

Washington State University

College of Education

Pruksapan Bantawtook

Will defend the dissertation

Date: May 13, 2021

Time: 12:45 P.M.

Location: Zoom by request

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend

TASK ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Chair: Joy Egbert

This dissertation explored student task engagement in two different higher education settings; a language classroom and a synchronous remote learning teacher education classroom. The two studies for this dissertation focused on student task engagement. The first study applied the Language Task Engagement (LTE) model to investigate language task engagement facilitators and task preferences of students from different cultural backgrounds. The study revealed that, in general, the students preferred tasks that were commonly implemented in language classrooms. Their reasons for these preferences indicated essential LTE facilitators such as authenticity, social interaction, and interest. When integrating a cultural lens to observe these preferences and LTE facilitators, the study demonstrated that students from the two culture types based their preferences on different task elements. However, the most frequently indicated LTE facilitator by the two groups was the same; it was authenticity. The transition chapter between the two studies introduces the possibility to apply the LTE model in another academic classroom, especially in a synchronous remote learning (SRL) setting, which becomes a common mode of teaching and learning in many countries around the world because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The second study indicated that SRL tasks could engage the future teacher participants when pedagogical knowledge relevant for a teaching career was incorporated into the tasks. Moreover, the study revealed that the Breakout room function or an opportunity to converse in a small group facilitated the participants' TE; however, unenthusiastic peers could impede group interaction. Further, the data suggested that discussion topics or content of tasks could spark the participants' interest that drove them to TE.