

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND
SELF-CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS
IN A THAIUNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY OF
CHIANG RAI RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY



TANAPHAT WUTTHISARNWATTANA

A Thesis Submitted to University of Phayao
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts in English

December 2021

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มหาวิทยาลัยในประเทศไทย: ศึกษากรณีมหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย



วิทยานิพนธ์เสนอมหาวิทยาลัยพะเยา เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา
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Master of Arts Degree in English
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Keywords: Intercultural Communication Strategy, Self-adaptation, Chinese Students

ABSTRACT

In the new globalization era, the requirements for internationalization have been driven in different higher educational institutions in order to update academic advancements, as well as to promote intercultural understandings and sustainable human developments. In other words, a variety of internationalizing methods including student and staff exchange, duo study programs, branch campuses, and distance learning can be implicated in all universities. Based on the mixed method, the major purposes of the study aimed to identify intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a long-term Thai public university, as well as to investigate the Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering with their intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university. For research methodology, using interview and questionnaire as a tool, 30 four-year Chinese students majoring in English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in the MOU with Pu'er Teachers' College, Pu'er in Yunnan province of China were selected. The findings of the study revealed that all the aspects of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies, with its mean of 2.08 and its standard deviation (x_{\square}) of 0.85, were sometimes used when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university as compared to each aspect, it showed that asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions ($x_{\square} = 2.38$, S.D. = 1.01) were frequently used, followed by avoiding talking about sensitive issues ($x_{\square} = 2.14$, S.D. = 0.91) and using your own language to facilitate the communication ($x_{\square} = 2.14$, S.D. = 0.93), and using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication ($x_{\square} = 2.10$, S.D. = 0.93).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my thesis advisor, Assistant Professor Dr. Sukanya Kaowiwattanakul for her invaluable help and constant encouragement throughout the course of the research. I am grateful for her teaching and suggestions, not only the research methodologies and learning course but also many other methodologies in life.

I would not have achieved this far, and this thesis would not have been completed without all support that I have always receive from her. The researcher wishes to thanks to Assistant Professor Dr.Rattana Yawiloeng and Dr.SingKham Rakpa who devoted his precious time for giving me valuable advice, insightful remarks, and research supervision from the preliminary to the final step in order to complete this research and who gave me much valuable advice in the early stage to the final stage of this grateful work.

Finally, I most gratefully acknowledge my parents and my family for all their support throughout the period of this research. I thank to my parents, my classmate reverend Prawin Utahorn and everyone for their constant love, care, and support.

Tanaphat Wutthisarnwattana

The image contains a large, faint watermark of the University of Phayao logo. The logo is circular and features a central emblem with Thai script. Below the emblem, the text 'UNIVERSITY OF PHAYAO' is written in a semi-circle. The watermark is light purple and yellow.

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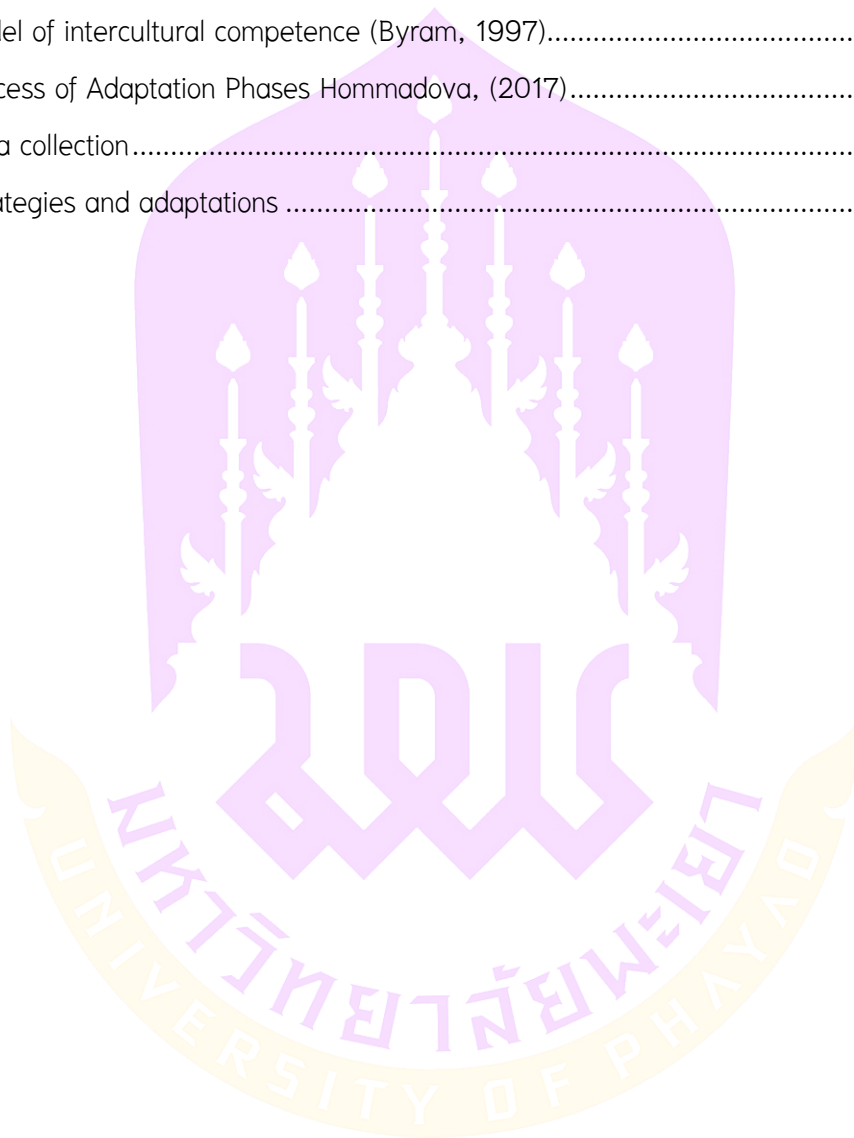
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In the new globalization era, the requirements for internationalization have been driven in different higher educational institutions in order to update academic advancements, as well as to promote intercultural understandings and sustainable human developments Gacel-Ávila, (2020). In other words, a variety of internationalizing methods including student and staff exchange, duo study programs, branch campuses, and distance learning can be implicated in all universities (Lathapipat, 2016; Rhein, 2017; Ferguson, 2020). That is to say, not only are the academic staff's overseas study programs all provided for strategic schemes for internationalizing higher education in most universities, but also the university staff's international academic collaborations with different host universities are stipulated for international students' and academic staff's mobility of perceiving their better intercultural understandings, developing their new intercultural knowledge and skills, as well as arousing cultural awareness and cross-cultural adaptation. In fact, the friendly educational environment in Thailand has attracted ASEAN and Asian students' oversea study, particularly in China. (Li and Lim, 2017; Nomnian, 2018; and Yan, 2019).

Intercultural communication is an incident on in which people from different cultural contexts interact (Noonkong, Damnet, and Charttrakul, 2019; Xiuwen and Razali, 2020, and Jamil, 2020). It is apparent that communication between different cultures is more complicated than communication within the same culture. However, effective intercultural communication requires communication strategies rather than communication under the same culture Chomsky, (1965); Canale and Swain (1980), and Euamornvanich, (2017) also stated that the English speaker's communicative competence is integral to communication so that knowledge and understanding of language are both stimulated for effective communication.

In other words, English communicative competence is considered one of the most significant elements for intracultural or cross-cultural communication for more effective

communication (Euamornvanich, 2017; Thanakong and Adipattaranan, 2017). Most importantly, English communication between members of the same culture in the same language and different cultures using the same language can be effective when using communicative competence and intercultural communication strategies Rastegar, Sadat and Gohari, (2016). As a result, the interlocutors' communicative competences are all influenced by their effective communication. The interlocutors' intercultural communication strategies found in many different educational, socio-cultural, and environmental contexts, along with using their social interaction and negotiation in order to overcome language barriers across cultures (Berardo, 2008), should be activated for more effective intercultural communication (Nomnian, 2018).

In other words, cross-cultural adaptation or adaptation conceptualized by Kim, (2017) initiated a U-curve model of cross-cultural adaptation. This model encompasses four different major adaptation stages. In the first stage on "honeymoon", it begins with perceptions of interlocutors coming to the new culture. The interlocutors commence to learn about the new cultural issues in their real-life situations, and in the second stage on "culture shock", it is defining as being frustrated, anxious, confused, helpless, as well as challenges to deal with different cultural settings. However, at the adaptation stage, the interlocutors gradually learn the cultural norms and values of the host country. Later, they can adapt and behave confidently in the new culture. The last stage is mastery. Most of the anxieties are gone. The interlocutor's life is more enjoyable and feels better. Also, they can learn to accept the norms and values and can function in the host culture effectively (Songsirisak, 2018). The Office of the Higher Education Commission's (Webmetrics, 2019) annual report has indicated that the incoming numbers of 16,910 international students studying in Thailand increased dramatically in 2019. When the internationalization of Thai higher education is compared to other Asian countries like China, India, or Vietnam, Thailand was still targeted significantly by international students. According to the UNESCO data, the highest numbers of international students came from other ASEAN or nearby Asian countries; moreover, 37.85% of the incoming numbers of Chinese students selected Thailand as their targeted ASEAN country, followed by 6.48 % of Myanmar, 5.34 % of Cambodia, 4.87% of, and 4.40% of Vietnam and Laos (Webmetrics, 2019). In order to

pursue such a global growth in multicultural diversities, ASEAN and Asian educational institutions should emphasize empowering the university's staff and students' communicative competence because international students who leave their own cultural environments to study abroad will have the potentialities of developing capabilities for adaptation and flexibility as they encounter unfamiliar and changing situations. Furthermore, the international students' opportunities to broaden their cultural and intellectual horizons are offered. Meanwhile, economic activities among ASEAN countries, as well as three Asian countries (China, Korea, and Japan), have increased, resulting in a greater need for English-language competence among the citizens of the member nations using English as a communication tool (ASEAN, 2017).

In terms of the incoming numbers of international students in Thailand, the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for exchange programs with those in China and other ASEAN member countries have been signed with many Thai higher educational institutions. Not only are Thai university students' educational opportunities in furthering their overseas studies in different foreign universities offered, but also foreign students' various academic study programs in Thailand are provided for exchange students to experience the study of new languages in an environment similar to those in their home universities. In this regard, students' different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds in such exchange programs are all needed to promote the use of English as a medium of communication. The People's Republic of China is one of the countries with which ASEAN universities have signed MOUs, including Thai higher educational institutions. Likewise, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University (CRRU) entered into exchange programs with Chinese universities in 2004, facilitating students from the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Thailand and from Pu-er Teachers' College, Yunnan County, China PRC. to study English in a foreign environment.

Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, one of Thailand's tertiary institutions receiving an annual batch of Chinese undergraduate students, is located in the north of Thailand. Specifically, this university's agreement with Pu'er Teachers' College of China, which is one of the Chinese universities in southern China seeking to empower their academic and socio-cultural services in the Greater Mae Khong Sub-regions (GMS), have officially

signed up for Chiang Rai Rajabhat University's (CRRU) and Pu'er Teachers' College's academic collaborations,, as well as its student and teacher exchange programs; moreover, the incoming numbers of 40 undergraduate students for each year have been accepted for its student exchange program initiated by CRRU's policies on international academic services. From 19 July 2014 to the present, the first batch of students from CRRU under the exchange program has been dispatched to Pu'er Teachers' College, Pu'er in Yunnan province of China in order to sustain the two universities' academic collaborations. The first batch of Chinese students learned English for two years in their home university based on their own curriculum and then were enrolled in the Faculty of Humanities in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in only special classes, which were exclusively arranged for them, and not attended by any other students. In fact, the numbers of Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) undergraduate students learning English in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University under the MOU of "2+ 2 Student Exchange Program", have risen substantially.

According to related studies and observations conducted by Zhang (2016); Wang (2016); Kanat (2016); and Tran and Pham (2016); Chinese international students' academic success depends on many factors, such as the acculturation to their new environment, academic stress, financial problem, English language communication obstacles, and loneliness, but it is the intercultural-knowledge obstacles that should be prioritized as the first challenge for international Chinese students. In order to overcome psychological sociocultural academic discourse socialization challenges, Chinese international students should prioritize the importance of the acquisition of intercultural knowledge (Wette, and Furneaux, 2018). The success of international Chinese students with intercultural knowledge is crucial because it helps to build social relationships with other colleagues, to have better intercultural communication competence and understandings of the content of the course, as well as having more confidence for asking for help both in academic and in daily life from their advisors and host country classmates, which can reduce their academic pressure and cultural adaptation stress. Furthermore, Sarwari and Wahab (2017); Irwandi (2017) and Sun (2019) asserted that intercultural communication plays a significant role in the internationalization system negotiating socio-cultural issues between people from multi-

cultural diversities. Additionally, researchers also posited that intercultural communication competence is pertinent to the target of the co-hosts of people who prepare for individuals to build intercultural relationships as different phenomena together with numerous models of intercultural competence happen. That is to say, these include international business, overseas study, international schools, medical careers, living abroad, and transnational education. In order to get a better and insightful understanding of the content of the class, it is vital for international students to master basic intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, he also indicated that the practice of intercultural academic communication establishes, creates, remodels, reinforces, and re-creates intercultural communicative competence. It can assist intercultural speakers to identify similarities and differences between home culture contexts and host culture contexts directly leading to their successful communication, as well as establishment of communicative relationships (Byram, 1997). Like the study of Xiuwen and Razali (2020), it found that the Chinese international students' experiences in different overseas universities are induced by language barriers, communication breakdowns, culture shock, self-adaptation, psychological paradigm shifts, and academic issues. These language and cultural issues are pertinent amongst international students, especially those from China, but there have been many studies that posit that these intercultural communication challenges can be overcome with intercultural communicative competence in order to prepare themselves not only in developing communication skills but also intercultural appreciation before studying in foreign countries. In the context of Thailand, CRRU International Relations Division's annual report (2020) also noted that the Chinese undergraduate students were mostly faced with their English language barriers and their educational and cultural adaptations when they stayed in this Thai-speaking context. These English-language problems are all caused by the Chinese undergraduate students' insufficient English-language knowledge in academic English. This language challenges among the Chinese undergraduate students have caused their communication breakdowns together with their misunderstandings, and their misinterpretation. On the difficulty of Thai students, Euamornvanich (2017); Nomnian (2019) revealed that the Thai students also faced with understanding problems in language and culture which adjusted by learning by oneself; moreover, they encountered with their attitude problems from thinking but adjusted

by starting from changing the perspective and unattached their own culture and accept the new culture. Also, they were inducted by their behavioral problems from trying to avoid meeting strangers by accepting new friends for the opportunity to gain new experiences in life.

The previous studies and observations on the Chinese students' adaptation to a host culture, Songsirisak (2018); Nomnian and Jhaiyanuntana (2019) and Kang, et al. (2019) indicated that most Chinese undergraduate students' adaptation was caused by their communication breakdowns together with Thai and local cultural misunderstandings when interacting English with Thais in a Thai-speaking context. With the increasing numbers of Chinese students studying at Thai universities, their worse life existence and incapability to adjust their life at Thai universities successfully are all encountered in the Thai culture. Specifically, comments from the investigation of Chinese students' self-adaptation cited above showed that a fewer number of Chinese students can adapt, meanwhile most of them faced with prolonging culture shocks due to their lack of strategies for dealing with new cultural experiences, no understandings of Thai culture, and ineffective intercultural communication ability.

There is limited research on intercultural communication challenges and strategies, as well as adaptation employed by Chinese undergraduate students using English as the main language in tertiary educational contexts, as well as their language and cultural adaptations in a long-term Thai public university. In this regard, this study aims to investigate intercultural communication strategies and socio-cultural adaptation problems, as well as to find out solutions and strategies for Chinese students to consider after staying in a long-term Thai public university, particularly in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. In order to provide training courses in tertiary educational contexts, as well as to increase cultural awareness for the better understandings of English intercultural communication and self-adaptation in a long-term Thai public university, the analysis of intercultural communication strategies and their self-adaptation employed by 30 senior Chinese students using English as the main language should be firstly scrutinized for the development of successful English intercultural communication at the university level.

Purposes of the Study

1. To identify intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a long-term Thai-speaking professional setting.
2. To investigate the Chinese students' self-adaptations when encountering their intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai-speaking professional setting.

Research Questions

This study aims to find out the answer to the following questions.

1. What are the intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when encountering their intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university?
2. How do Chinese students use their adaptation to deal with those English intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university?

The Scope of the Study

Participants: 30 senior Chinese undergraduate students majoring in the English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in the MOU with Pu'er Teachers' College, Pu'er province, Yunnan County, China PRC. were all selected by the purposive sampling technique.

Duration/Time:

This study was held from December 1st, 2020, to September 30th, 2021.

Places / Study Site:

Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai province, Thailand

Definition of Terms

Intercultural Communication Strategies are strategies that are associated with English communication among Chinese and Thai people whose different cultural perceptions and English language capability are interacted in a long-term Thai public

university. In this study, it also refers to strategies used in English communication between Chinese undergraduate students and Thai people in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University.

The intercultural communication strategies proposed by Leung, Lee and Chiu (2013); Sharifian (2013); Cogo and Dewey (2006); Mauranen (2009); Byram, Gribkova and Starkey. (2002); Jenkins (2007); Kirkpatrick (2007); Breiteneder (2005); Gnutzmann (2000a); Mauranen (2012); Seidlhofer (2004); Baker (2012) and Sharifian (2013); Suwanasom (2019) are categorized into ten major aspects:

1. Asking for repetition of unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions.
2. Avoiding talking about sensitive issues.
3. Being careful in using grammatically correct expressions (English).
4. Using the Chinese language to facilitate communication.
5. Using the partner's mother tongue (Chinese or Thai) to facilitate communication.
6. Clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics.
7. Selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions.
8. Asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts.
9. Selecting conversation topics of shared common interests between different cultural backgrounds.
10. Using your background knowledge of the partner's culture.

Adaptation refers to the four-year Chinese students' behaviors towards their self-adaptation related to the English language and socio-cultural adaptations in a Thai public university when their long-term study in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University takes place.

A Thai-Speaking Environment refers to a Thai educational institution where 3rd-year Chinese students are studying in the English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai province, Thailand, communicating through English as a foreign language in Thailand.

Chinese Students refers to those majoring in the four-year English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai province, Thailand, communicating with English in a long-term Thai public university.

Significance of the study

1. To make the Chinese students', Thai students', as well as different interlocutors' better understandings of the use of intercultural communication strategies, and their self-adaptation worked with Thai and foreign university students in different educational institutions or universities.

2. To help Thai and international lecturers, different university staff, as well as Thai and different overseas outsiders to understand how to communicate English effectively with Thais in different educational institutions or universities and help them to choose the appropriate use of self-adaptation to deal with intercultural problems in different Thai universities.

3. The framework of the study can be used as a guideline in analyzing the use of intercultural communication strategies used during their intercultural communication in different educational institutions or universities, as well as scrutinizing self-adaptation of students when encountering with intercultural communication problems in different Thai universities.

4. This study can be implicated for on-going intensive training courses related to the development of effective intercultural communication in English together with better understandings of self-adaptation on communication and socio-cultural dimensions in different Thai universities, as well as effective conflict organizational management in different Thai-speaking professional settings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

This study investigates the use of intercultural communication strategies employed by Chinese EFL students and their self-adaptation in a long-term Thai-speaking context. This chapter also presents a review of communication together with types of verbal and non-verbal communication, intercultural communication involved in communicative competence (CC), intercultural communication competence (ICC), intercultural communication strategies, self-adaptations, factors influencing English intercultural communication barriers as well as previous research related to intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation. Also, this literature review scrutinizes five main aspects as listed below.

1. Communication
 - 1.1 Definition of communication
 - 1.2 Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication
2. Intercultural Communication (IC)
 - 2.1 Communicative Competence (CC)
 - 2.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)
3. Intercultural Communication Strategies (ICS)
4. Factors Influencing English Intercultural Communication Barriers in a Thai-Speaking Context
5. Self-Adaptation
6. Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)
7. Related studies
 - 7.1 Related studies on intercultural communication strategies
 - 7.2 Related studies on self-adaptations

Communication

1. Definition of Communication

Communication is defined as the transferring and understanding of meaning. It is the process of transmitting information, ideas, notions, feelings, and interpretation between one person to another by using words or language for interactive responses (Tran and Pham, 2015; Kanat, 2016; Wang, 2016 and Wette and Furneaux, 2018). In other words, communication also refers to the process of exchanging information, knowledge, facts, and ideas between senders and receivers. It exchanges information and delivers important things through the use of various media or methods focusing on persuasion and resulting in awareness or a change of attitude and behaviors (Rastegar, Sadat and Gohari, 2016; Euamornvanich, 2017; Park, Klieve and Tsurutani, (2017) and Kakita and Palukuri, 2020). In addition, communication means the process of connecting human thoughts and feelings with others to encourage interaction between interlocutors. This involves the message of one person or group of people who require communicating so that everyone understands their information (Dörnyei and Scott, 1995; Pérez-Vidal, 2014). Therefore, communication is the process of transferring and exchanging information, knowledge, facts, and ideas to connect thoughts and feelings between people. In fact, methods used in communication between people include words, media, and languages to bring about a mutual reaction and understanding of the message between the sender and receiver. Also, several components directly lead to efficient communication.

2. Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Communication between members of diverse cultural backgrounds has always been and will likely continue to be essential to the peaceful co-existence of humans on earth. Verbal and nonverbal codes are elements of intercultural communication and both of them can be used to process and transmit messages (Fatt, 1998; Hou, 2017; Konchiab and Charoennai, 2021). These codes vary by culture and both of them are equally important.

Verbal communication is composed of both spoken and written languages. Spoken language is characterized by in-person spoken communication as well as spoken messages delivered through various other forms of media and technology. Written language is the sounds or words of a language represented by written or imprinted letters or symbols.

Verbal language includes five components: phonology, morphology, semantics, syntactic, and pragmatics (Mundy, et al., 1995; Lekhanovaa and Glukhovaa, 2016; Abu–Arqoub and Alserhan, 2019 and Birlik and Kaur, 2020).

The opposite of the above is nonverbal communication, which is communication defined by the lack of spoken or written words. Nonverbal language, or “silent language”, is the way people express their feelings or respond to others through the use of body language. Edward T. Hall (1981) analyzed the multitude of ways in which people communicate without the use of spoken or written words. The various types of body language offer an alternative to communication through verbal means (Hall, 1981) pp. 115

Nonverbal language is often used to complement the verbal message (Noonkong, Damnet and Charttrakul, 2019). Nonverbal language is used by communicators to emphasize, complement, argue, or substitute for verbal communication. Gestures, head movements, facial expressions, eye movements and contact, and a variety of other physical displays can express different feelings, messages, and meanings that speakers wish to communicate. The examples of nonverbal communication listed above are called kinesics, which is communication through varying body movements. Although it isn't the only form of nonverbal communication, it is certainly the most well-known. The five types of kinesics behavior are emblems, illustrators, affective display, regulators, and adaptors. Emblems include gestures such as forming a thumbs up or waving of the hand to indicate a hello or goodbye. Illustrators are used for support or to explain a word or sentence to make them more meaningful. For example, if people give someone directions, they might use their arms or fingers to point in the right direction. Affective display is used to display feelings through facial expressions and body part movement. There are seven universal facial expressions of emotion: happy, disgust, fear, surprise, sadness, contempt, and anger. Regulators include eye contact, head nods, postural shifts, and some back-channel signals. They are often used together with some spoken words such as ‘uh-hum or ‘a-ha’ and other turn-taking cues. Speakers use regulators to indicate when they prefer others to take a turn, or the listeners should carry on listening. Adaptors are movements that fulfill personal needs and help people to more comfortably adapt themselves to their environment, including some behaviors such as hair twisting, scratching, swinging of the legs, adjusting

glasses, and many more. In addition, related contributions and various behaviors of nonverbal communication explained in this study also focused on nonverbal communications as explained below.

1. Silence

Silence is more than communication without words. In fact, it is more about putting the context of communication into words (Hall, 1973). Silence is understood differently among people around the world. In the United States, verbal communication is emphasized, while nonverbal communication is less significant. Silence is seen as a lack of communication. Rhetoric is understood as natural self-expression, so long periods of silence are uncomfortable for most Americans as a result (Rytterström, et al., 2019). On the other hand, silence is considered to be one form of meaningful communication in other cultures, such as Japanese and Thai.

Truthfulness, social discretion, embarrassment, and defiance are the four dimensions of silence in Japanese culture (Poon Teng Fatt, 1998). The consideration, understanding, and caring of others is an inseparable part of Japanese culture. Existing research proposes that silence in Japan displays both disagreement and rejection. The Japanese use silence coupled with body language such as grimacing, frowning, squinting of the eyes, wrinkling of the nose, or pouting to express disagreement. Additionally, surprise is expressed through silence when direct participation in confrontations with others is impossible (Hou, 2017).

Silence appears in various ways. Silence is divided into four states as follows; the silence between sounds within a word is the smallest unit of silence, switching pause and inter-turn pause in interaction is another type of micro-level unit of silence, and gap and silent response is another unit of silence (Konchiab and Charoennai, 2021). Silences in conversation were listed by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson. (1974) by using a conversation-analytical perspective. They define the terms for silences based on the length; “pause” is a silence within a single turn, “gap” is the silence that occurs at the transition relevance place (TRP), and “lapse” is silence that takes longer than a gap or break of talk. It can be interpreted as a “silent response” when a gap develops into expanded silence. Silence exists in various communicative events such as when students are silent in the classroom out of respect for their teacher’s lectures or when participants

keep quiet in religious events out of respect to ritual ceremonies. Japanese silence could be interpreted not only as disagreement and rejection but also as the long silent pauses in the position of second pair parts of the conversation. Functions of silence can be grouped into these main categories: cognitive, discursive, social, affective, and semantic. This study will focus on how silence plays its role in the workplace. Politeness strategies can be categorized into two major aspects. **Positive politeness strategies** highlight friendliness to avoid causing offense. These strategies include framing criticism with compliments, establishing common ground, and using jokes, nicknames, honorifics, tag questions, polite discourse markers, and in-group jargon and slang. On the other hand, **negative politeness strategies** show deference to the speaker to avoid offending them, and consist of strategies like questioning, hedging, and presenting disagreements as opinions (Penelope and Stephen, 1978).

In many cultures, silence can be used to abstain from unwanted imposition, confrontation, or embarrassment in social encounters. The use of silence can be both a positive politeness strategy and a negative politeness strategy depending on its function in each communication event. There is a stronger inclination for silence in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean cultures, where it is often applied as negative politeness. According to the study of Birlik and Kaur, (2020), it showed that the various and uncertain nature of silence suggested that its interpretation is highly context-dependent and there are potential risks of miscommunication in intercultural communication.

2. Smile

According to Ekman (1970), a smile has been used as a sign of happiness in the six universal facial expressions. Generally, many people in all countries use a smile for greeting, welcoming, and displaying pleasure. Most people use a smile as a positive signal, but in modern studies, eastern cultural countries use smiles differently.

Thailand is well known as “the land of smiles”. Thai people always smile for different occasions and with different feelings: happy, sad, and angry. Most Thai people are able to interpret the different meanings of other Thai people’s smiles correctly because Thai culture encourages indirect communication, but this can cause some frustrations to foreigners from cultures that value direct and explicit communication (Rodat,

2019). Rytterström, et al., (2019) mentioned that there are many types of smiles such as formal smiles (a smile without opening your lips), commercial smiles (a smile with open lips but without showing teeth), sincere smiles, etc. People from different cultures can interpret each smile differently depending on each individual's perception and interpretation. Even though a smile is the most basic and universal body language, sometimes people from different cultural backgrounds treat a smile in different ways and this has the potential to cause some misunderstanding or conflict in intercultural communication.

2.1 Kinesics

Kinesics is body language as defined by a wide variety of movements. It focuses on communication through whole or partial body movements such as movements of the face, hands, and arms, as well as posture, gestures, facial expressions, and eye movements and contact (Aripin and Rahmat, 2019). These types of kinesics are described in detail as follows.

2.1.1 Posture

The emotions, attitudes, and intentions of an individual are reflected in the posture they adopt. Additionally, posture can provide insight into the personality of an individual. For example, impressions of confidence and competence are given off by good posture (Sheth, 2017). A wide range of postural signals and their meanings were identified by researchers, two of which are open and closed posture. An individual's willingness to communicate with others, confidence in themselves, and status are all reflected in an individual's posture. Open posture, for example, is characterized by a person facing you directly, with both hands apart and in plain view. This posture indicates a desire to listen and an interest in the other speaker. Closed posture, on the other hand, is marked by an individual seated with crossed legs, folded arms and/or concealed hands, and facing partially or mostly away from the other speaker, effectively 'closed off' from communication. It can be inferred from closed posture that an individual is uncomfortable, uninterested, or unwilling to engage in communication.

2.1.2 Facial expressions

Human facial expressions are an important part of displaying emotions. Experts debate over whether the ability to express emotions through facial expressions is universal or varies between cultures. (Papitchaya, 2018 and Aloysius, 2020). In 2018, Yao and Lai (2018) concluded that, depending on the context, there are both universal and culture-specific emotional displays and facial expressions. Due to the interest in the use of facial expressions, the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) Manual was created by Ekman in the 1970s. The FACS Manual details a system for measuring movements and expressions in each of several sections of the human face. The FACS system pays particular attention to movements in the parts of the face such as the chinning boss, eye aperture, glabella, etc. Ekman's systems cited in 2003 are the standard by which human facial gestures and expressions are measured. According to Ekman, these systems are primarily mechanical measures. The following studies demonstrate that facial expressions are integral to human communication. The variety of human facial expressions convey different meanings in communication between members of both similar and diverse cultural backgrounds.

A study conducted by Catherine, et al. (2020), challenges existing research that states that facial expressions do not differ among various cultures, as facial expressions are a hard-wired human behavior resulting from evolution. This study used statistical image processing techniques to examine how individuals of different cultural backgrounds perceived facial expressions through their own mental representations. The results demonstrate that while Chinese participants evaluate facial expressions by focusing on the eyes, Western Caucasians were more reliant on the eyebrows and mouth. The results of the study thus suggest that differences such as these could contribute to miscommunication, missed cues, or misinterpreted signals about emotions during cross-cultural communication.

2.1.3 Eye contact

During communication, the way that an individual looks at another individual can send a variety of messages. Speakers naturally focus on the face and eyes during communication. As a result, eye contact is an essential component of nonverbal behavior. Despite this importance, multicultural workplaces are rarely investigated in research

concerning the role of eye contact in nonverbal communication. Akhtim (2018) cited that to achieve successful social communication, the appropriate use of eye contact is essential. Individuals with autism often display different eye contact behaviors than typical individuals, as a result of the severe social and communicative issues they face. A visual oddball paradigm was applied in this study to determine if children with high functioning autism struggle to detect mutual gaze under experimental conditions. The results show that, unlike normal children, children with autism struggled equally with detecting direct gaze and averted gaze. It is thus proposed that children with autism are unable to detect direct gaze, which differs from the abilities of typical children. Autistic children, then, are at risk of developing deviant eye contact behavior, which could hamper the development of vital social and communicative skills. Jongerius, et al. (2020) stated that in two-person encounters eye contact has numerous functions, but maybe the most significant of which is gathering feedback on the other person's reactions. It is also suggested that affiliate motivation and eye contact are related. A stable level of physical proximity, eye contact, and other aspects of intimacy is created by approach and avoidance forces. If one of these is disturbed, changes may occur along the other dimensions to compensate. As a result of the experiments, it is proposed that people move towards a median distance and apply a particular level of eye contact. The closer that two subjects were placed together (and while one participant gazed constantly at the other), both eye contact and glances were shorter. The effect was displayed most noticeably between pairs of the opposite-sex. Another experiment demonstrated that subjects would stand closer to an individual if their eyes were shut, which was predicted by the theory.

Intercultural Communication (IC)

Definition

Intercultural communication is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultural backgrounds try to communicate. It is a field of study derived from many others, such as anthropology, psychology, linguistics, communication, and cultural studies. The term culture is taken from sociology, defining the integrated way of life of representatives of a community to the extent that they are conditioned by that membership. The term

"culture" is most commonly used by anthropologists to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify, and communicate their experiences symbolically (Jin, Xiaohui and Xiaoli, 2019). In linguistically and culturally diverse contexts, the fact that people have different perceptions and attitudes towards the language and culture of others often results in challenges in intercultural communication. (Phumpho and Nomnian, 2019). As a result, a variety of speakers' social roles, reflections, and communication behaviors exist (Qingliang, 2018; Xiuwen and Razali 2020) For instance, hotel staff often face challenges related to intercultural communication whenever they interact with individuals of foreign cultural backgrounds. This is caused by individuals bringing their own languages, cultures, and attitudes with them (Qingliang, 2018). As effective communication depends on a variety of interpretations and comprehensions, hotel workers likewise have to be culturally sensitive to communicate effectively with customers from different cultural backgrounds. (Posai and Soranasthaporn, 2019) It is common for people to voluntarily communicate with those who share a similar language, culture, and attitudes, and the opposite is also true in that they avoid communicating with people who have a different linguistic and cultural background since it is more likely that intercultural communication breakdown will occur. Thus, effective intercultural communication competence is influenced to overcome communication challenges since such challenges between people of disparate language and cultural backgrounds usually stem from sociolinguistic and cultural differences that influence their distinctive perceptions, interpretations, lack of shared experiences, and frames of reference (Gudykunst and Kim, 1992; Silverthorne, 2005).

In addition to these obstacles in communication, Vivatananukul (2016) classifies three others: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Cognitive obstacles are caused when speakers do not understand the language of the other speaker and lack knowledge of the appropriate language to use in terms of the innate meaning of words and signs. Translating from one language to another without changing the original meaning and genre misuse in languages, such as using slang words in a formal situation or formal language in a casual situation, are typical problems encountered by speakers communicating across cultures. Another key barrier to intercultural communication is a lack of cultural knowledge or understanding. This issue includes being unaware of or lacking experience with the other

culture, and also a lack of knowledge of the socio-cultural background and subcultures of a specific group. Speakers often do not recognize the complexities and subtleties of intercultural communication, potentially leading to misinterpretations or failures in translation. Also, affective obstruction like negative attitudes, bias, prejudices, and stereotypes cause speakers to have a frozen perception. The judgment of others based on race, gender, religious membership, physical qualities, or skin color at the outset of communication impedes communication and is caused by the opinions, thoughts, and behaviors of the speakers. Communication of this nature is generally misleading, inappropriate, and discriminatory. Finally, a lack of recognition of the cultural backgrounds and non-verbal cues and practices of others, such as gestures, smiles, body movements, and social distance, can constrain and impede successful communication. Mutual understanding, flexibility, and adaptability are required by members of different cultural groups who wish to adjust appropriately and communicate successfully in a new cultural environment, especially during the initial encounter.

Wang and Zhang (2016) argue that communication between different cultures is often less effective due to the risk of cultural norms being violated. Speakers faced with this situation are uncertain about whether they are expected to follow the cultural norms of their own culture or that of the other speaker. When a speaker is anxious or assumes a similarity in cultural norms rather than a difference, various issues may occur such as the intercultural communication gap widening, negative perceptions forming between speakers, and potentially ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is based on “negatively judging aspects of another culture by the standards of one’s own culture” (Kanat, 2016), which means every culture has its rules and standards. The ability to gain knowledge or appreciation of another culture’s values are limited by ethnocentrism, as a communicator is not likely to apply the standards of their own culture to another. Stereotypes and prejudice also challenge effective intercultural communication because speakers make judgments about a person based on common values, beliefs, and images (Kanat, 2016). Even when both speakers share the same language during intercultural communication exchanges, people of different cultural groups often misunderstand one another. Nuances in dialects may be the cause of some of these differences. In conclusion, challenges in intercultural communication are resolved by the development of both communicative competence (CC) and intercultural competence

(IC), which directly leads to intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and effective intercultural communication strategies of sojourners communicating in English in a long-term Thai-speaking context.

1. Communicative Competence (CC)

Definition

Communicative competence (CC) according to the linguist Hymes argued that acquisition of and grammatical competence in the first language is not sufficient by itself. This argument stands in opposition to Chomsky's theory related to first language acquisition. Hymes postulates that speakers must also develop the ability to use language appropriately, otherwise known as sociolinguistic competence. This theory dominates the advancement of communicative language teaching (CLT) (Byram, 1997). However, Byram criticized Hymes' description of first language acquisition and communication (1997), arguing that it only applied to native speaking contexts. Hymes still emphasizes that there is a relationship between linguistic and sociocultural competencies by highlighting the likelihood of interaction between linguistic and cultural spheres (Hymes, 1972). However, his theory implicitly suggested that foreign language students must model themselves as native speakers in acquiring the first language, which disregards both the cultural competence and social personality of these foreign students.

The concept of communicative competence is defined by both capability and suitability, which were both further clarified by the researchers (Chen and Starosta, 1996). Capability is the capacity of a respective communicator to create an intended effect by interacting with the environment. Suitability, however, is scrutinized as a basic human skill that is obtained throughout the learning and socialization process (White, 1959). In regard to suitability in the communication process, Wiemann and Backlund (1980) as cited in (Chen and Starosta, 1996) contradict this concept by arguing for three kinds of competence, which are further developed by others. The first competence is knowing that context may bind communication so that one can connect appropriately through consolidating social and knowledge capabilities (Trenholm and Rose, 1981). The second is the potential to keep away from inadequate responses which create negative consequences, for example an individual who is unnecessarily intense, abrasive, or bizarre in their communication. (Getter

and Nowinski, 1981). The third is the ability to take appropriate satisfaction and pleasure in such communications through the distribution of feelings, controlling, informing, ritualizing, and imagining (Allen and Wood, 1978). In summary, communicative competence is the ability not only to completely and appropriately apply and produce the language as a means of communication, but also a consideration and perception of the content and context of the encounter. This awareness results in the avoidance of inappropriate responses by refraining from the violation of norms and personal rules until a productive conversation is accomplished.

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC hereafter) has been variously defined. Byram (1997) considers ICC as an encompassing term that refers to the key competencies that enable speakers to interact effectively with those of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. These competencies include linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence. Similarly, Chen and Starosta (1996) state that ICC is the abilities and competencies of speakers which are essential for effective and appropriate communication within a culturally diverse context. The vital skills they specifically refer to are intercultural sensitivity (affective process), intercultural awareness (cognitive process), and intercultural adroitness (behavioral process). Lázár et al. (2007), likewise, define ICC as a speaker's self-assuredness of their skills and attitudes with respect to communicating in various cross-cultural situations. To sum up, ICC can be considered as speakers' communicative abilities, competencies, skills, and attitudes towards other interlocutors with regard to their linguistic and cultural identities in multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Types of Communicative Competence (CC)

The CC concept, as first introduced by Hymes (1972), has been developed and defined as both grammatical competence and also the ability to apply this competence correctly in social situations, which is called sociolinguistic competence. Subsequently, Canale and Swan (1980) and Van Ek (1986) further developed this idea into a fundamental and integral part of the field of communicative language teaching. Additionally, Canale and Swan (1980) defined CC in the context of foreign language education as consisting of grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competencies.

Discourse competence was added by Canale (1984), which consists of some elements that were taken from sociolinguistic competence. Following the addition of this category, his CC framework was composed of the following four main competencies: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence:

1. Grammatical competence: mastery of lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence grammar, semantics, and phonology.

2. Sociolinguistic competence: mastery of appropriate language use in different sociolinguistic contexts. This is dependent on various contextual factors such as the status of the participants and the purpose of the interaction. Sociolinguistic competence includes both the knowledge of what is appropriate in meaning and of what is appropriate in form.

3. Discourse competence: mastery of the rules involved in the understanding and production of continuous text, both spoken and written. This type of competence is achieved through mastery of the devices required for cohesion (e.g., pronouns, transition words, and parallel structures) and coherence (e.g., repetition, progression, consistency, and relevance of ideas).

4. Strategic competence: mastery of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that are used for two reasons: (a) to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to insufficient competence or to performance limitations (e.g., strategies such as the use of dictionaries, paraphrase, and gestures) and (b) to enhance the effectiveness of communication (e.g., deliberately slow, and soft speech for rhetorical effect) (Canale, 1984, p. 112).

Following the development of this framework of CC, Canale and Swain (1980) stated that CLT should assist learners in becoming highly competent speakers of a language who are capable of dealing with various real-world second language situations. Importantly, they also argued for the importance of sociocultural knowledge as key to appropriate language use by learners of the target language. A framework for comprehensive foreign language learning objectives was proposed by Van Ek (1986). The concepts included in this framework are social competence, the promotion of autonomy, and the development of social responsibility. This framework was developed by Van Ek to emphasize that foreign language teaching should focus on communication skills along with the personal and social

development of the individual learner. This model was later adapted and absorbed into the model of ICC.

The following is Byram (1997) model of ICC, which will be discussed. The six components or sub-competencies that constitute communicative ability are explained as follows:

1. Linguistic competence: knowledge of vocabulary items and the mastery of certain structural rules through which they are processed into meaningful utterances.
2. Sociolinguistic competence: ability to produce well-formed meaningful utterances and to determine the conventional meaning of similar utterances produced by others, and the ability to use and interpret language forms with situational appropriateness for successful communication.
3. Discourse competence: the ability to perceive and to achieve coherence of separate utterances in meaningful communication patterns.
4. Strategic competence: use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the language user's knowledge of the code or for a breakdown of communication for other reasons.
5. Sociocultural competence: use of a particular language implies the use of a reference frame which is at least partly determined by the socio-cultural context in which that language is used by native speakers.
6. Social competence: the will to interact involves motivation, attitude, and self-Confidence, and the skill to interact involves such qualities as empathy and the ability to handle social situations (Van Ek, 1986, pp. 39-40).

Van Ek (1986, p. 112) implicitly used the native speaker and all of the linguistic and social competencies that an educated native speaker should possess to form his framework of foreign language teaching. However, the use of the native speaker as a model is no longer adequate in language education because “the requirement that learners have the same mastery over a language as an (educated) native speaker ignores the conditions under which learners and native speakers learn and acquire a language” (Byram, 1997, p. 11). Furthermore, it risks the development of the wrong kind of competence because acceptance as a native speaker by other native speakers is an

implicit need of learners. This development implies the progression from one's own culture into the target culture and the addition of a native socio-cultural competence.

In summary, communicative competence is the ability to achieve successful communication through the appropriate use and production of language as a means of communicating effectively through interaction. It is also equally concerned with the ability to recognize as well as understand the content and context of the encounter, which allows speakers to consider cultural norms and personal rules, to successfully avoid inappropriate responses.

2. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

The term intercultural communicative competence as referred to in the literature has been used interchangeably with communicative competence in general ways, implying that the two are the same (Chen and Starosta, 1996). Yet, many interculturalists emphasize intercultural communicative competence as differentiated in definition by contextual factors as well as some intended purposes (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2009 and Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984). There are also a variety of names for this concept that differ between each interculturalist, such as intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (e.g., Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006), intercultural competence (IC) and intercultural communication competence (ICC) (e.g., Chen and Starosta, 1996). The most common term used by scholars, educators, and others involved in this field is "intercultural communicative competence" (Fantini, 2009).

Byram's definition, in the educational context, generally defines intercultural communicative competence (ICC) as the ability to communicate with other people from dissimilar countries and cultures in a foreign language (1997). Upon initial examination, this definition seems simple, however, without further explanation, it is rather difficult to fully comprehend. Linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competencies are the three targets proposed by Byram. They are considered to be essential for gaining new insight into languages and cultures via communication and negotiation, along with the ability to use the language properly within any cultural situation. Reaching the status of an intercultural speaker requires one to have these aforementioned competencies and abilities to be applied in various communication situations.

The perspective of the professional domain related to the definition of intercultural communication competence provides valuable insight, as the term intercultural competence typically implies communicative competence (Sercu, 2010). Chen & Starosta's definition of intercultural communication competence, in contrast, emphasizes that a competent speaker should understand how to communicate efficiently and properly with different people in a specific context and how to actualize their own intended communicative purposes by respecting and displaying positive attitudes towards people who have multicultural identities (1996, p. 359). Provide an alternative definition that describes intercultural communicative competence as the capability to communicate in varying cross-cultural situations effectively and to relate in different cultural situations appropriately, which is utilized as an instruction for language teachers. Elaborating further, it emphasizes two important components: skills, which focuses on the development of observing, interpreting, and relating as well as mediating and discovering; and attitudes, which focuses on giving empathy, respect, and tolerance for ambiguity, raise interest in, curiosity, openness, as well as promote a sense of willingness to avoid negative judgment (ibid: 9–10).

In an analysis of the definitions above, it can be understood that ICC is the ability of a speaker to interact as properly and eloquently as possible in a foreign language with other people from distinctive linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Language competence, consisting of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence accompanied by intercultural competence consisting of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and awareness, is considered to be essential in an individual's ability to successfully and effectively integrate into a particular multicultural society (Tran and Pham, 2015).

ICC is derived from the combination of IC and CC, but IC and ICC are often used interchangeably because many components of both IC and ICC overlap. Additionally, this lack of clarity between IC and ICC occasionally confuses addressing the appropriate phenomenon. Some scholars have attempted to differentiate the two terms. Byram (1997) points out that ICC is an umbrella term that covers many components including linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and IC. By proposing a model of ICC (see sub-section 2.8.1), he defines the term ICC as the ability which enables

one to interact effectively and appropriately with people from different cultures in a foreign language.

Likewise, intercultural communication (or communicative) competence is defined as “the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors that negotiate each other’s cultural identity or identities in a culturally diverse environment” (p. 28). IC, they argue, consists of three key components of intercultural communication competence: intercultural sensitivity (affective process), intercultural awareness (cognitive process), and intercultural adroitness (behavioral process), all of which are defined as verbal and nonverbal skills needed to act effectively and appropriately in intercultural interactions.

Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Byram’s (1997) ICC model is part of the foundation of this study and illustrated below (see Figure1)

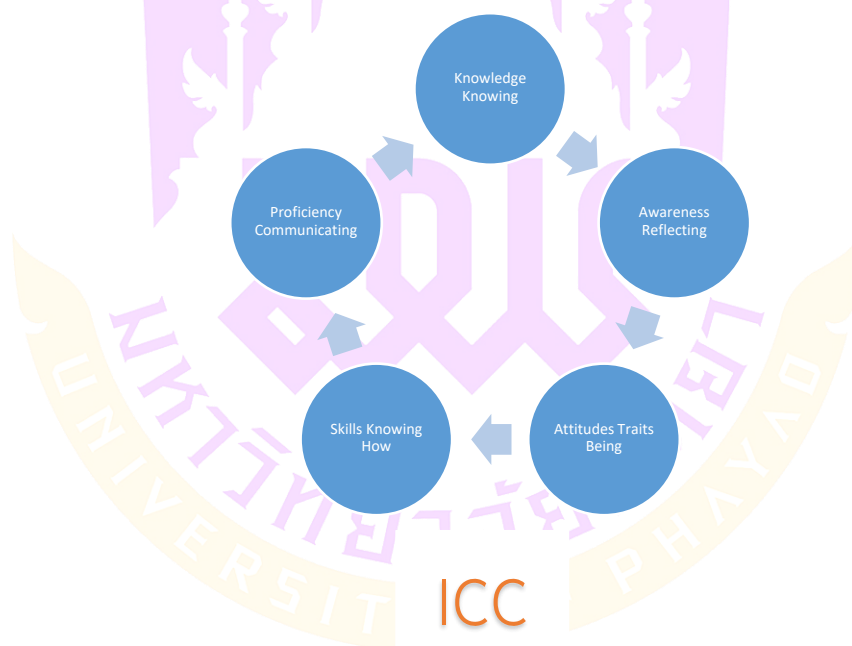


Figure 1 model of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997)

According to Byram’s ICC model (1997) (Figure 1), the following are the five essential competencies for developing intercultural communicative competence: first, attitudes;

second, knowledge; third, skills of interpreting and relating; fourth, skills of discovery and interaction; and fifth, critical cultural awareness; each of which is discussed below.

The first factor is attitudes, which consist of the interest, openness, and readiness to suspend hesitance in learning about other cultures and beliefs, which improves intercultural knowledge and skills that are integral to appropriate and effective interaction with members of foreign cultures. Second is intercultural knowledge, that is, information about social groups, products, and practices. Byram divides knowledge into conscious and unconscious. Conscious knowledge is knowledge that can be more or less clarified but present to some degree, while unconscious knowledge is knowledge of notions and processes in interactions.

Interpreting and relating and discovery and interaction are the third and fourth skills, respectively. Interpreting and relating are defined as the abilities necessary to interpret information in foreign cultures and relate them to one's own. Discovery and interaction are defined as the capabilities to both acquire new knowledge of foreign cultures and employ knowledge, attitudes, and skills within communication and interactions. The fifth and final component is critical cultural awareness, which is the ability to evaluate critically based on the explicit criteria of perspectives, practices, and products in the individual's own culture and others (Byram, 1997, p. 54). In summary, the ICC model (Byram, 1997) is the most extensive framework to evaluate ICC learners in various contexts, particularly in this study's research setting. In Byram's view, communication can be accomplished not only by the effective exchange of information but also in terms of the preservation and establishment of human relationships, which depend on attitudinal factors. Knowledge is another significant factor that speakers bring to intercultural communication.

As proposed by Byram (1997), knowledge is divided into two categories: "knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one's own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor's country" and "knowledge of the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels" (Byram, 1997, p. 35). Additionally, the knowledge of an individual influences the effectiveness of intercultural communication in that it includes the skills of interpreting and relating, which are described as the skills necessary for interpretation of documents from other cultures (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p.

66). Included are discovery and interaction, which are capabilities required both to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills in real-time communication and interaction, and to acquire new knowledge of a culture. Speakers' knowledge and attitudes are also vital for successful intercultural communication.

In short, from the brief review of ICC constructs and their definitions, intercultural communicative competence focuses on an affective domain (attitudes), a cognitive domain (knowledge), and a skills domain. Additionally, despite the wide variety of constructs and definitions of ICC that have been established, scholars have yet to concur on the definition or composition of ICC.

Intercultural Communication Strategies (ICS)

Definition

In multicultural communication settings, English speakers usually draw on their language and cultural repertoires to create the most appropriate expression for particular interlocutors and communicative purposes. The choice of languages that speakers contribute to intercultural communication is therefore flexible and adjustable. In this regard, the degree of effectiveness in intercultural communication does not depend on how it conforms to the original norm but rather how successful it is mediated in the meaning-making process between international speakers. As Seidlhofer (2011) proposed, English as a lingua franca (ELF) users should be functionally not formally defined on how they utilize English, and "English as a lingua franca is not a variety of English but a variable way to use the language" (p. 77).

Regarding competence in English as a lingua franca setting, the competence of native speakers seems to be at a disadvantage due to the lack of practice in intercultural interactions. Actually, Seidlhofer (2004) mentioned that the idiomatic kind of language used by native speakers can be an obstacle in intercultural communication or even harmful to the success of communication (Gnutzmann, 2000b). Therefore, a successful English as a lingua franca speaker has to adopt new competencies and strategies to achieve their communicative goals. It is believed that English as lingua franca users is non-dependent and capable of producing the norm which is regarded as the multilingualism competency.

Although most English as a lingua franca's speaker have learned "English as a second or foreign language" (ESL/EFL) and are usually perceived as learners with incomplete knowledge through the ESL/EFL lenses, they are not merely developing their skills towards the standard norm. These users are also practicing the language as primary users by incidentally applying the language in various intercultural situations. In this regard, Jenkins (2007, p. 230) explained that in international communications, the ability to accommodate to interlocutors regardless of whether the language production contains 'errors' is far more important than the ability to imitate the English of native speakers. As a result, to be a competent speaker, people should feel that they can express their identity and be themselves in cross-cultural communications without being labeled with foreign accents or lacking idiomatic or culturally specific expressions that belong to the native norm (Mackenzie, 2014, p. 5). Learners should develop appropriate 'Intercultural Attitude' which means the openness or readiness to suspend disbelief about others' cultures and being able to relate one's own cultural beliefs to others' (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002, p.12). Therefore, the most important characteristic of an ELF learner is being one who possesses the appropriate knowledge and attitude and becomes successful in intercultural tasks. What is essential in intercultural communication is that English speakers should feel comfortable and be able to negotiate and manage communicative situations when speaking the language. According to Crystal (2014), the number of non-native English speakers in the 'outer circle' and 'expanding circle' has outnumbered the native speakers or those in the 'inner circle'. It is found that an overwhelming majority of the interactions done in English happens among non-native speakers of English, who do not necessarily follow the native speakers' way of language use (Carter, 2003, p. 97). This phenomenon is taking place in the ASEAN community; more NNS are using English as a medium of communication. Therefore, to become a successful English as a lingua franca speaker in the multicultural communities of ASEAN demands a broader set of language and pragmatic competencies. In this respect, Baker (2012) addressed that English as a lingua franca speakers need to acquire intercultural sensitivity or awareness and several communication strategies and skills for negotiation of meaning in lingua franca situations. They should be prepared to employ strategies such as clarification on issues of different

cultures or avoiding sensitive topics in multicultural settings. These skills are often neglected in EFL perspectives in comparison to correct grammatical and lexical uses. However, in English as a lingua franca perspectives, intercultural skills and awareness have become the major focus of developing English language competence in globalized settings. Therefore, intercultural competence is critical for developing a competent English as a lingua franca speaker in cross-cultural communications.

Furthermore, Sharifian (2010) emphasized that if more than 80 percent of communication in English is now taking place between non-native speakers, instead of exploring phonological and syntactic dimensions of different varieties of English spoken globally, it is crucial to examine the cultural schemata that these speakers draw on while consulting their intercultural communication that underlies their semantic and pragmatic levels. However, it is arguable whether Thai English language users are planning towards and receptive to the challenges of using English as a lingua franca. Regarding the situation of English as a lingua franca in Thailand, Geerson (2013) argued that the English educational program should be reconstructed due to the widespread use of English as a communicative medium in the ASEAN association. However, most of the syllabus and classroom instructions in the country were still influenced by language imperialism. It is crucial to explore the dynamics of intercultural learning communities in the country in order to evolve English curriculum and corpora based on non-native communication. Hence, research into intercultural communication strategies will pave the way for the development of English as a lingua franca instruction and the preparation for the paradigm shift. Kirkpatrick (2012) pointed out that the goals of English language learning in Asian contexts should reach mutual intelligibility and develop intercultural competence so that learners can use the language to express their own cultural perspectives and vice versa to understand local situations and worldwide social phenomena. This also contributes to intercultural literacy, which is one of the most critical pieces of knowledge of individuals in the 21st century as a fundamental component of academic and professional success (Barrett, et al., 2014). This is especially true for students at the graduate level, as they are required to demonstrate a high level of communicative skills in both academic and professional settings. For example, selecting appropriate topics (Leung, Lee and Chiu,

2013; Sharifian, 2013); asking for repetitions or clarifications (Cogo and Dewey, 2006; Mauranen, 2009), using background knowledge of others' cultures (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002), using each other's mother tongue or code-switching (Jenkins, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007), avoiding idiomatic vocabulary or expressions (Breiteneder, 2005; Gnutzmann, 2000b; Mauranen, 2012 and Seidlhofer 2004). According to Baker (2012) and Sharifian (2013), the abovementioned key strategies are regarded as crucial characteristics of the intercultural competence of English speakers in English as a lingua franca communication.

Types of Intercultural Communication Strategies (ICS)

In this regard, English language intercultural communication strategies were divided into two groups: strategies for coping with speaking problems and strategies for coping with listening problems. Suwanasom, (2019, p. 317) Each strategy is described below.

1. Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions.
2. Avoiding talking about sensitive issues.
3. Being careful in using grammatically (English) correct expressions.
4. Using the Chinese language to facilitate communication.
5. Using the partner's mother tongue (Chinese and Thai) to facilitate communication.
6. Clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics.
7. Selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions.
8. Asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts.
9. Selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background,
10. Using your background knowledge of the partner's culture.

In addition to this, the Fourth-Year Chinese students' self-adaptation conceptualized by Kim's theory of cross-cultural adaptation (2017), in terms of the qualitative research, was carried out for their semi-structured face-to-face interview and divided into two major aspects:

1. English Language Adaptation
2. Socio-Cultural Adaptation

In this study, intercultural communicative strategies require Chinese students to demonstrate sufficient awareness, knowledge, motivation, and skills. Successful intercultural communication requires positive intent, enthusiasm, and willingness on the part of speakers to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers, as well as self-adaptations in a long-term academic Thai-speaking context.

From the previous studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that intercultural communication strategies are the strategies that help accomplish communication and solve problems in communication. In addition, it is an important strategy in second language communication for both the speaker and the sojourners to understand the same meaning when they are faced with a difficult communication situation.

Factors Influencing English Intercultural Communication in a Thai-Speaking Context

Generally, many scholars study the effect of nonverbal communication on social, cultural, psychological, and linguistic factors. Many scholars study the factors of intercultural miscommunication. According to Barna (1994), workplaces, in this age of globalization, are increasingly integrated. This makes communication and cross-cultural understanding more crucial for everyone, including executives, business leaders, workplace managers, and employees. In order to develop skills as communicators, practical knowledge of these factors leads to successful communication across cultures. Many business sectors have studied factors affecting intercultural communication to solve problems in their organizations. However, this study will focus on four factors in relation to the use of nonverbal codes in the workplaces of Chiangrai province as listed below.

1 Cultural factors

Culture essentially informs communication. It is shared values, norms, and experiences that make people understand each other in both verbal and nonverbal communication (Apte, 2001). In addition, it is the values, attitudes, and ways of doing things that a person brings with them from the particular place where they were brought up as a child. These values and attitudes can have an impact on communication across cultures because each person's norms and practices may be different and may clash with

those of co-workers brought up in a different part of the world. Each culture sets up its own accepted and not-accepted behaviors. Cultural factors that play an important role in the use of nonverbal codes include power distance, high and low culture context, values of time, and assumption of similarities.

1.1 Power distance

Power distance is an issue concerning people's inequality. Power distance refers to the power level of the people in the society. For example, in high power distance countries such as Thailand, Japan, and China, students in the classroom are expected to obey the teacher. In the workplace where there is high power distance the boss is always right, and the employees do not have much room for their own opinions. In contrast, in a workplace where there is low power distance the boss always lets the employees have an opinion. Most of the low power distance workplaces would work as a team and the power distance between boss and employees is low. The way power was distributed explained the behavior of the more powerful members, the managers rather than the staff. Therefore, power in the organizations may not be equally distributed (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

As mentioned by Paulston, Randel and Kiesling (2014), power distance might be associated with the use of some nonverbal communication such as silence. For example, the Akan's king used silence to imprint his power, authority, rank, and status. Furthermore, Kudesia and Elfenbein pointed out that nonverbal language may not only reflect power but also be used to create power. When comparing people who hold high power posture, they certainly feel more "powerful" than those who hold low power posture. According to Umar and Hassan's studies (2014), power distance influenced the voice and silence behaviors of employees in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions. An adopted self-administered quantitative survey questionnaire was used to collect data from 127 employees working for Waziri Umaru Federal Polytechnic, Birnin Kebbi in Kebbi State, Nigeria. From their study, it revealed that high power distance has a strong influence on employee's lack of voice or silence. Their study also suggested that employees would be more likely to open up and provide useful voice suggestions and opinions to improve their work if the organization could narrow down the interpersonal power distance.

1.2 High and low Context Culture

High context cultures are mostly found in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and South America. Messages have specific meanings, and sometimes the meaning is assumed based on beliefs, values, and norms. People from high context cultures prefer nonverbal communication. Messages are communicated in a group and sometimes people do not need to explain the meaning. They will understand each other under the same context. A high context culture normally takes place in a long-term relationship between two people who are always able to interpret the smallest gesture or biggest opinion because they share an understanding relationship. (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005).

Moreover, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) claimed that low context cultures include Western Europe and North America. Low context cultures not only tend to explain information but also provide background and specific details. People from low context cultures emphasize logic, facts, and directness. They focus on verbal communication and body language. Time is highly organized; most works are scheduled. They make a decision based on facts, and discussions will end with actions. For example, people experience low context culture when they communicate with computers. In order to make the computer understand the message, they need to give clear and accurate instructions. For example, an American colleague will tell their colleagues directly if he or she cannot give them information by the time they need it. Burgoon, Floyd and Guerrero (2010) indicated that high context cultures including Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, and other Asian countries, gain information from the surrounding environment and also believe in nonverbal language. Japanese people prefer to use nonverbal language to show their respect and affinity through bowing and gentle facial expressions. In contrast, people from low context cultures such as the US, Canada, and most northern European regions do not entrust in nonverbal language as much as the people from high context cultures do. This characteristic does not mean that nonverbal language is unnecessary in low context cultures, but indirect forms of communication go unnoticed in low context cultures. Moreover, Barna (1994) claimed that many people in this world presume there are abundant similarities among people of the world. An assumption of similarity is rarely expected outside of a common verbal language, but nonverbal symbols, signs, and signals

meanings are often inferred. One good example of common nonverbal behavior that people assume is a universal sign is a smile. A study found comments from newly arrived international students in the United States. Most Asian students such as Japanese, Korean, Arabic, and Vietnamese, provided the same sense of using smiles in their cultures. They do not smile at everyone and in some cultures such as Japanese, they are concerned that smiles from strangers indicate that they are sexual fanatics or impolite people, especially from the perspective of women. From these comments, some Americans found that when they smile at a stranger from both their country and from overseas, they will get different reactions.

1.3 Time (Chronemics)

Time (Chronemics) is the study of the aspect of time values in communication. It is one of the factors affecting nonverbal communication subcategories. Cultures divide values of time (chronemics) into two types: one is monochronic time, and the other is polychronic time. Hall (1959) described monochronic time as a system in which various things can be done according to a particular order, one task at a time. On the other hand, in a polychronic culture, multiple tasks can be done at the same time. The United States is a good example of a monochronic time system. Things need to be planned and put on schedules. The perception of time is money and value. On the contrary, a polychronic time system values multitasking and focuses on relationships rather than task achievement. Working with people who hold different time value perceptions may create miscommunication in the workplace.

2. Social factors

Language is a part of society. Humans in societies use languages to communicate with each other. The use of language to communicate in societies has been explored from different points of view. Some scholars put social factors under cultural factors as they are a part of cultural studies. 7 social elements that have been investigated and pointed out as influencing the use of nonverbal communication in societies are listed below.

2.1 Age

The age identity factor is concerned with the interaction between members of different age groups, sometimes referred to as the "generation gap". Some cultures, like those of China, Thailand, and Cambodia, are very hierarchical in nature. In these cultures, younger people are very respectful and defer to their elders and heed the opinion and advice of their seniors when making life-changing decisions. In contrast, within some cultures, such as can be seen in the United States, younger people are less considerate of their elders and are not as likely to seek or heed the advice of their elders in regard to important decisions. The varying roles and significance of age within cultures causes the age identity factor to impact intercultural communication in the workplace.

According to Jancovi, Devo and Wiene (1975), his study about age factors influencing the use of children's nonverbal codes in their intercultural communication revealed that age-related changes in hand and arm movements are nonverbal communication. It also found that age should be considered in the study of hand and arm gestures in order to investigate nonverbal communication patterns by age. There are numerous studies about people's ages in relation to nonverbal communication, however, only a few studies are concerned with nonverbal miscommunication in the workplace. These are concentrated on the use of each code when people communicate with different age levels. This study assumes that different age levels will affect the use of smiles, silence, and kinesics in some cultures.

2.2 Gender Roles

The second factor that impacts intercultural communication is gender, which states that the varying cultural perceptions of the roles of men and women in society directly impacts communication between members of different cultures. For example, to a Westerner who views things through a Western lens, the rules that require women in Saudi Arabia to cover themselves and only travel in public when accompanied by a male family member are seen as repressive and degrading. In contrast, Saudi women would argue that these rules show that they are both protected and honored. Although women in America struggle with these traditional stereotypes, Saudi Arabian women overwhelmingly embrace their cultural roles. As a result, it can be seen that when

studying gender roles and identity in a foreign country, it is important to view that culture through its own lens and from an internal perspective (Bailey and Kelly, 2015).

In both Eastern and Western Europe, according to Guithan's study (2005), women are under-represented in positions of power. Nowadays, it shows in various media, women are accepted in both public and private sectors. Some companies have women in senior positions, and in some countries, women work in senior positions in government sectors.

2.3 Racial Identity

Racial identity is a concept concerned with how an individual's membership to a particular race impacts their interactions with members of other races. Daniel Velasco's research article (2013) detailed exercises for intercultural training that ask participants to describe, interpret, and evaluate an ambiguous object or photograph. "If one is going to undertake the unpleasant goal of uncovering underlying racism in order to learn how to better communicate with other cultures," Velasco writes, "it is necessary to engage in exercises that confront racism head-on." Velasco asks participants to objectively describe what they see first and evaluate what they see in a process called E.A.D. "By moving backward through the process, we are able to confront underlying racism, which will hopefully pave the way for self-awareness, cultural respect, and effective intercultural communication."

2.4 Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is concerned with how ethnicity affects interactions between members of different cultures. According to the research conducted in the United States, white European Americans are less likely than other groups to take their ethnicity into account when communicating. This fact supports the importance of addressing different ethnicities in a workplace as a way of educating all co-workers about the dynamics that may arise between individuals of the same or different ethnic groups.

2.5 Social Class

The social identity factor is the level of society into which an individual was born, which influences who they wish to be and how they will conduct themselves. Research has illustrated that social position and class directly shapes our reactions to and

interpretations of culture. French sociologist Bourdieu (1987) studied how members of different social classes in France responded to art, sports, and other cultural activities. According to his results, class distinction can be seen in the preferences of different social classes. For example, working-class people prefer to watch soccer, while upper-class members would prefer to watch tennis. Bourdieu demonstrates through his findings that class distinctions are real and can be linked to actual behavioral practices and preferences.

2.6 Roles Identity

The roles' identity factor is concerned with the varying roles an individual plays in his or her life. For example, this may include their role as a spouse, parent, child, employee, executive, etc. The differences in how coworkers from two different cultures view these various roles have a direct influence on their interactions in the workplace.

2.7 Individual Personality

The individual personality factor impacts cross-cultural communication. An individual's unique personality traits and perception of themselves will impact how they communicate with members of other cultures. Just as a culture can be described in broad terms as "open" or "traditional," an individual from a culture can also be observed to be "open-minded" or "conservative." Cultures are often broadly described as "open" or "traditional", and the individual members of these cultures also differ in the extent to which they are considered open or conservative within the context of their culture. These differences directly impact the way that multiple individuals from the same culture communicate with members of other cultures.

3 Psychological Factors

Behind the words we use to communicate with someone is an attitude and feeling that comes through (Gelard and Saleh, 2011). As people are socialized within the context of their own culture, members of varying cultures are often characterized by different social norms and psychological elements. Culture is very inclusive; it influences nearly every aspect of human life and directly influences or determines an individual's behaviors, including psychology. In the domain of psychology, there are culture-related elements known as psycho-cultural factors. Kim and Gudykunst pointed out in 1992 that

psycho-cultural factors like stereotypes of and attitudes towards other cultures influence communication and interaction between members of different cultures.

3.1 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism describes the tendency of individuals to view their cultural norms, values, and way of life as the most correct or reasonable way to live, and often as superior to other cultures. Similarly, this contributes to an expectation members of other cultures should follow their civilized ways of thinking and behaving. Ethnocentrism is reinforced through people's cultural socialization process, consisting of both implicit and explicit attitudes towards the norms, customs, and behaviors of out-group members. It can be seen as the tendency to use one's own cultural standards to interpret and evaluate out-groups' behaviors. Ethnocentrism is both natural and avoidable. Ethnocentric feelings can be positive, including the emphasis on looking after their own group and protecting it against what might be hostile outsiders, but often in modern times they have a negative impact, especially concerning communication between members of different cultures (Brislin, 1993).

Many scholars argue that ethnocentrism might be the greatest barrier to intercultural communication because people learn ethnocentrism so early in life, and most of this learning is unconscious. Stewart and Bennett (1991) clearly detail the negative impacts of ethnocentrism on intercultural communication. First, ethnocentric beliefs create a narrow and defensive social sense of identity. Second, it leads to stereotypes being the norm by which members of other cultures are perceived and evaluated. Last, ethnocentrism leads to comparative judgments between one's own culture and other cultures under the assumption that one's own culture is both normal and natural, in contrast to other foreign cultures. As a result, these ethnocentric judgments generally lead to a superior view of one's own culture, and a degrading view of foreign cultures.

Likewise, Samovar and Porter (1998) argued that a high level of ethnocentrism negatively impacts successful communication, particularly with members of out-groups. The higher an individual's level of ethnocentrism, the more likely they are to have a misperception about members of other cultures. This, in turn, causes people to make inaccurate attributions about the behaviors of these out-group members. Thus, it

can be understood that a high level of ethnocentrism causes people to use their own cultural frame of reference to interpret out-group members' behaviors, which likely distorts the true meaning of the out-group members' behaviors. Effective communication cannot be accomplished without understanding the behaviors of others.

3.2 Prejudice

Plotnik (1986) defines prejudice as an unfair, biased, or intolerant attitude towards another group of people. In relation to intercultural communication, prejudice often causes misjudgment by the individual holding the prejudiced views. Prejudice has varying functions and uses for people, such as expressing values or defending self-images, and also takes various forms, ranging from hostile rejection to very subtle tokenism.

Aronson (1972) suggested that prejudice is often understood in terms of a dichotomy: you are either prejudiced or not prejudiced. It is more accurate, however, to view prejudice as a spectrum with levels ranging from low to high. An example of prejudiced views would be an individual's belief that they are better than others, or another group may have more money because they cheat. This spectrum view suggests that all people are prejudiced to some degree instead of simply being prejudiced or not. Like ethnocentrism, this is a natural and unavoidable result of people's being socialized as members of their respective cultures. Because it is more comfortable and familiar to interact with those of same or similar cultural groups, even individuals with low levels of prejudice prefer to communicate within their own cultural group instead of with members of other groups. Research has shown that prejudice against members of other cultures develops through the family socialization process, education, peer groups, mass media, and a variety of other influences. Prejudices can be based on a variety of factors, such as skin color, foreign accents, or local dialects, cultural or religious practices, and more.

3.3 Stereotypes

Stereotyping is a complex form of categorization that mentally organizes people's experiences and guides their behavior toward a particular group of people. Lippman (1997) stated that an entire group of people are represented by stereotypes, the fixed and simple categories for sorting images of members of other cultures that form in one's mind. Stereotyping is an often exaggerated and inaccurate set of expectations and

ideas concerning the attributes of members of other cultures. In other words, it is an overgeneralization about the collective cultural group without any attempt to determine individual variations within that group.

As seen above with both ethnocentrism and prejudice, stereotyping is a natural result of communication and interaction between cultures. When an individual communicates on autopilot, it is natural for stereotyping to occur. Stereotypes are categories about people and cultures, and as such they have all the typical features of categories, particularly the organization of information and subsequent reactions to the category as a whole. When an individual bears a strong stereotype about a different ethnic or cultural group, that stereotype can be applied to any interaction with an individual belonging to said group. On a daily basis, people must make a multitude of decisions regarding their behavior. Stereotypes provide a shortcut to thinking by providing guidance, hints, rules, and expectations.

Stephan and Rosenfield's study in 1982 detailed the effects of stereotypes on the effectiveness and success of communication. They found that stereotypes on their own do not cause miscommunication or the disruption of communication. However, if stereotypes are firmly believed and inaccurate, the speaker may be unable to predict others' behavior and cause miscommunication to occur. Both inaccurate stereotypes and simple stereotypes of others can contribute to misunderstandings. Effectiveness in communication with members of other groups can be achieved by increasing the complexity of stereotypes, for example including a large number of traits and acknowledging differences between sub-groups within the overall group that is stereotyped. It is equally important for communicators to question their unconscious assumption that a single stereotype can be applied to most members of a group.

It is understood that humans are unable to respond to the specific traits, needs, and goals of every individual they meet. It is necessary for them to group people together and then form a response based on their knowledge of that group or category of people. However, doing so runs the risk of stereotyping the individual and placing them at a disadvantage. Stereotypes cause people to depersonalize out-groups. Because the stereotype associated with that out-group is guiding communication behaviors, little

emphasis is placed on the characteristics of the out-group individual. Communication difficulties are explained by stereotypes, and negative feelings associated with these stereotypes are reinforced by these communication breakdowns. When issues occur during intergroup communication, individuals will seek advice and consolation from members of the in-group and likely blame the members of the out-group for the breakdown in communication.

4. Linguistic factors

Linguistic disciplines by definition do not take into account the nonverbal component of human communication to any considerable extent (Bratanić, 2007). However, lacking language competency will cause miscommunication both verbally and nonverbally. Linguistics will account for one of the significant factors that make people misunderstand each other. An environment from different contexts normally consists of people from different cultures and also educational backgrounds. Different levels of language proficiency will make meaning interpretation difficult.

In reference to (Scollon and Scollon, 2001) language an essential tool through which people construct and express meaning with each other. Forming meaning through the exchange of language is situated in shared social and cultural contexts. As a result, successful communication relies on an understanding of the cultural context in which communication occurs. Mutual understanding is facilitated by learning to use the same language as other speakers, which provides us not only with a method to facilitate communication on the simplest and most practical level, but also with insight into the culture of the other speaker. As stated by Samovar and Porter in 1982, language gives people a means of interacting with other members of their culture and a means of thinking. Language is both a mechanism for communication and a guide to social reality.

Furthermore, Gass and Varonis (1991) indicated developing a high level of linguistic competence by itself is not sufficient, although it is certainly fundamental for intercultural communication. It has been observed that when non-native speakers display native-like levels of competence in the target language, the result is an expectation that they will also behave according to the socio-cultural norms that the native speakers of the target language conduct themselves by. When this expectation is not met by native

speakers, they often consider any ensuing failure in communication as an intentional act of the non-native speaker, rather than as an honest mistake.

Gass and Varonis (1991) also noted that the use of different languages is among the most frequently cited barriers to successful cross-cultural communication in a business context. The importance of understanding linguistic differences is plain to see and plays an integral role in successful international business communication. Due to this fact, business consultants counsel clients regarding the importance of enlisting the services of a good translator. Language failures between cultures can be organized into three common categories: 1) gross translation problems; 2) subtle distinctions from language to language, and 3) culturally based variations among speakers of the same target language.

Gross translation errors are frequent; however, they are less likely to cause conflict than other language difficulties for two reasons. Often, the almost comical nature of many gross translation errors often raises very blatant and obvious red flags. The involved parties can then go back and analyze the communication area that prompted said error. Although they may be generally easy to detect, gross translation errors take up vital time and wear on the patience of everyone involved. In addition, depending on the nature of the message or individuals involved, these mistakes may come off as disrespectful for the party into whose language the message is translated.

When the involved parties do not have equivalent levels of mastery over the target language, subtle shadings that are often integral to negotiations in business are also weakened. It is common for misunderstandings to occur as a result of dialectical differences within the same language. When other parties with mastery of the target language with assume that the nonnative speaker has knowledge of this distinction, conflicts deriving from misunderstanding are likely. Likewise, the attitudes of speakers towards the accents and dialects of others also create communication barriers in international business. It is a common view held in many languages around the world that a particular accent suggests loyalty or familiarity to a particular nation or region. Even if the user is fluent, the use of a particular accent or dialect is very noticeable and often suggests a lack of familiarity with the target language, such as the use of Parisian French in Quebec, Mexican Spanish in Spain, or sub-continental Indian English in the United

States. More importantly, regional ties or tensions in such nations as Italy, France, or Germany among others can be suggested by the dialect a native speaker uses.

Finally, sociolinguistics, or the social patterning of language, often play a role in reinforcing national prejudices and class distinctions. In the United States, certain accents associated with urban areas, rural regions, or minorities may reinforce negative stereotypes about business ability, level of education, or overall intelligence. These stereotypes are the result of regional prejudice and tension along with racism and create barriers in communication. Likewise, sociolinguistics is applied within some cultures to differentiate between economic classes. For example, in England there are distinct accents that are associated with the aristocratic, middle, and lower classes. Foreigners are often unaware of these distinctions.

Self-Adaptation

Definition

In this perspective, for those sojourners who reside and work in a foreign environment and are dependent on the local culture to reach a level of psychological and social proficiency in their daily actions, adaptation is a matter of practical necessity (Brein and David, 1971).

It is important to note that the concept of intercultural adaptation for sojourners is a relatively new concept and has recently become an interest of researchers. Intercultural adaptation is described as the process of an individual or group entering a new cultural environment, followed by the successive development and adoption of the values, principles, norms, and behaviors of the new culture (Brein and David, 1971).

The achievement of maximum social and psychological integration to a new culture while also retaining all originality, authenticity, and richness is considered to be true and successful adaptation. Intercultural adaptation specifically, in a broad sense, is a complex process. When successfully completed, it results in the full or partial compatibility of the individual with the new culture and social environment they have adopted. It also includes the identification of other cultures with their own traditions and the continuation of life in accordance with them. Also, it is noted that the dilemma accompanying adaptation

is not the mastery of the rules and standards of living of the new culture, but rather the preservation of an individual's cultural originality and identity.

As a result of cross-cultural adaptation, the individual stays in a state of gratification, is intellectually healthy and aware of their personal and cultural personality, participates fully in social and cultural activities of the new group, and is able to communicate effectively with a variety of ethnic groups and their individual representatives. It should be emphasized that many researchers have a similar point of view on the main way of reaching intercultural adaptation, which consists of the development, adoption, assimilation of norms, standards, values, principles, and way of life of an immigrant social and cultural environment, including object-oriented activity.

There are a multitude of disputed and contentious issues within the various concepts and theoretical approaches related to intercultural adaptation and all of its intrinsic values. As has been established, intercultural adaptation is both a kind of socio-cultural adaptation and an established part of social adaptation. As such, in a cross-cultural interaction between graduates, intercultural and social adaptation have complementary peculiarities and attributes. It is examined from the perspectives of enigma, complexity, variability, and is not merely limited only to the quantity of adaptation. A variety of processes occur simultaneously. Role concept is the process of an individual taking a convincing social role, including the adoption and internalization of norms and values, as well as the conditions of existence of this role in society. The theory of behaviorism is giving reflection, feedback, and the manifestation of an individual's response to the effects of external factors. The cognitive concept, taken from the information field theory and from the perspective of humanitarian concepts, is a complex system of multiple interactions of an individual and the environment; the connection and correlation between the newly acquired information and previous experience from training, education, and life. Ultimately, it is a person's ability to make contact and cooperate in finding solutions to any encountered problems and difficulties, as well as to form protection against aggressive environments.

With consideration of the above conceptual approaches, it is worth emphasizing the interdisciplinary phenomenon of intercultural adaptation once more, which includes the preservation of identity, authenticity, psychological health, and the positive emotional state

of a person, along with their acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills, whether it be in cross-cultural cooperation in the context of educational environments or in the information field, for the successful continuation of life in the new social and cultural environment, as well as fulfilling everyday tasks.

As a result, intercultural adaptation is a subject examined in psychology, sociology, and educational science. Being a comparatively progressive process in terms of time, which virtually acts as an axiom in the category of temporality, many researchers estimate that adaptation has some stages, steps, or phases through which a person proceeds in a foreign cultural environment. The most widely spread model among ethno-psychologists and ethno-sociologists is the so-called "U-shape curve" adaptation by Norwegian scientist Lysgaard (1955), which consists of 5 steps and, although is not the norm for each particular situation, is fairly typical for the majority of cases. This model in a simplified form can be represented as a downwardly upward sequence: with values such as "good-worse-bad-better-good".

Stages of Self-Adaptation

According to Stefanenko (2009), the stages of adaptation are as follows:

1. The state of satisfaction, positive mood, there are goals and aspirations, confidence, optimism, and a certain degree of emotional "euphoria" –the so-called "honeymoon" stage.
2. The cultural environment is beginning to manifest itself in aggressive actions, causing negative feelings of anxiety, frustration, insecurity, and depression– the symptoms of so-called "culture shock."
3. The crucial point, "bottom", is when the state of "culture shock" reaches a critical value, which may cause mental illness, or even a physiological one. At this stage, there is a high probability of a person's refusal of a new cultural environment and return back to their native customary conditions.
4. The negative emotional and mental state of the individual is being gradually neutralized by awareness of capabilities, demands, and acceptability of the need for social and cultural adaptation and integration, including a reasoned study of the host culture, its language, traditions, customs, attitudes, patterns, and norms. It is the recovery period.

5. The state of satisfaction when the individual is mentally healthy, aware of the personal and cultural identity, ideally– full compliance of a person and cultural environment. The individual takes full part in the social and cultural activities of the new group and is able to effectively communicate with its various members.

In regard to temporal and longitudinal adapting, this model is divided into two parts. The first is short-term, which lasts a minimum of 2 years and is accompanied by both the preservation of its own ethnic and cultural identity and also the acquisition of the new environment's primary socio-cultural relations. The second is long-term, consisting of a time period longer than at least 2 years and contributing to a more favorable cross-cultural interaction along with the rise of social unity and activities. It is worth mentioning that the results of the research conducted by psychologists and sociologists prove that the level of adaptation of an individual does not correlate with time in a linear fashion. Currently, there are a multitude of models and strategies of intercultural adaptation postulated from different conceptual approaches.

Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2009), for example, approach adaptation from the perspective that it is a natural process of learning something new that is received from a different culture. There are two tendencies that exist in the field of communication and in the field of social behavior. The first tendency considers intercultural adaptation in terms of developing students' speech activity and intercultural communication for the purpose of successful communication in another cultural environment. Meanwhile, the second focuses on the training of behavior patterns characteristic to the norms, traditions, and cultural situation.

The concept by B. A. Bennett (2010) is based on the principle of psychological dissonance and reviews the effectiveness and success of intercultural adaptation in relation to the wide variety of outcomes in the acquisition of a number of new skills and stereotyped patterns of behavior. It also reviews the implementation of adequate, relevant interpretation and response to the behavior of cross-cultural interaction.

Lund and Rundmo (2009) mark the dynamics, consistency, and the cyclical reduction of the psychological and emotional stress in the process of cross-cultural adaptation within this homeostatic model. During this process, the individual self-assesses

the current situation in the system of interactions "personality –a new environment" and seeks to achieve the level of internal satisfaction, or balance with the environment, to the best of their personal sociocultural competence.

The most successful, in our opinion, is the model of adaptation proposed by Melnikova, (2020) where like Stefanenko there are also 5 distinguished stages, but which, in fact, is a "universal matrix" used to describe any kind of adaptation process, including intercultural within a cross-cultural interaction.

1. In the first stage, there is some disorientation revealed in the changed environment. The initial reaction of an individual in the activity aspect can be manifested in spontaneous behavior, rather than in a focused activity, while the emotional background indicates an imbalance in the system environment. There is both the need for change as well as the establishment of a foundation for further cooperation during this initial stage.

2. In the second stage, there is orientation in the new environment that is expected to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and skills in order to find a way out of this problematic situation.

3. The third stage is characterized by a redistribution of value orientations of the individual and the modification of internal reflection, which leads to the problem of selecting appropriate strategies and patterns of behavior and complex language means to be filled in with the instruments used in the implementation of an effective cross-cultural interaction.

4. The fourth stage is the beginning of the "ascent" and "mobilization" of internal resources and capabilities of an individual, as well as the increasing of activities aimed at reconstruction and changes in their socio-cultural, psychological, emotional, intellectual, and other spheres.

5. In the final stage, intercultural interaction is characterized by high productivity and efficiency, and the status of an individual is distinguished by different inner poise, comfort, stability, the balance of emotional tension, mental health, complete (ideally) adaptability, optimism, and a positive attitude to the reality and members of the new society.

First, it should be clarified that in the actual process of cross-cultural adaptation, distinct phases along with the above steps are not necessarily present. Additionally, it is not guaranteed that the presumed positive effects derived from the theoretical models will be achieved. This is also mentioned in the works on psychology by Lebedeva (1999): "Adaptation may or may not lead to the mutual satisfaction of individuals and the environment; it may include not only the adaptation, but also resistance, and attempt to change their environment or change mutually".

Generally, many scholars study the effect of nonverbal communication on social, cultural, psychological, and linguistic factors. Many scholars study about these factors in regard to intercultural miscommunication. According to Barna (1994), workplaces are increasingly integrated as a result of the modern globalized environment. This fact makes communication and intercultural understanding vital for those involved at all levels of business, including executives, business leaders, workplace managers, and employees. In order to develop skills as communicators, practical knowledge of these factors leads to successful communication across cultures. Also, many business sectors have studied factors affecting intercultural communication to solve problems in their organizations, so that the sojourners from different workplaces are able to adjust and achieve better cultural awareness.

In the globalization era, education across boundaries is increasingly popular among international students. The major purposes of cross-boundary education for those students are to study the language, culture, politics, economy, and ideology of the host country in order to make contributions upon returning to their homeland. However, the majority of international students encounter linguistic barriers and cultural challenges for effective adaptation in the host country. Those who cannot tolerate and have unsuccessfully adapted to the new cultural environment have to return to their homeland before the end date of their study.

Previous studies have shown that the significant problems correlated to cross-cultural adaptation include the lack of language competence (Shi and Wang, 2014), intercultural communicative ability (Lewthwaite, 1996), and traveling experience (Mustaffa and Ilias, 2013). challenges in language can cause difficulties and failures in communication

among people from different cultures. It is from the mismatch of different perceptions of social values, traditions, and different cultural interpretations. In addition, many international students also come across academic difficulties while they are in university. For example, Janjua, Malik, and Rahman (2011) note that foreign students are not only facing difficulties in terms of social and cultural norms and values, but also the different modes of teaching and learning and expectations of performance in university. Moreover, Mustaffa and Ilias (2013) point out that students' language proficiency is interrelated and influenced their cross-cultural adaptation process among international students. Also, results from a study conducted with Thai undergraduates from a Thai university revealed that those Thai students from different academic disciplines at the same university campus adjusted themselves differently according to their field of studies, teacher-student relationships, friend relationships, and university activities and environments (Niyomtham, Thepmanee, and Thongthai, 2017). Findings of this study further demonstrated that the freshmen had to adjust themselves to these factors more significantly than the students from other academic years because they were newcomers and unfamiliar with the environment at the university.

These results infer that cultural adaptation not only occurs with international students but also with Thai students who come from different regions in Thailand and study different academic disciplines on the same university campus. At present, there are a large number of Chinese students coming to study at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University due to the joint academic collaboration between the university and university institutions in China, the reputation of the university in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), and the signing of MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) agreements. Most of the students are from Yunnan Province, China. They lack experience in understanding the Thai academic systems and understanding about Thai culture, even though they previously studied one Thai language and culture course while in China. Since it was noted that the lack of experience, language, and cultural competence are problematic for Chinese students studying abroad (Hongmei, 2017), this study is primarily concerned with Chinese students' adaptation in the Thai academic contexts and cultural environments, which are totally different to their contexts in China.

Importantly, there is a lack of research concerning the issues of cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students and guidance to facilitate their adaptation in Thailand. Thus, this study aims to investigate Chinese students' complications and solutions concerning cross-cultural adaptation at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. The results of the current study are expected to suggest strategic solutions and effective approaches for better cross-cultural adaptation in Thailand.

Research concerning cross-cultural adaptation has been conducted for over five decades. In the middle of the twentieth century, Lysgaard (1955) theoretically proposed a U-curve model of cross-cultural adaptation. This model consists of four different adaptation stages. The first stage is the honeymoon. It starts off with the satisfaction and feeling of well-being upon entering the new culture. The sojourners start learning with the new cultural conditions in their real life. The second stage is culture shock which refers to the frustration, anxiety, confusion, helplessness, and inability to deal with cultural differences effectively and successfully. However, at the adaptation stage, the sojourners gradually learn the cultural norms and values of the host country. Later, they can adapt and behave confidently in the new culture.

The last stage is mastery. Most of the anxieties are gone. The sojourner's life is more enjoyable and feels better. They learn to accept the norms and values and can effectively function in the host culture. However, the U-curve model is not clear-cut in identifying the process of cross-cultural adaptation since it is still vague and lacks supportive statistical data (Black and Mendenhall, 1991). Later, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) modified the U-curve to a W-curve model of adaptation. They note that cross-cultural adaptation is a cycle of acculturation and an ongoing process. The sojourners are not only adjusted to the new culture they enter, but also readjust and acculturate to their home culture after they return.

This adaptation process is characterized as the same as when they encounter the host country. Adler (1975) points out that the U- and W-curve models reflect the adaptation to culture shock at the peak through time without the consideration of the encompassing actors related to the adaptation process. Adler then proposed the model of the transitional experience explaining the five stages of cultural adaptation through the

progress of experiential learning. The first stage is contact. This stage is the initial contact with the new culture and environment accompanied by excitement, euphoria, and alertness to discover new learning experiences. The similarity between the two cultures reinforces the sojourner's home cultural behavior rather than the difference. The disintegration stage is marked as the psychological perception of confusion, differences of behaviors, values, and norms of the host culture. They discover that their behaviors are no longer appropriate. This sense makes them misunderstand the host culture, feel depressed, and withdraw from the new cultural situations. They perceive themselves to be isolated and are confused about their individual identities and home values. The third stage is reintegration, referring to the rejection and unacceptance of the second culture. Negative behaviors and emotional ranges occur, and individuals securely withdraw back to their familiarity and those who are from the same culture. However, cultural awareness is growing along with the ability to deal with cultural difficulties and frustrations encountered in daily life.

In terms of Self-Adaptation, Hongmei (2017) notes that the problems for Chinese students who study in the U.S. include incompetent language ability, lack of experience and creativity, and schema of the host country. The study points out that some Chinese students feel frustrated with their learning because of the differences in academic culture and the approaches conducted by their teachers. Also, Janjua, Malik, and Rahman (2011) state that Chinese and Afghan students in Pakistan have inadequate communication skills for effective discussions, and that makes them feel discomfort with the use of student-centered approaches by their teachers in class. This is because those students are from the context of teacher-centered approaches and textbook-based learning which lack student participation.

However, studies show that social and organizational support can facilitate international students' adaptation and performance in a new learning environment and culture (Lewthwaite, 1996). According to Kim's (2017) theory of cross-cultural adaptation, individuals' engagement with social interactions can help them acquire social skills and gradually transform their identity to the new culture for a better understanding of the new cultural conditions, norms, values, and communicative systems. Social interaction brings

the sojourners closer to cultural and linguistic differences and effective adaptation to the host culture. Importantly, it moves their point of view of isolation and unawareness of cultural differences to cultural integration between the different worldviews.

Process of cultural Adaptation

Hommadova, (2017) cited in Kim's theory of cultural adaptation (1988) also noted that the conceptualized phases of adaptation displayed five major categories that emerged from the data analyses according to the stage the students were at during the sojourners' study abroad as illustrated below.

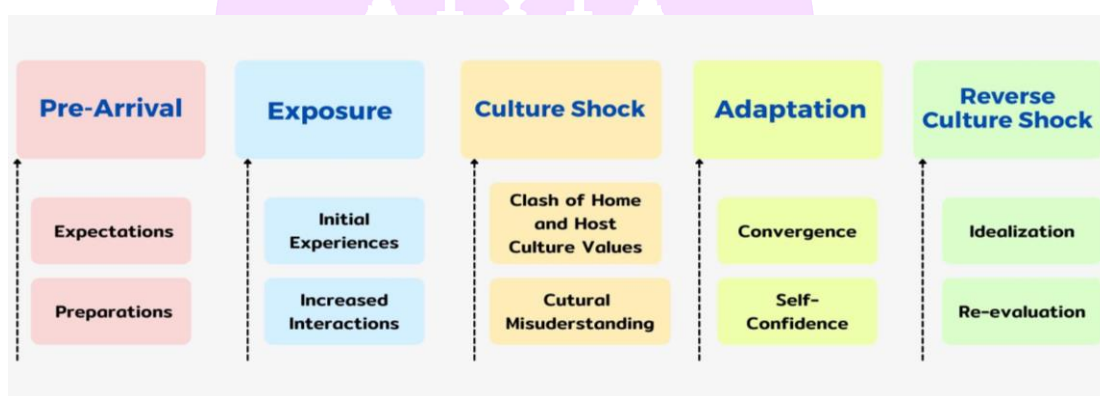


Figure 2 Process of Adaptation Phases Hommadova, (2017)

Phase One: Pre-Arrival

The pre-arrival phase lasts for varying periods of time, depending on the individual student. It typically lasts a few weeks for most students, but it could last for many years for others. In this phase, the following elements of East Asian students are examined, including their motivation for coming, their expectations and formation, as well as fear, anxiety, and preparations for studying abroad. This phase is accompanied by many different feelings and focuses on the personal circumstances of individuals and their personalities.

Motivations for Studying Abroad

There was a great variance in the reasons or motivations to study abroad for East Asian students. As might be expected, the number-one reason concerned learning

English. However, there were a multitude of other reasons including wanting to experience a foreign culture, obtain a better college education, or as a result of failing the university exams at home.

In fact, a significant number of international students that were enrolled in regular bachelor's degree programs came to the U.S. for the aforementioned reason: they failed their university entrance exams in their home country and thus decided to look for an inexpensive university in the U.S. Exchange students chose M. University based on the results of their tests in English as a foreign language (hereafter referred to as TOEFL) score and major.

Fears, Worries, and Anxiety

As is to be expected, every student expressed some level of worry. The most regularly occurring worry was, also as expected, caused by language ability. More than half of the students stated that their English language abilities were their main concern.

A Korean student wrote, "Language is the biggest concern and lifestyle is a little concern. Most scary is the language." Besides the language barrier, other worries included economic issues, weather (among the ones who researched the area), safety, integration, making friends, academic ability, being able to get along with their roommate(s), ability to communicate, gaining weight, being homesick, and facing discrimination.

A Chinese student wrote, "Prior to my arrival in the States, my concerns were that the hostile reception I might get because I am a foreigner that is living in their country. I was also concerned for my safety as I am aware that Americans love their right to bear arms and due to the many reported shootings in the States, I had [sic] concerned that I would be caught in an unfortunate situation."

Of the students who researched the area before arrival, most were concerned with the lack of public transportation. One student from China researched the city where M. University was located extensively and was concerned by her discovery that the city was quite uneventful and that there was no public transportation on Sundays. This leads us into the actual behavior of preparing during the pre-arrival phase.

Phase Two: Exposure and Initial Experience

Phase Two is accompanied by an array of emotions, which is referred to as the honeymoon stage in the literature or, as Gebhard (2010) calls it, the initial experience stage. It is usually filled with elation, gratitude, fear, anger, frustration, and confusion, as well as happiness. In this phase, the students have moved to their new residence, started consuming the local food, and are now experiencing a multitude of experiences for the first time.

The students went through physical adaptation in this stage. As there are so many new experiences, this process is quick and often accompanied by excitement. Many were surprised by the rural nature and emptiness of the area, but any preconceived notions of a more urbanized environment were overshadowed by the week-long orientation, beautiful campus, moving into the dorms, and waiting for the arrival of roommates.

A special orientation at M. University was conducted exclusively for international students upon arrival. This gave some students the impression that the only Americans in the whole school were the staff and the handful of students acting as guides. A student from Japan described how surprised she was that there were so many international students at the orientation, leading her to believe that the university was made up of mostly international students. However, she was consistently the only foreigner in her class when they began, and only later realized that the international and regular students had different orientations. The regular students arrived and moved into the dorms a week after the international students, which contributed to the confusion. During the orientation, international students learned how to perform some essential functions, such as paying their tuition online and registering for volunteer work to keep their tuition low. There was also significant stress and insecurity among the students about their academic performance. They were unsure how to study, how to behave in the classroom, or if they were even studying the correct material. During the first week of classes, students expressed difficulties in understanding the lectures. After a few weeks, students were able to be more precise about what exactly they struggled with and pointed out that they did not understand specific factors such as the professor's sense of humor or particular accent.

Their insecurity diminishes after a few weeks of classes and increased amounts of interactions, but the stress and anxiety levels of students should not be disregarded during their first two weeks of classes.

Phase Three: Culture Shock

Culture shock is experienced from noticing differences and confronting expectations and commonly accompanied by feelings of uncertainty regarding social norms, loneliness, anger, and isolation. Culture shock is the inevitable and stressful feeling caused by social difficulties experienced by international students during their time living in the host culture. Students often anticipate some degree of difficulty related to culture shock, but generally not to the same extent that they experience it. Furthermore, there are challenges in micro-behaviors described by Hall (1973) in nonverbal cues and personal distance, which often act as a guide to human behavior, varying across different cultures.

Symptoms of culture shock include anxiety, homesickness, helplessness, boredom, depression, fatigue, confusion, self-doubt, paranoia, and physical ailments (Gebhard, 2010). Furthermore, according to the results of previous studies, there is a positive relationship among communication adaptability, interaction involvement, and the ability to cope with social difficulties (Chen, 1992). This might help explain why Chinese students, who are more direct in their style of communication, avoid some of the challenges that are faced by some Japanese students. It is impossible to draw clear lines between the phases of adaptation other than for phase one and phase five, where it is clear that the pre-arrival phase ends once students arrive, and reverse culture shock only begins once the sojourner has returned to their native culture. It is important to note that not every sojourner goes through all of the phases, and in addition, the outlooks and attitudes of East Asian students impacted the difference between the initial experiences of the second stage and the culture shock phase.

Phase Four: Adaptation and Integration vs. Adaptation

While some students can conform to the expectations of host cultures, resulting in feelings of confidence, self-assurance, and an increase in self-esteem, not all of the students reach the integration stage. Some students might be able to adapt well to the host culture, but not many are able to integrate. Although adaptation concerns coping with

the environment, the ultimate goal is true integration. Very few of these students became integrated into the local culture, but all of the students can be understood to have achieved adaptation, as no one had left by the middle of the year when the study was conducted. There was a degree of segregation between each of the groups observed, however, within the groups, there was a degree to which some students were able to negotiate their cultural identity and approach a healthy middle ground of having an equal number of close American and co-national friends.

A majority of the students became used to living in the rural U.S. Students in this study were able to adapt to the harsh weather, and no one returned home due to the weather, however, the level of cultural adaptation and integration is harder to determine. Some might argue that there is no clear distinction, and the experiences of a majority of participants in this study could be plotted on a broad spectrum from full assimilation to complete seclusion.

Phase Five: Reverse Culture Shock

Reverse culture shock was experienced by students upon returning to their home countries, where they faced various difficulties in re-adaptation. Some Japanese students struggled with the lack of cultural diversity, the pleasantries of Japanese social interactions, and even being teased for gaining weight during their time abroad. Students from China often have difficulty readjusting to the pollution, car traffic, and lack of adherence to traffic rules back home. Another shock reported by returning Chinese students was how dirty they viewed the environment and eating habits after having spent time in a very different culture. One of the students who returned to Korea and was in the army complained that the seniors around him were absurd, and that the hierarchical organizational structure at universities and in the workplace made him feel uncomfortable. This sentiment was also expressed by other returning Korean students.

In conclusion, regarding the process of adaptation to the host culture, it is important to note the important role that forming positive relationships and increasing interaction between foreign and local students play. Desolation has disadvantageous effects on foreign students (Wang and Sun, 2009) and communal support is crucial for the students to confront the process of adaptation (Miyazaki, et al., 2008; Wei, et al., 2007).

The students' successful adaptation to the rural host were significantly influenced by communications with the regional population. Various studies suggest that the more frequently the international students interact with friends from the host country, the better they adjust (Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Heikinheimo and Shute, 1986; Perkins, 1971) Sellitz and Cook (1962) showed that international students felt a stronger connection to the United States if they had at least one close American friend; however, a majority of the students in this study had very few close American friends. (Hommadova ,2017. pp. 189)

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Chiang Rai Rajabhat University's annual report (2019) cited that Chiang Rai Rajabhat University is one of Thailand's higher education institutions receiving an annual batch of Chinese undergraduate students. It is located in the Northern Thai province of Chiang Rai. This institution has an agreement with Pu'er Teachers' College of China and accepts 40 undergraduate students each school year under its student exchange programs, which are part of Thailand–China educational cooperation. Although the student exchange programs between Chiang Rai Rajabhat University (CRRU) with foreign universities began in 2004, it was not until 19 July 2014 that the first batch of students from CRRU under the exchange programs was dispatched to Pu'er Teachers' College, Pu'er in Yunnan province of China to promote the exchange of students between the two countries.

The first batch of Chinese students who studied English for two years in their home university based on their own curriculum were enrolled in the Faculty of Humanities in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in specially arranged classes in which they are the only students. This means that all of their classes are arranged exclusively for them, and not attended by any other students. Chiang Rai Rajabhat University is also providing opportunities for students at those universities under the exchange programs to experience the study of new languages in an environment that is similar to those in their home universities. Such exchange programs have also made it possible for students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds to meet and communicate with each other and promote the use of English as a medium of communication. One of the countries whose universities

have signed MOUs with Thai institutions is China. Among them is Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, which entered into exchange programs with Chinese universities in 2004 to facilitate students from the faculty of humanities of both countries to study English in a foreign environment.

Related Studies

Previous research on intercultural communication challenges and solutions, together with intercultural communicative competence, as well as self-adaptations, have been mostly investigated in overseas and Asian countries; meanwhile, a number of related studies on intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation have been explored in Thailand.

1. Related studies on intercultural communication strategies

Kantamas, Malawong-ariya and Khamnet (2017) previewed the study of works related to intercultural communication strategies in workplaces. In this paper, senior Chinese undergraduate students have worked for many workplaces. Some of the workplaces in Chiang Rai and nearby provinces varied in the numbers of multicultural employees whose nationalities include Thai, British, Canadian, Kenyan, American, Chinese, and other countries around the world. So, working with people who have different cultural backgrounds, different ages, gender, educational backgrounds, and different working experiences has created intercultural communication challenges. Furthermore, the number of related studies in workplaces are rarely explored in Thailand, so this study aims to identify the use of nonverbal miscommunication e.g., silences, smiles, kinesics, and time (chronemics) among senior Chinese undergraduate students during their internship in Chiang Rai province, as well as to investigate social, cultural, and linguistic factors influencing the use of nonverbal miscommunication during their internship experiences. It revealed that the EFL Chinese undergraduate students studying in the English Studies Program, Faculty of Humanities, Chiangrai Rajabhat University frequently used their Achievement or Compensatory Strategies and Avoidance or Reduction.

Accordingly, Qingliang (2018) studied the intercultural communication strategies used in the diplomatic relations of Donald Trump's First Visit to China and posited that

intercultural communication strategies in diplomatic relations are an embodiment of cultural dimensions whereas these strategies are determined by leader personality, national strength, and demand for interest.

Posai and Soranasthaporn (2019) investigated English communication strategies employed by Thai students studying Chinese majors. The findings illustrated that the students overall used English and Chinese communication strategies at moderate to high levels. The mean score of using Chinese communication strategies was higher than that of English communication strategies. There was a significant difference between English and Chinese communication strategies in 4 sub-strategies for coping with speaking problems ($p < .05$).

Like the study of Liu, Yi, and Su (2019) on factors and strategies of Uyghur–Han intercultural communication at colleges and universities, it indicated that Uyghur and Han have two different cultural models. In terms of the behavior and cognition of intercultural communication, observation, and case interviews through the interaction of festivals and group activities related to the mutual help of learning, the state of friendship, and the interaction of “Human and Han nationality” in the dormitory described the specific content of cross-cultural communication between high school students. Also, their cross-cultural communication has the characteristics of a low frequency of communication, shallow degree of communication, and unbalanced communication foundation.

Also, Xiuwen and Razali (2020) investigated challenges with intercultural communication facing international Chinese students and the importance of developing intercultural communication competence and noted that the conditions Chinese international students have suffered in foreign universities are language anxiety, culture shock, initial adaptation, psychological changes, and academic issues. Specifically, these language and cultural issues are pertinent amongst international students, especially those from China, but there have been many studies that posit that these intercultural communication challenges can be overcome with intercultural communicative competence in order to prepare themselves not only in developing communication skills, but also intercultural appreciation before studying in foreign countries, as well as to provide program planners

and host universities with insightful information about effectively supporting Chinese international students.

2. Related studies on self-adaptations

Anya Hommadowa Lu, (2017) explored the study of the phases of adaptation of East Asian Students' communication and integration into American culture, and also noted that there is a growing population of international students in the U.S. Although previously only elite or scholastically advanced students were able to study abroad, this experience is now becoming more accessible to a more diverse population. The students' interactions with the local population are analyzed using the Interpersonal Adaptation Theory. Practical suggestions were made based on the students' experiences and reflections on possible ways for sojourners to not only adjust but to integrate into the local culture.

Subsequently, Songsirisak (2018) explored the study of the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students: problems and solutions. It showed that the most significant problems for cultural adaptation included language barriers in both English and Thai, having no strategies for intercultural communication with Thai people, not being familiar with Thai etiquette and food, appropriate social behavior, and Thai classroom culture. As far as solutions and strategies, the research recommends three main areas including increasing the study of Thai language and culture, having better competence in intercultural communication strategies for talking with Thai people, and providing more detailed orientation training before coming to Thailand in order to understand proper Thai cultural behavior, etiquette, and Thai university study habits.

Kang, et al., (2019) conducted a study of Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation process and their main difficulties encountered while studying in the upper northern Thai university revealed that the Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation process was roughly in the shape of a "U-Curve"; moreover, different Chinese student groups performed differently in the four fields of cross-cultural adaptation. In other words, eleven main difficulties were found to be contributing factors affecting the process of Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation, among which 'being not accustomed to campus life', 'having difficulty in understanding courses', 'not having good job prospects',

and 'having difficulty in fitting-in with Thai society' were the most influential items. Finally, some useful suggestions for both Chinese students and Thai universities were put forward to help these students to become better adapted to the host Thai environment.

Lastly, Yao (2020) survey of the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese female undergraduates studying abroad indicated that language competence, identity, leisure activities, and personal relationships have reflected the characteristics of female international students. In addition, international students' opinions about the relationship between specific factors of adaptation influenced their subjective feeling about how well they adapt. In the same year, Zhong, et al. (2020) explored the factors influencing the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students of different academic levels and stated that the initial academic level was significantly related to the "interpersonal relationship", "environmental factors" and "psychological adaptation" of students' cross-cultural adaptation and has no significant correlation with "academic situation." Also, Shi and Ek-lem (2020) conducted a study of cross-cultural adaptation related to factors affecting the academic and social achievements of Chinese students in a college in Malaysia and asserted that psychological and social adaptations have significantly correlated with social and academic achievements. In psychological adaptation, life satisfaction has a significantly positive effect on social and academic achievements; in social adaptation, friends, the ability to make friends, and networking have a significantly positive influence on social and academic achievements.

This chapter presents communication process that interlocutors interact with other different outsiders, together with the definition of communication, as well as verbal and non-verbal communication influencing on interlocutors' effective communication competence. It also focuses on intercultural communication (IC), communicative competence (CC), intercultural communicative competence (ICC), and intercultural communication strategies (ICS) leading to interlocutors' successful intercultural communication abilities. Specifically, related documents and literature reviews on factors affecting influencing communication barriers in a Thai-speaking context were all underpinned in this study. Furthermore, theoretical concepts on self-adaptation or cross-cultural adjustments related to communication problems and socio-cultural problems, as well as their cultural awareness after using English as a main language with Thais in a Thai-speaking context were all

investigated. Next, insightful information about knowledge backgrounds on Chiang Rai Rajabhat University's MOUs with Chinese universities are identified in this study. Also, previous studies on both intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation occurred in different Thai-speaking contexts are eventually scrutinized for academic arguments with discussions of the study.

From this chapter cited above, the present research has shown contributions to the studies of challenges and strategies in long-term intercultural communication, as well as self-adaptations employed by sojourners in overseas and Asian contexts. As a result of the lack of research on English intercultural communication strategies and the self-adaptations of Chinese undergraduate students within their long-term internship in a Thai-speaking context, the present research was conducted in order to discriminate the strategies of English intercultural communicative competence and socio-cultural awareness when living in a Thai-speaking professional setting.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter addresses the research methodology and data collection used for identifying the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies, as well as the Chinese senior undergraduate students' self-adaptation in a Thai public university. The overall research design and research methods were explained and justified in terms of the underlying research questions. In order to address these questions, a survey study was conducted by adopting a questionnaire and a semi-structured online face-to-face interview as research instruments to scrutinize the two research questions:

1. What are the intercultural communication strategies used by fourth-year Chinese students when encountering their intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university?
2. How do the fourth-year Chinese students use their self-adaptation to deal with those English intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university?

The findings of the preliminary study taken from questionnaires and interviews aimed to reveal the fourth-year Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies in a long-term Thai public university, as well as how the Chinese students' self-adaptation was used in dealing with their intercultural communication problems.

In this chapter, the major characteristics of the survey methods including a questionnaire and an interview are described first. Then, a review explained and justified three types of interviews including semi-structured. This is followed by an account of how the research methods are implemented. Lastly, the fieldwork administration is described in the final part of this chapter.

Research Design

This was a mixed-method study, which focused on collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. In terms of the quantitative data collection, a questionnaire on intercultural communication strategies conceptualized by Leung, Lee and Chiu, 2013; Sharifian, 2013; Cogo and Dewey, 2006; Mauranen, 2009; Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002; Jenkins, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Breiteneder, 2005; Gnutzmann, 2000; Mauranen, 2012; Seidlhofer 2004; Baker, 2012 and Sharifian, 2013 cited in Suwanasom (2019, p. 317) was used as the main criteria for identifying the strategies that occurred during the interpersonal interactions of fourth-year Chinese students in a long-term Thai public university. Also, these intercultural communication strategies were categorized into ten major aspects:

1. Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions.
2. Avoiding talking about sensitive issues.
3. Being careful in using grammatically (English) correct expressions.
4. Using the Chinese language to facilitate communication.
5. Using the partner's mother tongue (Chinese and Thai) to facilitate communication.
6. Clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics.
7. Selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions.
8. Asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts.
9. Selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background.
10. Using your background knowledge of the partner's culture.

In addition to this, the fourth-year Chinese students' self-adaptation conceptualized by Kim's theory of cross-cultural adaptation (2017), in terms of the qualitative research, was carried out for their semi-structured face-to-face interviews and divided into two major aspects:

1. English Language Adaptation
2. Socio-Cultural Adaptation

Participants

In this study, 30 fourth-year Chinese students majoring in the English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Chinese universities during the year 2020 were all selected based on the purposive sampling technique.

Research Instruments

The purposes of this study are to identify the English intercultural communication strategies employed by 30 fourth-year Chinese students as well as to investigate their self-adaptation in a long-term Thai public university. In order to provide an insightful understanding of the English intercultural communication strategies together with their self-adaptation, the results of this study examined 30 fourth-year Chinese students to reveal in-depth information on how they processed their effective communication in English, and how they used their self-adaptation to deal with their problems of English intercultural communication. The instruments used in this study include a questionnaire and a face-to-face interview.

1. Questionnaire on Intercultural Communication Strategies

In this study, this questionnaire was carried out for identifying the classification of English intercultural communication strategies conceptualized by Leung, Lee and Chiu, 2013; Sharifian, 2013; Cogo and Dewey, 2006; Mauranen, 2009; Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002; Jenkins, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Breiteneder, 2005; Gnutzmann, 2000; Mauranen, 2012; Seidlhofer 2004; Baker, 2012 and Sharifian, 2013 cited in Suwanasom (2019, p. 317).

A question list was used as criteria for identifying strategies when communication occurred among 30 fourth-year Chinese students. In this phase of the study, the questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part focused on the participant's personal information, and the second part was designed to investigate the pattern of rating on the five-rating scale. In the third part, the discourse completion task, conceptualized by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989), was adapted for its content analysis. Moreover, ten simulation questions on different English intercultural communication situations were

adapted. Also, this last part allows the participants to express their ideas and their reactions to each simulation situation in the questionnaire.

After that, the approved questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The Chinese students as participants were asked to complete the questionnaire for insightful understandings of their intercultural communication strategies in a Thai public university. This study phase allowed quantitative insights that clarify the quantitative data from the questionnaire questions. Finally, these questionnaires were analyzed for identifying the use of English intercultural communication strategies employed among 30 fourth-year Chinese students in a Thai public university.

2. Online Face-to-Face Interview on Self-Adaptation

In this study, the researcher used an online face-to-face interview on self-adaptation conceptualized by Kim (2017) in order to obtain understandings through detailed examples and to ascertain the meaning of actions, experiences, and the sentiments underlying expressed opinions. Thus, in order to get more insightful information about the English language and socio-cultural adaptations of the 30 fourth-year Chinese students in a Thai public university, selected by the purposive sampling technique, one-by-one online interviews were used to investigate what kind of self-adaptation the selected Chinese students used to deal with their English language and socio-cultural problems in a long-term Thai public university. This phase of the study consists of two major parts. The first part mainly focuses one by one on the participants' English language adaptation, and the second part involves the participants' socio-cultural adaptation. Finally, face-to-face interviews were conducted in this study, and the 30 participants completed the face-to-face interview concerning the English language and socio-cultural adaptations of individual fourth-year Chinese students when dealing with the English language and socio-cultural problems in a long-term Thai public university. This study phase allowed in-depth qualitative insights that clarify the quantitative data from online face-to-face interviews. Finally, these face-to-face interviews were summarized into a content analysis. (see appendix A)

Validity of Research Instruments

For validity reasons of the pilot study, the questionnaire questions about English intercultural communication strategies were validated by three English language teaching experts for their content accuracy. Moreover, face-to-face interview questions related to their English language and socio-cultural adaptations were also explored for the content validity and accurate content approved by three English language teaching experts. Subsequently, the researcher conducted the IOC for questionnaire questions and interview questions in order to check the reliability and validity of the content before using the questionnaire and semi-structure interview questions. At first, three English language teaching experts were assigned to approve the questionnaire and face-to-face questions, as well as agree upon the content. According to the IOC (Index of Item Objective Congruence) theory of Taro Yamane (1967) cited in Phumpho and Nomnian (2019), it is indicated that the examination questions meet the requirements of the research; otherwise, they need to be adjusted. Based on the criteria of a four-rating scale, the questionnaire is detailed as follows:

4.21 – 5.00	means	very high level in intercultural communication strategies.
3.41 – 4.20	means	high level in intercultural communication strategies.
2.61 – 3.40	means	moderate level in intercultural communication strategies.
1.81 – 2.60	means	low level in intercultural communication strategies.
1.00 – 1.80	means	very low level in intercultural communication strategies.

According to the formula: $IOC = \frac{\sum R}{N}$

ICO means index of Item Objective Congruence

$\sum R$ means total scores from three experts.

N means total number of experts

Next, the IOC form was presented to the language experts for checking.

After receiving feedback, the researcher developed the approved questionnaire and online face-to-face interview questions to complete.

At last, the approved questionnaire was conducted as a pilot study with 30 third-year Chinese students majoring in the English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Thailand, and then distributed to the selected

participants during the data collection stage. Also, in such an individual setting of the pilot study stage, the approved interview questions were all conducted with the 30 fourth-year Chinese students majoring in the English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Thailand.

After the analysis was completed, the results were re-examined by language experts. Both the approved questionnaire and face-to-face interview questions passed the criteria for consideration, and the experts' provided detailed suggestions to improve the clarity.

Procedures for Data Collection

After the ethical approval by the University of Phayao was completed, the participants were asked by using the questionnaire in order to provide insightful information about how they used intercultural communication strategies in a Thai public university.

In this first phase, submissions of the approved questionnaire related to the fourth-year Chinese students' English intercultural communication strategies used in a long-term Thai public university were taken for three weeks during December 2020 and January 2021. Then, the results of the study taken from these questionnaires were categorized into frequency checklists and were presented in percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

After that, the online face-to-face interviews were carried out concerning 30 fourth-year Chinese students' self-adaptation in a long-term Thai public university in relation to their English language and socio-cultural adaptations. The interview questions were approved by the advisor and three language experts for accurate content. Then, selected descriptions taken from data analysis were summarized and also presented in the descriptive analysis and frequency from December 2020 to January 2021.

Finally, the results of the 30 senior Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies, as well as their self-adaptation related to English language and socio-cultural adaptations were analyzed in Chapter 4 and were discussed in Chapter 5.

Procedures for data analysis

The flowchart demonstrates the procedures of the data analysis as shown below.

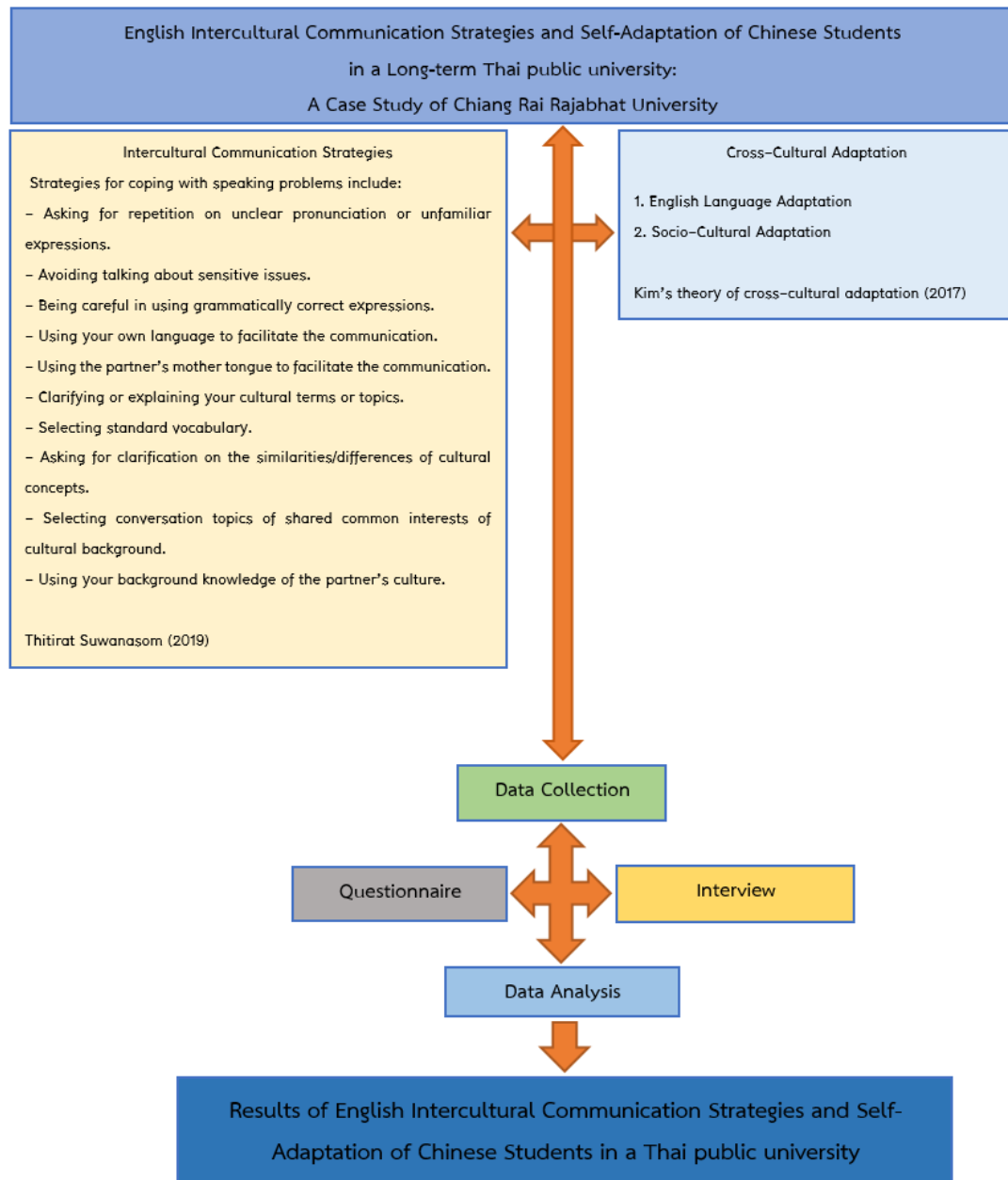


Figure 3 Data collection

In the quantitative data, a questionnaire checklist was carried out for the 30 fourth-year Chinese students' use of English intercultural communication strategies in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in a long-term Thai public university. Subsequently, there was a frequency distribution for data analysis through using percentage, mean, and standard deviation for investigating their use of English intercultural communication strategies employed by the 30 fourth-year Chinese students in a long-term Thai public university. Next, all the numbers and data were presented in tables. Finally, the information was summarized and reported.

In analyzing the qualitative data, face-to-face interviews of the 30 fourth-year Chinese students' self-adaptation emphasizing their English language and socio-cultural adaptations conceptualized by Kim's Cross-Cultural Adaptation (2017) were all analyzed and summarized for more comprehensive views. Next, the results taken from the 30 fourth-year Chinese students' self-adaptation in dealing with their stay in a long-term Thai public university were categorized into frequency lists.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university. Moreover, this study presents the investigation of the Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university.

Part One: Identifying Intercultural Communication Strategies Used by Chinese Students When interacting with Thais in a Public Thai University

According to the first research question of this study related to "What are the intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when encountering intercultural communication problems in a Thai-speaking context?", the Chinese students' use of intercultural communication strategies was identified in this part as shown in Table 1 and was categorized into themes as shown in Table 2-11.

Table 1 The Overall Use of Intercultural Communication Strategies by Chinese Students When Interacting with Thais in a Public Thai University

Intercultural Communication Strategies	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions	2.38	1.01	Low
2) Avoiding talking about sensitive issues	2.26	0.91	Low
3) Being careful in using English grammatically correct expressions	2.14	0.99	Low
4) Using the Chinese language to facilitate the communication	2.14	0.93	Low
5) Using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication	2.10	0.93	Low

Table 1 (Cont.)

Intercultural Communication Strategies	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
6) Clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics	2.07	0.85	Low
7) Selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions	1.97	0.79	Low
8) Asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts	1.97	0.78	Low
9) Selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background	1.95	0.62	Low
10) Using your background knowledge of the partner's culture	1.82	0.72	Low
Total	2.08	0.85	Low

Table 1 showed that the overall use of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies, with its mean of 2.08 and its standard deviation (S.D) of 0.85, was rated at a low level when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university. When comparing the Chinese students' use of intercultural communication strategies with each theme, it showed that asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions ($\bar{X} = 2.38$, S.D = 1.01) was rated at a low level, followed by avoiding talking about sensitive issues ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.91) and using the Chinese language to facilitate communication ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.93), using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.93), clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.85), both selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions ($\bar{X} = 1.97$, S.D = 0.79) and asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts ($\bar{X} = 1.97$, S.D = 0.78), selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background ($\bar{X} = 1.95$, S.D = 0.62), and using your background knowledge of the partner's culture ($\bar{X} = 1.82$, S.D = 0.72). In addition, the results of analyzing the Chinese students' use of intercultural communication strategies compared with each theme were detailed in Table 2–11.

**Table 2 Use of Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies
Related to Asking for Repetition on Unclear Pronunciation or Unfamiliar
Expressions**

Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I am interested in the Thais' own accents.	2.43	1.06	Low
2) I am interested in pronouncing the Thais' rhythm and high or low intonations.	2.33	0.96	Low
Total	2.38	1.01	Low

From Table 2, it showed that the interest in pronouncing the Thais' rhythm and high or low intonations ($\bar{X} = 2.33$, S.D = 0.96). was rated at a low level in terms of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions ($\bar{X} = 2.38$, S.D = 1.01) and followed by being interested in the Thais' own accents ($\bar{X} = 2.43$, S.D = 1.06),

**Table 3 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies
Related to Avoiding Talking about Sensitive Issues**

Avoiding Talking about Sensitive Issues	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I concentrate on the Thais' negotiation.	2.40	1.07	Low
2) Communication breakdowns happen when the Thais' understandings cannot be cleared.	2.30	0.95	Low
3) Amusement is used for their conversation with Thais.	2.27	0.98	Low
4) I will abandon difficult messages when I talk with Thais.	2.23	0.67	Low

Table 3 (Cont.)

Avoiding Talking about Sensitive Issues	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
5) I attempt to translate or transfer what Thais listen to from their expressions into their own language in order to understand what Thais express.	2.10	0.88	Low
Total	2.26	0.91	Low

From Table 3, it showed that the use of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to avoiding talking about sensitive issues ($\bar{X} = 2.26$, S.D = 0.91) was rated at a low in terms of concentrating on the Thais' negotiation ($\bar{X} = 2.40$, S.D = 1.07), followed by communication breakdowns that happen when the Thais' understandings cannot be cleared ($\bar{X} = 2.30$, S.D = 0.95), using amusement for their conversation with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.27$, S.D = 0.98), abandoning difficult messages when talking with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.23$, S.D = 0.67), and attempting to translate or transfer what Thais listen to from their expressions into their own language in order to understand what Thais express ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.88).

Table 4 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Being Careful in Using Grammatically Correct Expressions

Being Careful in Using Grammatically Correct Expressions	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I am able to correct language mistakes when communicating in English with Thais.	2.37	1.09	Low
2) I focus on the subject-verb agreement of the English structure while listening.	2.17	1.17	Low
3) I focus on words used for questioning when sojourners have heard WH-questions.	2.17	1.02	Low

Table 4 (Cont.)

Being Careful in Using Grammatically Correct Expressions	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
4) I mainly focus on using non-verbal communication to correct grammatical structures and to sequence words or statements with Thais' conversation.	2.10	1.06	Low
5) I endeavor to focus on the appropriate use of language and intercultural understandings with Thais.	2.07	0.82	Low
6) I use body language to decrease Thais' worries when interacting with them.	2.00	0.78	Low
Total	2.14	0.99	Low

From Table 4, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to being careful in using grammatically correct expressions ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.99) was rated at a low level in terms of being able to correct language mistakes when communicating English with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.37$, S.D = 1.09), followed by focusing on the subject-verb agreement of the English structure while listening and words used for questioning when sojourners have heard Wh-questions ($\bar{X} = 2.17$, S.D = 1.02), using non-verbal communication to correct grammatical structures and to sequence words or statements with Thais' conversation ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 1.06), focusing on the appropriate use of language and intercultural understandings with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 1.06), and using body language to decrease Thais' worries when interacting with them ($\bar{X} = 2.00$, S.D = 0.78).

Table 5 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Using the Partner's Mother Tongue to Facilitate Communication

Using the Partner's Mother Tongue to Facilitate Communication	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) Help is requested from outsiders when not interacting with the sojourners.	2.20	0.96	Low
2) I examine what the Thais' understandings are perceived from our interaction.	2.17	0.95	Low
3) I will give some examples to help Thais understand what I say.	2.13	1.01	Low
4) I try to use the Thais' language expressions that are taught from the lecture.	2.07	0.91	Low
5) I make conversation dialogues mostly fluent with Thais.	1.93	0.82	Low
Total	2.10	0.93	Low

From Table 5, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate communication ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.93) were rated at a low level in terms of help is requested from outsiders when not interacting with the sojourners ($\bar{X} = 2.20$, S.D = 1.01), followed by examining what the Thais' understandings are perceived from our interaction ($\bar{X} = 2.17$, S.D = 0.95), giving some examples to help Thais understand what the Chinese student says ($\bar{X} = 2.13$, S.D = 1.01), trying to use the Thais' language expressions that are taught from the lecture ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.91), and making conversation dialogues mostly fluent with Thais ($\bar{X} = 1.93$, S.D = 0.82).

Table 6 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Using Your Own Language to Facilitate the Communication

Using the Chinese Language to Facilitate Communication	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I have to speak clearly and loudly with Thais when interacting with them.	2.40	1.22	Low
2) I use my own language first so that my appropriate expressions can be used for interacting with Thais.	2.17	0.98	Low
3) I use transferring skills to identify words and their meanings with Thais in the time required.	2.13	0.86	Low
4) I use different ways of speaking based on such a different context when shifting other topics with Thais.	2.10	0.96	Low
5) I use different means of communication when faced with the Thai sojourner's interaction.	2.07	0.78	Low
6) I let Thais explain more details when they are not sure what they express.	1.98	0.78	Low
Total	2.14	0.93	Low

From Table 6, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to using the Chinese language to facilitate communication ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.93) were rated at a low level in terms of having to speak clearly and loudly with Thais when interacting with them ($\bar{X} = 2.40$, S.D = 1.22), followed by using the Chinese students' own language first so that their appropriate expressions can be used for interacting with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.17$, S.D = 0.98), using transferring skills to identify words and their meaning with Thais in the required time ($\bar{X} = 2.13$, S.D = 0.86), using different ways of speaking based on such a different context when shifting other topics with Thais ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.96), using different means of communication when faced with the Thai

sojourner's interaction ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.78), and letting Thais explain more details when they are not sure what I express. ($\bar{X} = 1.98$, S.D = 0.78).

Table 7 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Clarifying or Explaining Your Cultural Terms or Topics

Clarifying or Explaining Your Cultural Terms or Topics	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I provide more details for Thais when they do not understand.	2.20	0.99	Low
2) I try to use the first word to make questions.	2.17	0.95	Low
3) I focus on the first part of the Thai's questions and the expectation of the Thai's purposes.	2.10	0.92	Low
4) I mostly use familiar words when interacting with Thais.	2.07	0.52	Low
5) I try to replace new statements with Thais when I cannot transfer them.	2.03	0.81	Low
6) I let the Thais speak repeatedly when they do not understand.	2.03	0.94	Low
7) I speak repeatedly to make the Thais understand.	1.90	0.84	Low
Total	2.07	0.85	Low

From Table 7, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to clarifying or explaining cultural terms or topics ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.85) were rated at a low level in terms of providing more details for Thais when they do not understand ($\bar{X} = 2.20$, S.D = 0.99), followed by trying to use the first word to make questions ($\mu = 2.17$, $\sigma = 0.95$), focusing on the first part of the Thai's questions and the expectation of the Thai's purposes ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.92), letting the Thais speak

repeatedly when they do not understand ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.52), using familiar words when interacting with Thais mostly ($\bar{X} = 2.07$, S.D = 0.52), trying to replace new statements with Thais when they cannot transfer them ($\bar{X} = 2.03$, S.D = 0.52), and speaking repeatedly to make the Thais understand ($\bar{X} = 1.90$, S.D = 0.84).

Table 8 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Selecting Standard Vocabulary or Easy Expressions

Selecting Standard Vocabulary or Easy Expressions	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I emphasize expressing familiar words or statements with Thais only.	2.23	1.07	Low
2) I use my transferring skills to encourage Thais to explain their own expressions.	2.09	0.76	Low
3) I avoid expressing some technical terms and difficult words that are used in communicating English with Thais when they do not know how to explain.	1.93	0.78	Low
4) I try to summarize my statements by expressing easy-to-understand words or phrases when interacting with Thais.	1.80	0.71	Very Low
5) I use simplified words or statements with Thais when they do not understand.	1.80	0.66	Very Low
Total	1.97	0.79	Low

From Table 8, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions ($\bar{X} = 1.97$, S.D = 0.79) were rated at a low level in terms of expressing familiar words or statements with Thais only ($\bar{X} = 2.23$, S.D = 1.07), followed by using transferring skills to encourage Thais to explain their own expressions ($\bar{X} = 2.09$, S.D = 0.76), avoiding expressing some

technical terms and difficult words that are used in communicating English with Thais when they do not know how to explain ($\bar{X} = 1.93$, S.D = 0.78), and using simplified words or statements with Thais when they do not understand and trying to summarize my statements by expressing easy-to-understand words or phrases when interacting with Thais ($\bar{X} = 1.80$, S.D = 0.71).

Table 9 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Asking for Clarification on the Similarities

Asking for Clarification on the Similarities / Differences of Cultural Concepts	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I use my facial expressions with Thais when I am discussing something with them.	2.10	0.84	Low
2) I use my eye contact with Thais when I am discussing something with them.	2.07	0.86	Low
3) I attempt to reply with Thais when they hardly understand what I express to them.	1.97	0.72	Low
4) I emphasize speaking slowly or expressing cultural understandings with Thais easily.	1.93	0.78	Low
5) I use familiar words or statements that are involved in cultural understandings with Thais.	1.93	0.74	Low
6) I use my gestures with Thais when they are confused, or they are facing with their communication problems.	1.83	0.74	Low
Total	1.97	0.78	Low

From Table 9, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts ($\bar{X} = 1.97$, S.D = 0.78) were rated at a low level in terms of using facial expressions with Thais when discussing something with them ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.84), followed by using eye contact with Thais when discussing something with them ($\bar{X} = 2.07$,

S.D = 0.86, attempting to reply with Thais when hardly understanding what the Chinese students express with them (\bar{X} = 1.97, S.D = 0.72), using familiar words or statements that are involved in cultural understandings with Thais and emphasizing speaking slowly or expressing cultural understandings with Thais easily (\bar{X} = 1.93, S.D = 0.78), and using my gestures with Thais when they are confused or they are facing communication problems (\bar{X} = 1.83, S.D = 0.74).

Table 10 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Selecting Conversation Topics of Shared Common Interests of Cultural Background

Selecting Conversation Topics of Shared Common Interests of Cultural Background	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I give some examples when Thais do not understand.	2.07	0.91	Low
2) I try to use appropriate English expressions or statements with Thais in different academic situations.	2.03	0.89	Low
3) I try to understand the Thais' main ideas.	1.90	0.76	Low
4) I will speak slowly when Thais do not understand what I am saying.	1.80	0.84	Very Low
Total	1.95	0.62	Low

From Table 10, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background (\bar{X} = 1.95, S.D = 0.62), were rated at a low level in terms of giving some examples when Thais do not understand (\bar{X} = 2.07, S.D = 0.91), followed by trying to use appropriate English expressions or statements with Thais in different academic situations (\bar{X} = 2.03, S.D = 0.89), trying to understand the Thais' main ideas (\bar{X} = 1.90, S.D =

0.76), and speaking slowly when Thais do not understand what I am saying ($\bar{X} = 1.80$, S.D = 0.84).

Table 11 Use of the Chinese Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies Related to Using Your Background Knowledge of the Partner's Culture

Using Your Background Knowledge of the Partner's Culture	\bar{X}	S.D.	Use of ICS Level
1) I try to build first impressions with Thais when interacting with them.	1.87	0.68	Low
2) I avoid making worries with Thais or I try to get relaxed with Thais when speaking English with them.	1.80	0.71	Very Low
3) I will greet Thais before starting the conversation.	1.80	0.76	Very Low
Total	1.82	0.72	Low

From Table 11, it showed that the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies related to using your background knowledge of the partner's culture ($\bar{X} = 1.82$, S.D = 0.72) were rated at a low level in terms of trying to build first impressions with Thais when interacting with them ($\bar{X} = 1.87$, S.D = 0.68), and followed by greeting Thais before starting the conversation ($\bar{X} = 1.80$, S.D = 0.76), and both avoiding making worries with Thais or trying to get relaxed with Thais when speaking English with them ($\bar{X} = 1.80$, S.D = 0.71).

Part Two: Investigation of the Chinese Students' Self-Adaptation When Encountering Intercultural Communication Problems in a Public Thai University Taken from Online Interviews

According to the online interviews of the Chinese students' self-adaptation in a public Thai university based on content analysis, insightful information about the investigation of 15 Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university were analyzed as shown below.

1. Background of Interviewees

There were 6 males and 9 females who participated in the online interviews. All of the participants were fourth-year Chinese students dealing with their internships in Thailand and China. These included service training as ground crew at an airport in China, professional training as a teacher of English in China, service training at a hotel and resort in Thailand, and business training in logistics shipping in Thailand.

2. Attitudes toward Self-Adaptation When Encountering Intercultural Communication Problems in a Public Thai University

According to the analysis of the 15 Chinese interviewees' attitudes toward their self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university, there were 6 major interview questions including: 1) "Before arriving in Thailand, how did you prepare yourself to study English here?"; 2) "When you first arrived in Thailand, have you experienced any communication problems with Thai people? If so, how did you deal with the problems?"; 3) "In terms of cultural differences, have you ever experienced culture shock during your stay in Thailand? If so, please describe."; 4) "How can you adjust yourself after interacting with Thai people using English in a Thai academic context?"; 5) "How can you adjust yourself when you misunderstand the Thai culture?", and 6) "Do you expect any intercultural communication problems when going back to your home country? & What are they?"

In this part, the insightful information about the 15 Chinese interviewees' attitudes toward their self-cultural adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university was analyzed as follows.

2.1 The Chinese Students' Preparation in Studying English before Arriving in Thailand

All of the interviewees' preparation in studying English before arriving in a Thai public university were all categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 12.

Table 12 The Chinese Students' Preparation in Studying English before Arriving in Thailand

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Preparation in studying English
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	I learn English first, then make sure that I can understand the lessons and some Thai cultural differences.	Learning to improve English by using language learning styles on reviewing English books and textbooks, magazines about different Thai cultural aspects.
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	I start learning English in advanced level.	Learning to improve English by taking intensive English courses.
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	I try to improve my oral English-speaking skills with Chinese lecturers of English and foreign lecturers.	Learning to improve English communication skills with Chinese people of English and foreign academic staff by speaking orally

Table 12 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Preparation in studying English
Interviewee 5	Extract 5	I use English language to communicate with Chinese lecturers, Chinese friends, and some Thai friends living in an English environment.	Learning to improve English communication skills with Chinese academic staff and Chinese and Thai intimate classmates by creating an English-speaking environment
Interviewee 6	Extract 6	I learn English about Thai local cultures and historical backgrounds of Thailand with my Chinese family members and Chinese people being used to live in a long-term Thai-speaking context.”	Learning to improve English by asking for different Thai cultures and historical backgrounds with people who experienced in their long stay in Thailand
Interviewee 7	Extract 7	I often practice improving all the four English language skills by myself.	Learning to improve English by using language learning strategies related self-directed learning or autonomous learning

Table 12 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Preparation in studying English
Interviewee 8	Extract 8	I surf the Internet and take English and Thai courses via YouKu (YouTube) website organized by the Chinese government and different social media.	Learning to improve English and Thai by using different social media
Interviewee 9	Extract 9	I watched many English movies and Chinese Movies with English soundtracks and subtitles via my mobile phones and laptops for preparing myself.	Learning to improve English by using electronic devices to access edutainment learning resources
Interviewee 10	Extract 10	I use English as a communication medium for searching information about Thai historical backgrounds and Thai culture through the Internet and ask some Thai lecturers of English about Thai different cultural aspects in China.	Learning to improve English by using electronic devices to access insightful Thai socio-cultural information

According to Table 12, all of the interviewees had similar techniques to prepare before they started to learn English in a Thai public university by improving English communication skills through their self-study and their interaction with Thai people using English and Mandarin Chinese as a communication tool in China, as well as by learning a mixture of Thai socio-cultural diversities in different parts of Thailand. As can be seen, Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 7 prepared to study English by using language learning styles such as reviewing English books and textbooks, magazines about different Thai cultural aspects, and using language learning strategies related to self-directed learning or autonomous learning (Extract 1 and Extract 7). In addition, Interviewee 2 attempted to take intensive English courses (Extract 2) and Interviewee 6 asked for different Thai cultures and historical backgrounds experienced by others during their long stay in Thailand (Extract 6). Furthermore, interviewee 4 attempted to practice speaking English orally with Chinese people and foreign academic staff (Extract 4). Interviewees 8, 9, and 10 prepared themselves to use electronic devices to access edutainment learning resources, as well as insightful Thai socio-cultural information via different forms of social media (Extract 8, Extract 9, and Extract 10). Also, interviewee 10 prepared to learn English by creating an English-speaking environment (Extract 10).

2.2 The Chinese Students' Experiences in Communication Problems with Thais When Arriving in Thailand

All of the interviewees' English communication problems with Thais when arriving in Thailand are categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 13.

Table 13 The Chinese Students' Experiences in Communication Problems with Thais When Arriving in Thailand

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Communication Problems & Solving
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	I feel that some Thai lecturers' English consonants, vowels, and accents are not very standard. When the Thai teacher discussed on lectures, I did not occasionally understand what Thai lecturers used English with me and my classmates. So, I cannot understand what it means, and to solve this problem is only more learning, more to listen to, more to exercise.	Difficulties in Thai lecturers' standard English pronunciation skills and solving by practicing more English pronunciation skills based on the American Pronunciation Association's style (APA)
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	I think my oral English is very poor. Sometimes, I cannot explain what I want to express when I communicate with my Thai intimate friends and lecturers. Therefore, I try hard to improve more speaking abilities.	Difficulties in oral speaking skills on English communicative expressions and solving by practicing more oral communication skills

Table 13 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Communication Problems & Solving
Interviewee 3	Extract 3	I have encountered with English accents of Thai lecturers of English. So, I solve the problem by using more gestures to express myself.	Difficulties in Thai lecturers' English pronunciation skills and solving by practicing learning non-verbal communication skills on using gestures
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	I have the especial problems of English accents pronounced by Thai lecturers, and Thai people however, I try to use more gestures to express myself.	Difficulties in Thai lecturers' and Thai people's English pronunciation and solving by practicing learning non-verbal communication skills on using gestures
Interviewee 5	Extract 5	I usually have to use my body language or target expressions to communicate English with Thai lecturers and Thai people and so on.	Difficulties in Thai lecturers' and Thai people's English communication skills and solving by practicing learning non-verbal communication skills on using body language
Interviewee 6	Extract 6	The problems I faced with are English pronunciation skills and I used translation applications on my mobile phone to solve.	Difficulties in English pronunciation skills and solving by practicing learning English pronunciation through using applications on smartphones

Table 13 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Communication Problems & Solving
Interviewee 8	Extract 8	I have the problems of English listening skills when I talk with Thai people, and I do not understand the Thai lecturer's teaching styles based on teacher-centered learning management. The way to deal with the problem is asking Thai lecturers of English and Thai intimate friends.	Difficulties in Thai lecturers and Thai people's language communication skills in listening English, as well as the Thai lecturer's teaching styles, and solving by asking Thai lecturers and Thai intimate friends for help
Interviewee 9	Extract 9	There are some problems in listening comprehension so that I ask my Chinese friends to help me to solve my listening comprehension problems by watching Thai News with English soundtrack and subtitles together.	Difficulties in English listening skills for comprehension and solving by practicing listening skills from mass media.

Table 13 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Communication Problems & Solving
Interviewee 10	Extract 10	When I first arrive in Thailand, I do not know how to listen the English language of Thai people because they speak English with Thai accents mostly; moreover, I cannot understand what they said. However, I need the help of Thai intimate friends to learn.	Difficulties in Thai people's language communication skills in their listening comprehension and solving by asking for help with Thai intimate friends.

Table 13 shows that the Chinese students experienced problems with pronunciation skills as well as their communication skills concerning both listening and speaking skills in English with Thai lecturers of English and Thai people. As can be seen, Interviewee 1 was faced with the Thai lecturers' standard English pronunciation skills, so that practicing more English pronunciation skills based on the American Pronunciation Association's style (APA) is needed to solve the issue (Extract 1). Besides, Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4, and Interviewee 6 had similar difficulties with the Thai lecturers' English pronunciation skills. In order to solve this pronunciation problem, however, all of the interviewees practiced learning their non-verbal communication skills such as using gestures, as well as using applications on smartphones (Extract 3, Extract 4, and Extract 6). Otherwise, Interviewees 8, 9, and 10 encountered English listening comprehension problems with Thai academic staff and Thai people, leading to improving their listening skills by practicing listening skills from mass media, asking for help from close Thai friends, and asking Thai teaching staff and close Thai friends for help (Extract 8, Extract 9, and Extract 10). Specifically, Interviewee 8 stated that difficulties in the Thai lecturer's teaching styles were found; consequently, she requested

her intimate friends' clearer explanations on Thai teaching styles. Interviewee 2 improved her oral speaking skills concerning English communicative expressions by practicing more oral communication skills with Thai lecturers of English and close Thai friends (Extract 2). Also, Interviewee 5 addressed cultural difficulties in communicating English expressions with Thai lecturers and Thai people by practicing learning non-verbal communication skills of using body language (Extract 5).

2.3 The Chinese Students' Experiences in Culture Shock during Their Stay in Thailand

All of the interviewees' experiences in culture shock during their stay in Thailand are categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 14.

Table 14 The Chinese Students' Experiences in Culture Shock during Their Stay in Thailand

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Culture Shocks
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	The only thing that shocked me in Thailand that was the old Thai lecturers were not very punctual. They were late, sometimes it was an hour late that was, and they let the students wait for them all the time. Well, one thing I did not understand because Chinese lecturers were very punctual in China. But in Thailand, the Thai lecturers were very	Using no chronemics or time of Thai lecturers when coming late to the class.

Table 14 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Culture Shocks
		quiet, and it scared me. So, we need respects from the Thai lecturers' on-time lectures.	
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	Yes, When the Thai lecturer knobbed on the table very loudly, this situation shocked me during the lecture because some of Chinese classmates did not pay their attention on lecture; otherwise, they mostly concentrated on different homework assignments.	Using gesture of Thai lecturers to warn lecture regulations
Interviewee 3	Extract 3	Yes, greetings, parting, thanking, and apologizing of Thai lecturers of English were quite different from Chinese lecturers of English. For example, we had to show respects by giving a bow or "Wai" to them.	Using gestures to express English communication with Thai people during the conversation

Table 14 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Culture Shocks
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	Yes, when I first came to Thailand, I made a lot of mistakes. When I expressed to thank you to Thai people, I ignored to show my respects on how to say thank you expressions in different real-life situations.	Using gestures to express English communication with Thai people during the conversation
Interviewee 5	Extract 5	When I arrived in Thailand, I was shocked with my Thai lecturers' no responses from my questions meanwhile I endeavored to explain my reasons on late submission of homework assignments. Moreover, my Thai lecturer of English did not glance at me any time so that I felt sorrowful and started crying.	Using silent language and eye avoidance of Thai lecturers to dissatisfy with Chinese students' lecture regulations

Table 14 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Culture Shocks
Interviewee 7	Extract 7	I was really shocked with my Thai advisor's and my intimate friends' hugs when I was homesick and had many personal troubles with my Chinese friends because I had never seen this warm moment before.	Using haptics or touching of Thai lecturers to show sympathy with Chinese students when feeling depressed on personal troubles
Interviewee 8	Extract 8	I felt impressed with Thai people who were very friendly with me when I went shopping with my Chinese friends at different local shops; otherwise, they tried to show the price tags of products to me when they were not able to communicate English or Mandarin Chinese with me.	Using facial expressions of Thai people to show their friendliness and using object language of Thai people to negotiate with customers

From Table 14, it can be seen that the Chinese students have similar experiences in culture shock caused by the use of nonverbal communication by Thai lecturers. Interviewees 2, 3, and 4 were puzzled by the Thai lecturers use of gestures to warn about lecture regulations (Extract 2), as well as expressing English communication with Thai people during conversation (Extract 3 and 4); moreover, Interviewees 5 experienced

the use of silent language and eye avoidance of Thai lecturers to show dissatisfaction with Chinese students' lecture regulations (Extract 5). Furthermore, Interviewee 7 is quite shocked with the Thai advisors and close Thai friends embracing her when feeling depressed about personal troubles in order to show sympathy with Chinese students (Extract 7), meanwhile, Interviewee 8 felt impressed with Thai people using facial expressions to show their friendliness and using object language to negotiate with customers (Extract 8). Also, Interviewee 1 was so shocked with Thai lecturers not showing chronemics or time when coming late to the class (Extract 1).

2.4 The Chinese Students' Self-Adaptation after Interacting with Thais Using English in a Thai Public University

All of the interviewees' self-adaptation strategies after interacting with Thais using English in a Thai public university were categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 15.

Table 15 The Chinese Students' Self-Adaptation after Interacting with Thais Using English in a Thai Public University

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Self-Adaptation
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	I tried to avoid speaking impolite English expressions with my Thai and Chinese classmates, and then I did not use taboos with them too.	Learning euphemism and taboos
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	I practiced learning English communication skills and Thai culture with Thai people using English in different local villages.	Engaging with learning English speaking strategies and different Thai socio-cultural diversities.

Table 15 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Self-Adaptation
Interviewee 3	Extract 3	I made friends and kept in touch with Thai friends using English in order to improve speaking the Thai language.	Making friends with Thai people using English to improve Thai communication skills
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	In my leisure time, I tried to learn Thai language with Thai intimate friends by using English as a communication medium.	Making friends with Thai people using English to improve Thai communication skills
Interviewee 5	Extract 5	I used easy words, phrases, and sentences to communicate English with my Thai lecturers and my intimate Thai friends.	Simplifying English spoken and written languages
Interviewee 7	Extract 7	I tried to get used with their Thai lecturers' and Thai friends' English accents, rhythm, and high or low intonations.	Asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions
Interviewee 8	Extract 8	I practiced speaking English with Thai classmates taking places in real-life situations.	Improving English speaking skills in daily-life usage

Table 15 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Self-Adaptation
Interviewee 9	Extract 9	I attempted to use familiar words in English when I talked with Thai people, and I provided more details for Thai people when they did not understand what I expressed.	Selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions
Interviewee 10	Extract 10	I tried to negotiate English concerns with Thai people, and I used easy English words or expressions when talking with Thai people.	Avoiding talking sensitive issues
Interviewee 11	Extract 11	I tried to use familiar words or statements in English with Thais; moreover, I used my transferring skills to encourage Thais explaining their own expressions.	Asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts

Table 15 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Self-Adaptation
Interviewee 12	Extract 12	I gave some examples to help Thai people' better understanding when I talked with them. Besides, I tried to express Thai language obtained from the lecture.	Using Thai language to facilitate the communication

Table 15 showed that the Chinese students made similar adjustments after interacting with Thais using English in Thailand by using intercultural communication strategies, learning English language strategies, making friends with Chinese people, as well as learning idiomatic expressions in a Thai-speaking context. As can be seen, Interviewee 7, Interviewee 9, Interviewee 10, Interviewee 11, and Interviewee 12 used their intercultural communication strategies to deal with Thai lecturers and Thai people by asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions, selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions, avoiding talking sensitive issues, asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts, and using the Thai language to facilitate communication (Extract 7, Extract 9, Extract 10, Extract 11, and Extract 12). In addition, Interviewee 2, Interviewee 5, and Interviewee 8 used their English communication skills by engaging with learning English speaking strategies and different Thai socio-cultural diversities, simplifying English spoken and written languages, and improving English speaking skills in daily-life usage (Extract 2, Extract 5, Extract 8). On the other hand, Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 4 made friends with Thai people using English to improve Thai communication skills (Extract 3, and Extract 4). Also, Interviewee 1 tried to avoid euphemisms and taboos in Thailand.

2.5 The Chinese Students' Self-Adaptation When Misunderstanding the Thai Culture

All of the interviewees' self-adaptations when misunderstanding the Thai culture were categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 16.

Table 16 The Chinese Students' Self-Adaptation When Misunderstanding the Thai Culture

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Cultural Adaptation
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	I did not understand why the Thai lecturers of English avoid hitting the points of their lecture.	Reviewing and sharing ideas on previous lessons with Chinese classmates.
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	I was confused with the intimate Thai friends' code-mixing and code-switching from English to Thai, and Northern Thai dialect For examples of code-mixing from English to Thai -- "Be careful Na (นะ) !, Thanks Kha (ค่ะ), etc. For examples of code-switching from English to Northern Thai dialect -- "It is about twenty-baht, Sao Baht" (ชาวนาบาท), etc.	Asking for repeating unfamiliar words, phrases, sentences, and expressions

Table 16 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Cultural Adaptation
Interviewee 3	Extract 3	I was puzzled on the supporting staff's requests for help of another Thai colleague who spoke both Chinese and English.	Using translating applications such as voice translate, i-translate, etc. to facilitate the communication in English.
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	I felt doubtful with the faculty dean's talks with a great deal of humor when I accidentally met her in front of the Faculty of Humanities Building.	Giving for Thai people's clearer explanation on Thai sense of humor
Interviewee 5	Extract 5	I was so shocked with my Thai friends talking about Thai dirty jokes and obscenity when Thai students chitchatted around the CRRU's Sports Complex during their fitness time.	Inquiring the Thai intimate friends' use of Thai slangs and idiomatic expressions
Interviewee 7	Extract 7	When the security guard refused me to enter my Uni-dormitory at overnight time, I had to talk with him in a lower tone so that I was allowed to go inside my dormitory.	Using tone of voice with Thai people in order to show one's sympathy, as well as to request for one's assistance,

Table 16 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Cultural Adaptation
Interviewee 8	Extract 8	My Thai friends liked to suggest how to keep left along the road; however, I did not understand why Thai friends said indirectly.	Learning about implied expressions of Thai people in different Thai situations

According to Table 16 cited above, the Chinese students had similar adjustments when misunderstanding the Thai culture by using different learning styles of Chinese students using English in a Thai public university. As can be seen, Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 8 reviewed and shared their ideas of previous lessons with Chinese classmates (Extract 1) and learned about implied expressions of Thai people in different Thai situations (Extract 8). Furthermore, Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 5 re-check their understandings of what they have expressed indirectly, and they do not recognize English conversations with Thai intimate friends by asking for repetition of unfamiliar words, phrases, sentences, and expressions (Extract 2), and by inquiring about close Thai friends' use of Thai slang and idiomatic expressions (Extract 5). While Interviewee 3 requested help from the supporting staff by using different translating applications (Extract 3), Interviewee 4 felt doubtful about the faculty dean's talks containing a great deal of humor and resolved this by asking for a clearer explanation from Thai people on the Thai sense of humor (Extract 4). Also, Interviewee 7 had to use a low tone of voice with Thai people in order to show sympathy, as well as to request one's assistance (Extract 7).

2.6 The Chinese Students' Expectations on Intercultural Communication Problems When Going Back to Their Home Country

All of the interviewees' expectations of their intercultural communication problems when returning to their home country were categorized and summarized in themes as shown in Table 17.

Table 17 The Chinese Students' Expectation of Intercultural Communication Problems When Going Back to Their Home Country

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Expectation on IC Problems
Interviewee 1	Extract 1	In my listening skills, when I talked with my intimate Thai friends' personal affairs, they expressed politely to me all the time. On the other hands, my male Chinese friends mostly exaggerated with their female friends in China.	Requesting for the male Chinese people's polite expressions on different real-life situations
Interviewee 2	Extract 2	Sometimes, I really switched Chinese grammatical structures to English structures when negotiating English with Thai intimate friends.	Expressing standard English communication like native speakers of English
Interviewee 3	Extract 3	In my online lecture, I saw some of Chinese friends nodding their head when they both understood and did not understand what they were lecturing by online. That was to say, some Chinese friends said yes with their Thai lecturers,	Clarifying for concise responses of Thai people and engaging in non-verbal communication skills and cultural awareness of socializing in different Chinese speaking contexts

Table 17 (Cont.)

Interviewee	Extract	Statements	Expectation on IC Problems
		but it might mean no to reply on Thai lecturers' instructional management on "English in Business Aviation" course".	
Interviewee 4	Extract 4	At different places, I saw all the Chinese friends and Chinese people who preferred speaking very loudly in public areas when their face-to-face communication took places.	Understanding cultural awareness and using chronemics or time to deal with other Chinese people everywhere

Table 17 indicated that the Chinese students have different expectations of intercultural communication problems when going back to their home country concerning how to deal with Chinese people appropriately in China. As can be seen, Interviewee 1 experienced male Chinese friends' exaggeration with female Chinese friends causing her to request male Chinese people's polite expressions in different real-life situations in China (Extract 1). Interviewee 2 always switches Chinese grammatical structures into English structures with close Thai friends; however, expressing standard English communication like native speakers of English is needed (Extract 2). Interviewee 3 was doubtful of Thai people's use of the word yes, all the time, but no action happened in their lecture, so it is expected that the Chinese students need to clarify concise responses of Thai people and engage in non-verbal communication skills as well as cultural awareness of socializing in different Chinese speaking contexts (Extract 3). Also, Interviewee 4 observed the Chinese people's terrible social interactions with their friends by speaking very loudly in public

areas (Extract 4). It is, however, expected that understanding cultural awareness and using chronemics or time to deal with other Chinese people everywhere is needed.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This chapter emphasizes on scrutinizing the use of intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university, as well as an investigation of the Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university. Also, this chapter reports a summary of the results, a discussion of the study, implications of the study, and recommendations for further studies.

Summary of the study

1. Summary of the results of intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university are detailed as follows.

The most interesting results taken from the data showed that most Chinese students used their intercultural communication strategies at a low level when they faced intercultural communication problems while interacting with Thais in a Thai university context. Although these Chinese students seldom used intercultural communication strategies, they tended to use a strategy of asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions more than other intercultural communication strategies. According to the results, these Chinese students may have asked for repetition because they were not familiar with the accents, rhythm, and intonations of Thai lecturers, close Thai friends, and Thai people communicating in English with Chinese students in a Thai public university.

2. Summary of the results of the investigation of the Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university taken from online interviews are detailed as follows.

2.1 In terms of English preparation, it showed that the Chinese students shared similar techniques in preparing their English abilities before starting to learn English in a Thai public university. The results show that the Chinese students mostly made improvements to their English communication skills through their autonomous learning and negotiation with Thai people, such as using English and Mandarin Chinese as a communication medium in China and using language learning styles like reviewing English books and textbooks, magazines about different English language and Thai cultural aspects, taking intensive English courses, etc. Also, the Chinese students learned a mixture of Thai socio-cultural diversities in different parts of Thailand by asking for different Thai cultures and historical backgrounds from people who experienced these differences during their long stay in Thailand.

2.2 In terms of practicing English pronunciation, it showed that the Chinese students have encountered problems of standard English accents, rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation by Thai people, leading them to solutions such as practicing standard APA English pronunciation skills via applications on smartphones, learning non-verbal communication skills on using gestures, etc. Furthermore, the Chinese students' difficulties in listening to English with Thai people were solved by asking Thai teaching staff and close Thai friends for help. The necessity of speaking orally in English with Thai people provides an opportunity to improve these oral communication skills. Also, the Chinese students' difficulties with the Thai cultural use of body language occurred; however, learning non-verbal communication skills can be enhanced from these interactions.

2.3 In terms of describing the Chinese students' experiences with cultural differences and culture shock during their stay in Thailand, it showed that the Chinese students' similar experiences in nonverbal communication such as using gestures, body language, eye-avoidance, chronemics or time, haptics or touch, object language, silent language, etc. are mostly found in terms of the culture shock they experienced in Thailand.

2.4 In terms of the Chinese students' self-adaptation after interacting with Thai people using English in a Thai academic context, it showed that the Chinese students made similar adjustments such as using intercultural communication strategies, learning English language strategies, making friends with Chinese people, as well as learning idiomatic expressions in a Thai-speaking context, etc. after interacting with Thais using English in Thailand.

2.5 In terms of the Chinese students' misunderstanding of Thai culture, it showed that the Chinese students made similar adjustments such as using intercultural communication strategies, learning English language strategies, making friends with Chinese people, learning idiomatic expressions in a Thai-speaking context, asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions, selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions, avoiding talking about sensitive issues, asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts, and using Thai language to facilitate communication when misunderstanding Thai culture.

2.6 In terms of dealing with problems when going back to China, it showed that the Chinese students have different expectations on intercultural communication problems. Requesting for male Chinese people's polite expressions concerning different real-life situations in China, expressing standard English communication like native speakers of English, clarifying concise responses of Thai people and engaging in non-verbal communication skills, as well as cultural awareness of socializing in different Chinese speaking contexts, and understanding cultural awareness and using chronemics or time to deal with other Chinese people, etc. were common issues when going back to their home country and adapting to how to deal with Chinese people appropriately in China.

Discussion

1. Results of the investigation of intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a public Thai university are discussed as follows.

The most interesting result to emerge from the data, according to the 1st research question, “What are the intercultural communication strategies employed by Chinese students when encountering intercultural communication problems in a Thai public university?”, is that most Chinese students used their intercultural communication strategies at a low level when they faced intercultural communication problems while interacting with Thais in a Thai university context. Although these Chinese students seldom used intercultural communication strategies, they tended to use a strategy of asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions more than other intercultural communication strategies. According to the results, these Chinese students may have asked for repetition because they were not familiar with the accents, rhythm, and intonations of Thai lecturers, close Thai friends, and Thai people communicating in English with Chinese students in a Thai public university. In reference to the study of Phumpho and Nomniam (2019), it was stated that in terms of communicative styles, pace and pausing and intonation together with accent and pronunciation were considered the two key factors that directly impacted communication between Thai people and their ASEAN partners. As a result, all of the respondents were not able to catch English words taken from listening to different accents, pace and pausing, and nasal twang. Moreover, the study of Boussaid (2019) insisted that Chinese students’ difficulties in English final consonants are all found because of no final Chinese consonants, unlike English. It is also seen that Chinese students may also opt for producing /t/ instead of /k/ because of the articulatory easiness and difficulty by which /t/ and /k/ are produced, respectively. Because Chinese consonants are “voiceless,” Chinese students mispronounce English words that have voiced consonants by replacing them with voiceless counterparts. Therefore, Chinese consonants are aspirated meanwhile English consonants separated by voicing. This disparity makes the learning of English by Chinese students challenging. This linguistic dissimilarity should be taken into consideration by English teachers while teaching their

Chinese students. These differences should also be heeded by teachers in designing drills and exercises for their students.

Referring to the study of accents, pronunciation, and grammar by Stevens (2017 cited in Kannikar, 2021), the researcher also claimed that the native Chinese speakers' English pronunciation errors included 1) In terms of Chinese tone and intonation, a Chinese logographic system is used for its written language; that was to say, it encompasses a character related to a word or phrase, and a tonal language in which pitches can change the meaning of a Chinese word. Comparatively, with an English alphabetic writing system, English consonants and vowels as an intonated language are used in creating individual words. Furthermore, no individual tones are not only found for a specific word, but also tone and pitch are associated with the whole of a sentence leading to the expression of its meaning and emotion. Also, the Chinese students finely perceived tones so that learning proper English language is resulted in their understandings of intonation affecting communication process; 2) In terms of Chinese consonant clusters and words ending with consonants, it was insisted that all the Chinese consonant clusters did not occur on the top of unfamiliar Chinese sounds whereas English consonant clusters including "r" or "l" sounds— "tr", "dr", "pl", "cl", "fr", "fl", "pr" . Additionally, Chinese students' English vowel sounds are added among consonant clusters; moreover, the substitution of consonant sounds was pronounced easily. Specifically, words ending in Chinese consonants were rarely found; otherwise, word ending in "n" or "ng" was excepted. Chinese students' English words ending in consonant sounds with either an "ah" or "eu" vowel sound were pronounced at the end of the word, being omitted entirely with the final consonant sound. However, both English consonant clusters and final consonant sounds are all new for Chinese ESL students causing their English pronunciation to suffer from substituting and omitting. These pronouncing errors can be corrected with careful attention to English word pronunciation; 3) In terms of the "R" and "V" sounds in Chinese, it was asserted that two major consonant sounds do not exist. For this reason, it is difficult to form the "r" and "v" sounds for Chinese ESL learners' pronunciation; 4) In terms of Chinese vowel confusion, it was indicated that the two common vowel sounds that Chinese students were always confused are exemplified in the English "ih" and "eh"

vowel sounds, and the “ih” sound is mixed up with and “ee” sound, and 5) In terms of the “L” and “N” sound confusion in Chinese, it was also asserted that the “n” sound did exist in Chinese; nevertheless, the “l” sound did not. Moreover, double “ll” sounds are especially difficult to master for Chinese ESL students. Therefore, Chinese students’ substitution of an “n” sound for the “l” sound in their English word pronunciations was mostly found.

However, in order to avoid Chinese students’ language and cultural barriers together with their communication breakdowns, their misunderstandings, as well as their misinterpretations with Thais, Chinese students’ pronunciation errors in communicative styles in relation to pace and pausing, intonation, accent, and pronunciation, as well as English consonant finals mainly impacted their fluent English communication with Thai people.

2. Results on the investigation of the Chinese students’ self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university taken from online interviews.

Results of the investigation of the Chinese students’ self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university taken from online interviews, according to the 2nd research question “How do the Chinese students use their adaptation to deal with those English intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai-speaking context?” are discussed in themes as follows.

2.1 Engaging in Language Learning Strategies

The Chinese students attempted to improve English communication skills through using their autonomous language learning styles such as reviewing English books and textbooks, magazines about different English language and Thai cultural aspects, taking intensive English courses, using intercultural communication strategies, learning English language strategies, learning idiomatic expressions in a Thai-speaking context, making friends with Chinese people, and engaging in non-verbal communication skills and cultural awareness of socializing in different Chinese speaking contexts, etc. This was because the Chinese students’ language learning strategies directly led to their effective English intercultural communication together with no communication breakdowns,

misunderstandings, misinterpretations, as well as better Thai cultural awareness in order to socialize with Thai and Chinese counterparts appropriately in a Thai public university and outside the university campus.

With references to the perspectives of the Ministry of Education in China, (2017), it claimed that in language learning, Chinese students have not only preferred their own learning styles with formal practices on linguistic accuracy, but also the Chinese students concentrated on reception, repetition, review, and reproduction in English's learning. Most importantly, the learners' full receptiveness to teacher-communicate awareness and intelligence ingrained in texts' procedure were mostly found, and it was also engaged in their intense repetition involved in their understandings of reduplicative learning and constant review was a vital factor for successful learning. According to constant reviews, it was indicated that Chinese students' knowledge and acquisition of new knowledge can be perceived. Specifically, the Chinese students' accurate reproduction of learned knowledge could be reproduced by minute language details to master required knowledge. However, a series of curricular reforms mainly focused on language comprehensive competence of Chinese student in order to industrial needs, to alter an interpretation of language competence, as well as to increase abilities of students in using the language of students for real communication. These drawbacks caused the establishment of a curriculum focusing on teaching processes in task-oriented activities, experiential and practical group lessons, as well as to enhance their cooperative learning, and help them form their optimistic attitudes engaged in their culturally significant enterprise and autonomous language learning attempt. Accordingly, the previous study of Fang, Zhang, and Elyas (2020) on the investigation of the pre-departure Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation and preparation with intercultural learning in tertiary education before studying abroad also asserted that Chinese university students socialized prior intercultural learning for different purposes in order to master their adequate intercultural learning. Specifically, prior intercultural learning was needed for oversea students' achievements on their cross-cultural adaptation, but a limited influence on Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation was required to be trained on intercultural encounters for shaping up such a different adaptation.

2.2 Practicing English Pronunciation

In terms of dealing with Chinese students' English intercultural communication barriers in a Thai public university, they encountered issues of standard English accents, rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation of Thai counterparts, leading them to practice pronouncing standard English words and expressions via using applications on smartphones.

That is to say, the Chinese students were all unfamiliar with the standard English pronunciation of their Thai counterparts related to both segmental and supra-segmental levels. Referring to the study of Park, Klieve and Tsurutani (2017) related to "oversea students' accented English communication difficulties and developed strategies", it was claimed that such an accent was a vital factor effecting a marked impact on students' successful communication and educational purposes. Also, the findings were apparent that the participants' awareness of accents and use of strategies should be supported for their effective communication so that the educators should signify different strategies implemented for oversea students' language learning skills. According to the study of Hilmi, Aini and Hasren (2017) on socio-phonetic investigation among Chinese learners, the researcher claimed that the Chinese-Malaysian learners can stress the sound /θ/ tokens strongly as correlated to Chinese learners' English pronunciation, particularly in the connected texts. In addition, those who failed to pronounce the purpose sound substituted it with /t/ for the Malaysian learners, and /s/ or /z/ for the Chinese students. Whether the /r/ tokens, the finding showed that couple groups of students enabled to pronounce the sound correctly; otherwise, only a few numbers of Malaysian and Chinese learners substituted /r/ with /l/. Also, difficulties in English pronunciation were all encountered by specific groups of learners when practicing English pronunciation for different purposes.

In other words, the study of Yang (2020) conducted on the factors affecting Chinese students' lecture-oriented listening comprehension at Thai universities also asserted that learner factors together with cultural and background factors, and teacher factors directly affected their lecture-oriented listening abilities. More importantly, their insufficient vocabulary was reported as the biggest language barriers which hindered

their effective listening skills so that they tended to use more cognitive strategies to resolve their listening difficulties than social–affective strategies, meta–cognitive strategies, and memory strategies. They were found to be keen on skipping unfamiliar words, empathizing on vital points while listening. Accordingly, the students’ self–efficacy in lecture–oriented listening comprehension, as well as those with relatively higher self–efficacy were likely to use more memory strategies to accumulate their vocabulary, meanwhile they were not resulted in both learner and teacher factors.

2.3 Difficulties in Listening Skills

The Chinese students demonstrated difficulties in English listening skills with their Thai counterparts, resulting in asking for Thai teaching staff’s and close Thai friends’ help on how to ask for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions. This was because the Chinese students lacked prior knowledge of English vocabulary causing their perceptiveness in the listening system; furthermore, the various accents of the native speakers were induced by the improper understanding of the listening lessons, as well as the Chinese students’ learning behaviors were all induced by their effective English communication learning process. Consequently, these effective English language strategies helped improve students’ listening skills.

The study of Darti and Asmawati (2017) insisted that accents, pronunciation, pace of speech, insufficient vocabulary, differing accents of speakers, lack of attentiveness, and tough quality of note were resulted from Chinese students’ major problems. Additionally, understanding students’ difficulties enabled the lecturers to assist the learners to improve effective learning strategies and listening abilities. Therefore, solutions for overcoming listening problems indicated that the teachers’ self–adaptation, and improvements for designing listening to visual instructional media, students’ activation on vocabulary learning strategies, as well as the students’ use of various English accents while practicing listening skills should be all supported. Other solutions included the Chinese students’ trainings on pronouncing improvements from native speakers, the students’ establishments of knowledge about the topic, their enhancement of learning strategies, as well as their learning motivation on English listening learning strategies. Similarly, the insights into listening comprehension problems of Chinese university students in Vietnam conducted by Tran and Duong (2020)

noted that not only the teachers, but also the students faced with their English listening comprehension involved with their perception, parsing, and utilization. Specifically, the students also encountered phonological and lexical difficulties related to high speech rates and vocabulary, as well as semantic and syntactic difficulties concerning long utterances, and discourse difficulties in relations to implied meanings, unfamiliar topics, and organization of ideas.

2.4 Difficulties in Speaking Skills

Concerning English language negotiation with Thai counterparts, Chinese students facilitated the use of strategies such as practicing more oral communication skills with Thai people, selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions, avoiding talking about sensitive issues (indirectness), asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts, using the Thai language to facilitate communication, expressing standard English communication like native speakers of English, and clarifying concise responses of Thai counterparts, etc. for improved fluency. This was because, more importantly, the requirements for English oral proficiency were resulted in rapid global changes. The English language was spoken all around the globe and has therefore been considered a global language. It is also among other languages widely used in the field of educational, technological, economic, socio-cultural, environmental, communication, political, business management, service hospitality research, etc. Amoah and Yeboah (2021). Accordingly, it was stated from the researcher's point of view that English is an international language most widely used in interacting with foreign learners in different classrooms in many countries. It was due to both popularity and other usefulness of English that the world today is tended to learn to accomplish proficiency in its various fields of study, particularly in an English-spoken foreign language. Also, the Chinese students' speaking problems were all caused by linguistic challenges, Thai lecturers' different pedagogical strategies, the curriculum, the environment, the influence of the first language, insufficient vocabulary, pronunciation, insufficient knowledge of grammar rules, reading, and oral presentation.

With references to the study of Shen and Chiu (2019). on English as a Foreign Language students' English-Speaking Difficulties and Strategy Use", they insisted

that psychological problems related to irritability, awareness of mistakes, and lack of conviction as the based reason for English conversation difficulties were mostly found, followed by linguistic division related to incomplete vocabulary, and substantial problems related to no learning contexts for English communication. Specifically, an importantly of successful learners focused to apply different speaking strategies to improve their English oral's performance and especially focused on linguistic efficiency by continually practicing pitch, pronunciation, and intonation. Besides, majority of students hold the opportunities to develop speaking English, such as enrolling English activities in English contests, etc. students also used body language for better communication.

2.5 Difficulties in Non-Verbal Communication

The Chinese students' difficulties in using body movement or kinesics in a Thai cultural context related to body language, gestures, eye-avoidance, silent language, facial expressions, as well as chronemics or time, haptics or touch, and object language. So, the Chinese students had to learn deeper understandings of Thai non-verbal communication as well as how to deal with Thai counterparts properly in a Thai public university and outside the university campus. This was because nonverbal interaction could aid to increase, discipline, regulate, contradict, and even oppose the verbal directive, in addition, cultural backgrounds and important factors on nonverbal languages outcome in the appropriate use of nonverbal language in negation of international business.

Referring to the study of Hou, (2017) on "The Nonverbal Language in Cross-Cultural Communication and Its Application in International Business Negotiation", he insisted that nonverbal interaction is a necessary part of human's interaction. Because the limited knowledge of nonverbal language in cross-cultural communication, misunderstandings and abuses of nonverbal language occurs in international negotiation. That is importance to gain an intensive learning on the function of nonverbal expression in international negotiation to assist the high performance of international negotiation.

In the study of Konchiab and Charoennai (2021) on "Needs for Improving Non-Verbal Communication Skills of Thai Homestay Staff in the New Normal Tourism Context, Chiang Mai", it was noted that NVC was essential for expressing feelings and enhancing interaction with international tourists. The most common NVC included gestures,

eye contact, and hand symbols. Besides, the most challenging communicative tasks in homestays were asking for cooperation in keeping distance in English, talking about shuttle services in English, and introducing proper hygiene in English. Implications for improving NVC skills included raising awareness and understanding of NVC used in different countries; practicing NVC along with English vocabulary and expressions, Thai transcriptions, and translation; as well as learning from visualizations to gain understandings of NVC.

2.6 Dealing with Problems related to Thai Culture (Thai Lanna Northern Language/ Local Dialect)

Chinese students are faced with Thai socio-cultural diversities in different parts of Thailand. It is, however, anticipated that asking for different Thai cultures and historical backgrounds with multi-national people who experienced these differences during their long stay in Thailand, as well as understanding Thai cultural awareness, and requesting for the male Chinese people's polite expressions on different real-life situations in China will be engaged in their home country. This was because the Chinese students lacked knowledge and interest in Thai culture. Accordingly, Thai, English, and Thai Lanna northern languages barriers are also found to contribute significantly to the cross-cultural adaptation barrier, particularly in social supports and life changes because the mutual presence of Thai Lanna northern language, a local dialect, has existed in different daily real-life situations in which the Chinese undergraduate students' communication and socio-cultural interaction have faced with Thais in different Thai-speaking contexts. Moreover, Chinese students encountered cultural difficulties and adjustments due to the differences in socio-cultural aspects, different ways of cultural communication and interpretation, and incomplete knowledge of Thai culture. Most importantly, the most crucial problems affecting their cultural adjustment processes were all caused by insufficient knowledge of English, Thai, and Thai Lanna northern languages along with cultural competences.

Regarding the study of Sun, Yossuck, Panyadee and Ek-lem (2019) claimed that cross-cultural adaptation process of Chinese student was implemented for the shape of a "U-Curve". In addition, the Chinese student groups' cross-cultural adaptation was performed in different purposes; otherwise, the main difficulties in cross-cultural

adaptation divided into 11 major aspects directly led to the contribution of factors influencing the system of Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation. These included non-acustoming to university life, barriers in understanding procedure, and difficulties in suitable-in with the Thai society. In the last, the useful suggestions for Chinese and Thai students in Thai universities leading to assist all of those students to be well-adjusted to the Thai environmental contexts. Also, the study of Songsirisak (2018) on "Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Chinese Students: Problems and Solutions" indicated that the most significant cultural adaptation that the Chinese undergraduate students studying English in a Thai-speaking context was caused by language barriers in both English and Thai, followed by their no strategies for effective intercultural communication with Thais, unfamiliarity with Thai etiquette and food, inappropriate social behaviors, and Thai classroom cultures. As far as solutions and strategies, it was suggested that enhancing the study of Thai language and culture, together with having better capability in intercultural communication strategies for interacting with Thais, as well as providing more insightful information for orientation training before visiting Thailand were mostly required in order to help realize proper Thai cultural habits, etiquettes, and study habits in Thai universities.

Contributions / Implications of the Study

Insightful contributions or implications for the Chinese students' use of intercultural communication strategies and self-cultural adaptation before, while, and after studying in a Thai-speaking context were detailed as shown below.

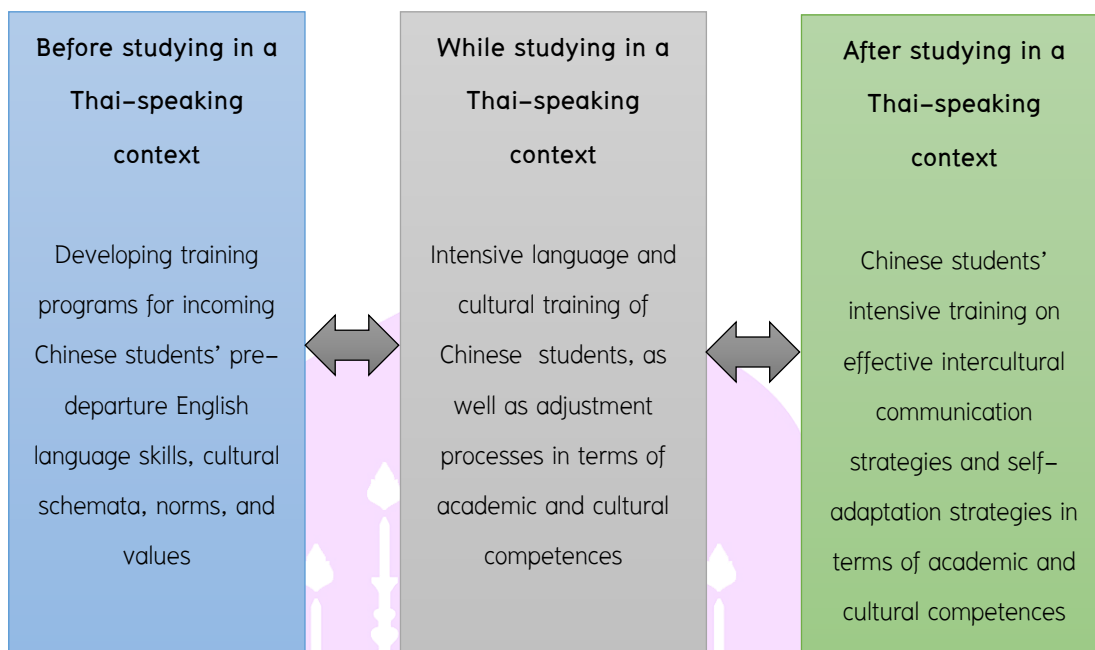


Figure 4 Strategies and adaptations

In conclusion, this study suggests that in order to deal with Thai counterparts using English as a medium for socio-cultural interaction in a Thai-speaking context, educators should be aware of developing different training courses and practical activities for the incoming numbers of pre-departure Chinese students' English communication competence and better socio-cultural understandings before, while, and after coming to Thailand. Most importantly, the pre-departure Chinese students' various training courses involved in English and Thai language skills, as well as socio-cultural dimensions related to cultural awareness and cultural appreciation should be supported before coming to Thailand to the highest extent. Besides, the pre-departure Chinese students' intensive English and Thai language and socio-cultural training of Chinese students, as well as their adjustment processes in terms of academic and cultural competencies should be facilitated for their better improvements while staying in Thailand. Also, the pre-departure Chinese students' intensive training on effective intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation strategies in terms of academic and cultural competencies should be provided to a higher extent after coming to Thailand. Focusing on these strategies can help Chinese

students develop adequate academic and cultural competence in order to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers in the host country so that these Chinese students will have a comprehensive picture of Thai culture that supports their adaptation processes. From these results, it is also feasible to conduct further research concerning the pre-departure language and cultural training of Chinese students on how those courses help them adjust successfully in the Thai-speaking context.

Recommendations

Expected Benefits & Application

1. The framework of the study can be used as a guideline in analyzing the use of intercultural communication strategies used during their intercultural communication in different educational institutions or universities, as well as scrutinizing self-adaptation of students when encountering with intercultural communication problems in different Thai universities.

2. This study can be used to make the Chinese students' and Thai sojourners' better understandings of the use of intercultural communication strategies, and their self-adaptation worked with Thai and foreign university students in different educational institutions or universities.

3. The findings of this study might help all Chinese students and Thais have the appropriate use of intercultural communication strategies to communicate with Chinese students and Thais in different educational institutions or universities, as well as the proper use of self-adaptation to deal with intercultural problems in different Thai universities.

4. This study can help Chinese students to understand how to communicate effectively with Thais in different educational institutions or universities and help them to choose the appropriate use of self-adaptation to deal with intercultural problems in different Thai universities.

Recommendations and Limitations for Further Study

1. As the present study was conducted only with Chinese students and Thais in a Thai public university, further studies could be conducted with other groups studying in different programs in different educational institutions or universities such as in other fields

and at other levels of study. Another possibility would be a comparative study of other university students in different educational institutions or universities.

2. A further study might be conducted through using other taxonomies of use of intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation in different educational institutions or universities.

3. A further study might be conducted through using other factors affecting the use of intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation in different educational institutions or universities.

4. A study should be conducted as a comparative study of the use of intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation prior to and after studying in order to explore whether training in intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation affects the best solutions for Chinese students' and Thai sojourners' effective verbal communication in in different educational institutions/universities or not.



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APPENDIX

Appendix A Questionnaire Checklist

“Intercultural Communication Strategies and self-adaptation of Chinese Students in a Thai Public University”

Instruction: Please put a tick the item which you think is concerned with your English Intercultural communication strategies in the Thai academic context.

No.	Intercultural Communication Strategies	Level of Frequency				
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
1) Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I am interested in the Thais' own accents.					
2.	I am interested in pronouncing the Thais' rhythm and high or low intonations.					
2) Avoiding Talking about Sensitive Issues		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I concentrate on the Thais' negotiation.					
2.	Communication breakdowns happen when the Thais' understandings cannot be cleared.					
3.	Amusement is used for their conversation with Thais.					
4.	I will abandon difficult messages when I talk with Thais.					
5.	I attempt to translate or transfer what Thais listen to from their expressions into their own language in order to understand what Thais express.					

No.	Intercultural Communication Strategies	Level of Frequency				
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
3) Being Careful in Using Grammatically Correct Expressions		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I am able to correct language mistakes when communicating in English with Thais.					
2.	I focus on the subject-verb agreement of the English structure while listening.					
3.	I focus on words used for questioning when sojourners have heard Wh-questions.					
4.	I mainly focus on using non-verbal communication to correct grammatical structures and to sequence words or statements with Thais' conversation.					
5.	I endeavor to focus on the appropriate use of language and intercultural understandings with Thais.					
6.	I use body language to decrease Thais' worries when interacting with them.					
4) Using the Partner's Mother Tongue to Facilitate Communication		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Help is requested from outsiders when not interacting with the sojourners.					
2.	I examine what the Thais' understandings are perceived from our interaction.					
3.	I will give some examples to help Thais understand what I say.					
4.	I try to use the Thais' language expressions that are taught from the lecture.					
5.	I make conversation dialogues mostly fluent with Thais.					

No.	Intercultural Communication Strategies	Level of Frequency				
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
5) Using the Chinese Language to Facilitate Communication		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I have to speak clearly and loudly with Thais when interacting with them.					
2.	I use my own language first so that my appropriate expressions can be used for interacting with Thais.					
3.	I use transferring skills to identify words and their meanings with Thais in the time required.					
4.	I use different ways of speaking based on such a different context when shifting other topics with Thais.					
5.	I use different means of communication when faced with the Thai sojourner's interaction.					
6.	I let Thais explain more details when they are not sure what they express.					
6) Clarifying or Explaining Your Cultural Terms or Topics		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I provide more details for Thais when they do not understand.					
2.	I try to use the first word to make questions.					
3.	I focus on the first part of the Thai's questions and the expectation of the Thai's purposes.					
4.	I mostly use familiar words when interacting with Thais.					
5.	I try to replace new statements with Thais when I cannot transfer them.					

No.	Intercultural Communication Strategies	Level of Frequency				
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
6.	I let the Thais speak repeatedly when they do not understand.					
7	I speak repeatedly to make the Thais understand.					
7) Selecting Standard Vocabulary or Easy Expressions		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I emphasize expressing familiar words or statements with Thais only.					
2.	I use my transferring skills to encourage Thais to explain their own expressions.					
3.	I avoid expressing some technical terms and difficult words that are used in communicating English with Thais when they do not know how to explain.					
4.	I try to summarize my statements by expressing easy-to-understand words or phrases when interacting with Thais.					
5.	I use simplified words or statements with Thais when they do not understand.					
8) Asking for Clarification on the Similarities		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I use my facial expressions with Thais when I am discussing something with them.					
2.	I use my eye contact with Thais when I am discussing something with them.					
3.	I attempt to reply with Thais when they hardly understand what I express to them.					
4.	I emphasize speaking slowly or expressing cultural understandings with Thais easily.					
5.	I use familiar words or statements that are involved in cultural understandings with Thais.					

No.	Intercultural Communication Strategies	Level of Frequency				
		Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very low
6.	I use my gestures with Thais when they are confused, or they are facing with their communication problems.					
9) Selecting Conversation Topics of Shared Common Interests of Cultural Background		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I give some examples when Thais do not understand.					
2.	I try to use appropriate English expressions or statements with Thais in different academic situations.					
3.	I try to understand the Thais' main ideas.					
4.	I will speak slowly when Thais do not understand what I am saying.					
10) Using Your Background Knowledge of the Partner's Culture		1	2	3	4	5
1.	I try to build first impressions with Thais when interacting with them.					
2.	I avoid making worries with Thais or I try to get relaxed with Thais when speaking English with them.					
3.	I will greet Thais before starting the conversation.					

Appendix B Interview Questions

“Intercultural Communication Strategies and Academic-Adjustment of Chinese Students in a Public Thai University”

Instruction: Explain your insightful reasons on academic adjustments when you deal with Thai Sojourners in the Thai academic context in brief.

Phase 1: Pre-Arrival

1) Before arriving in Thailand, how do you prepare yourself to study English here??

Phase 2: Exposure & Initial Experiences

1) When you first arrive in Thailand, have you experienced any communication problems with Thai people? If so, how do you deal with the problems?

Phase 3: Culture Shock

1) In terms of cultural differences, have you ever experienced culture shock during your stay in Thailand? If so, please describe.

Phase 4: Adaptation

1) How can you adjust yourself after interacting with Thai people using English in Thai academic context?

2) How can you adjust yourself when you misunderstand the Thai culture?

Phase 5: Reverse Culture Shock

1) What is your expectation on intercultural communication problems when going back to your country?



Appendix C Item–Objective Congruence Index: IOC

Title

Intercultural Communication Strategies and Self–Adaptation of Chinese Students in at a Public Thai University: A case Study of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University

Purposes of the Study

1. To identify intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais in a long–term Thai–speaking professional setting.
2. To investigate the Chinese students’ self–adaptations when encountering their intercultural communication problems in a long–term Thai–speaking professional setting.

Mean of Level

Agreeable	+1
Unsure	0
Disagreeable	–1

Instruction: Please consider the questions in each of the following questionnaires to determine whether these questions are consistent with the research objectives and the issues to be measured.

Part 1 Strategies for Coping Speaking Problems

No.	Part 1: Intercultural Communication Strategies	IOC Level			Note
		+1	0	-1	
1) Asking for repetition on unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I am interested in the Thais' own accents.				
2.	I am interested in pronouncing the Thais' rhythm and high or low intonations.				
2) Avoiding Talking about Sensitive Issues		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I concentrate on the Thais' negotiation.				
2.	Communication breakdowns happen when the Thais' understandings cannot be cleared.				
3.	Amusement is used for their conversation with Thais.				
4.	I will abandon difficult messages when I talk with Thais.				
5.	I attempt to translate or transfer what Thais listen to from their expressions into their own language in order to understand what Thais express.				
3) Being careful in using English grammatically correct expressions		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I am able to correct language mistakes when communicating in English with Thais.				
2.	I focus on the subject-verb agreement of the English structure while listening.				
3.	I focus on words used for questioning when sojourners have heard Wh-questions.				
4.	I mainly focus on using non-verbal communication to correct grammatical structures and to sequence words or statements with Thais' conversation.				

No.	Part 1: Intercultural Communication Strategies	IOC Level			Note
5.	I endeavor to focus on the appropriate use of language and intercultural understandings with Thais.				
6.	I use body language to decrease Thais' worries when interacting with them.				
4) Using the Chinese language to facilitate the communication		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	Help is requested from outsiders when not interacting with the sojourners.				
2.	I examine what the Thais' understandings are perceived from our interaction.				
3.	I will give some examples to help Thais understand what I say.				
4.	I try to use the Thais' language expressions that are taught from the lecture.				
5.	I make conversation dialogues mostly fluent with Thais.				
5) Using the Thai or Chinese partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I have to speak clearly and loudly with Thais when interacting with them.				
2.	I use my own language first so that my appropriate expressions can be used for interacting with Thais.				
3.	I use transferring skills to identify words and their meanings with Thais in the time required.				
4.	I use different ways of speaking based on such a different context when shifting other topics with Thais.				

No.	Part 1: Intercultural Communication Strategies	IOC Level			Note
5	I use different means of communication when faced with the Thai sojourner's interaction.				
6	I let Thais explain more details when they are not sure what they express.				
6) Clarifying or Explaining Your Cultural Terms or Topics		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I provide more details for Thais when they do not understand.				
2.	I try to use the first word to make questions.				
3.	I focus on the first part of the Thai's questions and the expectation of the Thai's purposes.				
4	I mostly use familiar words when interacting with Thais.				
5	I try to replace new statements with Thais when I cannot transfer them.				
6	I let the Thais speak repeatedly when they do not understand.				
7	I speak repeatedly to make the Thais understand.				
7) Selecting Standard English Vocabulary or Easy Expressions		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I emphasize expressing familiar words or statements with Thais only.				
2.	I use my transferring skills to encourage Thais to explain their own expressions.				
3.	I avoid expressing some technical terms and difficult words that are used in communicating English with Thais when they do not know how to explain.				

No.	Part 1: Intercultural Communication Strategies	IOC Level			Note
4.	I try to summarize my statements by expressing easy-to-understand words or phrases when interacting with Thais.				
5.	I use simplified words or statements with Thais when they do not understand.				
8) Asking for Clarification on the Similarities/Differences of cultural concepts		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I use my facial expressions with Thais when I am discussing something with them.				
2.	I use my eye contact with Thais when I am discussing something with them.				
3.	I attempt to reply with Thais when they hardly understand what I express to them.				
4.	I emphasize speaking slowly or expressing cultural understandings with Thais easily.				
5.	I use familiar words or statements that are involved in cultural understandings with Thais.				
6.	I use my gestures with Thais when they are confused, or they are facing with their communication problems.				
9) Selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I give some examples when Thais do not understand.				
2.	I try to use appropriate English expressions or statements with Thais in different academic situations.				
3.	I try to understand the Thais' main ideas.				
4.	I will speak slowly when Thais do not understand what I am saying.				

No.	Part 1: Intercultural Communication Strategies	IOC Level			Note
10) Using Your Background Knowledge of the Partner's Culture		+1	0	-1	Note
1.	I try to build first impressions with Thais when interacting with them.				
2.	I avoid making worries with Thais or I try to get relaxed with Thais when speaking English with them.				
3.	I will greet Thais before starting the conversation.				



Part 2 Interview Questions

“Intercultural Communication Strategies and Self-Adaptation of Chinese Students in a Public Thai University”

Instruction: Explain your insightful reasons on self-adaptation when you deal with Thais in the Thai-speaking context in brief.

NO.	Phase 1: Pre-Arrival	LEVEL OF IOC			NOTE
		+1	0	-1	
1.	Before arriving in Thailand, how do you prepare yourself to study English here?				
NO.	Phase 2: Exposure & Initial Experiences	LEVEL OF IOC			NOTE
		+1	0	-1	
1.	When you first arrive in Thailand, have you experienced any communication problems with Thai people? If so, how do you deal with the problems?				
NO.	Phase 3: Culture Shock	LEVEL OF IOC			NOTE
		+1	0	-1	
1.	In terms of cultural differences, have you ever experienced culture shock during your stay in Thailand? If so, please describe.				
NO.	Phase 4: Adaptation	LEVEL OF IOC			NOTE
		+1	0	-1	
1.	How can you adjust yourself after interacting with Thai people using English in Thai academic context?				
2.	How can you adjust yourself when you misunderstand the Thai culture?				

NO.	Phase 5: Reverse Culture Shock	LEVEL OF IOC			NOTE
		+1	0	-1	
1.	What is your expectation on intercultural communication problems when going back to your country?				

Mean of Level

Agreeable	+1
Unsure	0
Disagreeable	-1

SUGGESTION.....

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BIOGRAPHY

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