Check for
updates

Unpacking Vietnamese L2 Students' Motivation for and Engagement in Intercultural Language Learning

Thao Quoc Tran[1] · Dung M. T. Nguyen[2]

Abstract

Intercultural language learning (ICLL) has become an important concept that drives English learners' attention to the understanding and application of cultural elements in their English learning process; however, the learning motivation for and engagement in the proliferation of culture in English language teaching vary from one context to another. This study aimed to unpack L2 students' motivation for and engagement in ICLL, and the correlation between the two research variables. A group of 198 L2 students, who were learning at a high school in Vietnam, were recruited based on a convenience sampling technique. A closed-ended questionnaire was employed for data collection. The sociolinguistic perspective was adopted for data analysis using the SPSS software. The findings unraveled that Vietnamese L2 students had a high level of motivation for ICLL, and they tended to get engaged in ICLL actively; however, their level of emotional engagement in ICLL seemed higher than their behavioral and cognitive engagement in ICLL. Additionally, a positive correlation between Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for and engagement in ICLL was significantly found. This study recommends pedagogical implications in an attempt to enhance the quality of intercultural language teaching and learning in the research context and other similar ones.

Keywords Engagement · Intercultural language learning · L2 · Motivation · Sociolinguistic perspective

Introduction

Scholars (e.g., Moeller and Nugent, 2014; Tran and Dang, 2014; Tran and Pham, 2018) have asserted that language and culture have an intertwined relationship, which fosters the need for embedding culture teaching into language education. Moreover, language and culture

---

✉ Thao Quoc Tran
tq.thao@hutech.edu.vn

[1] HUTECH University, 475A Dien Bien Phu Street, Ward 25, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City 72308, Vietnam

[2] Ho Thi Ky High School, 48 Ly Bon Street, Ward 2, Ca Mau, Vietnam

play a key role in students' language acquisition, in which learners gain mutual benefits from understanding cultural points through language and using language to shape cultural beliefs (Liddicoat et al., 2003). In the context of globalization, English has become a lingua franca and a world language (Tran et al., 2022; Tran & Tran, 2017), so ESL/EFL learners are supposed to learn different types of cultures from native and non-native English speaking countries in order to be good at intercultural competence (i.e., the ability to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds effectively and appropriately) (e.g., Tran and Duong, 2018; Tran and Seepho, 2016, 2017; Tran and Vong, 2021). Intercultural competence should deal with one's capacity of adapting to new cultural contexts in which he or she refers to the original culture and seeks optimal solutions to deal with the current cultural problems (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012). Hence, intercultural competence has become one of the ultimate goals in second/foreign language education, but in local contexts, intercultural language teaching needs mindful considerations (e.g., Chau and Truong, 2019; Tran and Duong, 2018; Tran and Vong, 2021). Nevertheless, the successful integration of intercultural language learning (ICLL) may need a variety of elements, not only from the teaching (teachers, curriculum, and materials) (Chau & Truong, 2019) but also from the learners themselves (House, 2008). Accordingly, ESL/EFL teachers and learners need to change their traditional roles in which learners have become the centre of the classroom to develop their own "attitudes, skills, and critical awareness" (Aguilar, 2007). Thus, in pursuit of the successful implementation of intercultural language teaching and learning, EFL teachers need to have learner-centered classroom activities. In such activities, it is important to consider learners' learning motivation and engagement as these two variables are related to each other, contributing to the learners' active participation in a course and their academic performance (Martin et al., 2018).

Intercultural language teaching and learning in Vietnam has received much more attention, notwithstanding its current practical issues (Ho, 2011; Dao & Do, 2019; Tran & Vong, 2021). On one hand, Ho (2011) states that the use of intercultural language teaching and learning can be beneficial for the Vietnamese educational context. On the other hand, Dao and Do (2019) add that both university students and teachers could understand the importance of ICLL and appreciate the current ELT materials. The intercultural lessons in ELT materials seem to be unable to serve the need of almost all students. Likewise, recently Nguyen et al. (2021) has asserted that the lack of multicultural perspectives in current ELT materials in Vietnam was transparent. While the current textbooks primarily focus on Anglophone English users, the role of Englishes seems to be inadequate. Moreover, as stated by Tran and Tran (2018), the current English textbooks for high school students in Vietnam now have an update of cultural issues and elements in lessons, but it seems inadequate and still older than those in the present time. To put it simply, ELT materials in Vietnam appear to facilitate intercultural language teaching and learning, but the full potential of these materials needs studying for a long time, with more mindful considerations from stakeholders (e.g., teachers, students, textbook designers, and so on).

Within the research context, new English textbooks have been recently introduced to both teachers and students. The aims of such new English textbooks are to improve students' English language skills and foster their intercultural competence. It is observed that, nonetheless, the practice of intercultural language teaching and learning seems to be inadequate. One of the leading reasons is the need for formal English exams at the end of every semester. English teaching and learning still pay much attention to the mastery of grammatical

structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These could support the students to accomplish final tests and graduation exams, yet communicative competence in English, and especially intercultural competence, appears unfocused. With all the aforementioned rationale, this study sets to examine L2 students' learning motivation for and engagement in ICLL in the context of a high school in one of the rural provinces in Vietnam. It aims to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent are Vietnamese L2 students motivated for ICLL?
2. To what extent do Vietnamese L2 students get engaged in ICLL?
3. What is the relationship between Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for and engagement in ICLL?

With the above-mentioned purposes, this study is theoretically hoped to add further understanding to the body of literature in terms of ICLL. Practically, it is hoped that this study will provide an in-depth understanding of Vietnamese L2 learners' motivation for and engagement in ICLL and the correlation between Vietnamese L2 learners' motivation and engagement in ICLL, which can help stakeholders (i.e., teachers, students, and administrators) to adjust the intercultural language teaching and learning activities as well as curriculum in an attempt to enhance the quality of intercultural language teaching and learning.

Literature Review

The term ICLL refers to the development of learners' understanding of "their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture" (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 46). This core definition clarifies that ICLL could be understood at two levels: global and individual. Globally, in the process of intercultural communication to develop intercultural competence, learners initially may need to gain the knowledge that enables them to understand their home culture values and the other ones, and then seek the mutual relationship between these two for a better measure to neutralize. Individually, intercultural learners need to communicate with people from exotic cultures in an effective way by means of considering various perspectives in such communication. To be specific, to become effective intercultural language users, students may need to understand their own cultural identity and intercultural space between the two cultures so that they can engage well in this kind of interaction. Furthermore, Byram (2000) postulates that the additional task of any foreign language teacher should be making the students beware their culturally-shaped perspectives. In the same vein, Moeller and Nugent (2014) further confirm that teaching language guides learners to use language properly by means of not only linguistic devices (grammar, vocabulary, etc.) but also cultural points. Thus, EFL teachers can employ any cultural artifacts in their language class to teach language and culture simultaneously (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Basically, the employment of cultural points in ICLL lessons should derive from certain principles, as theorized by Deardoff (2006), namely (1) the balanced distribution of linguistic and cultural lessons, (2) the exchange of explicit and implicit cultural lessons, (3) the use of cultural lessons for language development, (4) the appropriateness of various activities for different types of learners, and (5) the ignorance of linguistically cultural knowledge like native speakers.

It is noticed that there are numerous different definitions of motivation in learning, which demonstrates how difficult it is to describe the motivation and its significance in the learning process (Filgona et al., 2020). According to Tohidi and Jabbari (2012), motivation is "powering people to achieve high levels of performance and overcoming barriers in order to change" (p. 820). Redondo and Martin (2015) consider motivation as the factor which drives students to dedicate their time freely to a particular activity. Likewise, Gopalan et al. (2017) believe that motivation is the reason that pushes students to deal with different kinds of difficult situations. Furthermore, Svinicki and Vogler (2012) argue motivation is a form of interaction between the learner and the environment which is characterized by goal-directed behavior selection, initiation, increase, or persistence. In terms of the constructs of motivation, Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017) admit that motivation is considered as "a complex construct" due to several external and internal factors, forming two popular types: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation comes from the outside world, while intrinsic motivation exists inside the students' cognitive and psychological system (Dörnyei, 1994). As stated in Dörnyei (1994), extrinsic motivation derives from learners' desire to gain external achievements (from the outside world) such as higher marks, more qualifications, and so on. Intrinsic motivation stems from the internal world or psychological achievements. To illustrate, the joy of speaking English fluently can be an intrinsic motivation. Sharing the same view, Hennessey et al. (2015) reaffirm that "extrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something in order to attain some external goal or meet some externally imposed constraint" while "intrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something for its own sake, for the sheer enjoyment of the task itself" (p.1). Therefore, the motivation for ICLL is understood as learners are motivated to learn ICLL. Intrinsically motivated, they enjoy ICLL and believe that ICLL is beneficial for their English learning. Extrinsically motivated, they learn culture for different purposes such as communicating with foreigners well, using English well, and overcoming cultural problems in multicultural interactions.

Learning engagement is another complex construct. Shneiderman (1998) defines it as the meaningful, active participation of students in lessons through social interactions with peers and while completing study tasks. Robinson and Hullinger (2008) state that learning engagement is a determinant of "students' satisfaction" and "course completion". Learning engagement comprises three popular elements, namely (1) behavioral engagement, (2) emotional engagement, and (3) cognitive engagement (Buelow et al., 2018). Accordingly, behavioral engagement concerns students' physical participation in classrooms, namely submitting assignments, presenting topics, and so on. Cognitive engagement deals with how learners feel about the course or lesson. Such feelings may be expressed through their active or inactive participation. The last component, cognitive engagement regards the extent to which learners are ready to join study tasks. Accordingly, learning engagement in ICLL means learners get actively involved in learning culture in English learning. Behaviorally, they try to learn culture as they want to gain more cultural knowledge and improve their English proficiency. Emotionally, they are interested in getting engaged in ICLL. Cognitively, they are willing to get engaged in learning activities to enhance their cultural knowledge.

Basically, learning motivation can be a predictor of students' learning engagement in classrooms (Dörnyei, 2003; Law et al., 2019). When students are highly motivated, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, they may engage more in classroom activities. The learning motivation and engagement in ICLL can be well matched (e.g., Salem, 2012; Ho, 2011). The ICLL model can somehow boost learning motivation and engagement in the lessons. Students

with a high level of motivation to study English tend to attribute the significance of English learning to intercultural integration. Then, they may engage more in intercultural lessons they are interested (Salem, 2012).

Past research on different aspects of students' learning motivation for and engagement in ICLL has been conducted. Internationally, Salem (2012) investigated the effectiveness of intercultural language teaching on Lebanese EFL learners' motivation and engagement, their attitudes towards intercultural competence and the improvement in language proficiency, and the stakeholders' (administrators', teachers', and students') perception of pros and cons of an intercultural language program. In this qualitative action research, the researcher used three qualitative data tools, namely teachers' diary, focus group discussion, and focused semi-structured interview, for data collection. This study revealed the intercultural language teaching and learning could help boost EFL learners' motivation and engagement in classrooms, raise their awareness of intercultural competence, and help enhance EFL learners' language proficiency. In the context of the UK, Kormos et al. (2014) investigated international students' learning motivation and contact experiences, using the questionnaire and interview for data collection. The researchers concluded that the majority of the students were motivated to learn English because of the international status of the language. The students also expressed a high level of self-efficacy, demonstrating that they believed they could achieve a higher level of language proficiency. However, instead of considering the language to be important for socio-cultural contacts, most students agreed that they learned English just due to their needs for exams and higher marks. Harvey (2017) did a study involving six international students in the UK to explore students' language learning motivation and intercultural competence. The participants were invited to join four interviews within a long period of 16 months. The students were asked to narrate their language learning journey in which the impact of ideological awareness, or intercultural competence, had been reflected. The findings revealed that language learners may be related to different ideologies. However, when they studied the same language, they may need to develop their own instrumental language learning motivation and maintain the awareness of some socio-cultural dimensions. In the local context, Truong and Tran (2014) conducted a study to use film as a way to boost EFL learners' motivation and engagement in intercultural language lessons. The study reported results from many sources of data: student interviews, reflective journals, and video-recorded observations. Findings indicated that this type of instructional technique could promote students' intercultural competence because it helped immerse students into the new culture and then learners could develop their cultural knowledge. Tran and Tran (2018) examined Vietnamese high school students' attitudes towards the use of culture in language teaching and learning. A total of 115 high school students responded to a questionnaire, 15 of whom joined the follow-up interviews. Results indicated that students had positive attitudes towards culture in language teaching and learning, and they strongly agreed with the viewpoint that studying culture was indispensable in the process of learning English. Quite similarly, Dao and Do (2019) analyzed Vietnamese university students' perceptions of ICLL. A group of 458 students at the College of Foreign Languages, National University in Hanoi took part in the questionnaire survey. The results demonstrated that the students paid attention to the use of intercultural language lessons. In brief, it is noticed that prior studies have examined aspects of learners' learning motivation for and engagement in ICLL, but they did not explore both motivation for and engagement in ICLL and their correlation. To that void, this study attempted to unpack L2 learners' motivation for and

engagement in ICLL and the correlation between the two researched variables at a Vietnamese high school.

Methodology

Research Setting and Participants

This study which employed the quantitative research design adopted the post-positivism worldview for data collection (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018) in order to unpack L2 students' motivation for and engagement in ICLL and the correlation between the two mentioned variables. It was conducted at a high school in a rural province, Vietnam, in which students had to learn English as a compulsory subject. Students had to take three English classes weekly using the new English textbooks designed by Vietnam's Ministry and Education and Training. Each new English textbook consists of ten units which feature different language knowledge (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation), language skills (i.e., reading, listening, speaking, writing), and cultural content (i.e., cultural information about both native and non-native English speaking countries such as family life in Singapore and in Vietnam; health practices in Indonesia and in Vietnam; folk music of Indonesia and Vietnam; local and global activities for community development; invention in Asian countries; gender equality in the United Kingdom; Gift-giving in the UK and the ideas of success in the USA and in Vietnam; new ways to learn in the USA; the World Wide Fund for nature; problems with ecotourism in Vietnam and Africa. Regarding cultural content, students were required to do a project at the end of each unit, and they had to present their project orally in class. Additionally, teachers still designed other ICLL activities such as guessing cultural issues through pictures, quizzes, and games.

A group of 198 L2 students were recruited based on the convenience sampling technique, and they were in grade 10. They were sampled for this study as they had experience in learning English featuring PBLL and they were available. Among 198 participants, a majority (80%) of students had learned English for at least five years, while the rest (20%) of students had experienced English for less than five years. Additionally, many students (87%) had never had a chance to interact with foreigners, but some of them (13%) had ever traveled abroad.

Research Instrument

This study employed the closed-ended questionnaire for data collection. There are two main parts in the questionnaire. Part A collects general information from the respondents. Meanwhile, part B is the main content divided into two sections: Section A includes 12 items about motivation for ICLL (adapted from Dörnyei, 1994); Section B consists of 12 items about engagement in ICLL (adapted from Buelow et al., 2018). Simultaneously, the questionnaire items for motivation for ICLL and engagement in ICLL were adjusted to fit the research questions. All 24 items were designed with a five-point Likert scale (from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*). The questionnaire was first in English, it then was translated into respondents' mother tongue to assure respondents' understanding of the questionnaire and being able to answer it. The Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was 0.78 (Section A, $\alpha=0.76$; Section B, $\alpha=0.83$), which means that the questionnaire was reliable.

Steps for Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was piloted with a group of ten students who shared similar characteristics with those in the main study. After the modification of the questionnaire had been done, the official questionnaire was administered to 220 students in person. It took them roughly 20 min to finish the questionnaire. The returned copies of the questionnaire were double-checked, and 198 copies of the questionnaire were valid for data analysis.

As for data analysis, the sociolinguistic perspective was adopted to understand L2 learners' motivation for and engagement in ICLL which could be affected by different aspects of society (e.g., cultural norms, expectations, & context) (Meyerhoff, 2011). The SPSS software (version 22) was used for processing data. The interval mean score for the five-point Likert scale was as follows: 1.00–1.80: Strongly disagree; 1.81–2.60: Disagree; 2.61–3.40: Neutral; 3.41–4.20: Agree; 4.21–5.00: Strongly agree (Kan, 2009).

Results and Discussion

Results

Vietnamese L2 Students' Motivation for ICLL

The results in Table 1 reveal that the average mean score of Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for ICLL is 4.11 (SD=0.82) out of five. The mean scores of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are 4.16 (SD=0.80) and 4.05 (SD=0.84), respectively. This implies that Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for ICLL was high.

Vietnamese L2 Students' Intrinsic Motivation for ICLL

As seen in Table 2, L2 students had a high level of intrinsic motivation. They strongly believed that "interacting with people from different cultures [was] useful for [their] English learning" (item 6: M=4.43, SD=0.83) and "applying cultural knowledge to English learning [was] important" (item 4: M=4.24, SD=0.77). They enjoyed learning "how to communicate effectively with many foreigners from different countries" (item 3: M=4.19, SD=0.87) and "how to apply cultural knowledge effectively to learning English" (item 5: M=4.07, SD=0.73), and "learning about culture through English lessons" (item 1: M=4.09, SD=0.79). They also believed that they could "apply cultural knowledge well to [their] English learning" (item 2: M=3.97, SD=0.80). In brief, L2 students were intrinsically motivated to learn culture in English learning.

Table 1 Vietnamese L2 learners' motivation for ICLL	Components	N=198	
		M	SD
	Intrinsic motivation	4.16	0.80
	Extrinsic motivation	4.05	0.84
	Average	**4.11**	**0.82**

Table 2 Vietnamese L2 students' intrinsic motivation for ICLL

Statements	N=198	
	M	SD
1. I enjoy learning about culture through English lessons.	4.09	0.79
2. I believe that I can apply cultural knowledge well to my English learning.	3.97	0.80
3. I enjoy learning how to communicate effectively with many foreigners from different countries.	4.19	0.87
4. I believe that applying cultural knowledge to English learning is important.	4.24	0.77
5. I enjoy learning how to apply cultural knowledge effectively to learning English.	4.07	0.73
6. I believe that interacting with people from different cultures is useful for my English learning.	4.43	0.83

Table 3 Vietnamese L2 students' extrinsic motivation for ICLL

ICLL helps me….	N=198	
	M	SD
7. understand the English language more clearly.	4.13	0.76
8. communicate well with foreigners from different countries.	4.12	0.84
9. understand foreign cultures more clearly.	3.72	0.91
10. use English more effectively in multicultural interactions.	4.14	0.85
11. use English more appropriately in multicultural interactions.	4.08	0.88
12. overcome many cultural problems in multicultural interactions.	4.09	0.82

Vietnamese L2 Students' Extrinsic Motivation for ICLL

The results in Table 3 indicate that respondents believed that ICLL helped them use English more "effectively" (item 10: M=4.14, SD=.85) and "appropriately" (item 11: M=4.08, SD=.88) in multicultural interactions, and "overcome many cultural problems in multicultural interactions" (item 12: M=4.09, SD=.82). They also reckoned that ICLL helped them understand "the English language" (item 7: M=4.13, SD=.76) and "foreign cultures" more clearly" (item 9: M=3.72, SD=0.91), and "communicate well with foreigners from different countries" (item 8: M=4.12, SD=0.84). These findings imply that L2 students were extrinsically motivated to learn culture in English learning.

Vietnamese L2 Students' Engagement in ICLL

As indicated in Table 4, the average mean score of Vietnamese L2 students' engagement in ICLL is 3.92 (SD=0.81) out of five. Regarding the components of engagement in ICLL, the mean score of students' emotional engagement was 4.04 (SD=0.82), followed by that of students' cognitive (M=3.95, SD=0.79). and behavioral engagement (M=3.88, SD=0.75). This means that Vietnamese L2 students agreed that they got engaged in ICLL, and it seemed that they engaged in ICLL emotionally more than they did cognitively and behaviorally.

Table 4 Vietnamese L2 students' engagement in ICLL

Components	N=198	
	M	SD
Behavioral engagement	3.88	0.75
Emotional engagement	4.04	0.82
Cognitive engagement	3.92	0.81
Average	**3.95**	**0.79**

Table 5 Vietnamese L2 students' behavioral engagement in ICLL

Statements	N=198	
	M	SD
1. I try to use English to answer any question about culture in my English class.	3.75	0.76
2. I attentively listen to my English teacher's explanations about the cultural themes of the lessons.	4.18	0.65
3. I usually share my perspectives on the cultural themes of the lessons with my classmates.	3.65	0.87
4. I usually fulfill all language tasks relevant to the culture given by my teacher.	3.93	0.71

Table 6 Vietnamese L2 students' emotional engagement in ICLL

I find it interesting to….	N=198	
	M	SD
5. answer my English teacher's questions about culture.	4.05	0.82
6. listen to my English teacher's explanations about the cultural themes of the lessons.	4.21	0.73
7. share my perspectives on the cultural themes of the lessons with my classmates.	3.91	0.91
8. fulfill all language tasks relevant to the culture given by my teacher.	3.97	0.82

Vietnamese L2 Students' Behavioral Engagement in ICLL

Regarding behavioral engagement in ICLL, the results in Table 5 reveal that research participants agreed that they "attentively [listened] to [their] English teacher's explanations about the cultural themes of the lessons" (item 2: M=4.18, SD=0.65) and "[tried] to use English to answer any question about culture in [their] English class" (item 1: M=3.75, SD=0.76). Additionally, they usually "[fulfilled] all language tasks relevant to the culture given by [their] teacher" (item 4: M=3.93, SD=0.71) and "[shared their] perspectives on the cultural themes of the lessons with [their] classmates" (item 3: M=3.65, SD=0.87). In short, L2 students tended to get actively engaged in ICLL behaviorally.

Vietnamese L2 students' Emotional Engagement in ICLL

With respect to emotional engagement in ICLL (see Table 6), respondents strongly agreed that they found it "interesting to listen to [their] English teacher's explanations about the cultural themes of the lessons" (item 6: M=4.21, SD=0.73). They reckoned that they found it interesting to "answer [their] English teacher's questions about culture" (item 5: M=4.05,

Table 7 Vietnamese L2 students' cognitive engagement in ICLL

I can demonstrate my willingness to….	N = 198	
	M	SD
9. respond to any language task relevant to the culture in my class.	3.87	0.79
10. search for more information about the cultural issues embedded in English classes.	4.01	0.83
11. give feedback to classmates on their explanations for the cultural issues embedded in English classes.	3.97	0.82
12. apply cultural knowledge into English learning by joining conversation simulations in class.	3.84	0.79

Table 8 Correlation between Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for and their engagement in ICLL

Motivation	Engagement	Behavioral engagement	Emotional engagement	Cognitive engagement
Intrinsic motivation	Pearson Correlation	0.663**	0.724**	0.727**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	198	198	198
Extrinsic motivation	Pearson Correlation	0.658**	0.692**	0.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	198	198	198

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

SD = 0.82), "fulfill all language tasks relevant to the culture given by [their] teacher" (item 8: M = 3.97, SD = 0.82), and "share [their] perspectives on the cultural themes of the lessons with [their] classmates" (item 7: M = 3.91, SD = 0.91). It can be interpreted that L2 students' emotional in ICLL was high.

Vietnamese L2 Students' Cognitive Engagement in ICLL

As for cognitive engagement in ICLL in Table 7, L2 students believed that they could demonstrate their willingness to "search for more information about the cultural issues embedded in English classes" (item 10: M = 4.01, SD = 0.83), and "give feedback to classmates on their explanations for the cultural issues embedded in English classes" (item 11: M = 3.97, SD = 0.82). Moreover, they were also willing to get engaged cognitively in ICLL by "[responding] to any language task relevant to the culture in [their] class" (item 9: M = 3.87, SD = 0.79) and "[applying] cultural knowledge into English learning by joining conversation simulations in class" (item 12: M = 3.84, SD = 0.79). Thus, it can be concluded that L2 students had a high level of cognitive engagement in ICLL.

Correlation Between Vietnamese L2 Students' Motivation for and Their Engagement in ICLL

The results in Table 8 present that there are positive correlations between Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for ICLL and their engagement in ICLL. Specifically, high school students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were positively correlated with their behav-

ioral ($r=.663$ and $r=.658$; p=000), emotional ($r=.724$ and $r=.692$; p=000), and cognitive engagement ($r=.727$ and $r=.707$; p=000). Such findings can be understood that the higher Vietnamese L2 students' levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for ICLL were, the more they got engaged in ICLL behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively.

Discussion

This study endeavored to explore the Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for and engagement in ICLL, and the correlation between the two aforementioned variables, and it has reached some remarkable findings. Firstly, the finding revealed that Vietnamese L2 students had a high level of motivation for ICLL. They were intrinsically motivated by ICLL because of their own personal interest and their desire for communication with foreigners. They were interested in learning English and exploring cultural themes through English lessons. ICLL helped them gain many kinds of knowledge, including both general and cultural knowledge. Understanding and applying cultural lessons to English learning were also helpful as L2 students could deal with communication with foreigners more effectively, and later a higher level of English proficiency. Besides their intrinsic motivation, they were also extrinsically interested in achieving practical results in ICLL. Several benefits could help explicate these extrinsic achievements, namely the actual English communicative competence, the enhanced cultural and English knowledge, and further understanding of foreign cultures. The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation could be explained that most of the respondents may be proponents of cultural learning through English lessons. Another possible explanation for this was the students' experience in English language learning (80% of students had learned English for at least five years). They might develop further insights into English learning, leading to their appreciation of cultural knowledge in the language acquisition. Also, as proved by Ho (2011), the actual demands of Vietnamese students for English learning – real-life communications and higher English proficiency levels, could predetermine their higher level of motivation for ICLL. In terms of the students' personal interest in learning and applying cultural themes, the current study was backed up by Dao and Do's (2019) study. Both studies could imply that Vietnamese L2 students have their own motivation for cultural themes in English lessons. Halimi et al. (2020) concluded that EFL learners had their own desire to apply cultural knowledge to real communication and for their future career options. These findings could help explain the results of the current research. The present research might be in favor of Harvey (2017) and Ho (2011) because all results implied the connection between ICLL and learning motivation. When EFL learners could be exposed to different cultural aspects in their English learning pathways, they could develop different types of knowledge and effectively interact with the outside world. Also, like Kormos et al. (2014), the current research also presented the global impact of English in the world. The students might maintain their own motivation for ICLL because of the necessity and widespread of this language in life. Furthermore, the students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for ICLL in the present study, as agreeing upon the need for higher English proficiency levels, could be in alignment with those in Nguyen's (2013) study. Both works showed that the cultural themes in English language lessons could be a useful source for the students to accomplish their language knowledge and skills, leading to a higher proficiency level. Finally, as agreed by Semaan and Yamazaki (2015), the motivation for ICLL could be related to not only language proficiency but also the dream of being globally competent, as a global citizen. The current study could help provide further insights into the motivation for ICLL. By employing two types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic, as stated in

Dörnyei (1994), the findings could present more details about the motivation. The result might shed light on the fact that Vietnamese L2 students in this study seemed to have more intrinsic than extrinsic motivation for ICLL. Their inner motivation might determine what they did in their English learning. As learning culture through English can be a part of the students' favorites, they could recognize that they were highly motivated for ICLL.

The second major finding is that Vietnamese L2 students tended to get engaged in ICLL actively. In terms of engagement components, they seemed to get engaged in ICLL emotionally more than they did cognitively and behaviorally. This finding could be explained by many factors. Firstly, the research participants' background information showed that not many students (13%) interacted with foreigners, which may imply students did not participate in multicultural interactions in their real life and study. The inhibitors came from the socio-cultural backgrounds and might determine their low degree of ICLL engagement. Also, as mentioned by Kaikkonen (2001), the ability to engage in ICLL requires EFL learners to develop many relevant skills, beyond their English competence. They may need to self-develop a greater tolerance to the ambiguity and flexibly react to new arising problems in language learning and communication. The students may also need to be mindful across both cultures, understand people from foreign cultures, express greater empathy, and shaping the multi-perspectives from different angles. Hence, in general, the active participation in ICLL seems challenging, in terms of necessary skills. The second factor may be that the hindrance to the students' active participation in ICLL might also derive from the lack of fruitful activities for this in their real context, even in their own EFL classrooms. As stated by Chau and Truong (2019) and Dao and Do (2019), the non-existence of profound cultural knowledge in current EFL classrooms might be caused by the predominance of EL teachers' roles in their class. The students had very few opportunities to explore cultural themes and apply their cultural knowledge to real-life problems. Moreover, as mentioned by Nguyen et al. (2021) and Tran and Tran (2018), lack of updated cultural themes in current ELT materials in Vietnam may be another problem. Hence, the insufficient cultural lessons and chances to use the cultural knowledge prevented the students from actively participating in ICLL.

Another remarkable finding is that Vietnamese L2 students' motivation for ICLL was positively correlated with their engagement in ICLL. This interrelationship between motivation and engagement in ICLL could be explained by many reasons. First, while the majority of students fancied this type of ICLL, they rarely experienced intercultural interactions in their real life, at least in communications with foreigners. This result could highlight the role of socio-cultural contexts in the motivation-engagement connection. Nevertheless, there should have been mediating factors that facilitate or inhibit this relationship, such as the English needs in work and study (Harvey, 2017), and even the curriculum and coursebook materials (Nguyen et al., 2021; Tran & Tran, 2018). Second, for Vietnamese EFL learners with a regular lack of English communicative competence, the embedment of ICLL in a language program might help students boost their own motivation and engagement. Therefore, instead of considering these two variables to be discrete, it is necessary to consider them as a group with mutual benefits. Likewise, Kormos et al. (2014) and Salem (2012) explicated that EFL learners' motivation and engagement were related to each other. For students who could master their English competence, they might find their own passion (intrinsic motivation) to pursue ICLL (Salem, 2012).

Conclusion

This study has concluded that Vietnamese L2 students were highly motivated by ICLL, and their engagement in ICLL was also at a high level. Additionally, Vietnamese L2 students' level of motivation for ICLL was positively correlated with their level of engagement in ICLL. Such conclusions can suggest pedagogical implications. Firstly, Vietnamese L2 students had a high level of motivation for ICLL, but their behavioral and cognitive engagement in ICLL seemed lower than their emotional engagement. Therefore, it is important for EFL teachers to reflect on their current English teaching. They should prepare useful ICLL materials that aim at the integration of useful cultural lessons into English class. It depends on the current educational settings (e.g., students' language proficiency level, age, personal interests, and so forth). The teachers should review many teaching and learning sources to best select and adapt the suitable ones. Additionally, the teachers should organize useful, enjoyable, meaningful language games or quizzes to facilitate the students' ICLL so that students can use their intercultural knowledge in future multicultural interactions. Furthermore, there should be interactional activities or field trips in which students can have chances to interact with foreigners so that students will be able to get aware of the importance of culture and know how to function in multicultural situations appropriately and effectively.

There are still some inevitable limitations in this study. Firstly, this study limited itself to a quantitative study with only one research instrument. Secondly, the study may not involve other possible aspects of ICLL. Therefore, future research should use other types of research design (e.g., mixed-method design, narrative study) for an in-depth view on students' ICLL. Additionally, other aspects of ICLL such as learning strategies for and investment in ICLL should be considered for research variables.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest Author A declares that he has no conflict of interest. Author B declares that she has no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

References

Aguilar, M. J. C. (2007). Dealing with intercultural communicative competence in the foreign language classroom. In E. A. Soler, & M. P. S. Jordà (Eds.), *Intercultural language use and language learning* (pp. 59–78). Dordrecht: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-5639-0_4

Buelow, J. R., Barry, T., & Rich, L. E. (2018). Supporting learning engagement with online students. *Online Learning*, *22*(4), 313–340. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1202338

Chau, T. H. H., & Truong, V. (2019). The integration of intercultural education into teaching English: What Vietnamese teachers do and say. *International Journal of Instruction*, *12*(1), 441–456. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1201145.pdf

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage publications.

Dao, T. D. L., & Do, N. Q. (2019). Nhận thức của sinh viên trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ-Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội về năng lực giao tiếp liên văn hóa (the awareness of the students at the university of languages and international studies, Vietnam National University towards intercultural communicative competence). *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, *35*(5), 94–105.

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *10*, 241–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315306287002

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, *78*(3), 273–284. https://doi.org/10.2307/330107

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. *Language Learning*, *53*(S1), 3–32. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.53222

Dörnyei, Z., & Al-Hoorie, A. H. (2017). The motivational foundation of learning languages other than global English: Theoretical issues and research directions. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(3), 455–468. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12408

Filgona, J., Sakiyo, J., Gwany, D. M., & Okoronka, A. U. (2020). Motivation in learning. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, *10*(4), 16–37. https://doi.org/10.9734/AJESS/2020/v10i430273

Gopalan, V., Bakar, J. A. A., Zulkifli, A. N., Alwi, A., & Mat, R. C. (2017). A review of the motivation theories in learning. In *AIP conference proceedings* (Vol. 1891, No. 1, p. 020043). AIP Publishing LLC. https://doi.org/10.1063/1.5005376

Halimi, F., Daniel, C. E., & AlShammari, I. A. (2020). Motivation and socio-cultural milieu of second language learners: Considerations involved in English teaching. *English Language Teaching*, *13*(5), 149–163. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n5p149

Harvey, L. (2017). Language learning motivation as ideological becoming. *System*, *65*, 69–77. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.12.009

Hennessey, B., Moran, S., Altringer, B., & Amabile, T. M. (2015). Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. *Wiley Encyclopedia of Management*, *11*, 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118785317.weom110098

Ho, S. T. K. (2011). *An investigation of intercultural teaching and learning in tertiary EFL classrooms in Vietnam*. Doctoral dissertation, New Zealand, the Victoria University of Wellington. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10063/4447

House, J. (2008). What is an 'intercultural speaker'? In E. A. Soler, & M. P. S. Jordà (Eds.), *Intercultural language use and language learning* (pp. 7–21). Dordrecht: Springer.

Kaikkonen, P. (2001). Intercultural learning through foreign language education. In V. Kohonen, R. Jaatinen, P. Kaikkonen, & J. Lehtovaara (Eds.), *Experiential learning in foreign language education* (pp. 61–105). Routledge.

Kan, A. (2009). Statistical procedures on measurement results. In the H. Atilgan. *Assessment and evaluation in education* (pp. 397–456). Ani Publications.

Kormos, J., Csizér, K., & Iwaniec, J. (2014). A mixed-method study of language-learning motivation and intercultural contact of international students. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *35*(2), 151–166. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2013.847940

Law, K. M., Geng, S., & Li, T. (2019). Student enrollment, motivation and learning performance in a blended learning environment: The mediating effects of social, teaching, and cognitive presence. *Computers & Education*, *136*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.02.021

Liddicoat, A. J., & Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural language teaching and learning*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Liddicoat, A. J., Eisenchlas, S., & Trevaskes, S. (2003). *Australian perspectives on internationalising education* (pp. 27–37). Language Australia.

Martin, F., Wang, C., & Sadaf, A. (2018). Student perception of helpfulness of facilitation strategies that enhance instructor presence, connectedness, engagement and learning in online courses. *The Internet and Higher Education*, *37*, 52–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2018.01.003

Meyerhoff, M. (2011). *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Taylor & Francis.

Moeller, A. J., & Nugent, K. (2014). Building intercultural competence in the language classroom. In S. Dhonau (Ed.), *Unlock the Gateway to Communication* Central States Conference Report (pp. 1–18). Crown Prints.

Nguyen, D. C. (2013). Cultural diversity in English language teaching: Learners' voices. *English Language Teaching*, *6*(4), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n4p1

Nguyen, T. T. M., Marlina, R., & Cao, T. H. P. (2021). How well do ELT textbooks prepare students to use English in global contexts? An evaluation of the vietnamese English textbooks from an English as an international language (EIL) perspective. *Asian Englishes*, *23*(2), 184–200. https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2020.1717794

Redondo, R. E., & Martin, J. L. O. (2015). Motivation: The road to successful learning. *Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development*, *17*(2), 125–136. https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v17n2.50563

Salem, L. R. (2012). *Incorporating intercultural competence in English language teaching in a Lebanese university intensive English program context: An action research project*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Leicester. Retrieved from https://t.ly/nXTF

Semaan, G., & Yamazaki, K. (2015). The relationship between global competence and language learning motivation: An empirical study in critical language classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals*, *48*(3), 511–520. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12146

Shneiderman, B. (1998). Relate–Create–Donate: A teaching/learning philosophy for the cyber-generation. *Computers & education*, *31*(1), 25–39. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0360-1315(98)00014-1

Svinicki, M. D., & Vogler, J. S. (2012). Motivation and learning: Modern theories. In N. M. Seel (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the sciences of learning* (pp. 2336–2339). Springer.

Ting-Toomey, S., & Chung, L. C. (2012). *Understanding intercultural communication* (2,2nd, ed.). Oxford University Press.

Tohidi, H., & Jabbari, M. M. (2012). The effects of motivation in education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *31*, 820–824. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.12.148

Tran, T. Q., & Dang, H. V. (2014). Culture teaching in English language teaching: teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices. *Korea TESOL Journal, 11*(1), 207–223. Retrieved from https://koreatesol.org/sites/default/files/pdf_publications/KTJ11-1web.pdf

Tran, T. Q., & Duong, T. M. (2018). The effectiveness of the intercultural language communicative teaching model for EFL learners. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, *3*(6), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-018-0048-0

Tran, T. Q., & Pham, T. T. (2018). English-major students' perceptions of the role of culture in English language learning. *Proceedings of the International conference: Language Teaching and Learning Today at Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology and Education* (pp.253–270). Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh Press.

Tran, T. Q., & Seepho, S. (2016). EFL learners' attitudes toward intercultural communicative language teaching and their intercultural communicative competence development. *Journal of English Studies*, *11*, 1–40. Retrieved from https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jsel/article/view/73301

Tran, T. Q., & Seepho, S. (2017). Intercultural language education: Supportive factors and constraints on EFL Learners' intercultural communicative competence development. *Suranaree Journal of Social Science*, *11*(1), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.55766/VGWQ2509

Tran, T. N. P., & Tran, T. Q. (2018). Attitudes towards the learning of culture in English language learning among Vietnamese high school students. *Proceedings of the Third International TESOL Conference Promoting ELT: Diverse Perspectives and New Horizons at Ho Chi Minh City University of Education* (pp.233–246). Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Publishing House.

Tran, T. Q., & Vong, H. P. (2021). EFL high school students' perceptions of the factors affecting their intercultural communicative competence development. *Vietnam Journal of Educational Sciences, 17*(1), 111–120. Retrieved from https://t.ly/whqQD

Tran, T. Q., Duong, T. M., & Nguyen, H. L. (2022). Vietnamese teachers' attitudes toward English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) and classroom EFL teaching practices. *VNU Journal of Science: Education Research*, *38*(4), 90–102. https://doi.org/10.25073/2588-1159/vnuer.4641

Truong, B. L., & Tran, T. L. (2014). Students' intercultural development through language learning in vietnamese tertiary education: A case study on the use of film as an innovative approach. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, *14*(2), 207–225. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2013.849717