

A Study of Pre-Departure Mainland Chinese Undergraduate Students' Intercultural Communication Strategies and Academic Adaptation in English as a Medium for Online Instruction (EMOI) Classroom : A Case Study of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University

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Abstract

In the globalized disruption and COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, internationalization has been pushed into different higher educational institutions in order to promote academic advancements, as well as intercultural understandings and sustainable human developments (Gacel-Avila, 2015). In addition, university student and academic staff exchange programs in university campuses together with long distance learning programs are all associated with different universities (Pad Lavankura, 2013). Thus, not only are the overseas universities' various study programs offered for international students' university strategic policies, but also home universities' academic collaborations with different host universities are all supported for establishing incoming international students' and university staff's well-preparedness, mutual socio-cultural understandings, cultural awareness, and cross-cultural adaptations. In fact, effective intercultural communication strategies have played a vital role in managing knowledge and cultural backgrounds, as well as their English language competence. In this paper, this research, based on the survey research, mainly focused on identifying the use of intercultural communication strategies and academic adaptation employed by pre-departure mainland Chinese undergraduate students using English as a medium for on-line instruction classroom. For research methodology, two sets of on-line questionnaires related to identifying the use of intercultural communication strategies and academic adaptation employed by Chinese students were conducted with 35 third-year/junior Chinese students majoring in English Studies program, the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University during the 2021 academic year. The data were statistically analyzed using mean, percentage, and standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed that the overall use of the Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies was rated at a moderate level when interacting with Thais in the Thai-speaking context in terms of asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions, followed by avoiding talking about sensitive issues, and using their own language to facilitate the communication, meanwhile their use of academic adaptation was

rated at a higher level in terms of their socio-cultural challenges, followed by their supports, and their readiness

Keywords : Intercultural Communication Strategies, Academic Adaptation, English as an Instruction, Academic Challenges, Preparedness, Supports, Thai-speaking Context

Introduction

There are many students in international education, especially English users and English language teaching professionals who have increased worldwide. This means, instructions which focus on reading, spelling and sounds or English phonics either as a foreign language or the various dialects thereof, are provided predominantly. So, with the perspective of their international peers, many universities in Thailand have entered into Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) for exchange programmes with those in China and other ASEAN member countries. This is not only an attempt to give Thai university students more opportunities to study in universities in a foreign country, but also to enable foreign students to study in various academics fields in Thailand. This associates to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2019's report (2019) showing that Thailand is a popular regional study destination and representing the third most popular study destination in Southeast Asia after Malaysia and Singapore. Most of these students come from China followed by Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam including other ASEAN or nearby Asian countries.

While culture has always been a part of language teaching, education across boundaries is increasingly popular and concerns with cultural dimension of language teaching among international students. Especially in relation to English language teaching, culture, economy, politics, and ideology of the host country in order to make contributions upon their returning to their homeland. In particular, international students encounter linguistic barriers and cultural incompetence for effective adjustment at the host country. They not only face difficulties in terms of social and cultural norms and values, but also the different modes of teaching and learning and expectations of performance in university. Especially students' language proficiency is interrelated and influenced by their cross-cultural adjustment process among the international students (Janjua, Malik, and Rahman, 2011 & Mustaffa and Ilias, 2013).

However, developing intercultural awareness together with English communication skills in students from different cultural backgrounds and nations are necessary. This especially where English is used as the medium of communication then the integration of intercultural approach in English instruction should therefore be highlighted. The implementation of intercultural approach and intercultural awareness activities should be

taught through exploration, reflection and discussion in the classroom about different cultures (Baker, 2012). More especially, intercultural awareness regards as the base of communication and becomes essential while individuals communicate with others people who come from different cultures and countries (Zhu, 2011).

Additionally, while talking about International education and culture, Chiangrai Rajabhat University is one of Thailand's higher education institutions receiving an annual batch of Chinese undergraduate students. It is located in the Northern Thai province of Chiang Rai. This institution has an agreement with Pu'er Teachers' College of China and accepts 40 undergraduate students each school year under its student exchange programme, which is part of Thailand-China educational cooperation. Although the student exchange programme between Chiangrai Rajabhat University (CRRU) with foreign universities began in 2004, it was not until 19 July 2014 that the first batch of students from CRU under the exchange programme were dispatched to Pu'er Teachers' College, Pu'er in Yunnan province of China to promote the exchange of students between the two countries. The first batch of Chinese students have been doing English study for two years in their home university based on their own curriculum, were enrolled in the Faculty of Humanities in Chiangrai Rajabhat University in specially arranged classes in which they are the ONLY students. This means that all of their classes are arranged exclusively for them, and not attended by any other students. Chiangrai Rajabhat University is also providing opportunities for students of those universities under the exchange programmes to experience the study of new languages in an environment that is similar to those in their home universities. Such exchange programmes has also made it possible for students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds to meet and communicate with each other and a situation that is supposed to promote the use of English as a medium of communication. One of the countries where universities have signed MOUs with Thai institutions is China, among them, Chiangrai Rajabhat University, which had entered into exchange programmes with Chinese universities in 2004, to facilitate students from the Faculty of Humanities of both countries to study English in a foreign environment (Chiangrai Rajabhat University (CRRU), 2019).

Preliminary observation by the researcher and other teachers working with these Chinese exchange students show a number of English-language problems associated with their ineffective communication. This problem is likely to result in misinterpretation of the contents of studies, mistakes in understanding, and eventually communication breakdown. This is because these exchange programmes with all these Chinese university students have not required any TOEFL or IELTS scores of English that assesses listening, as well as speaking skills, in addition to reading, writing and grammar, instead, they have done a small English test from CRRU only. However, it is important for Chinese students to have good scores of English because any TOEFL or IELTS scores of English tests can gauge applicants' ability worldwide to use and understand English, and is generally used as a requirement for

admission to university level studies. TOEFL or IELTS are used to test English language proficiency to find out whether candidates are ready to study or train in the medium of English.

In communication, understanding has a key point and from the above mentioned on Chinese students who have low scores on TOEFL and IELTS test could have problems with English communication. More interesting, previous research has pointed out that when it comes to understanding, intercultural communication and low interpersonal familiarity have more miscommunications and restrictions (Allwood, 2015). This is because culture is learned and grown up with by people in terms of language, religion, cuisine, patterns of thought and behavior, and so forth. People conduct their communicative behaviors in accordance with how they perceive and understand one another are strongly influenced by their own cultures. These mean that people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds bring their local knowledge together into a joint communication activity. Therefore, people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds have more problems and difficulties in understanding each other than when they communicate with people who have the same relevant backgrounds (Eliot, 2010).

In fact, the number of Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) undergraduate students learning English in Chiangrai Rajabhat University under the MOU of '2+2 Student Exchange Programme', have increased gradually. The 2019 CRRU International Relations Division's annual report has identified two major aspects of language problems encountered by Chinese undergraduate students namely their English communication incompetence. This language incompetence among the Chinese EFL undergraduate students has led to their communication breakdowns together with their misunderstandings and misinterpretation. To acquire English Language on this study, Chinese students need to practice reading to develop their phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Cimmiyotti, 2013).

Moreover, few studies investigated Chinese EFL undergraduate students with different language abilities and different types of communication strategies (CS). On the other hand, some studies have focused on more relation between intercultural communication strategies with native speakers or frequency of using communication strategies. From all these studies as mentioned show that intercultural communication strategies can be defined as the methods one uses when facing problems in the process of accomplishing a communicative goal (Dong and Fang-Peng, 2010).

This present study, therefore, focuses on the investigating on the use of intercultural communication strategies in English and their academic adaptation strategies in a Thai-speaking context. Despite the growing number of Chinese EFL undergraduate students attending Thai universities, as previously stated, not many exclusive research studies have been conducted on intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation in academic contexts among pre-departure Chinese undergraduate English-majoring students. Therefore, using such technique's

effectiveness is the professed change in effective intercultural communication strategies and academic adaptation strategies among the Chinese EFL undergraduate students studying in a Thai-speaking context.

Purposes of the study

1) To identify the pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL undergraduate students' use of English intercultural communication strategies in English as a medium for online instruction classroom in Chiangrai Rajabht University.

2) To investigate the pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL undergraduate students' academic adaptation in English as a medium for online instruction classroom when interacting with Thai counterparts in Chiangrai Rajabht University.

Research Methodology

Resign Design

This study was a survey research, which aimed to collect quantitative data in order to identify the use of the pre-departure mainland Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies and academic adaptation in English as a medium for online instruction classroom in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, Thailand

Participants

In this study, 35 third-year Chinese EFL undergraduate students majoring in English Studies Program at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in the MOU with Chinese universities during the year 2021 was selected based on the purposive sampling technique.

Research Instruments: there were 2 series of semi-structured questionnaire related to investigating the use of the pre-departure mainland Chinese students' intercultural communication strategies in English and their academic adaptation in English as a medium for online instruction classroom in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, Thailand

Procedures for Data Collection

In this first phase, the two approved questionnaires related to the pre-departure third-year Chinese EFL undergraduate students' English intercultural communication strategies and academic adaptation in English as a medium for online instruction classroom in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, Thailand were take 3 weeks, which had been conducted during April – May, 2021. Then, the results of the study taken from these questionnaires were analyzed using percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Finally, the results of the pre-departure third-year Chinese EFL undergraduate students' intercultural

communication strategies, as well as their academic adaptation related to challenges, supports, and readiness were analyzed and presented in tables.

Procedures for data analysis

In the quantitative data, two series of semi-structured questionnaire checklist were carried out for the pre-departure third-year Chinese EFL undergraduate students' use of English intercultural communication strategies in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in a Thai-speaking context. Subsequently, there was a frequency distribution for data analysis through using percentage, mean, and standard deviation for investigating their use of English intercultural communication strategies employed by the pre-departure third-year Chinese EFL undergraduate students' use of English intercultural communication strategies in Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in a Thai-speaking context. Next, all the numbers and data were presented in tables. Finally, the information was summarized and reported.

Summary

1) The frequent use of the Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies were rated at a moderate level in terms of avoiding talking about sensitive issues, followed by asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions, clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics, asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts, using Chinese language to facilitate the communication, selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions, selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background, using your background knowledge of the partner's culture, and using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication.

Furthermore, the top three intercultural communication strategies used by the pre-departure Chinese EFL undergraduate students as compared to each theme were detailed as follows.

1.1) The Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies related to avoiding talking about sensitive issues was rated at a moderate level in terms of concentrating on the Thais' negotiation, followed by, amusing for their conversation with Thais, and communication breakdowns happen when the Thai's understandings cannot be cleared.

1.2) The Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies related to asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions was rated at a moderate level in terms of being interested in the Thais' own accents, and followed by being interested in pronouncing the Thai's rhythm and high or low intonations.

1.3) The Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies related to clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics were rated at a moderate level in terms of using familiar words when interacting with Thais, followed by providing more details for Thais when they do not understand, and trying to use the first word to make questions.

2) The pre-departure Chinese EFL undergraduate students' academic adaptation strategies when interacting with Thais in a Thai-speaking context were rated at a moderate level in terms of their challenges, followed by their readiness, and their supports.

2.1) As compared to the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' challenges, it revealed that the most remarkable challenge the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a low level was their socio-cultural challenges, followed by their language challenges, and their academic challenges. In addition, their socio-cultural challenges were rated at a high level in terms of their understanding of campus life, followed by their participation in extra-curricular activities, and communicating in English with Thai classmates or Thais.

2.2) In terms of the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' supports, it showed that the most remarkable support the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a moderate level was their university supports. As compared to each theme, it showed that the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' academic support services, course registration, etc. were rated at a high level, followed by their health insurance, playgrounds, gyms, on-line library services, etc., and their supervisor research guidance.

2.3) In terms of the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' readiness/preparedness, it also showed that the most remarkable readiness / preparedness the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a moderate level was their on-site orientation. As compared to each theme, it showed that the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' intensive language training courses were rated at a high level, followed by their helps and supports, and their provision for co-curricular activities.

Discussion

1) The frequent use of the Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies were rated at a moderate level in terms of avoiding talking about sensitive issues, followed by asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions, clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics, asking for clarification on the similarities/differences of cultural concepts, using Chinese language to facilitate the communication, selecting standard vocabulary or easy expressions, selecting conversation topics of shared common interests of cultural background, using your background knowledge of the partner's culture, and using the partner's mother tongue to facilitate the communication. Furthermore, the top three intercultural communication strategies used by

the pre-departure Chinese EFL undergraduate students as compared to each theme were detailed as follows.

1.1) The Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies related to avoiding talking about sensitive issues was rated at a moderate level in terms of concentrating on the Thais' negotiation, followed by, amusing for their conversation with Thais, and communication breakdowns happen when the Thai's understandings cannot be cleared. These results showed that the Chinese EFL students sometimes paid their attention on negotiating English with Thais. In other words, they sometimes understood their conversations with Thais, and they occasionally enjoyed talking with Thais. Accordingly, the Chinese EFL students encountered their intercultural communicative problems when the Chinese EFL students transferred from their English language to the other without changing the original meaning, and by misusing the genre of the language such as using slang words in a formal conversation or rituals, or formal language with casual acquaintances or intimate friends. Moreover, they lacked of experiences in understanding the Thai academic systems and understanding about the Thai culture, even though they previously studied one Thai language and culture course while in China. However, it was noted that the lack of experience, language and cultural competence are problematic for Chinese students to study abroad (Hongmei, 2017). With references to the study of Janjua, Malik, and Rahman (2011) noted that foreign students are not only face difficulties in terms of social and cultural norms and values, but also the different modes of teaching and learning and expectations of performance in university. Moreover, Mustaffa and Ilias (2013) pointed out that students' language proficiency is interrelated and influenced their cross-cultural adjustment process among the international students. Also, Niyomtham, Thepmanee, and Thongthai, (2017) showed that the findings of this study further demonstrated that the freshmen had to adjust themselves to these factors over the students from other academic years because they were the new comers and unfamiliar with the environment sat the university.

1.2) The Chinese EFL students' intercultural communication strategies related to asking for repetition on the unclear pronunciation or unfamiliar expressions was rated at a moderate level in terms of being interested in the Thais' own accents, and followed by being interested in pronouncing the Thai's rhythm and high or low intonations. This was because the Chinese EFL students faced several hurdles to proper English pronunciation, as well as pronunciation errors, particularly in tone and intonation; consonant clusters and words ending in consonants; "r" and "v" sounds; vowel confusion; and "l" and "n" confusion. However, the most common pronunciation errors by Chinese EFL students can be traced to the students' tendencies to translate to their native language. Also, the fact that English and Chinese share a similar word order and sentence structure only exacerbate this problem (Kannikar Kantamas, 2007).

With references to the study of accents and pronunciation, grammar by J. Louis Stevens (2017), he insisted that there were English pronunciation errors made by native Chinese speakers were that 1) In terms of Chinese tone and intonation, Chinese uses a logographic system for its written language, this means that a character represents a word or phrase. Furthermore, Chinese is a tone language that pitches can change the meaning of a word. By comparison, English was used with an alphabetic writing system -- consonants and vowels are used to create individual words, and English is an intonation language. There's no individual tone for a specific word rather, how your tone and pitch is used over the whole of a sentence changes its meaning and the emotion expressed. Also, the Chinese EFL students' ears are finely tuned to tone so learning proper English language intonation will be straight-forward once students understand the way intonation effects what's being communicated. For examples, Yeah, that's right. = Statement; Yeah, that's right. = Sarcasm, and Yeah, that's right? = Question. 2) In terms of Chinese consonant clusters and words ending with consonants, consonant cluster don't exist in Chinese; on top of these unfamiliar sounds, many consonant clusters in English contain the especially challenging "r" or "l" sounds— "tr", "dr", "pl", "cl", "fr", "fl", "pr". Otherwise, Chinese students of English often add vowel sounds between consonant clusters, and substitute consonant sounds that are easier for them to say. For examples. drape becomes dilape; French become Filench or students omit the sounds all together; words becomes wors, and cluster becomes cusser, etc. Words ending in consonants are also hard to find in the Chinese language —except for those ending in "n" or "ng". Chinese students will pronounce English words ending in consonant sounds with either an "ah" or "eu" vowel sound at the end of the word, or they omit the final consonant sound entirely. For example, and becomes and-eu; kind becomes kind-ah; card becomes car; change becomes chain, etc. However, these consonant clusters and final consonant sounds are all new for Chinese ESL students so that their English pronunciation suffers from these sorts of substitutions and omissions. These errors can be corrected with careful attention to English word pronunciation. 3) In terms of "R" and "V" sounds in Chinese, these 2 consonant sounds don't exist in Chinese. For some reasons, it's unusually difficult for Chinese ESL learners to form the "r" and "v" sounds. Some cliché errors are: really becomes wewe; very becomes wawy; rice becomes lice; love becomes lub, and dark becomes dock, etc. Also, more of that focused sound production is called for here; use every tool at your disposal to vanquish these foes. 4) In terms of Chinese vowel confusion, the two common vowel sounds Chinese students most often confuse are exemplified in the English "ih" and "eh" vowel sounds, and the "ih" sound is mixed up with and "ee" sound. For examples, knit becomes neet; bit becomes beet; the "eh" sound is confused with an "ahe" sound; bed becomes bad, and set becomes sat, etc. 5) In terms of "L" and "N" Sound Confusion in Chinese, "The "n" sound does exist in Chinese but...unfortunately, the "l" sound does not. Moreover, double "ll" sounds are especially

difficult for Chinese ESL students to master. So, Chinese students habitually substitute an “n” sound for the “l” sound in their English word pronunciations. For examples, foil becomes foin; fault becomes faunt, and fall becomes fawn, etc. However, in order to avoid the Chinese EFL students’ language and culture barriers together with their communication breakdowns, their misunderstandings, as well as their misinterpretation with Thais, the pre-departure Chinese EFL undergraduate students’ pronunciation errors mainly caused their fluent English communication with their Thais.

1.3) The Chinese EFL students’ intercultural communication strategies related to clarifying or explaining your cultural terms or topics were rated at a moderate level in terms of using familiar words when interacting with Thais, followed by providing more details for Thais when they do not understand, and trying to use the first word to make questions. This was because the Chinese EFL students in a public Thai university had their inadequate knowledge backgrounds of English linguistic competence that affected the Chinese EFL students’ knowledge of vocabulary items and the mastery of certain structural rules through which they are processed into meaningful utterances when they have studied in English program at their host culture in China for 2 years before studying English in academic collaborations with the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University. With references to the study of Byram (1997), he noted that linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence enabled individuals to interact with others who are from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Also, Lázár et al. (2007) stated that intercultural communication competence is resulted in speakers’ skills and attitudes with respect to communicating in various cross-cultural situations.

On the other hands, in terms of using their own language to facilitate the communication ($\mu = 2.14$, $\sigma = 0.93$), it insisted that having to speak clearly and loudly with Thais was rated at a moderate level when interacting with them ($\mu = 2.40$, $\sigma = 1.22$), followed by using to express the Chinese EFL students’ own language first so that their appropriate expressions can be used for interacting with Thais ($\mu = 2.17$, $\sigma = 0.98$), and using transferring skills to identify words and its meaning with Thais in required time ($\mu = 2.13$, $\sigma = 0.86$). This was to say, all the Chinese EFL students needed their Thais understand what they expressed when talking with Thais so that they needed to use emphases to clarify their statements with Thais.

With references to the study of Reyes, (2004), he claimed that code-switching is employed as a function of emphasis for a specific command. Similarly, Koziol (2000) also pointed out that emphasis was being given to a certain segment of the utterance, as well as the switch is made in order to highlight the speaker’s point. Furthermore, Hongmei (2017) noted that the problems for Chinese students who study in the U.S. included the incompetent language ability, lack of experience and creativity, and schema of the host

country. In addition, Prommin Songsirisak (2018) stated that the most significant problems for cultural adaptation were including language barriers in both English and Thai, having no strategies for inter-cultural communication with Thai people, not being familiar with Thai etiquette and food, appropriate social behavior and Thai classroom culture. As far as solutions and strategies, the research recommends three main areas including increasing the study of Thai language and culture, having better competence in inter-cultural communication strategies for talking with Thai people, and providing more detail orientation training before coming to Thailand in order to understand proper Thai cultural behavior, etiquette and Thai university study habits.

Likewise, Lysgaard (1955) insisted that he proposed a U-curve model of cross-cultural adjustment. This model consisted of four different adjustment stages. The first stage was honeymoon. It began with the satisfaction and feeling of well-being entering to the new culture. The sojourners started learning with the new cultural conditions in their real life. The second stage was culture shock which referring to the frustration, anxiety, confusion, helplessness, and unable to deal with cultural differences effectively and successfully. At the adjustment stage, the sojourners gradually learned cultural norms and values of the host country. Later, they could adapt and behaved confidently in the new culture. The last stage was mastery. Most of the anxieties were gone. The sojourner's life was more enjoyable and feels better. They learned to accept the norms and values and can effectively function to the host culture. However, the U-curve model was not clear cut identifying the process of cross-cultural adjustment since it is still vague and lacks of supportive statistical data (Black and Mendenhall, 1991).

In terms of academic adjustment, Hongmei (2017) notes that the problems for Chinese students who study in the U.S. include the incompetent language ability, lack of experience and creativity, and schema of the host country. The study points out that some Chinese students feel frustrated with their learning because of the differences of academic culture and the approaches conducted by their teachers.

Also, Kim (2017) stated that individuals' engagement with social interactions did help them acquire social skills and gradually transform their identity to the new culture for better understanding of the new cultural conditions, norms, values, and communicative systems. With social interaction, it brought the sojourners closer to the cultural and linguistic differences and could effectively adapt to the host culture. Most importantly, it moved their point of views of isolation and unaware of cultural differences to cultural integration between the different worldview.

2) The pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL undergraduate students' academic adaptation strategies when interacting with Thais in a Thai-speaking context were rated at a moderate level in terms of their challenges, followed by their readiness, and their supports.

2.1) As compared to the pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL students' challenges, it revealed that the most remarkable challenge the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a low level was their socio-cultural challenges, followed by their language challenges, and their academic challenges. In addition, their socio-cultural challenges were rated at a high level in terms of their understanding of campus life, followed by their participation in extra-curricular activities, and communicating in English with Thai classmates or Thais.

2.2) In terms of the pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL students' supports, it showed that the most remarkable support the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a moderate level was their university supports. As compared to each theme, it showed that the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' academic support services, course registration, etc. were rated at a high level, followed by their health insurance, playgrounds, gyms, on-line library services, etc., and their supervisor research guidance.

2.3) In terms of the pre-departure mainland Chinese EFL students' readiness/preparedness, it also showed that the most remarkable readiness / preparedness the pre-departure Chinese EFL students encountered in a moderate level was their on-site orientation. As compared to each theme, it showed that the pre-departure Chinese EFL students' intensive language training courses were rated at a high level, followed by their helps and supports, and their provision for co-curricular activities.

Recommendations and Implication for the study

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

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

3. A further study might be conducted through using other factors (such as cultural schemata, norms, and values, etc.) affecting the use of intercultural communication strategies and academic adjustments in different educational institutions or universities.

4. A study should be conducted as a comparative study of the use of intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation before, while, and after studying in a Thai-speaking context in order to explore whether training in intercultural communication strategies and self-adaptation affect the best solutions for Chinese EFL students' effective

English communication and cultural competences in different educational institutions/universities or not.

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