

The Effects of Applying Intercultural Tasks on Pre-Service ELT Teachers' Intercultural Awareness in a Course on English for Intercultural Communication

Nattida Pattaraworathum^a

^a Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

*Corresponding author: nattida.p@chula.ac.th

Article information	
Abstract	The study investigates the development of pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness by incorporating various cultural activities based on Baker's (2022) model of Intercultural Awareness (ICA) into a course on English for Intercultural Communication. Data were collected for four months from 24 pre-service ELT teachers through pre- and post-test questionnaires, classroom observations, and document archives. Content analysis was employed to analyze the data. Empirical evidence indicates that intercultural activities based on Baker's (2022) ICA model can significantly enhance pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness. This increase in their ICA development is likely to influence their future cultural instruction in English language classrooms. Given the participants' ICA development, the study strongly supports integrating intercultural tasks to promote ELT teachers' awareness of English as a lingua franca (ELF) and intercultural communication in teacher education.
Keywords	English for intercultural communication, Intercultural awareness, English as a lingua franca, English language teaching, Teacher education
APA citation:	Pattaraworathum, N. (2025). The effects of applying intercultural tasks on pre-service ELT teachers' intercultural awareness in a course on English for intercultural communication. <i>PASAA Journal</i> , 71, 121–159.

1. Introduction

In our globalizing world, at the present time, approximately two billion people are using the English language for communication (Crystal, 2008). The overwhelming majority of English users are non-native speakers, who surpass native speakers by approximately four or five times (Jenkins, 2014, p. 61). Not only has English been spread worldwide because of its long history related to colonization and trade, but the language has also been steadily extended through globalization and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) advancement (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2015). Regarding its important function as a multifunctional language, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) commonly denotes “any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option” (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 7).

In Thailand, among more than 70 spoken languages, English is employed for both intercultural and intracultural interactions, especially in English-Medium Education and among urban middle classes (Baker & Jarunthawatchai, 2017). Nowadays English appears to be of rising importance among Thai people in everyday life, as the younger Thai generation increasingly accepts a mix of English words in Thai sentences (Thai Health Report Team, 2016). However, regardless of the way English is used by Thais, the majority of Thai people still value native English-speaking countries or traditions. Accordingly, only British and American English are perceived as the standard models of English (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2021a; Snodin & Young, 2015). Hence, studying in English-speaking countries is often considered a sign of great English language skills (Trakulkasemsuk, 2012). English in language education is thus treated as the most significant of the foreign languages. Despite aiming to develop learners’ communicative competence and cultural awareness, the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E.2551 (A.D.2008) prioritizes the cultures of native speakers and Thais (Ministry of Education, 2008). Therefore, it is believed that this conflict between policies and practices unavoidably results in the country’s unsuccessful educational reform, as exemplified by the underachievement of both Thai students’ and teachers’ Standard English testing outcomes as reported by many studies (Franz & Teo, 2018). Even though English language education has been reformed many times in attempts to increase the language proficiency of Thai people in terms of using

English for communicative purposes, progress in this light remains slow and inconsistent (Baker & Jarunthawatchai, 2017; Hayes, 2017).

In fact, Thailand's English language education should be more open to the rich diversity of languages and cultures. As Seidlhofer (2011) argues, “in ELF situations, speakers of any kind of English, from EFL, ENL, and ESL contexts, need to adjust to the requirements of intercultural communication” (p. 81). Baker (2018) further emphasizes the flow of multiple cultures through the local and global use of English in interaction (p. 26). Therefore, English Language Teaching (ELT) and its cultural dimension should move beyond traditional approaches. Rather than merely highlighting native speakers' linguistic features and varieties (Baker, 2022), occasionally incorporating cultural instruction within a national framework (Ronzón Montiel, 2018), or improving Thai teachers' English skills based on exonormative frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) (Mala, 2021), the focus should shift towards developing intercultural and transcultural awareness (Baker, 2022).

To encourage intercultural education, raising ELT teachers' intercultural awareness is essential. Studies on ELT teachers' awareness of language teaching and intercultural education has indicated that there is a causal relationship between teachers' awareness of ELF and their instructional approaches (Huttayavilaiphan, 2019), as well as between teachers' perceptions and practices of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and students' awareness of ELF in intercultural communication (Ronzón Montiel, 2018). In addition, it was found that teachers are the most crucial factor in determining the extent to which teaching culture and intercultural communication might take place in English language classrooms (Pattaraworathum, 2024). Considering that ELT teachers' levels of intercultural competence are linked to language learners' competence and success (Young & Sachdev, 2011), it is crucial to highlight that when teachers become aware of the use of English in multilingual and multicultural contexts, they are more likely to adopt and integrate ELF awareness and intercultural awareness, including communicative strategies into their teaching context (Pullin, 2015; Sifakis, 2014).

However, despite the necessity of enhancing intercultural education and increasing ELT teachers' awareness of ELF and intercultural communication, a

review of the literature reveals a significant research gap. Existing studies on teachers' awareness of language teaching primarily focus on grammar and literacy (Borg, 2015). Fewer studies investigate teachers' awareness of culture and cultural instruction (e.g., Khan, 2019; Young & Sachdev, 2011), and there is limited empirical evidence from actual classrooms (Borg, 2015). In an ELF context, research on teachers' ELF awareness and intercultural awareness remains notably scarce, particularly classroom-based studies on the development of ELT teachers' intercultural awareness.

To achieve this, intercultural awareness should be promoted particularly in the early stages of teacher education (Pattaraworathum, 2024). This approach will encourage teachers to integrate more cultural dimensions into their English language classrooms, which, in turn, will enhance students' intercultural awareness and communicative performance. To enhance pre-service teachers' intercultural awareness in English for intercultural communication, this study focuses on two primary objectives: 1) Developing a course on English for intercultural communication for a group of pre-service English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers at a Thai university, and 2) Examining the impact of incorporating intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) Intercultural Awareness (ICA) model. Specifically, the study explores the development of students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward ELF and intercultural communication.

2. Literature Review

This section begins with a brief examination of Thailand's English language education, focusing on its intercultural approaches. It then presents Baker's (2022) ICA model, supported by previous studies, to demonstrate its applicability as a framework for implementation in diverse ELT contexts and as the theoretical foundation for the present research.

2.1 Intercultural Approaches in Thai Education

As mentioned earlier, Thailand's English language education operates under the influence of Standard English ideology and native speakerism, and the mismatch between English language education and the use of language in reality causes difficulties for language learners and teachers. The apparent contradiction also impacts the implementation of intercultural education because the focus of cultural teaching in the Thai national curriculum excludes non-native speakers

who are the larger number of language users in the world (Eberhard et al., 2024; Jenkins, 2014). These cultural representations and linguistic references of only native speakers in ELT can consequently lead to teachers' ignorance of cultural teaching (Snodin, 2016), cultural overgeneralization, stereotypical ideas, and negative attitudes towards not only non-native speakers, but also towards Thai students' own identities (Hayes, 2016; Nomnian, 2013). Therefore, instead of aiming towards acquiring native speaker competence for intercultural communication, many researchers call for the support of ICC in Thai ELT (e.g., Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018; Cheewasukthaworn & Suwanarak, 2017; Snodin, 2016) whereby individual students' attitudes, skills, knowledge, and critical awareness are developed through interaction via digital technologies (Byram, 2012) and the implementation of communicative and cultural activities in a foreign language classroom (Mitchell et al., 2015). In doing so, the ICC approach can help students challenge particular cultural stereotypes with an increase in students' cultural understanding, awareness, critical thinking, and learner autonomy (Sercu, 2002; Snodin, 2016). Nonetheless, ICC testing, intercultural textbooks, and teachers' intercultural training are in need of improvement in order to boost students' ICC (Banjongjit & Boonmoh, 2018; Cheewasukthaworn & Suwanarak, 2017; Nomnian, 2013).

Furthermore, using native speakers' language and culture as a frame of reference in multilingual and multicultural contexts is highly questionable. It is also problematic to identify culture solely through a language used in a specific speech community since technological advancements have made intercultural communication much more complex (Holliday, 2012; Kramsch & Uryu, 2012). Since culture is flexible and can be constructed within blurred boundaries, members of the same speech community do not necessarily think, act, and interpret language and culture in the same way (Baker, 2015b). Regarding the complex nature of language and culture in intercultural communication through ELF, namely transcultural communication (Baker, 2015a), scholars suggest developing Thai learners' flexibility and adaptability skills in ELF by adjusting pedagogy and assessments to suit the ELF context (Baker & Jarunthawatchai, 2017; Boonsuk & Ambele, 2020), raising teachers' ELF awareness (Boonsuk & Fang, 2024), and developing their intercultural awareness and cultural pedagogy in teacher education (Pattaraworathum, 2024). In sum, despite their different research paradigms and settings, previous studies similarly point out that the intercultural

aspect in teacher education and professional training is essential to advancing intercultural education in ELT.

2.2 The Integration of Intercultural Awareness into ELT

It is necessary for ELT to offer learners “the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for intercultural and transcultural L2 communication”, “space for reflection and discussion of intercultural and transcultural experiences”, and also awareness of language ideologies and multilingualism via more critical approaches to language teaching based on local contexts and cultures (Baker, 2022, p. 62). Considering intercultural approaches in relation to the development of ELT teachers’ intercultural awareness in ELF settings (such as that of Thailand), Baker’s (2022) ICA model is employed as the theoretical framework in this current study. That is because the ICA model incorporates ICC and expands the ICC concept to cover the fluidity of languages and cultures through ELF in communication (Baker, 2012a, 2012b). The ICA model is particularly suitable for the Thai context which is characterized by language diversity and cultural heterogeneity (Baker, 2015b; Boonsuk & Fang, 2024).

According to Baker (2022), there are 12 components within three levels of the ICA model (see Figure 1). From the ground up, the concept of culture is presented from a general understanding of cultural differences (Level 1: basic cultural awareness), to a more complex cultural understanding within social groups (Level 2: advanced cultural awareness), and to the most complex understanding of hybrid and emergent cultures in communication (Level 3: intercultural awareness). Referencing Baker’s (2012a, 2012b) application of ICA in ELT, it is suggested that, depending on the learning context, learners can explore local communities and discuss local cultures and national cultural representations, or critically explore and evaluate images in language learning materials, media, arts, and IT resources. They can also discuss and reflect on their own experiences of intercultural communication in class with cultural informants: local English teachers, non-local teachers, or non-local students. Therefore, the concept of intercultural tasks in this study drew upon the ICA activities suggested by Baker (2012a, 2012b) to facilitate both explicit and implicit cultural learning within the course. These tasks aim to promote learners’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward individuals from various social groups.

However, it is noteworthy to mention that ICA levels can be reverted, and learners may not follow the ICA's model linearly due to many factors that can occur from learners' life experiences and from new intercultural encounters (Baker, 2012a; Humphreys & Baker, 2021). Hence, acquisition of new knowledge, awareness, and skills are needed on a regular basis (Baker, 2012a, 2015b). Despite these challenges, several researchers have implemented the ICA model in ELT and in intercultural classrooms in Asian contexts. Such challenges include asking students questions about Chinese culture from English texts in an English reading course (Yu & Van Maele, 2018), using digital photographs with a variety of learning tasks in English as an Additional Language (EAL) classrooms in Indonesia (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018), investigating Japanese students' experiences in short-term study abroad programmes (Humphreys & Baker, 2021), and running an independent online course in intercultural communication and intercultural awareness for a group of Thai students (Baker, 2012b). Irrespective of different intercultural tasks, the studies all reported positive feedback on the ICA model as an effective approach to developing learners' awareness. Yet, all studies concluded that further research investigating students' experiences in intercultural learning and their intercultural development in wider settings was needed; hence, the current research was conducted accordingly.

Figure 1

Baker's (2022) ICA Model, Adapted from Baker (2015b)

Level 1: basic cultural awareness

An awareness of:

- 1 culture as a set of shared behaviours, beliefs, and values;
- 2 the role culture and context play in any interpretation of meaning;
- 3 our own culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs and the ability to articulate this;
- 4 others' culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs and the ability to compare this with our own culturally induced behaviour, values, and beliefs.

Level 2: advanced cultural awareness

An awareness of:

- 5 the relative nature of cultural norms;
- 6 cultural understanding as provisional and open to revision;
- 7 multiple voices or perspectives within any cultural grouping;
- 8 individuals as members of many social groupings including cultural ones;
- 9 common ground between specific cultures as well as an awareness of possibilities for mismatch and miscommunication between specific cultures.

Level 3: intercultural awareness

An awareness of:

- 10 culturally based frames of reference, forms, and communicative practices as being related both to specific cultures and also as emergent and hybrid in intercultural communication;
- 11 initial interaction in intercultural communication as possibly based on cultural stereotypes or generalizations but an ability to move beyond these through:
- 12 a capacity to negotiate and mediate between different emergent socioculturally grounded communication modes and frames of reference based on the above understanding of culture in intercultural communication.

3. Methodology

In light of enhancing intercultural education in Thailand's English language education, this classroom-based research was carried out in accordance with Baker's (2012a, 2012b) recommendations on intercultural tasks. The research aims to develop a required course on English for intercultural communication for a group of English-major students at the Faculty of Education, and to investigate the effects of applying intercultural tasks in relation to Baker's (2022) ICA model on students' development of ELF and intercultural awareness. This led to the following research question: What is the impact of integrating intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model on students' intercultural awareness?

3.1 Participants

Due to the widespread use of ELF, particularly in English-Medium Education among Thailand's middle-class populations in metropolitan areas (Baker, 2015b), it is assumed that tertiary students would possess greater experience in English language learning and intercultural communication (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2021b; Baker, 2009). Therefore, the course on English for Intercultural Communication was conducted at the Faculty of Education at a public university in Bangkok. In accordance with university policy, undergraduate students in all degree programs are required to complete a minimum of 24 credits in general education courses. Consequently, the course was available to any interested students across the university, and a total of 26 students enrolled in the course.

Despite the fact that all students voluntarily participated in the study, purposive sampling was employed based on the background and rationale of the study. Although two students were excluded from the study (a fourth-year female student from the Faculty of Science and a Japanese male exchange student majoring in music), their presence was significant to the research since they served as cultural informants who offered participants insights and perspectives on different social groups (Baker, 2012a, 2012b). As a result, 24 English-major students from the Faculty of Education were recruited with written consent following ethical approval from the university. The participants consisted of 22 second-year students in Secondary Education, and two third-year students in Elementary Education. Apart from using English in education, the participants mostly used English to communicate with foreigners, including in online communication and social media. Approximately one-third of the participants also

reported using English to communicate with other Thais. This means the participants had experience in both intercultural and intracultural communication. To gain more comprehensive understanding of the participants' viewpoints in their natural context, a participatory qualitative methodology was employed (Dörnyei, 2007; Silverman, 2017). The insider status of the researcher as the lecturer helped engage the participants in co-constructing knowledge, learning processes, and experiences while participating in intercultural activities (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018).

3.2 The Course on English for Intercultural Communication

The previous objectives of the course were to enable students to 1) describe similarities and differences among native English speakers' culture, students' culture, and international culture; 2) seek knowledge about English through native English speakers' culture, students' culture and international culture; 3) use English appropriately in different cultural contexts; and 4) develop various strategies to teach culture. Nevertheless, to develop the course and students' learning outcomes, the course aim was to use intercultural tasks to enhance students' ELF and intercultural awareness in intercultural communication. Instead of emphasizing any particular culture, the course content was revised. It involved 14 topics that equipped students with basic knowledge about the definition of culture and stereotypes; the relationship between language, culture, and identity in communication; the notions of intercultural and intracultural communication; the spread of the English language; the different concepts under the umbrella term of Global Englishes, English varieties (e.g., British English, American English, Nigerian English, Singaporean English, and other Asian Englishes); the use of English and different cultural interpretations due to social factors (e.g., age, social class, gender, and ethnicity) and changing contexts (e.g., in online communication); awareness of netiquette and digital literacy when using the internet; awareness of standard ideology and native speakerism in ELT (e.g., textbooks); and cultural pedagogy regarding different paradigms (i.e., cross-cultural communication, intercultural communication, and transcultural communication).

In relation to the course pedagogy, intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model were applied to each class period, which lasted 3 hours per week; there were a total of 15 class periods over the semester. In addition, students

participated in out-of-class activities, which accounted for approximately 3 additional hours of learning (totaling 48 hours). In each class period, the instructional process consisted of a lecture integrated with a task session. Students participated in various intercultural activities, such as exploring the use of English in their daily lives and their own culture. They additionally performed cultural behaviors based on their interpretation of communication in different contexts, for example, paying respect to Buddhist monks or Buddha images in a temple (see Figure 2). They evaluated texts from various sources (e.g., local and foreign news and ELT textbooks), and also discussed different issues (e.g., the intelligibility of native and non-native speakers' language use, the ownership of language, and communicative needs in intercultural contexts). Some questions from Baker's (2012b) questionnaire were adopted in class discussions. For instance, students shared ideas about whether they agreed with the statement that Standard English is spoken by native English speakers. Additionally, one class was on Halloween Day, so there was an extra short lesson on Halloween where students were asked to voluntarily wear fancy costumes. This additional activity was due to the constant need to modify and enhance knowledge, awareness, and skills concerning the model (Baker, 2012a, 2015b). Moreover, some additional intercultural tasks were to be completed outside of the classroom, such as conducting fieldwork and writing a short report on their exploration of local cultures in group. At the later stage, students were also asked to find ways to integrate cultural elements (i.e., skills, knowledge, and attitudes) and local cultures into their English language classrooms (see Figure 2). In the final class period, they presented their group projects of cultural exploration based on their interests, together with delivering their own cultural teaching activities (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Students' Demonstration of Thai Prostrating for Paying Respect to Buddhist Monks (left)
Students' Presentation on the Integration of Local Cultures into ELT Textbooks (center)
Students' Group Project Presentation on Funerals Around the World (right)



As reflections on learning in teacher education could raise ELT teachers' self-awareness of their practices (Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Lourenço et al., 2018), individual students were required to reflect on their thoughts, feelings, personal experiences, and intercultural encounters approximately five times. In an effort to support their learning, they subsequently received responses and feedback on their assignments and reflections (Baker, 2012b). The course schedule, including the course content and intercultural tasks, is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1

A Summary of the Course Content and Intercultural Tasks in Each Class Period

Content	Task
1. Culture and Stereotypes	Exploring and evaluating local and foreign news about elder care home and pageant beauty, and discussing in a group. Reflection 1.
2. Culture, Identity, and Communication	Discussing the language use in different social groups. Going to the university's memorial hall and exploring culture within the university.
3. English as a Global Language	Discussing why English becomes the global language, and exploring the use of English in different domains, including students' use of English.
4. Varieties of Englishes	Exploring and discussing the different varieties of English language. Exploring Englishes in students' daily life.
5. The Concepts of Intercultural Communication and Intracultural Communication	Evaluating and discussing English used in signs, media, and IT resources. Exploring the use of English for intercultural communication and intracultural communication in students' daily life.
6. English and Social Factors	Exploring the effect of social factors on different use of English. Creating and presenting 7-day greeting messages in a group.
7. Language in Context: Formal and Informal English	Doing a role play and analyzing the language use in different given situations. Reflection 2.

8. Dangerous English and Taboos	Exploring and evaluating the language use in comic strips. Reading local and foreign news about a change of names (e.g., Austrian village's name), and discussing in a group.
9. Culture in Idioms, Proverbs, Similes, and Metaphors	Exploring and analyzing the use of idioms, proverbs, similes, and metaphors in different languages and cultures, including ELF. Reflection 3.
10. Culture as Soft Power	Exploring and evaluating local and foreign news about the country's famous cultural products. Creating and presenting a mascot of an individual student's hometown.
11. Non-Verbal Communication	Exploring non-verbal language (e.g., hand gestures and eye contact) and the different interpretations. Analyzing and evaluating people's messages from their behavior in communication.
12. General Social Etiquette	Discussing, performing, and practicing different social greetings. Exploring social greetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reflection 4.
An Extra Lesson on Halloween	Performing cultural behavior, such as wearing a fancy costume and doing trick or treat.
13. Digital Communication	Exploring and evaluating false news and online propaganda. Evaluating local and foreign news about the use of emoticons and emoji and the different interpretations between social groups. Discussing how teachers could teach students to use the internet appropriately.
14. Intercultural Communication and Language Teaching	Exploring different cultural teaching techniques. Evaluating images and content in ELT textbooks. Discussing and presenting ideas of how teachers could integrate culture into their English language classroom. Reflection 5.

15.A Group Project	Presenting cultural exploration with their own teaching activities. Submitting a portfolio.
--------------------	---

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Since a combination of different methods of observation helped the researcher better explore the participants’ cognition (Borg, 2015), various research instruments were used in the data collection. At the beginning and end of the course, pre- and post-test questionnaires, partly adapted from Baker’s (2012b) questionnaire, were completed online. Students were asked to answer 10 open-ended questions about language and culture (see Table 2), with an additional question about their learning aims in a pre-test questionnaire and their learning outcomes in a post-test questionnaire. As open-ended questions provide participants with greater freedom of expression (Dörnyei, 2007), such questions were used to explore the participants’ knowledge and attitudes towards language and culture in ELT. The researcher could thus assess the participants’ cultural understanding and awareness based on the ICA model. Furthermore, the use of open-ended questions helped the researcher obtain richer data on the participants’ background knowledge, attitudes, and experiences in using English for intercultural communication (Baker, 2012b). The students’ intercultural experiences and perspectives on language teaching and learning were also explored. By comparing responses collected before and after undertaking the course, the researcher could observe students’ learning progress (Dörnyei, 2007) and any changes in their attitudes (Baker, 2012b). This process subsequently enabled an examination of the impact of incorporating intercultural tasks based on Baker’s (2022) ICA model, as well as the development of students’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards ELF and intercultural communication.

Table 2
Pre- and Post-Test Questions, Adapted from Baker’s (2012b) Questionnaire

Questions
1. Write your own definition of culture.
2. What is the relationship between language and culture?
3. Have you ever heard of or experienced any stereotypes?
4. What type of English do you think students of English should learn? Why?

-
5. Do you think whether an American person will change their accent when living in the UK? Why or why not?
 6. Would you change your name when contacting foreigners? Why?
 7. Have you heard of the word soft power? Can you think of any examples of culture as soft power?
 8. Can you give some examples of non-verbal language and their meanings?
 9. What do you think are the most important aspects to learn when studying English?
 10. Do you think intercultural awareness should be part of English language teaching and learning?
-

Additional Questions

- Pre-test questionnaire: Write your learning aim(s) for this course.
 - Post-test questionnaire: What have you got from this course?
-

Note: Adapted from *Using e-learning to develop intercultural awareness in ELT: A critical evaluation in a Thai higher education setting* by W. Baker, 2012, British Council. Copyright 2012 by British Council. Adapted with permission from the author.

During the instructional process, classroom observations were used to gain direct information from students to understand the effects of intercultural tasks used in real situations on student participants' learning (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Dörnyei, 2007). A combination of structured and unstructured observation was adopted. Students' ICA development was recorded using an observation scheme (see Figure 3), and any emerging issues were documented in narrative field notes¹ (Dörnyei, 2007). Photos of students' tasks and classroom activities were also taken, so that the researcher could further observe students' expressions and actions when participating in intercultural tasks and to review their cognitive processes (Borg, 2015). However, students' faces were not included in the frame without their approval due to ethical considerations (Dörnyei, 2007).

¹ Transcription conventions

S _{no.}	marks	a student participant with a classroom number
<i>italic</i>	marks	translate from Thai language
[]	marks	an omitted word

Figure 3*Observation Scheme for Tracking ICA Development*

dd/mm/yy _____	Time _____	Place _____
Topic _____		Activity _____
Number of students _____		
ICA Level 1:		

ICA Level 2:		

ICA Level 3:		

Others:		

Photos of Students' Doing an Activity		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>		

Documents from students could reflect their attitudes and behaviors with minimal researcher interference (Silverman, 2014). Accordingly, the researcher archived or made copies of students' classwork throughout the semester. At the end of the course, students' assignments and five reflections on intercultural tasks were collected to form a portfolio. Students could also add additional reflections and any photos to their portfolio based on their personal preferences. In doing so, students were encouraged to express their attitudes, elicit relevant thoughts from their long-term memories, capture their experiences and dynamics of the cultural learning process, and investigate their cognition across different intercultural experiences (Dörnyei, 2007; Rose et al., 2020). The researcher also considered the

results of the university's course evaluation at the end of the semester since students were able to anonymously rate the course content, teaching methods, and assessment methods. Therefore, the researcher could gather unbiased student feedback on course development while minimizing pressure and the researcher's influence.

In data analysis and interpretation, the analysis process was conducted concurrently with data collection (Silverman, 2017), and content analysis was conducted with NVivo 14 software. That is, data from the pre-test questionnaire were initially analyzed to determine students' ICA levels. Data from observation schemes, field notes, and document archives were subsequently coded and recoded multiple times. Then, recurring codes were grouped into common categories so that the researcher could identify students' attitudes and behaviors (Dörnyei, 2007; Silverman, 2014). However, when new data emerged, additional codes were created to capture recurring themes in participants' actions, shared perspectives, and experiences with intercultural tasks (Dörnyei, 2007; Silverman, 2017). Finally, the emerging topics and key themes were connected to Baker's (2022) ICA framework in order to examine changes in students' knowledge, practices, and perspectives on ELF and intercultural communication.

Furthermore, the researcher used the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 14 to categorize all datasets. In doing so, the large amounts of data were efficiently managed and organized to facilitate an in-depth analysis of participants' attitudes and experiences related to intercultural learning, their engagement in intercultural activities, and their evaluations of the course. The researcher also assessed the consistency of the findings by quantifying the frequency of common codes and categories. This process helped strengthen the validity and reliability of the data interpretation (Silverman, 2017).

At the end of the course, data from the post-test questionnaire were also coded to identify any changes in the participants' ICA levels. The researcher compared data from the pre- and post-course results to assess the extent of their development in intercultural awareness. The researcher also examined participants' attitudes toward intercultural tasks and their evaluations of the course. The participants' anonymous responses from the university's official course evaluation were additionally incorporated into the analysis. By integrating

recurring data on participants' ICA levels, attitudes, and experiences with intercultural tasks, the researcher was able to examine the impact of incorporating intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model on students' intercultural awareness.

4. Findings

Due to space limitations, only a part of the larger research project is presented. The findings in this paper are based primarily on the analysis of students' responses to pre- and post-test questionnaires and selected archival documents (see Pattaraworathum, 2025 for additional findings on the extent of students' ICA development, their attitudes and experiences with intercultural tasks, and their evaluations of the course). The analysis of the effects of applying intercultural tasks to pre-service ELT teachers identified two major categories: 1) students' ICA development and 2) their future teaching practices. Each category, with its corresponding codes and criteria, is presented in Table 3, along with the number of participants per code and illustrative excerpts highlighting key terms. However, ICA development follows a non-linear trajectory (Humphreys & Baker, 2021), and the participant numbers in Table 3 are drawn from questionnaire data, which reflect ICA development at specific points in time rather than providing an exact measure of students' overall progression in intercultural awareness across the semester. Evidence from portfolios indicated that ICA development, particularly in the domain of attitudes, during the semester was more extensive than the questionnaire-based snapshot presented in this table (see Appendix).

Table 3

The Basic Coding Table Showing the Effects of Applying Intercultural Tasks on the Pre-Service ELT Teachers

Category	Codes
1. Students' Intercultural Awareness (ICA) Development	1.1 Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the nature of ELF and its role in communication. - Understand the nature of culture and its role in communication. - Recognize linguistic and cultural diversity. - Recognize cultural similarities and differences in behaviors, beliefs, and values.

- Recognize the complexity of culture, including similarities, differences, and dynamics in communication.

The Number of Participants

- 24 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S7: I have *gained a lot of knowledge* about various cultures in this course and also it can help us *reduce negative stereotypes and personal biases* about different groups.
- S9: The English for Intercultural Communication course has helped me *gain a deeper understanding* of the *complexities surrounding communication* across *diverse cultural contexts*.
- S22: To sum up, the important thought I have *realized* is that the various levels of formality in *language use* can express the *situation*, the class, and the relationship between the interlocutors. Therefore, I should *be aware of* the relationship and the appropriateness when I communicate with others.

1.2 Skills

- Adapt language use and behavior to different communication contexts.
- Interpret meaning and mediate between cultural perspectives.
- Collaborate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Apply strategies for negotiating understanding in intercultural settings.
- Observe, compare, and analyze cultural similarities and differences in behaviors, beliefs, and values.

The Number of Participants

- 23 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S8: So I think in this class I can separate the language in *each situation* and I can be able to *use* the word correctly and *suit* the situations.
- S16: I had a chance to *work with* some classmates that I have never worked with. This caused a *new working environment*, which provided a broader view for me as we *exchange* a lot of thoughts within the group.
- S22: I have learnt that non-verbal languages greatly impact on communication, and we cannot *interpret* them directly. We should *observe* the context and *look into* their body language and tone.

1.3 Attitudes

- Express openness and curiosity toward other cultures.
- Show respect and appreciation for one's own and others' cultures.
- Demonstrate tolerance of ambiguity in communication.
- Express willingness to engage in intercultural interaction.
- Embrace both cultural similarities and differences.
- Show readiness to reflect on one's own cultural positioning.

The Number of Participants

- 14 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S3: I particularly *appreciated* the opportunity to learn about my friends' provinces and their *unique* cultural practices, such as the Muslim greeting and the Japanese bow.
 - S11: I got to focus on only their own culture, culture shock, greater understanding why things are the way they are and finally *respecting* it fully. This
-

really explained how me and my friends from different cultures can *feel much greater comfort*.

- S20: When I learned Singlish and other Englishes in the class, I had *so much fun* and I realized that I have used Englishes in my daily life too.

2. Students' Future Teaching Practices

2.1 Integrating various issues on ELF, culture and communication into English language teaching

- Teach students about the diversity of language and culture.
- Encourage students' intercultural awareness.
- Apply ELF-informed pedagogy.

The Number of Participants

- 21 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S4: I think any English is fine. It is because *English is a global language* that anyone can use. *There's no limitation on what type of English should be use in the lesson.*
- S12: I think the most important aspect is that there are differences in each country even though it is English and they have to *be aware* of it. They should *be able to communicate properly*. The proper usage of level in English and what words that are possibly offend people from different cultures. They should be aware that they sometimes accidentally offend people and it is not strange for other people to be offended. They should not think that as long as it is alright to them, other people should always be alright about it too.
- S15: Of course, *we shouldn't study only the content of English use*, but we should *learn to understand the culture of those communities* which use the English language. *Not only US and UK use English*, there're many more countries that use the language and we have to learn and acknowledge their

cultures too, because *we are both English learners and Global Citizens*.

- S16: I think that *students of English should have a right to choose what English they want to use as a tool for communication*. Therefore, English teachers should be responsible for teaching them *varieties of English language*, such as Englishes used around the world, levels of English, dangerous English, etc.

2.2 Teaching linguistic features in English language classrooms

- Teach students about the formal aspects of the language, such as pronunciation, grammatical structure, and vocabulary.

The Number of Participants

- 3 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S2: I think it is the *structure and vocabulary* which are the basic lessons that the students should pay attention to because normally, you communicate with the people by using English words and sentences. Therefore, they should know *how to order the sentence, how to pronounce the word, what the word meaning is* etc.

2.3 Teaching standard varieties of English in English language classrooms

- Teach students about native-speaker varieties of English, such as British English or American English.

The Number of Participants

- 6 students

Illustrative Excerpts with Key Terms

- S21: I might sound a little biased here, but I would say that they should go for *an American accent*. The United States of America is home to over 240 million English speakers. There, students can find

all types of Englishes, which makes the language super inclusive and modern.

- S23: I think they should learn *British English* because this is the type of English that they might familiar the most, and they can also use it in their every life easily.

Note: $N = 24$

4.1 Students' ICA Development

In relation to the concept of intercultural and transcultural L2 communication (Baker, 2022), this study finds that applying intercultural tasks significantly enhanced students' ICA levels. Their development can be categorized into three holistic domains: knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4.1.1 Knowledge

All participants demonstrated their enhanced intercultural awareness, particularly in relation to their developing knowledge. Therefore, they recognized the nature of ELF, the linguistic and cultural diversity in communication, and the complexity of culture, including people's similarities and differences in behaviors, beliefs, and values within intercultural interactions. Notably, participants' conceptions of culture and intercultural communication were broadened and deepened.

At the beginning of the course, the dataset indicated that most participants perceived culture as a set of fixed practices associated with a particular social group. Many additionally linked culture to temporal continuity, viewing traditional knowledge and practices as being transmitted across generations.

S21: By my standard, any accumulation of certain practices accepted and followed by community members from generation to generation can be called culture.

Eighteen participants expressed their view on the strong and inseparable relationship between language and culture. Language was consequently perceived as an integral component of culture, or culture as an integral aspect of language.

S11: I think both of language and culture is intertwined. Culture can influence communication styles. And language reflects the unique of culture or social norms.

After completing the course, however, participants' conceptualizations of culture and intercultural communication experienced a profound transformation. Their understanding of culture became more expansive and dynamic as they realized multifaceted interpretations across various levels. Significantly, 14 participants integrated three elements of cultural dimensions—knowledge (product), skills (practice), and attitudes (perspective)—into their own definition of culture and their explanation of what they had learned in class.

S14: Culture shows an identity of a particular community. It is expressed through many ways, such as communication—verbal and non-verbal, language, social etiquettes, food, practices, etc. However, it is not something set in stone. Culture can be fluid, and can change over time depending on the influence it receives. It can also be observed at a large scale or a small scale up to the observer since it is very likely that each person in the same community has different cultures within themselves. Thus, a culture can be studied at a national level or an individual level.

Moreover, most participants asserted that the course activities (e.g., exploring verbal and non-verbal language, particularly personal space) raised their intercultural awareness and understanding, and broadened their viewpoint of cultural differences and the complexity of culture in communication.

Figure 4

An Excerpt from S3's Final Reflection

As the semester comes to an end, I find myself reflecting on the various aspects of intercultural communication that we have learned throughout this course. From understanding the three Ps of culture; perspective, practice, and product to exploring the differences of non-verbal communication and the layers of culture, each class has been a journey of discovery. The engaging activities, ranging from the weekday greeting to role-playing scenarios, have not only made the learning experience enjoyable but have also provided educational knowledge. The exploration of personal space, a concept I had not given much thought to before, has resonated with me. It's fascinating how this aspect varies among individuals, reflecting the complexities of cultural differences. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to learn about my friends' provinces and their unique cultural practices, such as the Muslim greeting and the Japanese bow. It has broadened my appreciation for the diversity within our class.

4.1.2 Skills

Twenty-three participants documented significant skill enhancement through participation in intercultural tasks. Through observing, comparing, and analyzing cultural variations in behaviors, beliefs, and values during class activities, participants developed skills to adjust their behavior appropriately across different communication contexts. Their adaptability and willingness to accommodate in intercultural communication was reflected in their effective collaboration with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Seventeen participants related what they had learned through intercultural activities to their own life experiences (see Figure 4 above). They perceived the course activities as valuable for developing adaptive communication skills.

Figure 5

An Excerpt from S9's Final Reflection

A key takeaway from this course is the realization that communication is not just about words. Nonverbal cues, gestures, and cultural nuances all contribute to human communication. I have learnt to appreciate the importance of both verbal and nonverbal elements in conveying messages accurately and with cultural sensitivity. Moreover, the course delves into the concept of cultural competence. Cultural competence involves the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures, acknowledging and respecting diversity. This goes beyond simple tolerance and requires a genuine effort to understand and appreciate the values, beliefs, and customs of others. Overall, this course is not just about imparting knowledge but about developing a skill set and mindset that prepares us to thrive in an interconnected and culturally diverse world. It encourages open-mindedness, empathy, and willingness to learn from others.

As participants explored culture from their own family background to the fluidity of online communication, they enhanced their ability to negotiate meaning and manage differing interpretations. Through in-class and out-of-class activities, they developed skills in observing and comparing cultural similarities and differences, mediating between diverse perspectives, and interpreting verbal and non-verbal communication. Over time, participants developed intercultural communicative competence and an increased ELF awareness in intercultural contexts, which in turn fostered attitudes of openness, respect, and appreciation toward their own and others' cultures. They also became more culturally sensitive and tolerant. Their ICA development in knowledge and skills subsequently led to positive changes in attitudes towards themselves and others in intercultural communication.

Figure 6*An Excerpt from S16's Final Reflection*

I have learned to embrace who I am. This is because there was an activity that allowed me to explore more about myself and I found that I am so proud and grateful for everything that has made me who I am today. Finally, I have learned to expand what culture is in my head through the group project presentation. In the process of preparation, my group members and I tried to present not only the information, but with the interpretation of culture. Consequently, we decided to come up with an idea that we needed to present what we see in the products we chose and connect them with what we have learned from the course. I really enjoyed working on this project because I got to see how I view cultures comparing to the past. In addition, watching my classmates doing my group's activity is a very special moment because I also learned more through their different interpretations.

4.1.3 Attitudes

While only 14 participants marked their attitudinal development in the post-test questionnaire, 22 participants documented enhanced intercultural awareness through the development of their attitudes. Beyond demonstrating openness, empathy, respect, and appreciation for their own and others' cultures, as well as tolerance of ambiguity in communication, participation in intercultural tasks also fostered students' interest and motivation for cultural learning. Although four participants occasionally experienced mixed feelings about new intercultural exploration—they were mostly confused at the beginning—they ultimately expressed positive attitudes (see excerpt from S21 below). Motivated by their enjoyment and curiosity, participants actively engaged in intercultural activities. Five participants even reported in their portfolios further cultural explorations with friends or family at various times and places, such as the European Languages Café organized by the European Union in Thailand, the Diwali festival in the Phahurat Road area (where Bangkok's Thai-Indian community resides), and a trip to Japan (see also Figure 7).

S4: The activity [at the European Languages Café] was entertaining and lively. The food was the best! They provided us with some cookies and drinks before the event started. And they handed us the food after playing games with them as well. The Polish doughnut was soooooo good! I wish I had it one more time.

S21: All the people inside [the Sikh Temple] were so kind and warmhearted. They all made sure we did not feel like outsiders

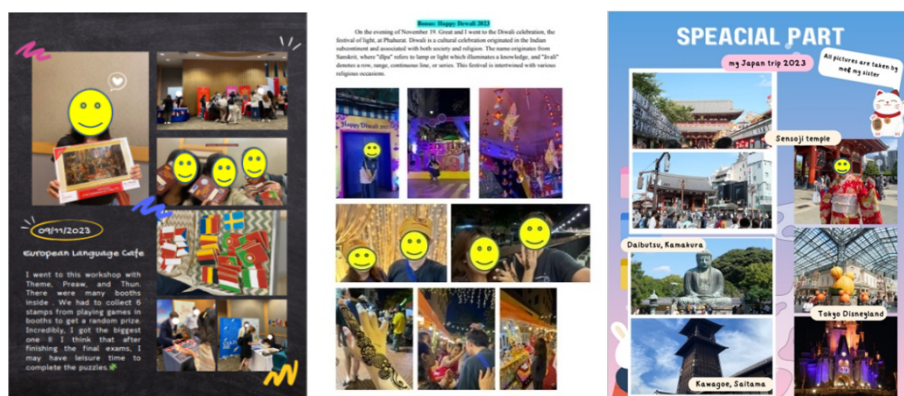
being there without permission. They even invited us to have dinner with them in the dining room. We were amazed at the kindness these pure souls gave to us. We left the Temple with mixed feelings: feelings of confusion and joy. That night, I went to bed smiling because I felt like I just witnessed one of the best incidents of my life. Just like they said, the best revelations come at the most unexpected times.

S10: Moreover, I got a chance to be on vacation in Japan during the course, I had many cultures from my experience to share with friends. For example, it is 'Omamori'. It is a Japanese charm from the shrine. Besides, each shrine will have different Omamori depending on the famous thing or creativity of each shrine.

P.s. I would like to leave some pictures from my Japan trip for you in the photo collection. Please take a look of them. ♡ (o- ω -)

Figure 7

Examples of Students' Self-Cultural Exploration



To sum up, the application of intercultural tasks had a positive effect on participants as they demonstrated improved understanding of language and culture, enhanced communication skills, and openness in intercultural communication. That is, they found the activities engaging and enjoyed learning through the provided intercultural tasks, consequently gaining more knowledge about the complexities of culture and individuals' cultural differences. Consequently, the participants' concept of culture evolved. Initially, they perceived culture as "a set of shared behaviors, beliefs, and values" (Baker, 2018, p. 44) within a national framework. Over time, however, they came to understand culture

on multiple levels, viewing it as “multiple voices or perspectives within any cultural grouping” (Baker, 2018, p. 44).

As exemplified in Figure 4 above, the participants enjoyed engaging in intercultural tasks, particularly role-playing and exploring different interpretations of non-verbal language. Since they learned how to adapt and behave appropriately in various contexts, they believed intercultural tasks helped them become more sensitive to cultural differences in intercultural communication (see Figure 5). The participants also perceived that the activities provided them opportunities to explore more about themselves. However, even though the tasks led them to new intercultural exploration, these tasks could initially cause participants confusion. The participants nevertheless reflected on their enjoyment and pride in the latter part of their cultural exploration.

In addition, participants revealed that learning through intercultural tasks helped them appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity, which led them to embrace their identities (see Figure 6). Participants consequently continued exploring both local and global cultures based on their interests (see Figure 7). Due to the shift in their understanding, it can be concluded that the participants' ICA level evolved from basic cultural awareness (Level 1) to advanced cultural awareness (Level 2).

4.2 Students' Future Teaching Practices

The data analysis reveals that the intercultural tasks had a multifaceted impact on the participants. Not only did the intercultural tasks demonstrate its potential in developing participants' ICA, but the intercultural tasks also revealed significant implications for future English language education. This study demonstrates that there is an emerging positive correlation between participants' developing ICA and their future teaching practices. This means that participants' increased intercultural awareness is essentially connected to attitudinal shifts, which in turn creates opportunities to integrate aspects of ELF, culture, and communication into their ELT.

In other words, participants became aware of and understood the changes in English language use across different historical and social contexts. They also recognized the varieties of language and culture in communication. Hence, student perspectives on Englishes and cultures, particularly those centering on non-native

speakers, significantly broadened. Seven participants' critical reflection on their perception of English language ownership shows a decentralized perspective on native speaker dominance. This can be attributed to participants' inclusion of linguistic and cultural diversity in ELT, and also their increased confidence in English language ownership (see Figure 8). The participants' evolving intercultural awareness significantly led to their recognition of the importance of integrating cultural content into ELT and the fostering of intercultural awareness. In their post-response to the question about important aspects of English learning, 21 participants emphasized topics related to ELF, culture, and communication. Their answers also included topics such as linguistic and cultural diversity, cultural understanding, respect for others, open-mindedness, awareness, and confidence in communication. In stark contrast, there were only three participants who focused on traditional linguistic features, such as grammatical structures, vocabulary or accent as important features of language competence.

Figure 8

An Excerpt from S22's Final Reflection

Honestly, I have been studying English in a linguistic area throughout my life. I studied to take examinations and communicate with people whom I used to call "Native." This course opened up my view about the English language. There is an idea that is still stuck in my mind and makes me completely change my attitude, "Everyone owns the English language, and everyone can be a native." It is so impactful somehow. I have learnt to properly communicate with people in different cultures through both verbal and non-verbal communication. Not only about communication, but all the lessons also taught me to understand people, diversity, and culture. They enhanced my awareness of differences such as social factors and social etiquette in each culture. Moreover, I have realized how important it is to teach students about culture. I hope that I can integrate culture into English teaching and open student's mind about culture.

Nonetheless, the reversion of ICA levels among participants was also found in the study. Despite an emerging openness to diverse Englishes and cultures, participants demonstrated resistance towards dismantling deeply entrenched beliefs about Standard English and native-speakerism. When asked in the post-questionnaire about the types of English students should learn, six participants maintained that British or American English should be the standard, seven participants advocated for learning diverse English language varieties, and six participants thought it should depend on students' choices. However, six participants stated that they would integrate English varieties together with

Standard English, namely British English (BrE) or American English (AE), in their future teaching practices.

S6: Nowadays as there are not certain native speakers. Therefore, if I were a teacher, I would teach my students with my own English. I mean my accent. However, I think I still use BE or AE to teach my students as well because these two are still the main English that are taught in our world or country.

In summary, the study reveals the progression of participants' ICA, which developed from basic to advanced cultural understanding. Despite some participants' variations in their ICA levels, the study confirms that the implementation of intercultural tasks grounded in Baker's (2022) ICA model could facilitate a substantial improvement in participants' awareness of ELF and intercultural communication. The study also demonstrates participants' proclivities towards incorporating these perspectives in their future ELT practices.

5. Discussion

The application of intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model in a course on English for Intercultural Communication resulted in participants' progression of ICA levels. This is evident by significant shifts in participants' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, particularly in their expanding understanding of culture and its complexity in communication; the linguistic and cultural diversity of English language users; and their sense of ownership of the English language as non-native speakers. Evidence from this study has shown that adopting the ICA model can help reduce students' cultural stereotypes and promote their cultural understanding, critical thinking, and independence, similar to other ICC approaches (Sercu, 2002; Snodin, 2016). Meanwhile, the ICA model offers students an expanded concept of language-and-culture flexibility in communication (Baker, 2012a, 2012b). In agreement with previous research (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018; Yu & Van Maele, 2018), the current study confirms the significant effects of intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model in developing students' awareness, particularly at levels 1 and 2.

However, consistent with other studies highlighting the impact of life experiences on the reversal of ICA development (Baker, 2012a; Humphreys &

Baker, 2021), the current findings reveal that many pre-service ELT teachers in the Thai context have had limited exposure to intercultural learning in their formal education. This lack of linguistic and cultural diversity in prior English language learning experiences may reinforce traditional views of language and culture, and contribute to regression in some participants' ICA, particularly regarding their perspectives on future intercultural education. Given the participants' traditional view of culture as fixed and their belief in the inseparability of language and culture, it is unsurprising that native speakers became their primary frame of reference when asked about what is most important to learn when studying English. They also perceived native speakers as their only target interlocutors in intercultural communication, a phenomenon observed in previous studies (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). Since traditional views of language and culture form a person's core beliefs, altering such beliefs is challenging (Borg, 2015). Resistance to adopting new perspectives against their core beliefs may explain why participants' attitudes have shown inconsistent results when measured using different instruments at different times, in contrast to their knowledge and skills. This observable uneven growth in participants' attitudes implies the multifaceted nature of ICA development, highlighting that students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes can potentially evolve independently and at varying intensities. However, this variability in attitudinal development highlights the need for sustained, targeted interventions in intercultural education, and reinforces the importance of continuous, context-specific support in developing intercultural awareness among pre-service teachers.

Furthermore, in line with previous research (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2021a; Snodin & Young, 2015), the participants' ideology of Standard English and native speakerism appears to stem from the widespread preference for native speaker models in English language education among Thai people. This tendency may also be linked to a lack of intercultural education in their English language learning, often attributed to teachers' emphasis on native speaker linguistic norms in the EFL classroom (Pattaraworathum & Baker, 2025; Snodin, 2016). As observed, many participants reported limited exposure to cultural content, stating that they had little to no opportunity to engage in cultural learning during secondary education, largely due to their ELT secondary teachers' personal preferences (see Figure 9).

Figure 9*An Excerpt from S6's Reflection 4*

Today is Halloween and most of my friends try to dress up like ghosts and pumpkins. When I entered the class I was really surprised and impressed by what they were doing and wearing. It is because when I was in high school, my teacher didn't interest or pay attention to this festival that much. To clarify, most of my English teachers and students love Christmas more than any festival. Therefore, I have a new mission for myself to dress up like this next year if I have a chance. Moreover, voting for best costume, receiving a candy or chocolate also makes me feel like we are in the real Halloween party. After that, I also learn about the history of Halloween, how to dress up and decorate in this day, what we need to prepare such as candy or chocolate, and etc.

While the participants' prior learning experiences suggest that only Anglophone speakers' language and culture are central to Thai English Language Teaching (ELT), they also confirm that the repetitive presentation of native speakers' cultural and linguistic norms in ELT can reinforce stereotypical ideas and negative attitudes toward non-native speakers, including themselves (Hayes, 2016; Nomnian, 2013). Some participants' lack of intercultural education in their prior schooling may contribute to persistent traditional views of language and culture; to resistance to changes in students' beliefs about Standard English and native-speakerism; and to the prioritization of linguistic competence in English language education. This finding aligns with the traditional emphasis on linguistic features based on the native-speaker model in ELT among Thai teachers (Snodin, 2016).

Moreover, the participants' prior learning experiences and their gradual transformation highlight the role of ELT teachers as key agents in intercultural education (Pattaraworathum, 2024) and underscore the importance of developing ELT teachers' intercultural awareness. The participants' learning experiences appear to shape the development of their intercultural awareness, which in turn may influence their future cultural teaching practices (see Figure 8). In this regard, their perspectives on what should be taught in future ELT classrooms further affirm the relationship between teachers' awareness of ELF and their instructional approaches (Huttayavilaiphan, 2019). The relationship also includes the integration of cultural content into English language classrooms (Pattaraworathum, 2024). The participants' ICA development may consequently influence their future students' awareness of ELF (Ronzón Montiel, 2018). Therefore, this study strongly supports the integration of intercultural components into Thailand's English language education.

Equally important, this study encourages the advancement of ELT teachers' intercultural awareness and professional competence through teacher preparation programs, with particular emphasis on the pre-service level (Pattaraworathum, 2024). As teachers tend to teach what they are aware of and value (Pullin, 2015; Sifakis, 2014), implementing intercultural tasks grounded in Baker's (2022) ICA model emerges as a priority. This approach offers a pathway to substantive transformation in Thailand's English language and intercultural education. In spite of the potential for ICA regression, it is essential for pre-service ELT teachers to be supported so that they can effectively navigate the complex process of applying theoretical insights to their context-dependent pedagogical practices. By cultivating meaningful professional development among ELT teachers, the long-term goal of enhancing Thai students' intercultural awareness and communicative competence can be progressively achieved.

6. Limitations and Recommendations

In correspondence with other ICA studies (Baker, 2012b; Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018), this classroom-based study addresses existing research gaps by employing a different approach over an extended time frame. The variety of intercultural tasks in the required course met high student satisfaction. This evidence suggests that the assessment method and course design did not negatively impact students' positive perceptions of the course and intercultural activities. However, the findings from a single group of pre-service teachers at one university cannot be generalized to other ELT teachers or institutions. Further research is needed for other educational settings involving diverse groups of teachers so that the long-term effects of ICA development can be explored. A longitudinal study would be particularly valuable to examine whether pre-service teachers integrate cultural content into English classrooms. It is also significant to investigate the extent and manner of their cultural teaching approaches. Such comprehensive research could provide deeper insights into implementing the ICA model in other English language education settings.

Based on the substantial changes in participants' ICA development and their favorable attitudes towards intercultural tasks, the study offers several important implications for ELT. Firstly, the study suggests how intercultural tasks based on local contexts and cultures can be used to improve pre-service ELT teachers'

awareness of ELF and intercultural communication. It is possible that the ICA development of pre-service ELT teachers can lead to an increase of ELF and intercultural communication in English language education since teachers' learning and teaching experience are crucial factors in teaching culture and intercultural communication (Pattaraworathum, 2024). Secondly, the study demonstrates the importance of education in developing ELF and intercultural awareness to help reduce stereotypical ideas and bias against non-native speakers, and the need to decentralize the native speaker model in English language education (Pullin, 2015; Sifakis, 2014). Thirdly, the findings reaffirm that teachers should reflect on their learning and themselves to raise their self-awareness and intercultural awareness. This includes class discussion about students' new intercultural encounters and intercultural experiences for better understanding (Baker, 2022; Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Lourenço et al., 2018).

7. Conclusion

The study advocates for enhancing pre-service ELT teachers' ELF and intercultural awareness through the integration of intercultural tasks in teacher education, aiming to promote the development of intercultural education within English language education. In relation to the research question, the study seeks to develop a course on English for Intercultural Communication and examines the effects of intercultural tasks on learners' intercultural awareness. Findings from this classroom-based research indicate that integrating intercultural tasks based on Baker's (2022) ICA model significantly enhances pre-service teachers' awareness of ELF and intercultural communication. Participants reported their broader understanding of culture, improved skills, and greater openness and motivation to explore cultural diversity in intercultural communication. However, the research also revealed a nuanced pattern of development. For some participants, we saw reversions of their ICA as some students showed resistance to changing their attitudes toward Standard English and native speakers in ELT.

The diversity in participants' responses illuminates the complex, non-linear nature of ICA development, and it suggests that attitudinal domains may evolve in a fluctuating manner and at different rates compared to knowledge and skills domains. The research consequently unveils the multifaceted challenges in cultivating intercultural awareness within teacher education. It particularly highlights the need to support pre-service ELT teachers in developing awareness

and reconciling theoretical understanding with contextual teaching practices. Despite this complexity, their ICA development likely contributes to their increased tendency to embrace greater language and cultural diversity in future teaching practices. The study thus highlights the essential role of ELT teachers as key agents in advancing intercultural education in ELT. It also emphasizes the importance of developing ELT teachers' awareness of ELF and intercultural communication, and calls for further classroom-based studies and longitudinal research on ELT teachers across various contexts to deepen the understanding of how ELF and intercultural approaches can be systematically incorporated into in English language education.

8. About the Author

Nattida Pattaraworathum holds a lecturing position in the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University. She was a secondary English teacher before pursuing her PhD at the University of Southampton. Her research explores the areas of English as a lingua franca, intercultural communication, English language teaching, and teacher education.

9. Acknowledgement

This work was supported by Chulalongkorn University under Grants for Development of New Faculty Staff, Ratchadaphiseksomphot Endowment Fund [number DNS_66_090_2700_002].

10. References

- Ambele, E. A., & Boonsuk, Y. (2021a). Thai tertiary learners' attitudes towards their Thai English accent. *PASAA*, 61, 87–110.
<https://doi.org/10.58837/CHULA.PASAA.61.1.4>
- Ambele, E. A., & Boonsuk, Y. (2021b). Voices of learners in Thai ELT classrooms: A wake up call towards teaching English as a lingua franca. *Asian Englishes*, 23(2), 201–217.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2020.1759248>
- Baker, W. (2009). The cultures of English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(4), 567–592. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00187.x>
- Baker, W. (2012a). From cultural awareness to intercultural awareness: culture in ELT. *ELT Journal*, 66(1), 62–70. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccr017>

- Baker, W. (2012b). *Using e-learning to develop intercultural awareness in ELT: A critical evaluation in Thai higher education setting*. British Council.
- Baker, W. (2015a). Culture and complexity through English as a lingua franca: rethinking competences and pedagogy in ELT. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 4(1), 9–30. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2015-0005>
- Baker, W. (2015b). *Culture and identity through English as a lingua franca: Rethinking concepts and goals in intercultural communication*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Baker, W. (2018). English as a lingua franca and intercultural communication. In J. Jenkins, W. Baker, & M. Dewey (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of English as a lingua franca* (pp. 25–36). Routledge.
- Baker, W. (2022). From intercultural to transcultural communication. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 22(3), 280–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2021.2001477>
- Baker, W., & Jarunthawatchai, W. (2017). English language policy in Thailand. *European Journal of Language Policy*, 9(1), 27–44. <https://doi.org/10.3828/ejlp.2017.3>
- Banjongjit, B., & Boonmoh, A. (2018). Teachers' perceptions towards promoting intercultural communicative competence in the EFL classroom. *rEFLections*, 25(2), 76–97. <https://doi.org/10.61508/refl.v25i2.165393>
- Boonsuk, Y., & Ambele, E. A. (2020). Who 'owns English' in our changing world? Exploring the perception of Thai university students in Thailand. *Asian Englishes*, 22(3), 297–308. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2019.1669302>
- Boonsuk, Y., & Fang, F. (2024). Incorporating innovative Global Englishes-oriented activities into classroom instruction: Voices from pre-service English teachers in Thailand. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 19(2), 174–187. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2024.2352478>
- Borg, S. (2015). Researching teachers' beliefs. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Research methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource* (pp. 487–504). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Byram, M. (2012). Conceptualizing intercultural (communicative) competence and intercultural citizenship. In J. Jackson (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication* (pp. 85–98). Routledge.

- Cheewasukthaworn, K., & Suwanarak, K. (2017). Exploring Thai EFL teachers' perceptions of how intercultural communicative competence is important for their students. *PASAA*, 54, 177–204.
<https://doi.org/10.58837/CHULA.PASAA.54.1.7>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Crystal, D. (2008). Two thousand million? *English Today*, 24(1), 3–6.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000023>
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.
- Eberhard, D. M., Simons, G. F., & Fennig, C. D. (2024). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world* (27th ed.). SIL International.
- Farrell, T. S. C., & Bennis, K. (2013). Reflecting on ESL teacher beliefs and classroom practices: A case study. *RELC Journal*, 44(2), 163–176.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688213488463>
- Franz, J., & Teo, A. (2018). 'A2 is normal' – Thai secondary school English teachers' encounters with the CEFR. *RELC Journal*, 49(3), 322–338.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217738816>
- Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2015). *Introducing global Englishes*. Routledge.
- Hayes, D. (2016). The value of learning English in Thailand and its impact on Thai: Perspectives from university students. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 36(1), 73–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2014.924390>
- Hayes, D. (2017). Fallacies affecting policy and practice in the teaching of English as a foreign language in state primary schools in Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 37(2), 179–192.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2016.1240660>
- Holliday, A. (2012). Culture, communication, context and power. In J. Jackson (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication* (pp. 37–51). Routledge.
- Humphreys, G., & Baker, W. (2021). Developing intercultural awareness from short-term study abroad: Insights from an interview study of Japanese students. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21(2), 260–275.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1860997>
- Huttayavilaiphan, R. (2019). *Thai university teachers' beliefs about English language teaching and their awareness of global Englishes: A study of relationship and impact on teaching practices* [Doctoral thesis, University

- of Southampton]. University of Southampton Institutional Repository.
<https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/432269/>
- Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: The politics of academic English language policy*. Routledge.
- Jenkins, J. (2015). *Global Englishes: A resource book for students* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Khan, C. (2019). Cultural awareness through linguicism? Questioning the roles of native English speakers in Bogota, Colombia. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 19(2), 123–136.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1486408>
- Kramsch, C., & Uryu, M. (2012). Intercultural contact, hybridity, and the third space. In J. Jackson (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication* (pp. 211–226). Routledge.
- Kusumaningputri, R., & Widodo, H. P. (2018). Promoting Indonesian university students' critical intercultural awareness in tertiary EAL classrooms: The use of digital photograph-mediated intercultural tasks. *System*, 72, 49–61.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.10.003>
- Lourenço, M., Andrade, A. I., & Sá, S. (2018). Teachers' voices on language awareness in pre-primary and primary school settings: Implications for teacher education. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 31(2), 113–127.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2017.1415924>
- Mala, D. (2021, 18 February). Bid to raise English skills of teachers: Instructors to get scored on new scale. *Bangkok Post*.
<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2070087/bid-to-raise-english-skills-of-teachers>
- Ministry of Education. (2008). *Basic education curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008)*.
<http://www.act.ac.th/document/1741H.pdf>
- Mitchell, P. J., Pardinho, L. A., Yermakova-Aguiar, N. N., & Meshkov, L. V. (2015). Language learning and intercultural communicative competence: An action research case study of learners of Portuguese. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 200, 307–312.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.08.070>
- Nomnian, S. (2013). Thai cultural aspects in English language textbooks in a Thai secondary school. *Veridian E-Journal*, 6(7), 13–30. <https://he02.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/Veridian-E-Journal/article/view/35089>

- Pattaraworathum, N. (2024). "You are what you have learnt": The impact of ELT teachers' teaching and learning experience on their culture teaching practices. *Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning*, 14(2), 134–150. <https://rpltl.eap.gr/images/2024B/RPLTL14-Issue2.pdf>
- Pattaraworathum, N. (2025). Investigating intercultural awareness development and attitudes towards intercultural activities in an English for intercultural communication course: A case study of Thai university students. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 18(2), 430–455. <https://doi.org/10.70730/GLIW9414>
- Pattaraworathum, N., & Baker, W. (2025). The impact of native-speakerism on culture teaching practices of secondary ELT teachers in Thailand. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Dismantling the native speaker construct in English language teaching* (pp. 118–139). Routledge.
- Pullin, P. (2015). Culture, curriculum design, syllabus and course development in the light of BELF. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 4(1), 31–53. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2015-0006>
- Ronzón Montiel, G. J. (2018). *Intercultural communicative competence in a university language centre in Mexico: teachers' and students' perceptions and practices* [Doctoral thesis, University of Southampton]. University of Southampton Institutional Repository. <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/437260/>
- Rose, H., McKinley, J., & Briggs Baffoe-Djan, J. (2020). *Data collection research methods in applied linguistics*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford University Press.
- Sercu, L. (2002). Autonomous learning and the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence: Some implications for course development. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 15(1), 61–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908310208666633>
- Sifakis, N. C. (2014). ELF awareness as an opportunity for change: a transformative perspective for ESOL teacher education. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 3(2), 317–335. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2014-0019>
- Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting qualitative data* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Silverman, D. (2017). *Doing qualitative research* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Snodin, N. S. (2016). Rethinking culture teaching in English language programmes in Thailand. *RELC Journal*, 47(3), 387–398. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688215609231>

- Snodin, N. S., & Young, T. J. (2015). 'Native-speaker' varieties of English: Thai perceptions and attitudes. *Asian Englishes*, 17(3), 248–260.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2015.1083354>
- Thai Health Report Team. (2016). *Thai health 2016: A good death: Alternative option*. Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University.
<https://dol.thaihealth.or.th/Media/Index/d0cd5f71-0b49-ec11-80fa-00155db45613#>
- Trakulkasemsuk, W. (2012). Thai English. In E. Low & A. Hashim (Eds.), *English in Southeast Asia: Features, policy and language in use* (pp. 101–112). John Benjamins Publishing.
- Young, T. J., & Sachdev, I. (2011). Intercultural communicative competence: Exploring English language teachers' beliefs and practices. *Language Awareness*, 20(2), 81–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2010.540328>
- Yu, Q., & Van Maele, J. (2018). Fostering intercultural awareness in a Chinese English reading class. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 41(3), 357–375. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2018-0027>

11. Appendix

Comparison of Participant Numbers by ICA Development Domains Between the Post-Test Questionnaire and Portfolio

Domain	Post-Test Questionnaire	Portfolio
Knowledge	24	24
Skills	23	23
Attitudes	14	22

Note: *N* = 24