

## Assignment One Instruction

### Goal

The goal of this mini project is to sharpen your critical observation skills and help you to look at the world and understand the culture from a native point of view. I would like you to start looking for the social context and think about how they could be used to understand the consumer culture in China.

### Where to observe?

As a group, you should have a clear research topic and narrow it down to a set of research questions. Based on your research questions and your previous experience, you should pick up one or three related sites to observe.

For instance, if your research topic is “globalization and localization in China.” You should be able to have the research questions like “ How global culture such as(fast food, coffee, luxury)....penetrate the Chinese people’s daily life? How such global culture is localized to fit in Chinese market? How such adjustment work in reality?” ... According these questions, you might pick up an international chain store where you can observe shopping or other consuming behaviors and analyze your data under the framework of globalization and localization.

### Tasks

#### *Step One:*

Each group member needs to find himself/herself a particular spot in the place your group chooses. On a sheet of paper sketch as much detail as you can see about the scene from that spot: where are things, how large are stores and other objects, what is on display, where are the major signs, where do people cluster, etc. Get as much as you can on your diagram.

In addition to the physical setting, you need observe the behaviors of people. Plan to spend **2 hours** observing and jotting notes on a notepad. With a critical eye, make note of what is going on in the spaces around you. I’d like you to adopt three different perspectives through out your observation time.

First, study the patterns of activity between people and objects in the place. Think about how people arrive at places, how people, goods and service flow.

Next observe the interactions between people( for instance, customers and salesperson, customers and customers, waiters and customers.....)

Finally, shadow a particular person for a long period of shopping or consuming. Watch how the person interacts with other people and the objects.

#### *Step two:*

When each of you finishes your own task in the place, get together, compare your field notes, discuss your findings and analyze your data revolving around your research questions.

*Step Three:*

As a group, form a final PPT report. It will be assessed on the following

1. Clarity of research question(s) asked
2. Clarity and persuasiveness of argument
3. Awareness of relevance of your research
4. Relevance of theories addressed
5. Clarity and persuasiveness of conclusions
6. Awareness of greater implications or questions that the topic draws on or suggests

As an individual reflective paper, it should be 1500 words or so. It is a piece of writing that demonstrates a high level of reflexivity as a researcher and an awareness of the strengths and limitations of your observation data collection experience. Place yourself in the researcher context. Some of the aspects you might like to explore in this individual reflective piece include:

1. What was easy or difficult in collecting data? What was easy? What was hard?
2. Did you need to change your research question(s) or did it stay the same?
3. What kind of relationship did you develop with the people you were observing?
4. How did you feel in the process? Did you expect this?
5. How did your presence as a researcher influence or impact the observations you were obtaining? Was this avoidable? Why / why not?
6. Did you experience any situations where you felt uncomfortable? Why?