Research on the Main Factors and Influencing Mechanisms Affecting the Intercultural Communication Competence of Chinese International Students in Thailand

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Abstract: *This study aims to investigate the main influencing factors and mechanisms of cross-cultural communicative competence of Chinese students in Thailand. The study hypothesized that culture shock and Sociocultural Adaptation were important predictors of intercultural communicative competence; culture shock had a significant negative impact on intercultural communicative competence, while Sociocultural Adaptation competence had a significant positive effect on intercultural communicative competence. Chinese students in Thailand (n=189) completed the questionnaire. This study adopts the path model of linear regression of SPSS to verify the proposed theoretical hypothesis. The study selected demographic characteristics of international students, including gender, age, length of study abroad and education level. The results of the study show that there are two internal dimensions to measure the Sociocultural Adaptation ability: personal skills and social skills. In addition, the study also found that they were all significantly positively correlated with intercultural communicative competence (P<0.05). This article explores these findings and implications.*

Keywords: *Intercultural Communicative Competence; Culture Shock; Sociocultural Adaptation for personal skills; Sociocultural Adaptation for social skills*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

With the extensive exchanges of Chinese and foreign cultures and the continuous advancement of the "Belt and Road", the exchanges between China and Thailand have become increasingly in-depth, and the demand for Chinese students to study in Thailand has become stronger. The cooperative program provides many avenues for Chinese students to study in Thailand. Under this general trend and background, international students, a relatively special social group, are facing the challenges of "cultural shock" and "cultural adaptation". This research investigates and analyzes Chinese undergraduates and postgraduates in Thailand and analyzes the main factors and influencing mechanisms that affect the intercultural communicative competence of international students in a targeted manner, so as to help them improve their intercultural communicative competence and cope with the more challenges of future study.

With the close exchanges and cooperation between China and Thailand, the ASEAN friendship bridge has been established. The cultures of China and Thailand are in the same vein, and the exchanges between the two countries are deepening. The cooperation projects and cooperative institutions of Chinese and Thai universities have provided many ways for Chinese students to study in Thailand. Thailand is a country rich in cultural tolerance. Its low consumption level and charming exotic culture have become one of the main countries for Chinese students to study abroad. Since the establishment of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area in 2010, it has shown explosive growth, an increase of nearly 10 times compared with 2001. Statistics show that currently Chinese students studying in Thailand account for about three-quarters of the total number of international students. Become Thailand's largest source of international students. With the increase in the number of international students, more and more researchers have begun to pay attention to this group. International students, a relatively special social group, are facing the challenges of "cultural shock" and "cultural adaptation". Under this general trend

and background, there will be many problems in the impact of the cross-cultural sensitivity of Chinese students studying in Thailand on their cross-cultural competence, such as the mitigation of "cultural shock" and "cultural adaptation". This research investigates and analyzes Chinese undergraduates and postgraduates in Thailand and analyzes their influence mechanism on cross-cultural competence in a targeted manner.

1.2 Problem Statement

Cultivating international talents with intercultural competence has become a consensus in the world of higher education today, and the level of sociocultural adaptation has a positive correlation with the strength of intercultural competence. Especially among international students, the phenomenon of "culture shock" is still relatively common. This research will evaluate the cross-cultural management ability in three aspects. The two aspects of sociocultural adaptation, and intercultural communicative competence are analyzed and interpreted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the impact mechanism of sociocultural adaptation on intercultural communicative competence.

1.3 Research purpose

Through a comprehensive assessment of various intercultural competence levels of Chinese students in Thailand, this research evaluates and tests from three scales, culture shock, sociocultural adaptation, and intercultural communication competence, in order to conduct a more in-depth study. Understand the main factors and influencing mechanisms that affect intercultural communicative competence. The purpose of this research is to enrich cross-cultural related theories and provide reference for universities and scientific research institutions, so as to provide more substantial help and support for international students' intercultural communicative competence.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the intercultural communicative competence of Chinese students studying in Thailand. It combines the unique insights of sociocultural adaptation put forward by social psychology and combines the perspectives of culturology and psychology on intercultural communicative competence. In-depth study of the influencing factors of ability, to explore the subconscious role of sociocultural adaptation issues in successfully crossing cultural differences.

Investigating sociocultural adaptation from a behavioral perspective, sociocultural adaptation issues in existing studies are more measured with affective indicators. This research emphasizes the importance of cultural differences and cultural adaptation to the opinions of people in other cultures. It has two characteristics: personal skills measurement and social skills measurement, that is, willing to accept the views of others; flexible, that is, adjusting their behavior appropriately according to the requirements of cultural situations. The second point, suggests that cultural adaptation can also be measured by adjusting, changing behaviors to suit the criteria of the environment.

According to the research purpose, the following research questions are put forward: Research question 1: What are the main factors affecting intercultural communicative competence? 2: How does culture shock affect intercultural competence? 3: How to improve affect intercultural communicative competence?

1.4 Research Significance

According to research analysis, scholars at home and abroad in this field do not have many comprehensive studies on the relationship between sociocultural adaptation, intercultural communicative competence, cultural shock. The main purpose is to use the advantages of quantitative, analyze trends, and deeply study this cultural phenomenon, so as to help improve the intercultural communicative competence of Chinese students in Thailand, and overcome the anxiety and difficulties caused by cultural shock.

1.5 Scope of study

Sociocultural adaptation: It is a new field emerging in Western cross-cultural research in recent years, which largely affects people's intercultural communicative competence. The concepts of intercultural sensitivity and sociocultural adaptation originated from the discussion of sensitivity proposed by Bronfenbrenner et al. (1958), which divided sensitivity into sensitivity to local culture and sensitivity to object culture. The former focuses on the cultural perception of the self-belonging group, while the latter

is the recognition and perception of foreign cultures and differences. Bennett (1993) put forward the famous developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, namely DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity). In this theory, Bennett describes the adaptation process of an individual's ICS to a different culture as a transition from ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism.

Intercultural communicative competence: It belongs to the research category of intercultural communication, which is the effective communicative competence in other cultural backgrounds on the basis of basic internal social competence. Therefore, in a broad sense, intercultural communicative competence refers to the ability of the subject to communicate effectively with people with different cultural identities.

Acculturation: Redfield et al. (1936) definition: When people of different cultural groups have continuous direct contact, the change in one or both of the original cultural types is called acculturation. Cultural adaptation is a basic concept that reflects cultural characteristics and cultural functions. It mainly refers to the adaptation of culture to the environment, and sometimes also refers to the mutual adaptation of various parts of culture. The adaptation of culture to the environment is mainly manifested in three aspects: tool and technology adaptation, organizational adaptation, and ideological and conceptual adaptation.

Culture shock: Oberg (1954), also known as culture shock (English: culture shock), refers to a state of confusion and anxiety experienced by a person or an organization in a different country's culture or in a different environment have serious consequences. Smalley (1963) believes that culture shock begins to appear after the loss of very familiar situations in the original social life and communication, and the symptoms are emotional disturbances caused by incompatibility with a new cultural environment.

First of all, quantitative research is adopted in the research method. Previous related research is mainly based on qualitative research. Secondly, the research object is to study in Thailand, and the study period is less than 3 years, and the age range is from 20 to 50 years old. For Chinese students studying in Thailand, random sampling was used, 189 questionnaires were distributed, and data was collected in the form of interviews. Finally, the result of this research is a model of intercultural communicative competence of Chinese students studying in Thailand.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The relationship between culture shock, Sociocultural Adaptation, and intercultural communication competence

Zhang (2021) found that when a person leaves a familiar culture, there will be culture shock, which is a necessary stage to integrate into a foreign cultural circle. Culture shock has a huge impact on people's mind and body. Therefore, in cross-cultural communication, culture shock has become a huge obstacle. The key to solving the problem of culture shock is to look directly at the problem and stimulate the awareness of cross-cultural communication from the cognitive and experiential level. In the process of culture shock, it is necessary to timely and actively adjust the mentality, correctly understand, and pay attention to the problem, quickly establish one's own strategy to deal with the crisis, and gradually integrate into the cross-cultural communication circle, so as to cultivate the cross-cultural communication ability.

Gong et al. (2021) examined the challenges encountered by a group of New Zealand students and their strategic responses to acculturation in China. In the survey, they encouraged 15 participants to write reflective journals and conduct group interviews to explore their experiences. The analysis revealed a variety of challenges faced by participants, including language, lifestyle, and academic challenges as well as sociocultural and psychological challenges. In response to these challenges, participants adopted different strategic efforts to achieve the development of intercultural communicative competence to facilitate their communicative practice with local Chinese. These findings suggest that language educators need to revise traditional teaching methods in order to develop new teaching activities to improve the communication skills of overseas students and should provide counseling services to assist their cultural adjustment and language learning to improve intercultural communicative competence.

Hu & Dai (2021) explore how international students transcend their own identities and build trajectories of intercultural identities during their higher education studies. The study surveyed participants from different countries, focusing on the process of (re)creating identities in multiple cultural contexts and how they understood this process. These findings suggest that it is crucial to acclimate

students to the culture, encourage them to reduce language barriers, awaken cultural memory, consolidate values, expand educational exchanges, and continue to improve international understanding and broad recognition from a cross-cultural perspective, all of which are important for improving psychological resilience.

Samovar et al. (2014) proposed that cross-cultural communicative competence should meet the cognitive, emotional, and operational standards, that is, to master the necessary knowledge, emotionally identify, and act in different cultural ways. This formulation makes up for the defect of pure communicative competence, and a model of intercultural communicative competence can be conceived.

Wei (2000) believes that the connotation of intercultural communicative competence can be summarized as cognitive ability (including language knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, social and cultural knowledge), empathy ability, adaptability and so on.

Xu (2018) proposed that intercultural competence is a combination of abilities including internal cultural awareness, attitude, and external knowledge and skills, which are all components of psychological adaptation.

2.2 Theories of Intercultural Sensitivity Relevance

Lash et al. (2022) report on research conducted in two early childhood education (ECE) teacher preparation programs focusing on cross-cultural teaching and diverse U.S. and international field experiences to improve the cross-cultural competence of pre-service teachers. Study 1 was conducted at a large university in the American Midwest, and the first batch of pre-service faculty completed a revised international focus program. Study conducted at a mid-sized rural university in the Rocky Mountains of the United States, where pre-service teachers completed an eight-month university-led project, the researchers used the same tool to measure pre-service teachers' cross-cultural sensitivity, the results showed a statistically significant increase in the composite score of preservice teachers' level of intercultural competence for the majority of participants. The ability to switch from belittling other cultures to recognizing cultural similarities, appreciation, and curiosity about cultural differences, and explaining phenomena that occur in cultural contexts increases significantly.

Shi (2016) used a questionnaire survey to study the overall situation of international students' cross-cultural sensitivity and the differences between different individual factors in "Intercultural Sensitivity of International Students" and found that: the higher the cross-cultural sensitivity of all international students, the more there is a significant positive correlation among the five dimensions. International students with different individual factors have certain differences in cross-cultural sensitivity. There are significant differences between international students from Chinese cultural circles and European and American countries. International students who have been in China for half a year to one year and those who have been in China for less than six months and more than three years have both There are significant differences between international students who like Chinese culture and those who study Chinese for work or because they like Chinese itself. There is no difference in the cross-cultural sensitivity of international students of different ages and genders. Teachers can improve the cross-cultural sensitivity of international students from the perspectives of improving students' sense of difference identification, communicative focus, and teaching students in accordance with their aptitude.

2.3 The theory of intercultural sensitivity and intercultural communicative competence

A case study of the "Learning" project, to investigate the overall level, correlation and influencing factors of cross-cultural sensitivity and effectiveness of Chinese project participants (N=62). The results showed that the cross-cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communicative competence of the project participants were generally at a moderate level, and there was a significant positive correlation between the two; among personal factors, only foreign language level and overseas experience had an impact on some elements of cross-cultural communicative competence influential. In the further implementation of the project, the cross-cultural communication skills of project participants should be strengthened, and special attention should be paid to their inner real emotional tendencies, so that they can become real "insiders".

2.4 Basic theory

Ruben (1976) proposed several elements for successful cross-cultural communication, including interaction, knowledge level, role behavior, empathy, and tolerance of ambiguity, and considered

Intercultural Sensitivity ICS (Intercultural Sensitivity) as the key to successful cross-cultural communication. Important skill, this skill includes both verbal and non-verbal behavior.

Triandis (1975) and Adler (1983) proposed the ICS (Intercultural Sensitivity) attribution theory. This theory believes that in cross-cultural communication behavior, "attribution" is a subconscious "reference" that helps people interpret behavior, and only when people have a reasonable explanation of behavior can they show acceptance and adaptation.

2.5 Innovation Theory

ICS (Intercultural Sensitivity) is considered to play an important role in the cognition of intercultural communication. On the other hand, Marsella and Pedersen (2004) regard the cognitive component as the first step in acquiring sensitivity and believe that the knowledge of different cultures and the mastery of knowledge of different cultures are the key to understanding cultural differences, and a good understanding of cultural differences is the key to understanding cultural differences. Understanding also contributes to a rise in cultural sensitivity.

Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) were the first to explore ICS (Intercultural Sensitivity) from a behavioral perspective, describing it as "a sensitivity to the importance of cultural differences and the perspectives of people in other cultures". There are two characteristics here: open-mindedness, that is, willing to accept the opinions of others; flexibility, that is, adjusting one's own behavior appropriately according to the requirements of the cultural situation. The latter shows that cross-cultural sensitivity can also be measured by adjusting, changing behaviors to suit the criteria of the environment.

2.6 Related theories

The concept of Intercultural Sensitivity (ICS) originated from the discussion of sensitivity proposed by Bronfenbrenner et al. (1958), which divided sensitivity into sensitivity to local culture and sensitivity to object culture. The former focuses on the cultural perception of the self-belonging group, while the latter is the recognition and perception of foreign cultures and differences.

2.7 The relationship between culture shock, Personal and Social Skills for Sociocultural Adaptation, intercultural communicative competence

Culture shock, also known as culture shock, was first coined by Oberg (1954) in 1954. Winkelman (1994) then carried out research on culture shock. The field of study of culture shock is intercultural communication. Recently, some researchers claimed that culture shock does have many positive effects on cross-cultural communication, such as enhancing self-confidence and self-motivation.

Accumulation is Redfield's (1936) proposition that when people of different cultural groups have continuous direct contact, one or both original cultural types are changed. Berry (1990) proposed a cultural adaptation model, which divided cultural adaptation into four types: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization; A two-dimensional acculturation model is proposed, which summarizes the problems of minority groups in the process of acculturation into 1) whether to maintain and develop the characteristics of the source culture; 2) whether they tend to communicate with the dominant society across ethnic groups. Evaluate and build a positive relationship.

Bennett (1993) put forward the famous developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, namely DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity). In this theory, Bennett describes the adaptation process of an individual's ICS to a different culture as a transition from ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism. In the whole transition process, it is divided into six stages, of which the first three stages are ethnocentrism, and the last three stages are included in national relativism.

Samovar et al. (2014) proposed that cross-cultural communicative competence should meet the cognitive, emotional, and operational standards, that is, to master the necessary knowledge, emotionally identify, and act in different cultural ways. This formulation makes up for the deficiency of pure communicative competence, and a model of intercultural communicative competence can be conceived.

Wei (2000) believes that the connotation of intercultural communicative competence can be summarized as cognitive ability (including language knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, social and cultural knowledge), empathy ability, adaptability and so on.

Xu (2018) proposed that intercultural competence is a combination of abilities including internal

cultural awareness, attitude, and external knowledge and skills. In terms of culture shock research,

Lyon (2002) pointed out that the existence of culture shock phenomenon is mainly due to the differences between the superstructures in different language systems. Lyon (2002) believes that any language system, in terms of structure, includes both the underlying structure and the upper structure. The bottom structure is the common physiological characteristics and original structure of human beings, and this structure makes the language tend to be consistent; the superstructure is the different cultural structure of each nation, which leads to the performance of the language of each nation in grammar, sentence, and text structure. There are differences in form. On this basis, Lyon (2002) further believes that it is precisely because each language has its own underlying structure that the regular correspondence between the native language and the foreign language can be realized in the language symbol system, and the language communication between different ethnic groups and regions can be realized. However, due to the existence of the superstructure, there are great differences in cultural factors in different language systems, which directly lead to cultural conflicts in cross-cultural communication.

Ward et al. (2020) pointed out that there are three elements of contact in culture shock: emotion, behavior, and cognition. Befus (1986) believes that culture shock is a symptom of people's behavioral, emotional, intellectual, and physiological cumulative, multiple, and interactive stress responses. This healing method is divided into four levels: physical level, behavioral level, emotional level and intellectual level, and the corresponding treatment is given according to its characteristics. Gorney (1973) studied the mental health problems in the development of the American nation from a macro perspective, and found that people's achievement, aggression, and psychological distress depend partly on competition and interpersonal relationships; when there is a high level of social coordination between sexes, aggression and psychological distress are reduced, but achievement levels are not affected, but achievement levels are not affected. This means that people do not have to trade less aggressiveness towards achievement in exchange for less social pressure. Avoiding aggression and psychological distress is seen as an inevitable side effect of modernization. However, this side effect can be attenuated, or even eliminated, by promoting synergistic behaviors in society, such as patterns of behavior that benefit both the individual and society at the same time.

Xu (2004) pointed out that it refers to a series of phenomena ranging from a light anxiety reaction to a deep panic and crisis, and should establish a correct cultural concept and treat international students with equality, mutual respect and tolerance; Consider differences and similarities in management; in life, provide sufficient information, be familiar with Chinese laws, and strengthen crisis education; cultural empathy is the skill, art and ability of effective communication in cross-cultural communication; healthy campus culture Life can alleviate the cultural shock of international students; the teaching mode for international students should be constantly explored.

Long (2005) analyzed the causes of communication barriers and cultural conflicts, that is, "culture shock" from two aspects of communicative verbal and non-verbal behaviors: in addition to language and cultural factors, there is also the "communicative fitness" of communicative participants. An effective way to avoid "culture shock" in cross-cultural communication is proposed.

2.8 Secondary theories

Xiao and Zhang (2012) found that stable individual differences such as the Big Five cannot effectively predict cross-cultural adaptation, while cultural intelligence, as a common individual difference characteristic, can be effectively intervened and has dynamic characteristics, thus becoming a new perspective for cross-cultural adaptation research. On this basis, the cultural intelligence scale is revised according to the characteristics of international business, some overlapping and repeated contents are deleted, and the items of professional knowledge cognition of international business are added. Exploratory factor analysis obtained four dimensions that were consistent with the original scale, which could explain 81% of the variance, proving that the cultural intelligence structure had cross-cultural consistency; confirmatory factor analysis proved that the revised cultural intelligence scale had good construct validity. Yu and Zheng (2005) think that the study of cultural adaptation (acculturation) has become an important part of cross-cultural psychology research. In recent years, research in this area has increased dramatically, and new theoretical models have emerged, and their research has had an important impact on the immigration policies of Western countries. Starting from the definition of acculturation, they reviewed the theoretical development and main research paradigms of acculturation, pointed out the problems existing in the current acculturation research, and finally made an outlook on the future development trend of acculturation research. This research field also has great theoretical significance for the studies on the adaptation and ethnic integration of China's floating population.

2.8.1 Theories related to intercultural communicative competence

Gaw (2000) conducted a study on 66 American college students with overseas experience and found that the returnees experienced reverse cultural adaptation, which reflected more personal adaptation and sensitivity issues in the process.

Bai (2010) investigated the intercultural communicative competence and intercultural sensitivity of second-year non-English majors in Dalian University of Technology and found that among the factors of the intercultural sensitivity scale, the sense of differential identity is the strongest, followed by the degree of communicative participation, communicative pleasure, communicative focus, while communicative confidence is the weakest.

Qiao (2015) Review of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Research: Retrospect and Prospect, Examination and Evaluation (College English Teaching and Research Edition) The acceleration of the globalization process poses a challenge to effective cross-cultural communication that cannot be underestimated. They reviewed the relevant research on cross-cultural sensitivity at home and abroad, including historical development and related theories, especially development models and measurement methods, and sorted out the achievements made by domestic and foreign scholars from various perspectives. On this basis, future research trends made some predictions.

Shi (2016) used a questionnaire survey to study the overall situation of international students' cross-cultural sensitivity and the differences between different individual factors in "International Students' Cross-cultural Sensitivity" and found that the higher the cross-cultural sensitivity of all international students, the higher the cross-cultural sensitivity of all international students. There is a significant positive correlation among the five dimensions. International students with different individual factors have certain differences in cross-cultural sensitivity. There are significant differences between international students from countries in the Chinese cultural circle and those from European and American countries. International students who have been in China for six months to one year and those who have been in China for less than six months and more than three years have both There are significant differences between international students who like Chinese culture and those who study Chinese for work or because they like Chinese itself. There is no difference in the cross-cultural sensitivity of international students of different ages and genders. Teachers can improve the cross-cultural sensitivity of international students from the perspectives of improving students' sense of difference identification, communicative focus, and teaching students in accordance with their aptitude.

Tan (2017) in "Research on Cross-Cultural Sensitivity and Effectiveness of Participants in Educational International Cooperation Projects" - a case study based on the "China-Canada Teacher Education and School Education Reciprocal Learning" project, on Chinese project participants (N=62) The overall level, correlation and influencing factors of cross-cultural sensitivity and efficacy are examined. The results showed that: the cross-cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communicative competence of the project participants were generally at a moderate level, and there was a significant positive correlation between the two; among personal factors, only foreign language level and overseas experience had an impact on some elements of cross-cultural communicative competence. In the further implementation of the project, the cross-cultural communication skills of the project participants should be strengthened, and special attention should be paid to their inner real emotional tendencies, so as to make them become real "insiders".

Xiong (2018) believes that the process of interaction between teachers and Chinese learners is itself a process of cross-cultural communication. At present, there are few empirical studies on the cross-cultural competence of students majoring in the Master of Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages. This paper investigates the cross-cultural communication competence, especially the cross-cultural sensitivity, of Chinese students majoring in the Master of Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages.

2.8.2 Theories related to the cultural dimension

Zhang (2019) adopted a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, starting from the aspects of social and cultural re-adaptation, psychological re-adaptation, and role re-adaptation, and deeply explored the cultural re-adaptation of Chinese volunteers who returned to Thailand. In the process of cultural re-adaptation of Chinese volunteer Chinese teachers, although many situations are common, everyone is different and the places they go to are also different, so to a large extent each person's feelings and the experience will also be different. In addition, many problems require specific analysis of specific problems. The cultural re-adaptation problem of each returned volunteer will also change with time. The problems encountered in different times and regions are also different.
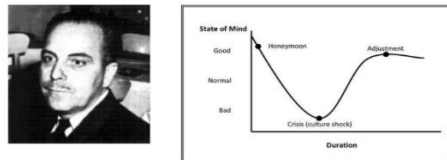
The phenomenon of culture shock is often caused by suddenly being in a different cultural life environment or being separated from the original cultural life environment for a long time, and then returning to the original cultural life environment, multicultural psychology. Culture shock is common among immigrants or when people with different cultural backgrounds fundamentally change their cultural living environment within a society.

Li et al. (2019) analyzed the common problems of "culture shock" that are prone to occur among international students in China and explored ways to help international students overcome "culture shock" through interviews and surveys, taking African students from the Bethune Medical Department of Jilin University as the survey object. "Phenomena's Cultural Adaptation Strategies.

Xue (2019) takes Bourdieu's cultural capital theory and Hofstede's cultural value orientation as the theoretical basis, compares the cultural adaptation "capital-personality transformation" theoretical paradigm, and uses the research of international students' experience as evidence to analyze the Bangladeshi students receiving academic education in China. The formation mechanism of "culture shock" is concluded that religious belief, culture, language, education system, climate and lifestyle are important mechanisms for "shock".

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Figure 1: Oberg's (1954) Culture Shock Stage Development Model
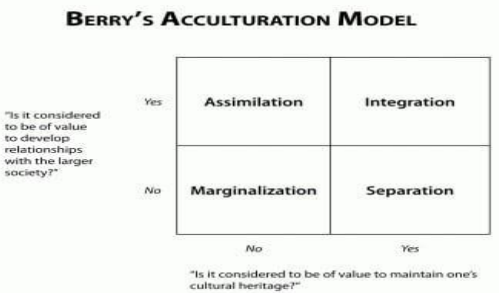

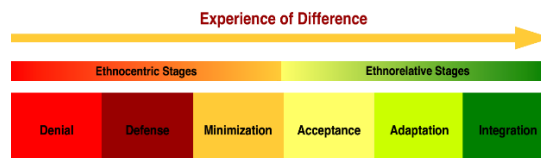*Figure 2: Berry's (1990) acculturation model*

Figure 3: Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity)

Oberg's (1954) culture shock stage development model, Berry's (1990) acculturation model, and Bennett's (1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, DMIS (developmental model of intercultural sensitivity) are shown in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure3. Based on the above theories and literature review, this study proposes six theoretical hypotheses:

H1: SAP (sociocultural adaptation for personal skills) is an important predictor of intercultural communicative competence.

H2: SAS (sociocultural adaptation for social skills) is an important predictor of intercultural

communicative competence.

H3: CS (Culture shock) is an important predictor of intercultural communicative competence. As shown in Figure 4.
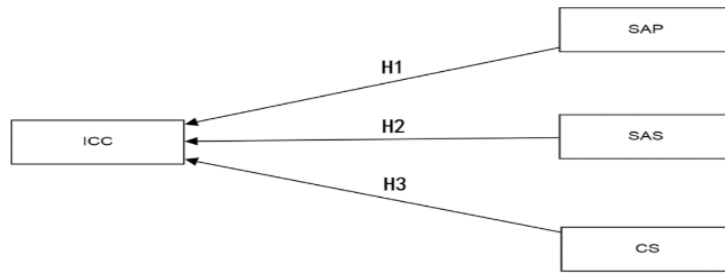

Figure 4: Conceptual framework and assumptions

3. Research Method

3.1 Research object

Research objects include attributes, study sites, and so on, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Research object

Attributes	Area of research
1.Study site	Thailand
2.Number of people	200 questionnaires
3.Gender	100 Male,100 Female
4.Education level	Bachelor's; Master's;Doctorate
5.Age	18-50 years old
6.Study duration	Less than half a year;half a year to one year;more than one year

3.2 Sampling method

3.2.1 Research tools and methods

The quantitative analysis method was adopted in this study, and 189 questionnaires were collected by random sampling.

3.2.2 Data collection process

The theoretical framework of this research was established based on the relevant literature, and questionnaires were distributed to 189 Chinese students studying in Thailand using the questionnaire star to collect data, and SPSS analysis software was used to test the reliability and validity of the scale questionnaire, and the method of multiple regression analysis was used to test four variables and dependent variables The regression relationship between them is established, the path model is established, and the goodness of fit of the model is tested, and finally a conclusion is drawn to verify whether the research hypothesis holds.

3.3 Questionnaire Design

3.3.1 Sociocultural Adaptation Scale

To obtain a robust, valid, and reliable basis in questionnaire design, these constructs employ widely validated tools from Cohen (1988), Ephrem (2019), Ye et al. (2022), Lucas (2021). Living in a different culture often requires learning new skills and behaviors. Considering your life in [country], please rate your ability in each of the following behaviors (1 = totally incompetent; 5 = very competent).

3.3.1.1 Sociocultural Adaptation for social skills

SAS1. Accurately interprets and responds to gestures and facial expressions of others and people.

SAS2. Works effectively with other students.

SAS3. Get the community services I need.

SAS4. Express my opinion to other students or colleagues in a culturally appropriate manner.

3.3.1.2 Sociocultural Adaptation for personal skills

SAP1. Manage my study or work responsibilities.

SAP2. Understand and speak the local language.

SAP3. Find your way.

SAP4. Get used to the noise near me

SAP5. Adapt to the pace of life.

3.3.2 Culture shock scale

1-5 (1 = not at all; 5 = very much).

l) Are you stressed by trying to adapt to the new culture?

2) Do you miss your family and friends?

3) Do you feel that the locals generally accept the new culture?

4) Do you have Haven't thought about escaping your new environment completely?

3.3.3 Intercultural Communication Competence scale

1) I often notice similarities in personality between people belonging to completely different cultures.

2) I feel that people from other cultures have a lot to teach me.

3) I am more comfortable with people who are open to people from other cultures than nobody.

4) I usually look for opportunities to communicate with people from other cultures.

Emotions:

5) I am more comfortable with people from my own culture than with people from other cultures.

6) I generally feel closer to people from my own culture because I can get along better with them.

4. Research result

4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

In quantitative data analysis, first, this study ensures the reliability of the measurement results, but also proves that each variable is different from each other (discriminant validity) and that the questionnaire items measure the variables in a valid way (convergent validity) (Hair et al. al., 2006). The study then continued with a path analysis to show support for the three hypotheses presented in the literature review section.

4.2 Random sampling

The appendix shows a total of 19 observable (measured) items, for path analysis a minimum sample size of 19 multiply by 5 = 95 is required, but 19 multiply by 10 = 190 is preferred (Hair et al., 2006).

A questionnaire survey was conducted on Chinese students studying in Thailand. In this study, questionnaires were distributed online in Bangkok, Thailand. With the permission of the respondents, 200 questionnaires were collected in this study, and the number of valid questionnaires was 189. Therefore, the study approximately reached Hair's optimal sample standard of 10 times.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The mean and standard deviation (SD) of all items for the four variables are shown in the descriptive statistics in Table 2.

This section presents the results of the quantitative analysis. First, quantitative data analysis is mainly aimed at validating the proposed theoretical framework represented by three hypotheses.

This study received 189 valid returns. 53.4% were male, 46.6% were female, 43.9% were 20 to 34

years old, and 56.1% were 35 to 45 years old. According to the level of education, 48.7% are pursuing undergraduate and master's degrees, and 51.3% are pursuing doctoral degrees. According to the length of study abroad, 24.3% are less than 0.5 years, 74.1% are 0.5 to 1 year, and 1.6% are more than 1 year.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
ICC1	Male	101	3.6436	.92287	.09183	1	5
	Female	88	3.7614	.85761	.09142	1	5
ICC2	Male	101	3.1089	.98895	.09840	1	5
	Female	88	3.3864	.91516	.09756	1	5
ICC3	Male	101	3.0693	.99255	.09876	1	5
	Female	88	3.2841	.97023	.10343	1	5
ICC4	Male	101	3.6139	1.01951	.10145	1	5
	Female	88	3.7386	.82343	.08778	1	5
ICC5	Male	101	3.1386	1.13163	.11260	1	5
	Female	88	3.2955	1.00755	.10740	1	5
ICC6	Male	101	3.4950	.96565	.09609	1	5
	Female	88	3.6818	.86497	.09221	1	5
SAS1	Male	101	2.9802	1.09526	.10898	1	5
	Female	88	3.3636	1.14653	.12222	1	5
SAS2	Male	101	3.2277	1.18221	.11763	1	5
	Female	88	3.4659	1.24059	.13225	1	5
SAS3	Male	101	3.1683	1.12311	.11175	1	5
	Female	88	3.3409	1.15357	.12297	1	5
SAS4	Male	101	3.3366	1.14260	.11369	1	5
	Female	88	3.4432	1.16321	.12400	1	5
CS1	Male	101	3.2277	1.15656	.11508	1	5
	Female	88	3.2045	1.21446	.12946	1	5
CS2	Male	101	3.3564	1.18814	.11822	1	5
	Female	88	3.4091	1.25612	.13390	1	5
CS3	Male	101	3.1188	1.14269	.11370	1	5
	Female	88	3.1364	1.14653	.12222	1	5
CS4	Male	101	3.3762	1.18196	.11761	1	5
	Female	88	3.1705	1.21505	.12953	1	5
SAP1	Male	101	3.4752	.88988	.08855	1	5
	Female	88	3.5341	.94624	.10087	1	5
SAP2	Male	101	3.4851	.81993	.08159	1	5
	Female	88	3.6932	.90157	.09611	1	5
SAP3	Male	101	3.5941	.81459	.08106	1	5
	Female	88	3.8523	.78110	.08327	1	5
SAP4	Male	101	3.7723	.89310	.08887	1	5
	Female	88	3.8750	.96862	.10325	1	5
SAP5	Male	101	3.8218	.82941	.08253	1	5
	Female	88	4.0000	.90972	.09698	1	5

Note: ICC = Intercultural Communication Competence; SAP = Sociocultural Adaptation for Personal Skills; SAS = Sociocultural Adaptation for Social Skills; CS = Cultural Shock.

4.4 EFA and Reliability Test

All these variables were subjected to EFA for all items using principal component analysis and Caesar's normalized maximum variance method, and the EFA presented 4 meaningful factors. Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant at the 0.001 level, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is 0.815, which is significantly greater than 0.7. These results ensure the decomposability of the data (Allen and Bennett, 2012). As shown in Table 3, EFA assigns 19 observed variables to four factors. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the revised scales. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient value (α) of greater than 0.6 indicates an acceptable level of reliability (Ursachi, Horodnic, and Zait, 2015). As shown in Table 4, the α values ranged from 0.842 to 0.874. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that the factors had good internal consistency of reliability. First, this study uses SPSS to measure reliability and conduct the following analyses. First, measure the reliability of the cross-cultural adaptation scale, which has a total of 9 items, and the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is 0.781, which indicates that the scale has good reliability.

Table 3: Summarized results of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

			Factors	
	1	2	3	4
ICC1	0.722			
ICC2	0.800			
ICC3	0.773			
ICC4	0.771			
ICC5	0.784			
ICC6	0.726			
SAP1		0.781		
SAP2		0.780		
SAP3		0.778		
SAP4		0.816		
SAP5		0.811		
SAS1			0.831	
SAS2			0.834	
SAS3			0.842	
SAS4			0.837	
CS1				0.795
CS2				0.821
CS3				0.807
CS4				0.775
Extraction method: principal component analysis.				
Rotation method: Caesar's normalized maximum variance method.				
A rotation has converged after 5 iterations.				

Note: ICC = Intercultural Communication Competence; SAP = Sociocultural Adaptation for Personal Skills; SAS = Sociocultural Adaptation for Social Skills; CS = Cultural Shock.

Second, the reliability analysis of measuring the culture shock scale, a total of 4 items, obtained the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.842, which indicates that the scale has good reliability.

Third, the reliability analysis of the scale for measuring intercultural communication skills, a total of 6 items, obtained the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.874, which indicates that the scale has good reliability. Finally, the reliability analysis of the three scales in the overall test, with a total of 19 items, obtained the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the overall scale of 0.805, which indicated that the overall scales in this study had good reliability.

Table 4: Factors and Cronbach's alpha.

Factors	Subscales	Cronbach's alpha
1. ICC	Items: ICC1–ICC6	α = 0.874
1. SAP	Items: SAP1–SAP5	α = 0.858
2. SAS	Items: SAS1–SAS4	α = 0.862
2. CS	Items: CS1–CS4	α = 0.842
3. Total scales	Items: ICC1–CS4	α = 0.805

Note: ICC = Intercultural Communication Competence; SAP = Sociocultural Adaptation for Personal Skills; SAS = Sociocultural Adaptation for Social Skills; CS = Cultural Shock.

4.5 Pearson Correlation Analysis result

This study use SPSS to run correlation analysis and Table 5 shows the correlation matrix for all the variables included in this study. Appropriate with the suggestion Pallant (2013), the independent variables show at least some relation to the dependent variable (higher correlation to 0.400) and indicates that the correlation between the independent variables is not very high (correlation less than 0.100). The variance inflation factors indicate that there are no serious multicollinearity problems. The highest value was 1.016, which is far below the standard cutoff of 5 (Hair et al., 2010). Pearson correlation analysis was performed for a total of 4 factors and 19 analysis items. It can be seen from Table 4 that the AVE values corresponding to the four factors are all greater than 0.5, and the CR values are all higher than 0.7,

which means that the data in this analysis have good convergent (convergent) validity.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Analysis and AVE Value

variables	Average variance extracted AVE value	Combined reliability CR value	1	2	3	4
1.SAS	0.572	0.842	0.756			
2.CS	0.610	0.862	.073*	0.781		
3.SAP	0.549	0.859	.085*	.099*	0.741	
4.ICC	0.537	0.874	.400**	-0.118*	.189**	0.733
		*. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 scale (one-tailed).				
		**. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (one-tailed).				

Note: ICC = Intercultural Communication Competence; SAP = Sociocultural Adaptation for Personal Skills; SAS = Sociocultural Adaptation for Social Skills; CS = Cultural Shock.

4.6 Path Analysis Results

This study used path analysis, and Figure 5 and Table 6 show that when SAP influences ICC, the standardized path coefficient value is 0.171>0, and this path shows a significant level of 0.01 (z=2.632, p=0.008<0.01), thus indicating that SAP will have a significant effect on ICC positive influence relationship. When CS influences ICC, the normalized path coefficient value is -0.164<0, and this path shows a significant level of 0.05 (z=-2.514, p=0.012<0.05), thus indicating that CS will have a significant negative effect on ICC affect the relationship. When SAS affects ICC, the standardized path coefficient value is 0.397>0, and this path shows a significant level of 0.01 (z=6.109, p=0.000<0.01), thus indicating that SAS has a significant positive impact on ICC. In conclusion, Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, and Hypothesis 3 of this study have been verified.
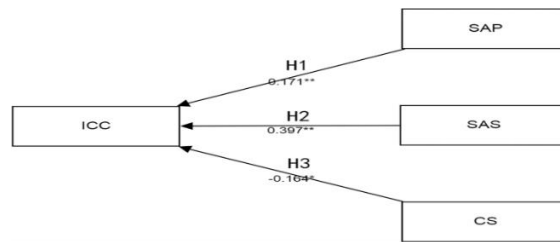

Figure 5: Path Analysis model

The output results are standardized path coefficients, and (*p<0.05, **p<0.01)
Note: ICC = Intercultural Communication Competence; SAP = Sociocultural Adaptation for Personal Skills; SAS = Sociocultural Adaptation for Social Skills; CS = Cultural Shock.

Table 6: Model Regression Coefficient Results

Independent variables	→	Dependent variable	Non-standardized path Coefficients	SE	z (CR value)	p	Standardized Path Coefficients
SAP	→	ICC	0.185	0.070	2.632	0.008	0.171
CS	→	ICC	-0.124	0.049	-2.514	0.012	-0.164
SAS	→	ICC	0.314	0.051	6.109	0.000	0.397
Remarks: → Indicates that the path affects the relationship							

5. Research Limitations and Discussion

5.1 Research Limitations

The limitation of this study is that the internal factors analyzed are limited, and future researchers can increase the number of internal factors for more in-depth research. Second, this study only uses quantitative research methods, and future researchers can use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for further research. Finally, the research objects involved in this study are Chinese students studying in Thailand, and future researchers can study students from other countries.

5.2 Discussion and prospects

This study analyzes the influence of three factors on the intercultural communicative competence of Chinese international students in Thailand. The study found that both personal skills and social skills in

intercultural adaptability can have a positive effect on students' intercultural communicative competence. Therefore, the study suggests that international students should improve and train their own survival skills to adapt to the foreign study life, including learning the local language, adapting to the local climate, culture, and customs. Secondly, the study suggests that international students should actively establish interpersonal relationships in the local area, including maintaining good interpersonal relationships with local teachers and classmates, so as to improve their cross-cultural communication skills.

Finally, the study also found that culture shock has a very significant negative impact on students' intercultural competence. Therefore, the study suggests that government agencies in Thailand should formulate corresponding policies and laws to protect international students to reduce the incompatibility of Chinese students coming to Thailand. The study also suggests that local Thai colleges and universities should actively arrange tutors who are proficient in Chinese and Thai bilingualism for Chinese students, so that Chinese students can resist the negative effects of culture shock and further improve their cross-cultural competence. In terms of food culture, foreign universities can try to hold campus activities such as Chinese and foreign student associations and Chinese and foreign food culture festivals to shorten the distance between each other and reduce the side effects of culture shock. In terms of administrative affairs, faculty and staff of foreign universities can strengthen exchanges and communication with Chinese students. Chinese culture training for faculty and staff of foreign universities is also a way to indirectly improve the cross-cultural communication skills of Chinese students.

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