



Thai and Indonesian teachers' efforts and challenges in facilitating intercultural communication in teaching English: A comparative study

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Abstract

This study aims to find out what intercultural communication efforts and problems faced by English teachers in facilitating intercultural communication in Thailand and Indonesia. The researcher used a qualitative approach with a comparative research type. The researcher used three methods namely observation, interview, document analysis. The results revealed that there are six efforts used in facilitating intercultural communication, namely respecting cultural differences with kindness, appreciating cultural differences based on an understanding of cultural diversity, dedication to increasing respecting, ability to deal with contradictions, demonstrating a good attitude, and having insightful knowledge. Meanwhile, the challenges faced by teachers in facilitating intercultural communication are lack of understanding, misunderstanding, emotional reactions and actions, individual level, and lack of understanding.

Keywords

Intercultural Communication Efforts, Intercultural Communication
Challenges, Comparative study

Introduction

Cultural differences in beliefs and customs can significantly impact how people communicate. For instance, variations in language usage, sentence construction, and methods of conveying information may affect how individuals from diverse backgrounds understand and interact with one another. While interpersonal interactions are a fundamental aspect of human society, there are differences in how these interactions are established and maintained. Therefore, building successful relationships and preventing misunderstandings requires an awareness of the customs, beliefs, and communication styles of few cultures (Oyserman, 2011). As therefore, the teacher facilitates learning for students in the classroom by making the materials and implement the proper teaching ways based on the requirements, academic levels, and other characteristics of the students(Sukmojati et al., 2023). Qualitative evidence also suggests that students favour the use of teacher created materials(Syarifudin, 2023). To better understand the dynamics of intercultural communication, it is essential to explore various interaction contexts.

The process of intercultural communication occurring in the field of education reveals significant opportunities for teachers in New Zealand to integrate the curriculum with arts education. This integration allows students to observe and become sensitive to the art and artists from various ethnic and cultural groups. This process involves challenging students' assumptions about individuals who appear different and fostering an understanding of others' experiences and perspectives (Smith, 2010). In terms of negotiations, Decisions made during negotiations are influenced by the cultures of the participating nations. Whereas American negotiators can be more focused on quick advantages and short-term outcomes, Chinese negotiators might be more concerned with the long-term effects of the economic partnership (Yang et al., 2017). In line with Syarifudin, intercultural communication is the exchange of ideas between individuals with disparate cultural values, attitudes, and beliefs(Syarifudin & Rahmat, 2021).

There has been numerous research about Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC). A study by Thongpan & Thumawongsa examine the effects of multicultural background as well as the intercultural contact, foreign seminars and training, and international travel. The study finds that foreign instructors had higher ICC levels. It was discovered that the attitude component, out of the five, was most prevalent in both groups. Thai teachers had the lowest level of critical cultural awareness, whereas foreign teachers had the lowest level of interpretation and interpersonal skills. The ICC score of two groups was found to be impacted by contact with international friends, social media contact, and the frequency of contact with coworkers in relation to foreign trip experiences; however, there was no effect on the ICC score when it came to international seminars or training events. According to this study, vocational education could incorporate ICC components. Additionally, intercultural interaction and travel experiences may be useful extracurricular activities for ICC development in ELT (Thongpan & Thumawongsa, 2023).

Furthermore, research on communicative strategies of Thai and Filipino English Teachers revealed that among the communicative techniques employed by both Thai and Filipino

teachers, "Listen to the message" was ranked best by listeners. As speakers, Thai teachers ranked "non-verbal language" as their top skill, while Filipino teachers most commonly utilized "persuasion." A statistically significant correlation between the communicative methods employed by the Thai and Filipino teachers was revealed using a chi-square test. The study's conclusions suggest that English language instruction and curricula in Thailand should adopt the communicative tactics it identified. In the context of ELF, teachers, educators, and non-native English speakers should all use these communication techniques to foster comprehension (Nawamawat & Cedar, 2021).

The other study about English Intercultural Teaching and Perception shows that According to the participants, their level of international English teaching integration was low. While evaluating students' intercultural "attitudes" and "behavior" received the least attention, teaching English intercultural "knowledge" was given top priority in the real classroom. Lastly, it should be mentioned that participants' teaching practices need more attention when it comes to cultural prejudice (Jantadej & Charubusp, 2018).

Furthermore, there are main efforts typically used in intercultural communication for language teaching and tourism education namely dealing to cultural differences; acquiring suitable skills; establishing similarities; upholding suitable connections and encouraging dispute resolution techniques (Huang, 2011). Moreover, there are 5 intercultural communication efforts namely as a critical understanding of culture; attitudes; knowledge; the ability to communicate and interpret; as well as being capable to learn and communicate (Jhaiyanuntana & Nomniam, 2020).

The researcher's experience participating in international community service in Thailand revealed that intercultural communication flows organically between teachers and students. The researcher found that even without explicit curriculum rules promoting intercultural communication, interactions between students and teachers from different cultural backgrounds were productive. To foster mutual understanding, both teachers and students naturally adapted their verbal and nonverbal communication in the classroom. Given that Indonesians are already familiar with the intercultural communication process between teachers and students, the researcher is interested in exploring this topic further.

Meanwhile, The results indicate that some challenges might prevent a seamless communication process at the corporations that were part of the study. These challenges result from the sender and recipient's disparate cultural, economic, political, and ideological backgrounds (Ineta, 2023). Alternative perspectives on the challenges of intercultural communication highlight several key issues. Cultural knowledge is essential for meaningful interpretation and to avoid misunderstandings, as its absence can lead to negative feelings and perceptions of rudeness among different cultural groups. Psychological factors, such as ethnocentrism and stereotypes, can further complicate interactions, hindering open and flexible communication. Additionally, it is recognized that intercultural communication challenges arise not only from language barriers but also from cultural and psychological dimensions. Understanding these complexities is crucial for fostering effective communication in a diverse world (Bili, 2020).

Understanding the structures and difficulties that various educational systems encounter is crucial in the context of education. Thailand's educational programs aim to give students a strong foundation, but they also struggle with teaching English. Similar circumstances exist in other Southeast Asian nations, such as Indonesia, where there are still serious concerns about the quality of English language.

In Thailand educational program consists of three years of kindergarten instruction at the *Anuban* level, six years of primary school instruction at the *Prathom* level, and six years of junior and senior high school instruction at the *Mattayom* level. Concerns have also been raised about the dearth of resources for teaching English and the low proficiency levels of many students and teachers. Nevertheless, methods that emphasize the knowledge and skills of proficient multilingual communicators, like those suggested in the ELF study, might offer fresh strategies for empowering English language users in Thailand and fulfilling their specific requirements (Baker, 2012). How linguistic knowledge (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, and syntax) operationalizes in real-world communication settings (real-world intercultural materials) and on using English as a communication. produce the target language and receive feedback on learner production when they are working on intercultural communicative tasks and materials (Lee et al., 2023).

Indonesia has 230 days in a year that are effective school days. With regular assignments and a heavy learning load of about 40 hours per week, education in Indonesia is often more concentrated on classroom activities. lack of educational facilities, high class sizes, and low teacher pay are all consequences of tight education budgets that lower the standard of English language education. Disparities in the accessibility and quality of English education in order continue to be a major problem in Indonesia, in spite of initiatives to enhance curriculum and teaching methods (Lie, 2007). Given the great ethnic and cultural diversity of Indonesia, One of the primary areas of interest is how instructors' professional identities impact their instructional strategies. It demonstrates how instructors' professional identities have a significant impact on how they provide students with intercultural communication resources (Gandana & Parr, 2013).

This study utilized a limited number of sources to compare intercultural communication in public elementary schools in Thailand and Indonesia. By analyzing the interactions between teachers and students from various cultural backgrounds. Despite the small sample size, the findings offered valuable insights into how intercultural communication plays a significant role in fostering understanding and collaboration among students of different ethnicities. Ultimately, this research highlights the necessity of recognizing challenges and efforts cultural differences in educational settings to enhance learning experiences and promote inclusivity. The research aimed to uncover practices, styles, and the challenges faced within both educational environments.

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the statement of problems as follows:

1. What are efforts used by Thai and Indonesian teachers use for teaching English in facilitating Intercultural communication?

2. What are the challenges faced by Thai and Indonesian teachers for teaching English in facilitating Intercultural communication?

Method

The researcher used a qualitative approach. On the other hand, investigating fundamental social processes and values in their specific social context, as well as exposing people's experiences and implied meanings, are the goals of qualitative research (Froggatt, 2001). Through this approach, complicated phenomena were thoroughly described while highlighting unique experiences and interpretations of events. With an emphasis on meaning and context, qualitative research enabled scholars to comprehend the social processes that underlay human behavior.

In addition, A comparative study is a type of research methodology where two or more instances are purposefully compared to one another in relation to a particular phenomenon or along a particular dimension in order to identify similarities and differences between the cases (Azarian, 2011). This study explored how intercultural communication manifested in English language learning between Thailand and Indonesia using a comparative study methodology. The purpose of the study was to identify the traits, trends, and connections between the communication efforts that teachers in the two nations employed. This study aimed to provide insights into how cultural factors affected teaching approaches and how teachers collaborated in a variety of educational settings.

The researcher used three methods namely observation, interview, document analysis. The observation method employed is non-participant observation where the researcher observes the subjects from afar without engaging in their activities (Barner-Barry, 1986). While three teachers were chosen by the researcher to be the primary respondents for this study. A non-probability sampling method called purposeful sampling will be used to select informants who possess particular skills or traits that are pertinent to the study (Tongco, 2007). In order to guarantee the validity of the study findings as well as the accuracy and reliability of the data, document analysis was also a crucial step in the data collection process. Documents for this study took the form of theoretical studies, social media of the school, photographs of school activities, lesson plans, and textbooks.

The study centers on intercultural communication in the context of teaching English at Prix Municipality School in Thailand and *Sekolah Dasar Negeri 47 Mataram*, Indonesia. The technique of increasing the validity and trustworthiness of research is known as triangulation. Put differently, the primary goal of research triangulation is to certify study findings. Triangulation is the process by which a researcher uses all of the various ways available to extract the necessary data from a study and critically analyzing the results (Brunner et al., 2023). This research used more than one method in collecting data because the aim was to increase the reliability and validity of the research results by comparing and confirming information from different sources. As a result, research that combined the three methodologies provided a more comprehensive intercultural communication strategy.

Results

The efforts used by Thai and Indonesian teachers use for teaching English in facilitating intercultural communication

1. Respecting cultural differences with kindness

Teachers in Thailand are implementing various efforts to enhance intercultural communication in their classrooms. They emphasize respect for diverse religions, such as Islam and Buddhism, during class prayers to foster tolerance and understanding among students of different faiths. Additionally, teachers integrate cultural elements into lessons, such as Thai food and traditional attire, making learning interactive and enjoyable, as seen in activities like singing about "*khao yum*" in English.

Creating a positive classroom atmosphere is also a priority, where mutual respect and collaboration encourage students to share ideas freely. Teachers believe that open communication with parents is essential for understanding students' needs, advocating for a supportive approach rather than imposing strict expectations. These combined efforts aim to cultivate an appreciation for diversity and enhance students' intercultural competence.

In daily activity, being sociable involves overcoming cultural barriers, creating opportunities for individuals to connect, share stories, and learn about each other's beliefs and traditions. Effective intercultural communication is crucial, particularly when responding to friends' inquiries about one's culture or experiences. Providing honest and open answers not only fosters understanding but also builds trust, demonstrating appreciation for the curiosity of others. This approach encourages a deeper engagement with diverse cultures and enhances mutual respect among individuals from different backgrounds.

Teacher creates a positive and inclusive classroom environment by emphasizing kindness and empathy. She encourages students to treat each other respectfully, ensuring everyone feels safe and valued. This helps build strong relationships among students, fostering comfort and camaraderie within the class.

Sociability in Indonesia goes beyond simple gatherings, it involves the ability to navigate and bridge cultural differences, fostering connections where individuals can share experiences and learn about each other's values and customs. Effective intercultural communication is vital, particularly in responding to friends' questions about one's culture or personal experiences. Providing open and honest answers not only cultivates trust but also shows appreciation for their curiosity, promoting deeper engagement and understanding among diverse cultures.

2. Appreciating cultural differences based on understanding of cultural diversity

Thai teachers emphasize various methods for applying intercultural communication in education. They encourage students to select different countries to research and share their preferences with classmates, promoting cultural awareness. Additionally, they highlight the differences in greetings, such as the Thai "*wai*" or "*sawaddee*," compared to the handshake or hug common among English speakers. Teachers also note cultural distinctions in celebrations, like the Songkran festival, which involves throwing water, contrasting with Western New Year celebrations that typically feature fireworks. These practices aim to enhance students' understanding of diverse cultures and foster intercultural competence.

Positive feedback from teachers significantly enhances students' sense of appreciation, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. This practice fosters mutual respect and creates a safe environment for students to express their opinions and experiences. Teachers' acknowledgment of diverse contributions helps everyone feel valued and heard, promoting community and solidarity. Encouraging connections among students from different backgrounds reduces discomfort and fosters support, enabling them to share experiences and learn from one another more effectively, ultimately enhancing the overall learning process.

Indonesian teachers highlight several efforts to promote intercultural communication, including inviting students to sing regional songs in class and incorporating traditional clothing from the local culture into specific activities. These practices aim to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage while fostering a sense of community and connection among diverse backgrounds.

Positive affirmations from teachers are vital in making students feel appreciated in Indonesia, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. Such affirmations create a safe environment for open expression, enhancing mutual respect among students. Recognition, like applause, acknowledges diverse contributions and fosters community and solidarity. Encouraging connections among peers from different backgrounds helps reduce awkwardness and strengthens bonds. This support allows students to share experiences and learn collaboratively, enriching the overall learning process.

3. A dedication to improving respecting

Teachers in Thailand emphasize the importance of recognizing cultural distinctions for effective intercultural communication. For instance, when teaching about food, they inform non-Muslim students that Muslims do not eat pork, advising them not to ask if they enjoy it. This approach fosters mutual understanding and encourages students to learn from one another, expanding their knowledge of diverse cultures.

Teachers emphasize the importance of involving all students, not just high performers, in helping peers who may be struggling. This approach fosters a cooperative atmosphere where every student feels valued and responsible for the group's success. By promoting

community and mutual respect, teachers encourage students to support one another, enhancing effective intercultural relationships and enriching the overall learning experience.

Indonesian teachers emphasize several strategies for successful intercultural communication in the classroom. They advocate for a collaborative approach, encouraging students to work together in groups to share their views and experiences, while also employing a differentiation approach to tailor teaching materials to students' needs and interests. Additionally, they organize Potluck events, where students bring dishes from their cultural backgrounds to share, and assign individual or group projects focused on researching specific cultures. Furthermore, teachers provide ongoing support to help students who struggle to adapt to the school culture, promoting inclusivity and connection among diverse learners.

Advocating for friends facing discrimination is crucial for demonstrating solidarity and empathy, reflecting inclusivity and equality principles. Engaging all students, not just high achievers, ensures that messages promoting diversity and intercultural understanding resonate broadly. By giving equal attention to every student, teachers foster confidence and encourage active participation from those who might feel marginalized, ultimately enriching the classroom environment.

4. The ability to deal with contradiction

Teachers in Thailand focus on promoting effective intercultural communication by first accepting each student's unique characteristics and then teaching them to adapt to one another. They emphasize the importance of embracing differences and, when conflicts arise, provide guidance to help students learn from the situation and improve their interactions.

A key aspect of fostering a polite and accountable learning environment involves having students apologize to the teacher for incorrect answers or mistakes. This practice not only demonstrates humility but also reinforces the principles of intercultural communication. By acknowledging their errors, students show respect for the teacher's role and their own learning process, promoting a culture where mistakes are viewed as valuable learning experiences rather than failures. Reflecting on past lessons helps students connect previously learned concepts to new topics, contributing to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding.

Teachers in Indonesia emphasize several strategies to enhance effective intercultural communication. They establish a class agreement that sets guidelines for the language used in school, ensuring comfort for all students from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, they implement collaboration and discussion groups to foster interaction and understanding among students, promoting an inclusive learning environment.

Fostering a polite and responsible classroom environment involves having students apologize to the teacher for mistakes or incorrect answers. Reflecting on previous lessons helps students connect what they've learned to new topics, leading to a deeper understanding. Clear communication is essential, which means using simple language

that students can easily grasp, especially when explaining complex ideas. Providing tangible examples further enhances relatability, making concepts more accessible and easier to understand.

5. Demonstrating a good attitude

Teachers emphasize various efforts to enhance intercultural communication in the classroom. They advocate for equal treatment of all students, promoting a bullying-free environment and teaching them to coexist with diverse cultures. Teachers encourage assertiveness and provide opportunities for students to express their opinions, which boosts confidence and communication skills. They foster warmth by addressing students by name and listening to their concerns. When discussing significant cultural events, teachers highlight important days in both Islam and Buddhism, promoting mutual respect and understanding. They also illustrate cultural differences, such as traditional communal dining in Thailand compared to Western dining practices. Overall, learning about different cultures is seen as essential for fostering open-mindedness and positive attitudes, enabling students to adapt appropriately in diverse environments.

Students demonstrate eagerness to learn and show respect for their teachers and peers through gestures like the "*wai*" which expresses appreciation and thanks after completing tasks. Teachers emphasize the importance of patience and proper conduct, such as lining up and keeping shoes tidy before entering the classroom, instilling values of politeness and responsibility.

Additionally, group prayers before class foster a sense of community and inclusivity, encouraging students to appreciate diverse religions and beliefs. Courteous communication is emphasized, teaching students to ask questions respectfully. These practices contribute to a respectful learning environment where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities, enhancing both personal growth and intercultural understanding.

Indonesian teachers emphasize several approaches to fostering intercultural communication in the classroom. They consistently remind students to respect peers from different cultures, highlighting that honoring diversity is essential for creating a harmonious and inclusive environment.

Local wisdom values such as mutual cooperation and togetherness are promoted to strengthen social bonds among students. Additionally, respect for elders is emphasized as a fundamental cultural value, encouraging students to listen to their advice. Teachers also stress the importance of politeness, manners, and customs in daily interactions, such as using respectful language and showing concern for others, which contribute to an atmosphere of harmony and mutual respect.

Students greet their teachers after class as a sign of respect and gratitude for the knowledge received. They also remind each other to maintain proper communication etiquette, such as not speaking loudly to the teacher. This behavior reflects their strong desire to learn and their commitment to fostering a positive learning atmosphere. By appreciating the teacher's authority while maintaining a welcoming environment,

students contribute to a classroom culture that promotes mutual respect and effective communication.

6. Having insightful knowledge

Thai teachers highlight several key aspects of intercultural communication. They advise students to appreciate Western cultural freedoms while maintaining traditional Asian values, particularly politeness toward elders. They emphasize the importance of social interaction, stating that understanding different cultures is essential for appropriate behavior in various settings, whether in communities, schools, or workplaces. Additionally, they note that exposure to diverse cultures enriches students with new knowledge, including language, attitudes, and values, which enhances their adaptability in interacting with others.

An effective approach to learning English involves using Thai letters to aid in the pronunciation of English words, helping students link sounds to letters for better understanding. Additionally, singing English songs enhances the learning experience by making it enjoyable while also improving vocabulary and pronunciation skills. Engaging with songs allows students to naturally absorb the intonation and rhythm of English, which helps them adapt to sounds that may not exist in Thai.

Indonesian teachers emphasize various strategies for effective intercultural communication. They highlight the importance of recognizing regional cultures represented in the classroom, such as traditional clothing, dances, and languages that differ from the local culture. Teachers ensure their lessons reflect diverse perspectives by incorporating resources and examples from various cultural backgrounds, including food and customs. Additionally, inviting students to sing regional songs serves as a fun and engaging way to introduce them to local cultural richness, fostering an appreciation for their cultural heritage.

Understanding the context of specific words is essential for learning English. Students need to grasp not only the meaning of words but also their correct usage in sentences. Recognizing words with similar pronunciations is also beneficial. With practice, students can improve their listening and speaking skills while expanding their vocabulary.

The challenges faced by English teachers in promoting intercultural communication between Thailand and Indonesia

1. Lack of understanding

The following are some findings from the observations obtained from Thailand that indicate like Students frequently struggle to comprehend the subject being taught during the learning process. While some of them might be reluctant or ashamed to ask the teacher questions, others have a tendency to approach their peers for more clarification.

This element is shown in the following points from the observations drawn from Indonesia such as Students frequently struggle to comprehend the subject being taught during the learning process. While some of them might be reluctant or ashamed to ask the teacher questions, others have a tendency to approach their peers for more clarification.

2. Misunderstanding

The following are some findings from the observations obtained from Thailand. It's crucial that students feel free to ask questions of the teacher, particularly if they don't fully understand the subject matter. To make sure that the information is fully understood, it can be helpful to ask questions two or three times.

This element is shown in the following points from the observations drawn from Indonesia. When students feel they do not comprehend completely the content being taught, it is important that they ask questions of the teacher without hesitation. Asking questions two or three times can be a good way to make sure you're getting what you are being told.

3. Emotional reactions and actions

The following are some findings from the observations obtained from Thailand. It's crucial that students feel free to ask questions of the teacher, particularly if they don't fully understand the subject matter. To make sure that the information is fully understood, it can be helpful to ask questions two or three times.

This element is shown in the following points from the observations drawn from Indonesia. When students feel they do not comprehend completely the content being taught, it is important that they ask questions of the teacher without hesitation. Asking questions two or three times can be a good way to make sure you're getting what you are being told.

4. Individual Level

The following are some findings from the observations obtained from Thailand that indicate like Two important factors that can affect students' learning success are the attention of the teacher and the book. Students often lose focus and are unable to reach their full potential when they are overly preoccupied with activities outside of the classroom, such as social interactions or even external pressures. Teachers as learning facilitators and books as information sources are crucial in helping pupils fully comprehend the subject matter.

This element is shown in the following points from the observations drawn from Indonesia. The focus of the teacher and the book are two important factors that might affect how well students learn. Students frequently drop their focus and are unable to perform to their full capacity when they become overly concerned with other activities, technology, social interactions, or even environmental pressures. Books as a source of

knowledge and teachers as facilitator of learning play a key role in helping students deeply understand the subject topic.

Discussion

The efforts used by Thai and Indonesian teachers use for teaching English in facilitating intercultural communication

1. Respecting cultural differences with kindness

Teachers in Thailand and Indonesia are prime examples of this method in the context of education. To foster a respectful environment among students from various religious origins, a teacher in Thailand, for example, mentions both Islam and Buddhism during class prayers. Students' comprehension of their cultural background is enhanced by the same teacher's discussion of Thai cuisine and customs, which incorporates cultural learning into lessons.

In a same vein, the Indonesian teacher places a strong emphasis on creating a welcoming environment in the classroom where everyone is treated with respect. Both nations' observations emphasize how essential student social connection is. Students can be observed interacting with peers and answering one other's questions in Thailand and Indonesia, which promotes a feeling of belonging and community. The statements previously expressed reinforced the statement that teachers believe ICC is a valuable and fascinating idea that need to be included and encouraged in their lessons. Additionally, they view it as the capacity to be open and culturally aware, to appreciate and communicate with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, and, finally, to possess the necessary abilities (hearing, perceiving, comprehending, assessing) in order to comprehend others (Tsatzali & Beazidou, 2023). In line with that, When attempting to foster the essentials of intercultural competency in young people, the concept of including culture and foreign language instruction into the curriculum across the board in public schools appears to be a useful instrument. Understanding other people's cultural behaviours and being able convey one's own cultural perspective so that it encompasses culturally influenced beliefs and perceptions that are expressed through language as well as perceptions that are presented through language and cultural behaviours that ensure acceptability (Jarosz et al., 2021).

2. Appreciating cultural differences based on understanding of cultural diversity

Through a variety of efforts for teaching, teachers in Thailand and Indonesia actively encouraged students to accept and understand other cultures. In order to cultivate an understanding of global variety, a teacher in Thailand invited students to choose several nations for their presentations. The instructor also discussed the distinctive Songkran festival, which celebrated the Thai New Year by throwing water, in contrast to Western New Year celebrations that usually included fireworks.

Additionally, they pointed out cultural differences in greetings, such as the Thai "*wai*" versus Western handshakes or hugs. To promote cultural awareness, teachers in Indonesia asked students to sing local songs and use traditional attire in class activities. Observations from both nations indicated a supportive learning environment in which teachers promoted constructive relationships. In addition to encouraging polite peer interaction, teachers in Thailand and Indonesia employed applause and positive affirmations to inspire their students.

In conclusion, there are a number of advantages that culture brings to language classes. It can help learners expand their language ability and with the right motivation, enhance their linguistic understanding. It goes without saying that teaching learners about the culture of the target language helps strengthen their global perspective and foster cultural awareness. Language, culture, customs, ethics, science, social issues, and other topics are all covered in this engaging and educational course on culture. Their motivation and desire to communicate in a foreign language will be sparked, as well as their interest in learning (Dai, 2011). Align with statement that higher self-other orientation and greater receptivity to new experiences. They made progress in their personal growth, becoming more self-assured and self-sufficient. The findings provide modest support for the stages of stress, adaptation, and growth as well as the simultaneous acculturation and deculturation processes that people go through while developing an international identity. They become more accepting of diversity and open minded by incorporating fresh cultural viewpoints into the old ones (Sobkowiak, 2021).

3. A dedication to improving respecting

Teachers in Thailand and Indonesia were dedicated to encouraging cultural and religious diversity through a variety of instructional efforts. A teacher in Thailand emphasized the value of cultural sensitivity by teaching non-Muslim students about dietary limitations, such as the ban on pork for Muslims, which promoted mutual tolerance and understanding. In addition to educating students about many viewpoints, this also taught them to avoid making hurtful inquiries. To accommodate the religious variety of their students, Indonesian educators used a customized and collaborative approach.

One way to do this was by organizing potluck gatherings where students celebrated their familial roots by sharing food from their cultural origins. Cultural awareness was also increased by the teacher's assignment of projects that asked students to investigate different cultures and report back on their findings. Both nations exhibited a dedication to diversity. Teachers in Thailand urged all students to participate and offered assistance to those who needed it, while classmates were taught to help one another. Similarly, teachers in Indonesia promoted a positive learning environment by protecting children from prejudice and ensuring that all voices not just those of high achievers were heard. The idea similar things, raising awareness about the diversity in English language use and how meaning could be interpreted through various cultural frameworks. This helped students understand that language was not a fixed norm but something dynamic and influenced by the cultural context (Fang et al., 2024). Through learning, students gain confidence in their ability to communicate over cultural boundaries, are open to engaging in intercultural activities, relish the joys of intercultural dialogue, and exhibit

greater respect and understanding for one another's cultures. Furthermore, the majority of students interviewed expressed a favourable opinion of the course and believed it to be more successful than the conventional intercultural course (Li & Wang, 2014).

4. The ability to deal with contradiction

Teachers in Thailand and Indonesia implemented efforts to create inclusive learning environments that respected and accommodated students' diverse backgrounds. A Thai teacher emphasized the importance of recognizing each student's unique characteristics and guiding them to adapt to one another. This approach involved teaching students how to accept differences and addressing any issues that arose by revisiting these lessons.

In Indonesia, a teacher fostered comfort in learning by establishing class agreements on communication and promoting collaborative discussions. This structure helped ensure that all students felt included and respected. Observations from both countries indicated a shared commitment to accountability and reflection. Students in both Thailand and Indonesia were encouraged to apologize when they answered questions incorrectly or made mistakes, reinforcing a culture of respect and learning from errors. Additionally, teachers simplified explanations and provided direct examples to enhance understanding, ensuring that all students could engage with the material effectively.

The study's conclusions have several real-world applications. Teachers and researchers alike should practice using online intercultural interactions to counter stereotyped mindsets and misconceptions of a national identity, given the effectiveness of Web 2.0 tools and applications in improving the ICC of L2 and FL learners (Avgousti, 2018). Presenting learners with crucial situations that could cause confusion is part of the cultural assimilation strategy used in language acquisition, especially when it comes to non-verbal greetings like cheek kissing. Through this exercise, students can experiment with different cheek kisses, which might vary from one to four based on local customs. The instructor models various kissing techniques during the class, and students are urged to determine which greeting is customary in their particular culture. The instructor explains that while all types of cheek kissing are acceptable, they vary from culture to culture, emphasizing that there are differences even within a single culture. For instance, social kissing is uncommon and usually consists of a single kiss in the UK, but it is common in Slovakia, Croatia, Austria, and Spain. While France might range from two to four kisses depending on the location, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Belgium frequently utilize three kisses. This activity improves students' comprehension of cross-cultural social interactions and raises awareness of cultural variations in nonverbal communication (Reid, 2015).

5. Demonstrating a good attitude

A Thai teacher emphasized treating all students equally and teaching them how to coexist with diverse cultures. This included encouraging assertiveness, creating warmth among students, and addressing complaints to ensure everyone felt heard. The teacher also incorporated lessons about significant religious days from both Islam and

Buddhism, promoting mutual respect and understanding among students from different backgrounds. Additionally, the teacher highlighted cultural practices, such as communal eating on mats during traditional events, contrasting this with Western dining customs.

In Indonesia, a teacher reinforced the importance of respecting classmates from various cultures by establishing class agreements on communication and promoting collaboration through group discussions. Observations from both countries revealed a positive classroom atmosphere where students showed enthusiasm for learning and demonstrated good manners. In Thailand, students greeted their teacher with a "*wai*" after activities and prayed for each religion, while in Indonesia, students reminded each other to maintain respectful behavior towards teachers and greeted them after lessons. These practices contributed to a supportive learning environment that encouraged appreciation for cultural differences and fostered social etiquette among students.

Logan et al highlight particular verbal and nonverbal abilities as well as broader behavioural techniques that support effective intercultural communication. Additionally, the larger body of literature supports these abilities like the application of empathy more broadly. This research shows that communication will be less successful if this crucial communication tactic is not used (Logan et al., 2014). The subsequent tactics included: An affective strategy where civility was maintained and respect was shown towards authority while being assertive and amiable to make students feel at ease, A cognitive strategy that involved learning about each student's home country's cultural background but not making it the sole criterion, A skill strategy that created both formal and informal relationships by organizing extracurricular events that allowed local students and residents to learn about each other's cultures and traditions (Gardiana et al., 2023). The previously stated viewpoints confirmed the researchers' conclusions.

6. Having insightful knowledge

Teachers in Thailand and Indonesia emphasized the importance of cultural understanding and respect in their classrooms, highlighting both local and Western cultural elements. A Thai teacher explained that while discussing Western culture's more liberal aspects, it was crucial to maintain traditional Asian values, such as politeness towards elders. This approach underscored the belief that understanding diverse cultures enhanced social interactions and promoted respectful behavior. In Indonesia, an English teacher incorporated regional cultures into lessons, discussing traditional clothing, dances, and local languages to reflect the diversity of students' backgrounds.

The teacher ensured that lessons represented various cultural perspectives by using diverse resources and examples, including food and customs. Additionally, inviting students to sing regional songs fostered a sense of belonging and appreciation for their heritage. Observations from both countries indicated active engagement in learning. In Thailand, students pronounced English words while recalling their Thai equivalents and participated in singing English songs. In Indonesia, students demonstrated awareness of word usage context and pronunciation similarities in English.

There were ways that could be tried to facilitate intercultural communication that ICC should be encouraged in EFL classes by teachers. Some educators give specific examples of cultural differences based on their own experiences. It is recommended for students to study other cultures and then share what they have learned. The best way to promote ICC, according to many educators, is through role-playing. Teachers also assign cultural literature and encourage discussion among their students. Students benefit from this by becoming more culturally aware and comprehending various cultural situations (Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018). Other studies also revealed similar findings, presenting Torajanese tour guides' approaches in intercultural communication based on four dimensions: knowledge, communication skills, traits, and interpersonal relationships (Asmin, 2022).

The challenges faced by English teachers in promoting intercultural communication between Thailand and Indonesia

1. Lack of understanding

Similar patterns in how students behaved in relation to comprehending the subject covered in class were observed in Thailand and Indonesia. Students were encouraged to ask direct questions about what they did not understand in both countries. While some students asked their fellow classmates for assistance, others kept quiet and avoided asking the teacher for clarification. This suggested a typical difficulty in encouraging open discussion and active participation from students in various learning settings.

This statement aligned with the intercultural communication challenges that confusion and negative emotions may result from moving to a new place with a different culture. A person's long-formed habits and mindset should align with the ideals and conventions of the present culture. It is not something that can be easily dealt with. Furthermore, if people lack the abilities and competence to handle the circumstance (Ridaryanthi et al., 2024). According to the preceding viewpoint, specifically, cultural knowledge avoided misunderstandings and contributed significantly to meaning interpretation. However, the lack of this understanding could cause hurt sentiments and judgments of rudeness in intercultural relations for both our group and within it (Bili, 2020).

2. Misunderstanding

According to observations made in both Thailand and Indonesia, students frequently asked the teacher for clarification two or three times to ensure they understood the material. Students in both nations shared this tendency, which emphasized their need for validation and insight during the learning process.

This remark aligned that discrepancies could potentially lead to unpleasant emotions and misunderstandings. These unfavourable emotions may specifically surface during an intercultural encounter because to the belief that a situation is hard to manage or that it is improbable that the contact would produce a just result for all sides (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018). On the other hand, intercultural interactions between disparate parochial practices could result in unintentional misunderstandings or even confrontation. The

following list of practical empathy-based communication efforts for effective intercultural communication was derived from insights into human behavior. The use of these efforts could reduce intercultural offenses (Leigh, 2000).

3. Emotional reactions and actions

Students in Thailand and Indonesia often conveyed their frustration with themselves through gestures and spoken language when they could not remember the meanings of English phrases, according to observations. While students in Indonesia similarly expressed frustration when they provided inaccurate responses, students in Thailand specifically cited forgetting the meanings of numbers. Furthermore, certain students showed their excitement and desire to participate by acting spiteful when the teacher did not select them. This demonstrated a problem that children in both nations faced regarding classroom participation and language learning.

The statement confirmed which emotion incorporates both physiological and cognitive processes, making it universal, but it is also culturally relative in how it is constructed, expressed, and practiced, as well as how it is perceived and interpreted. A particular emotion's corresponding physiological and cognitive processes are also culturally specific, which is crucial to remember. Emotion is accompanied by physiological changes whether they are apparent or not. Both verbal and nonverbal language, including phonology, discursal genre, facial expression, and body language, are used to express and convey it. Cultural norms and values guide and impact how emotional expression and practice are interpreted. In intercultural communication, a greater cultural difference between the participants results in more diverse and varied emotional expressions and practices (Yuan, 2023). From another perspective, it was also expressed that emotional competence, including the control of emotions during intercultural exchanges, seemed particularly crucial for lessening the negative consequences of such relations. This emotional competence served as the foundation for the adaptation process as well (Żaliński, 2022).

4. Individual Level

According to observations carried out in Thailand and Indonesia, students usually got sidetracked by other activities and concentrated mostly on their books and teachers. This behavior in both situations indicated a widespread student tendency to place a higher priority on academic topics while occasionally ignoring more general classroom participation.

This viewpoint supported the research has identified a number of issues, including inadequate English comprehension, cultural variations in learning, and improper management of professional relationships (Henderson et al., 2016). The factor relates to interactants' proficiency. By definition, language learners lack the proficiency or self-assurance to understand the viewpoints of the host culture and the language skills and communication abilities required to accomplish successful communication outcomes, such as identity negotiation. This challenge may lead to less successful intercultural adaptation (Jackson, 2012).

Conclusion

Based on the research results described in the previous sessions, so it can be concluded that there are six efforts used by Thai and Indonesian teachers use for teaching English in facilitating intercultural communication. These efforts are kindly embracing cultural differences; appreciating students based on knowledge of cultural variety; being committed to fostering greater respect; having the capacity to handle contradictions; Demonstrating good attitude; and Having insightful knowledge. These six efforts have been employed by teachers in facilitating intercultural communication into the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, there are four challenges in facilitating Intercultural Communication faced by Thai and Indonesian teachers for teaching English. These challenges are lack of understanding; misunderstanding; Emotional reactions and actions; and individual level. Researcher hopes that future researchers will want to conduct research about Teachers Intercultural Communication Efforts in Teaching English but using a different approach and a broader scope.

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