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## THE STRUGGLES OF PEOPLE FROM NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRIES TRYING TO LIVE AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

### Abstract

Studying abroad presents a unique opportunity for students, offering numerous benefits and some challenges. To embark on this journey, students need to research programs, fulfill application requirements, secure visas, and prepare financially. The advantages include cultural immersion, language acquisition, enhanced academic opportunities, and personal growth. However, it also involves potential drawbacks such as homesickness, cultural adjustment issues, and financial strain. Careful planning and a readiness to adapt are crucial for a successful experience.

By preparing thoroughly, young people can transform their dreams into reality and gain valuable life skills. Feeling prepared and taking necessary precautions ensures a rewarding study abroad experience.

**Keywords:** *international student, studying abroad, academic opportunities, language acquisition, adaptability*

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## İngilis dili bilməyən ölkələrdə beynəlxalq tələbə olaraq yaşamağa çalışan insanların mübarizəsi

### Xülasə

Xaricdə təhsil tələbələr üçün unikal bir fürsət təqdim etməklə yanaşı, onun çoxsaylı üstünlükləri və bəzi çətinlikləri də vardır. Bu səfərə başlamaq üçün tələbələr müxtəlif proqramları araşdırmalı, müraciət tələblərini yerinə yetirməli, vizalarını təmin etməli və maliyyə baxımından hazır olmalıdırlar. Üstünlükləri yeni mədəniyyətlər və dil öyrənmək, genişləndirilmiş akademik imkanlar və şəxsi inkişafı əhatə edir. Ancaq bu, həmçinin ev həsrəti, mədəni adaptasiya problemləri və maliyyə çətinlikləri kimi potensial mənfi cəhətləri də ehtiva edir. Uğurlu bir təcrübə üçün diqqətli planlaşdırma və uyğunlaşmağa hazır olmaq vacibdir.

Gənclər hərtərəfli hazırlaşmaqla xeyallarını reallığa çevirə və üstün həyat bacarıqları qazana bilərlər. Özünü buna hazır hiss etmək və zəruri tədbirlər görmək xaricdə təhsilin mükafatlandırıcı olmasını təmin edir.

**Açar sözlər:** *beynəlxalq tələbə, xaricdə təhsil, akademik imkanlar, dil öyrənmə, uyğunlaşma*

## Introduction

Becoming an International Student in the U.S.

If you want to study in the U.S. as an international student, there are several important steps to consider:

### 1. Obtain a Student Visa:

To study in the U.S. as an international student, you must obtain a student visa. The Department of State provides a 5-step guide to help with the process, including information on the types of student visas, how to apply, and whether you can work while studying.

### 2. Research and Apply to Programs:

It's essential to plan ahead and become familiar with U.S. student visa requirements. EducationUSA offers resources to help international students identify suitable institutions and understand the variety of options available for study in the U.S.

### 3. Explore Funding Options:

Understanding the costs associated with studying in the U.S. is crucial. It's important to figure out tuition costs, living expenses, and explore options for scholarships and financial aid available to international students.

### 4. Language Preparation:

If English is not your first language, it's beneficial to find courses to help you learn English as a second language (ESL) to prepare for studying in the U.S..

5. Understand Accreditation and Recognition:  
When considering U.S. institutions, it's important to ensure that the qualifications earned will be recognized globally. Additionally, understanding the accreditation of the institution is crucial for recognition of course credits and degrees (1).

### Additional Considerations

– Choosing the Right Program: With over 3,000 schools in the U.S., it's important to match your program of study and degree with the right school. The Study in the USA Guide for International Students provides searchable data to help find the right program.

– Standardized Testing: If you are not a native English speaker, it's important to consider standardized testing requirements for admission to U.S. universities. Some institutions may offer specific testing options for international students who are not native English speakers.

– Financial Aid Information: International student offices and career planning and placement offices on college campuses can be valuable sources of current financial aid information. They often have catalogs and books on scholarships, fellowships, and grants (2).

– Seeking Assistance: If you need further guidance, reaching out to the department of international students or an adviser from the university can provide complete details and information about the application procedure.

Becoming an international student in the U.S. involves careful planning, understanding visa requirements, exploring funding options, and ensuring that the chosen program and institution are the right fit for your academic and professional goals.

Studying abroad is a life-changing experience that offers students the opportunity to immerse themselves in new cultures, gain a global perspective, and pursue academic excellence. However, for individuals from non-English speaking countries, the journey of becoming an international student can be fraught with challenges and struggles, particularly when studying in countries where English is not the primary language.

This essay aims to delve into the multifaceted struggles faced by international students from non-English speaking backgrounds and explore the resilience and determination they exhibit in their pursuit of academic and personal success.

One of the primary hurdles faced by international students from non-English speaking countries is the language barrier. While many of these students possess a basic understanding of English, the transition to studying in an environment where English is the primary language of instruction and communication can be daunting.

Academic lectures, readings, assignments, and social interactions all require a high level of English proficiency, which can pose significant challenges for non-native speakers. This linguistic barrier often leads to feelings of isolation, frustration, and self-doubt, as students struggle to articulate their thoughts and ideas effectively in a language that is not their own (3).

In addition to the language barrier, international students from non-English speaking countries also face cultural and social challenges. The customs, traditions, and social norms in a new country can be vastly different from those in their home countries, leading to feelings of cultural disorientation and alienation. Simple tasks such as grocery shopping, navigating public transportation, or participating in social events can become formidable obstacles for international students who are unfamiliar with the local customs and societal norms. This cultural adjustment process often requires a great deal of resilience and adaptability, as students strive to find their place in a foreign environment while preserving their cultural identity (4).

Moreover, the financial burden of studying abroad can be overwhelming for many international students from non-English speaking countries. Tuition fees, living expenses, and healthcare costs in foreign countries can be exorbitant, and not all students have access to adequate financial resources or scholarships.

As a result, many students are forced to take on part-time jobs or seek alternative sources of income to support themselves while pursuing their education. Balancing work and studies can take a toll on their physical and mental well-being, as they juggle the demands of academic rigor with the pressures of financial stability.

Despite these formidable challenges, international students from non-English speaking countries exhibit remarkable resilience and determination in their pursuit of academic success. Many students actively seek out language support programs, English language courses, and academic tutoring to improve their language skills and academic performance. They form close-knit communities with fellow international students, providing each other with emotional support, guidance, and a sense of belonging in a foreign land. Additionally, many students actively engage in cultural exchange activities, volunteer work, and language exchanges to broaden their horizons and integrate into the local community (5).

Furthermore, international students often demonstrate remarkable adaptability and resourcefulness in overcoming financial limitations. They carefully manage their finances, seek out part-time employment opportunities, and explore alternate means of financial support to sustain their education and living expenses. Their tenacity and perseverance in the face of financial adversity are a testament to their unwavering commitment to achieving their academic goals (6).

International students face a range of challenges when studying abroad. These challenges can be academic, social, and cultural in nature. Here are some of the common challenges faced by international students:

#### 1. Academic Challenges:

International students often encounter academic challenges, including language barriers and differences in academic expectations. The English language barrier is a significant hurdle, as many students may struggle with understanding and expressing themselves in a new language. Additionally, the format of assignments and the emphasis on classroom discussions in some countries may differ from what international students are accustomed to, leading to difficulties in academic writing and participation in class discussions .

#### 2. Social and Cultural Adjustment:

Another significant challenge for international students is the process of adjusting to a new social and cultural environment. This includes issues such as social isolation, cultural adjustment, and the need to find accommodation, transportation, and banking services in a new country. The adjustment to a new life and culture can lead to daily emotional crises related to being away from family and familiar surroundings.

### 3. Financial Challenges for International Students

Studying abroad offers invaluable experiences, but it also comes with its set of financial challenges. Understanding and managing these challenges are crucial for international students to have a successful academic journey (7).

**Tuition Fees:** One of the primary financial concerns for international students is the high cost of tuition. Compared to domestic students, international students often face significantly higher tuition fees at universities and colleges. This difference in fees can create a significant financial burden, requiring careful planning and consideration.

**Cost of Living:** In addition to tuition fees, international students must also contend with the cost of living in their host country. This includes expenses such as accommodation, transportation, food, and daily necessities. Adjusting to a new currency and price levels can be challenging, and students may need to budget carefully to ensure they can afford their living expenses (8).

**Accommodation Expenses:** Finding suitable accommodation in a foreign country can be expensive. Whether living in university dormitories, renting an apartment, or staying with a host family, international students must budget for accommodation expenses. Factors such as location, amenities, and lease terms can all impact the cost of housing.

**Transportation Costs:** Navigating transportation in a new country can be both daunting and costly. International students may need to budget for public transportation fares, taxi rides, or even purchasing a vehicle if necessary. Understanding transportation options and planning for associated costs is essential for managing finances effectively (9).

**Daily Expenses:** Everyday expenses, such as groceries, dining out, and personal items, can quickly add up for international students. Differences in pricing and availability of goods compared to their home country may require adjustments to their spending habits. Budgeting for these daily expenses is essential to avoid financial strain.

**Health Insurance:** Many countries require international students to have health insurance coverage during their stay. The cost of health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for medical care can contribute to financial challenges. Understanding the healthcare system in the host country and obtaining the necessary insurance coverage is crucial for international students' well-being.

**Scholarships and Financial Aid:** Despite the financial challenges, international students have access to various scholarships, grants, and financial aid opportunities. Researching and applying for scholarships can help alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with studying abroad. Universities, governments, and private organizations offer a range of funding options based on academic merit, financial need, and other criteria (10).

**Part-Time Employment:** Many international students opt to work part-time during their studies to supplement their income. However, finding suitable employment opportunities that align with their academic schedule and visa regulations can be challenging. International students must be aware of visa restrictions and work permit requirements when seeking part-time employment.

**Budgeting and Financial Planning:** Effective budgeting and financial planning are essential skills for international students. Creating a detailed budget that accounts for tuition, living expenses, and other costs can help students manage their finances responsibly. Seeking advice from financial advisors or utilizing budgeting tools can aid students in making informed financial decisions.

**Support Services:** Universities and colleges often provide support services to help international students navigate financial challenges. These services may include financial aid offices, student counseling centers, and workshops on budgeting and financial literacy. Seeking assistance from these resources can provide international students with valuable guidance and support (11).

### 4. Mental Health and Discrimination:

International students may face challenges related to mental health, discrimination, and adjustment to new places, cultures, and languages. Living away from home and encountering cultural and language barriers can be more challenging than expected, leading to feelings of isolation and discrimination.

## 5. Lack of Understanding and Support:

International students may struggle with a lack of understanding and support, both academically and socially. This can include difficulties in seeking explanations from peers or professors, unfamiliarity with academic writing and research, and a lack of support in adjusting to a new academic and social environment.

International students encounter a variety of challenges, including academic, social, cultural, financial, and mental health-related issues. Overcoming these challenges often requires resilience, adaptation, and seeking support from academic institutions and local communities.

International students often require various support systems to help them navigate through their academic and personal experiences in a foreign country. These support systems can include academic assistance, career services, mental health support, and cultural adjustment programs.

### Types of Support Services:

**Academic Support:** Universities and colleges typically offer academic support services for international students, including workshops, one-on-one tutoring, and groups for practicing English and connecting with fellow students.

**Career Services:** Many institutions provide career advice, job hunting assistance, resume building, and interview preparation for international students.

**Mental Health Support:** Specialist mental health support is available for international students, along with general welfare support and hardship funding.

**Cultural Adjustment Programs:** Support services often include counseling, clubs promoting diversity and inclusion, and social events for networking to help students connect with their peers and adjust to a new culture (12).

### Key Considerations:

It's important for international students to seek support early to ensure timely assistance from their university.

Support systems can also help international students deal with challenges such as homesickness and the difficulties of adjusting to a new academic system and culture.

### Challenges and Variances:

While some institutions provide exemplary support for international students, there is a lack of consistent support across colleges and universities, leading to difficulties for many international students.

The availability and quality of support services may vary from one institution to another, and some offices may lack the staff and resources to offer extensive services.

International students can access a range of support services, including academic, career, mental health, and cultural adjustment support, to help them thrive in their academic and personal lives while studying abroad.

Moving to a foreign country can be an exciting but challenging experience, especially when it comes to making new friends. Here are some useful tips to help you navigate this process:

1. **Volunteer Activities:** Engaging in volunteer activities can be an excellent way to meet new people in a foreign country. Whether it's volunteering for cooking meals, gardening, interpreting, or teaching, this provides an opportunity to connect with other volunteers and organizers, who are likely to be friendly and open to meeting new people

2. **Find a Hobby:** Finding a hobby that you enjoy can also be a great way to make new friends in a foreign country. It allows you to connect with people who share similar interests, providing a common ground for building friendships.

3. **Join Clubs or Societies:** If you're in a university setting, joining a club or society can help you meet like-minded individuals and make new friends. It's a great way to connect with others who share your passions and interests.

4. **Connect with Expats:** Building friendships with other expats can provide a sense of camaraderie, as they understand the challenges and victories of living in a foreign country. Expats

can also offer valuable tips and insights about the local area, making it easier to navigate your new surroundings.

5. Use Social Media: Social media can be a valuable tool for meeting new people in a foreign country. Joining relevant Facebook groups dedicated to different cities or expat communities can help you connect with others and learn about meet-up events in your area.

6. Language Exchange: If the new country has a different native language, consider participating in language exchange programs. This not only helps you learn the local language but also provides an opportunity to build friendships with language partners.

7. Stay Connected: Finally, staying connected with friends and family members who have moved abroad can provide helpful tips and potential introductions to new connections, leading to the formation of a whole new group of friends.

Remember, making friends in a foreign country takes time and effort, but by being open to new experiences and actively seeking out opportunities to connect with others, you can build a fulfilling social circle in your new environment (12).

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the struggles faced by international students from non-English speaking countries as they navigate the complexities of studying abroad are multifaceted and formidable. From the language barrier to cultural disorientation and financial hardships, these students encounter numerous obstacles on their path to academic and personal success.

However, their resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment to their education enable them to surmount these challenges and thrive in a foreign academic environment. Their experiences serve as a powerful testament to the indomitable human spirit and the transformative power of education across borders.

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