



Pre-Service Teachers' Experience in Thai EFL Classrooms

Denny Maschuri ✉, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia

✉ 210203003@student.ar-raniry.ac.id

Abstract: This study investigates the experiences of Indonesian pre-service teachers in implementing Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Thai EFL classrooms. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with six purposively selected participants. The findings reveal that participants applied TBLT by designing authentic tasks such as role-plays and problem-solving activities, while CLT was implemented through interactive group discussions and communicative games to enhance students' communicative competence. Challenges encountered included students' low English proficiency, cultural norms discouraging public speaking, and limited teaching resources. Participants addressed these issues by simplifying instructions, incorporating visual aids, and adapting activities to available resources. The study concludes that TBLT and CLT can be effectively adapted in under-resourced Thai EFL contexts when supported by scaffolding, cultural sensitivity, and context-responsive pedagogy, contributing to the participants' professional growth in adaptability, intercultural communication, and classroom management.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers, teaching practicum, EFL classrooms, intercultural experience.

Received May 28, 2025; **Accepted** August 24, 2025; **Published** October 31, 2025

Citation: Maschuri, D. (2025). Pre-Service Teachers' Experience in Thai EFL Classrooms. *Journal of Innovation in English Education and Language Teaching*. 2(1). 15–25.

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a foreign language requires effective strategies that fit the learning environment. In Thailand, English education students often use different teaching methods during their teaching practice. Understanding which strategies work best helps improve English learning for Thai students (Ellis, 2018, Multilingual Matters).

Teaching English in Thailand presents unique challenges and opportunities. Thai students often exhibit shyness or reluctance to speak up in class, not out of disinterest but as a sign of respect and to avoid potential embarrassment in front of peers. Incorporating elements of fun and play into lessons can help engage students more deeply and make learning English a more enjoyable experience (TEAST, 2020, TEAST Language Education).

Teaching English in Thailand presents unique challenges and opportunities. One prominent issue, which is also reflected in studies conducted in Aceh, is students' speaking anxiety. Similar to the findings of Habiburrahim et al. (2020), speaking anxiety can negatively affect learners' oral performance by causing difficulties in constructing sentences and expressing ideas. These challenges are often rooted in low self-confidence, limited competence, and fear of making mistakes, which in turn reduce students' participation in classroom activities. In the Thai EFL context, such psychological barriers,

combined with cultural tendencies to avoid public mistakes, further hinder the implementation of communicative and task-based strategies.

In Thai classrooms, the Task-Based Language Teaching and the Communicative Language Teaching Approach are commonly used. Teachers often use Thai and ask students to translate, possibly because many Thai students have low English proficiency, making it difficult for them to understand the content. The Task-Based Language Teaching will measure the students' ability to know the student teachers' in English skills of the students. The Communicative Language Teaching Approach requires authentic materials and communication activities associated with real-world language (Education Resources Information Centre [ERIC], 2020, U.S. Department of Education).

This study will be using two specific teaching strategies, such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). TBLT focuses on using real-life tasks to enhance language skills, while CLT encourages interaction and communication among students (Richards, 2015, Cambridge University Press). The international teaching practicum, many student teachers from UIN Ar-Raniry faced serious communication challenges in Thai classrooms. Most students were not proficient in English, while the teachers could not speak Thai. This language barrier created a communication gap that hindered classroom interaction and reduced student engagement, making the learning environment less conducive. One of the major issues faced by Indonesian student teachers is the language barrier. Thai students in rural areas often have limited proficiency in English and are not familiar with other regional languages such as Malay or Indonesian. On the other hand, many student teachers from Indonesia are not proficient in the Thai language. As a result, both parties struggle to understand each other, and this gap in communication severely affects classroom dynamics, making it difficult to maintain a conducive learning environment. Students become passive and less responsive, while teachers face difficulties in delivering instructions effectively.

This communication issue not only disrupts classroom interaction but also impacts the teaching strategies that can be successfully applied. Therefore, it becomes crucial to investigate what teaching methods or strategies can help bridge this communication gap and enhance student participation despite the language differences.

METHODS

Research Design

The choice of a qualitative descriptive design in this study is also informed by previous research into EFL speaking instruction. For instance, Muluk et al. (2021) investigated strategies and challenges in managing EFL speaking classes, revealing that effective classroom management and adaptive strategies are crucial to overcome barriers such as lack of resources and low student confidence. These insights are highly relevant to the Thai EFL practicum setting, where similar challenges exist and require context-sensitive pedagogical adjustments.

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study approach. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. It emphasizes a naturalistic and interpretive approach to the world.

Fadli (2021) further explained that qualitative research deals with non-numerical data by analyzing and interpreting texts and interviews to uncover the holistic meaning of a phenomenon, utilizing the researcher as a key instrument. Therefore, this approach was selected because the focus of the study is to explore the real-life teaching experiences of pre-service teachers in Thai EFL classrooms.

A case study method, as proposed by Yin (2018), is appropriate when the researcher seeks to understand a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly

evident. This method allows for an in-depth investigation of the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) strategies, as well as the contextual challenges encountered by pre-service teachers.

Research Instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher is the main instrument for data collection and interpretation. Creswell (2012) stated that the researcher is directly involved in gathering and analyzing data, making decisions on what is meaningful, and interpreting participant responses within context. Likewise, Xu and Storr (2024) emphasized that “the researcher’s positionality—histories, assumptions, values, perspectives, and mannerisms—inevitably influence both data collection and analysis” (p. 5).

Fadli (2021) also highlighted that researchers serve as key instruments who engage directly in meaning-making during the research process. This involvement requires continuous reflection and sensitivity to context throughout data collection and interpretation. This interview guide consisted of open-ended questions that encouraged participants to freely describe their teaching experiences, challenges, and strategies in Thai EFL classrooms. This format allowed for flexibility while still covering the core themes aligned with the research questions. All interviews were conducted individually, recorded with consent, and transcribed for further analysis.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of 54 pre-service English teachers from UIN Ar-Raniry who participated in the international teaching practicum in Thailand during the 2024-2025 academic year. From this population, six participants were selected as the research sample, which represents approximately 11.11% of the entire population. These six participants comprised five males and one female. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which is suitable for qualitative research as it focuses on selecting individuals who are particularly knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon under study (Palinkas et al., 2015).

In this research, it was essential to establish clear criteria for selecting participants to ensure the data collected would be relevant and accurately represent the research objectives. The participants in this study were six pre-service teachers who had completed their teaching practicum in Thai EFL classrooms for a duration of 25 days as part of the PPKPM program. For confidentiality and clarity in data presentation, each participant was assigned a code from P1 to P6, which is consistently used throughout the findings and discussion chapters. The complete transcripts of their interviews have been provided in the Appendix to support transparency and allow readers to review the raw data upon which the analysis is based. The criteria for selecting the participants are as follows:

Direct Experience : They had direct teaching experience in Thai EFL classrooms during the international practicum program.

Variation in Teaching Context : They were placed in different schools and districts in Thailand to provide diverse perspectives on classroom conditions.

Exposure to TBLT and CLT: They had implemented both TBLT and CLT approaches during their teaching practice.

Availability and Willingness : They were willing to participate in the interview process and share their experiences in detail.

Gender Representation : Both male and female participants were included to provide a balanced view of teaching experiences.

Data Collection Procedures

In conducting this research, it was important to follow a systematic procedure for data collection to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. The process was designed to gather comprehensive and authentic information from the participants based on their teaching experiences in Thai EFL classrooms. Data were primarily obtained

through semi-structured interviews, which allowed the researcher to explore participants' perspectives in depth while still maintaining a clear focus on the research objectives. The following steps outline the procedures undertaken in collecting the data:

Participant Selection: The researcher contacted eligible student teachers from the 2024 international practicum cohort who had taught in Thai EFL settings.

Interview Process: Semi-structured interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via online platforms, depending on accessibility. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

Recording and Transcription: With participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Member Checking: Transcripts were shared with each participant to verify the accuracy of the content and to ensure credibility in the data.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of the following stages:

Data Reduction: Selecting, simplifying, and organizing the most relevant data from the interview transcripts. Codes were applied to key themes such as teaching strategies, challenges, and adaptations. **Data Display:** The organized data are presented in a narrative and thematic format in Chapter IV to illustrate patterns and relationships emerging from participants' responses. Instead of displaying detailed tables or full transcripts in this chapter, such supporting materials (including coded tables and verbatim interview excerpts) are provided in the Appendix for reference. **Conclusion Drawing and Verification:** Drawing inferences from the data, reviewing raw transcripts, and validating themes with participants through member checking to ensure accuracy.

This analytical approach ensured that the interpretations were grounded in authentic participant experiences and allowed the researcher to systematically make sense of the data.

RESULTS

This chapter presents and discusses the findings from the interviews conducted with six pre-service teachers from UIN Ar-Raniry who completed their teaching practicum in Thai EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. The data are thematically analyzed to explore the challenges, teaching methods, strategies, technological integration, and perceptions of teaching English in a foreign context. The findings are supported by direct excerpts from participants' responses and interpreted through the lens of qualitative content analysis.

Based on the interview data, Indonesian pre-service teachers implemented Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approaches during their teaching practicum in Thai EFL classrooms. Both methods aimed to encourage active participation and improve students' communicative competence.

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Participants created tasks designed to mimic real-life situations. These tasks required students to use English for meaningful communication rather than rote memorization. P4 explained:

"I tried to make the lesson like a real situation. For example, I asked students to make a dialogue about ordering food at a restaurant, so they could imagine speaking in real life" (P4, interview transcript).

This aligns with Ellis' (2018, *Multilingual Matters*) principle that tasks should focus on meaning and authenticity. However, several participants noted the need for scaffolding. P2 shared:

"Sometimes I had to break down the task into smaller steps because the students didn't understand the instructions in one go" (P2, interview transcript).

Strategies such as pre-teaching vocabulary, modeling activities, and using visual aids were common, matching the scaffolding component in TBLT theory (Willis & Willis, 2007, Oxford University Press).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Participants used CLT activities like pair work, group discussions, and games to create a relaxed learning environment. These activities encouraged students to focus on fluency and communication. P1 said:

"I often used games like word guessing and picture description to make the students speak more freely without feeling afraid" (P1, interview transcript).

Culturally relevant topics were incorporated to sustain engagement. This reflects Harmer's (2020, Pearson Education) view that meaningful interaction and a low-pressure environment help learners communicate more confidently.

Challenges in Implementing TBLT and CLT

Despite their benefits, implementing TBLT and CLT presented challenges in Thai EFL classrooms:

Language Barriers : Students' low English proficiency required teachers to simplify language and use non-verbal communication.

"Some students didn't understand simple English words, so I had to use pictures or body language" (P3, interview transcript). **Cultural Norms:** Students often avoided speaking in class to prevent embarrassment in front of peers. "Even if they knew the answer, they sometimes stayed quiet because they didn't want to make mistakes in front of friends" (P6, interview transcript). **Limited Resources :** The lack of teaching aids in some schools hindered interactive activities. "I planned to show a video, but the school didn't have a projector, so I had to adapt and draw on the whiteboard instead" (P5, interview transcript). These findings indicate that flexibility and adaptability were essential in implementing communicative and task-based teaching methods.

Interview Result

The interviews conducted with six student teachers who completed their teaching practicum in Thailand revealed a series of recurring themes related to their experiences, challenges, methods, strategies, and reflections while teaching English as a foreign language in a different cultural and linguistic setting.

One of the most frequently mentioned themes was the language barrier. According to Participant 1, many students had very limited English vocabulary, which made communication in the classroom extremely difficult. Participant 2 noted that students struggled to understand basic instructions, leading to repeated clarifications and non-verbal support. Participant 3 added that the students' pronunciation of English words was often unclear due to the differences between Thai and English phonology.

To cope with this challenge, student teachers implemented a variety of teaching methods. Participant 4 used multimedia such as videos and audio recordings to support student comprehension. Participant 5 applied elements of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) by assigning practical activities like student self-introductions. Others, like Participant 6, employed repetition and spelling drills to reinforce vocabulary retention. Flexibility in method choice was common, with most participants adjusting their approach based on students' responses and classroom dynamics.

In terms of teaching strategies, participants demonstrated creativity and adaptability. Participant 1 reported relying heavily on visual aids such as pictures and

real-life objects to explain abstract concepts. Participant 3 engaged students through games and role-plays, which encouraged interaction and reduced anxiety. Participant 5 incorporated daily English expressions, including greetings and classroom instructions, to help students build basic communicative competence. Additionally, Participant 6 emphasized emotional support, stating that helping students feel comfortable with the language was more important than immediate mastery.

Another notable theme was the use of technology in the classroom. Participants 2 and 4 mentioned using digital platforms such as YouTube, classroom TVs, and social media to present songs, stories, and visual content that supported learning. Participant 3 used Google Translate and online tools to aid communication and lesson preparation. However, technology use was not consistent; Participants 5 and 6 indicated that limited access to devices and internet connectivity in some schools required them to rely primarily on printed materials and textbooks.

The final theme explored was the participants' perception of teaching English in Thailand. Several participants highlighted that effective English teaching should focus on building communication skills rather than solely on grammar instruction. Others believed that exposing students to English from an early age would help develop language familiarity over time. Several noted that cultural and linguistic differences required them to adjust not only their teaching techniques but also their expectations. Some admitted experiencing challenges due to the students' strong preference for speaking Thai, especially when the teachers themselves did not understand the local language.

Language Barriers and Low English Proficiency

One of the most prominent challenges reported by pre-service teachers was the pervasive language barrier, primarily due to students' varying and often low English proficiency. P1 noted, "Students have different levels of English skills. This means teachers need to adjust their teaching to match students' abilities". This challenge was further exacerbated by a general lack of English knowledge among students. P4 explicitly stated, "The main challenge is the language barrier, because most students cannot understand English well".

This indicated a fundamental difficulty in basic classroom communication. The linguistic differences between Thai and English also contributed to the barrier, particularly in pronunciation. P2 observed, "Thai pronunciation is very different from English. This makes it harder for students to pronounce English words correctly". P5 added that students' limited vocabulary often necessitated translation: "Students know only a few English words. Sometimes teachers have to translate into Thai or Malay to help them understand". This suggests that a significant portion of class time might have been spent on bridging lexical gaps. P6 further emphasized the foundational nature of this challenge, stating, "Most primary students do not know much English. Only a few students have some basic knowledge".

These collective statements underscore the significant linguistic hurdles faced by both teachers and students in these EFL settings. These themes were identified through the data reduction and display stages of Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model. The coding process allowed the researcher to organise diverse experiences into coherent patterns that reflect the shared and individual realities of the participants. In the following section, each theme will be discussed in detail and interpreted in light of relevant literature to understand how these findings contribute to the broader context of EFL teaching in international settings.

Teaching Methods Employed by Pre-Service Teachers

To address the prevailing challenges, pre-service teachers adopted a range of teaching methods, often in an adaptive and flexible manner.

Multimedia integration : Was a common approach to enhance comprehension and engagement. P1 mentioned, "I used multimedia, such as videos and audio, to help students understand lessons better". Similarly, P2 described holistic method, Stating, "I used a holistic method, combining reading, writing, listening, and speaking", indicating an integrated skills approach.

Some teachers utilized methods focused on memorization and repetition for foundational skills. P3 explained, "I taught by repeating words and spelling them so students could remember", which points to a more traditional, rote learning technique. In contrast, P5 implemented task-based learning, specifically "asking students to introduce themselves in English in front of the class". This approach aligns with TBLT principles by creating authentic communicative opportunities through practical tasks (Ellis, 2018) .

Task-based learning : Exemplified by asking students "to introduce themselves in English in front of the class". This demonstrates an effort to create authentic communicative opportunities, aligning with TBLT principles. P4 reflecting adaptability, Noted, "I did not use a fixed method; I followed suggestions from my mentor and adapted to the students", highlighting a flexible pedagogical stance. P6 also employed mixed methods, Such as "teaching numbers by saying them first and letting students repeat", combining auditory input with repetition. These varied approaches illustrate the teachers' efforts to find effective ways to teach despite the challenges.

Teaching Strategies Implemented

Beyond broad methods, specific strategies were employed by pre-service teachers to facilitate learning and engagement. To increase exposure to English, P1 reported, "I tried to use English as much as possible in class so students get used to hearing and speaking it". Visual aids were extensively used to clarify meaning, as P2 stated, "I used visual aids, like pictures, videos, and real objects to make lessons clearer".

Interactive activities were also a key strategy to boost student participation and reduce anxiety. P4 noted, "I used fun activities, like games and role plays, to make learning more interesting". For building foundational communicative skills, P5 focused on teaching "simple daily English phrases, such as greetings and classroom commands". Crucially, attention was also given to the affective domain of learning. P6 emphasized, "I focused on helping students feel comfortable with English instead of forcing them to

learn quickly", highlighting a student-centered approach to reduce pressure. P3 also relied on repetition as a strategy for vocabulary retention, stating, "I asked students to read texts many times to help them remember new words". These approaches align with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) framework.

Technology Integration in the Classroom

The use of technology varied among participants, often reflecting available resources. Some teachers successfully integrated digital tools into their lessons. P1 used "videos and social media to make lessons more engaging" , and P2 leveraged "YouTube videos and audio materials to support teaching". P5 utilized "the TV in class to show cartoons and kids' songs in English", demonstrating creative use of existing classroom equipment. P4 even employed "Google Translate to communicate and AI tools to find new teaching ideas", showcasing an innovative approach to overcome communication barriers and plan lessons.

However, not all participants had access to such resources. P3 explicitly stated, "No, I only used textbooks provided by the school" , and P6 similarly reported, "No, I mainly used printed books because the school had limited technology". This disparity highlights the technological challenges faced by pre-service teachers and the need for adaptability and resourcefulness in varying school environments.

Perceptions on Teaching English in Thai EFL Classrooms

The practicum experience significantly shaped the pre-service teachers' perceptions of EFL instruction in Thailand. Several participants emphasized a shift from grammar-focused teaching to communication-focused teaching. P1 articulated this by stating, "Teaching should help students communicate in English, not just learn grammar". P5 and P6 both highlighted the importance of early exposure to English to build familiarity and confidence over time. P5 believed, "English should be taught early to help students slowly build their vocabulary", while P6 added, "It is good to introduce English from a young age so students become familiar with it over time".

Cultural and linguistic differences were also recognized as critical factors. P4 observed, "It is challenging because students still prefer to speak Thai, and teachers who do not speak Thai can face problems". This underscores the impact of the language barrier from the students' perspective. P2 pointed out the utility of teachers knowing the local language: "It helps if teachers know some words in students' first language to explain difficult topics". P3 also provided a broader perspective on the significance of English, stating, "English is important for students' future, especially for study and work". These perceptions demonstrate a developing understanding of culturally sensitive and learner-centered pedagogy among the pre-service teachers.

DISCUSSION

Application of TBLT and CLT in Thai Classrooms

The first research question was "How do the English pre-service teachers apply Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Thai classrooms?" The interview data and thematic coding (as seen in Tables 4.1 to 4.4) reveal that pre-service teachers applied both TBLT and CLT approaches in flexible and adaptive ways depending on classroom conditions. For instance, P5 applied task-based learning by asking students "to introduce themselves in English in front of the class," which reflects the core concept of TBLT that emphasizes meaningful real-life communication tasks (Ellis, 2018). This finding is similar to the research conducted by Ellis (2018), which highlights TBLT's effectiveness in increasing learner motivation and encouraging spontaneous language use in context.

Furthermore, several participants incorporated interactive strategies such as games, role plays, visual aids, and daily expression, consistent with the Communicative Language Teaching approach, which prioritizes student interaction and speaking practice (Harmer, 2020). P4 reported using "fun activities, like games and role plays, to make learning more interesting", which aligns with Harmer's (2020) perspective that CLT helps students build confidence and fluency by promoting interaction and reducing the fear of making mistakes. Additionally, P5 focus on teaching "simple daily English phrases, such as greetings and classroom commands" further indicates an application of CLT principles, aiming to equip students with practical communicative competence.

However, full implementation of these strategies was often hindered by contextual challenges, particularly students' low English proficiency and their reluctance to speak. As a result, participants had to simplify tasks, use repetition (P3), and translation tools (P4), and rely heavily on non-verbal communication. These adaptations demonstrate that TBLT and CLT, although effective in principle, require modification when applied in real EFL classrooms, especially in multilingual and cross-cultural settings such as rural Thai schools. This contextual constraint underscores the argument by Nunan (2019) that effective language teaching must be deeply rooted in the learners' specific context and needs. The creative use of technology—such as YouTube videos (P2), classroom TVs (P5), and Google Translate (P4)—also played a supportive role, although some participants (P3, P6) reported limited access to such tools, forcing them to rely on textbooks and

printed materials. This is a challenge acknowledged by Phyak and Bui (2021) regarding limited resources in multilingual contexts.

Challenges Faced and Adaptive Strategies

The second research question was: "What challenges do the pre-service teachers face when implementing their teaching strategies, and how do they address them?". Based on the data presented in Table 4.2 and Table 4.5, the primary challenge faced by all participants was the language barrier. Students' low English proficiency, limited vocabulary, and poor pronunciation made it difficult for teachers to conduct lessons effectively. Some teachers also lacked Thai language skills, creating a double-sided communication gap. P4 stated, "It is challenging because students still prefer to speak Thai, and teachers who do not speak Thai can face problems". This finding is similar to the research conducted by Punthumasen (2016), who highlights that English proficiency in Thailand remains low despite years of formal instruction. This aligns with the background of the study that mentions serious communication challenges faced by Indonesian student teachers who could not speak Thai.

To overcome these challenges, the pre-service teachers employed various coping strategies. These included using gestures and visual aids (P2), simplifying instructions, repeating key vocabulary (P3), and offering emotional support (P6) to reduce students' anxiety. For example, P6 focused on building a comfortable and low-pressure classroom environment, while P1 maximized the use of simple English expressions for daily routines. These approaches reflect the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptive teaching in international education settings. P2 observed that "It helps if teachers know some words in students' first language to explain difficult topics" provides further insight into bridging the communication gap.

In addition to language challenges, technological limitations and cultural differences also posed significant barriers. Not all schools provided digital resources or internet access, which limited the implementation of digital-supported learning. Furthermore, cultural factors, such as students' shyness and the traditional teacher-centered classroom culture, made it difficult to apply CLT-based activities that require open discussion and group interaction. As stated by TEAST, Thai students often avoid speaking in public due to fear of making mistakes or losing face. In response, pre-service teachers gradually adjusted their teaching styles, lowered expectations, and found ways to motivate students through humor, songs, or storytelling.

Lastly, the data from Table 4.6 show that the teaching practicum significantly influenced participants' perceptions of teaching English as a foreign language. Many participants (P1, P5, P6) concluded that effective English instruction should focus more on communication and practical use rather than on grammar memorization. Several also emphasized the importance of early exposure to English to build students' familiarity and confidence over time (P5, P6). These reflections indicate that the participants developed a more learner-centered, culturally responsive teaching philosophy. This supports Nunan's (2019) argument that effective language teaching must be based on the learners' context, needs, and backgrounds.

The findings suggest that while TBLT and CLT provide a strong foundation for language teaching, their practical application in Thai classrooms requires ongoing adaptation. Pre-service teachers must be equipped not only with pedagogical knowledge but also with the intercultural competence, emotional intelligence, and improvisational skills necessary for teaching in multilingual, low-resource, and culturally distinct environments.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the experiences of Indonesian pre-service English teachers during their international teaching practicum in Thai EFL classrooms, with a focus on the application of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The findings revealed that while pre-service teachers attempted to implement both approaches, their success was influenced by multiple contextual factors such as language barriers, students' low English proficiency, limited technological resources, and cultural differences. Regarding the first research question, pre-service teachers applied TBLT by designing practical and interactive tasks like student introductions and daily communication activities. CLT strategies were implemented through games, role-plays, and group interactions to encourage spoken English. However, these strategies required adjustment to fit the classroom realities, including simplifying tasks, using visual aids, and integrating technology where possible. For the second research question, the main challenge faced was the language barrier, which significantly limited communication and instructional clarity. Thai students' limited English proficiency and the teachers' inability to speak Thai created a two-sided communication gap. To address this, teachers employed various coping strategies such as repetition, translation tools, and emotional support. Cultural norms such as student passivity, fear of making mistakes, and deference to authority also affected participation. Moreover, lack of resources in some rural schools constrained the use of digital teaching aids, requiring teachers to be resourceful and adaptive. In summary, the study underscores that while TBLT and CLT have strong theoretical foundations, their successful implementation in Thai classrooms demands high flexibility, cultural awareness, and improvisational teaching skills. Pre-service teachers developed a more student-centered and culturally sensitive perspective through their practicum experience, recognizing that meaningful communication, rather than grammatical precision, should be at the core of EFL teaching in such contexts.

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