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## **Enhancing ASEAN Students' Cross-Cultural Adaptability in Higher Education: Exploring the Issues of Applying Bilingual Education in China Panorama Curriculum**

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### **Abstract**

This research explores the issues of applying bilingual education in China Panorama Curriculum, with purpose to enhance cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students in higher education. Employing questionnaires and interviews with a longitudinal analysis based on factors like age, gender, nationality, and time in China, to investigate the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students in China, focusing on psychological and learning environment adaptation. The research uncovers challenges in adapting to the Chinese cultural landscape and proposes solutions. Cultural disparities between China and ASEAN nations are identified, with the bilingual education approach proving beneficial in fostering classroom participation and cultural exchange. However, psychological challenges persist, impacting mental well-being and academic performance. The research reveals the limited social life of ASEAN students in China, confined to campus interactions, suggesting improvements in English proficiency among teachers and encouraging active student participation in social activities. While bilingual education holds promise, the research emphasizes the need for comprehensive strategies, including teacher training and addressing socioeconomic disparities. The findings offer insights into cross-cultural adaptation complexities, highlighting the potential of bilingual education within the Panorama Curriculum. Caution is advised when generalizing beyond ASEAN students in Guangxi, China, considering potential variations in cultural, social, and educational contexts internationally.

**Keywords:** Cross-cultural adaptability; bilingual education; China Panorama curriculum; ASEAN students; influencing factors

### **Introduction**

In the globalized world nowadays, enhancing cross-cultural adaptability is a key educational goal, particularly in nations like China that play a pivotal role in international affairs. China Panorama Curriculum, incorporating bilingual education, stands as a beacon for cultivating

cross-cultural adaptability in students, and it emerges as a noteworthy initiative in the realm of cross-cultural education.

Bilingual education is inherently intertwined with the development of cross-cultural adaptability (Feng, 2019). Most of the researchers discuss the rationale behind the integration of bilingual education in the China Panorama Curriculum, highlighting its potential to enhance students' language proficiency and cultural awareness simultaneously (Zhang, 2018 & Hu 2022). It is noteworthy to mention that, despite the increasing recognition of the importance of cross-cultural adaptability and bilingual education, there is no comprehensive research on the long-term effectiveness and outcomes of such initiatives. The lack of extensive studies on this subject leaves a critical gap in our understanding of how students truly benefit from bilingual education within the context of cross-cultural adaptability. This gap underscores the need for further empirical research to evaluate the sustained impact of bilingual education on students' ability to navigate and thrive in diverse cultural settings. In order to refine educational strategies and address potential challenges, it is imperative to conduct comprehensive research that explores the nuanced dynamics of cross-cultural adaptability in the context of programs like the China Panorama Curriculum

This exploration seeks to uncover the intricate issues and obstacles surrounding the implementation of bilingual education in the China Panorama Curriculum, shedding light on the complexities that may hinder the desired outcomes. Through an examination of the cross-cultural adaptation issues faced by ASEAN students in higher education, and the prerequisites for implementing bilingual education, our objective is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges associated with the application of bilingual education within the China Panorama curriculum. Subsequently, we aim to offer informed suggestions and recommendations for addressing these issues.

## **Literature review**

### **Bilingual education**

Bilingual education is an educational phenomenon spreading worldwide. The conceptualization of this term has engaged scholars for a long time. Generally, bilingual education is defined as education provided in more than one language (Baker, 2011). Cummins (2013) pinned down the concept by pointing out, as the key defining feature of the term, that “the languages are used to teach subject matter content rather than just the languages themselves.” The term was recently extended by (Bialystok, 2018), who referred to bilingual education as any education program in which two or more languages are used to teach nonlanguage-related academic subject matters in contexts where the language of instruction and the language of the home or community do not match. She also pointed out in her definition the wide variety and influence of the reasons to incorporate the languages and the specific languages involved, as well as the program structure and the relation between the language(s) of education and the community on the educational outcomes. Bilingual education can be traced back to many centuries ago, even to Greek and Roman times (Cummins, 2013). Nevertheless, it is only since the end of the 20th century that there has been a wider development of this educational model. Since the first French immersion program reported in Canada and the bilingual education experiences in North America (Cummins, 1986&1989; Lambert, 1972; Lapkin, 1991), bilingual education has rapidly extended to other countries and continents (Fortanet, 2009; Coyle, 2017). Currently, a wide number of countries across the globe offer some form of bilingual education (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2013), which is recently accessible to other contexts and social environments.

The concept of bilingual education, defined as education provided in more than one language, has undergone significant evolution and expansion, with scholars emphasizing the use of languages to teach subject matter content. It is generally believed that bilingual teaching in Chinese universities mainly uses Chinese and English as the teaching languages to teach non-language professional courses. It is worth mentioning that as the use of English as a teaching language to promote the internationalization of higher education has become a global phenomenon, some Western scholars have proposed EMI (English-medium instruction, English medium instruction) in recent years. The concept of language teaching) is the teaching of non-language professional courses in non-English speaking countries using English as the teaching medium. Although domestic scholars translate EMI localization into "all English" bilingual teaching (such as Cai 2010; Hu et al. 2014), the survey found that only 13.6% of EMI English classroom teaching time reaches more than 80% (Zhao & Dixon, 2017). In other words, the EMI of most domestic universities is actually bilingual teaching with Chinese and English as the teaching languages. It belongs to the bilingual education that Hu (2018) calls "teaching in two languages in one country". But it is different from international bilingual education or content and language integrated learning (CLIL) because the latter two focus more on the teaching or acquisition of the language itself.

In conclusion, the teaching process for international students in China has more particularities, especially the requirements for university teachers' speaking speed and Mandarin. In addition, there are also special requirements for the teaching language. More and more universities are implementing bilingual teaching in the education of international students in China, using both Chinese and English as teaching media. At present, there is an upsurge in learning Chinese around the world, and English is an important language for internationalization, prompting teachers in many domestic universities to teach international students in both Chinese and English.

#### Bilingual education and cross-cultural adaptability

Cross-cultural adaptability refers to the ability of individuals to effectively navigate and adjust to new or unfamiliar cultural environments. It involves understanding, accepting, and adapting to the cultural norms, values, behaviors, and communication styles of a different culture or society. This adaptability is crucial for individuals who find themselves in diverse or multicultural settings, whether due to travel, work, study abroad, or interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds. Emotional resilience is a critical component of cross-cultural adaptability, and it's important for individuals to develop this skill when living in foreign or culturally diverse settings. Both Edward T. Hall's work (1976), as summarized in his book "Beyond Culture", and Stella Ting-Toomey's research (1999) on intercultural communication, as cited in "Communicating Across Cultures", highlight the significance of emotional resilience in cross-cultural interactions. The learning model points out that cross-cultural adaptability is a process of learning the social and cultural customs (including cognition and behavior rules) of the country of residence, and it is a process of cross-cultural communication competence. Chen(2010) pointed out that cross-cultural adaptability skill consists of three elements: intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural effectiveness.

The nature and purposes of bilingual education program vary extensively across contexts (May, 2008). The purpose is to enable speakers of minority languages to develop skills in the majority language while maintaining their home language. This is what has been reported by research literature as maintenance bilingual education (May, 2008), and can be found in contexts

such as Spain with the Basque or Catalan languages, the UK with Welsh, or the USA with Spanish (Gorter, 2011; Cummins, 2013). Other bilingual education settings focus on the use of the home minority language in earlier educational settings, with the aim of shifting to the dominant language in subsequent educational stages to cope with mainstream education. This is known as transitional bilingual education (De Maija, 2002) and has been common in US bilingual program for Spanish native speakers (or Latinos) from the late 20th century onwards (Ramírez, 1991). Additional forms of bilingual education in the USA are those in which language-majority (e.g., native English speakers) and language-minority students (e.g., native speakers of another language, such as Spanish) are integrated and provided with content instruction and language development in both languages. These are known as two-way immersion or two-way bilingual program (Christian, 1996). This model gained momentum in the US from the mid-1980s onwards due to the increased attention to foreign language learning for English speakers, the development of research on effective program for educating language-minority students, and the availability of federal and state funding for program using this approach (Howard, 2002).

In a word, cross-cultural adaptability is a multifaceted skill essential for effectively navigating diverse cultural environments, involving an understanding and acceptance of cultural norms, values, and communication styles. Emotional resilience plays a pivotal role in this adaptability, as highlighted by Edward T. Hall and Stella Ting-Toomey, emphasizing its significance in cross-cultural interactions. Bilingual education programs vary widely in nature and purpose, ranging from maintenance bilingual education, focusing on developing skills in the majority language while maintaining the home language, to transitional bilingual education, which shifts from the home language to the dominant language. Two-way immersion programs integrate language-majority and minority students, fostering content instruction and language development in both languages. Each approach serves distinct linguistic and cultural goals, reflecting the diversity of bilingual education models across global contexts.

### Bilingual education and China panorama curriculum

China Panorama curriculum is a course that refers to a comprehensive course covering all aspects of China, aiming to introduce international students to basic information and important features of China's history, culture, politics, economy, society, geography, education, science and technology, etc.. The purpose of this curriculum is to help international students understand China more comprehensively, cultivate their interest and understanding of China, and provide them with background knowledge about China so that they can better participate in international affairs, cross-cultural exchanges, and international cooperation.

There are articles that discuss teaching model applied in China Panorama curriculum, such as Wang (2016) discussing the use of the flipped classroom model, Chen (2023) proposing "stimulating-communicating" teaching method, and Wu (2022) advocating the introduction of task-based teaching method. In addition, Chen (2023) outlined the domain model of China Panorama course based on demand analysis, and Wang (2012) discussed the construction of China Panorama digital course. Hu (2022) believe that dialogue theory has important reference significance for teaching China Panorama. Zhang (2018) suggested that applied bilingual education in China Panorama curriculum was necessary. In recent years, a number of master's theses on the theme of China Panorama teaching have appeared, focusing on the two aspects of student needs analysis and comparative analysis of different versions of China Panorama textbooks.

China Panorama curriculum applying bilingual education uses Chinese (target language) and English that students have mastered to teach. It is necessary to implement bilingual teaching in this course, on the one hand because bilingual teaching helps to achieve its dual teaching goals, and on the other hand it is determined by the students' Chinese proficiency.

In summary, studying China Panorama curriculum can help cultivate international students' global perspective, cross-cultural adaptability and comprehensive understanding of China, which is of great significance for future academic, career and civic responsibilities. In this research, the China Panorama curriculum plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of ASEAN students. It equips them with a global perspective that transcends borders, enhances their cross-cultural adaptability, and provides them with a comprehensive understanding of China's multifaceted society. These skills and knowledge are invaluable assets that prepare ASEAN students for successful careers, academic pursuits, and civic responsibilities in an increasingly interconnected world. As ASEAN and China continue to collaborate and interact on regional and global platforms, graduates of the China Panorama curriculum are poised to be effective bridge-builders and ambassadors of goodwill, contributing to stronger ASEAN-China relations and a more harmonious global community

## **Research method**

### Research questions

- Have the teaching methods of bilingual education been verified in improving the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students?
- What are the main challenges that teachers and students may face when implementing bilingual education?

### Research design

This research employs a mixed-methods research design, utilizing a combination of a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews to comprehensively explore and evaluate the cross-cultural adaptability of students from ASEAN countries studying in China. Through this integrated approach, the research aims to capture both quantitative data, providing a broader overview, and qualitative insights, delving into the nuanced experiences and perspectives of the participants. The questionnaire will serve as a quantitative tool to measure and quantify various dimensions of cross-cultural adaptability, while the interviews will offer a qualitative dimension, allowing for a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the adaptation process. This dual-method strategy is designed to provide a more robust and holistic analysis of the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students within the Chinese academic context.

### Participants

One category of the participant is the 100 international students from universities in Liuzhou selected randomly, Guangxi. Due to geographical restrictions, most of this questionnaire was distributed to international students from several universities in Liuzhou, including Guangxi University of Science and Technology, Liuzhou Vocational and Technical College, Liuzhou Railway Vocational and Technical College, and Liuzhou City Vocational and Technical College, and was distributed to Liuzhou City via Sojump, which is a Wechat Mini Program, easy to answer and collect data. There are relatively few questionnaires from other universities in Guangxi.

The other category is the 10 China Panorama curriculum teachers from the above-mentioned relevant universities selected according to their teaching experience and professional

title. Through interviews with these teachers, we can obtain more professional and diversified improvement suggestions, broaden the ideas of this article, and provide more targeted, detailed and scientific courses for international students. guidance.

## Research instruments

### *Questionnaire*

The questionnaire method of this research is mainly to conduct online surveys via Sojump mini program, and carry out online publicity in various universities through major network platforms, such as WeChat, Campus Network, Campus Post Bar, etc., to conduct a thorough survey of ASEAN students in these schools, and to It distributes questionnaires, invites these students to fill in the questionnaires, and collects and organizes them in a timely manner to improve the recycling rate and effectiveness of the questionnaires.

The questionnaire was designed in three parts. The first part is the basic situation of ASEAN students studying in China, including gender, age, nationality, time in China, academic level and other demographic factors. This part is divided into two types of questions: single-choice questions and multiple-choice questions. Single-choice questions are generally about personal circumstances such as gender, age, education, nationality, religion, etc.; multiple-choice questions are about ways to learn Chinese and reasons for studying in China. These two questions are designed as multiple-choice questions mainly because many respondents There may be more than one way to learn Chinese and reasons for studying in China. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the actual situation and mentality of the interviewees, this design is more appropriate.

The second part is about the psychological adaptation of the participants. There are 12 questions in this section. Most of this part is a scale question. The main questions include "During your study abroad, did you often miss your hometown?" "Do you feel relaxed and happy studying and living here?" "Do you feel lonely while studying and living in China?" "What is the attitude of the Chinese people around you towards you?" and "How do you usually respond when you see behaviors or phenomena you don't like?" There are three options for these questions, and the levels are "severe", "average" and "light" degree.

The third part is about the participants' learning adaptation situation. The international students from China mainly conduct questionnaire surveys on five aspects: campus environment, classroom adaptation situation, school management system, Chinese learning application and learning mode of their university. There are 14 questions in this section. There are "How long did it take you to adapt to the class time on Chinese campuses?" "What do you think of the school teachers' bilingual teaching methods?" "Do you think there is a difference between ASEAN's teaching methods and China's teaching methods?" and "What do you think of "China Overview" "How is the course designed?" etc.

### *Interview*

The interview method of this research was mainly conducted online with 10 ASEAN students in China and 10 China Panorama curriculum teachers through WeChat and email. It should be noted that the 10 students interviewed were all from the above-mentioned 100 ASEAN students studying in China and selected randomly. By organizing, summarizing and summarizing the survey results of the interview subjects, a more objective and comprehensive research basis will be provided for the following articles.

The interview is divided into two parts. The first part is an interview with the teachers of the China Panorama curriculum, including basic personal information of the teachers, and a summary of the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students coming to China from the teacher's perspective. For example, "Are there many ASEAN students in the class you teach? What do you think of their overall cross-cultural adaptability?" "Have you seen their progress in cross-cultural adaptability? Are there any impressive people or things?" "According to the ASEAN students you have contacted, what is their attitude towards Chinese culture?". It also summarizes the methods for improving the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students in China from the perspective of teachers as the second part, such as "How do you think these ASEAN students adapt to China after arriving in China? How do you help and psychologically adapt to them when they have discomfort in adapting?" In the most uncomfortable stage of cross-cultural adaptation for ASEAN students, what do you think is the effective support from the outside world at this stage?" "What suggestions do you have for the international student management departments in universities?" etc.

In order to make the investigation more in-depth and better understand the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students in China, the author selected several respondents for follow-up interviews based on the questionnaire survey. It mainly investigated the actual situation and subjective feelings of Chinese cultural adaptation before and after taking the China Panorama curriculum. For example, "How did you adapt to life in China before you studied China?" "What psychological pressure do you feel about studying in China?" "What do you think is the difference between the campus culture in your hometown and the campus culture in China?" "How do you feel? How do you view Chinese etiquette?" "What phenomenon in China do you find difficult to understand?" "Which Chinese social customs are difficult for you to accept?" "Do you get stared at by others when you walk on the streets in China? How do you react? What do you think about this phenomenon?" etc.

#### *Data collection procedures*

In order to improve the efficiency of the questionnaire survey, after the questionnaire design is formulated, the distribution of the questionnaire, the recycling of the questionnaire, and the elimination of invalid questionnaires will be completed within one month to facilitate the analysis and processing of the later questionnaire. According to the research needs, the data required for the questionnaire survey will be extracted. Since this research used Sojump online, it is impossible to count the number of questionnaires distributed to ASEAN students. However, under the settings of Questionnaire Star software, questionnaire collection will stop after 100 questionnaires are recovered. Since the Questionnaire Star software can set the questions, questions set as required questions cannot be submitted if there is no answer, so there are no questionnaires with missing answers or incomplete answers. After collecting all the questionnaires, the author checked each questionnaire to eliminate random answers by the respondents. Therefore, the effective recovery rate of the Questionnaire Star questionnaire was 100%.

A total of 20 people were interviewed in this interview, including 10 teachers of China overview courses and 10 ASEAN students. The teachers interviewed have rich experience in cultural teaching and have a better understanding of the cross-cultural adaptation of ASEAN students in China. The exchanges between China overview course teachers and ASEAN students in China are closer and smoother, and they are more involved in daily teaching. Can truly understand the real feelings and situations of ASEAN students studying abroad. The interview designed 9 questions for teachers of the China Overview Course, and invited teachers to answer them. While getting the basic answers to the questions, they also asked in-depth questions "What

do you think is the main reason for this problem?" We hope that through more in-depth Through exchanges, we can understand the most real situation of ASEAN students in China, find out the influencing factors of cross-cultural adaptation problems of ASEAN students in China, and formulate more feasible and targeted strategies to help them better study and live in China.

## Results

### Psychological preparation before studying in China

The questionnaire on the psychological preparation of ASEAN students before coming to China is mainly reflected in their psychological preparation and cultural, language, experience preparation, etc. Generally speaking, the experience of going abroad or not and the experience of communicating with areas where the language is not spoken will generally affect an individual's responsiveness and adaptability in a new social culture. According to the results, 71 ASEAN students in China have no previous experience of studying abroad, accounting for 71% of the total number, which is 42% more than those who have experience of studying abroad; the number of students who come to China to study in China has been to other countries before. 29 people, accounting for 29%.

Questionnaire data on the understanding of ASEAN students in China about Chinese universities show that the understanding of China among ASEAN students varies. The number of people who think they know China very well or understand China is relatively small, and the number of students who choose "know very well" is only 8, accounting for 8% of the total number of students; 26 people chose "know", accounting for 26% of the total number of students; 47 students chose to "know a little", accounting for 47% of the total number of students; 19 students chose "don't know", accounting for 19% of the total population, most students' understanding of Chinese universities is between "know" and "know a little".

Table 1. Psychological preparation before studying in China

Question	Answer	Number of Students	Ratio
Did you know anything about China before coming to China?	Know very well	8	8%
	Know	26	26%
	Know a little	47	47%
	Don't know	19	19%
Did you know anything about Chinese universities before coming to China?	Know very well	0	0%
	Know	35	35%
	Know a little	52	52%
	Don't know	13	13%
Are you confident about your trip to study in China?	Very confident	21	21%
	confident	52	52%
	Not confident	27	27%

According to the survey on ASEAN students' understanding of the university they are studying at, the vast majority of international students chose "know" and "know a little". The number of students who chose these two options were 35 and 52 respectively, accounting for the total number of students' 35% and 52%; a total of 13 students chose "don't know", accounting for 13% of the total; no one under this option "very much knowledge" about attending university. China has a vast territory, a large population, and many well-known colleges and universities. It is indeed difficult for international students to understand it. When asked why they chose their

university to study, some ASEAN students said "his school arranged for him to come" or "I only have one choice: this university." It can be seen that many students choose their own school to study not voluntarily. , this is also one of the reasons why ASEAN students have a vague understanding of their institutions, and it also makes the preparations made by ASEAN students before coming to China to study may be different from the institutions they actually attend.

There is another very important preparation for ASEAN students to prepare before coming to study in China, which is the mental preparation to adapt to the life of studying abroad. As shown in Table 1, most ASEAN students did not have enough confidence in their study abroad career before coming to China to study. In the survey, "Are you confident about your study abroad trip in China?", only 21% chose "very confident"; 52% of students chose "confident" and 27% chose "not confident". It can be seen that most ASEAN students were not fully prepared psychologically before coming to China, and they were at a loss to study in China, which has a large social and cultural gap with ASEAN.

Judging from the results of these survey projects, the psychological preparation of ASEAN students before coming to China is actually not sufficient, whether it is their motivation to study in China or their willingness to choose a Chinese school. Most ASEAN students make decisions influenced by the outside world. There are almost zero students who fully understand themselves and have a strong desire to study abroad.

#### Psychological adjustment after studying in China

International students basically need to go through an adaptation period when living in a new country. Especially for some students who are not mentally prepared, the process of studying abroad requires more time for psychological adjustment. Judging from the psychological adjustment of ASEAN students surveyed, 24 students chose to spend 1-3 months to adapt to campus life in China, accounting for 24% of the total; 39 students chose "3-6 months", accounting for the total 39% of the students chose "6-12 months", accounting for 25% of the total; 12 students chose "more than 1 year", accounting for 12% of the total.

The longing for and dependence on hometown will aggravate international students' inadaptation to China and increase students' inner feelings of loneliness and helplessness. In this survey, when asked "During studying abroad, did you often miss your hometown?", only 12% chose " frequently homesick ", and 43% of the students chose "homesick at the first beginning"; 32% of the students chose "rarely miss home", and 13% said they did not miss their hometown often.

The living and studying conditions of international students in China will also affect their psychological adaptation state. In the survey on "Do you feel relaxed and happy studying and living here?", 29 people, accounting for 29%, chose "very relaxed and happy" 29% of the total number; when international students make friends in China, their psychological adjustment will be much better. Therefore, 44% chose "It's okay when there are people accompanying them"; but 27% still felt Living and studying in China is not a pleasant experience. I chose "my heart is full of pressure and I often feel nervous and uneasy."

Table 2. Psychological adjustment after studying in China

Question	Answer	Number of Students	Ratio
How long did it take you to adapt to China?	1-3 months	24	24%
	3-6 months	39	39%
	6-12 months	25	25%
	More than 1 year	12	12%

During studying abroad, did you often miss your hometown?	Frequently homesick	12	12%
	Homesick at the first beginning	43	43%
	Rarely miss home	32	32%
	Did not miss	13	13%
Do you feel relaxed and happy studying and living here?	Very relaxed and happy	29	29%
	Fine	44	44%
	Not pleasant	27	27%

Judging from the survey results, most ASEAN students' psychological adjustment is not ideal after coming to China. Especially in the short term, most international students have difficulty adjusting psychologically and feel confused about China, a culturally diverse but unfamiliar country. Although after a period of buffering, most ASEAN students have gradually opened their hearts to accept China, there are still a small number of international students who are not optimistic about their cross-cultural adaptability and may not be able to adapt well to Chinese culture for a long time.

#### Adaptation to the application of bilingual education in China Panorama

After ASEAN students arrive in China, the first thing they need to solve is to improve their cross-cultural communication skills. 14% of students believe that studying through the China Overview Course is very helpful in improving their cross-cultural communication skills. 44% choose it as helpful and 36% After choosing somewhat helpful, only 6% of students thought it was not helpful. Meanwhile, they rated well about the application of bilingual education in China Panorama curriculum, with 63% chose "great", 24% chose "good", and only 13 people chose "not okay", accounting for 13% of the students. Among them, some students who chose "not okay" said that the English level of the teachers teaching the China Panorama curriculum was not high enough and difficult to understand; some students said that English and Chinese were equally difficult for them, and bilingual education made them feel it's more difficult for them to learn China Panorama curriculum.

Table 3 Adaptation to the application of bilingual education in China Panorama

Question	Answer	Number of Students	Ratio
Do you think China Panorama curriculum can improve your cross-cultural adaptability?	Very helpful	14	14%
	Helpful	44	44%
	Help a little	36	36%
	Not helpful	6	6%
What do you think of bilingual education applying in China Panorama curium?	Great	63	63%
	Good	24	24%
	Not okay	13	13%

The findings indicate a generally positive perception of the China Panorama curriculum in improving cross-cultural adaptability with a significant proportion of students finding it helpful. However, the qualitative feedback highlights challenges related to English proficiency among teachers. This suggests a need for further support and professional development for teachers to ensure effective communication.

#### Teacher interview results

There are 6 interviewees who have been teaching for 3-5 years. One person has been

teaching for less than 3 years, and 3 people have been teaching for more than 5 years. For the effectiveness of enhancing cross-cultural adaptability via applying bilingual education in China Panorama curriculum, the participants expressed their opinion as below:

- Participant 1 *“It obviously that the ASEAN students make progress after study China Panorama curriculum, especially the cross-cultural adaptability. Bilingual education is very useful to communicate with them in class.”*
- Participant 3 *“Compared with international students from Europe and the United States, ASEAN students in China are relatively more conservative in character and communication habits. It’s happy to see them interact with me in China Panorama curriculum.”*
- Participant 4 *“Few actively interact with teachers during the class, only a small number of ASEAN students actively answer questions, we need to guide them more actively at the beginning of the class.”*
- Participant 7 *“There are even fewer ASEAN students who take the initiative to seek consultation or exchange with teachers after class. I hardly could know what they need from me.”*
- Participant 8 *“ASEAN students themselves lack the ability to adapt to the new environment, lack the ability to solve problems alone and self-relieve stress, and find it difficult to quickly adapt to Chinese culture and living environment. The school need to form a system to help them. We teachers has little knowledge about phycology.”*
- Participant 10 *“It’s hard for me to apply bilingual education in China Panorama curriculum, my spoken English is not so good and I am afraid that can not explain myself clearly.”*

During the interviews, teachers believed that China Panorama curriculum of great help in improving the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students, especially the application of bilingual education. However, one one hand, some of the problems that ASEAN students in China have in cross-cultural adaptation are new problems that they have no experience in dealing with. On the other hand, the problem that comes with it is that teachers’ English proficiency must be improved, especially the English terminology must be as accurate as possible to avoid misunderstandings.

Besides, teachers considered that international student management office in universities play a very important role in the cross-cultural adaptation process of ASEAN students coming to China. They manage ASEAN students in China and European and American students in a unified manner, without taking into account the beliefs, social features, national characteristics and other issues of ASEAN students, and there is no specific management approach. They should provide targeted services for ASEAN students who are extremely difficult to adapt to, so as to reduce the psychological burden and mental pressure of ASEAN students as much as possible and avoid such students suffered serious psychological problems.

#### ASEAN student interview results

The 10 interviewees were all ASEAN students studying in China, 7 of whom were vocational college students and 3 were undergraduate students, and they had been in China for between 1 and 3 years. The participants in this research indicate:

- Participant 2 *“The campus culture in my hometown is very different from China, I felt confused at the beginning. The China Panorama curriculum help me a lot to understand and adapt them.”*

- Participant 4      *“The most difficult part for me is eating. I hardly find my favourite food here. Besides, the consumption level is too high for me.”*
- Participant 5      *“I have many courses and rigorous assessments. There is a certain gap between the life of studying abroad and what I expected.”*
- Participant 6      *“Bilingual education is friendly for me, I can communicate with teacher more smoothly.”*
- Participant 9      *“When I feel frustrated, I don't know who can help me.”*

It can be seen from the interview results that when ASEAN students first came to China, they were generally not accustomed to Chinese life, whether it was dressing or eating and drinking. Most ASEAN students studying in China say that the campus culture in their hometown is very different from that in China. In terms of school environment, Chinese universities have a more superior environment than some ASEAN students, and the learning system is much stricter, especially the university assessment system, which has brought greater learning pressure to ASEAN students studying in China. Judging from the interviews, study pressure is the biggest psychological pressure for international students in ASEAN. Because before coming to China, facing an unknown new country and new environment, ASEAN students had high ideals and imagined that their study abroad life would be free and rich. However, the biggest pressure for ASEAN students studying in China still comes from the pressure of life. Although many ASEAN students have preferential policies to study in China, the economic level of some ASEAN countries is relatively low. They have to live as freely in China as they do in their own country, and there is pressure on consumption is relatively large.

The students interview results showed that ASEAN students believed that although they could better understand China's geography, history, culture, etc. through China Panorama curriculum, and the bilingual education classes are very friendly to them, ASEAN students still have varying degrees of cross-cultural adaptation problems. Although the school has specialized institutions to pay attention to and help international students through the difficult period of cross-cultural adaptation, the school's attention is not long-term, continuous, and gradually in-depth. It is often just a consultation, or even just a phone consultation, without in-depth communication. , unable to discover the problems of international students at all, and without a basis for communication, international students from ASEAN in China cannot open up and express their cross-cultural adaptation problems fluently even when facing tutors.

## **Discussion**

Verification of teaching methods in improving cross-cultural adaptability

The findings from research underscore the significance of bilingual education (Hu, 2017; Farida, Supardi, & Muchtar, 2023), particularly the China Panorama curriculum, in enhancing the cross-cultural adaptability of ASEAN students in China. As posited, culture is a complex amalgamation of local customs, historical legacies, spiritual sentiments, and various other factors (Hall, 1976). The profound cultural disparities between China and ASEAN countries in terms of history, geography, customs, and more, pose challenges to cross-cultural adaptation for ASEAN students. However, the bilingual education approach implemented in the China Panorama curriculum provides a unique platform for students to actively engage in classroom discussions (Zhang, 2018). By encouraging the sharing and comparison of cultural elements from both their home countries and China, students can identify commonalities, fostering mutual understanding

and respect. This active participation contributes to a more nuanced comprehension of Chinese culture, thus improving their cross-cultural adaptability.

#### Challenges faced by teachers and students in bilingual education implementation

The research sheds light on the psychological adaptation problems prevalent among ASEAN students in China. One of the primary challenges lies in the reluctance of students to seek assistance when facing difficulties. The lack of initiative to reach out for support, be it from Chinese classmates or mental health professionals, can lead to heightened levels of anxiety and depression (Hall, 1976; Ting-Toomey, 1999; Suparto, Lao, & Salim, 2023). Additionally, cultural constraints, particularly among female students adhering to Islamic rules, further restrict social interactions, hindering effective communication and emotional expression. This, in turn, may contribute to a sense of isolation and impact both mental well-being and academic performance.

Furthermore, the study reveals the narrow scope of life for ASEAN students, primarily limited to the campus environment. While communication with teachers and classmates is present, it tends to be formal and lacks depth, limiting opportunities for understanding Chinese language and culture. To address these challenges, improvements in bilingual education should be considered. Firstly, enhancing the English proficiency of teachers could lead to more effective language instruction aligned with students' levels. Secondly, extending the China Panorama curriculum beyond the classroom, promoting active participation in social life, can provide more opportunities for meaningful interactions with Chinese people and first hand experiences of Chinese culture. This multifaceted approach aims to tackle the challenges faced by both teachers and students, fostering a more inclusive and enriching educational environment for ASEAN students in China.

#### Conclusion

While the Panorama Curriculum's bilingual education approach holds great potential for enhancing cross-cultural adaptability, the exploration of challenges outlined in this review underscores the importance of addressing multifaceted issues. Effective solutions must involve comprehensive strategies, including targeted teacher training, resource allocation, cultural sensitivity in instruction, and the acknowledgment of socioeconomic disparities. Overcoming these challenges will be crucial in realizing the full potential of bilingual education within the Panorama Curriculum and ensuring that it genuinely prepares students for successful cross-cultural interactions in our interconnected world.

Bilingual teachers in the China Panorama class should not only have a solid foundation in Chinese and rich knowledge, but also have strong cross-cultural communication skills. When the teaching qualifications are very immature, it is recommended not to forcefully implement bilingual teaching. Schools that have implemented or are preparing to implement bilingual teaching in the China Panorama curriculum must attach great importance to the training of bilingual teachers.

Before ASEAN students' Chinese proficiency reaches an advanced level, the bilingual education or we just can say bilingual teaching method is most conducive to achieving the teaching objectives of the China Panorama curriculum. By studying this curriculum, ASEAN students can not only master a large amount of knowledge about Chinese culture and society, but also improve their Chinese proficiency. The implementation of bilingual teaching in the China Panorama curriculum is a general trend. Moreover, it proves that potential future directions for enhancing the effectiveness of bilingual education in fostering cross-cultural adaptability.

### Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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