Indonesian EFL Students' Need Analysis on Enhancing ICC through the Development of Digital-Assisted Learning DALNaz

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Abstract. Learning English with Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has become increasingly important in the EFL context, particularly in today's borderless world. However, it remains challenging for Indonesian lecturers to provide relevant ICC materials and adopt appropriate teaching models. This study investigates Indonesian EFL students' ICC development through a Digital-Assisted Learning model called DALNaz, which integrates Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and Willingness to Communicate (WTC). Using the ADDIE model within a Research and Development (R&D) framework, the study thoroughly evaluates the effectiveness of DALNaz in fostering ICC. The needs analysis reveals three main challenges: limited opportunities to practice ICC, insufficient technological support, and time constraints. Based on these findings, further research will focus on designing an enhanced DALNaz model—integrating PjBL and WTC—to improve Indonesian EFL students' intercultural communication competence and better prepare them for global interactions.

Keywords: EFL Students, Fundamental needs, Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), Project-based Learning, Willingness to Communicate,

1   Introduction

Recently, the urgency of communicating in English with intercultural understanding is getting more essential due to globalized-world since English becomes one of international language used in global sectors such; economic, industry, education, etc. Using English with intercultural communicative competence is beyond learning English because ICC opens up the students' engagement to learn both language and culture of English-speaking countries effectively. It is believed that using English beyond language structure will result the more profoundly communication. In the last thirty years ago, the connection between teaching English as foreign language and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has been long discussed by previous studies [1,2,3] The growth of globalization comes together with the high demands of English communication with ICC so they can effectively communicate with other people from other countries.

English students have to continuously enhance speaking English skill with the understanding of intercultural competence since it provides the transferable skills necessary that keeps growing for future employability, in which it makes culture and language have an impact

on one another [4]. The urgency of learning English keeps growing in order to engage in international interaction among global community and also to intense cross-culture relationships. This situation, promoting intercultural and linguistic competency for EFL students is crucial demand to keep cultural understanding growing [5]. The phenomenon of learning English as foreign language integrating with ICC in non-English countries is diverse.

The study conducted in Indonesia revealed that EFL students are lack of adequate ICC knowledges and little opportunities to improve their English. Consequently, their insufficient practice in their productive talents prevented them from surviving in interactive cross-cultural dialogue [6]. Then, an empirical report conducted by Vo revealed Vietnamese EFL lecturers have the positive attitudes on ICC in ELT but they frequently encounter several challenges, such as; limited time integrate ICC in the classroom, limited knowledge of ICC, limited IT support [7]. Based on the previous observation, it is found that English students in tertiary level of Universitas Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah, Medan North Sumatera Indonesia have a little opportunity to improve ICC during learning process in the classroom. Most students just carry out English ICC practice based on curriculum, regulation, and assignment. Then, another reality also shows that there is no available native speakers during learning process. Whereas, in this interconnected world among different countries higher education must prepare the young generation who are able to speak and to communicate in English with intercultural views. It is highly expected to the students' have sensitivity and awareness of different cultural background among global community at the same time and the same place. This article attempts to explore the fundamental difficulties faced by EFL students to completely enhance their ICC by exploring the combination of project-based learning and willingness to communicate, then, it results the basis information to design a teaching English learning model DALNaz. DALNaz stands for Digital-Assisted Learning by Nazriani. It is a brand-new innovation of web-based language teaching model which is integrated with project-based learning and model willingness to communicate (WTC) in EFL context. This article will explore the fundamental needs of the students in learning ICC, so it can be used as the basis of developing DALNaz teaching model for enhancing ICC in EFL scope.

2   Theoritical Basis
2.1 The Theory of ICC

ICC is an intercultural English language competency that encompasses attitudes, skills, and knowledge [8,9]. Enhancing ICC communication has become the primary goal in English language learning (Second Language/Foreign Language) [10] because the fundamental characteristic of ICC prepares students to become global citizens with empathy, critical thinking, and openness. EFL tertiary students' ICC in China is influenced by international vibes which is combining with local resources; hence, the students are allowed to switchover between domestic and global context at the same time [11]. ICC has three guidelines: learning objectives, activity implementation instructions, and assessment indicators, then, ICC is getting more enjoyable due to the students eager to find out the comfort using English as foreign language and having talk with their peers [12,13,14]. Therefore, the method of teaching English in foreign country such as; Indonesia should be created by ICC approach so that the use of English achieves Cultural Awareness [15,16] to improve natural English communication. [17]. In English language instruction, intercultural communicative competencies (ICC) enable students to comprehend and interact effectively with members of the target language cultures [18].

Research by Alvarez reported that English teachers realized that they must adopt an intercultural communicative-oriented English teaching perspective to fulfill the modern educational, social, and cultural demands of a world that is becoming more and more interwoven [19]. It shows that English language teaching is dramatically changing in terms of the strategy of teaching language itself connecting with the multicultural world. Understanding language abilities to communicate concepts and related facets of customs and culture is necessary for effective cross-cultural communication. When people of different racial backgrounds, faiths, and political and social ideologies coexist, it is critical to comprehend intercultural differences. To enhance ICC in EFL scope, EFL lecturers / teachers have to creatively design the appropriate teaching approach due to the demands of real international life with ICC materials so it will effect on students' capability to interact with other people from different countries. Since it is in line with speaking and communication skill, this present study aimed to develop DALNaz model, in which it is developed from Project-based Learning and Willingness to Communicate (WTC).

2.2 DALNaz with Project-based Learning and WTC

DALNaz stands for Digital-Assisted Learning by Nazriani invented by the author in which it is the new learning model developed with the basis of project-based model and WTC. DALNaz is very suitable integrated with PjBL because the series of practical activities using English simultaneously includes language learning, understanding project content, enhancing communication skills, and social skills [20,21,22]. The implementation of PjBL in English language learning fosters communicative interactions, imaginative thinking, and stimulates creativity [23]. PjBL actively engages students productively in developing knowledge according to real experiences, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration [24,25,26]. Project-based Learning is not only for gaining students' cognitive but also the attitudes since the students will pass stages that provide certain activity; creativity, collaboration, communication and innovation [27]

Furthermore, WTC model established by MacIntyre et al. encompasses a natural communication model with several affecting factors such as; mother tongue, behavior, desire, cognitive, affective, social, environmental, and personality in which it enables students to communicate in English confidently [28]. WTC is a communication model oriented towards the active fluency of language communication [30,31,32,33,34]. The WTC model theory is integrated with digital technology, providing students the freedom to communicate with interlocutors in extracurricular context flexibly, this model offers the students to more actively communicate with their mates outside the classroom over social media platforms website applications [35,36.37]. Students' WTC variation was explored by Syed that revealed affecting factors influence Iranian postgraduate students' WTC consisting of situational variables, namely; chance of interacting, the comfortable interlocutor, and dynamic topic during the interaction, moreover personality variables such as; motivation, characteristics in which introvert students tend to rely on the active company, in contrast, the students with extrovert traits will be much more easier to create a topic to discuss with their interlocutors [38]. The active English learners are highly suggested to explore language input and actively engage in any sources to expand language exposure [39]. It is clearly seen that English learners need to actively participate in certain community so they will have the chance to gain the learning sources and taking part of having conversation and interaction with other people more frequently. It would be a great chance for English students to have higher WTC.

Out-of-class activity absolutely completes students' need in practicing English communication skill, in this context, The integration of WTC and CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) has a very high urgency in the context of EFL/ESL with a wide and open reach, that allows the enjoyable learning atmosphere without worrying making errors and mistakes [40,41,42,43]. English communication practical activities could be more easily accessed with self-study in which the students can use the mobile-assisted learning without worrying the surveillance of teacher or lecturer [44]. Self-regulated learning gives much more opportunities for English students to increase willingness to interact with other peers and mates outside the formal situation because they not only feel free to talk but they also decide their own learning setting situation with their own authority. Fundamental characteristics of CALL; pedagogy and teacher regulation, and evolving with the sub-study of IDLE (Informal Digital Learning English) used outside the classroom more dynamically without teacher supervision [45,46]. This research will develop the CALL and IDLE formats by Benson [47,48] with the development of Digital-Assisted Learning integrated with Project-based Learning and WTC according to the needs of Indonesian EFL students. Hence, DALNaz model will offer the systematics stages and activity either for students and lecturers to learn ICC.

3 Research Method
3.1 Research Design

Research and Development (R&D) was applied with ADDIE approach; Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate. R&D approach was established to deeply measure the fundamental needs, and it would be used to develop a new concept to be implemented and evaluated. In this present study, Questionnaires with Likert Scale was used for analyzing the needs of lecturers, students, initial abilities, and learning environments, as well as indirect observations. The samples of the research selected with random sampling technique, there are 120 English language students from three different universities were chosen to participate answering the questionnaire. The sample of the research were selected with several criteria, namely; learning English more than 1 year in higher institution, categorizing as EFL and ESL students.

4 Result and Discussion
4.1 Questionnaire Analysis

This analysis was measured by using descriptive statistics Zcore as stated as follows

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Z-SCORE (IBM SPSS Statistic 27 For Windows)

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	360	1,00	5,00	3,0899	1,42124
Q2	360	1,00	5,00	3,0694	1,3389
Q3	360	1,00	5,00	4.1194	1,03674
Q4	360	1,00	5,00	3,9972	,97460
Q5	360	1,00	5,00	4.0742	1,01548

From Table 1, it can be clearly explained that on the indicator (a) enjoyment of learning English (speaking practice) with a mean score of 3.0889 (3 = neutral) indicates that students have an interest in learning English but with a category of less enthusiasm; (b) intercultural communication skills (ICC) are very rarely applied in the classroom with a mean score of 3.0694 (3 = neutral), confirming the same statement that some students say it is often applied in the classroom but others explain it is rarely applied in the classroom; (c) difficulty in integrating foreign cultures with local cultures with a mean score of 4.1194 (4 = agree) indicates that students find it difficult to integrate local cultures with foreign cultures due to insufficient references and difficulty in describing the similarities or advantages of each culture. (d) The practice of speaking English in class is never sufficient with a mean score of 3.9972 (4 = Agree), meaning it indicates agreement that time is a significant limitation in practicing English, especially in daily communication or formal language. (e) The difficulty in constructing English sentences with a mean score of 4.0472 (4 = Agree) shows that students struggle with grammar to explain or present the results of observations/critical journals/critical books or project assignments in front of the class, as well as determining grammar in field communication. This is due to the limited number of peers to exchange opinions.
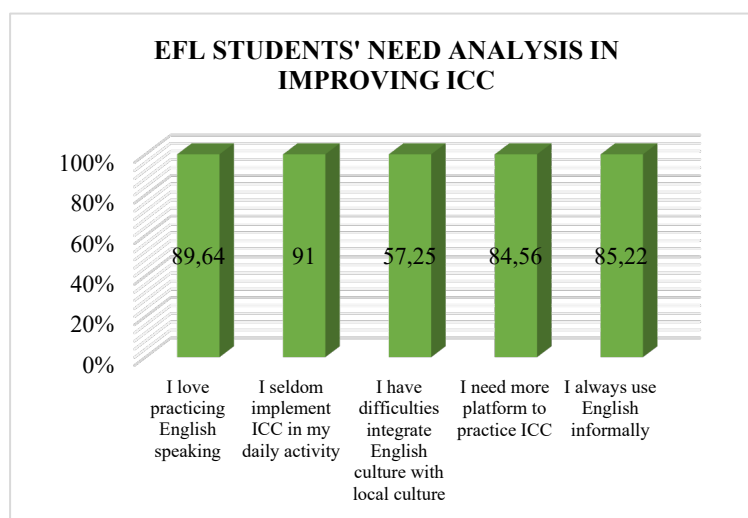

Fig. 1. EFL Students' Need Analysis in Learning ICC

Based on figure 1, it clearly shows that there are five indicators, namely; 1) practicing English speaking, 2) frequency of implementing ICC, 3) Integration between English and local culture, 4) ICC platform, 5) style of using English language in daily life. Clearly, the graph demonstrates that the students' ICC practice in daily activity reach 91%, but 89,46% of EFL students really love practicing English. It obviously shows that EFL students are not offered ICC materials, but they actually enjoy learning English. The other fundamental needs are the online platform of learning ICC. It is relevant with the demand of technology of language learning in which the students can learn English with measurable IT support. In brief, EFL students demand appropriate teaching model to help them having eagerness to learn ICC.

4.2 Factor Analysis

K-Means Cluster was used to obtain difficulty clusters with two groups, namely group 1 (highly need) and group 2 (lower need). After detailed analysis, clusters were obtained for each indicator, leading to conclusions as per the Final Clusters Centers table, as follows:

Table 2. Analysis Final Cluster Center

	Cluster	
	1	2
I love practicing English speaking	4,31	1,64
I seldom implement ICC in my daily activity	3,38	2,70
I have difficulties integrate English culture with local culture	4,19	4,03
I need more platform to practice ICC	4,23	3,72
I always use English informally	4,10	3,99

From the table above, each cluster can be explained according to the data above: In the results above, it is clearly shown that all aspects are located in Cluster 1. This confirms that many students experience difficulties in completing the learning material. In this case, cluster 1 explains that respondents who answered the questionnaire statements had higher scores compared to others. This group reported difficulties such as enjoying learning English at 4.31; the difficulty of intercultural communication (ICC) skills being rarely applied in class at 3.38; the difficulty of integrating foreign cultures and local cultures at 4.23; the practice of speaking English in class being insufficient at 4.23; and finally, the difficulty of constructing English sentences at 4.10. Thus, cluster 1 can be classified as having high difficulty, indicating a strong need for a learning process that enhances students' enthusiasm and interest in learning English. Overall, Indonesian tertiary students encounter a bigger effort to comprehensively understand the combination of learning English Language and gaining cross-cultural understanding. The richness of Indonesian culture linked with international culture becomes fundamental section of English language learning for either the present or the future contexts. It certainly aligns with constructivist theory, which emphasizes life-based or experiential learning for students.

5 Conclusion

This R&D research examines Indonesian EFL students encounter the difficulties of improving ICC due to the fundamental factors, namely; a) the limitation of time for practicing b) the limitation of flexible platform that can be used both inside and outside the classroom and c) the lack of appropriate technology for supporting their learning process. The result is consistent with the previous study reported that there is obvious gap between expectation and reality faced by English learners and teachers [18] in which they are lack of IT support and time allocation teaching ICC in EFL classroom. Furthermore, this present result also connects with report research by Reid showing that how English teacher face struggle and flurry in presenting

teaching materials, teaching strategy and teaching scenario related with real ICC situation. However, the result of the research revealed that Indonesian tertiary students have eagerness to learn and to practice English speaking skill but they have sufficient facilities and sources of learning ICC. It obviously contributes more fundamental analysis to establish web-based teaching model for ICC in EFL context. Therefore, this research will continue to design a new learning model DALNaz integrated with Project-based Learning and Willingness to Communicate in order to enhance Indonesian EFL students' ICC. In addition, this present study also suggests to create more flexible teaching learning process that enables students to practice ICC outside the classroom balancing the supervisor of the lecturer and self-study. However, the present result meets with unavoidable limitation in terms of sample size. The sample size is limited to English tertiary students in Medan city, province North Sumatera Indonesia to represent Indonesian EFL students. The researchers could approach a bigger sample over several cities in Indonesia. Moreover, the instrument of the research using questionnaire with Likert scale, it seems to limit the researchers to investigate the factors affecting lacking of ICC faced by students. To conclude, the final result of analysis would be used to undertake a design of DALNaz integrating with Project-based Learning and Willingness to Communicate

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