



**INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS
STUDYING IN THAILAND: A CASE OF
A THAI PRIVATE UNIVERSITY**

**BY
WENJING NONG**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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Abstract

This study aimed to 1) explore whether Chinese students' English and Thai language proficiency has an impact on their intercultural adaptation in Thailand; 2) explore whether the length of time of Chinese students study in Thailand has an impact on their intercultural adaptation; and 3) explore whether daily life culture and classroom culture have an impact on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation. A mixed methods approach was adopted to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through the use of the 33-item questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. A private university in Thailand was selected as the case study. 148 Chinese students at the university were selected as the survey subjects. These students were aged between 18-24 years old and studied at the private university ranging from four months to two years. For semi-structured interviews, nine students were purposely selected and divided into three groups based on the length of time they stayed in Thailand: six months, one year and two years. The questionnaire data analysis showed that the overall mean of the impact of the students' Chinese and English language proficiency was at the 'Agree' level ($\bar{X}=3.67/SD=0.87$). Secondly, the overall mean of the impact on the length of time needed for adaptation was also at the 'Agree' level ($\bar{X}=3.45/SD=0.91$). In addition, the overall means of the impact of daily life and classroom culture on their cultural adaptation were both at the 'Agree' level respectively ($\bar{X}=3.41/SD=0.85$; $\bar{X}=3.53/SD=0.94$). The analysis of the semi-structured interview data revealed that the language proficiency affected Chinese students' intercultural adaptation. At each stage of studying abroad, Chinese students faced different intercultural challenges. Daily life and classroom culture also had varying degrees of impact on intercultural adaptation. This study recommends that schools provide more assistance in life and study to Chinese students during their studies, and that Chinese students should continue to improve themselves to better adapt to studying and living in Thailand.

(Total 129 pages)

Keywords: Intercultural Adaptation, Language Proficiency, Daily Life, Classroom Culture, Length of Time Needed for Adaptation

Student's Signature Thesis Advisor's Signature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research background; statement of the problem; research objectives; research question; significance of the study; scope of the study; research framework; limitations of the study; and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of The Study

China and Thailand are geographically adjacent to each other. With the "One Belt, One Road" and "Thailand 4.0" strategies, along with the construction of the China-Thailand Railway, cooperation between the two countries in the fields of economy, trade, investment, culture, and education has strengthened continuously. In recent years, due to Thailand's beautiful campus environments, international curricula, and relatively lower costs compared to other countries for studying abroad, an increasing number of Chinese students have chosen to study in Thailand (Thailand Study Abroad News, 2021). Furthermore, the influx of Chinese investments into Thailand has created numerous employment opportunities for Chinese students studying there, further enhancing the appeal of Thailand as a study destination for Chinese students.

As an international tourist country, Thailand is also in line with international standards in education. Thailand has inherited the Commonwealth education system for more than 150 years. Thailand's education environment, education level, and education internationalization are world-leading. There are over 37,000 Educational Institutions and nearly 20 million students in the Thai education system. The current Thai Education system stems from the reforms set by the 1999 National Education Act which implemented new organizational structures, promoted the denationalization of

administration, and called for innovative learner-centered teaching practices. The Thai education system (Figure 1) provides 9 years of compulsory education, with 12 year of free basic education guaranteed by the Constitution (Bureau of International Cooperation, 2008).

In addition, in terms of cultural beliefs, Thailand is a Buddhist country, and its cultural traditions and living habits have many similarities with China. Thai people are warm, kind, polite, and domestic politics are stable. This is also one reason why Chinese students choose to study in Thailand.

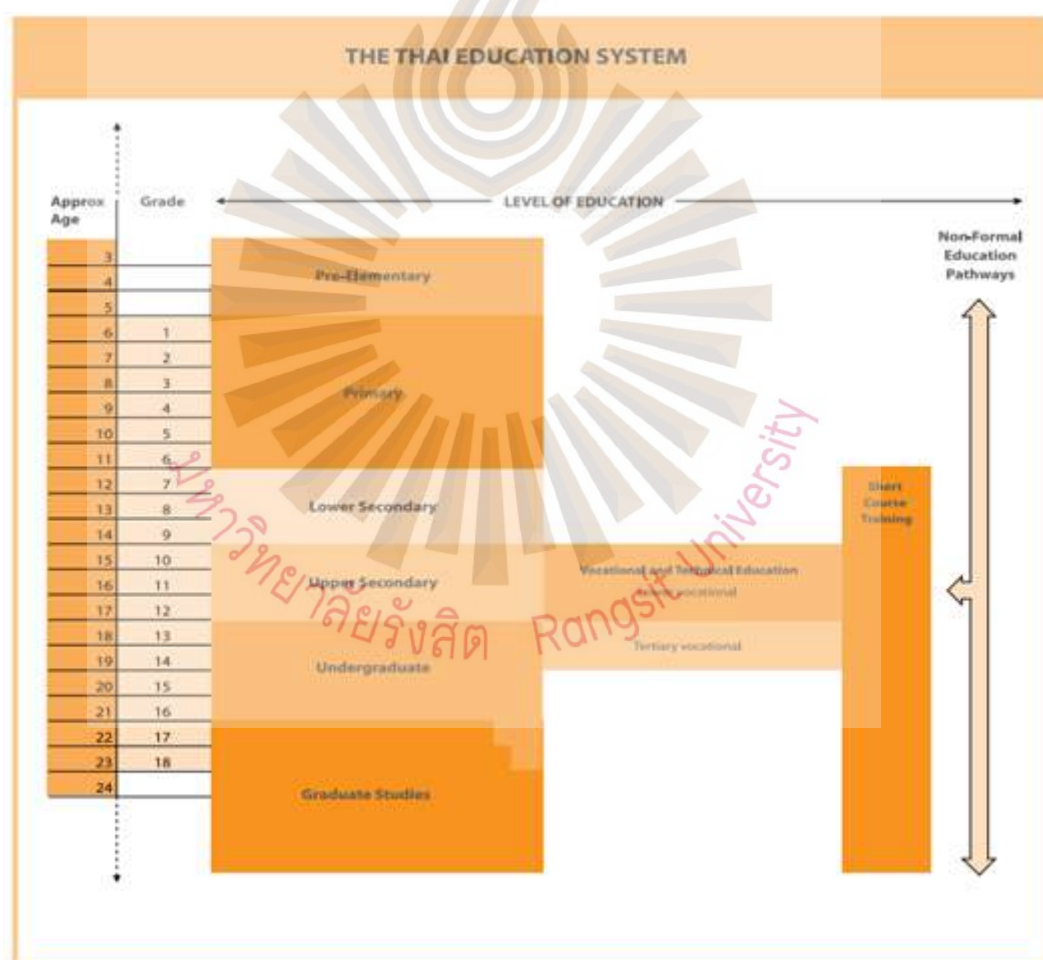


Figure 1.1 The Thai Education System

Source: Tangkitvanich & Sasiwuttiwat, 2012

Thailand shares cultural and environmental similarities with China. For students studying in the United Kingdom or the United States, the cultural and historical differences compared to China can be stressful, particularly for those who find it challenging to adapt quickly. Adjusting to these differences takes time and effort. In contrast, students in Thailand do not encounter such concerns as there is a significant Chinese presence and a friendly relationship with the local population. Thailand and China share similarities in culture and customs. Living in Thailand allows students to adapt quickly to the local life, creating a more relaxed environment overall. Additionally, the short distance between China and Thailand facilitates convenient travel back home.

In recent times, many parents and students have become increasingly pragmatic when considering studying abroad. They are beginning to assess the true significance of studying in Thailand, rather than blindly following trends. This shift indicates a positive evolution in the trend of Chinese students studying abroad. The primary reasons students choose to study in Thailand include preparing for future employment opportunities and enhancing foreign language skills. Factors such as aspirations to work or immigrate abroad, influence from peers, and Thailand's climate also play roles in students' decisions. This clearer purpose has led to a discernible decrease in the number of students studying in Thailand, with those who do so having more specific objectives in mind (Thailand Study Abroad News, 2021).

On November 23, 2023, according to data released by the Secretariat of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation of Thailand, in the first semester of 2023, the total number of foreign students in Thailand reached 36,060. The proportion of Chinese international students in Thailand's higher education institutions is overwhelming, with as many as 60% of foreign students coming from mainland China. The reason why Chinese students choose to study in Thailand is that the competition for postgraduate entrance examinations in China is very fierce, and the application threshold for most foreign universities is relatively low.

Table 1.1 The ranking of the number of international students in Thailand

| No. | Country | Student Number |
|-----|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Chinese | 21906 |
| 2 | Myanmar | 4046 |
| 3 | Cambodian | 1528 |
| 4 | Stateless person | 868 |
| 5 | Vietnamese | 610 |
| 6 | Lao | 610 |
| 7 | Indonesian | 543 |
| 8 | Philippino | 541 |
| 9 | Indian | 413 |
| 10 | Bhutanese | 276 |

Source: The Secretariat of Thailand's Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2023

There are more complex reasons why Chinese students primarily opt to study in private universities. Private institutions invest more and earlier in international student services and public relations. Firstly, private institutions have professional marketing departments and funding to support ongoing promotion of international exchanges and overseas enrollment activities.

Secondly, graduates from Thailand's private institutions are more active and competitive in the job market, being no less competitive than graduates from public universities. The courses they offer are more international and diversified, keeping up with market trends. Compared to public universities, private universities have more flexible admission standards. This is advantageous for Chinese applicants who may lack the academic or language skills required to gain entry into top public universities but still aspire to study in Thailand.

Table 1.2 The Thai private universities with the largest number of Chinese students

| No. | Name of University | Student Number |
|-----|---|----------------|
| 1 | Krirk University มหาวิทยาลัยเกริก | 4199 |
| 2 | Dhurakij Pundit University มหาวิทยาลัยธุรกิจบัณฑิต | 2644 |
| 3 | Assumption University มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ | 1424 |
| 4 | Shinawatra University มหาวิทยาลัยชินวัตร | 856 |
| 5 | Bangkok Thonburi University มหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพธนบุรี | 804 |
| 6 | Rangsit University มหาวิทยาลัยรังสิต | 793 |

Source: The Secretariat of Thailand's Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2023

Take Rangsit University in Thailand as an example. Since 2014, Rangsit University has been recruiting international students from China, including exchange students, undergraduates, master's, and doctoral programs. Rangsit University offers undergraduate international courses with English as the medium of instruction in philosophy, political science, economics, tourism hotel management, and other disciplines. In the fields of business economics, social humanities, art media, engineering technology, and education, the medium of instruction is either English or Thai. Rangsit University also hosts the only China International College outside the Chinese-speaking region in the world. With the enhanced quality and reputation of Rangsit University, an increasing number of Chinese students are choosing to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the university.

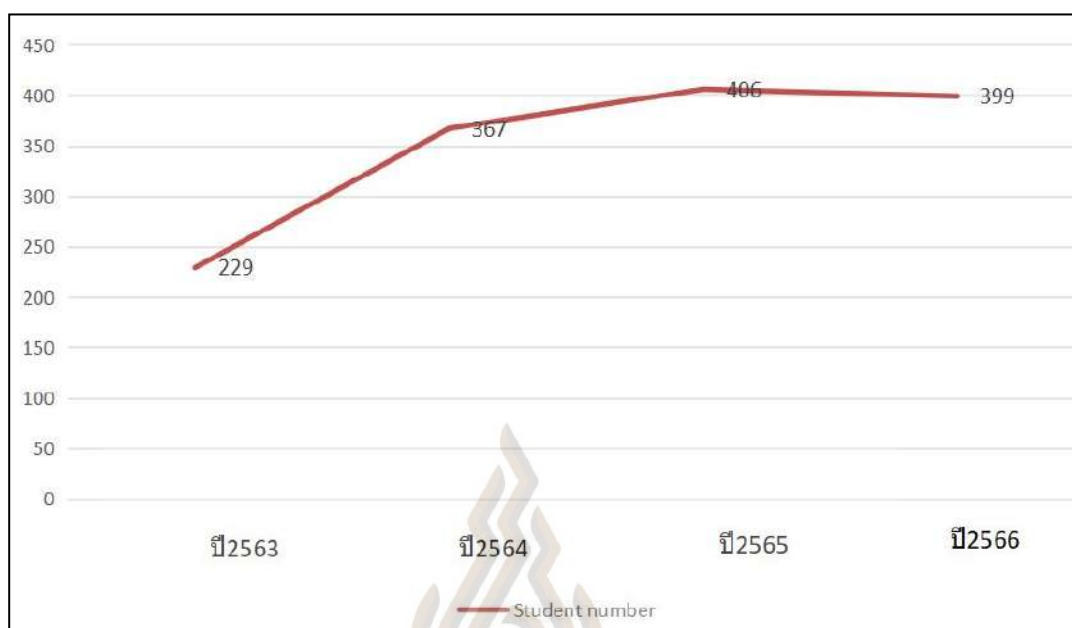


Figure 1.2 Number of Chinese Students at Rangsit University from 2020 to 2023

Sources: Rangsit University, Chinese-Thai Institute, 2023

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1.2.1 Chinese Students in Adapting to Daily Life Culture in Thailand

Although China and Thailand are geographically close to each other, the differences in economy, history, culture, politics, and beliefs make it necessary for Chinese students to undergo a new cultural adaptation process when they enter a new learning and living environment in Thailand. As a Chinese student studying at Rangsit University, undergraduate students need to study for four years. During the period from one to four years, Chinese students need to adjust and adapt to the challenges brought by intercultural differences. Intercultural influences are multifaceted. For instance, Chinese students who are new to Thailand, dietary differences will be a challenge.

Thailand is a tropical country with a hot climate throughout the year. In terms of diet, it prefers raw, cold, spicy, and sweet foods. When many Chinese students first arrived in Thailand, they were not accustomed to the local cuisine. Chinese people typically consume cooked food and seldom drink ice water. The dietary disparity

poses a challenge that Chinese college students need to overcome in Thailand. Additionally, adjusting to the climate difference. March to May is the hottest season in Thailand every year, and many Chinese students have developed the habit of staying in the dormitory and not going out because they cannot adapt to the hot weather.

As the duration of studying abroad progresses, learning about the cultural etiquette of Thailand has become essential. Thailand is a predominantly Buddhist country, and there are significant differences in beliefs compared to China. For instance, it is considered inappropriate to wear shorts when entering a temple, and touching monks casually is also not allowed. Due to the differences in daily life culture, students who come to Thailand may feel frustrated during intercultural adaptation. Chinese students studying in Thailand need to undergo a process of intercultural adaptation. During this period, if students can find a suitable way to study in Thailand, they can quickly adapt to studying and living in Thailand. On the contrary, if individuals cannot adapt to intercultural barriers, they may avoid social interactions, lack friends, and over time, this can negatively impact their physical and mental health. In severe cases, they may struggle to complete their studies as usual.

1.2.2 Chinese Students in Adapting to Classroom Culture in Thailand

Chinese students studying in Thailand face challenges not only in their daily lives but also in navigating differences in classroom culture, which significantly affects their intercultural adaptation. "Culture" encompasses all aspects of life, including its influence on classroom dynamics. Over time, this influence shapes what is known as "classroom culture." Different countries have distinct classroom styles, which provide insights into their respective classroom cultures.

The social backgrounds and teaching expectations in China and Thailand are different. Exam-oriented education is prevalent in China. Chinese students have to face numerous exams from elementary school to university, and academic performance has become a crucial indicator for measuring the quality of students. This has led to phenomena in Chinese classrooms where students adhere to rules and regulations, study

more diligently, experience a dull classroom atmosphere, and possess weak hands-on skills. In Thailand, the education system fosters an active atmosphere in classrooms. Students engage in various classroom games and activities, making them more lively and active.

When Chinese students go to university in Thailand, adapting to the classroom culture becomes another challenge. Chinese education emphasizes nurturing students' talents and enhancing their knowledge and literacy, whereas Thailand places greater emphasis on joyful learning, independent learning, and unleashing students' innate potential. This is the educational philosophy of Thai teachers. The varying personality traits of Chinese and Thai students also result in differences in their perceptions of classroom time and classroom atmospheres in China and Thailand.

Chinese students adhere strictly to the system, resulting in punctuality being a common practice with few instances of tardiness to class. In contrast, Thai students are more inclined to accept the status quo, leading to a higher frequency of lateness and absences in classes. Thailand's education system places a strong emphasis on developing students' teamwork skills, reflected in the prevalence of group assignments and discussions. Conversely, in China, there is greater emphasis on fostering individual abilities, resulting in students having a substantial amount of individual homework. To summarize, Thailand's education model prioritizes cultivating teamwork skills through numerous group assignments and discussions, whereas China's system places more emphasis on developing personal abilities, leading to a heavier focus on individual homework assignments.

Chinese students studying at Rangsit University also have various problems in adapting to classroom culture. This difference is not only reflected in cultural differences, educational systems, and social backgrounds, but also in teaching models and individual student motivations. This will also become an obstacle for Chinese students to adapt intercultural in Thailand.

1.2.3 The Language Problem of Intercultural Adaptation

Intercultural adaptation theory primarily focuses on the challenges individuals face when navigating new cultural systems and environments. Since the early 20th century, the role of language in intercultural interactions has received significant global attention, prompting scholars to extensively study this phenomenon from various perspectives. Gudykunst's AUM theory suggests that improved proficiency in a foreign language enhances sojourners' ability to anticipate local behavior, thereby reducing their anxiety when adapting to a new cultural setting. International students with better language skills are likely to have a more positive study abroad experience and achieve greater cultural integration outcomes.

Byram (1997) emphasizes that learners need to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and cultural awareness to make objective judgments in intercultural communication. In his view, communicative language ability and five other dimensions constitute the system of intercultural communication competence. Crano's study found that there are six dimensions inherent in international students' adaptation to local society and culture: educational factors, local family factors, language factors, problem factors, interpersonal factors, and social factors.

Rosenthal, Russel, and Thomson (2010) utilized questionnaires to identify the factors influencing sojourners' adaptation to the local culture. These factors include language proficiency, gender, age, education level, social status, self-esteem, and intercultural experience. Danckwortt's "Adaptation to Unfamiliar Cultures Theory" focuses on the adaptation of international students to a foreign culture. According to this theory, there are four main factors that influence acculturation: the objective environment, the subjective needs of students, the students' personal adaptability, and the quality of help provided by the outside world. Among them, the ability and quality of international students in terms of cultural adaptation largely determine the process and extent of cultural assimilation.

Hou (2010) pointed out that language is a reflection of culture. Introducing the theory of intercultural communication into second language teaching and reforming the traditional teaching methods can enhance teaching efficiency and truly achieve the goal of improving students' intercultural communication abilities.

Although many scholars have conducted extensive research on cross-cultural adaptation, the scope of research is still broad, especially concerning the acculturation of international students in specific universities. Currently, Chinese students have become the predominant group studying in Thailand, and the matter of intercultural adaptation among Chinese students has garnered growing attention. Therefore, due to the lack of research on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in specific universities in Thailand, this article aims to conduct an empirical study on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students at Rangsit University in Thailand. Emphasis will be placed on language barriers, length of study abroad, daily life, and classroom culture to enhance empirical research in the field of intercultural adaptation.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 To explore whether Chinese students' English and Thai language proficiency affect their intercultural adaptation in Thailand.

1.3.2 To explore whether the length of time of Chinese students study in Thailand affect their intercultural adaptation.

1.3.2 To explore whether daily life culture and classroom cultural affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Does the English and Thai language proficiency of Chinese students affect intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand?

1.4.2 Does the length of time that Chinese students study in Thailand affect their intercultural adaptation?

1.4.3 Does daily life culture and classroom cultural affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Many Chinese students studying in Thailand are prone to a series of intercultural adaptation problems due to differences in lifestyle, mindset, and length of stay. In many people's minds, the local language ability of international students is directly proportional to their intercultural adaptability. If international students can master the local language or speak English proficiently, their intercultural adaptability will surpass that of others. But in fact, there are many factors that affect the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students, and it is not known whether language proficiency plays a dominant role.

Chinese students studying at Rangsit University in Thailand include short-term exchange students who typically study for 1-2 years, as well as undergraduate students who study for 4 years. Is there a difference in the short-term and long-term impact of English and Thai language proficiency Chinese international students? Does English proficiency have a greater impact on students who study abroad for a short period of time than on students who study abroad for a long period of time?

Scholars in this field have conducted limited research. This study posits that the language proficiency of Chinese international students is directly related to their intercultural adaptation skills. Daily life and classroom culture also have an impact on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students. This study also investigates and analyzes the length of Chinese students studying abroad. The final research summary investigates will find that whether the length of time, language barriers, daily life, and classroom culture have an impact on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students studying at Rangsit University.

1.6 Research Framework

The conceptual framework is shown Figure 1.3.

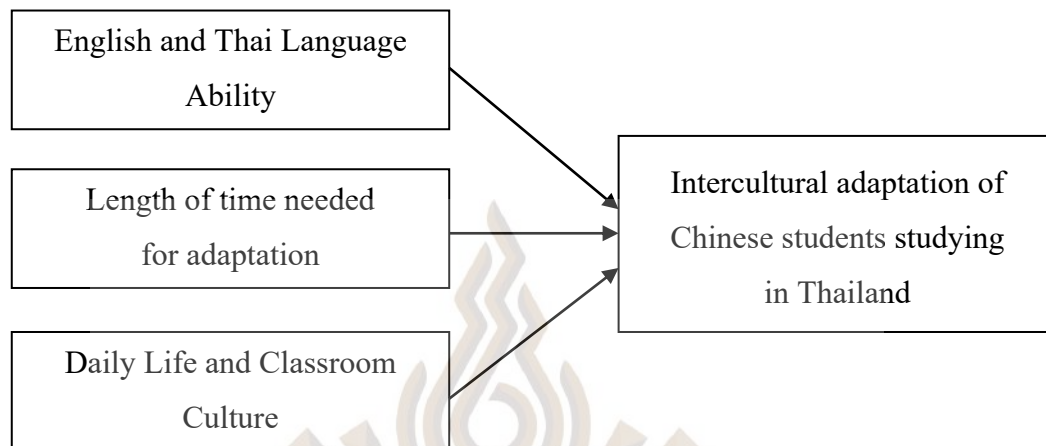


Figure 1.3 Research Framework

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Since the sample of the study came from private universities in Thailand, the results of the study can only be used for similar contexts (a small number of Chinese students at a private university), but not for other contexts.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Intercultural Adaptation refers to the process by which individuals or groups adjust to living in a new cultural environment. This process involves acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors to function effectively and comfortably in a different cultural context. Several key terms are often used in discussions of intercultural adaptation:

1) **Culture**: refers to the shared beliefs, values, norms, customs, behaviors, and symbols that characterize a particular group of people. When Chinese students come to Thailand, they have to adapt culturally. It encompasses both visible aspects (such as clothing, food, and language) and underlying beliefs and attitudes.

2) **Adaptation**: involves the process by which Chinese students adapt to new situations or environments. In the context of intercultural adaptation, it refers to the changes that Chinese students experience when adapting to different cultural environments.

3) **Intercultural**: when Chinese students are in different cultures, they will be in the exchange of ideas, values, and practices across cultural boundaries.

Chinese Students refers to 235 undergraduate students who came from China to study in Thailand, entering Rangsit in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Private University refers to the Rangsit University of Thailand, where the researcher collected data.

Daily Life refers to every life that is the environment of ways of life that students are exposed to such as: food, clothing, housing and transportation on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

Classroom Culture refers to the students classroom interaction: the classroom atmosphere, curriculum, and teacher-student relationship of Thai private universities on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following literature review, there are six sections. The first section will provide an overview of the development of Intercultural Adaptation Theory. In the second section, the context of psychological adjustment and social-cultural adjustment theory will be presented. In the third section is the relationship between language and intercultural adaptation. In the fourth section describes the impact of length of time on intercultural adaptation. In the fifth section is the differences in classroom culture between China and Thailand. Finally, related studies on the same or similar topics are presented with the findings.

2.1 Development of Intercultural Adaptation Theory

Cultural adaptation is one of the most crucial aspects of contemporary intercultural education. With the boom in cross-international education and study abroad, as well as the increase in immigrant students and exchange students, the process of learning and cultural adaptation in a diverse society has started to be taken seriously. When a series of changes and conflicts occur in the educational culture, educational system, and environment, students will inevitably undergo certain psychological and behavioral changes. The trend and extent of this change are crucial for successfully completing intercultural learning. To investigate the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand, it is essential to comprehend the theory of intercultural adaptation and the evolution of intercultural adaptation theory both internationally and in China.

2.1.1 Intercultural Adaptation Theory

Proposed by American ethnologists Robert Redfield, Ralf Linton, Melville Jean Herskovits in 1935, the concept of cultural adaptation involves the necessity of understanding and integrating into a new culture's thought, beliefs, emotional system, and communication system. Some scholars also translate "cultural adaptation" as "acculturation".

Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) further deepened the definition of intercultural: "Intercultural adaptation refers to the phenomenon of changes in cultural patterns during continuous and diverse cultural interactions between individuals or groups with different cultural backgrounds." To a certain extent, intercultural adaptation is generally a process in which individuals, societies, and groups transition from unfamiliarity and disapproval to familiarity, tolerance, and acceptance of a foreign culture following interaction and influence. In 1954, anthropologists such as Siegel and Voget provided a relatively broad and concise definition, stating that "acculturation is the cultural change that takes place when two or more independent cultural systems are interconnected."

The Cultural Adaptation Model theory was proposed by Schumann in 1978. Schumann's cultural adaptation theory includes two groups of variables: social factors and psychological factors. Social factors include assimilation, retention, and change; closure; cohesion; size of the learner community; cultural harmony; attitude of the community; and intended length of stay. Psychological factors include language shock, cultural shock, motivation, and self-transparency.

Kim (1988) pointed out that the intercultural adaptation process is a journey in which communicators encounter the pressures of a foreign cultural environment, continuously make self-adjustments, gradually adapt to a new way of life, and eventually develop an intercultural identity. Countless immigrants, refugees, temporary residents, and internal migrants have left their familiar cultural environments and settled in new cultural settings for varying periods of time. Although personal circumstances vary, all

newcomers find themselves required to establish and maintain relatively stable working relationships with the host environment.

Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen (2002). proposed in his book "Cross-cultural Psychology: Research and Application" that the process of acculturation actually affects both cultures that come into contact with each other, but the impact on the mainstream culture is relatively small. Therefore, his two-dimensional model advanced the study of acculturation to a more comprehensive, detailed, and in-depth stage. It proposed four types of integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization from the perspective of non-mainstream cultural groups.

| | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Value and Maintain Native Culture | |
| | YES | NO |
| YES | Integration | Assimilation |
| NO | Separation | Marginalization |

Figure 2.1 Berry's Two-Dimensional Model

Source: Berry et al., 2002

Integration: Individuals in acculturation not only value preserving their traditional culture but also focus on daily interactions with other groups.

Assimilation: Individuals are unwilling to maintain their original cultural identity but have frequent interactions with other cultural groups.

Separation: Individuals value their own unique culture and prefer to avoid interactions with other groups.

Marginalization (the most difficult to accept): The individual is unable to preserve their original culture and is not embraced by the culture of other groups.

Sun and Liu (2010) argue that cultural adaptation is a crucial aspect of intercultural educational research and serves as the primary criterion for assessing whether students from diverse cultural backgrounds can access high-quality education.

As this learning method becomes increasingly popular and diversified in various countries, the process of learning and cultural adaptation for immigrant students, exchange students, and minority students in a diverse society has started to be taken seriously. When faced with educational culture and systems, students inevitably experience psychological and behavioral changes due to conflicts and changes in their environment. The trend and extent of these changes are also key to successfully completing intercultural learning.

Acculturation is the process and time it takes for a person to assimilate into and spend time in a new culture. Booth & Lazear (2015) explain that cultural adaptation involves "reviewing and changing the structure of a program or practice to more appropriately fit the needs and preferences of a particular cultural group or community." It is a process of "adjusting the delivery of mental health services to be consistent with the consumers and culture." It involves modification of mental health service delivery at the administrative, service delivery, and clinical levels so that the service or program is culturally competent.

Chen (2012) believes that intercultural is a process of learning the social and cultural customs (including cognitive and behavioral rules) of the country of residence. It is also a process of acquiring intercultural communication skills. Intercultural communication ability consists of three major elements: intercultural understanding, intercultural sensitivity, and cultural timeliness.

According to Wang and Lai (2015), cultural adaptation is a social behavior that occurs when two different cultures intersect. During this period, students learn the moral norms, language, and customs of unfamiliar cultures. They adapt to and accept these unfamiliar cultures, integrating their inherent beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and behavioral patterns with them to form a multicultural background.

Čuhlová (2019) argues that the final model adaptation across cultures is developed by applying a systems thinking approach, emphasizing connections and backward dynamics between elements as an appropriate strategy. The model is based on

the interaction of six determinants, such as intercultural competence, language skills, intercultural training, past intercultural experience, motivation, and cultural distance.

Intercultural adaptation is a process that individuals need to undergo when integrating into a foreign cultural environment. When Chinese international students enter Thailand to study and live, they will inevitably undergo the process of intercultural adaptation. There are many factors that determine this process. Whether it is intercultural adaptation or psychological adaptation, all Chinese international students have to face it. Understanding the history of intercultural development at home and abroad, finding theories that can help solve the intercultural adaptation problems of Chinese students studying abroad, and conducting research can provide effective assistance for the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students studying in Thailand.

2.1.2 Foreign intercultural adaptation theory development

Intercultural refers to the blending of cultures across various countries and ethnic groups. It is the cultural difference among various ethnic groups, countries, and communities. Individuals have different identifications with culture. Intercultural adaptation is a complex process, and many scholars have conducted in-depth research on it. In the 1950s, Edward Twitchell Hall first proposed the concept of "cross-cultural communication" while working at the American Foreign Service Institute (FSI). He proposed the concepts of "high-context culture" and "low-context culture," developed these ideas, and published the book "Silent Language" in 1959.

Oberg (1960) proposed the concept of "culture shock." In 1960, he first introduced the concept of culture shock to describe a series of psychological symptoms experienced by overseas immigrants when encountering unfamiliar cultures. He observed that when people are separated from their own cultural environment and begin to adapt to a new cultural environment, it is easy to experience a period of physical or psychological discomfort, such as alienation, panic, irritability, and depression. Therefore, he modified the classic U-shaped model proposed by Løvgaard in 1955. The Curve Model created the acculturation cycle theory. This model shows

that intercultural communicators generally go through four stages: honeymoon period, crisis period, recovery period, and complete adaptation period.

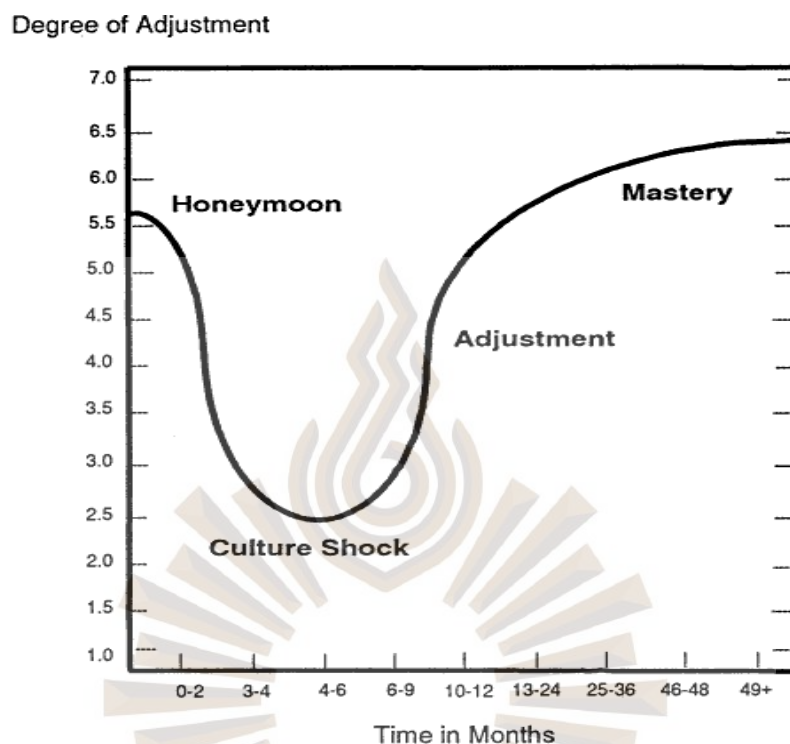


Figure 2.2 Depiction of Oberg's U-Curve of Intercultural Adjustment

Source: Oberg, 1960

The first stage: the honeymoon phase, during which the contrasts between the new culture and the old culture ignite romantic sparks. For example, when people first arrive in a new country, they may fall in love with the novel food, the rhythm of life, and the different living habits of the locals.

The second stage: the transition period, which is characterized by culture shock. After a period of time (about three months, though this timeframe varies for everyone), the contrasts between the old and new cultures will gradually become increasingly apparent, leading to heightened levels of anxiety.

The third stage: adjustment period. After a period of time (usually 6-12 months), people gradually become accustomed to the new culture and develop new daily routines.

The fourth stage: the adaptation/integration period. The final stage is when individuals can fully integrate into the new culture and feel comfortable and happy. The final stage does not refer to the last stage of life. People often experience shock in the initial phases of encountering new cultures, including differences in accent and language.

Gullahorn, J. T., & Gullahorn, J. E. (1963) noticed the re-adaptation phenomenon after returning to the country and extended the U-shaped curve into a W-shaped curve model to more fully demonstrate the process of intercultural adaptation.



Figure 2.3 W-shaped curve model

Source: Gullahorn, J. T., & Gullahorn, J. E., 1963

In 1975, American psychologist Adler proposed a five-stage model hypothesis of intercultural adaptation. The stages are: 1) contact phase, 2) disintegration stage, 3) denial stage, 4) autonomy stage, and 5) independence stage. Based on Oberg's cross-cultural emotional adaptation stage theory, Drew Nesdale further divided the intercultural adaptation process into the euphoric stage, shock stage, abnormal stage, and assimilation or adaptation stage. Adler's five-stage hypothesis shares similarities with Oberg's four-stage culture shock theory; however, Adler's model includes a fifth stage where individuals attain heightened cultural awareness, facilitating better adaptation to a foreign culture.

Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder (2006) argued that acculturation can be viewed as a multidimensional linear phenomenon rather than a one-dimensional one. It can therefore be hypothesized that: 1) individuals may prefer to retain their original culture; 2) the same individuals may prefer to selectively participate in other cultures. Based on this, Berry proposed a better way to understand an individual's attitude towards cultural adaptation and their position in this process, distinguishing four ways of cultural adaptation: integration, assimilation, separation, and exclusion. Text: ### Berry proposed a series of items in the form of a Likert scale and finally developed an adaptation style scale comprising 4 subscales and a total of 38 items to assess the four modes of cultural adaptation.

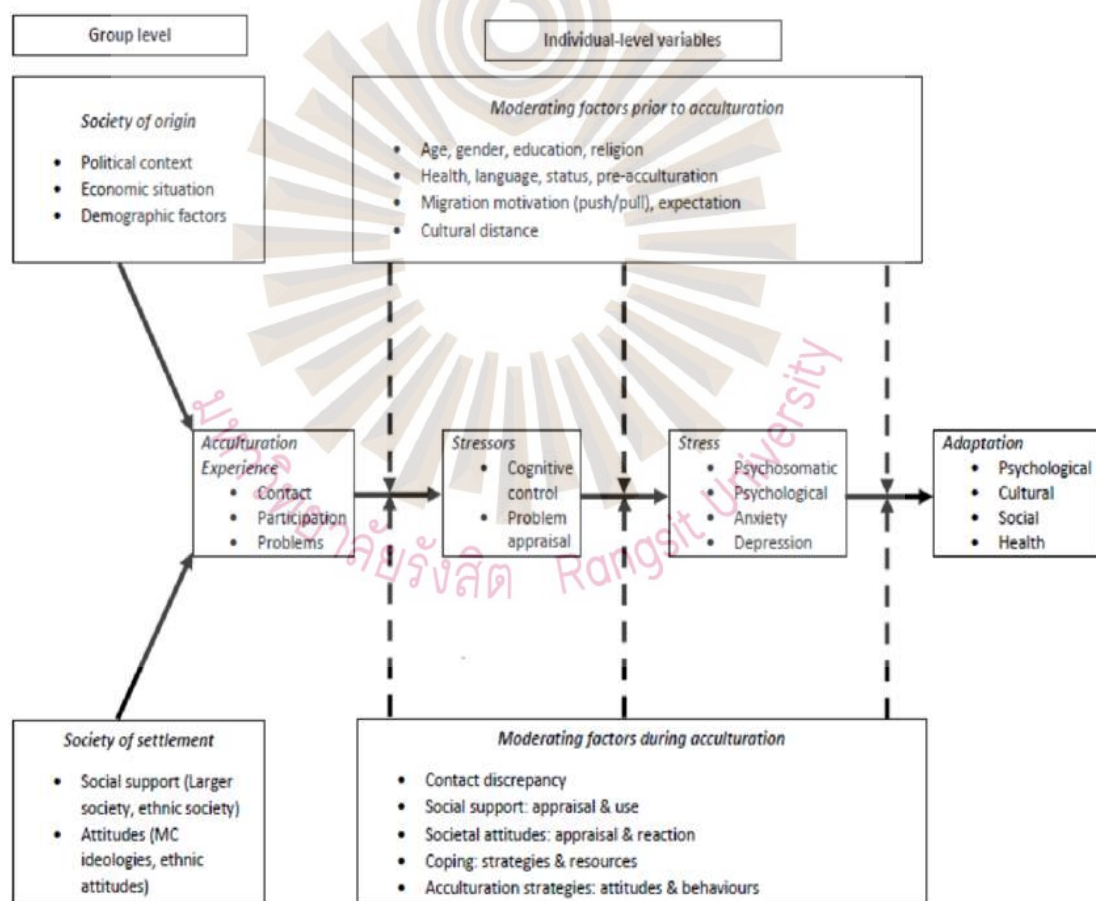


Figure 2.4 The Acculturative Stress Model

Source: Berry et al., 2006

The idea of cultural distance was put forth by Babiker, Cox, and Miller (1980), who thought that it could serve as a mediating indicator of the stress and adjustment issues that sojourners encounter. They suggested adapting to other cultures. In response to the pressures of life transitions, they created the Cultural Distance Inventory (Cultural Distance Inventory) to gauge the social and environmental disparities between the sojourner's previous cultural surroundings and the new ones he entered. distinction. A culture's sociocultural traits can be categorized along a continuum as distant or close.

Kim (2017) proposed the "Pressure-Adaptation-Growth" dynamic model, suggesting that in cross-cultural communication, pressure acts as a driving force for individuals to adapt. The pressure they experience compels them to engage in new learning activities. He pointed out that as long as there are new pressure challenges, the pressure-adaptation-growth process will continue. Pressure, adaptation, and growth together constitute the triple concept of psychology, forming the foundation of the cross-cultural adaptation process.

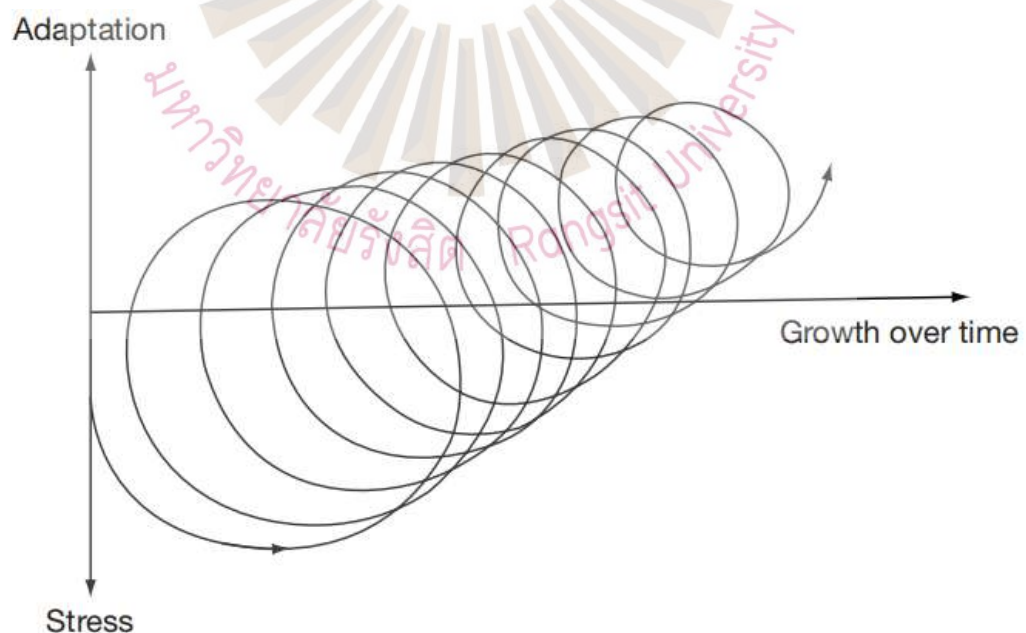


Figure 2.5 The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic

Source: Reproduced from Kim, 2017

2.1.3 The development of intercultural adaptation theory in China

Since 1980, Chinese scholars have started researching the field of intercultural studies. However, the research has been predominantly focused on intercultural communication skills, with less emphasis on the study of intercultural adaptation.

Chen and Zhu (2003) conducted a study on cross-cultural influencing factors, pointing out that factors influencing intercultural adaptation include internal and external factors. External factors include changes in lifestyle, social support, length of stay abroad, cultural distance, discrimination, and prejudice. Internal factors include cognitive appraisal methods, coping strategies, personality, culture-related knowledge and skills, and demographic factors. Life changes in external factors refer to a series of adjustments experienced by individuals living abroad; social support pertains to the assistance provided by local residents and members of the culture; sojourn time indicates the influence of the duration of intercultural interactions on adaptation; cultural distance refers to the dissimilarity between the sojourner's culture and that of their host country.

The distinction between culture and local culture; discrimination and prejudice refer to the attitudes of the local culture towards sojourners. The cognitive style of internal factors refers to the cognition of intercultural contacts, such as expectations; personality factors such as control point and personality; knowledge and skills refer to the knowledge and skills required for cross-cultural contact; coping strategies refer to the methods used by Indians to deal with cross-cultural contacts. Pressure caused by culture and demographic factors, such as gender, age, and education level, can have an impact.

Zhao (2011) explored the current research status and future applications of intercultural sensitivity in second language teaching and intercultural training, using the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) as an example. She argues that intercultural sensitivity is a necessary element for successful communication in intercultural contexts. Intercultural sensitivity, as an independent concept, comprises six factors: self-respect, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, perspective-taking, communication involvement, and non-judgmental attitude. Intercultural sensitivity is crucial for intercultural communication.

Li and Dong (2019) explored the construction and positioning of a "three-dimensional" intercultural adaptability training model. They pointed out that international students should undergo a "three-dimensional" intercultural adaptability training model while studying abroad. These dimensions include: "strengthening language training and simulating business environment," "innovating curriculum system and solid professional skills," and "enhancing international exchanges and understanding historical culture." In the first dimension, "strengthening language training and simulating business environment," international students should build a solid language foundation, overcome the confusion brought by "culture shock," break through the bottleneck of intercultural adaptability, and embrace non-native cultures.

In the second dimension, the "innovative courses and high-precision professional skills dimension," overseas students need to overcome intercultural barriers and the extended period of "cultural shock" to alleviate the anxiety stemming from cultural differences. In the third dimension, it is essential to strengthen international exchanges and enhance understanding. When considering the cultural aspect of history, students studying abroad should work on reducing difficulties and consistently enhance their ability to adapt to cross-cultural situations.

Zhang, Amankwah-Amoah, and Beaverstock (2016) utilized the pressure-adaptation-growth dynamic model in integrated communication theory to explain intercultural adaptation as a process of personality reshaping influenced by environmental pressure and multicultural integration. She conducted research on the intercultural adaptation of foreign students studying in China. She pointed out that the intercultural adaptation expressed in the pressure-adaptation-growth dynamic model is not linear, stable, smooth, and single-directional, but a dialectical, cyclical, and iterative process. The process of. Through research, she found that by integrating communication theory, international students in China should actively engage in communication with others. Even long-term intercultural adaptation is difficult to achieve without assimilation. For short- and medium-term residents, such as international students, greater emphasis should be placed on multicultural integration.

Ye and Wang (2018) examined the correlation between intercultural adaptation and career adaptation among Chinese international students. They discovered that during their overseas study and exchange experiences, Chinese international students exhibit two orientations in intercultural adaptation: a preference for interacting with local people and engaging with the local community, and being receptive to learning from diverse cultures. The study also revealed that some students prefer interacting with individuals from their own ethnic group and hold a positive perspective on their own country's culture and traditions.

Compared with foreign scholars, Chinese scholars still lag behind in terms of research depth and quantity. Nowadays, an increasing number of Chinese people are traveling abroad. Whether it is conducting business, studying abroad, or living overseas, these activities are becoming increasingly popular. At the same time, individuals from ethnic minorities come to China to study, negotiate, or conduct trade. Intercultural research has also become increasingly important.

2.2 Psychological Adjustment and Social-Cultural Adjustment Theory

Although the U-shaped curve has occupied a central position in adjustment theory and research for more than 30 years, Ward and other scholars concluded through research that psychological adjustment is not reflected in the U-shaped curve. This is because individuals experience the most direct life changes when transitioning into a new culture, leading to psychological distress at this time. Therefore, the U-shaped curve is still considered one-sided in intercultural research. Ward and colleagues followed a group of Malaysian and Singaporean students who were interviewed and tested during their first, sixth, and twelfth months in New Zealand. They found that depression levels increased between the first and second months in New Zealand. It is at its highest point in a year and relatively low in 6 months. In other words, the level of psychological adaptation is at its lowest in the first month and after one year. Therefore, they pointed out that in the initial stage of cross-cultural adaptation, the number of life changes is the highest, and the adaptation resources are the least. The level of adaptation at this time is the lowest.

Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima (1998) divided sojourners' intercultural adjustment into two dimensions: psychological adjustment and Social-cultural adjustment. Psychological adaptation refers to an individual's mental health and subjective well-being in a different culture. Ward & Kennedy believe that sociocultural adaptation refers to an individual's acquisition of appropriate cultural knowledge and skills in a foreign culture. Intercultural competence refers to the capacity to adjust to a foreign cultural setting and effectively engage with individuals, developed through the process of intercultural adaptation. They pointed out that psychological adaptation can be used to assess an individual's level of satisfaction and mental well-being in a foreign culture. Sociocultural adaptation, on the other hand, can gauge how well an individual acquires and applies cultural knowledge and life skills in a foreign environment. This includes the ability to communicate effectively with members of a different culture and to adeptly handle various situations and challenges that may arise in a different cultural setting.

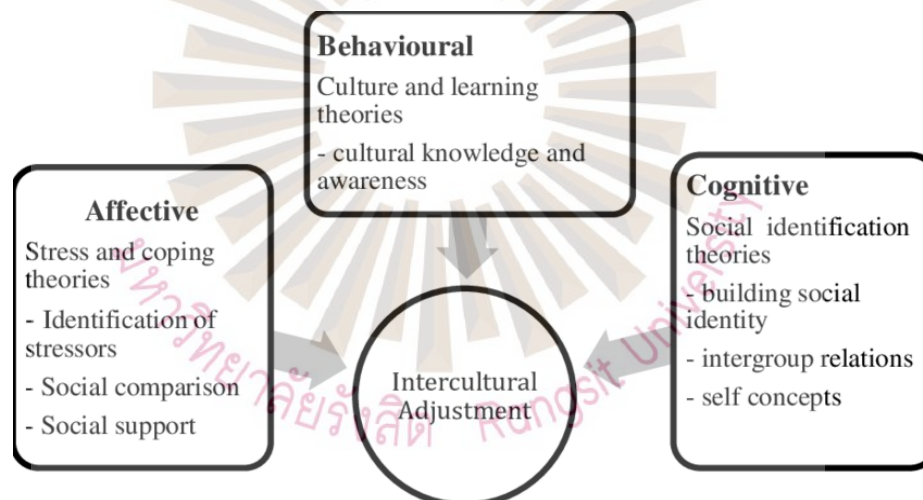


Figure 2.6 Framework for understanding intercultural adjustment

Source: Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001

2.2.1 Factors Affecting Psychological Adjustment

In psychology, adaptation refers to a state in which a person can adjust to changes in physical, occupational, and social environments. In other words, adjustment refers to the behavioral process of balancing conflicting demands or demands that are

challenged by environmental obstacles. Chen and Zhu (2003) pointed out that psychological adaptation is based on emotional responses and is linked to mental health and life satisfaction in intercultural interactions. In the process of intercultural contact, achieving psychological adaptation may not be enough if there is an absence or reduction of depression, anxiety, loneliness, disappointment, homesickness, and other negative emotions. Sociocultural adaptation refers to the ability to adapt to the local social and cultural environment and effectively engage with people from the local culture.

Psychological adaptation and sociocultural adaptation are closely related, but there are differences in their variables. Psychological adaptation is measured by assessing individual frustration and overall emotional problems. The main variables include social support level, personality traits, personal motivation, and expectations regarding problem-solving strategies. Sociocultural adaptation is measured based on the various difficulties individuals encounter in their daily lives. The main variables include language proficiency, cultural knowledge, cultural differences, length of stay, and the level of acceptance of foreign cultures. Psychological adaptation and social adaptation exhibit various fluctuations over time.

For psychological and social adaptation, the most challenging period is when an individual first enters a foreign culture. There is a gradual and steady decline in sociocultural adjustment problems, whereas the level of psychological adjustment problems fluctuates repeatedly. (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). There is an inherent connection between the two adaptations, but the magnitude of this connection is not fixed. The greater the degree of integration of the individual's host culture and co-national culture, the more similar the two cultures will be. The greater the value, the stronger the internal connection between sociocultural adaptation and psychological adaptation (Chen, 2013).

The most challenging period for psychological and social adaptation occurs when individuals first enter a foreign culture. According to Ward & Rana-Deuba (2000), there is a gradual and steady decline in sociocultural adjustment problems over time, whereas psychological adjustment problems fluctuate repeatedly. There exists an inherent connection between these two forms of adaptation, although the strength of

this connection varies. Chen (2013) suggests that the extent of integration between an individual's host culture and their co-national culture determines the similarity between the two cultures. Greater alignment leads to a stronger internal connection between sociocultural adaptation and psychological adaptation.

Psychological adaptation refers to the individual changes that occur as a result of cultural changes after an individual has continuous and direct contact with a group from a different culture. In a foreign culture, the most significant challenge individuals face is the reduction or absence of social support. Moving to a foreign culture can lead to the loss of the social support system established in one's native culture, individual lack of self-confidence, increased tension, and confusion (Qiu and Yan, 2016).

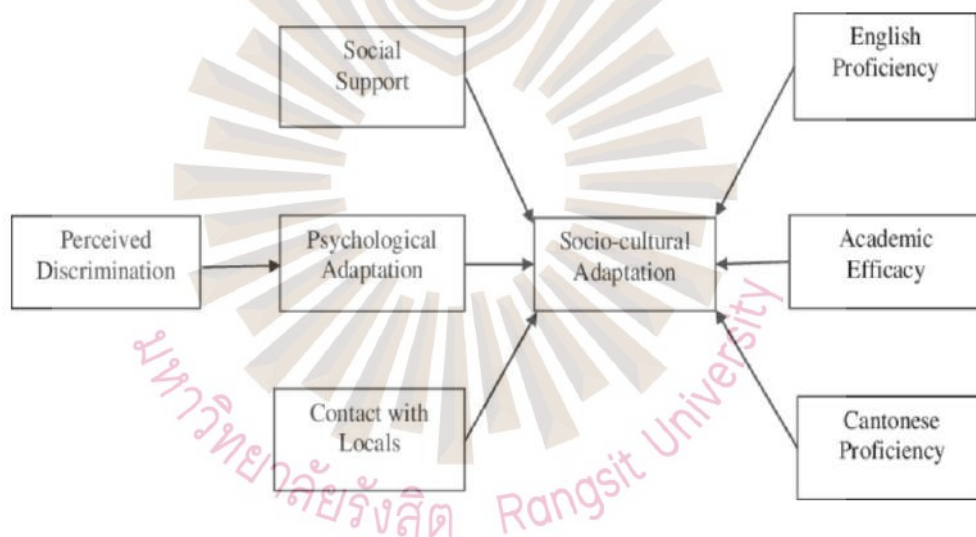


Figure 2.7 Conceptual framework of sociocultural adaptation in crosscultural transition

Source: Yu, Vyas, & Wright, 2019

2.2.2 Factors Affecting Social-Cultural Adjustment

Culture Adjustment emphasizes the process of adapting to different cultures. It is advocated that different cultural subjects should adapt to each other by adjusting their customs, lifestyles, and ideas to align with one another. Cultural adaptability is manifested in various fields, such as multinational enterprises, international education,

language translation, and more. Given that social progress imposes specific demands on cultural development, cultural adaptability demonstrates its inherent dynamic nature. For example, sustainable development requires cultural adaptive evolution. Sociocultural adjustment is defined as an individual's ability to “fit in” or negotiate social interactions successfully in the new culture (Ward et al., 1998).

Factors that affect social and cultural adaptation include individual language proficiency, cultural knowledge, cultural differences, length of stay, and the level of acceptance of foreign cultures. Culture encompasses people's patterned and repeated ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Therefore, it is not only maintained by communication but is also often expressed through communication. Culture is also a series of spiritual windows into all of life. It is not just the geographical location or surrounding environment where people live, nor is it just a single component of people's personalities or backgrounds. It also includes people's race, nationality, and language. Gender, belief, physical ability, or socioeconomic status. These components, their interactions, and their combined influence determine a person's social status and educational background. They also play a crucial role in defining an individual's position within their family, community, and workplace. Influence, therefore, culture is also a way of life (Jiang, 2008).

External factors that affect cross-cultural adaptation include life changes such as eating habits, daily routines, climate, etc. These changes can bring stress to people. Babiker, Cox, and Miller (1990) proposed the concept of cultural distance and believed that cultural distance is a moderating variable for the stress and adjustment problems experienced by sojourners. During intercultural adaptation, it is proposed that when life changes bring stress to individuals, the variances between their home culture and the local culture will play a moderating role. Many studies have found that international students with previous experience of living abroad have better adaptation to cross-cultural life in the future. Another way to acquire cultural knowledge is through training and education, such as gaining proficiency in using the local language, which can be acquired through training (Chen and Zhu, 2003)

This study primarily focuses on the concept of intercultural adaptation as proposed by Ward and colleagues. It examines the intercultural adaptation of Chinese undergraduate students studying at Rangsit University in Thailand from two perspectives: sociocultural adaptation and psychological adaptation.

2.3 The Relationship Between Language and Intercultural Adaptation

A number of previous studies found that Chinese university students commonly encountered difficulties in adjusting themselves to new languages locally used in and out of the class, especially Thai and English. For example: Peng and Zhu (2017) investigated and analyzed the development status of Chinese college students' intercultural competence based on intercultural competence theory and previous related research, using empirical data. A quantitative study was conducted on 1,350 Chinese students from freshman to senior years in ten comprehensive universities in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Wuhan.

The study focused on national cultural knowledge, foreign cultural knowledge, attitudes, intercultural communication skills, and intercultural cognition. Among the six competency dimensions, college students demonstrate a relatively strong level of native cultural knowledge, attitude, and awareness when analyzing the six dimensions of skills and awareness. Among these, college students exhibit the highest proficiency in attitude. In contrast, college students generally exhibit lower proficiency in cultural knowledge, intercultural communication skills, and intercultural cognitive skills. Among these, college students demonstrate the weakest ability in intercultural communication skills. It shows that Chinese college students are still at a disadvantage in language communication during cross-cultural interactions.

Lin and Kingminghae (2014), took 2,000 Chinese undergraduate international students from 14 Thai universities as the research subjects, and conducted an analysis from the two dimensions of social support and loneliness, in the research result, there are several intercultural communication stressors found via interviews. Language, cultural and religious knowledge, local information, loneliness and homesickness are

main stressors among Chinese students. In addition, pressure of study, work and graduation, food, living condition, friendship, lost of identity are explored stressors in each group. Moreover, in pre-arrival and post-arrival, respondents stereotypes are found as well. In general, respondents hold negative stereotype toward to Thailand in pre-arrival such as sexy overabundance, many transsexuals, weak in social security and overabundance of drugs; in post-arrival, respondents' stereotypes are generally positive in 0-6 months period and negative in 6-18 months and 18-30 months periods; and their stereotypes are become to average in 30 up months period.

Shi (2021) found through research that Chinese students in Thailand tend to study business because it is beneficial for their future career development; therefore, the learning of English is quite important. However, due to a lack of a solid foundation or positive attitude towards learning English, some students opt to drop out of school and later need to re-enroll because they struggle to comprehend the lessons and become weary of the learning process. Alternatively, they may transfer to specific universities that exclusively admit Chinese students and conduct classes in Chinese. Universities that teach in Chinese.

Yan and He (2020) pointed out that Chinese international students commonly worry about encountering insurmountable difficulties during their studies due to poor language communication and lack of understanding of study rules. Chinese international students are prone to negative emotions, often suffering from anxiety and depression. The main factors affecting the psychological stress of international students are language communication barriers and lack of factual understanding, which lead to increased psychological stress among international students.

According to Ye (2015), applying to universities in Thailand is relatively easy and does not require high English language proficiency. Although Chinese students can study Thai language courses after arriving in Thailand, some students tend to neglect English language learning, resulting in slow progress and inadequate academic performance. As a consequence, they only acquire basic language skills, which leaves them at a disadvantage upon graduation.

Chen, P., You, & Chen, D. (2018) emphasizes that in Thai language learning, some Thai language teachers focus more on the practical application of the language and less on developing cultural communication skills. Under this traditional teaching model, even students who perform well in their studies may not be able to communicate appropriately and effectively with Thai people using the Thai language they have learned.

Ning (2019) pointed out that English is an international language. Chinese students studying in Thailand need language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for their daily life and studies. When Chinese students with deeply rooted Chinese thinking enter a new cultural environment, they face challenges from various aspects such as foreign society, culture, learning methods, and language. If not handled properly, these challenges will inevitably have a negative impact on their studies.

Jia and Rui (2020) explored the current situation and causes of cross-cultural adaptation among Chinese students from four perspectives: "daily life," "interpersonal communication," "academic performance," and "mental health." They found that respect, understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of cultural differences in different social contexts are important and necessary aspects of the intercultural adaptation process. For Chinese international students, having strong foreign language skills, oral proficiency, and high-level academic English skills can help shorten the adaptation period of intercultural communication and enhance its effectiveness.

Zhang and Cao (2019) found that based on the results of the friendship model, Chinese students prefer to enter social circles dominated by Chinese people. Language proficiency is a key factor in facilitating communication between Chinese international students and locals. Students with good language skills have a stronger ability to integrate into the local culture and are more likely to achieve good academic results. Due to language barriers faced by some international students, they rarely communicate with the outside world. Over time, they may develop feelings of frustration and alienation towards different cultures. Compared to academic language,

students often lack social interaction skills. Particularly, Chinese students from Thailand often need to master at least two languages.

As mentioned above, language proficiency is the most fundamental and crucial ability in intercultural communication. Without language tools, civilization cannot be passed down, and communication cannot take place. Language serves as a carrier of culture, possessing profound cultural connotations. It is closely related to cultural backgrounds regarding how to express an idea to different audiences in various situations. People from different cultural backgrounds often interpret and use the language they have learned based on their own cultural upbringing, ways of thinking, values, and language habits. Research by scholars has shown that the language proficiency of Chinese students studying abroad affects their intercultural adaptation and can even impact their psychological adjustment. For Chinese students studying in Thailand, in addition to using English in the classroom, learning basic Thai has become essential for smooth daily life and social interactions.

2.4 The Impact of Length of Time on Intercultural Adaptation

By sorting through previous research literature, it was found that the research directions can be roughly divided into two categories. Firstly, this study examines the intercultural communication barriers faced by exchange students and undergraduate international students studying in Thailand for a short period of time. For example, Prommin (2018) selected 30 Chinese students who had recently enrolled in a Thai university to study English for three months as the research participants. After conducting questionnaire surveys and interviews, he found that Chinese students have encountered cultural difficulties and adaptation issues due to cultural differences, varying cultural communication and interpretation methods, as well as an incomplete understanding of Thai culture. The most critical issues affecting their cultural adaptation process are insufficient knowledge of English and Thai languages and cultural norms. Thailand's academic environment and Thai cuisine are also considered to have an impact. An important factor in their ability to adapt.

Lin and Worapinya (2014) conducted a survey of 897 Chinese students studying in Bangkok, Thailand. The survey subjects were all Chinese students who had been in Thailand for at least 8 months. In the research results, it was found through interviews that several cross-cultural stressors such as communication, language barriers, cultural and religious differences, lack of local information, loneliness, and homesickness are the main stressors for Chinese students. In addition, pressure from studies, work, graduation, food, living conditions, friendships, and loss of identity were also stressors explored in each group. Furthermore, stereotypes of respondents were identified both before and after their arrival. In general, the interviewees held negative stereotypes about Thailand before arriving, such as being overly sexy, having many transgender people, weak social security, and being drug-infested. After arrival, the interviewees' stereotypes ranged from 0 to 6. They are generally positive within one month, negative between 6-18 months, and 18-30 months; and over 30 months, their stereotypes tend to be average.

Si and Shi (2020) selected undergraduate international students who had studied in Thailand for one year as the research subjects from the Sino-Thailand cooperative education program at Hunan High-speed Railway Vocational and Technical College. Through the research, it was found that undergraduate students in the Sino-Thailand cooperative education program at Hunan High-speed Railway Vocational and Technical College face two main obstacles when studying in Thailand. One barrier is the language barrier, and the other is the cultural adaptation barrier.

Secondly, the research objective is to investigate the intercultural communication barriers encountered by exchange students and undergraduate international students who have studied in Thailand for an extended period. Shi (2021) conducted a questionnaire survey among 56 Chinese students who were studying in Thailand for four months to two years at an international university in Thailand. He found that language is the key to getting along with Thai people. The key factors of studying at an international university in Thailand include the need for Chinese students to adapt to the learning culture, interpersonal dynamics, and social norms of Thai universities.

Li (2020) conducted a study on Thai language major undergraduate students from five universities in Guangxi who studied in Thailand for one year. The research revealed that the intercultural learning adaptation of international students from Guangxi in Thailand is hindered by their weak language foundation and lack of learning enthusiasm. Factors include unreasonable curriculum arrangements in Thai schools, management issues such as the organization of internship positions, the necessity to optimize internship tasks, as well as the impact of teachers' non-standard pronunciation, speaking too quickly, and dull teaching content.

Dao and Cao (2018) conducted a study with Chinese students majoring in Thai at the School of Foreign Languages of Yuxi Normal University who had studied in Thailand for two years. Through qualitative analysis, they discovered that simply mastering pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar is not sufficient for smooth communication among middle school students. The study highlighted the importance of appropriateness and flexibility in language communication, as students who lack these skills may feel less confident in their ability to communicate effectively. Therefore, it is more important to apply the acquired language knowledge to actual communication. Therefore, enhancing cross-cultural communication skills is beneficial for boosting students' self-confidence during the communication process.

To sum up, current research on the intercultural impact of Chinese students studying in Thailand mainly focuses on project students. This study focuses on the cross-cultural adjustment of Chinese students at a private university in Thailand. Mainly aimed at freshmen and sophomore students.

2.5 Differences Classroom Culture between China and Thailand

Classroom culture is a unique form of collective culture with a specific situational context. It mainly embodies an atmosphere and a spiritual essence of people. It should start from the human perspective and reflect care and attention to people, based on open and honest communication. "Culture" encompasses all aspects of our lives. For learning and life, culture also permeates the classroom. Over time, it

forms what we call the "classroom culture." "Classrooms" in different countries have varying styles. By observing different classroom styles in a country, one can gain insight into the country's classroom culture.

According to Wang (2018), classroom culture refers to the values and behavioral norms established by teachers and students through long-term classroom teaching practices, as well as the practical activities that ensue, primarily rooted in spiritual culture. Classroom culture refers to the values, behavioral norms, and resulting practical activities that shape the long-term classroom teaching practices of teachers and students. It is primarily rooted in spiritual culture. Although China and Thailand share many cultural similarities, there are still significant differences in classroom teaching models and classroom culture. Thai classrooms are different from those in China. The subjects, objects, and teaching environment in classroom instruction are very different from those in China. These differences are specifically reflected in aspects such as educational philosophy, classroom time, classroom order, classroom management, teacher-student relationship, and classroom atmosphere.

Xu and Wang (2019) selected six international students from Shangrao Normal University, who participated in the Sino-Thailand Cooperation Program at Buriram Rajabhat University in Thailand in 2017 and 2018, across various majors as the subjects of their research. They conducted questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews to organize and summarize their findings. The following analysis was conducted on the study, life, and cultural adaptation situation of the surveyed students: (2) Adaptation to life: The most challenging aspect for Chinese students to adjust to in Thailand is the climate and cuisine. In terms of transportation, Thai students mostly rely on motorcycles for travel, while some Chinese students express extreme discomfort with this mode of transportation. (3) Cultural Adaptation: Chinese students studying in Thailand tend to adapt well to Thai traditional culture. More than 85% of the students reported that they had no difficulty adapting to festival customs.

Wang (2019) found through teaching in Thailand that there are many cultural differences between China and Thailand. Such as educational concepts, teaching methods, and instructional formats. In terms of disparities in classroom education, Chinese individuals are influenced by the Confucian culture of "respecting teachers and valuing Tao". Teachers hold a high position and should be respected by students. Students must adopt a receptive posture and ask questions humbly. Classroom education in Thailand is relatively flexible. The behavior of Thai teachers and students in the classroom is evidently distinct from that in Chinese classrooms. Students can freely express their own opinions. Chinese classrooms are teacher-dominated, focusing on cultivating students' knowledge and discipline, and have high expectations for students. This emphasizes the acceptance of students and adhere to the principle of teaching according to their abilities. Thai students have a relaxed classroom atmosphere, but their attention span is very short.

Sun and Pradtana (2020), using 314 undergraduate Chinese students in eight universities in northern Thailand as the research object, studied the intercultural adaptation process and main difficulties of Chinese students in universities in northern Thailand, from social-cultural, academic, environmental and psychological four dimensions, the study found that the intercultural adaptation process of Chinese students roughly follows a "U-shaped curve", and that different groups of Chinese students perform differently in the four aspects of intercultural adaptation. The factors that mainly affect the intercultural adaptation process of Chinese students include "not accustomed to campus life", "difficulty in understanding the curriculum", "no good job prospects" and difficulty in integrating into Thai society.

Zhang and Yao (2020) argue that research on China's intercultural competency should be grounded in the Chinese context, focus on talent development, and be integrated into classroom instruction. Proposed is a "four-three-two-one" theoretical framework for the development of intercultural abilities, which comprises four perspectives, three levels, two contexts, and one platform. Based on this framework, the model was initially verified using experimental teaching methods to

describe the development of Chinese students' intercultural skills. The appropriateness and effectiveness of classroom instructional design.

Wang (2022) argues that people's concept of time is a reaction to and understanding of objective time. Cultural time perspective focuses on how individuals from diverse cultures perceive time and utilize it within a specific cultural context. Intercultural communication is divided into two parts: verbal communication and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication accounts for a large proportion of daily interactions. The concept of time is a non-verbal communication method related to behavior. China has a relatively strict view of time, requiring people to be punctual whether in the classroom or in life.

The Chinese and Thai perspectives on time play a crucial role in intercultural communication between China and Thailand. Under the backdrop of varying perspectives on time, Chinese and Thai students also hold distinct views on time management and punctuality in the classroom. Although Thailand emphasizes etiquette, the power distance between teachers and students is smaller than that in China. Thai classrooms are relatively relaxed and student-centered. Thai students are not as dependent on teachers, so Chinese teachers with a high power distance may find it challenging to adapt.

In summary, classroom culture has a significant impact on the cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese international students. For Chinese international students at Rangsit University, there are significant differences in classroom culture between China and Thailand. This is also a problem for Chinese international students. Challenge.

2.6 Related Studies

Shen and Chen (2017) used Ward's two-dimensional theory of sociocultural adaptation and psychological adaptation of cross-cultural adaptation to investigate the current situation of intercultural adaptation and psychological well-being of Chinese international students in Thailand, and then tested the correlation between the two.

They introduced the psychological concept of psychological well-being, combined with the intercultural adaptation of international students, and conducted research on Chinese students in Thailand. The purpose was to understand the cross-cultural adaptation and psychological well-being of Chinese college students studying in Thailand. situation, and finally analyze whether the degree of cross-cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand will affect their psychological well-being.

Since no researchers have studied the correlation between the degree of cross-cultural adaptation and psychological well-being, they formulated a hypothesis: There is a positive correlation between cross-cultural adaptation and psychological well-being. After formulating the hypothesis, a questionnaire was used to recruit undergraduate students from a university in Thailand. Out of 300 questionnaires distributed, 278 were recovered, and 238 valid questionnaires were collected. The ages of these students range from 18 to 25 years old, and they have been staying in Thailand for 1-4 months, 5-11 months, 1-2 years, and more than two years, respectively. The survey found that the social and cultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand is positively correlated with their psychological well-being. The higher the degree of adaptation, the better the psychological well-being. There is a significant moderate positive correlation between the degree of psychological adaptation and psychological well-being. In other words, the better the psychological adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand, the higher their psychological well-being.

Wang (2014) studied the impact of self-interpretation of Chinese international students on intercultural experiences while studying abroad. Self-interpretation in cross-cultural communication is divided into two dimensions, namely Markus and Kitayama's independent self-interpretation and dependence. Based on the concept of self-interpretation, research has found that mental health is related to life satisfaction in intercultural adaptation. The healthier the mind, the more satisfied Chinese students are with life. The two dimensions of self-interpretation and social support are significantly positively related to mental health and life satisfaction in the context of intercultural social adaptation.

Ma (2016) investigated and analyzed the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students from Qijing Normal University studying at Kasem Bundit University in Thailand. The study focused on four main aspects of social adaptation: life, study, interpersonal interactions, and support systems. The research subjects were 50 students from the International College of Qijing Normal University who pursued bachelor's degrees at Kasem Bundit University in Thailand through the "2+2" and "1+3" Sino-Thailand joint training models. There are 19 boys and 31 girls. They are all between 19 and 24 years old, majoring in Business Administration (35 people) and Thai Language (15 people). They have been in Thailand for more than one year. She uses questionnaires and interviews as research methods. The questionnaire covers six parts: students' basic personal information, living conditions in Thailand, learning situations, interpersonal interactions, support systems, and feelings about studying in Thailand.

The results revealed that the daily teaching language for 15 Thai language majors was Thai, while the teaching language for the remaining 35 business administration students was English. Although these students have received relatively systematic language teaching before going to Thailand, and some have good grades, this does not guarantee that they can adapt well to the new teaching and learning environment. According to the survey results, upon their initial arrival in Thailand, 94% of students reported having poor communication in class and struggling to comprehend the teacher's instruction. 89% of students said they were with friends from their own country. Even for some students who are outgoing and willing to communicate, cultural differences and language barriers may lead them to prefer staying within their "home culture circle" as much as possible. A girl who once lived with a Thai student told me that she initially chose a Thai roommate because she wanted to improve her Thai language skills and sincerely wanted to make foreign friends. But later, it was discovered that there were problems and conflicts between the two parties in many places.

Su (2018) investigated and analyzed the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international graduate students at University of The Thai Chamber of Commerce. The study focused on the social and cultural adaptation, environmental adaptation,

academic adaptation, and psychological adaptation of Chinese graduate students studying at University of The Thai Chamber of Commerce. Data was collected through questionnaires and oral interviews, and analyzed using SPSS software. The study aimed to integrate the current situation and existing problems faced by Chinese graduate students studying abroad at University of The Thai Chamber of Commerce, ultimately drawing conclusions based on the findings. Through data analysis, it is known that in the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand, the correlation between environmental adaptability and overall adaptability is the most significant, followed by cultural adaptation, academic adaptation, and psychological adaptation.

Wang (2018) took Chinese international students as the research object to study the adaptation issues of Chinese international students abroad. She conducted research from five dimensions: communicative participation, differential identity, communicative concentration, communicative pleasure, and communicative confidence. In the test span When it comes to cultural sensitivity, he used Chen & Starosta's "Intercultural Sensitivity Scale" to test the intercultural sensitivity of efficient students. It mainly tests five factors: participation, difference recognition, communicative confidence, and communicative pleasure. and communicative attentiveness. The study found that students' scores on the five variables that affect intercultural sensitivity are, from high to low, communicative participation > differential identity > communicative concentration > communicative pleasure > communicative confidence.

Ye and Wang (2018) utilized the Intercultural Adaptation Orientation Scale, Career Exploration Behavior Scale, and Career Adaptability Scale to survey 141 Chinese students with experience studying abroad. The study aimed to investigate the influence of overseas study experience on their career development. Impact path. They believe that students will face intercultural adaptation problems when the culture of the country where they study abroad is different from their own culture. By analyzing previous research by Berry, Kim, and Ward, it was found that individuals utilizing integration and assimilation adaptation strategies experienced fewer social and cultural adaptation difficulties. Conversely, those with a strong ethnic identity (high Home),

who support and maintain their traditional culture, may benefit from adaptation strategies that involve increased communication with native people to enhance their mental health and satisfaction.

They found that there is a connection between individual cultural adaptation behavior and ancestral development. They hypothesized that Chinese Muslims, while studying abroad, adopt two different intercultural adaptation strategies, both of which will impact career adaptability. Chinese exchange students from two universities in Jiangsu, as well as Chinese students studying abroad through online programs, were surveyed. Out of 150 forms issued, 141 valid forms were recovered, representing a recovery rate of 94% for the effective forms. Among them, 95 are short-term exchange students, and 46 are Chinese students studying for long-term degrees. Among them, there are 71 boys and 70 girls, 119 undergraduates, and 22 graduates.

Finally, it was concluded that Chinese international students with an ethnic orientation face language barriers, such as not being proficient enough in foreign languages. However, this does not imply that they do not prioritize their career development. In some cases, Chinese international students who uphold traditional family values have a strong sense of ethnicity and family. This can actually enhance the development of their self-identity and sense of responsibility, consequently boosting their career focus and curiosity, and laying the groundwork for enhancing career adaptability. Base. Furthermore, a strong ethnic identity is beneficial for experiencing less stressful psychological adjustment in intercultural settings (Ward & Kennedy, 1992). Therefore, Chinese students studying abroad often interact with people of the same nationality, which can promote mental health and help overcome stressors such as acclimatization, psychological pressure, loneliness, and social barriers.

Shi and Wang (2020) utilized Ward's dual model theory of psychological adaptation and social adaptation as the foundation to investigate the influence of intercultural adaptation on the psychological well-being of Chinese international students in Thailand. The study focused on Chinese international students from three

universities in Bangkok, Thailand, employing a questionnaire survey method for data collection. A random sample of 580 questionnaires was sent out, and 561 valid questionnaires were finally obtained. SPSS 22.0, AMOS 22.0, and other software were used to conduct statistical analysis on the data.

The following research conclusions were obtained: (1) Intercultural adaptation has a significant positive prediction effect on psychological well-being; (2) The personality traits of Chinese students in Thailand have a significant positive impact on psychological well-being; (3) The personality traits of Chinese students in Thailand - pleasantness has a mediating effect between intercultural adjustment and psychological well-being. For Chinese students in Thailand, intercultural adaptation is affected by psychological well-being, and schools and families should pay attention to cultivating students' sense of well-being. To further improve one's ability to adapt to studying abroad and improve students' overall personality development, thereby enhancing their individual ability to perceive happiness.

In summary, Ward's dual-model theory of intercultural adaptation is relevant for examining the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand. This study will utilize Ward's dual model theory of intercultural adaptation to examine Chinese international undergraduate students at a Thai private University. The study aims to investigate the influence of language proficiency, length of time, daily life, and classroom culture on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students. The findings will provide valuable insights and propose practical recommendations to help Chinese international students overcome intercultural challenges and enhance their academic experience at a Thai private University.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students at a Thai private University in Thailand. In order to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the research, necessary and systematic research methods are indispensable. Therefore, this chapter is focus on the research design and implementation plan of the research methods. Explore the validity analysis of research tools and research data. Finally, there are data collection procedures and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopt mixed -methods approach, it aims to explore the influence the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students studying a Thai private University. The data for quantitative research came from questionnaires, and the data for qualitative research came from semi-structured interviews. The benefits of mixed -methods have also been confirmed by multiple researchers.

Pawson (2008) concluded that researchers combine quantitative and qualitative methods because society is multifaceted, multilevel, and multi-perspective. Therefore, academia needs individuals who can integrate various forms of materials and evidence and apply current research methods from multiple research perspectives. Gang and Wang (2016) emphasized that mixed methods research, as an independent methodology, integrates quantitative research and qualitative research. It can provide researchers with a wide range of methodological options, opportunities for diverse research materials, and intellectual cross-pollination. This approach is considered an important

method to enhance educational research. Important Paths to Quality in Mixed Methods Research.

In summary, the mixed research method is highly practical, flexible, and more conducive to the collection of research data. Therefore, this study was conducted in the form of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The table below describes the methods used to conduct this study. Each goal was outlined along with the specific tools and techniques used to achieve each goal.

Table 3.1 Research Plan

| Research Question | Research Instrument | Data Collection Procedure | Data Analysis |
|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Do the language proficiency, length of study in Thailand, daily life and classroom culture of Chinese international students affect their intercultural adaptation? | Questionnaire | Online delivery of questionnaire form to respondents | Descriptive statistics |
| What are the factors that influence Chinese students' intercultural adaptation? | Online semi-structured Interview | Semi-structured interview through voice call on WeChat. | Content analysis using 3Cs (Coding-Category-Concept) |

3.2 Research Site

This research was conducted at Rangsit University, Thailand. Rangsit University is one of the largest comprehensive private university in Thailand with the most majors. Rangsit University has 31 departments, a total of 89 undergraduate programs, 38 master's programs, 11 doctoral degree programs, 4 graduate schools, and more than 32,000 students. In addition to local students in Thailand, there are also students from the United States, Japan, and Finland. There are about 1,200 international students from, Sweden, China, South Korea and other countries. Currently, Rangsit University offers undergraduate majors that are open to Chinese students, including Communication Arts (CA), International Business (IB), Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies (IRD), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), International Hotel Management (IH), Civil Engineering (CE), Biomedical Engineering (BE), Biomedical Science (BS), and Design.

Therefore, Rangsit University can be used as a research site to investigate whether the language proficiency, length of study abroad in Thailand, daily life culture, and classroom culture of Chinese international students will affect their intercultural adaptation.

3.3 Population and Sample

This study was select undergraduate students studying at Rangsit University as the survey population and sample.

3.3.1 Population

From 2022 to 2023, a total of 235 Chinese students have chosen to study in English-taught programs at Rangsit University. Among them, in the 2022 academic year, there are a total of 125 Chinese students distributed as follows: Communication Arts - 69 students, Design - 34 students, International Business - 6 students, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies - 4 students, Information and Communication Technology - 5

students, Hotel Management - 4 students, and Civil Engineering - 3 students. In the 2023 academic year, there are a total of 110 Chinese students distributed as follows: Communication Arts - 51 students, Design - 39 students, International Business - 10 students, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies - 1 student, Information and Communication Technology - 8 students, and Hotel Management - 1 student.

These students are aged 18-24 years old and study at Rangsit University for 4 months to 2 years. These students can serve as the research group to study whether Chinese students' language proficiency, length of study abroad in Thailand, daily life culture, and classroom culture have an impact on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

3.3.2 Sample

Experiments require multiple methods to determine the sample size required for a population. This study used Yamane's (1967) formula to determine the sample size.

Sample size for $\pm 7\%$ precision levels where confidence level is 95%.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad (3-1)$$

n = required sample size.

N = the population size. (235total)

e = the margin of error. (0.05 are commonly use)

*95%confidence level and e =0.05 are assumed

Formula source: Yamane (1967)

Therefore, the number of samples: $n \approx 148$

Finally, a total of 148 people were selected to participate in the questionnaire survey. Subsequently, 9 students were purposely selected and divided into three groups based on the length of time they stayed in Thailand: six months, one year and two years as the sample for semi-structured interviews.

3.4 Research Instruments

Two main instruments were used in the study: the Questionnaire and the Semi-Structured Interview. This section discusses the components of the research instruments: questionnaire design and semi-structured interviews.

Su (2018) studied the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in universities in Thailand through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, interactions with classmates and friends, personal experiences in Thailand, and analysis using SPSS software. This study used Su's questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews as a reference. Su's research mainly focuses on four aspects: sociocultural adaptation, environmental adaptation, academic adaptation and psychological adaptation. The research subjects were Chinese-taught graduate students in private universities in Thailand. The subjects of this study were Chinese students taught in English at private universities.

Through the questionnaire survey, this study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students, focusing on aspects such as their language proficiency, duration of study abroad, daily life, and classroom culture. On this basis, semi-structured interviews are conducted with Chinese international students. Semi-structured interviews can offer a more focused insight into the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students, complementing the limitations of a questionnaire and enhancing the comprehensiveness and accuracy of research data.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Various kinds of rating scales have been developed to measure attitudes directly (i.e., the person knows their attitude is being studied). The most widely used is the Likert

scale (1932). As shown in Appendix A, This research designed 33 questions and divided them into 5 parts.

Table 3.2 The 5-point Likert Scale

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

1) The first part is the student's basic personal information, with 4 items. such as: student's gender, age, college, major, etc.

2) The second part investigates the impact of English language ability on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students, with 9 items. Such as: whether students have difficulty integrating into local life due to language problems, whether they use English more than Thai in daily life, whether they are troubled by being unable to understand the teacher's content in class, etc.

3) The third part studies the impact of length of time on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation, with 7 items. For example: Do students feel anxious when they first come to study in Thailand? Does it take a long time to adapt to Thai culture? As the time spent studying abroad increases, will students become anxious about adapting to Thai culture?

4) The fourth part studies whether the daily life problems have an impact on Chinese international students. There are 5 items. For example: when students first come to Thailand, do they feel that the living habits of China and Thailand are very different, whether it is difficult to integrate into Thai life, whether they cope well with cultural differences in life, etc.

5) The fifth part studies the impact of classroom cultural differences on Chinese international students, with 8 items. For example: do students feel that there are big cultural differences between Chinese and Thai classrooms, do they like the way teachers teach, and can they get along well with teachers and classmates in class, etc.

Table 3.3 The Structure of the Questionnaire

| Dimensions | Location |
|---|----------|
| General Information | Q1-Q4 |
| The impact of English and Thai language ability on intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students | Q5-Q13 |
| The impact of length of time on intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students | Q14-Q20 |
| The impact of daily life on intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students | Q21-Q25 |
| The impact of classroom culture on intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students | Q26-Q33 |

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

This study utilized semi-structured interviews for qualitative analysis. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed interviewers to express their views and ask questions, encouraged participants to provide more useful information for the qualitative study, including their perspectives on sensitive issues. That was more conducive to understanding the intercultural adaptation issues of Chinese international students.

Burges (1984) pointed out that semi-structured interviews have the following characteristics: a more informal style. For example, interviewers and interviewees engage in face-to-face conversational discussions rather than following prescribed formal questions. Such conversations are referred to as "purposeful conversations." Levin (2023) highlighted that semi-structured interviews are an effective method for gathering qualitative information. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews are a valuable method for gathering information. This type of interview is a hybrid of structured and unstructured interviews, which allows for a greater degree of flexibility and control.

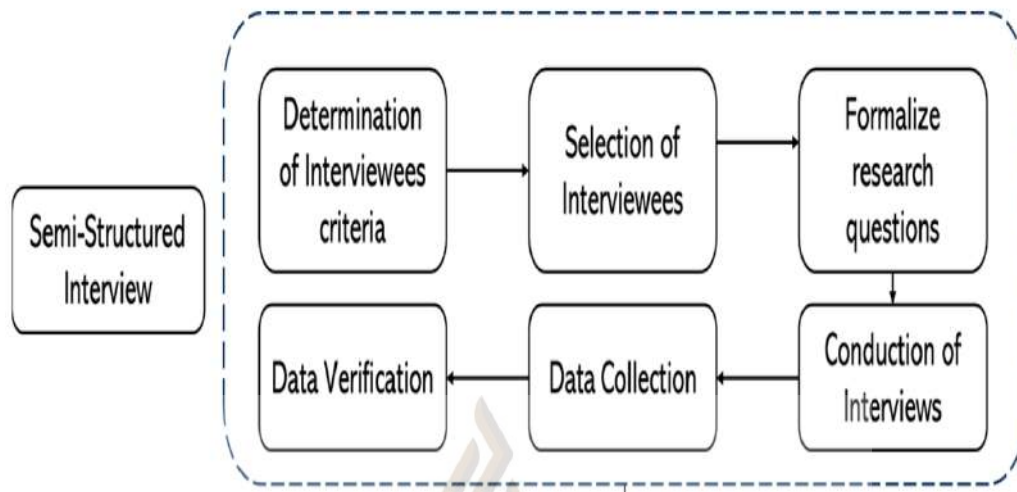


Figure 3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews Processing

Source: Geng, Huang, Li, & Zhang, 2023

Based on the advantages of semi-structured interviews, this study randomly selected 9 students from different grades and majors out of 148 students for interviews. The selected students adhere to the principle of volunteerism, and those who volunteer to be interviewed shared their study abroad experiences and personal opinions. The interview questions are provided in Appendix B. With the consent of the volunteer students, this interview was recorded and saved, and the researcher summarized the opinions of the volunteer students. The seven interview questions were as follows:

- 1) How are you adapting to studying and living in Thailand when you first arrive?
- 2) How long did it take for you to adapt to study life in Thailand?
- 3) Does your language proficiency have an impact on your life of studying abroad?
- 4) Do you think learning English well can help you integrate into Thai culture?
- 5) What do you think is the difference between Chinese classroom culture and Thai classroom culture?
- 6) Do you like Thai classroom culture?
- 7) How did you adjust yourself to life in Thailand while studying abroad?

- 1) 你在刚到泰国学习生活是是否适应?
- 2) 你经过了多长时间才适应泰国的学习生活?
- 3) 你的语言水平是否对你的留学生活产生影响?
- 4) 你觉得学习好英语能帮你很好的融入泰国的文化吗?
- 5) 你觉得中国课堂文化和泰国课堂文化有什么差异?
- 6) 你喜欢泰国的课堂文化吗?
- 7) 在留学期间你是怎样调整自己以适应泰国的生活的?

3.5 Instrument Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it was designed to measure, while reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument produces consistent results across multiple trials. By effectively addressing these two components, researchers can improve the measurement and data quality.

This section explains what the researcher did to avoid the threats to the instrument validity and reliability.

3.5.1 Validity

The index of item-objective congruence (IOC) is one method to quantitatively measure content experts' judgments of items (Turner & Carlson, 2003). Reliability and validity are the two most important and fundamental features in the evaluation of any measurement instrument or tool for a good research. Mohajan (2017). In this study, the research instruments, questionnaires and interview questions for this study will be evaluated by three experts.

This is a procedure for assessing the content validity of items during the instrument development phase. Therefore, this study uses IOC to evaluate questionnaire items with semi-structured interview questions. On the Use of Content Specialists in the Assessment of Criterion-Referenced Test Item Validity. by giving a rating of 1 for clearly

measuring objective, -1 for not clearly measuring, or 0 for the unclear objective. After experts score projects, the results are calculated to create an IOC index for each project for each goal.

IOC marks are calculated by below equation:

$$\text{IOC} = \text{R}/\text{N} \quad (3-2)$$

R = Total points of each expert

N = Numbers of experts

The basic rule of thumb has it that the item congruence index (IOC) for both individual items and the entire questionnaire by three experts should not be less than 0.67 (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977; Hambleton, 1978 cited in Carlson & Turner, 2003). Thus, the items were revised and modified based on the remarks and recommendations of the experts where the benchmark was not met. Two items were deleted because they were lower than 0.67. These two items were students' college issues and students' professional issues. The criteria were set up for the score of the test item, if the score falls between 0.67 and 1.00, the item was considered valid and acceptable. The scores of the test items in this study were all above 0.67, and then these items were valid for data collection in this research (See Appendix D).

3.5.2 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test were conducted. Before distributing the formal questionnaires, the researcher selected 30 Chinese international students from different schools to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Base on the pilot study with 30 students, the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.933; The higher the reliability value, the more reliable the measurement. Hence, the questionnaire is reliable.

3.6 Data Collection

Firstly, the questionnaire data was collected through online applications. After students complete the questionnaire, the researcher analyzed the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students. Researchers analyzed the impact of language proficiency, study abroad length, daily life, and classroom culture on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students.

Secondly, in order to obtain more intuitive information and enhance the authenticity of the data, the researcher will select 9 students from the target group and use audio recordings to conduct semi-structured interviews with the students in Chinese. Each student was interviewed for 20 to 30 minutes. After the interview, the researcher sort out the information provided by the interviewee students and conduct data analysis with their consent.

3.7 Data Analysis

This study used quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis.

3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

For the quantitative study, this study used SPSS software to analyze the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire sent to the respondents. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean and standard deviation will be used to analyze the questionnaire responses.

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis based on the 3Cs of data analysis by Lichtman (2013). After obtaining the interview content, the researcher coded the interview questions, organized the code content into categories, and finally conduct further analysis and explanation based on the categories. Researchers move from these

categories and concepts to higher-level theories. The image below illustrates how to analyze qualitative data.

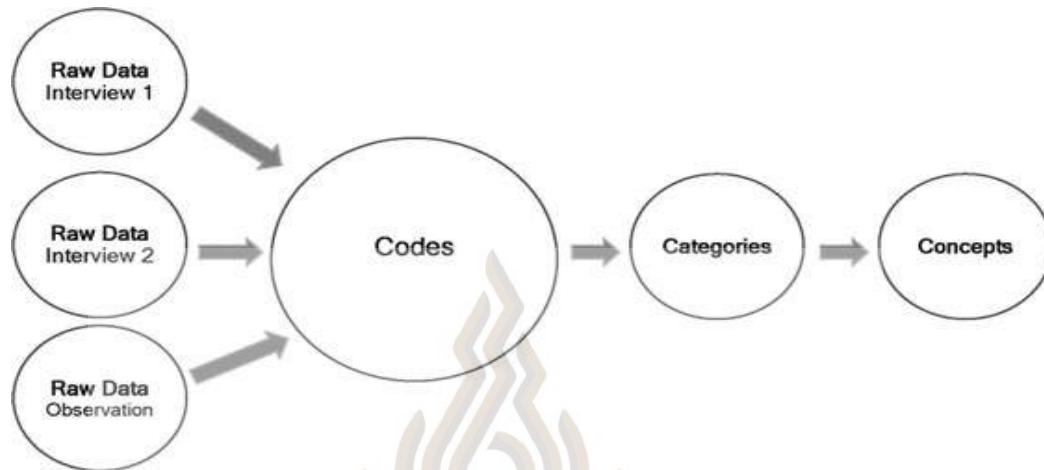


Figure 3.2 The 3Cs of Data Analysis

Source: Lichtman, 2013, p. 252

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Based on ethical considerations, the researcher promises to first obtain consent from the participants and seek permission from the RSU Ethical Review Board (ERB) before collecting data. Additionally, the researcher commits to complying with the relevant regulations of the Ethical Review Board and would not disclose the personal information of the participants. For confidentiality and identity protection, the collected data would only be utilized for this research. Moreover, the physical and mental well-being of the participants would not be compromised during the investigation process.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presented the quantitative and qualitative results of the data collected via the instruments described in chapter 3. The data analysis of the data collected through research instruments: questionnaire and semi-structured interview were also provided. Tables and charts were included to present the findings more clearly and vividly.

4.1 Presentation of the Quantitative Data

In order to study the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students studying in Thailand private university, the questionnaire were administrated 148 Chinese students who were studying at Rangsit University for 4 months to 2 years. These students served as the research group to study whether Chinese students' language proficiency, length of study abroad in Thailand, daily life culture, and classroom culture affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

4.1.1 Personal Information

A total of 148 questionnaires were collected in this study, and there were 148 valid questionnaires. The students' personal information data analyzed were shown in the table 4.1. The personal information statistics of responding population, including gender, age, length of study in Thailand and the reasons for choosing to study in Thailand.

Table 4.1 Personal Information

| Item | Choice | No. | Percentage |
|--|---------------------------------|-----|------------|
| Gender | Male | 63 | 42.57% |
| | Female | 85 | 57.43% |
| | Total | 148 | 100% |
| Age | 18-20 | 59 | 39.86% |
| | 21-23 | 53 | 35.81% |
| | 23-24 | 36 | 24.32% |
| | Total | 148 | 100% |
| How long did you study in Thailand ? | 0-6 months | 42 | 28.38% |
| | 6-12 months | 51 | 34.46% |
| | 1-2 years | 37 | 25% |
| | Over 2 years | 18 | 12.16% |
| | Total | 148 | 100% |
| Why did you choose to study in Thailand? | Improve academic qualifications | 115 | 77.7% |
| | Tuition is as expected | 78 | 52.7% |
| | Like Thai culture | 76 | 51.35% |
| | Others | 16 | 10.81% |
| | Total | 148 | 100% |

As Table 4.1 The number of valid entries for the gender single-choice question was 148. Among them, 63 men chose, accounting for 42.57%, and 85 women chose, accounting for 57.43%. It can see that in this multiple-choice question, there were slightly more women than men. According to the data table provided, students aged 18-20 account for the highest proportion, reaching 39.86%, followed by students aged 21-22, accounting for 35.81%, and the smallest group was those aged 23-24, accounting for 24.32%. Overall, students aged 18-20 account for the largest proportion.

Among those who studied in Thailand, 28.38% studied abroad for 0-6 months, 34.46% studied abroad for 6-12 months, 25% studied abroad for 1-2 years, and 12.16% studied abroad for more than 2 years. It can be see that the vast majority of students

studied abroad for 6 months to 2 years, and the proportion of international students for more than 2 years is smaller. The main reasons for choosing to study in Thailand include improving academic qualifications (77.7%), cost-effectiveness (52.7%) and liking Thai culture (51.35%). At the same time, 10.81% of students chose to study in Thailand for other reasons. Overall, improving academic qualifications was the main reason, followed by cost-effectiveness and liking Thai culture.

4.1.2 English and Thai Language Ability on Chinese Students Intercultural Adaptation

In order to study the impact of language ability on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation, a total of 9 items were designed in the questionnaire. The study mainly focuses on Chinese students' own language proficiency and some obstacles encountered due to language barriers. The questionnaire data analyzed is shown in Table 4.2 below. Descriptive statistics namely means and SDs were calculated for all items.

The mean values were interpreted based on Pimentel (2010) as follows: 'strongly disagree' within the point range of 1.00-1.80; 'disagree' within the point range of 1.81-2.60; 'neutral' within the point range of 2.61-3.40; 'agree' within the point range of 3.41-4.20; 'strongly agree' within the point range of 4.21-5.00.

Table 4.2 English and Thai language ability on Chinese students intercultural adaptation

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|-----|--|------|------|----------------|
| 5 | I can communicate simply in English. | 3.58 | 0.91 | Agree |
| 6 | I can communicate simply in Thai. | 2.49 | 1.13 | Disagree |
| 7 | I often find it difficult to integrate into local life due to language issues. | 3.83 | 0.86 | Agree |
| 8 | I would be troubled by not being able to understand what the teacher was teaching in Thai. | 4.19 | 0.67 | Agree |

Table 4.2 English and Thai language ability on Chinese students intercultural adaptation
(Cont.)

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---------|--|------|------|----------------|
| 9 | I use English more than Thai in my daily life. | 3.75 | 0.96 | Agree |
| 10 | I think learning English is more important than Thai in Thailand. | 3.42 | 0.74 | Agree |
| 11 | In college I improved my Thai language skills by taking a minor in Thai language. | 3.75 | 1.04 | Agree |
| 12 | I have continued to improve my English and Thai language proficiency through my own efforts. | 3.89 | 0.78 | Agree |
| 13 | My language skills have improved after I came to studying in Thailand. | 4.15 | 0.72 | Agree |
| Average | | 3.67 | 0.87 | Agree |

Table 4.2 showed that the overall mean of language ability on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation was 'Agree' ($\bar{X} = 3.67/SD=0.87$), which means that participating agreed that language ability was one of the influencing factors for Chinese students' intercultural adaptation in Thai private university.

The highest mean in this study was Item 8 ($\bar{X} = 4.19/SD=0.67$), which means that Chinese students would be troubled by not being able to understand what the teacher was teaching in Thai. The second a mean was Item 13 ($\bar{X} = 4.15/SD=0.72$), which means Chinese students language skills have improved after came to studying in Thailand. The third highest mean were Item12 ($\bar{X} = 3.89 /SD=0.78$), which means that Chinese students continued to improve their English and Thai language proficiency through heir own efforts. On the contrary, the lowest mean in this study was Item 6 ($\bar{X} = 2.49 /SD=1.13$), which meant that students many students couldn't speak Thai.

4.1.3 Length of Time Needed for Adaptation

In order to study the length of time Chinese students needed to adaptation, a total of 7 items were designed in the questionnaire, The questionnaire survey mainly included the situation of Chinese students when they first came to Thailand, the time it took for Chinese students to adapt to intercultural barriers, and coped with intercultural situations.

The mean values were interpreted based on Pimentel (2010) as follows: 'strongly disagree' within the point range of 1.00-1.80; 'disagree' within the point range of 1.81-2.60; 'neutral' within the point range of 2.61-3.40; 'agree' within the point range of 3.41-4.20; 'strongly agree' within the point range of 4.21-5.00.

Table 4.3 Length of Time Chinese Students Needed to Adaptation

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---------|--|------|------|----------------|
| 14 | I felt anxious when I first came to Thailand to study abroad. | 3.96 | 0.87 | Agree |
| 15 | I can adapt to studying and living in Thailand very quickly. | 2.54 | 1.11 | Disagree |
| 16 | The longer I study in Thailand, the more I like Thailand. | 2.75 | 0.97 | Neutral |
| 17 | When I studied in Thailand, I tended to make Chinese friends rather than Thai friends. | 3.78 | 0.75 | Agree |
| 18 | I think the length of study abroad is an obstacle to my integration into local study life in Thailand. | 3.83 | 0.83 | Agree |
| 19 | I feel that the culture of Thailand is very similar to the culture of my city. | 2.34 | 0.94 | Disagree |
| 20 | After graduation, I have long-term development plans in Thailand. | 2.46 | 0.88 | Disagree |
| Average | | 3.45 | 0.91 | Agree |

Table 4.3 showed that the overall mean length of time Chinese students needed to adaptation was ‘Agree’ ($\bar{X} = 3.45/SD=0.91$), which means that participating agree that length of time was one of the influencing factors for Chinese students’ intercultural adaptation in Thai private university.

The highest mean in this study was Item 14 ($\bar{X} = 3.96/SD=0.87$), which means Chinese students felt anxious when they first came to Thailand to study abroad. The second a mean was Item 18 ($\bar{X} = 3.83/SD=0.83$), which means that Chinese students though that the length of study abroad was an obstacle to their integration into local study life in Thailand. The third highest mean were Item17 ($\bar{X} = 3.78/SD=0.75$), which means that Chinese students tended to make Chinese friends rather than Thai friends when they studied in Thailand. On the contrary, the lowest mean in this study was Item 19 ($\bar{X} = 2.39/SD=0.94$), which means that Many students though that the lifestyle in Thailand didn't similar to the lifestyle in the city where they live.

4.1.4 Daily Life on Intercultural Adaptation

In order to study the daily life on Chinese students intercultural adaptation, a total of 5 Items were designed in the questionnaire. The questionnaire survey mainly included adaptation to the new environment, eating habits, and coped with different living habits

The mean values were interpreted based on Pimentel (2010) as follows: ‘strongly disagree’ within the point range of 1.00-1.80; ‘disagree’ within the point range of 1.81-2.60; ‘neutral’ within the point range of 2.61-3.40; ‘agree’ within the point range of 3.41-4.20; ‘strongly agree’ within the point range of 4.21-5.00.

Table 4.4 Daily Life Adaptation

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---------|---|------|------|----------------|
| 21 | When I first came to Thailand, I felt that the living habits of China and Thailand were very different. | 3.73 | 0.83 | Agree |
| 22 | I'm not used to Thai food. | 2.67 | 1.12 | Neutral |
| 23 | I can adapt well to cultural differences in life. | 2.34 | 0.81 | Disagree |
| 24 | I have been constantly adjusting my living habits to better adapt to life in Thailand. | 4.17 | 0.79 | Agree |
| 25 | I think the difference in living habits between China and Thailand is an obstacle to my ability to integrate into local life in Thailand. | 3.84 | 0.72 | Agree |
| Average | | 3.41 | 0.85 | Agree |

Table 4.4 showed that the overall mean daily life on Chinese students intercultural adaptation was 'Agree' ($\bar{X} = 3.41/SD=0.85$), which means that participating agreed that daily life adaptation was one of the influencing factors for Chinese students' intercultural adaptation in Thai private university.

The highest mean in this study was Item 24 ($\bar{X} = 4.17/SD=0.79$), which means Chinese students had constantly adjusting their living habits to better adapt to life in Thailand. The second mean was Item 25 ($\bar{X} = 3.84/SD=0.72$), which means that Chinese students though that the difference in living habits between China and Thailand was an

obstacle to integrate into local life in Thailand. The third highest mean were Item 21 ($\bar{X} = 3.73/SD=0.83$), which means that when Chinese students first came to Thailand they felt that the living habits of China and Thailand were very different. On the contrary, the lowest mean in this study was Item 23 ($\bar{X} = 2.34/SD=0.81$), which means that Many students though that they disagree they could adapt well to cultural differences in life.

4.1.5 Classroom Culture on Adaptation

In order to study the classroom culture on Chinese students intercultural adaptation, a total of 8 items were designed in the questionnaire. The questionnaire survey mainly included Thai teachers' teaching methods, differences in classroom culture between China and Thailand, students' interactions with teachers and classmates.

The mean values were interpreted based on Pimentel (2010) as follows: 'strongly disagree' within the point range of 1.00-1.80; 'disagree' within the point range of 1.81-2.60; 'neutral' within the point range of 2.61-3.40; 'agree' within the point range of 3.41-4.20; 'strongly agree' within the point range of 4.21-5.00.

Table 4.5 Classroom culture adaptation

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|-----|---|------|------|----------------|
| 26 | I chose to study in Thailand because I like the educational environment in Thailand. | 3.97 | 0.96 | Agree |
| 27 | I think there is not much difference in classroom culture between China and Thailand. | 1.83 | 1.10 | Disagree |
| 28 | I like the classroom culture in Thailand. | 3.95 | 0.88 | Agree |
| 29 | I like the way that Thai teachers teach. | 3.91 | 0.95 | Agree |
| 30 | I prefer the Thai classroom culture to the Chinese classroom environment. | 4.12 | 0.90 | Agree |

Table 4.5 Classroom culture adaptation (Cont.)

| No. | Items | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|---------|--|------|------|----------------|
| 31 | I can get along well with my teachers and classmates in class. | 2.66 | 0.80 | Neutral |
| 32 | I think the cultural differences in the classroom are an obstacle for me to integrate into local study life in Thailand. | 3.81 | 1.13 | Agree |
| 33 | I have been constantly adjusting my living habits to better adapt to the Thai classroom culture. | 3.96 | 0.76 | Agree |
| Average | | 3.53 | 0.94 | Agree |

Table 4.5 showed that the overall mean classroom culture adaptation on Chinese students was 'Agree' ($\bar{X} = 3.53/SD=0.94$), which means that participating agreed that daily life adaptation was one of the influencing factors for Chinese students' intercultural adaptation in Thai private university.

The highest mean in this study was Item 30 ($\bar{X} = 4.12/SD=0.90$), which means Chinese students prefer the Thai classroom culture to the Chinese classroom environment. The second a mean was Item 26 ($\bar{X} = 3.97/SD=0.96$), which means that Chinese students chose to study in Thailand because they liked the educational environment in Thailand. The third highest mean were Item 33 ($\bar{X} = 3.73 /SD=0.83$), which means that when Chinese students have been constantly adjusting my living habits to better adapt to the Thai classroom culture, the lowest mean in this study was Item 27 ($\bar{X} = 1.83 /SD=1.10$), which means that Chinese students didn't agreed that there was not much difference in classroom culture between China and Thailand.

4.2 Presentation of the Qualitative Data

In this section, the researcher collected data from Semi-Structured interview, aims to explore the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students studying at a Thai private university. The content of the conversation mainly focuses on Chinese students language proficiency, length of time needed to adaptation, daily life in Thailand and classroom culture.

Nine students from Rangsit University participated in this Semi-Structured interview, which 3 of them have been enrolled for half a year, 3 of them have been enrolled for more than one year, and 3 of them have been enrolled for two years. The raw data was voice recorded which were later transcribed into text to be analyzed.

The data of the 9 interviews from the participating interviewees were analyzed based on Lichtman (2103) The Three Cs Analysis Technique. The following table shows the number of codes, categories, and concepts.

Table 4.6 The Number of Codes, Categories, and Concepts

| Interviewees 1-9 | Number of codes | Number of categories | Number of concepts |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Interviewee 1 | 58 | 33 | 4 |
| Interviewee 2 | 60 | 46 | 4 |
| Interviewee 3 | 64 | 47 | 4 |
| Interviewee 4 | 54 | 34 | 4 |
| Interviewee 5 | 65 | 29 | 4 |
| Interviewee 6 | 58 | 38 | 4 |
| Interviewee 7 | 64 | 40 | 4 |
| Interviewee 8 | 61 | 36 | 4 |
| Interviewee 9 | 60 | 45 | 4 |
| Total | 544 | 348 | 36 |

Table 4.6 shows a total of 36 concepts which can be subsequently reduced to 1) Chinese students language proficiency; 2) length of time needed to adaptation; 3) daily life in Thailand; 4) classroom culture. The Analysis of interviewed data was in the three Cs (Codes-Categories-Concepts) columns below.

4.2.1 Chinese Students' Language Proficiency

Table 4.7 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Language proficiency on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|--|---|----------------------|
| -Communicating in English in Daily Life in Thailand (3) -Able to communicate briefly in English (5) -Frequent use of translation software (3) -Often don't understand what the teacher say in class (2) -Teacher's English accent (2) -Dare not talk to the teacher because of the language problem (1) -English level improved after studying in Thailand (9) -Can communicate with classmates in English in class (3) -Can't communicate in English when seeing a doctor (4) -Can't order food at restaurant in English (2) | English Proficiency -English language (13) -Teacher's English accent (2) -Communication with others (15) | Language Proficiency |

Table 4.7 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (language proficiency on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation) (Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|---|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can't communicate simply in Thai (6) -Can't order food at restaurant in Thai (7) -Thai is difficult to learn (6) -Learned Thai from a Thai classmate (3) -Can't use Thai social software (3) -Because of Thai language, can't understand Thai culture very well. (4) -Participated in Thai language courses at university (4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thai language Proficiency - Thai language used (14) -Communication with others (7) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Because of language problems, couldn't understand the menu and couldn't eat well, which led to weight loss. (4) -Unable to travel alone (3) -Often feel depressed (3) -Because of the language barrier, the driver took a detour (4) -There is a problem in the dormitory and don't know what to say (3) -Can't read the signs and can't find the classroom (3) -Don't dare to go shopping alone (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal experience -Unable to communicate with others (7) -Don't dare to go out alone (5) -Depression (3) -Embarrassing experience (7) | |

According to Table 4.7, the findings reveal 3 main aspects of language proficiency on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation: 1) English Proficiency; 2) Thai language Proficiency; 3) Personal experience.

4.2.1.1 English Proficiency

Because Chinese students' spoken English was not good, they have to face many obstacles after coming to Thailand to study, such as not being able to understand what the teacher was teaching, being afraid to talk to the teacher, didn't know how to go to the doctor when they were sick, and relying on translation software.

The following interviewed data point out the situations about the impact of English proficiency on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation:

“When I first took the class, because the teacher’s English had some accent, it was difficult for me to understand the content of the teacher’s class. I also didn’t know what the assignments assigned by the teacher were. I often had to ask my classmates.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“One time I had a fever and went to the school infirmary. The doctor asked me what my symptoms were, but I couldn’t tell them. Later, I called a Chinese teacher at the school to help translate, and the doctor finally understood my symptoms.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I don't know speak Thai, I can only order in English when I go to the restaurant, but the waiter doesn't understand English, so I order by looking at the pictures.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I studied courses taught in English, I was exposed to English every day. After coming to Thailand to study for a year, my English level has improved.” (Interviewee7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I can’t speak English well, I often use translation software when I go out. (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.1.2 Thai language Proficiency

In Thailand, daily communication is mainly in Thai. Therefore, Chinese students’ Thai language Proficiency also affects their intercultural adaptation. Students needed Thai to communicate about their daily necessities, food, clothing, housing and transportation.

The following interviewed data point out the situations about the impact of Thai language proficiency on Chinese students’ intercultural adaptation:

“I learned some Thai before coming to Thailand, but I still can’t speak it after coming to Thailand.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“When I go to a restaurant to eat, the menu is all in Thai. I don’t know how to order, and I don’t know how to speak Thai to the waiter.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I want to use Thai social applications, but when I download them, all the apps that appear are in Thai, and the apps are all in Thai. I don’t know how to use them.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In university, there are courses to learn Thai, but Thai is too difficult to learn. Each letter looks very similar and I don’t know how to distinguish them. Moreover, Chinese only has 4 tones, while Thai has 5 tones. I don’t know how to distinguish them.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I don’t understand Thai, I can’t integrate into local life well. My Thai classmates wanted to introduce the customs and habits of their

hometown, but I couldn't understand them." (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.1.3 Personal experience

Students also had some personal experiences about some problems caused by language barriers. These problems all affect students' intercultural adaptation. Such as outing and life problems, personal emotional problems

The following interviewed data point out personal experience mentioned above:

"Because I couldn't understand the Thai menu, I couldn't eat delicious dishes, which led to weight loss." (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

"Because of the language barrier, I don't dare to go to places too far alone, and I don't dare to travel alone." (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

"I want to connect to the Internet in the dormitory, but I don't know how to tell the dormitory administrator." (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

"Once when I was taking a professional class, I misread the sign and went to the wrong classroom. It was very embarrassing." (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

"When I first entered school, I often felt very lonely." (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.2 Length of Time Needed for Adaptation

Table 4.8 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Length of time needed for adaptation)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Felt excited when first came to Thailand (3) -Need to adapt to Thai eating habits (5) -Not used to drinking ice water (3) -Feeling very lonely (4) -Often miss home (6) -Have thoughts of giving up studying (1) -No friend (2) -Don't know how to go out and buy daily necessities (4) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First came to Thailand -Eating habits (2) -Emotional problems (13) -Life issues (11) | length of time needed to adaptation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can cook Chinese food (6) -Have a restaurant that often go (6) -Have 1 or 2 Thai friends (2) -Still miss home often (4) -Can travel with classmates (2) -Still feel lonely (3) -Don't know how to arrange spare time (3) -Often play games alone in the dormitory (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After coming to Thailand to study for half a year -Eating habits (13) -Emotional problems (7) -Life issues (13) | |

Table 4.8 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (length of time needed for adaptation)
(Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|--|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can get used to Thai food (5) -Go back to China twice a year (4) -Can speak some simple Thai (5) -English proficiency has improved (4) -Actively participate in extracurricular practical activities for learning (5) -Learn to take a taxi to the city (5) -Able to shop online (4) -Often send things from China to Thailand (6) -Call parents at least once a month (3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After coming to Thailand to study for a year -Eating habits (9) -Emotional problems (20) -Life issues (5) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can communicate basically in English (2) -Have own favorite Thai food (1) -Can go to the city or other places alone (3) -Have Thai friends who have fun (1) -Can understand some Thai (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After coming to Thailand to study for two year -language problem (4) -Life issues (5) | |

Table 4.8 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (length of time needed for adaptation)
(Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|--|---------|
| -Know how to deal with emergencies (2) | | |
| -The major I study is what I like (6) -I want to stay in Thailand and develop after graduation. (1) -Want to do a career related to my major of study (6) -Have a clear understanding of future development (2) -Feeling confused about future development (4) -Don't know what job want to do after graduation (2) -Have plans to study for graduate school (1) -Have a business plan (1) | Future plan -Feel confused (6) -Have a clear understanding of major (10) -Have own plans after graduation (3) | |

According to Table 4.8, the findings reveal 5 main aspects of length of time needed to adaptation: 1) First came to Thailand; 2) After coming to Thailand to study for half a year; 3) After coming to Thailand to study for a year; 4) After coming to Thailand to study for two year; 5) Future plan.

4.2.2.1 First came to Thailand

“When I first came to Thailand, I was not used to drinking ice water, especially in the morning, because in China, we are used to drinking warm water.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024)

“I’m not used to Thai food. Thai food is mainly spicy and sour. Many dishes are raw and the portions are small.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“In the first few days when I came to Thailand, I cried every day because I was the only child in my family and was loved by my parents since childhood. This was my first time going abroad and being away from my parents for so long.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I couldn’t understand what the teacher was saying in class, and I thought about giving up school, but after my parents’ persuasion, I continued studying.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“When I first came to Thailand, I was not familiar with my classmates. I often went to school alone and took a ride back to my apartment after school.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“The location of the school is relatively remote. When I first came to the school, I didn’t know how to get to the shopping center by bus.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.2.2 After coming to Thailand to study for half a year

“Because I was not used to Thai food, I started to learn how to cook Chinese food. Originally I didn’t know how to cook, but after coming to Thailand, I

started to learn how to cook the Chinese food that I like.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“After coming to Thailand to study for half a year, I fell in love with spicy and sour papaya shreds. I often went to restaurants near the school to eat them.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“At the end of the first semester, my friends and I went to the beach in Pattaya. We had a lot of fun eating a lot of seafood.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Although I have been in Thailand for half a year, I still feel lonely because I don’t have many friends.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I have no friends, my entertainment after class is to go back to the dormitory and play games to kill time.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In Thailand, we don’t have to study in the evenings, and classes are not far away on weekends, so we have more spare time.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.2.3 After coming to Thailand to study for a year

“I like Thai charcoal grilled pork neck very much, as well as Thai barbecue and chicken oil rice. I eat them almost every week.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“At the end of each semester, I will go back to China. Because the vacation time is relatively long, I can also take more than a month of vacation in China

and go home twice a year.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“The college organizes outdoor practical activities every semester, such as going to Ayutthaya to see the ancient ruins and experience wearing Thai clothes. It feels like traveling to ancient times. It is a very good experience.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In order to avoid drivers taking long detours, I learned to use Grab to take a taxi. The price is clear and it is safer.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Now it is very convenient to send express delivery from China to Thailand. It can be delivered in about 7-10 days. I often buy food from China and send some necessities to Thailand.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“My parents are very confident about my study and life in Thailand. I will call them every month to report on my study progress, and I usually share my daily life with them on WeChat.” Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.2.4 After coming to Thailand to study for two years

“In May of this year, I went to a Thai friend’s house in Chiang Mai alone. The Thai friend taught me how to cook Thai food and took me to see the elephants in Chiang Mai. I really like the life in Chiang Mai and it feels like More comfortable than Bangkok” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Once I was riding a motorcycle and was hit by a car. Fortunately, it was not serious. I went to the school hospital and asked the doctor to patch up my

wound. I also told the doctor what happened. The driver of the car kept contacting me and even compensated me. My medical bills.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In Thailand for two years, I minored in basic Thai language. I have learned to spell Thai and write some Thai.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“After class, I often go out to eat with my Thai friends and go shopping. I take them to eat Chinese hotpot. They like it very much.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.2.5 Future plan

“I don't know what kind of job I will do after graduation, because my major is very broad, and I don't know if I will be able to find a job in the future.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“My parents have a company in China, but I don't want to work in my parents' company. I want to make a career on my own.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I plan to continue my graduate studies at Rangsit University after graduation to improve myself.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Nowadays, there are frequent economic and trade exchanges between China and Thailand, and there are many opportunities. I want to start my own business in self-media.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I chose this major at the time because I thought it had good employment prospects, and I wanted to engage in something related to my major in the future.” Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.3 Chinese students' daily life in Thailand

Table 4.9 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Chinese students' daily life in Thailand)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|--|---|------------|
| -No habit of taking a shower in the morning (7) -It's too hot during the day and don't want to go out (6) -Like to stay in air-conditioned areas of school (7) -Thai noodles, the portion is too small (5) -Thai food is sweet (4) -Transportation in Thailand is inconvenient. You have to transfer several times to get to the city. (6) -Transportation costs are high (4) -There is no need to study at night in Thailand (5) -Go to the study room often to study (1) | New environment -Daily study (6) -Living habit (7) -Travel problems (10) -Climate adaptation (1013) | Daily life |

Table 4.9 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Chinese students' daily life in Thailand) (Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|--|---------|
| <p>-Don't dare to take the initiative to make friends (2)</p> <p>-All my friends are Chinese (4)</p> <p>-Have friends abroad (2)</p> <p>-Often feel shy and afraid to talk to others (3)</p> <p>-Don't like to make friends, like to be alone (2)</p> <p>-Like to do group work with Thai students (3)</p> <p>-The teacher encourage to make more foreigner friends (2)</p> <p>-Chinese friends will introduce Thai friends to me (1)</p> <p>-Like to make friends abroad (2)</p> | <p>Make friends</p> <p>-communication with others (8)</p> <p>-like to make friends (9)</p> <p>-afraid talk to someone (5)</p> | |
| <p>-Had the experience of being scammed when shopping online (1)</p> <p>-When go to the hospital, don't know how to explain symptoms to the doctor. (4)</p> <p>-Got scammed while exchanging money on WeChat (1)</p> | <p>Personal Experience</p> <p>- Bad exprience (10)</p> <p>-Low mood (3)</p> <p>-Parents care (1)</p> <p>-Living expenses (5)</p> | |

Table 4.9 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Chinese students' daily life in Thailand) (Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|--|--|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Often feel insecure when I am alone in the dormitory (3) -Been deceived by friends (1) -The driver took me a long way when I was out. (5) -Being criticized by the teacher for not turning in homework on time (2) -My parents come to visit me every six months (1) -Living expenses are often not enough (5) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I can plan my own life (7) -organized (3) -Not overly dependent on parents (3) -Reflect on yourself every day (3) -End of daily affairs (4) -Be satisfied with life (3) -Have a positive attitude (4) -Able to cope with emergencies (4) -Have the ability to help others (3) -No frustration when encountering setbacks (1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-survivability -Independent ability (10) -Help others (3) -Ability to deal with emergencies (4) -Know exactly what kind of life I want (12) - Positive attitude (8) | |

According to Table 4.9, the findings reveal 4 main aspects of Chinese students' daily life in Thailand: 1) New environment; 2) Make friends; 3) Personal Experience; 4) Self-survivability.

4.2.3.1 New environment

“When I came to Thailand, I realized that Thai people have the habit of taking a bath in the morning. Thai friends said that taking a bath in the morning would make them feel very refreshed, but I am not used to taking a bath in the morning and would rather sleep a little longer.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“The weather in Thailand is too hot. Especially in April and May, the temperature reaches over 40 degrees Celsius. It’s hard to go out.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“The portion of rice noodles in Thailand is so small.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“The school is not in the city, and taking a taxi to the city is too expensive. I have to transfer several times to go to the city, which is very inconvenient.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In China, when I was in high school, I had to have evening self-study every day except on weekends. The same applies to domestic universities, where they also have evening self-study. But in Thailand, there is no evening self-study, and you have a lot of time at your own disposal after class.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.3.2 Make friends

“I have a friend from Myanmar. Her English is very good. I often learn English from her and she learns Chinese from me.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I like to do group assignments with my Thai classmates because they have many creative ideas and I can learn a lot” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Because I am relatively introverted, I don’t dare to communicate with others.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Our teacher often encourages us to make more friends” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“My social circle is relatively small, I am surrounded by Chinese friends”(Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

4.2.3.3 Personal Experience

“Once I bought an autographed photo of a celebrity on Facebook. I paid according to the account number, but the seller did not deliver the goods. Later, I could not be contacted. Only then did I realize that I had been cheated.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In February, I had joint pain in my legs. I went to the hospital, but I didn’t know how to describe my symptoms to the doctor. I had to use a translation software to explain for a long time before the doctor understood.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I exchanged money on WeChat. A netizen in the student group said that he had Thai baht and could exchange it with me for RMB. I transferred the money to him without much thought. In the end, I couldn't contact him. I

have too little awareness of fraud prevention.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“Studying in Thailand is very expensive. Accommodation, water and electricity bills, food expenses, etc., you have to spend a lot of money every day.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Studying in Thailand is very expensive. Accommodation, water and electricity bills, food expenses, etc., you have to spend a lot of money every day.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.3.4 Self-survivability

“Every day I have my own plan and know what I want to do” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I like the pace of life in Thailand very much. It is relatively slow, unlike China where everyone is in a hurry.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I know how to deal with some of the problems I encounter in life” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Every day I will reflect on myself, if there is anything I have done badly that needs to be corrected, and I will continue to improve myself” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.4 Classroom Culture

Table 4.10 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (Classroom Culture)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|--|--|-------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Like to discuss study issues with classmates after class (6) -Can get along well with classmates in class (7) - Take the initiative to ask classmates. (6) -The classmates in the class are very friendly (4) -There are students don't like in the class (1) -Encounter difficulties, classmates will help (7) -Share the knowledge Iwith classmates (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get along with classmates -Friendly classmates (4) -like to make relationship and communicate with classmates (12) -like to ask for help and help classmates (13) -have someone doesn't like (1) | classroom culture |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask the teacher when don't understand something (5) -Don't communicate too much with the teacher (4) -Ask your teacher for help often (5) -Get along well with the teacher (3) -Often communicate with teachers even though language skills are not good (1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get along with teachers -Like to communicate with teachers (11) -Like the way Thai teachers teach (9) -Not communicating with teachers often (4) -Get along well with the teacher (9) | |

Table 4.10 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (classroom culture) (Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|---|---------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thai teachers are very patient (7) -Compared with Chinese teachers, prefer Thai teachers (5) -The teacher's class is very interesting (6) -Thai teachers often buy things for everyone to share in class (6) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Too much group work (3) -There are few courses scheduled for the week. (4) -Don't like group work (5) -Lunch break too short (8) -The teacher assigned too much homework (3) -Teachers' classroom grading standards are not uniform (2) -There are many procedures for selecting courses and transferring credits. (6) -The course is not very professional (3) -The knowledge you learn is of little practical use to you (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class schedule -Lots of homework, don't like group work (11) -The course is interesting (9) -Knowledge is not practical (2) -Course schedule is too loose (4) -The teacher's grading is unreasonable (2) -Not enough breaks between classes (8) | |

Table 4.10 The Codes-Categories-Concepts Analysis (classroom culture) (Cont.)

| Code | Category | Concept |
|---|--|---------|
| -Will prepare the knowledge for class in advance (3) -Take notes in class (7) -Will review the knowledge learned (4) -Didn't fail (9) -Often go to the study room to study after class (4) -Able to apply the knowledge learned in the classroom to life (3) -Will help students who are not good at studying (2) | Personal learning ability -Active learning (9) -Help classmates (2) -Apply what you I learn (3) | |

According to Table 4.10, the findings reveal 4 main aspects of Chinese students' daily life in Thailand: 1) Get along with classmates; 2) Get along with teachers; 3) Class schedule; 4) Personal learning ability.

4.2.4.1 Get along with classmates

“I like group discussion-style learning because I can ask my classmates if I have questions I don’t understand.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

“I often encounter various problems while doing my homework, but my friends are very enthusiastic to help me.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“When my classmates have problems in their studies, I will also take the initiative to share my learning experiences and methods with them.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I like cultural exchanges very much. In class, I can integrate well into the class group for communication and learning.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 3, 2024).

4.2.4.2 Get along with teachers

“In order to keep up with the teacher's pace in class, I will prepare the class content in advance.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I like taking notes in class. This is convenient for consolidating knowledge. A good memory is not as good as a bad writing.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“My grades this semester have been very good, and I haven't failed any class.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In my spare time after class, I like to study in the study room, because learning is endless and knowledge changes destiny.” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I think a lot of knowledge in the classroom can also be used in life, because we often have a lot of practical classes.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Even if our academic performance is not good, the teachers will not look down on us. They will guide us patiently and explain and guide us carefully.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.4.3 Class schedule

“I think the biggest difference between Chinese and Thai cultures is that there is no lunch break in Thailand.” (Interviewee 9, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Different people will have different ideas, and it is difficult to unify their thoughts. The completion of homework is not high. I don’t like group work.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“There are no clear documentation for course selection and transfer of credits, the course selection process is unclear, and the procedures are complicated.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Too much theoretical study and lack of practice are of little use to me.” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

4.2.4.4 Personal learning ability

“In order to keep up with the teacher's pace in class, I will prepare the class content in advance.” (Interviewee 4, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I like taking notes in class. This is convenient for consolidating knowledge. A good memory is not as good as a bad writing.” (Interviewee 3, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“My grades this semester have been very good, and I haven’t failed any class.” (Interviewee 2, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“In my spare time after class, I like to study in the study room, because learning is endless and knowledge changes destiny.” (Interviewee 1, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“I think a lot of knowledge in the classroom can also be used in life, because we often have a lot of practical classes.” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

“Even if our academic performance is not good, the teachers will not look down on us. They will guide us patiently and explain and guide us carefully.” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, June 4, 2024).

In brief, the analysis of student semi-structured interview data reveals the influencing factors that influence the intercultural adjustment of Chinese students at a private university in Thailand. The diagram below (Figure 4.1) shows the themes that emerge within each of these four concepts.

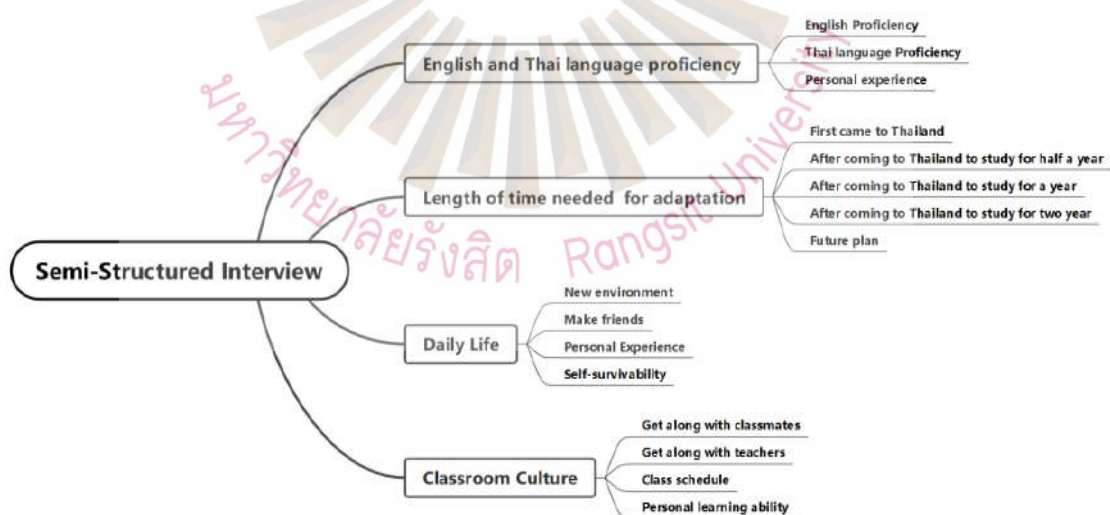
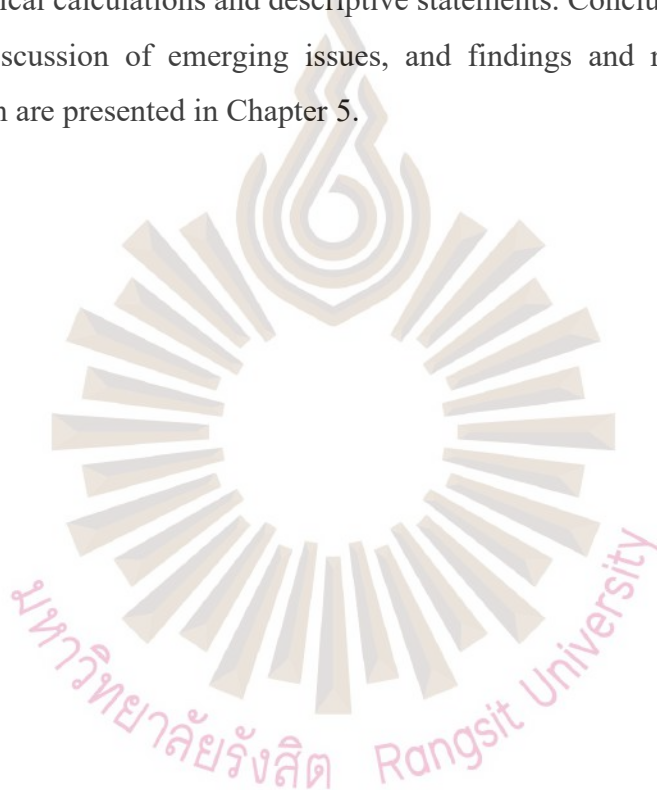


Figure 4.1 The Themes Emerged from Semi-Structured Interview

4.3 Conclusion

In summary, by collecting 148 questionnaires from Chinese students and interview data from 9 students, and conducting qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected data, the factors influencing the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in a private university in Thailand were obtained. Basic information, questionnaire answers, and interview answers for all participants were determined through statistical calculations and descriptive statements. Conclusions drawn from the findings, a discussion of emerging issues, and findings and recommendations for future research are presented in Chapter 5.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reviews the results of the data analysis and draw a conclusion, the discussion of findings and recommendation of the study also presented.

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the 3 research questions:

- 1) Does the English and Thai language proficiency of Chinese students affect intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand?
- 2) Does the length of time that Chinese students study in Thailand affect their intercultural adaptation?
- 3) Does daily life culture and classroom cultural affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation?

To explore the response of the research questions, the process of investigation and analysis has been completed successfully in proper order. In the following part, the finding would be summarized base on the research question.

5.1.1 Research Question 1: Does the English and Thai language proficiency of Chinese students have an affect on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand?

Quantitative data are obtained by collecting questionnaires from 148 students regarding the first question: The impact of English and Thai language proficiency on the intercultural adjustment of Chinese students. It can be see that the highest mean in this study is Item 8 ($\bar{X} = 4.19/SD=0.67$), which means that Chinese students would be troubled because they couldn't understand what the teacher teaches in Thai. This

shows that language ability was one of the important factors affecting the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students. We can also see that the second average is Item 13 ($\bar{X} = 4.15/SD=0.72$), which means that Chinese students' language skills had improved after coming to Thailand to study. This also shows that when studying in Thailand, because of the language environment, the language proficiency of Chinese students has improved.

The qualitative analysis data was obtained from the interview data of 9 Chinese students. Regarding the issue of intercultural adaptation of language proficiency to Chinese students, the interview data was divided into 3 categories: 1) English Proficiency; 2) Thai language Proficiency; 3) Personal experience.

Through the interview data, regarding the issue of language proficiency, most interviewees stated that they could conduct basic communication in English, but could hardly speak Thai. Through interviewing some personal experiences of interviewees, due to poor language skills, interviewees had been sick but did not know how to explain to the doctor, and they could not order food when going to a restaurant. In class, some interviewees said that they could not understand what the teacher said in class, so they felt frustrated and did not dare to ask the teacher questions after class. However, all interviewees said that their language proficiency improved after coming to Thailand to study.

5.1.2 Does the length of time that Chinese students study in Thailand affect their intercultural adaptation?

According to the results of the questionnaire, The highest mean in this study is Item 14 ($\bar{X} = 3.96/SD=0.87$), which means that Chinese students felt anxious and depressed because they hadn't adapted to the new environment. The lowest mean in this study was Item 19 ($\bar{X} = 2.39 /SD=0.94$), "I feel that the culture of Thailand is very similar to the culture of my city." When asked about whether the city students lived and the culture of Thailand were similar, most of the interviewees said they "disagree".

According to the qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interview, Regarding the length of time needed for adaptation, the interview data was divided into 5 categories: 1) First arriving to Thailand; 2) After coming to Thailand to study for half a year; 3) After coming to Thailand to study for a year; 4) After coming to Thailand to study for two year; 5) Future plan.

It could be seen from the interview data that when the Chinese students first came to study in Thailand, they were not accustomed to Thai eating habits and did not know how to buy daily necessities. Most of the interviewees also felt homesick from time to time. After studying in Thailand for half a year, the interviewees have a Thai restaurant they often went to, and they also cook Chinese food in the dormitory. However, some interviewees still miss home often. One year after coming to Thailand, the interviewees became accustomed to Thai food and could speak some simple Thai. They would go back to China once every semester, twice a year. Two years after coming to Thailand, the interviewees could travel independently, could understand some Thai, and could handle emergencies in life. When came to future plans, most interviewees said they want to do work related to their major.

5.1.3 Research Question 3: Does daily life culture and classroom cultural affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation?

5.1.3.1 Daily life on Intercultural Adaptation

According to the results of the questionnaire, The highest mean in this study was Item 24 ($\bar{X} = 4.17/SD=0.79$), It shows that in the face of differences in daily life habits, Chinese students have constantly adjusted themselves to adapt to life in Thailand .The second a mean was Item 25 ($\bar{X} = 3.84/SD=0.72$), It shows that most Chinese students believe that the difference in living habits between China and Thailand was an obstacle for them to adapt to local life. In the question "I can adapt well to cultural differences in life.", the answer was "disagree", indicating that Chinese students still had obstacles in adapting to local living habits.

According to the qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interview, the findings reveal 4 main aspects of Chinese students' daily life in Thailand: 1) New environment; 2) Make friends; 3) Personal Experience; 4) Self-survivability.

Most of the interviewees didn't have the habit of taking a shower in the morning. The weather in Thailand was too hot, which made them reluctant to go out and only want to stay in air-conditioned rooms. The interviewees also said that the transportation in Thailand was not convenient and it is difficult to go out to the city. It took several train transfers. Most of the interviewees' friends were Chinese friends and have their own social circles. Most of the interviewees had the experience of being detoured by drivers when traveling far away, and they also believe that spending money in Thailand was very high. Most of the interviewees could plan their own lives and have a positive attitude towards the problems they encounter.

5.1.3.2 Classroom Culture

According to the results of the questionnaire, The highest mean in this study is Item 30 ($\bar{X} = 4.12/SD=0.90$), indicating that Chinese students preferred Thai classroom culture to Chinese classroom culture. The second a mean is Item 26 ($\bar{X} = 3.97/SD= 0.96$), indicating that the reason why most Chinese students choose to study in Thailand was because they like Thailand's educational environment and teaching methods.

According to the qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interview, the findings reveal 4 main aspects of Chinese students' daily life in Thailand: 1) Get along with classmates; 2) Get along with teachers; 3) Class schedule; 4) Personal learning ability.

Most of the interviewees could get along well with their classmates and like to discuss problems with them in class. If they encounter problems they didn't understand, their classmates would help them. Most interviewees felt that teachers in Thailand were gentle and easy to get along with. Teachers often encouraged students to make more friends. However, many interviewees felt that the course schedule in

Thailand was too tight, with very little lunch break time, and that there were many procedures for selecting courses and transferring credits. In terms of course study, all interviewees did not fail the course and took notes in class.

5.2 Discussion

In this section, the issues related to the effects on intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand are discussed:

1) The English and Thai language proficiency affected Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

2) The length of time of Chinese students study in Thailand affected Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

3) The daily life culture and classroom cultural affected Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

5.2.1 Discussion on the English and Thai Language Proficiency on Chinese Students' Intercultural Adaptation.

Through questionnaire survey and semi-interview structured data, it can be seen that the English proficiency and Thai proficiency of Chinese students affect the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in a private university in Thailand. Regarding the intercultural adaptation of language proficiency in this study, the results showed "Agree". It shows that students' English and Thai proficiency affect students' intercultural adaptation. The findings are similar to previous research (Zhang & Cao, 2019; Ye, 2015; Jia & Rui, 2020)

Sociocultural adaptation was measured based on the number of difficulties an individual encounters in daily life. The main variables were: language level, cultural knowledge, cultural distance, length of stay and degree of acceptance of foreign cultures (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). Shi (2021) found through research that due to the lack of a good English learning foundation or attitude, some students chose to drop

out of school and needed to re-enroll because they cannot understand in class and feel tired of learning. This was also similar to the findings of this study. Because students cannot understand the content of the teacher's class, they felt bored or frustrated. Yan and He (2020) pointed out that Chinese international students commonly worried about encountering insurmountable difficulties during their studies due to poor language communication and lack of understanding of study rules. This also illustrates the importance of language ability in intercultural adaptation.

In this study, it can be found that after studying abroad in Thailand for a period of time, students' language proficiency has improved. Jia and Rui (2020) also found that for Chinese international students, mastering strong foreign languages, oral language skills were beneficial to shortening the adaptation period of intercultural communication and improving the effectiveness of intercultural communication. During the interview, also found that although some students had poor language proficiency, they had very cheerful personalities. They had stronger adaptability in cultural adaptation, and there were relatively few relevant studies.

5.2.2 Discussion on the length of time on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

Through questionnaire survey and semi-interview structured data, it can be seen that the length of time affect the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in a private university in Thailand. The average data page of the questionnaire shows "Agree". This shows that the length of study abroad had a different impact on each process in the intercultural adaptation of Chinese international students. This was similar to previous studies (Prommin, 2018; Lin & Worapinya, 2014; Dao & Cao, 2018).

Many students said that the length of study abroad had an impact on their intercultural adaptation. Lin and Worapinya (2014) also found that language, cultural and religious knowledge, local information, loneliness and homesickness were the main stressors for Chinese students. In addition, the pressure of studying, working and graduating, food, living conditions, friendships, and loss of identity were also sources

of stress for Chinese students. This study also found similar findings through surveys. When Chinese students enter a new environment to study, their feelings at each stage were different as the learning time progresses. Si and Shi (2020) found that when Chinese students were studying in Thailand, they have to adapt to the language, and Chinese students needed to adapt to the learning culture, interpersonal culture, and social culture of Thai universities.

In this study, it was also found that when Chinese students first entered a new environment to study until two years after studying in Thailand, they encountered setbacks in adapting to the environment, personal experiences, and planning for personal life and study, but there were also those who have improved their adaptability through the experience of setbacks. However, research had also found that some students who had been studying in Thailand for two years were still unable to adapt to Thailand's food and climate.

5.2.3 Discussion on the Daily life Culture and Classroom Cultural on Chinese Students' Intercultural Adaptation.

From the questionnaire survey and semi-interview structured data, It can be see that daily life and classroom cultural affect Chinese students' intercultural adaptation. In terms of daily life, Chinese students needed to adapt to the basic necessities, food, housing, transportation and weather when entering a strange environment. They also needed to adapt to interpersonal interactions. This was similar to the study of Babiker, Cox and Miller (1990), External factors that affected intercultural adaptation included life changes, such as eating habits, rhythm of life, climate, etc. These changes could bring stress to people. Xu and Wang (2019) found that in terms of life, the most difficult thing for Chinese students to adapt to was Thailand's climate and food.

As for classroom culture, in this study, Chinese students like the atmosphere of classes in Thailand, which similarly with Wang (2019), Thai students have a relaxed classroom atmosphere. But in terms of curriculum, students think that some teachers

have accents in class, and there are also issues with unreasonable curriculum, which is consistent with the survey by Li (2020), there are unreasonable curriculum arrangements in Thai schools, arrangements and management problems such as the impact of teachers' non-standard pronunciation, speaking too fast, and boring teaching content.

Sun and Pradtana (2020) research found that the factors that mainly affected the intercultural adaptation process of Chinese students were "not accustomed to campus life", "difficulty in understanding the curriculum", "no good job prospects" and difficulty in integrating into Thai society." In this study It was also found that Chinese students felt that the course arrangements were not very practical and felt confused about their future development.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for university and students

1) For university, before students enter the university to study, can issue a freshman handbook to students to let Chinese students know more about Thai culture, customs and habits. Provide pre-entry training to students and guide them on what they need to prepare before entering university, so that they can adapt to life in Thailand in advance. After students come to school, when students encounter difficulties in adapting to the new environment and living in life, they will inevitably feel frustrated and have negative emotions. Schools should pay attention to students' status in a timely manner and provide students with necessary help. Schools can hold more Thai cultural exchange activities so that Chinese students can better understand Thailand and adapt to Thai student life. A mental health consultation room has been opened to provide Chinese services so that students can get better consultation when they encounter mental health problems.

2) For students, when entering a new campus environment to study, will inevitably encounter frustration. At this time, students must communicate with classmates and teachers around in a timely manner and constantly adjust and adapt. During studying at Thai university, students must work hard to improve language

proficiency and actively integrate into local life. In terms of course study, get along well with classmates and teachers. If students are unclear about the course schedule, should ask the teacher in time, and arrange spare time reasonably, participate in more campus activities, and enrich spare time life. If students encounter problems in study or life, maintain a positive attitude. If students cannot handle something happen in daily life, should promptly provide feedback to family, friends or school teachers.

5.3.2 Recommendation for future research

This study investigated the factors that affected the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students studying in Thailand, mainly from the factors of language level, length of time required to adapt, life and classroom culture. This study only focuses on one private university in Thailand.

However, there are a number of studies that can be conducted such as an investigation into life stories of students or teachers trying to adapt themselves into a new culture. Or, more research participants in different contexts can be studied as well as studies into the cultural adaptation strategies that students from different cultures employ are also worth conducting.

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Questionnaire

| No. | Part 1: General Information 第一部分：个人信息 |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Gender 性别 <input type="checkbox"/> Male 男 <input type="checkbox"/> Female 女 |
| 2 | Your age? 你的年龄? <input type="checkbox"/> 18-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-23 <input type="checkbox"/> 23-24 |
| 3 | How long did you study in Thailand? 你在泰国的留学时长? <input type="checkbox"/> 0-6 months 个月 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-12 months 个月 <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years 年 <input type="checkbox"/> 超过 2 over years 年 |
| 4 | Why did you choose to study in Thailand? 你选择来泰国留学的原因? <input type="checkbox"/> Improve academic qualifications 提升学历 <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition is as expected 性价比高 <input type="checkbox"/> Like Thai culture 喜欢泰国文化 <input type="checkbox"/> Others 其他 |

Frequency of Use

5=Strongly Agree 非常赞同, 4=Agree 赞同, 3=Neutral 中立,

2=Disagree 不赞同, 1=Strongly Disagree 非常不赞同

| No. | Questions | Frequency of Use | | | | |
|--|--|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Part 2 第二部分 : Language issue 语言问题 | | | | | | |
| 5 | I can communicate simply in English. 我可以用英语进行简单的沟通。 | | | | | |
| 6 | I can communicate simply in Thai.我可以用泰语进行简单的沟通。 | | | | | |
| 7 | I often find it difficult to integrate into local life due to language issues. 我常常因为语言问题感到难以融入当地生活。 | | | | | |
| 8 | I would be troubled by not being able to understand what the teacher was teaching in Thai. 我会因为无法理解老师上课的内容而烦恼。 | | | | | |
| 9 | I use English more than Thai in my daily life. 我在日常生活中使用英语多于泰语。 | | | | | |
| 10 | I think learning English is more important than Thai in Thailand. 我认为在泰国学习英语比泰语重要。 | | | | | |
| 11 | In college I improved my Thai language skills by taking a minor in Thai language. 在大学我有通过参加泰语辅修课程来提升我的泰语水平。 | | | | | |
| 12 | I have continued to improve my English and Thai language proficiency through my own efforts. 我有不断通过自身努力来提高自己的英语和泰语水平。 | | | | | |
| 13 | My language skills have improved after I came to studying in Thailand. 我在泰国留学后我的语言水平有所提高。 | | | | | |

| No. | Questions | Frequency of Use | | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Part 3: Length of time needed for adaptation 需要适应的时长 | | | | | | |
| 14 | I felt anxious when I first came to Thailand to study abroad. 我刚来泰国留学时会感到焦虑。 | | | | | |
| 15 | I can adapt to studying and living in Thailand very quickly. 我可以很快的适应泰国的学习生活。 | | | | | |
| 16 | The longer I study in Thailand, the more I like Thailand. 在泰国留学越久，我越喜欢泰国。 | | | | | |
| 17 | When I studied abroad in Thailand, I tended to make Chinese friends rather than Thai friends. 在泰国留学时我倾向于交中国朋友而不是泰国朋友。 | | | | | |
| 18 | I think the length of study abroad is an obstacle to my integration into local study life in Thailand. 我认为留学时长是影响我融入泰国本地学习生活的阻碍。 | | | | | |
| 19 | I feel that the culture of Thailand is very similar to the culture of my city. 我觉得泰国的文化和我所在城市的文化很相似。 | | | | | |
| 20 | After graduation, I have long-term development plans in Thailand. 毕业后我有在泰国发展的计划。 | | | | | |

| No. | Questions | Frequency of Use | | | | |
|--|---|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Part 4: Daily Life Problems 日常生活问题 | | | | | | |
| 21 | When I first came to Thailand, I felt that the living habits of China and Thailand were very different. 初来泰国时我感觉中国和泰国的生活习惯相差很大。 | | | | | |
| 22 | I'm not used to Thai food. 我不喜欢泰国的饮食。 | | | | | |
| 23 | I can adapt well to cultural differences in life. 面对生活文化差异我能很好的适应。 | | | | | |
| 24 | I have been constantly adjusting my living habits to better adapt to life in Thailand. 我有不断调整自己的生活习惯以便于更好的适应泰国的生活。 | | | | | |
| 25 | I think the difference in living habits between China and Thailand is an obstacle to my ability to integrate into local life in Thailand. 我认为中泰两国生活习惯的不同是我不能融入泰国本地生活的阻碍。 | | | | | |
| Part 5: Classroom Culture Issues 课堂文化问题 | | | | | | |
| 26 | I chose to study in Thailand because I like the educational environment in Thailand. 我选择来泰国留学是因为我喜欢泰国的教育环境。 | | | | | |
| 27 | I think there is not much difference in classroom culture between China and Thailand. 我觉得中泰课堂文化差异不大。 | | | | | |

| No. | Questions | Frequency of Use | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28 | I like the classroom culture in Thailand. 我喜欢泰国的课堂文化。 | | | | | |
| 29 | I like the way that Thai teachers teach. 我喜欢泰国老师的上课方式。 | | | | | |
| 30 | I prefer the Thai classroom culture to the Chinese classroom environment. 相对于中国式的课堂环境我更喜欢泰国式的课堂文化。 | | | | | |
| 31 | I can get along well with my teachers and classmates in class. 我在课堂上能和老师同学相处得很融洽。 | | | | | |
| 32 | I think the cultural differences in the classroom are an obstacle for me to integrate into local study life in Thailand. 我认为课堂文化差异是我融入泰国本地学习生活的阻碍。 | | | | | |
| 33 | I have been constantly adjusting my living habits to better adapt to the Thai classroom culture. 我有不断调整自己的生活习惯以便于更好的适应泰国的课堂文化。 | | | | | |



APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

| No. | Interview Questions |
|-----|---|
| 1 | How are you adapting to studying and living in Thailand when you first arrive? 你在刚到泰国学习生活是否适应? |
| 2 | How long did it take for you to adapt to study life in Thailand? 你经过了多长时间才适应泰国的学习生活? |
| 3 | Does your language proficiency have an impact on your life of studying abroad? 你的语言水平是否对你的留学生活产生影响? |
| 4 | Do you think learning English and Thai well can help you integrate into Thai culture? 你觉得学习好英语和泰语能帮你很好的融入泰国的文化吗? |
| 5 | What do you think is the difference between Chinese classroom culture and Thai classroom culture? 你觉得中国课堂文化和泰国课堂文化有什么差异? |
| 6 | Do you like Thai classroom culture? 你喜欢泰国的课堂文化吗? |
| 7 | How did you adjust yourself to life in Thailand while studying abroad? 在留学期间你是怎样调整自己以适应泰国的生活的? |



APPENDIX C

THE INVITATION LETTER TO IOC EXPERT



**INVITATION TO BE AN IOC EXPERT IN
INTERCULTURAL ADAPTATION OF CHINESE STUDENTS
STUDYING IN THAILAND: A CASE OF
A THAI PRIVATE UNIVERSITY**

.....

Dear Expert,

I would like to thank you for accepting to be an IOC expert in my thesis. Please find below the Research Title, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Research Instruments and the Guidelines for Expert Review Using Item Objective Congruence (IOC) as well as the criteria for expert review.

My Research Title

Intercultural Adaptation of Chinese Students Studying in Thailand: A Case of a Thai Private University

Research Objectives

1. To explore whether Chinese students' English and Thai language proficiency has an impact on their intercultural adaptation in Thailand.
2. To explore whether the length of time of Chinese students study in Thailand has an impact on their intercultural adaptation.
3. To explore whether daily life culture and classroom cultural have an impact on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation.

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the research questions were formulated as follows:

- 1) Does the English and Thai language proficiency of Chinese students have an impact on the intercultural adaptation of Chinese students in Thailand?
- 2) Does the length of time that Chinese students study in Thailand have an impact on their intercultural adaptation?
- 3) Does daily life culture and classroom cultural have an impact on Chinese students' intercultural adaptation?

The Research Instruments

- 1) A Questionnaire for the language proficiency, length of study in Thailand, daily life and classroom culture of Chinese international students affect their intercultural adaptation, which consists of 35 questions.
- 2) The Semi-Structured Interview Questions for the factors that influence Chinese students' intercultural adaptation, which consists of 7 open-ended interview questions.

Guidelines for Expert Review Using Item Objective Congruence (IOC)

Please rate each item that corresponds to your opinion towards content validity

Rating Criteria

- +1 for the item that clearly matches the stated objectives
- 0 for the item that is unclear and the rater is unsure whether it meets the stated objectives
- 1 for the item that does not match the objectives

I truly appreciate your kind help and valuable support for my thesis.

Nong Wenjing
Researcher



IOC Result of the Questionnaire

| Items | Rating by Experts | | | IOC Average | Remarks |
|---|-------------------|---------|---------|-------------|------------|
| | Expert1 | Expert2 | Expert3 | | |
| Part 1 : General Information 第一部分：个人信息 | | | | | |
| 1 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |
| 2 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |
| 3 | +1 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | Unaccepted |
| 4 | +1 | 0 | 0 | 0.33 | Unaccepted |
| 5 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 6 | +1 | +1 | 0 | 0.67 | Accepted |
| Part 2 : Language issue 第二部分：语言问题 | | | | | |
| 7 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 8 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 9 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 10 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 11 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 12 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 13 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 14 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 15 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| Part 3 : length of time needed for adaptation 需要适应的时长 | | | | | |
| 16 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 17 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 18 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 19 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 20 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |
| 21 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 22 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |

| Items | Rating by Experts | | | IOC Average | Remarks |
|--|-------------------|---------|---------|-------------|----------|
| | Expert1 | Expert2 | Expert3 | | |
| Part 4 : Daily Life Problems 日常生活问题 | | | | | |
| 23 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 24 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 25 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 26 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |
| 27 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| Part 5 : Classroom Culture Issues 课堂文化问题 | | | | | |
| 28 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 29 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 30 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 31 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 32 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 33 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 34 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | Accepted |
| 35 | +1 | 0 | +1 | 0.67 | Accepted |



APPENDIX F
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL BY ETHICS REVIEW BOARD
OF RANGSIT UNIVERSITY

COA. No. RSUERB2024-087



**Certificate of Approval
By
Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University**

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| COA. No. | COA. No. RSUERB2024-087 |
| Protocol Title | Intercultural Adaptation of Chinese Students Studying in Thailand: A Case of a Thai Private University |
| Principle Investigator | Nong Wenjing |
| Co-Investigator | Asst.Prof.Dr.Anchalee Chayanuvat |
| Affiliation | Suryadhep Teachers College, Rangsit University |
| How to review | Expedited Review |
| Approval includes | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project proposal 2. Information sheet 3. Informed consent form 4. Data collection form/Program or Activity plan |
| Date of Approval: | 29 May 2024 |
| Date of Expiration: | 29 May 2026 |

The prior mentioned documents have been reviewed and approved by Ethics Review Board of Rangsit University based Declaration of Helsinki, The Belmont Report, CIOMS Guideline and International Conference on Harmonization in Good Clinical Practice or ICH-GCP.

Signature..... 

(Associate Professor Dr. Panan Kanchanaphum)

Chairman, Ethics Review Board for Human Research



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BIOGRAPHY

| | |
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