buy it, and you change yourself, or you prefer the other process like you come there, go to another stair. They will change for you when you come back. What do you prefer and why?

**00:17:12 Interviewee**

I prefer Germany because it's more time efficient like I just go and then I change whenever I have time. But I understand why people think Taiwan is more better because it's you don't have to do it yourself and you cannot make the mistake yourself. But I still prefer Germany because it's just much faster.

**00:17:35 Interviewer**

Yeah, it's interesting. What is? Can I ask what is your Chinese level?

**00:17:44 Interviewee**

I can understand I can talk a little bit, I would say. Beginner moving to intermediate like between beginner and intermediate.

**00:17:57 Interviewer**

Ah, nice. And do you think Chinese play important, like Chinese level plays an important role in learning service process here?

**00:18:07 Interviewee**

Yes, definitely. Because usually people don't speak English, so if you go to a store and you don't know what to do? You need to ask the staff and it's easier if you ask in Chinese.

**00:18:21 Interviewer**

Umm yeah, so I like. If you don't know Chinese, what would you do to make other understand you?

**00:18:30 Interviewee**

Google Translate.

**00:18:32 Interviewer**

Let's just say, OK, so related to the Google Translate and technology, how does technology help you to understand to get service here?

**00:18:45 Interviewee**



Because obviously my Chinese is not perfect, so one time I had the problem that my credit card wasn't working, so I asked the staff what I can do but they tell me in Chinese and I don't understand. So we so I need to ask they put it in translate and then I understand better.

**00:19:09 Interviewer**

Like, are there any other apps you are using besides Google Translate?

**00:19:14 Interviewee**

Papago it's the same, but it's also translator, but I think it's the translator made in Korea, so the translation is better. Sometimes it makes more sense than Google.

**00:19:27 Interviewer**

Uh, what is it? What is the name of the app?

It's a Tobago. A-P-A-G-O yes AAP AGO.

**00:19:39 Interviewer**

Ah, thank you. Can you describe the time when you didn't know what to do when you like, when you come to a shop or restaurant or a store here and you don't know what to do? And what is it? What is the situation and what did you do?

**00:19:59 Interviewee**

So when I go to the hospital. I don't know where to go. So first we ask at the information we ask a person like oh I have. I showed her my phone with the appointment and she just tell us where to go.

But then she, after she tells us where to go, the doctor told us to go to to other place to pick up medicine. But we don't know where the place is, so we need to go back all the way to the.

Because that is the only person speaking like tell it can tell us where the place is, so we took like 2 hours in the hospital because we got lost like four times and we always need to ask people, like, where do we go, how do we go?

**00:20:42 Interviewer**

OK. So like, What did you do in that situation what you asked or any other thing you do?

**00:20:57 Interviewee**

We asked. We ask, and we also we ask and we actually ask the person from the information to come with us to make sure that we go to right place like not only ask but ask her to accompany.

**00:21:17 Interviewer**

OK. Yeah, only us and also us accompany with you to go to the exactly the place that you should go right?

**00:21:28 Interviewee**

Yes, because it's so confusing.

**00:21:32 Interviewer**

And who do you prefer to get help when you are in the confusing situation like that?

**00:21:42 Interviewee**

Usually. Usually just the staff members like and shop. I will ask the staff members in hospital; I ask the information members so. Because I know. And if I sometimes have no idea what to do, I will call my Taiwanese friend and see if they know.

**00:22:06 Interviewer**

Yes, Taiwanese friend is like. It's like the people who can solve every problem, right?

**00:22:16 Interviewee**

Yeah.

**00:22:20 Interviewer**

Besides people, beside of asking the staff and friends, which one which method or which tool or which one do you prefer to get help? If you are into a confused situation.

**00:22:39 Interviewee**

Google, I asked the Internet.

**00:22:42 Interviewer**

You ask the Internet to see how to what to do right?

**00:22:48 Interviewee**

Yeah.

**00:22:53 Interviewer**

OK. And do you think when you already learn what to do, what can you, what have you learned can apply to the other situation?

**00:23:09 Interviewee**

Hmmm. Like Taiwanese are really nice, so it's, you know, in Germany when you ask for help, people sometimes are not so nice. So, in Germany, I don't like to ask for help.

But in Taiwan, they are always nice. So I learned that it's better to ask for help, because actually Taiwanese also ask help a lot of time. So, it's more common to get help here.

**00:23:34 Interviewer**

Oh wow, you are so smart. Yeah, because the people here are more friendly, right? So that's why you choose to ask them.

**00:23:46 Interviewee**

Yeah.

**00:23:48 Interviewer**

So, for like it's different if you are in, in Germany. So, you will maybe in Germany you will do the same strategy like you will see what is the best way to get help there. So, it's the best way to get help in Taiwan is asking.

**00:24:07 Interviewee**

Yes. Because usually everybody is. Yeah, everybody's super nice. Like sometimes they are busy, but they still try to be polite and nice. So, I think asking help is really good.

**00:24:21 Interviewer**

Did you find that's something you learn here? Like you, the steps or the idea you learn from here that cannot apply to other place, other process?

**00:24:39 Interviewee**

Yes, because after all like getting a service is very, very different in every country and I feel like Taiwan is some like they have processes that other countries don't have.

**00:24:55 Interviewer**

Oh yes. And I think it's quite it's so far, so good. And it's super valuable and fruitful information for me right now to having the conversation with you actually you are the queen of gossip, I guess because you are, you get the longest I get the longest conversation with you with a lot of information. And I find the right person I guess, And thank you so much for sharing your experience with me. Your insight are incredible and valuable to our study. And who would you be to? Would you be open to be contacted in the future if we need, like further clarification or follow up questions?

**00:25:47 Interviewee**

Of course.

**00:25:49 Interviewer**

Thank you if you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing the experience like you, could you introduce me to that person?

**00:26:03 Interviewee**

Of course.

**00:26:04 Interviewer**

Thank you. And thank you again for your time. If you if there is anything else, you would like to share please let me know and I will be in touch with you if there are more questions.

**00:26:19 Interviewee**

OK. Thank you.

**00:26:21 Interviewer**

Thank you. Thank you very much. Yeah, it's very nice to have you today. Thank you for your time and for sharing. I think it is quite unique and different for me and for to be compared with other interviews I already have. Yeah, because your perspective is quite unique and different. And I felt it's very valuable for our research.

**00:26:49 Interviewer**

OK. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you for the time. Thank you.

**00:26:56 Interviewer**

Bye.

**Date: June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 21:00**

**Location: Library**

**Interviewer: Michelle - VWW**

**Interviewee: 009\_K**

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**Interviewer:** Thanks for being here today so firstly can you share how long have you been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** so i've been here uh since february so it is four months

**Interviewer:** okay so is taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before

**Interviewee:** I've been traveling to other countries before

**Interviewer:** So can you share some countries that you have visited?

**Interviewee:** so Myanmar; Vietnam; like America; Canada; Spain; France; Italy and Japan; Korea and many other countries

**Interviewer:** All right so where are you originally from?

**Interviewee:** So i'm from europe

**Interviewer:** Actually I'm asking this question because i'm also a foreigner here in taiwan and i have the same experience when shopping in my country i already know what to do but when i come here is quite different when i want to buy a service here and what's about you?

**Interviewee:** so yes and it is more efficient than in my country because i was in i was in Switzerland and i was also in france and here is more straightforward in some ways

**Interviewer:** When you're in a shop or restaurant you are using or buying a goose and services in Taiwan, how do you know what to say?

**Interviewee:** so actually i get in touch with some locals and then i can learn from them and then i can know what to say

**Interviewer:** and how do you know what to do?

**Interviewee:** i observe people and how they act and i try to imitate them

**Interviewer:** So can you share with me some more specific details like what sentence or what action that you learn from them?

**Interviewee:** okay so for example i give you like a recent thing is yesterday i ordered some chicken with some noodles and i didn't know if it was like at the beginning if it was pork or so but i've asked and then later on i knew how to order by myself because i could recognize the characters

**Interviewer:** when you come to the shop or the restaurant how long do you notice that? I mean like how many minutes?

**Interviewee:** okay so it depends if the menu is big but normally after 30 seconds so it doesn't mean you learn very quick i mean it's about observation and remembering so it's more about memory

**Interviewer:** Okay so when you come to the new places or restaurant or in the shop who do you look at to figure out what to do or what to say?

**Interviewee:** so if i'm alone or i mean if i'm alone i'm i'm asking the the the people like serving and and and so and the owner and if i'm with other people like friends i'm asking my friends

**Interviewer:** Not just about the people um when you come to the places what do you look at to figure out i mean are there any pictures or decorations or anything that you look at?

**Interviewee:** i look at characters chinese characters like for example in in taiwan in this instance and i try to identify each of them and try to understand quickly

**Interviewer:** So that means you know chinese before?

**Interviewee:** yes i knew chinese before

**Interviewer:** okay can you share more about your chinese level?

**Interviewee:** uh let's say my chinese level is advanced like intermediary

**Interviewer:** So do you think Chinese play an important role when buying service here?

**Interviewee:** absolutely, i think you you need in general to have some basic chinese but it's better to have like uh to know some more characters i think it's essential to live here and survive

**Interviewer:** you quite are different with uh other respondent before does i interview like most of them have their very basic chinese or don't know chinese but like can you imagine that if you don't know chinese like what will you do to make other people understand you?

**Interviewee:** oh very good question so i will try to use i think translators and for example google translate and some some tools eventually some some i will take pictures and i will try to to ask yeah in order to communicate with pictures

**Interviewer:** So if you have to ask someone who or which one do you prefer to get help like you prefer to ask their staff or other customer or from friends which one that you prefer?

**Interviewee:** so first uh friends because i know them but otherwise is the closest person uh near me i see if it's their they are friendly or not otherwise that staff

**Interviewer:** So can you give me a detailed example like one time that you asked for help from others?

**Interviewee:** absolutely so one time i was um i was at a restaurant and i wanted to know uh i didn't know the character for pork and i wanted to know if it was with pork or not and then they they told me not and it was just like regular customers ordering things at the restaurant

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose that way?

**Interviewee:** because i wanted to avoid uh this meat as as much as possible because i'm not eating it and uh that's was my my first question and then the my second question it was like what will you recommend and to get some advices

**Interviewer:** Can you share with me how many steps that you need to do in some specific situation?

**Interviewee:** yes uh actually one step and if there are some difficulties uh true uh some people even if you speak the local language because if you appear different than like local they will

assume that you don't speak the local language and even if you speak good chinese to them they will not hear it will be like uh blocked

**Interviewer:** Can you describe for me what is the specific service step that you usually apply?

**Interviewee:** okay so i will i will ask a question and i will say like for example to ask in chinese like what is this or your true roma like is is there pork to avoid the the meats as much as possible

**Interviewer:** So you know that actually when I pay service here there's many steps that I have to do for you. You already know Chinese so have you missed any step or you skipped any step during your service encounters?

**Interviewee:** uh absolutely if i knew the characters entirely uh because i cannot say my my reading is good my speaking is much better um i will go directly and order directly without asking and without any step

**Interviewer:** Why did you skip that step

**Interviewee:** because i knew how to to order from myself and without any help

**Interviewer:** Are there any similar services from other countries that are similar compared to taiwan. I mean uh from the country that you traveled before and your home country, are there any similar services when compared with taiwan?

**Interviewee:** To order food i think it was in India and some restaurants they don't have like pictures of food or so i have to ask them and use more steps and even more steps than here

**Interviewer:** Did those past experiences help you to figure out what to do here? I mean did you apply any previous experience to do service here?

**Interviewee:** yes absolutely i think your experience traveling is building up some skills and to adapt yourself to the to some situations and for example restaurants ordering stuff or how to react or act in certain circumstances

**Interviewer:** So can you give me some specific examples?

**Interviewee:** i will ask if it's fresh if it's like freshly made for example when i was in India i'm retired i've asked if it was like a chicken that was made recently or so because i didn't want to be food poisoned and i did the same here to ask not for chicken but for seafood but for served

**Interviewer:** Can you share an experience when you learned something new about getting service ?

**Interviewee:** in Thailand, yes so it's like uh some new information that you could add to your previous knowledge and that you will have automated in the future when you order things

**Interviewer:** you learn to do a service from who?

**Interviewee:** oh i i learned from um from um i think from family members who used to travel also quite a bit so i i used to learn skills from them and also some friends yeah

**Interviewer:** So they are Chinese or they are foreigners but they know chinese?

**Interviewee:** so some are some are taiwanese i mean like some are foreigners

**Interviewer:** You mentioned that you were observed by other people to know what to do and what to say so can you give me or describe more specifically about this process when you meet specifically could you please give me more detail about it?

**Interviewee:** okay so i will i will ask for example if it if the salmon was recently finished or where it was fished and so i would you like a taiwanese friend asking about the the food

**Interviewer:** when you go to the new places you prefer to go directly to the counters or you prefer to just um take time to look around to do observation before making an order?

**Interviewee:** yes uh very good question so i observe before and then i i make a decision how long uh it could take one minute to observe and to think if it's good quality or not if it's worth ordering there or not and so on

**Interviewer:** what is the first thing that you look at when you go to new places?

**Interviewee:** um very good question so i try to see uh if it looks clean that's the first criteria that is the most important one for me because uh if the place looks clean it means like the food should be also clean.

**Interviewer:** yeah i don't mean about how you rate the service i mean like when you want to know what to do what is the first thing that you usually look at?

**Interviewee:** i look at uh i look at the menu or like i look at at people order people yeah that's the first thing i do

**Interviewer:** so at here there are some local restaurant local shop and there's also some modern place like mcdonald's or like McDonald i think it's um similar when in some countries it's not can you share it's different

**Interviewee:** yeah actually it's not to criticize mcdonald's but here um it's not only me but with a classmate we had the worst mcdonald's ever in our life and the the fish was not unfrozen completely and it was really a bad experience and we will never have like a mcdonald's anymore here

**Interviewer:** But when comparing a step to another McDonald's here with another country that is the same uh no it's a bit um yeah it's a bit the same?

**Interviewee:** some things are different because in my country you have a screen you can put like the order and so and where i've been in that mcdonald they didn't have any screen so they had like you had to speak to the cashier and ask what you wanted to order then he or she gave you a number for the order yeah so it was more like interpersonal than like a robot or automated

**Interviewer:** Okay so how about some local restaurants?

**Interviewee:** i think for local restaurant there's more thing that you have to do there so local restaurants do they have to be local food or could it be like for example japanese food and local restaurant

**Interviewer:** um taiwanese local restaurants

**Interviewee:** oh i can't i haven't been to too many to be honest like um it's very limited i have a very limited experience about it yeah it should be like um yeah i think the the hardest way it was to use the the the sheet like to to choose the meat or to like with a with a pen that was the hardest



part and this is completely different from any other places i've been and that's the biggest challenge that i've encountered i encountered here

**Interviewer:** So how do you know how you notice those differences?

**Interviewee:** oh i've i've experienced it uh firsthand i wanted to order things and you had to take like a pen with a paper so i felt a bit uh i feel a bit overwhelmed to be honest a bit just a bit yeah

**Interviewer:** So the first time I mean the first time you come here the first meal that you eat here how do you know what to do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** so i was with a friend so i my first restaurant was with a friend

**Interviewer:** so so they do everything for you

**Interviewee:** yes exactly they they ask me orally and then they wrote on the paper

**Interviewer:** And for the next time do you remember uh one of the things that you have to do?

**Interviewee:** yes absolutely so i i try to memorize and to not be lost for the next time

**Interviewer:** So that means you apply all of the steps that your friend did before and do it by yourself?

**Interviewee:** yes as mentioned i will imitate the the steps that were taken by my friend

**Interviewer:** So are there any situations that you and the staff misunderstand each other?

**Interviewee:** yes absolutely and we had even to um left leave the restaurant we we pay but we didn't want to eat there because uh we thought it was like pork and so and um yeah it was like um an experience that we had we're leaving leaving the place precipitously

**Interviewer:** Are there any situations that you and staff encounter during their service encounter that misunderstand each other?

**Interviewee:** so yes uh once i was in a it was like a local coffee shop and i used to go there like often and i tell them that i wanted something different not um like peanuts butter with bread but they serve me peanut butter with bread because i used to order that all the time and that time i mean not all the time it was the second time and they gave me like peanut butter instead of croissant yeah.

**Interviewer:** So how do they notice that they are misunderstanding you or you notice that there's something wrong here?

**Interviewee:** oh i've let it go i i haven't mentioned and i let it go because i didn't want to waste time so i just i just say okay whatever okay so

**Interviewer:** Is this related to the language barriers or others?

**Interviewee:** no i think it was related to poor customer service because i was i was talking in english actually and they understand perfectly i think they weren't listening to the customers how do you notice that um they were talking to each other and they were not very professional they were not acting very professionally

**Interviewer:** okay so do you usually use technology to help you understand how to get service here?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, so I used it but it was taking time. Actually, it was taking a picture with my iPhone and then using the translate directly with the copy paste and put it on google translate from the picture. But yeah, I use it once.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so if you don't have a phone or are out of battery, what will you do?

**Interviewee:** I will ask around. I will ask with people like the closest, the nearest person. Whatever the person is, I will ask them to help me.

**Interviewer:** So, can you tell me what kind of questions that you usually ask them to get information?

**Interviewee:** So, I will ask them what is this in Mandarin and what is that and what do you recommend and yeah, things like this.

**Interviewer:** By Chinese or English?

**Interviewee:** So, I will use the local language. I will use Mandarin. I don't know Taiwanese at the moment so I cannot communicate with them just in Mandarin.

**Interviewer:** So, do you think that when you learn what to do and then you can apply this experience for every situation?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I think you can apply it to every situation, like I mean any location, you can apply the same system.

**Interviewer:** So, are there any specifics or fixed steps that are in your mind?

**Interviewee:** There's a certain logic to the steps and it's related to my goal. So, what I will order, what I want and what I want to avoid and how fresh things are.

**Interviewer:** I mean like the fixed steps that you have to do when you enter the restaurant or the shops. Are there any fixed steps in your mind?

**Interviewee:** Yes, there are some fixed steps.

**Interviewer:** Can you describe in detail?

**Interviewee:** So, I will try to find the paper to write like what I wanted to order. So, this is like a first step and that I will use all the time at Taiwanese restaurants. And the second step or it could be before sometimes is like asking the chef what is recommended and what is good to order for me.

**Interviewer:** So, why do you think so? Like why do you think that you can use those steps for every situation?

**Interviewee:** Because the setup is relatively the same in each place. So, yeah, if it's a local place.

**Interviewer:** So, if you cannot apply those steps, then are there any situations that you cannot apply the common steps that you usually do?

**Interviewee:** I don't remember any situation that I haven't used those steps. It was kind of the same each time.

**Interviewer:** Okay, why do you think so?

**Interviewee:** Because the logic is the same for each location and so the steps are also the same.

**Interviewer:** Are you the one who likes to visit a place many times or you want to explore different kinds of restaurant, different services?

**Interviewee:** Very good question. I go to the same place if the quality is quite good. But I would like to explore more places to have more information about where I can choose, like having some more variety. But I will go to the same place. There's like a mala place. I mean like place hotpot. It's really good.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, I used to go there. It's a dry hotpot, right? (5:40) No water in this hotpot?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, exactly. Spicy one. Yes, the spicy one where everyone goes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so you prefer the services that are easy for you to take or if there is any complex step, do you try to avoid it?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I try to avoid it because it's going to be a waste of time otherwise. So, I take the easiest place. I mean regarding steps, like the easiest steps.

**Interviewer:** So, how do you notice or realize they're easy steps or complex steps?

**Interviewee:** Just by experience, by experimenting if it's like a place with easy steps or hard steps.

**Interviewer:** So, you mean does it by your choice if you want it? Do you prefer the easiest ways?

**Interviewee:** I think so, yeah.

**Interviewer:** Like you apply the easiest way in your mind before for every situation?

**Interviewee:** Yes, most of the time, yeah. Because I don't like to be wasting time. But it's not always the good way. But I mean the fastest way is not the good way.

**Interviewer:** So, if there are any steps that you don't know, how do you notice that?

**Interviewee:** Oh, you can make some mistakes along the way, but then you learn about the system or the steps that you have to take beforehand.

**Interviewer:** So, I mean in some situations that you don't know what to do at that time or you do the wrong thing, you notice that by yourself or look at other people or someone tell you about that. Can you describe in more detail?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I will check my situation and what is going on. And if it's not coinciding with what I expect, then it means that I took the wrong steps.

**Interviewer:** Can you give me a specific situation?

**Interviewee:** It has to be only a restaurant?

**Interviewer:** Any service

**Interviewee:** Okay, so I can't have it in mind really. Yeah, I think it's more in hospitality and the way certain hotels are working here. And yeah, I think it has to be only here in Taiwan? Okay, so for example, in Japan like...

**Interviewer:** It must be in Taiwan.

**Interviewee:** So, yeah, how the onsen, the hot spring are working and I was not aware of the steps to take because I was alone. And that made me realize like you have to take certain steps and follow a certain system to use the service.

**Interviewer:** How do you notice what to do? Because you mentioned that at that time you don't know what to do and then what helps you to realize?

**Interviewee:** Oh, yeah, so I want you to... There are two sides like it's the women and the men. So I was confused like I want you to... Women, but then I changed.

**Interviewer:** So, how about the encounters with their staff? I mean the service encounter where you have to participate with two people. The customer and their employee. In which instance? In which situation? Like, for example, when you go to the restaurants or the shop, are there any times that you don't realize what step that you have to do?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, so I was in a... It was a Thai restaurant and I mean it's owned by Taiwanese. But the way it was made, made me leave the place quickly. Because actually I had to use the paper with the pen to choose the things. But they didn't tell me and I didn't know. And it was taking a lot of time for them to take orders also. So I left.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so many times you mentioned that if it wastes your time and it makes you feel hard to know, you will leave that.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, exactly, yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so are there any special occasions that you don't leave and still use that service?

**Interviewee:** If the quality is very good and if the service is outstanding and if the... Yeah, I mean the quality is good because the price is related to the quality also. I will use it again and again.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so that means those play very familiar with you?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I think they are part of my environment and kind of lifestyle also.

**Interviewer:** When you come to Taiwan, do you prefer the local services or some European style or international style?

**Interviewee:** So I prefer the local style because I mean if you go to Taiwan, you don't want to have things that are similar to where you're from. So yeah, mostly only like local services or places.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so now can you summarize for me one of the things that you can apply to the local services here?

**Interviewee:** The local services? A summary? I don't understand.

**Interviewer:** Like the structure of the service staff that you use to the local situation.

**Interviewee:** Oh, okay. So yeah, just check the paper, the menu, use the pen and ask again and again for the local restaurant and then you will survive by taking those steps.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so is there anything that you want to share with me?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sometimes I think they should make more English menu and I think some places don't have like foreign languages, so it could be like overwhelming if you're like a visitor or if you're living here.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so I think that's all of the questions that I want to ask you today. So thank you so much for sharing your experience with me and I think your insight will be variable to this study. So would you be open to be in contact in the future for further clarification or follow-up questions?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, sure.

**Interviewer:** So if you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experience like yours, could you share their contact details?

**Interviewee:** Yes, sure.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thanks again for your time.

**Interviewee:** You're welcome.

**Date:** June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Start time:** 21:00

**Location:** NCKU Campus

**Interviewer:** Michelle - VWW

**Interviewee:** 010\_L

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**Interviewer:** So thanks for being here today. So can you share with me how long have you been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** I arrived in Taiwan since February and now it's June, almost 4 months.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:** No, it's not my first country. I have already arrived in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and now Taiwan. Yeah, it's not my first time going abroad.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so can you share where are you originally from? I'm from Vietnam. Actually, I'm asking this question because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan. And I have the experience when shopping in my country. Like you know, in my country, I already know what to do. But when I come here, it's quite different when I want to buy a service. So what about you? Are there any differences?

**Interviewee:** For me, it's not so difficult because I think it's quite the same when I go to another country. But the difficult thing is that I need to know Chinese when ordering something or seeing something. It's difficult for me.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so let's talk about something similar first. As you mentioned, there are some similar things when comparing Taiwan with the previous country that you go to. Can you share something similar?

**Interviewee:** Like when I arrived in Malaysia, I also have to go to Chinatown. And then they also have QR code on the table. And then I have to scan the QR code first and then order later. And also in Taiwan, it's exactly the same. So I think it's so similar. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so when you are in the shop, the restaurant, or you are buying a goods or service in Taiwan, how do you know what to say?

**Interviewee:** I just say it like I don't know Chinese. And then I just say 你好 and then 我要这个. That's it.

**Interviewer:** And I mean like how do you know those sentences?

**Interviewee:** I learn it from Chinese films or sometimes my friend just shares those sentences with me. That's it.

**Interviewer:** And how do you know what to do?

**Interviewee:** Like the first time, I will observe other people when they go to the restaurant before me. And then if I didn't see anyone, I will use Google Translate to ask the owner of the shop.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Ok, so when you go to the new places, when do you notice what to do or what to say?

**Interviewee:** I think it's quite hard or sometimes it's quite difficult because of the language barrier. But for me, observation is really the best way. All the time, I observe other people and then I follow them. And next time, I observe more and then I can improve more with my behavior.

**Interviewer:** So does it take you a lot of time to do observation?

**Interviewee:** Maybe second time, maybe twice, I guess.

**Interviewer:** So when you go to new places, does it take you a long time? Like how many seconds, like how many minutes that you realize what to do or what to say?

**Interviewee:** I think if I go to a new Chinese restaurant, I think it takes around for me from one to two minutes to see how everything works for me, maybe around that time.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so who do you look at to figure that out? Friends, strangers, staff or other customers?

**Interviewee:** I will look at everyone because if my friend is also their first time to go, maybe also they are not really get used to it. And then I will observe staff, strangers and also other people. All the people, I could say that.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so can you give me some more specific example?

**Interviewee:** Ok, so like if I go to the Chinese buffet or something, and then I don't know where to see the plate or something to see like chopsticks. And then I could observe strangers and also previous customers. I could ask them or I could like follow the new people coming. I think yeah.

**Interviewer:** Ok, good. So why do you choose that way?

**Interviewee:** It's easier to ask other people in Chinese. So I just stay in one place, I observe others and then I follow them. It's so much easier than asking in a language that you don't know.

**Interviewer:** So does that mean you try to avoid talking with other people?

**Interviewee:** If they can speak English, it's easy for me. But if they don't know English, it's so difficult for me. That's why I'm too lazy to talk to them.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so not just about people. So what are other things that you look at to figure what to do or what to say? I mean some pictures or the restaurant decorations or anything?

**Interviewee:** Sorry?

**Interviewer:** Ok, so as you mentioned before, you usually look at other people, right? So not just about people. I mean are there anything like pictures or the decorations of that places?

**Interviewee:** Oh yeah, definitely. Like if I go to new restaurant and they have signature thing, like really huge picture on the wall. Yeah, definitely I go see that and I go tell them that I want the food in this picture.

**Interviewer:** So can you give me some more specific example on those situation?

**Interviewee:** Ok, so let's say beef yi mian or huang mian in Taiwan. I didn't know it before, but then I go to a lot of Taiwanese restaurants, a lot of pictures, a lot of people eat this. And then I just order because everyone eat it. Yeah, that's it.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so can you share with me how you learn? What to do when getting service or goods in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** I think buying something is quite similar, but the services may be different. So let's say if I go to the supermarket, like sometimes I have to check out by myself. And then I have to read the guidelines to see how to check out by myself. And I have to read it carefully because the services here are different from those in my country. And then I have to read it a lot before doing it.

**Interviewer:** So how do you notice those differences?

**Interviewee:** I think maybe because I haven't experienced it before. That's why I see it so different compared to previous experience that I already have.

**Interviewer:** So as you mentioned before, you do some reading, right? So this is on English or Chinese?

**Interviewee:** Sometimes it is English, but most of the times it is Chinese. And it is so difficult because I have to use Google Translate all the time. And sometimes it's not too at all.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so did you notice how many steps that you need to do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** Sometimes yes, but sometimes no. Because for example, if the guidelines in Chinese is so small and then I cannot translate it through Google Translate. And then I skip it and then it's so difficult to follow all the steps.

**Interviewer:** So that means you usually missed some steps in the service, right? So how do you realize that you missed some steps?

**Interviewee:** Maybe if I have to check it by myself and then I don't see my debit card or credit card deduct my money. And then it is the time that I know I meet some staff.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, so are there any fixed scripts in your mind when you're using the service here? What? I mean like you already have some script in your mind. Like step one, I need to do that. Step two, I need to do that.

**Interviewee:** No, I don't do that. It's too complex for me. I'm so simple. I just go to any place. If they don't have guidelines, I go ask them. That's it. I cannot remember the script in my mind. It's too complex.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so the first time that you go to Taiwan, I mean the very first time here, you buy the service by yourself or you go with others?

**Interviewee:** I go with my friends and it's easier for me because we have a big group. And then if we don't know something, we can discuss it with each other before asking others. And it's way much easier if I have to be all by myself here.



**Interviewer:** So do you think, so can you remember all of the things that your friends help you and you can apply next time by yourself?

**Interviewee:** Ok, so I remember the first time that I catch the bus here and I didn't wave at the bus and then the bus driver didn't stop. And then my friend had to tell me that I need to wave it all the time if I want to catch on the bus. And then the next time I always wave the bus before it's coming to me.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so can you share with me are there any differences when compared with the service of Taiwan and your home country?

**Interviewee:** I think the service in Taiwan is pretty good compared to my country, compared to other countries. But sometimes, I guess, it's more traditional. And then, for example, if I go to a restaurant, the local people here prefer to eat alone. And then they eat so quietly. But in other countries like in Western or maybe also in my home country in Vietnam, they eat more loudly, louder, and they eat more loudly. And I think sometimes it's so funny. But in Taiwan, it's more like it's so quiet. And then sometimes I eat alone and also I feel a little bit stressed.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so you mentioned you traveled to some countries before. So did those best experiences help you to figure out what to do here?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, definitely. Like every country, they really have something really different. And then the more experience I have, the better situation I can handle later on. So I think it really works for me.

**Interviewer:** So can you share some specific examples?

**Interviewee:** It's really, ok, it's quite a difficult question and I need to think of it. But let's say, I cannot think of anything right now.

**Interviewer:** Ok, for example, just think about sometimes that you go to some convenience store or some restaurants or supermarkets. Like sometimes that you have to face with their staff.

**Interviewee:** I think for me, convenience stores, everywhere are the same. Even in Taiwan, Singapore or any country that I've been to. For me, buying something in a convenience store is so easy. If you want exactly the thing you want to buy. But if you don't want to, you have to ask. It is a problem.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so let's talk about the language. So can you share your Chinese level when you come here?

**Interviewee:** I think I don't know Chinese a lot. I just know like really basic words to communicate simply here.

**Interviewer:** So do you think that Chinese play an important role when buying service here?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, definitely because I live in Tainan. And then I heard that in Taipei, English is more common. And in Tainan, it's less common. Chinese is everywhere. If we don't know it, we have to depend a lot on our mobile phone. And sometimes it's not cool because you have to use it all the time. So Chinese is a really important thing to live here.

**Interviewer:** So you mentioned that you have to rely a lot on your phone to do Google Translate, right? So let's imagine that your phone is our battery. So at that time, what will you do to help other people understand you?

**Interviewee:** It's so difficult. Yeah, it's such a difficult situation. But I think I will try my best to find young people because I hope that young people or students can speak English. And then I will use English to ask them for help. It is the thing I think in my mind if my phone died.

**Interviewer:** So did you try to reach any stranger when you use service here?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, totally. Local Taiwanese, all of them, most of them are so friendly. And it's so easy to ask them for help. Even strangers or even our acquaintances. I think they are so easygoing and friendly. So I think it's so safe to ask for help in Taiwan.

**Interviewer:** So can you share for me some specific example that you ask for help from other people here?

**Interviewee:** I remember like maybe three months ago, I got a pain in my tooth and then I needed to go to the dentist. And then I don't know where to go. First, I don't know the way to go to the dentist. I asked a stranger. And surprisingly, they went with me by bus. And also they take me on the bus and then walk a lot of streets to show me the way to see the dentist. Secondly, when I saw the doctor, I said to them that I don't know Chinese. And then they change the doctor for me, the dentist for me. And then I think it's really useful for me. And I think they help me a lot because they know that foreigners cannot speak Chinese. And then if I cannot communicate with the doctor, it's gonna be so hard for me. And then they are trying their best to arrange for doctors to speak English with me. And I appreciate it a lot.

**Interviewer:** So can you share with me like why did you choose that person to ask?

**Interviewee:** I think normally if I go to the middle street, and then if I feel something that I don't know, I can catch the young people. First is the young people because I think that young people can speak English. And secondly, they are like, for me, it's like, if we communicate, I think I can get more information because we are the same age and also have the same style. But definitely being older is no problem at all. Yeah, but for me, like my experience in Tainan, I will find young people or students first.

**Interviewer:** But are there any other examples that you try to ask people during their service encounters?

**Interviewee:** I think maybe in the supermarket, if I want to buy something and I cannot find it, I will ask the staff there. They are also strangers, but I know they can help me. And then I just ask them. It saves time.

**Interviewer:** At that time, you use English or Chinese?

**Interviewee:** English, of course.

**Interviewer:** So, okay, good. And most of the time, they can understand you?

**Interviewee:** I think like 60%. They can understand me in English. 40%, they cannot. I just guessed. I'm not sure.

**Interviewer:** So if they cannot understand, like what did you do for the next step?

**Interviewee:** I use Google Translate. I type in the Google Translate and show them my phone.

**Interviewer:** So how do you know that they didn't understand you?

They just say, 听不懂. And then I just say, okay, okay, I can show you the picture. Or maybe they just say, no. And then I know they cannot understand English.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So if you have to choose between asking people and observing everything by yourself, which one do you prefer?

**Interviewee:** I think I will go before asking if I know Chinese. I think asking is better for me.

**Interviewer:** So can you share for me again, are there any times that you cannot ask any people around you?

**Interviewer:** Or are there no one around you? So what did you do at that time?

**Interviewee:** I think maybe, like I haven't faced any situation that I cannot see anyone to help me. But if I cannot see anyone to help me, maybe I could call my friend. And then I could choose a friend that they already live in Taiwan for a long time. And I will ask my friend through the phone.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so do you think buying service in Taiwan is difficult or easy?

**Interviewee:** I think it's easy.

**Interviewer:** So when comparing some restaurants or some place in Taiwan, do they usually have different ways to buy things or similar?

**Interviewee:** I think it's so different. Like some restaurants, they have this style and then other restaurants, they will have different styles. I think it's so different.

**Interviewer:** So what are the key things that help you to realize the difference or the similarity of those places?

**Interviewee:** I think the key difference could depend on, like if I go to the restaurant, I think the key difference is how to order and how to pay money. And the way to realize, I think also based on the previous clients, I think it is a way to know the difference between restaurants.

**Interviewer:** So that means that you look at the previous customer and realize everything, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So can you share what are the important things that affect how people know what to do or what to say when using service in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** Sorry, sorry.

**Interviewer:** What is the key important thing that affects how people know what to do or what to say?

**Interviewee:** I think the key difference of one place is the way they operate. Like if you go to fancy restaurants, their services are so different from normal restaurants. And I think it will depend on the style and also on the kind of restaurant.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so do you realize that there are any changes when you use service here after five months? Is it easier than before?

**Interviewee:** For me, I think the service is the same. But for me, it's easier because I get used to the style of Taiwanese restaurants. And now after four months, I feel much easier compared to the first month that I arrived here.

**Interviewer:** So are there any advices that you want to give for some shop owners in Taiwan to make their service for the international customers?

**Interviewee:** I think I just get that like just 30% of restaurants, they don't have an English menu. Just a really small percentage, they have English. And I hope that every restaurant in Taiwan have English menu. And like for me, paying in cash is so inconvenient. And I hope that later on they can accept like through paying non-cash. And I hope so.

**Interviewer:** Okay, are there anything else that you want to share with me?

**Interviewee:** And also Chinese is a key thing to have a good life here. So let's try to learn Chinese before you come here. It could help you a lot.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so I think that's all on the questions that I have today. And thank you so much for sharing your experience with us. And if you know anyone else who might be interested in sharing their experience like yours, could you share their contact details?

**Interviewee:** Okay, I could tell you later if I know someone.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you.

**Interviewee:** Goodbye. Thank you so much.

**Date: June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 20:00**

**Location: NCKU Campus**

**Interviewer: Michelle - VWW**

**Interviewee: 011\_V**

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**Interviewer:** So, thanks for being here today. First of all, can you share how long you have been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** Well, I have been in Taiwan for about 4 months.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:** Taiwan is actually the first foreign country I have been in.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and so where are you originally from?

**Interviewee:** I'm from Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so actually I'm asking these questions because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan. And you know, in my country, I already know what to do or what to say when I use the service. But when I come here, it's quite different when I want to buy a service. So, what about you?

**Interviewee:** Well, the first time I arrived in Taiwan, it was quite different from shopping here. And I didn't know what to say or what to do in the shop or restaurant. And it took a long time for me to figure it out.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, let's imagine when you are in the shop, the restaurant or buying goods or services in Taiwan, how do you know what to say?

**Interviewee:** Well, maybe I will observe other customers to know what is the right way to order or to pay money.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so can you give me some specific examples?

**Interviewee:** Well, when I come to a convenience store, I don't know where I should... I don't know what I did. What should I say? When I went to the convenience store, I just didn't know what to do. But I observed other customers and I know that I should take some things I want and then I go to the counter to make a payment to start.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, when do you notice what to do or say?

**Interviewee:** I think I really know when I should do or say anything. But maybe it takes a bit of time for me to be fully comfortable.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so the barrier for you is the language or others?

**Interviewee:** I think it's about the language, the difference of language.

**Interviewer:** So, talk about the languages. Can you share your Chinese level?

**Interviewee:** I didn't know anything about Chinese when I first came here. But now I just have some... But now I can realize some easy words like... Yeah, something like that.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how did you learn those words?

**Interviewee:** I learned the words from my friends. They told me how to order in Taiwanese.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so that means your friends took you to some places in Taiwan before, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes, that's right. They took me to some stores, some shops and guided me in the direction to go there.

**Interviewer:** So, can you describe more details for me about those situations?

**Interviewee:** The first time I came to Taiwan, one of my friends took me to a convenience store to buy some important things to live here. And they told me that when you're in Taiwan, you should do...

**Interviewer:** Like they teach you some guidelines, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes, they guide my actions, they tell me some words like...

**Interviewer:** So, do you think all of the things that your friends teach you are true when you apply by yourself?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think it actually works for me. But I also need to observe other customers when I come to some stores or some restaurants.

**Interviewer:** So, how do you know those things work for you? Are there any situations that you use exactly the things that your friends teach you and do it by yourself?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I apply the ways my friends teach me and it works because the staff can understand what I say and what I need to buy.

**Interviewer:** So, do you mean like Chinese? Do you use Chinese to speak with the staff?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, just some easy sentences and I also use some non-verbal language.

**Interviewer:** Body language, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, body language.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how long does it take for you to figure out what to say or what to do? I mean like how many minutes or how many sentences that you figure out what you have to say or what to do when you go to the new places?

**Interviewee:** I think it will take me some minutes to be confident to realize what I should say or how I can do anything.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, who do you look at to figure that out? Okay, I will give you some options like friends, strangers, staff or other customers. Who do you usually look at?

**Interviewee:** I usually look at my friends when we go together but if I go alone, I will look at other customers to see what they do or what they say.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so why do you choose that way or choose those people to look at?

**Interviewee:** Because they are in the same situation as me so I think when I look, when I observe how they do, I can apply for me and it can help me to resolve my issues.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, in those situations that you just look at them and observe by yourself or are there any situations that you try to get help from them, you go to them and ask them for help?

**Interviewee:** Yes, like when I come to a milk tea shop, I have a customer who knows that I am not Taiwanese and they also know how to, and they also can speak English so they help me to ask what I want to buy and then they talk to start what I want and then, yes, that's the way the customer can help me.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so in that situation, you go to this person first or they reach you first?

**Interviewee:** The customer reaches me first because they can see that I am in trouble.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, not just about people, what are other things that you can look at to figure that out? I mean, are there any situations where you look at the pictures or the decorations of the shop to figure out what to do or what to say?

**Interviewee:** Like, maybe sometimes when I come to a new restaurant and I don't know what I should order, I will look at some pictures to see what the special dishes are in that restaurant and then I can just point in this picture and say that, yes, I want to buy it. And the staff can understand me too.

**Interviewer:** So, how do you know that the staff can understand you?

**Interviewee:** Because when I point in that picture and then they ask me again, like they point in the menu and ask, like, yes, this cost how much? And that's the way I know that they can understand me.

**Interviewer:** So, are there any situations that the staff didn't understand you?

**Interviewee:** Sometimes it happens. And then in that situation, maybe I will use my Google Translate to help me.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how did you know that?

**Interviewee:** You mean how I know to use my Google Translate?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, it's just, I think, it's just the final choice when I can't find other help from other people. Then I choose to use Google Translate to help me.

**Interviewer:** So, do you notice how many steps that you need to do when buying service in Taiwan? Are there any fixed steps in your mind?

**Interviewee:** Actually, I can list all the steps. It's just like I come to the store and look at the menu, choose the dish I want to eat or drink, and pay the money. Maybe just three steps if I come to a restaurant.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, do you think using the service in Taiwan is easy or difficult for you?

**Interviewee:** It is quite difficult for me at first, but after like about two weeks I'm used to adapting. Yeah, when I'm used to adapting, I think it's not really hard for me.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so you mentioned that buying the service in Taiwan is quite difficult for you, right? So, does that mean that the service in Taiwan is so different when compared with your home country, Vietnam?

**Interviewee:** It's not really difficult in the process, but I think it's just about the difference of language.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so do you think the best experience in your home country can help you to figure out what to do here?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I think. Like I said before, it's not about the process. The process of ordering or payments in my hometown in Taiwan is not really different, so I can adapt the way I use in my hometown to you here.

**Interviewer:** So, you mean that there are no differences or are there still some differences?

**Interviewee:** I think there are also some differences.

**Interviewer:** Can you give me some specific examples?

**Interviewee:** For example, like in my hometown, when you go to the mart or convenience store and you buy something, they usually provide you with a bag. But here, they need to ask me if I need it or not. I think it's also different between my hometown and Taiwan.

**Interviewer:** Okay, let's say in Taiwan, when you buy something, they usually ask you to pay for the bag, right? But in Vietnam, they automatically put everything in the bag first. How do you notice that?

**Interviewee:** My friend told me, yes. Because at first, I didn't know Chinese, I didn't know Taiwanese, and they said something to me, but I don't know. But my friend explained to me that they are asking me about a bag, so I know that.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so how does technology help you to understand how to get service here?

**Interviewee:** Can you ask me again?

**Interviewer:** Before you mentioned you use Google Translate, right? This is a kind of technology. So, I mean, how does that help you to understand what to do here?

**Interviewee:** Yes, for example, when I use Google Translate, it can help me in the way that it translates from the language of the start to my language. And then I can understand what they tell me or what they ask me, and then I will use Google Translate to make them know what I want to buy or what I want to say to them.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. And let's imagine that if you don't have a phone or your phone is out of battery, what will you do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** Maybe, I think, in that situation, I can use something like body language to show that I want to buy one or two things. And they also use body language to show me the cost of the thing I want to buy.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. So, I remember that you mentioned Google Translate is your last choice when you don't know how to do, right? So, what is your first choice?



**Interviewee:** I think my first choice is when I come to any restaurant, I will show them that I'm not Taiwanese and then ask you about the English menu. So, I think it's easier for me when I have an English menu.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so your first choice is that you usually ask the staff for the English menu, right? That's easier for you to take the order. But if they don't have an English menu, what will you do next?

**Interviewee:** If they don't have the English menu but the menu has something like pictures of the dishes, I will paste on the picture of the dishes to know that I want to eat or drink or buy the food.

**Interviewer:** So, if you can give some suggestions for the shop owner here in Taiwan, what would you give them? I mean some suggestions for them to make the service more easier for the international customer. What is your suggestion?

**Interviewee:** I think my suggestion will be that the restaurant or the shop need to have an English menu to be easier for international customers. Yes, that's my recommendation.

**Interviewer:** So, how about the customer points? If you want to give some advice for some internationals before they come to Taiwan, what should they have to prepare before they come here?

**Interviewee:** Maybe I will say that they should prepare some knowledge about some easy sentences. A very common sentence is usually used in a shop or restaurant so that it can be easier for them to base. And they also can prepare Google Translate to help them.

**Interviewer:** So, your tips for the international customer when they come here, the first thing is they should prepare some basic sentences, right? And the second thing is technology like Google Translate, right? Okay, good. And is there anything else that you want to share with me?

**Interviewee:** I think all of the questions you asked me are enough. Is it about my tips or my knowledge about the process of order or paste?

**Interviewer:** Okay, so I think that's all about the questions that I want to ask you today. And thank you so much for sharing your experience with us. And I think your sharing will be very valuable for this study. If there's anything else you would like to share, feel free. I will be in touch if there are more questions. Thank you.

**Interviewee:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**Date:** June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Start time:** 14:00

**Location:** NCKU Campus

**Interviewer:** TU - VWW

**Interviewee:** 012\_N

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**Interviewer:** Hello, thanks for being here today. My name is Tu and I'm doing some research on how people from different countries learn what to do in places that they're not familiar with, such as ordering food, drinks and services. At our home country, we know what to do smoothly, but in the new places, we might not know and need to learn, and we are trying to understand.

So, before we begin, would you mind if I make the recording for this conversation?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, sure.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, for your information, this recording only deals for the research purpose and your privacy will be respected throughout the study.

So, let me begin with a simple question first. So, how long have you been here in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** I think it's approximately... I first came here in August, so it's about like nine months, I guess. Okay, nine months.

**Interviewer:** So, is Taiwan the first country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before? Can you name if you have traveled before?

**Interviewee:** I've been to several places, mostly in Southeast Asia, like Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and also I've been to Taiwan once and Hong Kong as well.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. So, where are you from?

**Interviewee:** I'm from Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so we will start our main topic now. For me, I have experience when shopping in my country and I already know what to do in my own country, but when I come here, it's quite different. So, what about you? When you're in a shop, like restaurant, or buying or using goods in Taiwan, how do you know what to say?

**Interviewee:** Usually in restaurant because, for example, if I'm new to a restaurant, before I came to this restaurant, I usually go to look for the information about restaurant on Google Map. I usually look through the menu to check what the price is, what kind of dishes they serve, something similar like that. And then, if I find the reviews are positive, I would probably choose a restaurant to go. And then, when I went there, I just kind of like observe how people order.

And sometimes, I was the only customer in that restaurant, so I would sometimes mess up a little. So, I would probably ask the staff like how to order and whether I should pay first or I use their service first. Do you mean like only restaurant, right? Or all the services? Also, other services. Oh, for other services, like, for instance, like on the train, at the train station or at the hospital, it would be a little different. For the train, at the train station, I would download the app. And then, usually, like, I would spend, because for the first time, if I used to, if I go around like by myself, I usually download the app and probably spend one night to figure out how this, how the app functions, something like that.

And then, I would, yeah, I would just try to do it all by myself. Like, I tried to book the tickets for myself and something like that. And, for instance, if I book the tickets to go to Kaohsiung

tomorrow morning at 8, at 9, I would probably come there like 30 or 40, 45 minutes in prior to look around.

Like, how I would do, where the ticket machine, the vending machine, or the customer service are. And then, I'll just try one by one. Yeah, but for the hospital, sometimes, yeah, for services like hospital, it's a little confusing.

So, I would just go straight to the customer service desk to ask for the procedure. Like, what should I do if I'm a newcomer? Or, like, where should I go? Something like that. So, you said that when you're in the train station and you don't know what to do, one of your options is asking for help.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So, it means that you know some Chinese, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, some basic Chinese.

**Interviewer:** So, what is your Chinese level?

**Interviewee:** I think around B2 to C1.

**Interviewer:** So, do you think your Chinese plays an important role in how you know what to do and what to say in a strong situation?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think it plays a big role. Because when I know the language, I'm less confusing. And it's easier to communicate.

And sometimes because if I notice that some of my friends, if they were in my situation, sometimes they were a little lost, I guess. They felt a little lost and a little panic. But for me, I think it's also okay.

Because Tainan is a very traditional province. So, not everyone would understand English. So, it's kind of hard if you don't understand the local language.

**Interviewer:** So, you both can speak more than Chinese and also Taiwanese?

**Interviewee:** I could understand. For the Mandarin, I think, yes. I could both speak and understand.

The Mandarin also read and write. But for the local, like the Taiwanese, sometimes I don't. But I'm just guessing.

Yeah, because I can speak. I could also speak Cantonese. So, sometimes I feel that the Taiwanese and the Cantonese, they share some similarities.

So, I think, yeah. I could guess what they were trying to say.

**Interviewer:** So, what happens if you guess but you cannot understand? So, what do you do in that kind of situation?

**Interviewee:** I would try to repeat what they want to say in Mandarin to confirm.

Yeah, something like they're asking for something. I'm just guessing. And I would also repeat, like, are you trying to say that blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Because even though they cannot, like for the elderly in Tainan, even though they cannot speak Mandarin, they can understand the Mandarin. So, yeah. So, if I speak, if I, yeah.

So, if I confirm with them, like, is it right, is it correct to think this way, blah, blah, blah, blah. They would say, oh, yes, yes, yes. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** I understand. So, back to our first question, when you first answered my question, you told me that you will observe how other people do and you will follow them to do the steps in the shop. Or you will ask the staff directly by yourself.

So, in the situation that you observe how other people do, what do you do in that kind of situation of observation? Can you give me a great example of your observation?

**Interviewee:** Because I think the basic step is find a menu, and then you go find a menu in a pen, and then you go read it over again. You take which dish you want to order, something like that. And then just, yeah.

So, I would try to see, like, where they could get the menu, where all the customers get their menu. And then where they, yeah, where they get a menu, and then where they place their order. And then whether they pay first or not.

And after they finish their meal, do they clean up their places by themselves? Like, yeah, like self-serve? Or they just leave it there and pack their stuff and leave the place? Yeah. And I would also look around for any further instruction. For example, like, if that restaurant wants you to clean your table after you finish your meal, they will also put some notification or something to tell you, like, yeah, you should clean your desk before you leave and put your bowls and something in place. At that specific kind of area, something like that.

**Interviewer:** So, you look into the notice and the notice that's posted on the wall of the shop to figure out what to do after you eat, right? Yeah. So, you know how to look, like, you follow people to see how they find, where they find the menu, where they look for the eating utensils, right? And what they do after they eat, they have to clean the dishes or not, and where to put the dirty dishes.

So, how do you know all the steps that you need to do in a shop like that? Because you have something in your mind, you should have a framework in your mind first, that you need to look for those steps. Then you look at people to find out a person doing that step. So, I mean, I want to ask, I'm quite curious of how you know how many steps in a shop.

Is it from your past experience or what makes you can understand those steps?

**Interviewee:** I think it's kind of, it's something, it's more like the common sense. It's more like the common sense. It's like, because if you want to eat something, you have to order.

If you want to order, you need to look at the menu. And if you want to look at the menu, you have to find the menu. Yeah, so it's something like a common sense.

But after, I'm saying that's the steps before you eat. But after you eat, whether you should leave the plate or not, leave your dirty dishes or not. And like, yeah, it really depends because sometimes if I don't know, I would just leave it there.

If I don't know something, like for a newcomer like me, I would just leave my utensils and my dirty dishes at the table and then just leave. But then I would get called back by the staff to clean up my stuff. Yeah, so it was like from that experience, whenever I come to a restaurant, I would kind of look around first to see like if there's any utensil left on the table.

Yeah, like once. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Not really. Yeah, not really.

**Interviewer:** What do you mean? By comparing with your life experience, it's completely different from before?

**Interviewee:** Because for other countries I've been to, I think they are quite similar to Vietnam. I mean, like you don't have to, yeah, the procedures are pretty much the same, except for the part that you have to clean up your desk, your table by yourself. Because, yes, it's indeed that some restaurants in, for example, like in Singapore, I also had to self-serve.

**Interviewer:** So you told me that during your observation, how many steps, what steps you need to do, you will observe from the other customers.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So how long does it take for you to do all your observations? I mean like, oh, how long does it take?

**Interviewee:** I don't really understand the question.

**Interviewer:** For example, when you first step into the shop and you want to, you said that you look around to see how people do in the shop, right? So how long does it take for you to figure out all the steps in the shop?

**Interviewee:** Oh, I think it's really fast, like in seconds. Yeah, in seconds.

Yeah, I mean, like, because since I don't observe the whole thing before I do, I just do it step by step. So like, if I step in a restaurant, I want to find a menu, I will look for someone who would, who share the same purpose. That's fine.

So, yeah, if I see that guy's approaching to a table where they have the menu, I just follow him. And then I went back to my table. And then when I, after I order, I will look for another customer who wants to place the order.

And then I just follow that person. Yeah, something like that. But, yeah, but four other places like train station, because the train station, the restaurant and the hospital are the three most, the three services I use most.

So I would just use those three examples. But for the restaurant, I would do something like that. But for the hospital, I would probably ask for help.

Yeah, I would go straight to the customer service desk. So, yeah, that's nothing to discuss here. But for the train station, I would also observe.

But sometimes I would just go if I cannot find someone, because in the train station there are a lot of people, there are loads of people. So I would just sometimes if I cannot like find someone who do the same thing as I am, I would just go to the ask for, ask a staff for help. Yeah, for help.

**Interviewer:** So I think we just go back to the concept of restaurant. Okay. For you to understand.

So you said that step by step you will find a person who has the same target with you. And follow that person.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Is there any situation that you miss the step in between? Because you told me that you follow your notion to figure out, like to create a framework of what to do in the shop. Then you follow a person that seems to have the same topic with you, right? Is it correct?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So what will you do if like your framework is not correct? Like if not, the framework is in the step by step in your mind, you miss some step in between comparing with the real step in that strategy. And there are some cases like that. For example, you, for example, just my example, like you go to the shop, you think that you, after eating, you will pay money. But then you figure out that you have to make money first. Is there something like that?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Yeah.

It's pretty much, it's pretty often, I think. So if I miss some steps, I would just ask the staff for help. Or sometimes I don't even need to ask.

The staff just remind me like, hey, you should pay first. Or you can eat first and pay later. Something like that. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So is there any step that you skip? Like you purposely want to skip that, so you just skip in between? Purposely skip some step?

**Interviewee:** You mean like for a newcomer, right? I guess no. No, no.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. If you don't purposely skip it, you just skip it because you don't know.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. So let's move to our next question.

Are there any similar services from other countries that are similar in Tainan?

**Interviewee:** I mean like for Vietnam, it's pretty much different. Because we don't need the menu. We don't need to order through the menu.

But for other countries, let me remember. Because it's been quite a long time since I've been to those places.

Except for the ordering part and payment part, everything else is similar. For example, like ordering. Yes, we also need to look at the menu. But for the local stores in Vietnam, they don't sell much dishes as in Taiwan. Like if you go to a pho restaurant, the only thing they serve is pho.

**Interviewer:** So they specialize just one dish?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. And you don't need to order through the menu as compared to Taiwan. And for the payment part, most of the time, I just pay after I finish my meal.

**Interviewer:** So the most differences you mentioned is, first thing, you don't need to order by marking on the menu, right? Yeah. And second is, you pay after you finish your meal. So there are those two differences.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So let's go back to the first time you came to Taiwan. Can you share an experience with me? And at that time, you learned something new about services here. Is there some kind of like occasion that is really new for you? Like the first time you encounter a restaurant?

**Interviewee:** Oh, it's ordered through QR code, I think.

Like for some restaurants, they would stick a QR code with the online menu.

They also have the paper-based. But then, yeah, I tried to use the QR code. Like I scanned, so they have a QR code on the table.

I just scanned that QR code. And then we can place order online. And then you go to the cashier, to the counter, to confirm your order.

And you pay for the order. Yeah. Or sometimes they have the machine that you can order through the machine.

And then, yeah, it's the same procedure as using your phone. So you order the machine, and then you go to the counter to pay for your bill.

**Interviewer:** Did you figure out by yourself? Or is there anyone at that time that you have to do?

**Interviewee:** For the QR code, it was just randomly.

Like because if I'm new to a restaurant for the first time, I would use the paper-based menu. But if I was there the second time, I would probably, because I've been there once. So I saw that they could order through using your phone with a QR code.

So I would just, and then the second time I came, I would just use my phone to order. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** But what happens if you cannot do that step? You cannot order through the QR code.

So which person do you search for for help?

**Interviewee:** I would refer to the staff. Because the staff knows everything. Because one thing I observed in Taiwan is that they, although they're trying to utilize the technology for every of their active operating activities and stuff, they will also give you like some, it's something like a backup plan.

Yeah. Like, yeah, yeah, yeah. They would also have the backup plan.

Like what if your customer doesn't have data, like doesn't have 4G, cannot access to the Internet? So I'm pretty sure they also offer a paper-based menu. Yeah. Okay.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So you told me that you use Google Maps to find the restaurant. So is there any other app that you're using?

**Interviewee:** Uber. Uber? Yeah, Uber Eats.

**Interviewer:** Okay. What else?

**Interviewee:** I think Line, Uber, Google Map.



I mean like Google Map. I would just use Google Map to find the service, not a function. Yeah, there's no ordering or something like that on Google Map.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that technology helps you to understand how to do and how to get the services? Do you play an important role in your mind?

**Interviewee:** Yes, a lot, a lot.

**Interviewer:** Can you give me an example? Why do you think technology plays an important role in how we use services?

**Interviewee:** Oh, because it saves some time. If I use technology because they provide instruction on the app or how to use the service.

So if I'm confused about something, I could just go over it. I would just read over the instruction to find which step I just missed. But if you ask the staff for help sometimes, if the procedure is way too long, like for example in hospital, I would just miss some parts.

**Interviewer:** So what happens if you miss some parts?

**Interviewee:** It's okay. I'll just go over again. But how do you figure out if you missed those parts? Because the procedures, they come in step by step.

So if I skip this part, for example, like in hospital, if you're a newcomer, you have to come to registry counter to register for it, to get your, they call, like to create your patient ID. So if you miss the part, like you just made appointment online, you go straight to the clinic, then the machine, like the check-in machine in front of the clinic would just reject your insurance card. So, yeah, so it also reminds you, so it kind of reminds you to go back to the registration counter to do the check-in procedure.

**Interviewer:** I understand. Thank you. Do you think that you can apply those steps to other same situation?

**Interviewee:** Apply those steps to other same situation? Uh, you mean like, for instance, if I go to a restaurant, if I see something like this, and if I go to the other restaurant, I would, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, sure, sure.

**Interviewer:** What happens in that kind of situation that make you figure out that all the steps are not the same?

**Interviewee:** Something like, because, probably because, for instance, , for the McDonald's, after I place my order, I would expect a screen popping out saying, like, you can choose your payment options, like, through something, something. But then they just, a paper just came out, and kind of, like, the screen just jumped back to the homepage.

Yeah, so I would think, oh, this machine is different. The only function of this machine is to use, is to place the order, not anything else.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much.

So that's all the questions. Thank you for sharing for this study. So if I have some more questions, I can contact you again.

**Interviewee:** Okay. Yeah, thank you.

**Interviewer:** Thank you so much.

**Date: June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 16:00**

**Location: Dormitory**

**Interviewer: TU - VWW**

**Interviewee: 013\_J**

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**Interviewer:** Hello, thanks for being here today. My name is Tu and I'm doing some research on how people from different countries learn what to say and do in places that they are not familiar with, such as ordering food, drinks and service. At home country, we know what to do smoothly, but in the new places, we might not know and need to learn and trying to understand the steps here.

Before we begin, would you mind if I make a recall for this conversation? Your participant and response will remain anonymous and your privacy will be respected. Is it ok for you?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Let's start our first question. For beginning, I'd love to ask how long have you been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** Less than 6 months.

**Interviewer:** Is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited?

**Interviewee:** No, it's not.

**Interviewer:** How many countries can you name for me?

**Interviewee:** So, I've been to Indonesia, I've been to the Philippines, I've been to Mainland China and I've been to Taiwan before. I've been to some parts of France, some parts of UK and I've been to Thailand and Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** Ok. So, where are you from?

**Interviewee:** I'm from Malaysia.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. So, when you're in a shop, restaurant here or when you're buying goods and services here in Taiwan, how do you know what to say and what to do here?

**Interviewee:** For example, if let's say I'm not familiar with the ordering process or how the shop works, I might find an employee and ask them how the shop works or if let's say an employee is not available, I might just observe how their customers work around in the shop, how they order, how they choose their items.

**Interviewer:** Ok. So, you said that you observe how other customers do. Can you give me a detailed situation that you did that observation?

**Interviewee:** Ok. So, usually this will only apply to restaurants mostly. So, usually if the restaurant is very packed, I have a lot of opportunity to look at how their patrons order their food. If the restaurant requires the customers to go to the cashier to pay first or they can just find a seat or they have to wait for the employees to come to them.

But for the most part, sometimes they will have signs outside the restaurant that says to wait, to queue. So, it's actually quite easy to observe, but only if the restaurant itself is busy. If the restaurant is not busy or the shop is not busy, usually I will just find an employee and ask them how it works.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So, basically you give me three pieces of information. The first thing is when you come to a shop that you don't know what to do, the first thing you will see like you will observe other people to see how other customers do.

The second thing is you will observe how the decoration of the shop. For example, is there some description or guidance post on the wall or not. And the third thing you will ask for the staff help if you come out successful with the observation.

**Interviewee:** Yes

**Interviewer:** So, for each of those three scenarios, can you give me one example? So, the first is you observe how other customers do. Can you describe for me a detailed information that you do that?

**Interviewee:** Okay. So, I'll just give an example.

When I first arrived here, I saw the signs saying that to pay first. So, which means I don't have to put my order in, pay first before the people will give me my food, will start with the food. So, and then another thing is sometimes they will put the menus on the side.

So, if I'm not too sure, at first I'm not too sure, but I found out that some of the customers, they will just take the menu from the basket and then they will just fill in their orders, maybe find a seat and fill in the orders first and only then they will queue to pay for their food. So, the first thing is I saw the sign and then I knew that we have to pay first. And then afterwards, I saw some other customers taking the menu from the basket, filling and paying as well.

And there was this, usually it works very well if I observe, but sometimes if I'm unsure and there are not a lot of customers around and because the employees are free and around, so I will just, I have asked them before, how does this work? Am I supposed to pay first? And the employees usually will say, oh, how many people are you dining in or are you taking out? And then I can answer them and they will just guide me through the process.

**Interviewer:** So, it means for you, it's the combination of those three methods, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, thank you. I understand. So, you're talking about you can directly add the staff.

So, can you speak Chinese?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** So, can you tell me what level you think you are fluent in Chinese or in the middle?

**Interviewee:** I think I'm just in the middle because I've never took an official international test for fluency. So, I'm not too sure.

But I have around 11 years of formal education and I've taken some tests, but not on the international level.

**Interviewer:** Yes, I understand. So, do you think Chinese play an important role in how you are successful in getting services here?

**Interviewee:** Yes, definitely.

Because if I cannot speak and I cannot even remotely read the writing, the language, then I will not be able to ask the employees what should I do in the restaurant or in the shop. Of course, observing the customers and the surroundings of the shop has served me very well. It usually serves a purpose.

You can usually work out how it works just by the two. But when the two of those are not options, then we have to default to asking the employees.

**Interviewer:** So, you have been learning Chinese for 11 or 12 years already?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** But is there any situation that you cannot communicate well in Chinese here? Like you speak in Chinese, but the staff cannot understand you. Does this happen?

**Interviewee:** Yes. Because the terms and the way we speak are a bit different.

So, I may not know the correct term to use for certain situations. So, there might not be any misunderstanding, but in the sense that I'm not sure what term to use and they're not sure what I'm talking about.

**Interviewer:** So, what do you do in that special situation?

**Interviewee:** Usually, I just ask them for clarification and they're okay to repeat the question. So, it's fine.

**Interviewer:** So, after they repeat, you totally understand?

**Interviewee:** Not 100% as well. It depends on the situation.

But for the most part, it's fine. So far, there's not much problem

**Interviewer:** So, is there any situation that in the end you cannot communicate with the staff by Chinese? With the staff?

**Interviewee:** At this moment, no.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. So, you told me about three methods you use for getting services here.

So, did you notice how many steps that you need to do when you get into a shop or restaurant? Can you describe the steps for me? How many steps?

**Interviewee:** Usually, by observing. Figuring out the steps is usually by observing. Because by asking the staff, I usually ask how it works.

So, they will just let me know if I order first, pay now or pay later. As for ordering food, it usually comes down to observation. Observation of the surroundings, like any instruction in the shop and how the customers work.

And one thing I have to remember is most shops operate very similarly. So, if you go to one shop, a similar shop, then the next one might work as well. But still, I still default to observing.

Usually, it takes during the first few minutes once I enter the shop and I look through all the instructions. Okay. I understand.

**Interviewer:** So, is there any situation that you miss the step in between and then you figure it out and you have to do that step again?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So, how can you figure that you miss the step?

**Interviewee:** By observing again. Observing someone else.

It's just observation. Sometimes I see the customer is doing this one thing that I haven't done and they have this outcome. So, I try doing what the customer did and I have the same outcome or maybe a bit different outcome.

**Interviewer:** So, you will base on the results of the step. If it doesn't lead to the outcome that you want, then you will get back to see, observe other people to see what's missing there and follow them again to do the same thing. So, is there any situation that you purposely skip any step?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

Yes. If let's say, sometimes I do not want this specific result. So, I observe what the customer did to get that result and I will know to avoid that step so I don't get whatever it is.

And sometimes the language also makes it easier because if let's say I don't want to go to that step, I can just let the staff or the employee know that can we have this instead of this or I do not want this. And they are okay with it. It's like, okay, fine.

I still get the desired result without skipping the step

**Interviewer:** Can you give me a specific situation?

**Interviewee:** So, for example, if I don't want any sauce on my food and I just don't take the sauce or I just refuse, they ask me, do you want any sauce? I say, no, thanks. That's fine.

**Interviewer:** Okay, I understand. So, you told me that you think that most of the shops here have the same procedure, the same process. And when you learn the step in one shop, you think that you can apply to many shops, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** So, is there any situation that's different from your thinking, like you cannot apply the step as you learned before?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I think it's dependent on the area of the shop because I remember I have been to another restaurant. It is a bit expensive. So, the way it works is different in which you settle down, you order your food and you pay later and you don't even have to go to the counter to pay your food.

The person will come to the counter. But yeah, this is the biggest difference. As for how I know what to do in specific restaurants, I think it's just to see the area in which the restaurant is located and what the restaurant offers.

**Interviewer:** Can you tell me more detail what you mean about the area of the restaurant?

**Interviewee:** So, for example, that we are staying in a college town, in a sense. So, the restaurants here, for efficiency, they will rather have the orders come to them, which means you have to pay at the counter, you pay first, you give them the order and they will set down your order for you and you just have to pick it up yourself. Because it will be faster for them and more efficient.

And for the people around the college town as well because they want it to be fast. But if there are some higher-end restaurants around the area, I've been to one. And just by the atmosphere, you will know that, even in terms of the price, you know that normal students won't be able to afford it.

So, when you enter, again, it's by reservation. So, it kind of clues you in that, oh, this is a different kind of establishment. So, once you get in, they will lead you to your seat and you have to order.

So, when they lead you to your seat and they take your order instead of you giving them the order, so it means this is a different situation. So, I think in a sense that you have to see, yeah, even though it's in a college town as well, but the restaurant is located in a building instead of like a shop outside on the street. So, I think that's a big difference as well.

**Interviewer:** So, you think the most different of the services, the steps here is based on the area and the luxury level of the restaurant, right? So, you mean that there are situations that you think you cannot apply the same steps as the local restaurants to more luxury restaurants?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Yes, and how you can figure out the differences? What makes you understand the differences instead?

**Interviewee:** The location of the shop, maybe. Is it like a small stall or a shop by the street or it's located in a building? Either it's in an office building or a mall.

It might be different, but it might not be. And just the general seating of the shop, the general seating, the price range of the items, yeah, and how the interior of the shop looks. So, there's a specific kind of look that a luxury shop, like a luxury restaurant will have compared to a cheaper, more affordable restaurant.

So, when you look at how it's renovated, how it looks like, you can usually get a sense on how you're supposed to order.

**Interviewer:** So, you look at how the shop facilities and decoration to figure out what you need to do, right?

**Interviewee:** Yes

**Interviewer:** How about the staff? Do you look at how the staff action to figure it out also? And also, do you look at all the customers to figure it out

**Interviewee:** Yeah, I look at the customers as well, because when you observe the interior, you might see some instructions as well. They might have instructions, but let's say if they don't have instructions, then most likely it is that you go to the counter, the employee will seat you in one of the tables and they will take your order.

Because usually the instructions are there to let you know how the shop works, but if there are no instructions, usually the staff will be there to guide you. But of course, you can have a look at the customers as well. If there's someone in front of you, you can observe them and how they take their orders, how they interact with the staff.

**Interviewer:** I understand. Thank you. So, can you share me some new or strange experience that you learned something new about getting services in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** Mostly the official receipt.

Once you buy something, apparently you can win a lottery with the receipt.

**Interviewer:** So, how did you learn that you can win the lottery with the receipt and you learned that? You have to keep the receipt, not throw it away. How did you learn to do that?

**Interviewee:** Someone else told me. A classmate, a friend told me that you can keep the receipt, you will win the lottery. I keep the receipt for financial purposes.

**Interviewer:** So, do you think that what you learned here and the services here in Taiwan have similarity with the country that you've been to before? Or is there any difference that only Taiwan has?

**Interviewee:** No, not really. It's quite similar. But I have to say, out of all the places that I've been, there might be some other countries who have this kind of, it's not a rule, but this kind of culture is that once you finish eating, you have to clean up your own utensils.

So, not a lot of places, other countries have this kind of culture. It wasn't a culture shock for me because I've done that sometimes in my home country. It's not that big of a deal.

It's just that it's not that prominent. It's very prominent here compared to the places that I've been to.

**Interviewer:** So, if you have something to teach other people who first come to Taiwan, can you teach them the way to learn how to do in getting services here? Can you give them some tips?

**Interviewee:** My advice is always to look at how people use the services.

Observation is very important. And if you're unsure, you can always ask. It will cost nothing.

**Interviewer:** So, if a person doesn't know any Chinese, what that person should do in the situation of needing some services here, like ordering food in a restaurant? Do you have any advice for that kind of person

**Interviewee:** Again, it's observation. Yeah, it's mostly observation. And if let's say the shop doesn't have, let's say you're in a restaurant and they don't have an open menu where you can just see what they're offering, might be that you have to, again, try to communicate with the staff.

In another sense, now we have a lot of technology, so you can just use your phone and Google Translate.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for your sharing. Your insight is very valuable for us.

So, if we have any questions, can I contact you again for additional questions?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Thank you very much. Bye-bye.

**Interviewee:** Bye-bye.



**Date: June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Start time: 10:00**

**Location: Online**

**Interviewer: Michelle - VWW**

**Interviewee: 014\_A**

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**Interviewer:** Let's start. So, can you share how long you have been in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** So, I'm in Taiwan for about one year, but I'm not staying for one year straight. I went back to France for six months in between.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so is Taiwan the first foreign country you visited or have you traveled to other countries before?

**Interviewee:** I traveled to many countries before, mostly with my family, so I don't need to do anything. And when I traveled by myself, it was in English-speaking countries. So, Taiwan is the first country I lived in, foreign country I lived in.

**Interviewer:** So, where are you originally from?

**Interviewee:** So, I come from France.

**Interviewer:** Actually, I'm asking these questions because I'm also a foreigner here in Taiwan. And like, you know, in my country, when I do shopping or buying service, I already know what to do. But when I come here, it's quite different when I want to buy a service. And what about you? Are there any differences or difficulties for you?

**Interviewee:** No, you mean anything? Or especially food and service? For the services, I almost never have. I never use services because I don't know how to use them. But for food, most of the time, I just use Google Translate and I can write on the paper. So, it's not so difficult. But in any other kind of interaction, if they don't have a written menu, I can write what I want to order. Then I try to avoid it because I have no idea how to interact.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, let's imagine that you are in a shop or restaurant in Taiwan. So, how do you know what to say? What kind of shop?

**Interviewee:** Actually, if I'm in a shop, I don't say anything. I just say good morning or something.

**Interviewer:** In English?

**Interviewee:** I try to say something in English. But if I notice they cannot understand, which is the case most of the time, then I don't communicate with words. I use my hand to let them know I need something.

**Interviewer:** Okay. You can continue.

**Interviewee:** No. If I get a headache, I will go to the pharmaceutical shop, chemistry shop. I forgot the name. Never mind. Chemistry shop. And I will show my head and say, oh, I feel pain.

Can you help me? Headache. Like this. But they don't understand English. So, I just try to let them know what my problem is with my hands.

**Interviewer:** So, that means you prefer body language, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And so, how do you know what to do?

**Interviewee:** You mean the steps to buy something?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Interviewee:** They also use body language. So, when I let them know that I'm interested in the product, they will just take it to the cashier. So, I just follow them everywhere. If they go to another place, I also follow them to another place. And then I understand, oh, it's not meant for me to go there. Sometimes, they go to the backstage of the shop. And I follow them to the backstage of the shop because I think they want to show me something. But they just go to check something by themselves. So, I just follow them. And eventually, at some point, they will go to the cashier and I can buy it.

**Interviewer:** So, the one you mentioned are the staff or other customers? Who do you look at? The staff.

**Interviewee:** The staff? Yeah. I interact with the staff.

**Interviewer:** So, how long does it take for you to figure out what to do and say?

**Interviewee:** Usually, very fast, actually. Maybe I will wait. In the beginning, I'm shy. So, I don't do anything. But then I just go to the shop, wait for one or two minutes or walk in the shop. And at some point, because I don't know what I should do or I can't find what I want, then I just go to see them and try to communicate with the staff. And now, I only go to the shops when I have a real idea in my mind. So, most of the time, I will just have a picture on my phone and I'm ready for what I want. And I will walk into the store, go straight to the staff and show them the picture and say, do you have it? If they don't have it, they will tell me straight. So, it's easier like this.

**Interviewer:** So, you already have the script in your mind that you prefer to prepare everything before you come to a place, right? And then ask their staff.

**Interviewee:** Yeah, but not using words because I cannot speak any Chinese.

**Interviewer:** So, are there any situations that you cannot get help from the staff? So, what do you do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** Let me think about it. Most of the time, when I go to a place, I know they will have it. But in the case they don't have the product I'm looking for, the staff will try to help me to go to the place where I can actually find the product I'm looking for. So, the staff is really helping me with this. Even if we can't communicate, they will try to show me a location or they will point me in a direction and say, oh, you need to go this way or this way. I mean, I think they are saying this and they just show me the direction and say, oh, go there, go there, go there. But in Chinese, I don't understand. Or if I can see that it's not the type of shop I'm looking for or service I'm looking for, if I can figure it out by myself, I will not try to have any interaction. I would just think, oh, okay, it's not the right place. So, I avoid going there and I go back to my place, go back

home, not try to go in the shop if I know they wouldn't have what I'm looking for. Try to avoid any interaction. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So, not just about looking at other, looking the help from other people. So, are there any situations that you look at some pictures or the decorations of the shop to figure out what you have to do?

**Interviewee:** Pictures. Yeah, pictures or any decorations that help you to realize what you have to do. In many services, especially banking services, they will ask you to take a number, when you enter the shop. So, that helps because you don't need to queue or wait or go to the wrong location. You will just take a number from the machine and when it's your time, you just go to the counter you are supposed to go to. They will say, oh, number 43, you need to go there. So, I'm number 43. So, I will just go there and I will hand them my request. I'm saying this because yesterday I went to pay for the credit fee for the university summer class, and this is what happened. I went to three different banks because I don't know where I should go. So, I tried three different banks.

The first one, I take the number, I go to the counter, and when I show them what I need to pay, they always say, oh, it's not here, you cannot pay in this bank, you need to go to another one. So, I go to another one, they send me there, and then I go to a third one, and in the third one, the staff actually could talk in English, but they also just asked me to withdraw the money and pay with cash very, very easily. So, I think it's very helpful to have this, but for some reason, I don't like it. I don't like to take a number and a queue and everything. Even if it's well organized, it's not really what I like. But yeah, sometimes they have the procedures, pictures or numbers or anything. So, you actually know what to do, even if you can't speak the language. And then, for banking services, you just show them your paper, and they will know what to do with the paper. So, they don't really need your help or any interactions.

**Interviewer:** Yes. So, as you mentioned, you have to visit three banks to do the transfer. So, in that situation, how do you realize that you were in the wrong place or you did something wrong?

**Interviewee:** When I just give my paper to the staff, they look at it, and they give it back to me and say, you cannot pay here. Cannot. With more or less good English, but they can say, oh, you don't do this here. You can't do this here. You need to go to another bank. So, I just figure it's not the right place to go. Then, I go to another one, and it's the same. I wait. I take my number. I go to the counter. And in the end, they just tell me, oh, you cannot pay for this here. You need to go to another bank. And the second time, they say you need to go to the Bank of Taiwan. So, I go to the Bank of Taiwan, and whenever there, everything goes smoothly.

**Interviewer:** So, can you share, like, are there any fixed steps in your mind when you're using service or buying something here? Are there, like, how many steps that you usually need to do when buying some things in Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** So, the first thing will be for the food or drinks. It's very easy because I like to go to the same place many times. So, I already know the menu. The staff already know me, and they know I order this kind of meal. So, it's very easy. I just went there. I ask for the same thing. So, I

also learn the name of the dishes or the drinks, everything. So, it's very easy for this. Like, I'm used to it, to do it because it's every day, twice a day, right?

Then, if it's another kind of service, let's say medicine, I sometimes need to do it. I just try to find it by myself first, but if I can't find it by myself, I will try to communicate with the staff by using my hands, as I said.

And if I'm looking for a specific item, like, maybe one month ago, I was looking for a charge for my computer. So, I just show them the picture of the charge I'm looking for, and with the specifications, the characteristics of the item, like the size and everything, right? And so, staff can check this and say, oh, we have it or we don't have it. So, in this situation, if I have a picture of the item I'm looking for, I don't need to check by myself first. I go straight to see the staff and show them the picture and ask them if they have it. And either they have it or they don't have it, so I can buy all of it.

So, I think these are three situations. The first one is, I can order by myself because I know the place. I can order with words after sometimes, with a gesture, if I can't find what I'm looking for. And if I know what I'm looking for and I can have a picture for it, I will go straight to see the staff with a picture.

**Interviewer:** So, as you mentioned that sometimes you will do something by yourself and in some situations you will get help from other people. So, when compared with observing everything and doing everything by yourself and asking for help from other people, which one do you prefer?

**Interviewee:** The one I prefer is doing everything by myself.

**Interviewer:** Prefer doing by yourself?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. I prefer when I have full control on what I'm doing, like going to the place I know, ordering the thing I know, and when I know they have it for sure. Like if I go to the restaurant, it's very convenient for me because I already know they have the meal I want to order. I know how to order this meal. I already know the price and everything. I'm well prepared for this one. So, that's another reason why I always go to the same place because I know that I can find what I want there and I know I can order it by myself without any trouble.

**Interviewer:** So, are there any situations that you missed some steps between your service?

**Interviewee:** Can you repeat the question?

**Interviewer:** Did you miss any step in between when using service?

**Interviewee:** Any step in between? You mean between going and buying? Yeah. No, the steps will always be the same, I think. Either try to figure it out by myself and go to the cashier after or show a picture and then they will tell me if they have it or not. And if I can't find it by myself, I just ask them with gestures, extra steps. But I can't think of any other situation. Or sometimes I also speak English, right? So, I can communicate in English but not most of the time. It's quite unusual if they speak English.

**Interviewer:** So, did you skip any step in between?

**Interviewee:** Oh, no. I never skipped any step.

**Interviewer:** How do you know? How do you know that you're missing something or you're skipping something?

**Interviewee:** Oh, do I miss something? I guess. I guess because I cannot do much more. Yeah. Like if I could speak Mandarin, I could try to interact with the staff. But if I don't have any chance to interact with words, I can't see any option or alternative for what I'm already doing. Hmm.

**Interviewer:** So, do you think learning how to use a service in Taiwan is difficult or easy for you?

**Interviewee:** Learning my way to do it, I wouldn't say it's long because, anyway, just like maybe one or two months. For sure, in the beginning, I felt it's very difficult. But after some time, just get used to it. But I think if I need to learn another way, like interacting in Chinese, it will be very long for me because I need a lot of time to process. I'm still learning some words of Mandarin, right? But even with a few words I know, it takes some time for me to process the information. So, if I want to order a service or something, it will be very specific words. So, I don't have many chances to learn those words, I think. So, if I want to change my way now by interacting in Chinese, it will be a very long process, I think. So, I'm thinking that my way of just showing a picture is not so bad.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay. So, you mentioned that there are some common words that you usually hear when you're using service here, right? So, how do you realize that?

**Interviewee:** Most common word, I would say is the price, for sure. Yeah. So, I just figured out two ways. The first one is learning the numbers by myself. The second one is just when they tell me the price, they will also write it and I can memorize the way they pronounce it. Okay. Like in the beginning, I don't know the numbers, but they always say something like this. I don't know about the pronunciation, but they say something like this. And they always show me like 105 on the paper. So, I figured out it's 105. But if they say like maybe, how to say, I don't know, any other number using the same way, like maybe another way. Probably I understand what they want to say. So, I still know they try to communicate the information about the price, but I will take a lot of time to process the information.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So, that is related to the language barrier, right?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, definitely.

**Interviewer:** And so, are there any similar services from other countries that are similar when compared to Taiwan?

**Interviewee:** What?

**Interviewer:** I mean some countries that you have visited before?

**Interviewee:** You mean the same interactions that I have in Taiwan, but in another country? I guess most of the interactions I have in other countries are just the hotel and the restaurants. So, it's not so difficult because you can also just look at the menu in the restaurants and then you show what item you want to the staff if they don't speak English. And in hotels, I think most of

the time they will have English speaking staff. So, in other countries, I don't face so much trouble with services. But in Taiwan, because it's a country where I live and study, it's more complicated because I need to have many interactions that I never have before in a foreign country. Like, yeah, go to the bank, go to the administration offices, go to the city hall, something like this. So, it's very unusual. So, it's my first time trying to deal with it. I don't have any experience with this kind of service. So, I need to learn by myself. So, sometimes it's quite long to know how to behave if they don't have any indication.

But for immigration office, for example, they also show you a picture, I think. So, you know what you need to do, what document you need to provide and everything.

**Interviewer:** So, can you share how technology helps you understand how to get service here?

**Interviewee:** So, the best tool I have is Google Translate. Just if I don't understand something, if it's only written in Mandarin, I open my Google Translate app and I take a picture and it would translate automatically. So, this is the most helpful thing. Even if they don't have any English subtitles for a service, I just take a picture and I understand what I'm supposed to do.

**Interviewer:** So, if you don't have a phone or your phone is out of battery, what would you do in that situation?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I will go back. I go back home and charge my phone. But if I don't have my phone, I cannot do anything because I don't even know where to go to find the service. I can't recognize from the name of the shop what does it sell most of the time. And I don't know the directions. I don't know the name of the streets. I don't know anything. So, if I don't have my phone to navigate in the city or to know exactly where I need to go and to know exactly what is written in the services, I cannot do anything. So, I just go back home.

**Interviewer:** So, can you describe a time when you didn't know what to do or what to say in the new places? I mean in the new shop or restaurants that you visit for the first time?

**Interviewee:** Let me think. I think the first time I go to the pharmacy, I need to have a specific type of medicine. But I don't know the name they have here in Taiwan because the name is different from Europe for sure. And I can't show any picture of what I want because it's medicine. It's not something you can find easily. And I try to show the scientific name, but scientific name is not the best thing to translate. So, I actually had a hard time interacting with the staff in the pharmacy because of this. Because it's a very specific type of interaction and I can't explain my point. So, I just stay like for maybe 20 minutes before I can get what I want. So, for most interactions, just buy a small item like medicine. 20 minutes is very long.

**Interviewer:** So, if you can give any suggestions for the shop owner in Taiwan to make the service more easy for the international customer, what will be your suggestions?

**Interviewee:** It depends on the service. If they just have like one small paper with English information, it would be very useful. Like no need to have a real big sign. But if they can print just print one sheet with English information, it will be very helpful in some places. Okay. So, also just using Google Translate.

**Interviewer:** And how about the customer? Are there any recommendations?

**Interviewee:** One of the most obvious recommendations is that you should learn how to speak the language of the country. I didn't follow this, but if I have any recommendation for travelers or people going abroad for studies or work, you should try to learn the language before going there. At least, as I mentioned, for the numbers, it's very useful to learn only numbers because it's quite fast, but it can help you to know how much you need to pay. Because in many restaurants in Taiwan, they don't really have any money or something. You need to order several items, so you don't know how much you need to pay in the end, right? So if you take the numbers, they will calculate for you, give you the number, and you just need to pay. So you can avoid any confusion in their interaction, like giving not enough money or too much money. I think at least learning this is very useful. And I think that's all about the questions that I have for you.

**Interviewer:** So are there anything else that you want to share?

**Interviewee:** Let me think. I think so far I don't need to share anything more. Maybe my final remark is I only go somewhere if I really need it, and I can't find it online. Because you can also go online to find what you're looking for, right? I mentioned I needed a chart for my computer, and I went to several shops, and I showed a picture and everything. But most of the time they wouldn't have it, they would redirect me to another place. So in the end, I just check online and I can find it, and I buy it online. So online services are also convenient. Or yeah, going to the same places always, for restaurants or drinks or everything. Just go to the place I know. Okay, so I think that is the end of this interview.

**Interviewer:** So thank you so much for sharing your experience with us. And I think your sharing will be very valuable for this study. And in the future, if there is anything else that you would like to share, I will be in touch if there are more questions.

**Interviewee:** Sure, no problem. Thank you, and goodbye, have a nice day. Enjoy your vacation.

**Interviewer:** Enjoy your vacation, Goodbye.

**Interviewee:** Bye-bye.