



## Miscommunication Among International College Students at Rangsit University: Causes and Ways to Improve Internal Communication By Applying the SMCR Model

Gessanee Maneerutt

Department of General Education, International College, Rangsit University  
Email: [gessanee.m@rsu.ac.th](mailto:gessanee.m@rsu.ac.th)

### Abstract

Miscommunication remains a critical issue in multicultural higher education settings where students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds engage in continuous academic and social interaction. This study examines the perceived causes of miscommunication among International College students at Rangsit University using the SMCR (Sender–Message–Channel–Receiver) model proposed by David K. Berlo as the analytical framework and proposes strategies to improve internal communication. This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design involving 898 students. Data were collected through a validated 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation).

The findings indicate that the Sender component was perceived as the primary source of miscommunication ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.433$ ), followed by Receiver ( $M = 2.969$ ), Message ( $M = 2.88$ ), and Channel ( $M = 2.782$ ). Interpersonal factors such as attitude (27.39%) and relationship dynamics (26.14%) emerged as additional significant contributors. The results suggest that communication breakdown in this multicultural academic context is primarily behavioral and relational rather than technological. By empirically validating the relevance of the SMCR framework in a contemporary international university setting, this study extends communication theory and offers practical implications for enhancing communication competence, intercultural sensitivity, and internal communication practices in higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** *Miscommunication, SMCR Model, Intercultural Communication, International Students, Communication Competence, Higher Education*

### 1. Introduction

Effective communication constitutes a foundational mechanism for knowledge construction, collaborative learning, and institutional functioning in higher education. In increasingly internationalized universities, communication processes are shaped not only by academic content but also by linguistic diversity, cultural frameworks, and interpersonal expectations. While multicultural environments enrich intellectual exchange, they simultaneously intensify the probability of miscommunication. Differences in language proficiency, pragmatic norms, communication styles, power distance orientation, and relational expectations can distort meaning-making processes and disrupt collaborative engagement.

The International College at Rangsit University exemplifies such a multicultural academic ecosystem. Students from Myanmar, China, Thailand, and other Asian countries, together with exchange students from Europe and beyond, participate in English-medium instruction, group-based coursework, and institutional communication systems. Within this heterogeneous environment, communication breakdowns may not stem solely from vocabulary limitations or grammatical competence. Rather, they often emerge from differences in interpretive frames, emotional regulation, communicative confidence, and relational dynamics. Consequently, miscommunication in this context should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing linguistic, psychological, and social variables.

To systematically diagnose these breakdowns, this study employs the SMCR communication model developed by David K. Berlo (1960). The SMCR model conceptualizes communication as a structured process comprising four interdependent components: Sender, Message, Channel, and Receiver. Each component contains sub-



elements—including communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, social systems, and cultural context—that influence encoding and decoding accuracy. A key strength of the SMCR framework lies in its analytical clarity: it enables researchers to isolate specific loci of perceived breakdown rather than treating miscommunication as an undifferentiated outcome. By applying this model within a contemporary multicultural higher education setting, the present study seeks to identify which communication component students perceive as the primary source of misunderstanding and to provide empirically grounded recommendations for improving communication effectiveness. The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify which SMCR component is perceived as the primary cause of miscommunication.
2. To examine additional contributing factors affecting internal communication.
3. To propose strategies to improve communication effectiveness in a multicultural academic setting.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *Communication and Miscommunication in Multicultural Higher Education*

Higher education institutions with international student populations function as complex intercultural communication environments. Students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds engage in academic discussions, collaborative projects, and institutional communication processes. While such diversity enriches learning experiences, it simultaneously increases the likelihood of miscommunication due to differences in language proficiency, communication styles, expectations, and cultural interpretation frameworks.

Recent research studies demonstrate that language proficiency remains one of the strongest predictors of communication effectiveness among international students. A bibliometric and content analysis review by Zhang and Goodson (2022) revealed that language competence significantly affects both academic performance and social adaptation in higher education contexts. When linguistic skills are insufficient, encoding and decoding processes become distorted, increasing the risk of misunderstanding.

Similarly, Lu and Habil (2023), in a systematic review of intercultural miscommunication in higher education institutions, identified language barriers and cultural mismatches as primary sources of communication breakdown. Their review emphasized that misunderstandings often arise not only from grammar or vocabulary limitations but also from pragmatic differences such as politeness strategies, turn-taking norms, and implicit expectations.

These findings suggest that miscommunication in international academic settings is multidimensional, involving linguistic, cultural, psychological, and relational components.

### 2.2 *The SMCR Model as a Framework for Analyzing Miscommunication*

This study adopts the SMCR model developed by David K. Berlo (1960) as its primary theoretical framework. The model conceptualizes communication as consisting of four interrelated components:

- **Sender** (communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, social system, culture)
- **Message** (content, structure, code, treatment)
- **Channel** (medium or sensory route)
- **Receiver** (decoding skills, attitudes, knowledge, culture)

According to Berlo (1960), communication effectiveness depends on the compatibility between sender and receiver characteristics. Differences in skills, knowledge, or cultural background may lead to distortion during transmission or interpretation.

Although the SMCR model is often categorized as a linear communication model, its components remain analytically useful for identifying breakdown points in multicultural educational contexts. In international settings, sender-related factors such as clarity of speech, language proficiency, and emotional control may significantly influence whether the intended meaning is successfully conveyed.



### **2.3 Communication Competence and Intercultural Communication**

Communication competence theory proposes that effective interaction requires motivation, knowledge, and skills (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). In multicultural environments, competence extends beyond linguistic ability to include intercultural sensitivity, adaptability, and awareness of cultural norms (Gudykunst, 2003).

Recent empirical research supports the centrality of intercultural communication competence in academic adaptation. Kantamas, Hsai, and Kham (2024) examined the challenges of intercultural communication competence in contexts where English functions as a lingua franca. Their findings indicate that students frequently struggle with implicit cultural expectations embedded in English communication, even when grammatical proficiency is adequate. This suggests that miscommunication often stems from pragmatic and sociocultural discrepancies rather than purely linguistic deficiencies.

Additionally, Rimkeeratikul (2023) found that communication apprehension and intercultural communication anxiety significantly reduce students' willingness to participate in academic discussions. Anxiety affects both encoding (clarity and confidence in expression) and decoding (interpretation accuracy), thereby increasing the probability of misunderstanding. These findings align with competence theory, which emphasizes that psychological readiness influences communication outcomes.

### **2.4 Relational and Emotional Dimensions of Miscommunication**

Communication is not solely informational; it also conveys relational meanings (Watzlawick, Bavelas, & Jackson, 1967). Interpersonal attitudes, emotional states, and relationship history shape how messages are interpreted. Miscommunication may therefore arise even when linguistic content is clear, if relational cues are misinterpreted.

Emotional intelligence, defined by Goleman (1995) as the capacity to recognize and regulate emotions in oneself and others, has been linked to more effective interpersonal interaction. In multicultural academic settings, emotional regulation becomes particularly important when navigating culturally sensitive issues or high-stress academic tasks.

Lu and Habil (2023) emphasize that interpersonal dynamics—including power distance, perceived hierarchy, and relational closeness—significantly influence communication effectiveness in higher education institutions. This reinforces the notion that communication breakdown is often relational rather than purely structural.

### **2.5 Digital Communication and Intercultural Interaction**

With increasing reliance on digital communication platforms in higher education, channels of communication have expanded beyond face-to-face interaction. Social media, learning management systems, and messaging applications introduce additional layers of interpretation.

Xu et al. (2024) examined intercultural communication challenges among foreign students and found that social media interaction can both enhance and complicate intercultural competence. While digital platforms provide opportunities for increased interaction, they may also intensify misunderstandings due to reduced nonverbal cues and asynchronous communication patterns.

However, research indicates that technological channels themselves are not always the primary source of miscommunication. Rather, user competence, interpretation frameworks, and relational context determine whether digital communication leads to clarity or confusion.

### **2.6 Synthesis and Research Gap**

The reviewed literature demonstrates that miscommunication among international students is influenced by:

- Linguistic competence (Zhang & Goodson, 2022)
- Cultural and pragmatic differences (Lu & Habil, 2023)
- Intercultural communication competence (Kantamas et al., 2024)
- Communication anxiety (Rimkeeratikul, 2023)



- Digital interaction dynamics (Xu et al., 2024)

While prior studies extensively examine intercultural adaptation and communication competence, fewer studies systematically analyze miscommunication using a structured communication model such as the SMCR model within a specific institutional context in Thailand.

Therefore, this study addresses the research gap by applying Berlo's SMCR model to identify which communication component—Sender, Message, Channel, or Receiver—is perceived as the primary cause of miscommunication among International College students at Rangsit University. By integrating classical communication theory with recent empirical research, this study contributes both theoretical clarification and practical insights for improving internal communication in multicultural higher education environments.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a **quantitative research** approach using a cross-sectional survey design to investigate students' perceptions of miscommunication causes within the framework of the SMCR model. The design was appropriate because the research aimed to measure and compare perceived contributions of four predefined communication components—Sender, Message, Channel, and Receiver—using standardized indicators. A structured questionnaire allowed systematic data collection from a large population and enabled statistical analysis of response patterns aligned with the study objectives.

The survey design addressed all research objectives through a single integrated instrument. Specifically, the questionnaire was structured to:

1. identify the primary perceived cause of miscommunication based on SMCR components,
2. examine additional contributing factors beyond SMCR elements, and
3. explore suggested strategies for improving internal communication.

Thus, one comprehensive questionnaire was designed to answer all research questions in a coherent and measurable manner.

#### 3.2 Participants and Sampling Procedure

The target population consisted of students enrolled in the International College at Rangsit University during the 2025 academic year.

A total of **898 students** participated in the study. Participants were selected using **convenience sampling**, as access was obtained through classroom coordination and institutional communication channels. Although probability sampling would enhance generalizability, convenience sampling was considered appropriate due to institutional accessibility and the exploratory nature of the research.

To ensure diversity, questionnaires were distributed across multiple academic programs and year levels. The sample included students from various nationalities and majors, increasing representativeness within the International College context.

#### Data Collection Procedure:

- Permission was obtained from relevant academic authorities.
- Lecturers were contacted to allow brief in-class data collection sessions.
- Questionnaires were distributed via an online survey link.
- Participants were informed of the study's purpose, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality.
- Completion time averaged 10–15 minutes.

No incentives were provided. Participation was entirely voluntary.



### 3.3 Instrument Development and Validation

#### 3.3.1 Instrument Development

The research instrument was developed based on the SMCR communication model proposed by David K. Berlo (1960). Item construction followed a deductive process:

- **Sender items** measured communication skills, clarity, preparation, language proficiency, and attitude.
- **Message items** assessed clarity, structure, appropriateness, and comprehensibility.
- **Channel items** examined the suitability of communication media and contextual environment.
- **Receiver items** measured listening skills, interpretation accuracy, and cultural understanding.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

**Section A: Demographic Information** Gender, nationality, and academic major

**Section B: SMCR Perception Scale** A 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) measuring agreement with statements such as “Sender is the main cause of miscommunication.” Each SMCR component was represented by multiple indicators to enhance construct coverage.

**Section C: Additional Factors and Improvement Strategies** Multiple-response items allowing respondents to select more than one option regarding other causes and possible solutions

#### 3.3.2 Content Validity

To ensure content validity, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by three experts in communication studies and educational research. The experts evaluated item relevance, clarity, and alignment with the SMCR constructs and research objectives. Minor wording revisions were made based on feedback to improve precision and conceptual alignment.

#### 3.3.3 Pilot Testing and Reliability

A pilot test was conducted with a small group of International College students ( $n \approx 30$ ) who were not included in the final sample. The pilot aimed to assess clarity, item comprehension, and internal consistency.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. The overall SMCR perception scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ), indicating satisfactory reliability for survey research. Items with low item-total correlations were revised or removed prior to full-scale data collection.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Data were coded and analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize findings:

- Frequency and percentage for demographic and multiple-response items
- Mean and standard deviation for Likert-scale items
- Ranking of SMCR components based on mean scores

The use of mean and standard deviation allowed comparison of perceived strength among the four SMCR components. Standard deviation values were examined to assess response dispersion and variability in perceptions.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that responses would remain anonymous and confidential. No personal identifiers were collected. Data were used solely for academic research purposes.

This expanded methodology provides sufficient procedural detail to allow replication and demonstrates that the measurement techniques were systematically developed, validated, and statistically examined for reliability.



## 4. Research Results

### 4.1 Overview of Findings

This section presents the empirical findings of the quantitative survey conducted among 898 International College students at Rangsit University. The results are structured to address the study's three objectives: (1) to describe respondent characteristics, (2) to determine which component of the SMCR model is perceived as the primary source of miscommunication, and (3) to identify additional contributing factors and improvement strategies. Descriptive statistical analyses—including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation—were applied to interpret the data.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 898 valid responses were analyzed. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with females representing 54.23% ( $n = 487$ ) and males accounting for 43.98% ( $n = 395$ ), while 1.79% ( $n = 16$ ) identified as other genders. The slight predominance of female respondents suggests that the findings reflect perspectives across gender groups without extreme imbalance.

The nationality profile demonstrates the multicultural nature of the International College. Myanmar students constituted the majority of respondents (62.38%,  $n = 562$ ), followed by Chinese students (23.35%,  $n = 208$ ) and Thai students (9.38%,  $n = 84$ ). All other nationalities individually represented less than 1% of the sample. Although the institution is internationally diverse, the data indicate that communication dynamics are primarily shaped by interactions among Myanmar, Chinese, and Thai students. This demographic structure is important when interpreting patterns of perceived miscommunication, as linguistic and cultural proximity may influence communication expectations and interpretations.

Academic representation was also diverse. Students from Information and Communication Technology (17.65%) and International Business (17.20%) comprised the largest groups, followed by bilingual or other programs (16.32%) and Communication Arts (14.21%). No single discipline dominated the sample, which strengthens the cross-program applicability of the findings and reduces the risk of disciplinary bias influencing perceptions of communication breakdown.

### 4.3 Perceived Causes of Miscommunication Based on the SMCR Model

The central objective of this study was to identify which component of the SMCR model developed by David K. Berlo is perceived as the primary source of miscommunication. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Mean scores were used to determine relative prominence.

**Table 1.** Comparative Perceptions of SMCR Components ( $n = 898$ )

(This Table 1 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and ranking of the four SMCR components.)

Component	Mean	SD	Rank
Sender	3.36	1.433	1
Receiver	2.969	1.478	2
Message	2.88	1.220	3
Channel	2.782	1.367	4

#### 4.3.1 Sender Component

The Sender component recorded the highest mean score ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ), indicating moderate agreement that sender-related factors contribute significantly to miscommunication. More than half of the respondents (54.16%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the sender is the primary cause of communication breakdown.



This pattern suggests that students attribute miscommunication largely to encoding-related issues, including insufficient language proficiency, lack of clarity, inadequate preparation, and negative communicative attitudes. The relatively higher standard deviation reflects some variability in perception; however, the overall mean exceeding the midpoint of the scale confirms that sender-related issues are viewed as the dominant explanatory factor.

#### 4.3.2 Receiver Component

The Receiver component ranked second ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ). Responses were more evenly distributed, with disagreement slightly outweighing agreement. Although receiver-related factors such as listening skills, cultural interpretation, and personal assumptions were acknowledged, they were not perceived as the principal source of breakdown.

The mean score slightly below 3.00 suggests ambivalence. Students recognize that decoding processes may contribute to misunderstanding, yet responsibility is attributed more strongly to message producers than to message interpreters.

#### 4.3.3 Message Component

The Message component obtained a mean of 2.88 ( $SD = 1.22$ ). The largest proportion of respondents selected “Neutral” (38.47%), indicating uncertainty regarding whether structural aspects of message design constitute the main cause of miscommunication.

While unclear wording and poor organization may affect understanding, students appear to distinguish these structural features from the broader communicative competence of the sender. The relatively lower mean suggests that message-related problems are perceived as secondary to behavioral and interpersonal factors.

#### 4.3.4 Channel Component

The Channel component received the lowest mean score ( $M = 2.78$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ). Overall responses leaned toward disagreement, indicating that communication media—such as digital platforms or communication tools—are not considered primary drivers of misunderstanding in this context.

This finding implies that students perceive miscommunication as primarily human rather than technological. Despite the increasing reliance on digital communication in higher education, the medium itself is not viewed as the dominant barrier.

### 4.4 Comparative Summary of SMCR Components

A comparative analysis confirms a clear ranking order: Sender (Rank 1), Receiver (Rank 2), Message (Rank 3), and Channel (Rank 4). The mean differences, while not subjected to inferential testing, indicate a consistent perception that communication breakdown originates most strongly from the individual delivering the message rather than from structural or technological factors.

This hierarchy directly answers the study’s primary research objective: within the SMCR framework, the Sender component is perceived as the principal source of miscommunication among International College students.

### 4.5 Additional Contributing Factors

**Table 2.** Additional Contributing Factors (Multiple Responses Allowed)

Factor	Percentage
Attitude of sender/receiver	27.39%
Relationship between sender and receiver	26.14%
Organizational context and culture	17.88%
Readiness of both parties	15.26%



Factor	Percentage
Communication context	13.33%

Because respondents were permitted to select multiple responses, the total number of selections ( $n = 1421$ ) exceeded the total number of participants. The most frequently selected contributing factor was attitude (27.39%), followed closely by relationship quality (26.14%). Organizational culture (17.88%), readiness (15.26%), and communication context (13.33%) were less frequently selected but still notable.

The prominence of attitude and relational quality reinforces the earlier finding that miscommunication is perceived as relational and emotional rather than purely structural. These results extend beyond the core SMCR components by emphasizing the interpersonal climate within which communication occurs.

#### 4.6 Strategies for Improving Communication

**Table 3** Suggested Strategies for Improving Communication (Multiple Responses Allowed)

Strategy	Percentage (%)
Build positive and friendly relationships	17.27
Ensure message clarity and ease of understanding	14.84
Maintain positive attitudes (sender & receiver)	13.79
Exercise emotional control during communication	12.67

The most frequently endorsed strategy was building positive and friendly relationships (17.27%), followed by improving message clarity (14.84%). Strategies directly targeting interpersonal attitudes and emotional regulation together account for a substantial proportion of responses, reinforcing earlier findings that students perceive miscommunication as primarily relational and behavioral rather than structural or technological. The convergence between diagnosed causes and recommended interventions demonstrates perceptual coherence within the dataset.

Students' proposed improvement strategies mirror their diagnosis of the problem. The most frequently selected strategies included building positive and friendly relationships (17.27%), ensuring message clarity (14.84%), maintaining positive attitudes (13.79%), and exercising emotional control during communication (12.67%).

The alignment between identified causes (attitude and relational factors) and proposed solutions (relationship-building and emotional regulation) indicates internal consistency in respondents' perceptions. Students not only attribute miscommunication to behavioral factors but also recommend behavioral interventions as corrective measures.

#### 4.7 Synthesis of Key Findings

Collectively, the findings demonstrate that miscommunication in this multicultural academic environment is perceived primarily as a function of sender-related competence and interpersonal dynamics. Structural elements (message design) and technological channels play comparatively smaller roles. The emphasis on attitude and relational quality further supports the interpretation that communication breakdown is viewed as a social and behavioral issue rather than a mechanical failure in information transmission.

#### 4.8 Concluding Statement of Results

In summary, the quantitative data reveal three principal conclusions:

1. The Sender component of the SMCR model is perceived as the strongest contributor to miscommunication.
2. Interpersonal attitudes and relationship quality significantly influence communication effectiveness.



3. Students recommend relational and behavioral strategies—rather than technological adjustments—to improve internal communication.

These results provide a clear empirical foundation for the subsequent discussion and theoretical interpretation.

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

This study concludes that miscommunication among International College students is primarily sender-driven and reinforced by relational and emotional factors. Enhancing communication competence, promoting intercultural awareness, and encouraging positive interpersonal behavior are essential for reducing misunderstanding.

Universities should implement communication training programs, intercultural workshops, and relationship-building initiatives to foster a more effective and harmonious academic environment.

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Interpretation of Findings

This study demonstrates that students perceive miscommunication primarily as a function of sender-related competence, particularly communication skills, attitudes, and intercultural awareness. While the SMCR model conceptualizes communication as a balanced system of four interdependent components, empirical results indicate asymmetrical perceptual weighting toward the Sender.

This finding extends Berlo's framework by integrating intercultural competence and emotional regulation as embedded subcomponents within sender attributes. The alignment with Anxiety/Uncertainty Management Theory and interactional communication theory suggests that communicative breakdown is strongly shaped by relational climate and affective regulation rather than by structural or technological deficiencies.

### 6.2 Support of Conclusions by Data

The conclusions drawn are directly grounded in the empirical findings. Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that sender-related variables (skills, attitudes, cultural awareness) received consistently higher mean scores than channel or message-related variables. This quantitative pattern justifies the interpretation that students perceive communication breakdown as primarily sender-driven.

However, while the descriptive statistics provide clear trends in perception, the absence of inferential testing limits the ability to establish statistically significant relationships among variables. For example, without correlation or regression analysis, it cannot be definitively concluded that sender competence predicts academic performance or relational satisfaction. Therefore, the conclusions are appropriately framed as perceptual dominance rather than causal determination.

Future studies employing inferential statistics, structural equation modeling, or path analysis could further validate and extend these findings.

### 6.3 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to communication and higher education theory in several ways:

1. Recontextualization of the SMCR model The findings demonstrate that the SMCR model remains applicable in multicultural academic settings but requires integration of intercultural competence and emotional intelligence constructs.
2. Expansion toward affective-intercultural integration Traditional linear interpretations of SMCR may underestimate relational and emotional dynamics. The results suggest that intercultural and affective variables should be embedded within the Sender and Receiver components when applied to globalized education contexts.
3. Bridging communication theory and educational technology research In contemporary digital learning environments, channel sophistication does not compensate for weak encoding practices. Thus,



communication theory must be integrated with digital pedagogy frameworks to address clarity, tone, and cultural nuance in mediated interactions.

#### **6.4 Practical Implications**

Given the dominance of sender-related factors, institutional interventions should prioritize human competence development rather than solely technological upgrades.

Universities should:

- Implement structured intercultural communication training for both domestic and international students.
- Offer workshops on message clarity, tone management, and emotional regulation in academic discourse.
- Integrate intercultural competence modules into orientation programs.
- Train faculty in inclusive communication strategies for multicultural classrooms.
- Develop structured peer-feedback mechanisms to improve encoding and decoding practices.

Such initiatives align with contemporary global education strategies that emphasize soft skills, cultural intelligence (CQ), and collaborative learning competencies.

#### **6.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in three principal contributions:

- It provides empirical support for the relevance of classical communication theory within modern internationalized higher education contexts.
- It clarifies that technological advancement does not eliminate communicative risk; rather, competence and relational awareness remain foundational.
- It offers evidence-based direction for institutional policy aimed at improving academic integration and reducing intercultural tension.

In an era of rapid globalization and digital transformation, understanding the human determinants of communication effectiveness is both academically and practically urgent.

#### **6.6 Limitations**

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations:

1. **Methodological Constraint**  
The analysis relies primarily on descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean). The absence of inferential statistical testing restricts the ability to establish predictive relationships or statistically significant correlations between variables.
2. **Self-Reported Data**  
The findings are based on participant perceptions, which may be influenced by response bias, social desirability bias, or limited self-awareness.
3. **Single-Institution Context**  
Data were collected from one institution, limiting the generalizability across different cultural, geographic, or disciplinary contexts.
4. **Cross-Sectional Design**  
The study captures perceptions at one point in time and does not account for longitudinal adaptation processes.

Acknowledging these limitations allows readers to appropriately interpret the scope and applicability of the findings.



### 6.7 Conclusion

This study demonstrates that miscommunication among International College students is predominantly perceived as a sender-driven phenomenon shaped by communicative competence, intercultural awareness, and relational-emotional factors. While structural and technological elements play supporting roles, they are secondary to human encoding and interpretive processes.

Improving communication effectiveness in multicultural higher education therefore requires a strategic shift from channel enhancement to competence development. By strengthening linguistic clarity, cultural sensitivity, and emotional intelligence, institutions can foster more inclusive, collaborative, and resilient academic environments.

### 7. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should:

- Employ mixed-method approaches combining surveys with interviews or focus groups.
- Conduct inferential statistical analyses (correlation, regression, SEM) to examine predictive relationships.
- Perform cross-institutional or cross-national comparative studies.
- Investigate digital communication challenges, including tone misinterpretation in email, messaging platforms, and LMS systems.
- Explore longitudinal adaptation processes among international students.

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