Second Language Competence and Student Acculturation: The Case of International Students

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Abstract
This paper presents a thorough literature review of the effects of second language competence on student acculturation and adjustment in an international setting. The study stems from a view of globalization as a key factor in today’s higher education considering, for instance, the rapid increase of overseas students over the years. A fundamental aspect of studying in a new country is the stipulation of interacting in a different language. With the spread of English as a lingua franca, a large part of the programs taught overseas is undertaken in English. Shedding light on this, the current paper provides a review of recent research efforts aimed at exploring the effects of second language competence on international students’ acculturation and academic success. A series of terms and concepts will first be defined, before the findings of various studies are discussed. The paper will then conclude with the author’s reflection.

Keywords: Acculturation, adjustment, academic success, second language competence, sociocultural knowledge.