STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES AND TEACHER'S EXPERIENCES ON THE INTEGRATION OF INTERCULTURAL CONTENTS TO TASK-BASED ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the integration of the intercultural contents to task-based activities in EFL classroom setting. Data collected include teacher's reflective journals, student focus group interview, and students' learning logs. The findings suggest that the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities is a feasible and effective innovation for teaching language and culture. The integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities was reported to be beneficial in engaging and motivating students in learning, enhancing intercultural awareness, and improving their communication abilities. However, students expressed difficulties with using target language during doing tasks.

Keywords: English as an International Language, perceptions, experiences, intercultural contents, task-based activities

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Introduction

In this era of globalisation, English has become an international language and an important tool for learning information and news, communicating, seeking knowledge, and building the understanding of cultures and visions of the world community. In relation to the forming of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic community in 2015, English is increasingly important because English is the working language of the ASEAN community. Hence, there are a large number of non-native speakers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds who use English as a lingua franca (ELF) or as a medium for intercultural communication (Meierkord, 2011). As the interaction between and among people from different cultural backgrounds keep growing, there will be an increasingly high need for foreign language teaching to empower language students with the appropriate tools to deal with everyday intercultural encounters in order to effectively and appropriately use the target language within multilingual and multicultural environments (Kramsch, 1993;Crystal, 2003; House, 2003; Rohmah, 2005, Nomnian, 2014). It is also crucial for foreign language users to be able to successfully communicate, understand and respect people from a variety of cultural backgrounds. By challenging contemporary issues such as stereotyping, prejudice, racism or discrimination, it is for this reason that English language teachers face the responsibility to equip learners with a solid intercultural competence, which has so far been neglected in the ELT classroom,

The researcher would like to propose the use of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities which can fulfill the aforementioned expectation. This is a combination between two approaches, naming intercultural language learning and task-based approach (TBA). TBA is an innovative language teaching method in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). According to Ellis (2003), TBA is a language teaching approach that provides students the opportunity to engage in authentic target language use through tasks. Tasks as a main component of TBA provide the context and focus on learning. It also fosters the use of similar language with the language used outside the classroom. Students learn a language and develop skills as they work to complete tasks which motivate them to stretch their available language sources (Ellis, 2003). According to Nunan (2006), TBA itself is an approach that focuses on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language. The second approach is the intercultural language learning and teaching focuses on interacting, exploring, and experiencing languages and cultures to improve learners' competencies to communicate effectively in intercultural situations (Liddicoat et al, 2003). Therefore, the integration of

intercultural content to task-based approach includes a wide range of tasks aiming at promoting both learners' communicative and intercultural competences by triggering the use of the four skills (i.e. speaking, listening, writing and reading) as well as fostering intercultural understanding. This innovation also provides learners with opportunities to explore both language use and intercultural knowledge through activities designed to engage learners in authentic and purposeful tasks." Additionally, this integrated practice motivates students to use language and helps them to learn about cultural diversity.

Objectives

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the practicality of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities included lesson plan covering the four teaching steps (preparing for the task, making connection, implementing task , reflecting), contents, materials, and activities. The results of this study will be used for the revision and improvement of the innovation. More specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

1). What are the teacher's beliefs about the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities?

2) What are the teacher's experiences in implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities?

3) What are the students' views toward learning through the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities?

Methodology

1. Participants

The participants consist of 35 undergraduate students who enrolled in the General English II course, in the second semester of the academic year 2018 at Kalasin university. The students were selected by purposive sampling. They are non-English major. Their ages ranged from 19 to 20. They are all native Thai speakers of both genders and mixed abilities. They have a homogenous background and they have never been abroad. They have studied English as a foreign language for fourteen years on average. The group comprises of males and females. They possess different levels of English proficiency, but the majority of them are presumed that they were at the intermediate level of English proficiency as they all had passed English Foundation and General English I.

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2. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. Descriptive study is designed to describe a picture of situations, characteristics of groups and phenomena as it naturally happens (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993; Ary et al., 2002). The instruments used to collect data were teacher's reflective journal, student's learning logs, and focus group interviews. The content analysis was utilized to analyze the data since it is inductive, and the investigation of the data might "lead to themes or theoretical criteria that are grounded in the data" (Lincohn and Guba, 1985).

3. Instruments

3.1 Reflective journal

Reflective journals were used to collect data from the perspective of the teachers. The journals were written for every class regarding the teacher's performance, process of teaching, student behaviors and performance in the classroom. It serves as a beneficial resource for recollections and reflection during and after teaching intervention

3.2 Learning logs

Learning logs were used to examine students' views toward learning through the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. In this study, students were asked to write learning logs after each lesson. Students have to describe their experiences in performing culture-related activities and to express their thoughts and attitudes about those activities. They were allowed to express their attitudes and feelings in Thai so that they can express their thoughts fully and in detail without being limited by linguistic abilities (Bauer et al., 2006). The learning logs were reviewed by the researcher after each lesson.

3.3 Focus group interview

In this study, focus group interviews were used to examine students' views toward learning through the integration of the intercultural contents to task-based activities. The focus group interview is used in this study to provide rich and deep data (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007). The students were thus encouraged to feel comfortable and open to express their opinions. The subjects were randomly selected for the interviews. They were asked to express their opinions, attitudes and perceptions of learning by the integration of the intercultural contents to task-based activities. The interviews were conducted in Thai so that students would not have difficulty understanding and answering the questions. The interview questions were validated by the experts. In addition, the interview was recorded to ensure that all the information will be gathered and used for the future reference of data analysis. The

interview took 7-10 minutes with 10-15 questions for each group. Then the data were then translated into Thai by the researcher.

Findings

This section discusses the findings obtained from the teacher's reflective journals, students' learning log and focus group interview. The results of this study are presented in three parts. They are teacher's beliefs, teacher's experience, and students' views.

Teacher's Beliefs

Teachers' beliefs can play an important role in their decision-making regarding the type of materials, activities and instruction they will use in their lessons. According to the incidence of the responses from the teacher's reflective journal, the finding of the teachers' beliefs, therefore, seem to be consistent with the principles of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. The teacher's belief is discussed further below.

1) The Integration of Intercultural Contents to Task-based Activities is compatible with a learner-centered educational philosophy

The teachers believe that the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities classroom should be learner-centred. The teacher also believes that teacher should provide meaningful collaborative tasks in the classroom and act as the facilitator of activities in the classroom. Learners should be involved in group work and paired work. Moreover, the topics and cultures for the tasks are selected based on students' preferences. Students also form their own group and responsibilities.

2) The Integration of Intercultural Contents to Task-based Activities enables learners to learn through communication and engagement

The teacher believes that language acquisition and intercultural competence can be gained through communication (Long, 1983; Ellis, 2003). To clarify, while students work on tasks and attempt to communicate, students need to negotiate meaning with their interlocutors to attain comprehension. At this point, they are uncovered to comprehensible input and have opportunities to exchange linguistic modifications for clarification. As a result, second language acquisition occurs because the interactive modifications of conversation make the subsequent interaction more understandable, becoming comprehensible input (Shehadeh, 2005). Hence tasks should be designed to encourage students' communication and cooperation by asking them to work in pairs and in groups.

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3) The Integration of Intercultural Contents to Task-based Activities focuses on meanings rather than linguistic forms

In the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities, the instructed language learning primarily involve naturalistic language use, based on activities concerned with meaning rather than language. As such, students may communicate with each other using their existing knowledge to do the task without being interrupted to promote fluency.

It can be concluded the teacher believes that integration of intercultural content to task-based approach 1) is a learner-centered 2) promote communication as well as collaborative learning, and 3) focus on meaning rather than linguistic forms. The teacher have to take these aspects into consideration when the teacher plan instruction; choose the teaching strategy, the media, the material and the type of resources; interact and communicate with their students in the class; manage classroom; and react to whatever possible conditions in the classroom.

Teacher's Experience

This section discusses the teacher's experiences in designing and implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. Based on a content analysis of teacher reflective journal, the findings are depicted in the following sections.

1) Designing the Lesson Plan of the Integration of the Intercultural Contents to Task-based activities

According to Corbett (2005) Skehan (2003) and Ellis & Shintani (2013), key considerations in designing and implementing the lesson plan of task-based activities are: 1) to set the pedagogical goal, 2) to establish the content, 3) to select the tasks types, 4) to design the materials that are most suitable for displaying the intercultural contents, and 5) to sequence these in the most coherent way.

First, the teacher considers the main objective of the lesson, which builds both linguistic and intercultural competence (Corbett, 2003; Scarino & Liddicoat, 2009). Second, after the purposes of the lesson have been determined, the teacher decided on topic and content selection. Topic contents include general intercultural (i.e. geography, history, politics, etc.) and sociocultural aspects such as identity, social norms, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs (Sercu, 1995; Paricio, 2005). The cultural contents need to be emphasized by including information from more than one country (Sercu, 1995). Third, the attention is drawn on the selection of task types. Tasks are the core activities of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. It is crucial to design proper tasks. The teacher also took students' language level into consideration so that they can actively engage in the discussion of cultural

issues in the units that require language skill, and knowledge of their own culture and target culture (Byram et al., 2002; Mezger-Wendlandt, 2013a; Mezger-Wendlandt, 2013b). Most of the learning tasks for this innovation are conducted in pair work or group work in order to construct their knowledge by collaborating and communicating with each other. Common activities for this innovation are listing, simulation, discussions, oral presentations and problem-solving task. Fourth, the learning materials for the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities are designed with the ultimate aim of educating students to be intercultural speakers. The materials are compiled from commercial texts, authentic materials and created by the researcher. In addition, the learning materials of cultural learning consist of native and non-native speakers of English and students' own culture. Moreover, PowerPoint presentations, short audio-visual clips of conversations, authentic reading passages are designed to provide intercultural knowledge, motivate students to learn and engage them in discussion. Moreover, the learning materials are designed in terms of the relevance to learners' age, interests, and needs. Lastly, learning procedure of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities has a strong aim to scaffold learners through performing a series of activities as a step to achieve the goals of the tasks and assist them to acquire the target language. However, there is no single framework which is suitable to develop communication ability and intercultural awareness. Hence, the present study synthesises the four frameworks (Willis, 1996; Skehan 1996; Nunan, 2004; Ellis, 2004) with some principles of intercultural language learning which leads to a well-organised framework for IcTBA model. The proposed framework covers four stages: preparing for task, making connection, implementing task, and reflecting. The four stages of IcTBA model are described as follows:

Stage 1: Preparation for task aims at builds understanding of the language topic and intercultural knowledge by activating students' background knowledge and/or personal responses in an attempt to prepare the learners for the main task.

Stage 2: Making connection stage aims at providing learners with language knowledge and intercultural knowledge by exposing learners to a wide range of authentic texts and sources (oral, written, and visual) about language and different cultures.

Stage 3: Implementing task stage aims at enabling students to apply social interactions from inside and outside the classroom through intercultural tasks such as discussion, brainstorming, problem-solving, and role play.

Stage 4: Reflecting stage aims at enabling the student to reflect and monitor their intercultural awareness and language work.

Based on teacher's reflective journal, the teacher stated that the teacher should be well-prepared in designing the lesson plans, including the materials, contents, teaching methodology, and media based on the students' characters in the classroom. It is shown in the reflective journal that

"I have to be well-prepared; especially selecting appropriate content to provide intercultural knowledge. For the teaching stages, it was designed to be easy to follow, practical, and well-organized to assist students to develop communication ability and intercultural awareness. I also selected activities and materials to engage and motivate students to learn. It was important to prepare for the lesson plans to implement in the class because the reality is somehow different from the theory itself.

2) Implementing lesson plans of the Integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities into EFL classroom.

In this study, the two lesson plans including custom worldwide and let's celebrate of the unit "Taste" were implemented. Due to the scope of the tasks, the whole lesson has been projected to fit 2 different sessions of 180 minutes each. The lesson requires students 1) to ask and answer about their typical food and eating manners. 2) to discuss culture shock from the differences in typical foods and eating from different cultures, 3). to notice the differences of typical food and eating manners around the world and 4) to reflect on typical foods and eating manners of home and other culture.

According to the teacher's reflective journal, findings in the implementation of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities into EFL classroom were found in different stages as follows:

Stage 1: Prepare to task

Teacher began the class with four activities. They are 1) brainstorming food and drink words they've known from the video, 2) guidelines on making arrangements, 3) sentence completion and 4) sharing their typical foods and preferences. For the first activity, most students actively provided vocabularies about foods, drinks, and kitchen equipment. They concentrate on watching the video–clip in the second activities but it seemed difficult for them to complete the sentences from what they heard from the video clip. The teacher expected to display the video-clip twice but students could not finish the activity hence the video-clip was displayed three times. Once students have finished completing the sentence, they were afforded some time in activity 4 to discuss and compare in groups of 4 the responses they have provided to questions such as 'What is the typical breakfast in your country?' and 'What do you like eating for breakfast?' This activity allowed students to

engage in conversation while realizing that most classmates bear different preferences and routines to that of theirs. This activity can increase awareness of the diversity within learners' own culture as well as their individual concepts of typical foods and eating manner (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993). The allowance of 30 minutes for this stage was inadequate. The teacher extended the time to 45 minutes.

Stage 2: Making Connection

There are reading comprehension task and listening task in this stage, Teacher motivated students' attentions by allowing them to look at the photos which related to the reading text and discuss the questions such as "Have you tried any of these dishes? or 'Do you prefer your own country's food or other kinds of food?'

Students had the chance to compare their answer with their classmates. This activity does not require the provision of right answers, but rather, they are intended to set the appropriate arena for the exchange of information. Most of the students hesitated to share their answers. The teacher had to encourage them to speak out. Secondly, Teacher exposed them to the reading texts "Breakfast around the World" and "Eating manners around the world". These texts presented an example of typical foods and eating etiquette from many cultures such as Japan, Brazil, France, India, and England. The teacher arranged them to read in a group of four. The teacher also went around the class helping them with any problems of vocabulary they might have. It was found that the time allowance of 40 minutes to finish reading the text was inadequate. After finishing reading the text, students did the tasks about answering the reading comprehension questions. Then, the teacher encourages learners to draw on their knowledge of their own culture and make comparisons between other cultures and their own, and talk about what they notice. The teacher assists learners in recalling their own culture and linking it to their new knowledge through a discussion. Students could notice the differences between their own culture and other culture from the reading text but most students struggled to speak full sentences. They usually speak in few words. Before the end of the class, the teacher also assigned students to write a short text to post on the blog spot about typical foods and eating etiquette in Thailand by using the internet for more information and the reading text as an example

It was calculated that the making connection phase took around 150 minutes of the first session. Hence, session two was devoted to one more listening comprehension task in making connection stage, implementing task stage, and reflecting stage.

Stage 2: Making Connection (session 2)

Before initiating in session two, teacher started by refreshing students' memory on what has been done in the previous session. Most students could remember what they have learned. Then, the teacher briefly introduced what the following task is about. In groups, students look at the photo and discuss the questions. Then the teacher asks students to think about the important celebration in their country and write the names of foods and drinks people usually have and activities people usually do. Teacher elicited the answers from the whole class. The teacher played the recording and students number the words in the order they hear them. Let them check with a partner and then elicit the answers from the class. After that teacher got various students to read out the questions and check everybody understands them. The teacher played the recording again and students take notes. The teacher let them compare with a partner before checking the answers with the whole class. To make sure that students comprehend the listening, the conclusion made by the teacher-researcher helped to wrap up listening comprehension, factual knowledge about different cultures,

Stage 3: Implementing task

In groups, students engaged in problem-solving activities as a way to mediate between cultures. In this lesson plan, students discuss dilemmas about a Hindu man who did not drink alcohol or eat meat but he was treated with beer and steak by the host at the party. Teacher gives student 20 minutes to discuss and plan their presentation. The teacher went around the class helping them with any problems of vocabulary they might have. It found that students usually use their first language to discuss. The teacher encouraged them to use the target language as much as possible. Moreover, almost all group asked the teacher to proof their scripts before their presentation. Students showed that they were enthusiastic to present their solutions to the class. However, they were all very nervous to present it in front of the classroom. In addition, some audience didn't concentrate on the presentation because they were preparing for their own presentation.

Stage 4: Reflecting stage

In the last stage, the teacher allowed students some time to not only reflect on intercultural learning but also to carry out language work which emphasizes on those specific formal aspects that were found problematic during doing tasks (Willis, 1996; Mezger-Wendlandt, 2013b). The teacher explained some mistakes found to the class and let them practice language use. After that, the teacher encouraged the students to explore the causes

of differences the home and foreign cultures. Finally, the teacher summarized why people eat and act differently. The teacher also mentioned that student should create positive perspectives towards the differences and they should be aware of prejudices and risks of generalization.

From the teacher's experience in designing and implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. It can be concluded that the most successful part of the lesson was engaging students

However, the teacher notices the difficulty in time constraint. The teacher stated that the time allocation was considered less because there are many tasks to complete and some activities are too difficult for students. Thus, this challenge should be taken into account for the teacher in managing tasks with a better proportion of time. Another problem dealt with students' proficient level. According to the teachers' reflective journals, it revealed that high ability students can finish the task fast and correct. On the other hand, most students lack language proficiency such as limited vocabularies, grammar, and pronunciation.

Students' Views

The data gathered from the students' learning logs and focus group interviews were reviewed to explore their views toward the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson. The students' views were analyzed and reported in three aspects; what they had learned, the benefits, the difficulties, and the suggestions to improve the lessons.

In term of what they had learned through the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson, they reported that they had learned about typical foods and eating manners around the world, vocabularies, and how to make arrangement. They added that what they had learned was very useful to overcome both linguistic and cultural barriers they may encounter in interaction with people from other cultures.

In terms of the benefits, students reported that the lesson evokes students' interest in learning, increase students' interaction, and raise students' intercultural awareness. The first benefit found in this study was the raising of students' motivation in learning. Many comments from learning logs showed that students liked the activities that encouraged them to interact with friends. In addition, the students mentioned that the teacher employed several types of materials, including a video clip, audio clip, worksheets, and PowerPoint presentation. These materials were interesting, authentic, up-to-date, and attractive. These made the lessons more interesting and motivating to learn. The second benefit found from

implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson is that the lesson highlighted the increase of student interaction when working together as a group. In the lesson, the interaction between students and their friends occurred all the time that the students did the tasks both in pairs and in groups in order to share their experiences and ideas to solve the problem and brainstorm the ideas to complete the tasks. Many comments from learning logs and focus group interviews revealed that most students liked group work and felt that it was fun to work with friends. They also learned from their friends in the group. They believed that they could complete the task by practicing and doing together. During the learning process, most of the students felt that they learned and received support from their peers. The low achievers appeared to gain benefits from their peers in asking questions from them when encountering problems and obstacles. The medium achievers thought that they could exchange ideas and build more knowledge from them. The higher achievers felt that they could compare and share information with their friends. The third benefit found in implementing the lesson is that it could raise students' intercultural awareness. Many comments from learning logs reported that students claimed that after learning through the lesson they do not easily judge other cultures are worse than their own cultures. They also believed that they more appreciate the diversity and differences in their environment. They realize that people act differently according to where they live and what they believe. They do not judge a problem found as a bad or good, rather they view it from the other people's view, so they can act and speak properly. Therefore, it indicates that the students have critically seen a thing from a different point of view. It is, of course, in line with the principle of intercultural language learning (Liddicoat et al, 2003).

Regarding their difficulties in learning through the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson, the students revealed that they had the problems with the language use and the time allocation. The first problem found was the language use. Most of the students stated that they had language and vocabulary limitations when doing the tasks such as in discussing and in reporting the task outcomes since the instruction required students to use the target language in discussing and reporting the completed tasks in oral presentations in English. The time constraint was another problem found in this study because there was not enough time for some students to complete the plenty of tasks provided in the class. For example, students noted that:

"I need more time to do the task sheets because I have to brainstormand make a decision with my friend."

"there were many words that I didn't know in the reading text hence I take a long time searching the meaning of words. As a result, I couldn't finish in time.

In relation to the above problems, they proposed three suggestions for the improvement of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lessons. Firstly, they suggested that the teacher should provide more time to do each task because time allotment to complete activities was inadequate for the students. Secondly, Students suggested adjusting the font size in reading text because the font size is too small. It was difficult for them to read the text. Lastly, students recommended that the teacher should give clear instruction because some instructions for comprehension tasks were not clear to the students, so they could not provide correct answers.

Discussion

This study applied the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities into language classroom to explore the teacher's beliefs and experiences and students' views of the innovation in EFL setting. This section will briefly summarize how this study addresses each of the research questions.

(1) What are the teacher's beliefs about the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities?

The teacher believed that the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities brought many positive outcomes to students' learning by engaging and motivating them in doing tasks, providing them opportunities to use the target language and practicing the language. This is also in line with the previous study of Lin & Wu (2012) indicating that teachers had positive attitudes towards task-based activities as they considered this method could increase learners' motivation and communicative abilities. Learners are motivated by the communicative tasks and relaxed atmosphere to develop their language use. This is similar to what found in the study of Meng & Sheng (2010). They found that EFL teachers perceived communicative activities as a tool to motivate students to learn language since tasks provide learners the opportunity to speak and interact in different situations.

(2) What are the teacher's experiences in implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities? Teacher experience in designing the lesson plans of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities and implementing the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson in EFL classroom. From these experiences, the teacher also encountered two main challenges. They are the availability of time and mixed ability students. This is similar to what found in the study of

Bunmak (2015).The previous study found that the teaching time can cause the crucial problem in implementing task-based activities. The students are not given enough time to complete tasks. Hui (2004) also supports that task-based approach requires teachers to give more time to students to share their ideas with classmates or with classes. Beside the availability of time, students with low proficiency or mixed ability were the obstacle in the implementation of the task-based approach (Bunmak, 2015).

(3) How do students' view the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities? Based on students' feedback, they enjoyed, felt engaged and motivated by the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities. In addition, students expressed that the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson enhanced their understanding of intercultural culture and improved their language skills by providing them opportunities to practice the language. The results were in line with the research by Tran, T., & Seepho, S. (2015). According to the study, it revealed that EFL learners had positive perceptions of the integration of intercultural content into English language classes. This is also similar to the study of Marwa, M. (2018) which investigated how the Indonesian EFL students view and undertake the culture learning in their classrooms. The findings reveal that the students showed positive attitudes in learning cultures. They also believed that culture contents help them become more tolerant and open-minded towards other peoples and cultures. However, students in this reported that tasks in the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities lesson were difficult especially using the target language to do discussion task. Moreover, time allowance to complete task was inadequate for students.

Finally, it can be concluded that the result of the study confirmed the possibility of teaching English which uses the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities in assisting Thai undergrad students to develop communication ability and intercultural awareness. The integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities changed the traditional way of teaching and learning that focuses more on memorizing vocabulary and grammatical rules, reading texts by translation, and doing various exercises with the use of the first language to a way that promotes language learning by encouraging language use. The integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities also shed light on how English language learners and the teacher perceive the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities.

Suggestions for Further Study

The results and interpretation of this study lead to recommendations for further studies, which are as follows.

1. The teacher should take into consideration students' language competence to best meet their needs and at the same time provide them space to learn and practice the target language. Success of the integration of the intercultural contents to task-based activities and students' perceptions of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities are closely related to students' language proficiency as indicated by the findings of the current study.

2. This study was conducted with non- major English undergrad students at Kalasin University. It is advisable that the study should be conducted with other students at other institutions who possess the same background knowledge to see if the use of the integration of intercultural contents to task-based activities raises students' motivation in learning English.

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