

กลยุทธ์การสื่อสารระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและการปรับตัวของนักศึกษาชาวจีน
ที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศในมหาวิทยาลัยสังกัดรัฐบาลไทย :
ศึกษากรณีมหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย

Intercultural Communication Strategies and Self-Adaptation
of Chinese Students in a Thai public University: A Case Study
of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University

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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 programs, duo study programs, branch campuses, and distance learning can be implicated in all universities. Based on the mixed methods, this study aimed to identify intercultural communication strategies used by Chinese students when interacting with Thais, as well as to investigate their adaptation when encountering with intercultural communication problems at a Thai university. An in-depth interview and a set of questionnaires were used for data collection. There were 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 in Yunnan province, China were selected. The findings revealed that all the aspects of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies ($\bar{X} = 2.08$, S.D = 0.85) were sometimes used when they interacted with Thais in the university. Comparing each aspect, it showed that asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions ($\bar{X} = 2.38$, S.D = 1.01) were frequently used, followed by avoid talking about sensitive issues ($\bar{X} = 2.14$,

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S.D = 0.91), and using one's own language to facilitate the communication ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.93), and using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.93).

Keywords: Intercultural Communication Strategy, Self-adaptation, Chinese Students

บทคัดย่อ

ในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์มีความต้องการความเป็นสากลในสถาบันการศึกษาในระดับสูงเพื่อพัฒนาความก้าวหน้าทางวิชาการตลอดจนส่งเสริมความเข้าใจระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและการพัฒนามนุษย์ที่ยั่งยืน กล่าวอีกนัยหนึ่งคือการสร้างความเป็นสากลอันมีความหลากหลายรวมไปถึงการแลกเปลี่ยนวัฒนธรรมของนักศึกษาและเจ้าหน้าที่ด้วยวิธีการวิจัยแบบผสมผสานมีจุดประสงค์หลักของการศึกษาค้นคว้าวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อระบุกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารระหว่างวัฒนธรรมของนักศึกษาชาวจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศเมื่อมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับชาวไทยในระยะยาวตลอดจนเพื่อตรวจสอบการปรับตัวของของนักศึกษาชาวจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศเมื่อเผชิญกับปัญหาการสื่อสารระหว่างวัฒนธรรมสำหรับวิธีการวิจัยนักศึกษชาวจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ ชั้นปีที่ 4 จำนวน 30 คนที่เรียนวิชาภาษาอังกฤษศึกษาที่คณะมนุษยศาสตร์มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงรายในการ MOU กับมหาวิทยาลัยผู้เอื้อเมืองผู้เอื้อในมณฑลยูนนานของจีน ผลการวิจัยพบว่าทุกแง่มุมของกลยุทธ์การสื่อสารระหว่างวัฒนธรรมของนักศึกษาชาวจีนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศมีค่าเฉลี่ย 2.08 และค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน (S.D) 0.85 ถูกนำมาใช้ “บางครั้ง” เมื่อมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับคนไทยในมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐในประเทศไทยเมื่อเทียบกับแต่ละแง่มุมพบว่ามีการใช้การถามซ้ำในการออกเสียงที่ไม่ชัดเจนหรือสำนวนที่ไม่คุ้นเคย ($\bar{X} = 2.38$, S.D = 1.01) ตามด้วยการหลีกเลี่ยงการพูดถึงประเด็นที่ละเอียดอ่อน ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.91) และการใช้ภาษาของตนเอง เพื่ออำนวยความสะดวกในการสื่อสาร ($\bar{X} = 2.14$, S.D = 0.93) และใช้ภาษาแม่ของเพื่อนเพื่ออำนวยความสะดวกในการสื่อสาร ($\bar{X} = 2.10$, S.D = 0.93)

Introduction

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-Avila, 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. Nomnian & Jhaiyanuntana, (2018); and Yan Ye, (2019).

Intercultural communication is an incident on in which people from different cultural contexts interact (Noonkong, Damnet, & Charttrakul, 2019; Xiuwen and Razali, 2020, and Jamil S., 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 & Swain (1980), and Euamornvanich, (2017) also stated that the speaker's communicative competence is integral to communication so that knowledge and understanding of language are both stimulated for effective communication. In other words, communicative competence is considered one of the most significant elements for intracultural or cross-cultural communication for more effective communication (Euamornvanich, 2017; Thanakong & Adipattaranan, 2017). Most importantly, 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 & 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 & Jhaiyanuntana, (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 incompetence 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 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 (OHEC, 2017). 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, 2019).

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), has been officially signed up for Thailand-China 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 & Wang (2016); Kanat-Mutluoğlu (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, R., & Furneaux, C., 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 Abdul Wahab (2017) and Irwandi, Albert, Nur, (2018) asserted that intercultural communication plays a significant role in the internationalization system negotiating socio-cultural issues between people from multi-cultural diversities.

In terms of the previous studies and observations on the Chinese students' adaptation to a host culture, Songsirisak (2018), Nomnian & Jhaiyanuntana (2018), and Kang, Sun, Yossuck, Panyadee, & Ek-lem (2019) also 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.

In terms of the study of the students' adjustment in a host culture, Prommin Songsirisak (2018) also stated that the Chinese undergraduate students' adjustment was induced by their no deeper understandings of Thai and local cultures when their social interactions with Thai interlocutors or sojourners happened in a long-term Thai public university. With the rapid increase of Chinese students studying at Thai universities, there was a growing concern for their welfare and ability to adapt to life at Thai universities and function successfully in the Thai culture. Comments from past students showed that a few can adapt, but most encounter problems such as prolonging culture shock due to the lack of strategies for dealing with new cultural experiences, inadequate knowledge of Thai culture, and poor intercultural communication ability.

Thus, there is a 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 should be initiated 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 public university.
2. To investigate the Chinese students' self-adaptations when encountering their intercultural communication problems in a long-term Thai public university.

Research 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?

Significance of the study

1. In order to effectively communicate with different staff's social interactions and negotiations in different intercultural workplaces, effective English intercultural communication abilities can be improved and promoted for areas concerning Thai staff or Thai counterparts, such as workplaces and education.

2. English language conversation lessons about English intercultural communication can be created for Thai university staff and people from different workplaces in order to make their understandings of intercultural communication with them clear when their interaction takes place in such a different Thai public university.

3. Learning about appropriate English intercultural communication conversations can be designed for intensive training courses in order to provide Thai learners' and Chinese students' insightful information about their better understandings of English intercultural communication when occurring in a long-term Thai public university.

4. A training model and handbook on effective English intercultural communication can be created for Chinese undergraduate students' and other foreign students' self-adaptation in varying long-term Thai public university.

Research Methodology

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 Suwanasom (2019) 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

In this study, a questionnaire on intercultural communication strategies, and an online in-depth face-to-face interview on self-adaptation were carried out for data collection and data analysis.

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 in-depth 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

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, in-depth 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.

Result

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 remarkable result to emerge from the data 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. Accord-

ing 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 in-depth 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 remarkable result to emerge from the data, according to the 1st research question, "What are the intercultural communication strategies used 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 long-term Thai public university. 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 & Nomnian, (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. 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 in-depth interviews.

Results of the investigation of the Chinese students' self-adaptation when encountering intercultural communication problems in a public Thai university taken from online in-depth 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 public university?" 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.

Accordingly, the previous study of Fan 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.

In other words, the study of Yan 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 that inhibited their understanding in the listening process; moreover, the differences in the accents of the native speakers prohibited the proper understanding of the listening content, a short span of concentration, as well as the learning habit of Chinese students were all inducted by the effective English language communication learning process. Consequently, these effective strategies helped to enhance Chinese students' listening skills and improvements for the effect of college students' English listening learning.

Similarly, the insights into listening comprehension problems of Chinese university students in Vietnam conducted by Thao (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 demand for English oral proficiency is undoubtedly high in this rapidly changing world. The English language is spoken all around the globe and has therefore attained the status of a global language. It is also among other languages widely used in the field of education research, the internet, international relations, business, social media, travel and tourism, software, communication, entertainment, banking, etc.

With references to the study of Shen, Ming-yueh & Chiu, Tzu-yen. (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 communication could help to strengthen, substitute, control, regulate, contradict, and even deny the verbal messages; moreover, cultural backgrounds and influential factors on nonverbal languages result in the proper use of nonverbal language in international business negotiation.

Like, the study of Konchiab, Kappina, & Charoennaiwongphao (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

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. Thai and English language barriers are also found to contribute significantly to the cross-cultural adaptation barrier, particularly in social support and life changes. Moreover, Chinese students encountered cultural difficulties and adjustments due to the difference in 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 and Thai languages along with cultural competence.

According to 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 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.

Recommendations

Recommendation for 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 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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