# English as an International Language Teaching and Perceptions: A Case Study of Thai Tertiary English Language Teachers

**Kewalin Jantadej** [i]
Lampang Rajabhat University

**Abstract**

This study scrutinized English as an international language teaching (EILT) and perceptions of Thai tertiary English language teachers through a 20-item Likert Scale questionnaire and a 7-question semi-structured interview protocol. The results from these two instruments disclosed some inconsistencies. Although the questionnaire results revealed that the participants (n=15) perceived the role of EILT to a great level, the semi-structured interview results indicated that they did not entirely implement EILT in their classroom. It was manifest that participants were confused with the concept and principles of EILT as they considered it a new language teaching paradigm. Therefore, they were uncertain how to implement EILT into practice. Some were misunderstood and misled to provide linguistic and cultural literacy to their students. Besides, they disregarded to raise awareness on the dispossession of English and underline the proud localism concept to their students. However, it was noteworthy that participants best applied English as an international language interpretation in their classroom. Overall results evidenced that a case study of the English teaching situation found from this study remained far from the progress of moving toward EILT and suggested that the EILT paradigm should be urgently and sustainably endorsed and integrated into the English teaching curriculum in Thailand.

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[i] **Kewalin Jantadej,** Instructor Dr., Humanities and Social Sciences, Lampang Rajabhat University, ORCID: 0000-0003-0390-0859

**Email:** kewalin.jan@g.lpru.ac.th

# INTRODUCTION

Globalization empowers English everywhere. It is undeniable that the use of English is varied perceive among English users or non-native speakers (NNS). Crystal (2006; 2018; 2019) summarizes that English users these days adopt two forms of English in place; one is ordinary gathering from the English they learn with their families, on streets, from media, from their friends, from their workplaces, from tourists, and so forth which can be called a local Creole. Another is when they are in schools they learn Standard English.

It is noteworthy that people are compelled to use both forms since they are human beings that are outward-looking in the way to read the rest of the world, and inward-looking that they need to be themselves and not like the other. These two forms of English are not supposed to take each other place and decry each other's identity (Alsagoff, 2012; Crystal, 2019; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018; Richards, 2011). The question is, how do NNS teachers manage this balance?

Implementing EILT is likely to answer the above question. To elaborate, EILT is distinct since its key goal is intelligibility which defines that people need to understand each other (Crystal, 2006; Nelson, 2011). Crystal further states that this intelligibility instigates the evolvement of Standard English basically in a written or printed form which English learners learn from educational institutions as a requirement. For this case, Standard English intelligibility is there to verify and confirm that English learners comprehend each other domestically and universally.

The other case of intelligibility that spurs people to learn and use English as an International Language (EIL) is the internal desire to promote their national identity (Alsagoff, 2012; Jenkins, 2015; Richards, 2011). Concerning this, Richards (2011) an EILT maven, reaffirms that the essentiality for identity people have is the integrity to represent who they are and where they are from. This drive induces EILT to promote the increase in accents and dialects both at the national and international levels (Richards, 2011).

Consequently, implementing EILT can enhance NNS learners' fluency because their anxiety of distorting pronunciation is diminished and respect of accents as identity representations is supported (Alsagoff, 2012; Jenkins, 2015; Richards, 2011). That is to say, EILT reinforces NNS learners' confidence, integrity, flexibility, empathy, and tolerance to express themselves in their way to achieving intelligibility across cultures.

With this significance, considerable numbers of English teaching institutions in the areas of Outer and Expanding Circle countries (Kachru's 1992: Three Concentric Circles) have changed their focus from administering English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching to be EILT. The reason is that EILT is built on the notion of the English-speaking world which aims to acknowledge the diversity and intricacy as part of the real world in which our practice is grounded (Crystal, 2019; Jenkins, 2015, Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018).

Considering Thailand's English language teaching (ELT) situation, Thai ELT is grounded on the EFL teaching paradigm for several decades (Ngamwilaipong, Darasawang & Srimavin, 2007). Therefore, Thai English language teachers categorize themselves as EFL teachers. It is noted that EFL teaching means to equip learners with linguistic ability and NS's norms to use English accurately and fluently with NS rather than convincing them to practice using English in real-world phenomenon with other English users (Matsuda, & Matsuda, 2018; Ngamwilaipong, Darasawang & Srimavin, 2007).

Unfortunately, three times outnumber of NS today are the English users from Outer and Expanding Circle countries (Crystal, 2018; 2019). For this reason, demand for NS's norms is not supposed to be the achievement of ELT in Expanding Circle country like Thailand. This is largely due to NNS have unique local wisdom, cultures, and languages that are different from those of NS. Focusing on EFL teaching, therefore, is unlikely to prepare Thai EFL learners especially at the tertiary level to be ready to join the domestic or international workforce with sufficient English intercultural

and international communicative competence. Such Thai EFL teaching's drawbacks have been mentioned continuously in several studies such as in Wichien & Aksornjarung (2011), Ngowananchai (2013), Cheewasukthaworn & Suwanarak (2017), Jantadej & Charubusp (2018).

In that case, moving toward EILT seems to be a judicious decision to raise Thai tertiary learners' awareness of linguistic differences of English that confront them daily and prepare them to apply those differences effectively in intercultural conversations or future careers. However, in preparing Thai tertiary English language learners to be ready for their future workforce with EILT, first and foremost, Thai English language teachers must understand EILT's notion, perceive its roles, importance, and benefits learners will gain. Otherwise, the teachers fail to integrate EILT productively in the Thai ELT context.

The problem is that prior studies have declined to cite the definite depiction of Thai tertiary English language teachers' perceptions and practices toward EILT which is overshadowed by the popularity of the EFL teaching paradigm (Lai, 2008; Liou, 2010; Rajani Na Ayuthaya & Sitthitikul, 2016). Thus, the purpose of this current study is to make an effort to fill the gap by investigating perceptions and practices toward EILT of Thai tertiary English language teachers to indicate problems, and a tendency for Thai tertiary education in moving toward EILT. In this regard, research questions were as follows:

Research Question 1: To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers perceive the role of English as an international language teaching?

Research Question 2: To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers practice English as an international language teaching?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Guided by the above research questions, the literature relevant to this study is comprised of the EILT paradigm and challenges of EILT in Thailand education. Besides, the conceptual framework is depicted.

### EILT Paradigm

EILT is an arising paradigm in ELT that endorses the linguistic, functional, and cultural diversity coincided with the current trend in the English language and presumes that this divergent and convoluted reality of the language needs to be activated in ELT (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018; Marlina & Giri, 2014; McKay, 2002; Sharifian, 2009). Xu (2017: 708) further elaborates that EILT has been established "...*alongside the glocalization—globalization and localization of English. It is a multicultural lingua franca of various cultural conceptualizations for international and intercultural communication which admits English variation and varieties, including different dialects of English and World Englishes*". In another word, EILT creates an equivalent approach to English learning for all learners and turns out to be a means to empower speakers to express their local and cultural identity to the world.

It is known that EILT does not mean to oppose the notion of native speakerism of ELT. On the other side, EILT ideology has reconsidered the possibilities of NS's model and its consequence on achieving communication in intercultural contexts (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Jenkins, 2015). Notwithstanding, EILT does not accept that NS teachers have sufficient linguistic knowledge solely from their nativeness (Cook, 1999). Mainly because EILT acknowledges the pluricentric attributes of English so that the feasibility that the diverse learners expect to learn and the diversity an NS teacher has may not match. Therefore, nativeness may helpless in this case.

Most importantly, the competency in intercultural communication, which is a substantial focus of EILT, is not something that all NS teachers achieve in common. Those who have not encountered

cultural differences in communicating and living abroad do not have as many direct experiences to develop intercultural competence or intercultural communicative skills as NS and NNS who commonly have opportunities to communicate with more diverse populations. Again, the native speakerism of a teacher becomes less advantageous when we reconsider the kind of experience, competencies, and knowledge needed for the users and teachers of EILT (Matsuda, 2014; Selvi, 2016). Also, NS do not sufficiently represent English language learners' future interlocutors.

Besides grounded on the existence of English varieties, users, cultures, and the stress on linguistic strategies that would provide learners with a capability of efficient EIL users, EILT underlines the progress of awareness and a sense of accountability among both NNS teachers and learners (Alsagoff et al., 2012; Marlina & Giri, 2014; Mckay, 2002; Selvi & Yazan, 2013). In this case, EILT guides teachers and learners that the English varieties learners learn or even the English itself may not constantly be interpreted as the most applicable linguistic choice for all intercultural situations. They need to aware that the application of language choice depends on the sensibilities and expectations of representatives of each speech community. As a consequence, each choice requires the negotiation of meanings and the use of different strategies to achieve the goal of international communication—intelligibility (Crystal, 2006; Friedrich, 2012; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2010).

### Challenges of EILT in Thailand Education

Adapting or replacing EFL with EILT in the Thai educational context may count as a hardship. The problem is that in the public eye EFL teaching has long been the ELT paradigm in Thailand to serve the national and international demands. Nevertheless, several studies have approved that the EFL paradigm is impractical and insufficient to help Thai learners communicate successfully in the globalized community Cheewasukthaworn & Suwanarak, 2017; Saengboon, 2017). If that so, EFL teaching is probably opposed to the aims for reforming Thai national education.

The point is that the EFL paradigm has not meant to help Thai English language learners ready for the rapid transformation of the world, bringing the ELT curriculum in educational institutions in Thailand cannot meet the needs for English use in the real contexts (Wiriyachitra, 2001). In another word, English from the lessons is inapplicable to learners' everyday speech. This disadvantage results in shyness and embarrassment of Thai English language learners when they make mistakes in using English (Boriboon, 2011).

As long as the Thai educational ideology still concentrates on EFL teaching, it is not easy to persuade Thai English language teachers and learners to promote Thai national identity and uniqueness without binding their English use with NS's model. This tends to cause teachers' incompetence of reinforcing learners' confidence in using English in their way with less worry of making local accent and English grammatical mistakes. Inevitably, teachers lose their chances to decrease the contrastive gap between NS and NNS, to increase learners' understanding of English in a global context concerning English in Thai socio-cultural, political, and economic arenas (Boriboon, 2011; Jindapitak & Teo, 2011).

Such aforementioned drawbacks should be urgently solved to serve the moment needs in Thailand. At present, Thai English language learners are amid the fluctuation of using English with variety of English users under several purposes. Accordingly, English in Thailand does not only become a required course at any educational level but it is also a conversational device for social and realistic use (Foley, 2005). Thus, promoting a realistic localized and globalized context like EILT is most likely to raise Thai English language learners' awareness and acceptance of differences in forms, functions, and accents among various English users that later on inhibit learners' shyness in Thailand.

### Related Studies

During the past decade, an increasing number of literatures relating to teachers' views toward EILT in several parts of the world have emerged. For instance, in Taipei, Liou (2010) established a 14-

item questionnaire to explore the views of Taiwanese college teachers and students toward EILT. In Japan, Tanaka (2010) investigated how 80 pre-service tertiary English language teachers and students perceived EILT and the ideal future of ELT using a self-developed 11-item Likert questionnaire. Altun-Evci (2010) conducted a distinguished big scale explorative and contrastive study. He investigated 448 English teachers' perspectives toward EILT in 71 different countries from the Expanding, Outer and Inner Circle countries through an online survey and 14 semi-structured interviews. In Bahrain, Elsheikh (2015) conducted a small scale exploratory study to investigate tertiary teachers' views and classroom practices of EILT through an open-ended questionnaire adapted from McKay's (2012) concepts. In Cambodia, Lim (2016) administered interviews and observations to examine pre-service teachers' attitudes toward ASEAN English varieties in the classroom. In Taiwan, Luo (2017) employed interviews and questionnaires to explore 7 Taiwanese English teachers' perceptions of English as a lingua franca in their classrooms. In India and Iran, Monfared and Khatib (2018) delivered questionnaires to investigate 260 English teachers' attitudes toward their own variant English in EFL teaching contexts.

Most of the above-mentioned studies revealed similar results. To elaborate, the main findings of each study discovered that no matter how much the teachers perceived and intended to integrate EILT principles into practice, they remained to adhere to teaching NS models causing by their personal beliefs and the NS's commercial course books they used. In respect of the content, most research participants wished to teach about the lifestyle and culture of several parts of the world including their home culture. Besides, the points about awareness of international use of English were raised to a greater extent among participants. They also perceived that the shift in forms and functions of English use should determine what they teach.

Quite a lot of these studies yielded pedagogical implications formed on their empirical findings. For instance, Monfared and Khatib (2018) suggested that, besides supporting and valuing the diversity of English, it is crucial to recognize and facilitate strategies to cultivate awareness of the global spread of English to both teachers and learners. Moreover, Curran and Chern (2017) recommended curriculum designers to seek modern methods or frameworks that integrate the notion of English as a lingua franca into teacher training programs. They further emphasized that it is most likely to be vital for pre-service teachers in expanding circle countries to have a clear knowledge and understanding of this ideology to meet the current global need.

In Thailand, studies on Thai teachers' perspectives toward EILT are petite. One was Saengsukka (2015) who explored 30 Thai EFL secondary school teachers on their beliefs toward World Englishes with a Likert scale questionnaire. The results demonstrated that most of the participants believed in using books and teaching materials with the World Englishes model. Nevertheless, they held firm beliefs on teaching grammar standard English to their students. Another was Huttayavilaiphan (2019) who investigated 10 Thai university teachers' beliefs, awareness of Global English (GE), and teaching practices using surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Similar to previous studies, the results were discovered that the NS's norms were the major teaching practices while GE's perspectives were the minor practices in participants' classrooms. The results suggested that the ambiguity of GE had caused the participants to hold misconceptions, negative attitudes, as well as unawareness of GE which were another factor for GE-based teaching practice decision.

In sum, all the above-mentioned studies show that the teachers' perceptions such as beliefs form a critical construct that vastly dominates decision-making on the teachers' teaching practices. If teachers adhere to the beliefs of NS's norms, it will be difficult to promote the ownership of the English concept to the teachers themselves and learners. This could lead to a failure in developing NNS learners to become global citizens who share the same global community under their own identity and dignity. It seems crucial for current NNS teachers to reconsider what to bring to classrooms to teach students in this current era.

**Conceptual Framework**

Drawing upon the theories and practices on language attitudes, world Englishes, globalization, localization, and their consequences for language learning and teaching from Alsagoff (2012), Canagarajah (2013), Crystal (2019), Jenkins, 2015, Kumaravadivelu (2012), Matsuda and Matsuda (2018), Phillipson (1992), Selvi (2016), the four EILT pillars were emerged— Linguistic and cultural literacy, Awareness on the dispossessing of English, EIL interpretation, and Proud localism. These four EILT pillars were used to initiate a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview protocol to investigate Thai English language teachers' perceptions and practices toward EILT.

According to this study conceptual framework, "Linguistic and cultural literacy" requires NNS teachers to encourage NNS learners to aware that ELT does not mean to use English as a tool of linguistic and cultural dictatorship or homogenization by pursuing learners to attain and use the pragmatic rules of the English-speaking society. Rather, it supports teachers to provide learners with language and cultural differences experiences and implement awareness of those rules to develop global English and cultural sensitivity that may increase learner's linguistic and cultural horizons (Canagarajah, 2013; Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018: Phillipson, 1992).

As for "Awareness on the dispossessing of English", this pillar expects NNS teachers to aware of the dispossessing of English and inform learners that English these days is manipulated by both its NS and NNS. Therefore, English is owned by all its users around the world and the notion of native-speakerism is obsoleted (Crystal, 2019; Widdowson, 1998). Learners should understand that it is insensible for NS guardians who think that English varieties can chunk the English language into mutually incomprehensible varieties. The fact is that varieties of Englishes are formed to serve various types of situations in various fields all over the globe (Crystal, 2019; Selvi, 2016). Thus, it is high time for English practitioners to notice learners with the use of English alongside other languages in diverse speech societies.

Next, "EIL interpretation" in this study reflects how teachers perceive the role of EIL plays in the world or the adjacent countries and help learners relate themselves to the global society which is not limited to the NS group, as a construct beyond the EFL framework. There are several terms used to name this condition such as EIL/WE Posture or Global significance of WE (Jenkins, 2015). All these terms interpret how well English users value EIL and realize that EIL lends itself to be as a local language as well as taking a role as a global language to respond to divergent local languages and cultural needs of EIL users (Alsagoff, 2012). Given that NNS teachers are obligated to interpret and cultivate this concept to learners.

Last but not least, "Proud localism" agrees with EILT flow of thought that the English language should be utilized to display learners' own culture and relate to others all over the world. Accordingly, "Proud localism" supports NNS teachers to aware that globalization is terminated in localization (Alsagoff, 2012; Kumaravadivelu 2012). Similarly, Brown (2007, p.7) advocated that "*our zeal for spreading English needs to be accompanied by concurrent efforts to value home languages and cultures*". With this in mind, NNS teachers should inspire learners to be proud of their cultural self-identity through English use by simply aware that English is the best tool to represents the uniqueness and identity of everyone who uses it.

All the four EILT pillars mentioned above constructed a manifest and practical framework to guide the researcher in investigating Thai tertiary English language teachers' perceptions and practices to see the possibility of moving toward EILT of Thai ELT context.

# METHODOLOGY

### Research design

This study was a mixed-method sequential explanatory design, employing a quantitative method through a questionnaire and a qualitative method through a semi-structured interview to collect data from the research participants.

### Participants

The participants of this study were categorized into two groups according to the stages of the study. The first stage group comprised 15 Thai tertiary English language teachers from two faculties of LR University (Pseudonym)—Humanity and Social Sciences faculty, and Education faculty. This university is situated in the northern part of Thailand. Participants were recruited as the sample of this study by the purposive sampling technique. They participated in the study by responding to the EILT Perceptions questionnaire.

The second stage group included those who responded to the questionnaire in the first stage and volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interview. It was noted that five teachers volunteered to be the interviewees of this stage.

### Research instruments

There were two research instruments—an EILT Perceptions questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview protocol. The EILT Perceptions questionnaire was used to collect data for Research Question 1, To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers perceive the role of English as an international language teaching? The semi-structured interview protocol was used to collect data for Research Question 2, To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers practice English as an international language teaching?

As for the EILT Perceptions questionnaire, it was a 20-item closed-ended four-point Likert scale used to inform participants' perceptions on the role of EILT. The content of the questionnaire covered the four EILT pillars in the conceptual framework: 1) Linguistic and cultural literacy 2) Awareness on the dispossessing of English 3) EIL interpretation 4) Proud localism. The internal consistency of the EILT Perceptions questionnaire was .91 (N=30) which showed that the EILT Perceptions Questionnaire was highly reliable for revealing teachers' perceptions on the role of EILT in Thailand. As Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) indicate that an alpha level of .80 or greater is considered a good level of reliability.

To triangulate the results from the questionnaire, a 7-item semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on the conceptual framework to elicit participants' practices that related to EILT as well as their suggestions for applying EILT to Thai tertiary educational context. The semi-structured interview protocol was validated by five experts in the field. The item-objective congruency (IOC) test on each item of the interview protocol was rated to 1, indicating that all items were strongly valid (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977).

### Procedure

At the beginning of August 2020, 15 copies of EILT Perceptions questionnaires were distributed to Thai tertiary English language teachers at the LR University. Each respondent received a set of three types of documents and an instruction note. The documents include: (a) the information sheet, (b) the consent form, and (c) the questionnaire. The teachers were asked to rate their perceptions regarding their understanding of EILT role on a four-point Likert scale questionnaire. Four weeks later, 15 copies of the questionnaires were returned to the researcher. Descriptive statistics, namely the Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviation, and Percentage were used to analyze the data collected.

Subsequently, five teacher participants who responded to the EILT Perceptions questionnaires volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interview. Each of them spent approximately 60 minutes to reflect their EILT practices and provide suggestions and comments for EILT at the tertiary level in Thailand. The interview data were analyzed mainly with a deductive content analysis by outlining and defining prior codes/categories based on the four EILT pillars framework. Codes and categories that did not belong to the framework but were relevant for explaining the phenomenon under discussion were analyzed by inductive content analysis.

## RESULTS

**Research question 1:** To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers perceive the role of English as an international language teaching?

First of all the results informed that 12 out of 15 respondents (80%) were female. Most of them aged between 31-40 years old (46.6%). 73.3% of them held a master's degree while the rest (26.6%) held a doctor's degree. The majority (86.6%) graduated in Thailand while the minority graduated from England (6.6%) and Australia (6.6%). A large number of the respondents had 6-10 years of teaching experience (46.6%).

The scores of perceiving the role of EILT from these 15 respondents were classified into four categories using Arithmetic Means—greatly perceive (M = 3.26-4.00), somewhat perceive (M = 2.51-3.25), rarely perceive (M = 1.76-2.50), and not at all perceive (M = 1.00-1.75). The results of respondents' perceptions on the role of EILT are displayed in detail in Table 1.

**Table 1: The EILT Perceptions reported by 15 teacher participants**

| The Four EILT Pillars | 4 Totally Agree (Person) | 3 Somewhat Agree (Person) | 2 Not Sure (Person) | 1 Disagree (Person) | Mean 4.00 | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Linguistic and cultural literacy** | | | | | | |
| 1.1 EILT facilitates learners to learn from other cultures. | 8 | 5 | 2 | - | 3.40 | 0.7 |
| 1.2 EILT encourages learners to acquire and use the pragmatic rules of the target community. | 12 | 3 | - | - | 3.80 | 0.41 |
| 1.3 EILT attempts to replace biculturalism with interculturalism. | 7 | 4 | 4 | - | 3.20 | 0.86 |
| 1.4 EILT encourages learners to acquire cultural heterogenization. | 8 | 7 | - | - | 3.53 | 0.52 |
| 1.5 EILT discusses with learners that learning English preserves the local cultures around the globe. | 5 | 10 | - | - | 3.33 | 0.49 |
| **Revered Questions** | | | | | | |
| 1.6 EILT puts focus on the culture of native English speakers. | 9 | 6 | - | - | 3.60 | 0.51 |
| 1.7 EILT encourages learners to acquire and use the pragmatic rules of native English speakers. | 9 | 6 | - | - | 3.60 | 0.51 |
| 1.8 EILT discusses with learners that learning English threatens the local cultures around the globe. | 11 | 4 | - | - | 3.73 | 0.46 |
| 1.9 EILT considers English globalization as the instrument of linguistic and cultural imperialism, and homogenization. | 13 | 1 | 1 | - | 3.80 | 0.56 |
| **Interpretation of score: Greatly perceive "Linguistic and cultural literacy"** | | | | | **3.56** | **0.56** |

| | 4 Totally Agree (Person) | 3 Somewhat Agree (Person) | 2 Not Sure (Person) | 1 Disagree (Person) | Mean 4.00 | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2. Awareness on the dispossession of English** | | | | | | |
| 2.1 EILT informs learners that English with its many varieties is utilized for a wide range of activities in different fields around the world. | 4 | 10 | 1 | - | 3.20 | 0.56 |
| 2.2 EILT informs learners that English is everybody's language which belongs to all its users around the globe. | 12 | 3 | - | - | 3.80 | 0.41 |
| 2.3 EILT informs learners that English language is going to be influenced by both its native speakers and non-native speakers. | 15 | - | - | - | 4.00 | 0.00 |
| **Revered Questions** | | | | | | |
| 2.4 EILT informs learners that English belongs to native English speakers. | 14 | 1 | - | - | 3.93 | 0.26 |
| 2.5 EILT informs learners that the English language is going to be influenced by its native speakers | 9 | 6 | - | - | 3.60 | 0.51 |
| **Interpretation of score: Greatly perceive "Awareness on the dispossession of English"** | | | | | **3.71** | **0.35** |
| **3. EIL interpretation** | | | | | | |
| 3.1 EILT discusses with learners about the role of the English language plays in the world and in neighboring countries. | 15 | - | - | - | 4.00 | 0.00 |
| 3.2 EILT encourages learners to relate themselves to the international community as a whole rather than any particular L2 group. | 12 | 3 | - | - | 3.80 | 0.41 |
| **Revered Questions** | | | | | | |
| 3.3 EILT raises its significance in enhancing relationship with the owner of the English language. | 12 | - | 1 | 2 | 3.47 | 1.13 |
| **Interpretation of score: Greatly perceive "EIL interpretation"** | | | | | **3.76** | **0.51** |
| **4. Proud localism** | | | | | | |
| 4.1 EILT discusses with learners that English language should be used as a means to present learners' language and culture and concerns to others around the globe. | 4 | 9 | 2 | - | 3.13 | 0.64 |
| 4.2 EILT discusses with learners that globalization is culminated in localization. | 3 | 8 | 4 | - | 2.93 | 0.70 |
| **Revered Questions** | | | | | | |
| 4.3 EILT emphasizes learners with an essence of local culture of native English speakers. | 12 | - | 1 | 2 | 3.47 | 1.13 |
| **Interpretation of score: Somewhat perceive "Proud localism"** | | | | | **3.18** | **0.82** |
| **Overall interpretation of score: Greatly perceive the role of EILT** | | | | | **3.55** | **0.56** |

The results from Table 1 showed that 15 teachers who responded to the EILT Perceptions questionnaire greatly perceived "Linguistic and cultural literacy", "Awareness on the dispossession of English", and "EIL Interpretation" (M=3.56, 3.71, and 3.76, respectively). Though participants

somewhat perceived "Proud localism" (M=3.18), the overall picture revealed that they were greatly perceived the role EILT (M=3.55).

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do Thai tertiary English language teachers practice English as an international language teaching?

At this stage, one male and four female participants agreed to participate in an individual semi-structured interview. Their ages were between 35-58 years old with 6 up to 22 years of English teaching experience. Two of them held a doctor's degree from English-speaking countries majoring in Curriculum and Instruction, and English while the rest held a master's degree in Thailand majoring in Teaching English, and Applied Linguistics. All the five volunteered participants reported greatly perceived the role of EILT (M = 3.26 - 4.00). The results from their semi-structured interviews are presented under the four EILT pillars—"Linguistic and cultural literacy", "Awareness on the dispossession of English", "EIL interpretation", and "Proud localism".

For the first EILT pillar— "Linguistic and cultural literacy":

Participants' practices on this EILT pillar were revealed through two out of seven questions—Question#1, *"How do you do to facilitate your students' cultural literacy?"*, and Question#2 *"Have you ever discussed with your students that an increasing interest in learning the English language today threaten the local languages and cultures around the globe?"*

Regarding question#1, most of the teacher participants reported that they mainly shared their cultural experiences from both English and non-English speaking countries to students with the hope to help them aware of cultural diversities in different countries (see an example answer in Excerpt 1).

*Excerpt 1:*

*"My students can learn a lot from me because I had been living in Australia before. I also have a lot of experience traveling to various countries both in Europe and Asia. So I often tell them about how I lived my life abroad, giving them several interpretations of verbal and non-verbal language the local people use, and of course the culture shock I faced in several parts of the world."*

However, one teacher claimed that she tried to provide students with vocabularies and situations that reflected NS's cultures to help them become culturally literate (see Excerpt 2).

*Excerpt 2:*

*"I add some vocabularies that reflect different cultural linguistics such as American say football but they mean American football while the English say soccer which means football. Besides, I explain some situations that enhance more knowledge of native English speakers' culture to my students to develop their cultural literacy."*

Question#2, *"Have you ever discussed with your students that an increasing interest in learning the English language today threatens the local languages and cultures around the globe?"*

The entire five teacher participants had never discussed with their students regarding this issue. For them, learning the culture of NS is part of English teaching to show that those cultures differ from home culture. It was marked that one teacher stressed on teaching home culture to her students than other cultures (see Excerpt 3).

*Excerpt 3:*

> *"I've never said to my students that increased interest in learning English can destroy local languages and cultures. I don't think it can happen that way. The culture of each nation is unique. Teaching English is to help students use it to communicate with the world successfully. Therefore, English is just a tool, not a weapon to rule over the local language and culture. For me, I spend more time talking about Thai culture than other cultures in my class. This is not because I'm scared that my students will adopt British or American modern cultures into Thai. It is simply because Thai culture is my students' culture which they can truly understand the in-depth meaning of each aspect. It wouldn't be possible for my students to imagine or understand the indirect meanings of native speakers' cultures. Therefore, mentioning Thai culture is my concern for teaching English to my students here."*

Regarding questions#1 and 2, most of the participants agreed that the way they informed diverse cultural knowledge to students can develop their cultural literacy. Discussing home culture was another point one participant performed in her teaching to reassure students' gain genuine understanding on the issue she mentioned. Moreover, the majority of participants insisted that the English language today is not used as an instrument for linguistic and cultural colonialism but global understanding. Nevertheless, they had never discussed with their students that global understanding needs EIL to mediate between diversities of English, not just NS's language.

Participants believed that the local culture of each nation is high prestige but not superior to others. Thus, teaching NS's language and cultures is the way to help students understand that we are different. Given one teacher mainly focused on teaching NS's linguistics and cultures rather than cultivating EIL and interculturalism. She thought that following NS's model can develop students' linguistic and cultural literacy.

In sum, participants did not completely perceive the role of EIL as such they had not fully practiced "Linguistic and cultural literacy" in their teaching. The fact is "Linguistic and cultural literacy" seeks to develop global English language awareness and intercultural competence (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2018). Consequently, teaching biculturalism is satisfying but still not sufficient to develop learners' "Linguistic and cultural literacy" for a globalized society of the 21st century.

For the second EILT pillar—"Awareness on the dispossession of English":

Participants' practices on this pillar were revealed through question#3—*"Which nation is the current owner of the English language?" And which English accent do you prefer to hear from your students?"* Some participants' answers were exhibited in Excerpts 4 and 5.

*Excerpt 4:*

> *"I guess it is owned by the UK and US. It's pretty hard for students here to imitate British or American accents. So I always tell my students that I don't prefer to hear any particular accents from them. It's their choice! What I expect from them is proper pronunciation. For me, whether Thai, British, or American accents are fine as long as they can negotiate meaning when speaking English."*

*Excerpt 5:*

> *"I think no one owns spoken English language today because many people speak it. So it is changed by several speakers every day. But standard English which is used for formal or academic purposes is owned by the UK and US. These two forms of the standard are accepted universally. For accent, I told my students that*

*any accents that help them communicate with foreigners successfully are acceptable.
People today are more concerned on how to understand each other than listening to
what accent the other use."*

To answer question#3, three participants mainly viewed the English language as a property of the United Kingdoms (UK), and the United States (US) while one participant viewed that the English language is owned by all the English-speaking countries. There was only one participant who specified that spoken English belongs to no one else because it is daily spoken and changed by diverse English users in plenty areas of the world. This participant further stated that the written form of the English language is merely owned by the UK and the US as Standard English.

In response to the probe question, all of the participants expressed that they informed students to aware that the key success in English communication is an ability to negotiate of meaning, not native liked accents. In brief, the majority of participants in this study may fail to acknowledge students that English is used for a wide range of activities around the world so that English equally belongs to everyone who uses it effectively. Therefore, participants in this study declined to raise students' "Awareness on the dispossession of English".

For the third EILT pillar—"EIL interpretation":

Participants' practices on this pillar were revealed through question#4—*"Have you ever discussed with students about the global significance of English? And How?"* Some participants' practices were shown in Excepts 6 and 7.

### Excerpt 6:

*"Sure, I have. I often share my abroad experiences so they realize that English is really important for us to survive in this digital and technology world. Everyone indeed wishes to progress in their future careers. Without having English communication skills, they may find it difficult to deal a business with foreign stakeholders or customers. They may lose benefits or good opportunities in their lives. Therefore, I always tell my students to be alert to learn English."*

### Excerpt 7:

*"Yes, I have. I like to tell my students that people use English worldwide. So it is the world language. I told them that I lived in France before and whenever I stepped out of France I wouldn't survive without speaking English. I also told them that all kinds of knowledge and information are loaded on on-line search engines in English, so the lack of English literacy slowdowns their progress."*

The overall picture showed that teacher participants tended to apply "EIL interpretation" in their classroom. Some example excerpts displayed that participants were able to interpret and emphasize the global significance of English to their students. They capture a tendency to relate students' lives to international demands such as enhancing good opportunities for future careers and living life smartly in the digital world.

For the fourth EILT pillar—"Proud localism":

Participants' practices on this pillar were revealed through question#5—*"Have you ever discussed with your students whether the destination of EILT is globalization or localization?"*

Three out of five teacher participants had never discussed the aim of EILT with their students. They perceived that EILT inclines to be about globalization. They rarely found that the destination of EILT is localization (see an example answer in Excerpt 8).

*Excerpt 8:*

> *"I've never discussed with my students that the destination of EILT is globalization or localization. However, I'm sure that localization is not the destination of EILT as EILT aims to promote globalization."*

Notwithstanding, two teacher participants somewhat encouraged their students to aware that English plays important role in both global and local contexts (see Excerpts 9, 10).

*Excerpt 9:*

> *"I guess yes because I emphasize to my students that English is important both in global and local contexts. For example, when English is used in our country it is used as localization. But, when English is used to communicate outside our country it displays the role of English for globalization."*

*Excerpt 10:*

> *"Not really. I rather tell them to study English to communicate with the people who able to use English. This is going to happen whether in local or international contexts."*

It can be seen that the majority of participants did not practice cultivating "Proud localism" in their students. They also misunderstood the purpose of EILT by purely interpreted its role as globalization and civilization that bring learners away from the locality. Furthermore, they did not seem to see the mutual goal between globalization and localization.

Although some of the participants underlined the significance of English as a tool to communicate with NS and NNS in local and international contexts to their students, they did not touch on EILT's purpose of teaching English to encourage learners to reveal their identity. In another word, they did not facilitate learners to proudly and comfortably use English in an international context without pretending to be the others.

This means that learners should be supported to feel free from NS's model and NS's norms when speaking English because they are not the NS's members. They have the right to speak English with the local accent which is based on their linguistic and cultural difference. Given the English language they speak can convey their national identity to the world. In this case, globalization promotes localization by drawing the world's acceptance and respect for revealing who the speakers are and where they are from.

Reconsidering participants' answers, it is possible that some Thai English language teachers still disregard to equip learners with the ability to use EIL to promote self-identity and "Proud localism". Without introducing the "Proud localism" concept to learners, teachers are much likely to trap NS's norms in their English teaching.

After asking participants about their practices on EILT, the researcher asked them to reflect on their weaknesses and strengths in teaching EIL with Question#6— *"What have been your weaknesses and strengths of teaching EIL?"*

Regarding the weaknesses, four participants remained uncertain about the concept of EILT. Two of them evaluated themselves on the lack of NS's cultural knowledge and pragmatic rule of the NS while another two wished to know plenty of cultural knowledge of the world to teach EIL to their students (see example answers in Excerpts 11, 12).

### Excerpt 11:

*"I need to know more about idioms of the native English speakers so I can explain the indirect meaning to my students. For me, idioms can be one tool to develop students' pragmatic knowledge of the target language. Thus, the lack of idioms knowledge is my limitation to teach EIL."*

### Excerpt 12:

*"I can't learn and teach plenty of cultures in this world. I wish I know a lot of them so I can pass them on to my students."*

There was only one participant that seemed to have more understanding of EILT than the rest of the participants. He attempted to concentrate on familiarizing his students with differences among cultures and the English language used by the global citizens. Yet, he considered himself having doubt about the concept of EILT and desired to learn more about it (see Excerpt 13).

### Excerpt 13:

*"I'm not sure about the concept of teaching EIL. That's my weak point. I have to learn about it. However, what I do is to develop my students with linguistic and cultural awareness as much as I can to familiarize them with English and cultural differences. I do my best to prepare them for the global context."*

Regarding the strengths of teaching EIL, most participants expressed that they attempted to substitute their weaknesses by providing students with cultural information and authentic English conversations as much as they can to prepare students to communicate with anyone who speaks English (see an example answer in Excerpt 14).

### Excerpt 14:

*"As I told you that I try to develop my students with linguistic and cultural awareness as much as I can to make sure that they can use skills and knowledge to communicate with anyone who speaks English. That's my strength."*

Question#7— *"What would you suggest for implementing EILT to tertiary level in Thailand?"*

This question was used to elicit participants' suggestions on EILT that may facilitate Thai learners to become global citizens. Some of their suggestions were reported in Excerpts 15 and 16.

### Excerpt 15:

*"I suggest that applying EILT to tertiary education should begin from the teacher themselves. Tertiary teachers must research on EILT concept to truly aware of its significance and know how to pass on this knowledge and skills to their students. For me, I am still not sure about the concept of EILT. However, I guess EFL teaching is not similar to EILT. EILT tends to learn the language deeply and broadly but EFL teaching lays the ground on a surface knowledge, just like the knowledge of outsiders who are not the owners of the language. To develop students, the university should provide grants for teachers to train or learn international culture overseas which is not limited to English-speaking countries. This will make them acquire EILT knowledge to teach their students."*

*Excerpt 16:*

> *"I think most English teachers have cultural knowledge and experiences. They are aware that language can't be separated from culture. So, they are supposed to add cultures in every English course they teach. EILT is new for me but I'm sure that the concept of EILT is developed for the majority of the world's citizens to be able to use English to communicate globally."*

It was manifest that participants were confused with the concept and principles of EILT. Thus, most of them recommended Thai tertiary English language teachers to develop themselves by learning to aware of the importance of EILT and understanding how to implement it into their classroom to assist learners to become successful communicators in the globalized communities.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### Teachers' perceptions and practices on EILT

The current study used a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview to reveal perceptions and practices toward EILT of Thai tertiary English language teachers. The overall results from the questionnaire informed that the participants greatly perceived the fundamental role of EILT which comprised four pillars—Linguistic and cultural literacy, Awareness on the dispossession of English, EIL interpretation, and Proud localism. However, they were dubious about how to integrate EILT into practices.

As for the semi-structured interview, the results revealed that participants did not completely perceive the role of EIL. They had ambiguities in interpreting and practicing on the four EILT pillars. To elaborate, they did not fully instill "Linguistic and cultural literacy" in their student. NS's norms played a key role in their classroom in which biculturalism and bilingualism dominated the diversity of English and interculturalism.

Although participants in this study did not expect to hear the UK or US accents from their students as long as students can use English to convey meaning, they failed to raise students' "Awareness on the dispossession of English". This is because the majority of them remained to limit English language ownership to the UK and US. It was noticeable that "EIL interpretation" seemed to be the only pillar of EILT that teacher participants applied in their classroom by relating the world demands of English to student's future careers.

Apart from that majority of participants were somewhat underdeveloped to advise the "Proud localism" concept to their students. They could not see that globalization and localization complement each other. Furthermore, they did not encourage learners to feel free from NS's norms when speaking English so that the English learners use may not convey their identity or a story of who they are to the world.

The most serious issue of EILT was that participants were not familiar with the ideology of EILT and considered it as a new language teaching paradigm. One participant even called for overseas training grants from their affiliations to help develop teachers' EILT proficiency that may enable students to become successful global communicators. However, the majority suggested that to develop learners' global citizenship the in-service English teachers themselves should first and foremost begin to learn more about the significances and principles of EILT to implement it effectively in their teaching.

These results are concurrent with Maley (2010) and Matsuda and Matsuda (2018) who indicate that EILT ideology is not commonly recognized by most teaching practitioners and it only sounds familiar to a limited group of researchers. Moreover, the description and interpretation of EILT is the major confrontation with ELT as they do not concurrently share the main aim. While EILT aims

to develop learners to understand the realism of global English language usage and intercultural sensitivity, ELT lays the ground on pursuing learners' language accuracy, fluency, and evaluation that are in accord with NS's model and NS's norms (Jenkins, 2015; Matsuda and Matsuda, 2018). With different interpretations, EIL may be used in the EFL classroom and intercultural contexts by default.

A vital implication for EILT is to cultivate the paradigm shift respecting the current use and users of English to teachers and learners to help them predict distinctive cultural views that are ingrained in English when using EIL for international purposes. With this in mind, they can acquire and achieve new literacy, proficiency, and competency that can engage them in intercultural situations.

Besides, a careful selection of particular teaching frameworks and better team working among EIL curriculum designers, applied linguists, researchers, and practitioners may deliver EILT to be closer and more convenient to teachers. This cooperation can create teacher education programs that sufficiently correspond to the means to incorporate EILT into classroom practices, evaluations, course books, curricula, and ELT pedagogical courses.

**Perceive globally, perform locally, and teach English interculturally in EILT can create several kinds of awareness**

There was a big point to worry about participant's misunderstanding that the high goal of EILT is to support globalization, not localization. The findings pointed out that the development of Thai English language teachers' awareness and perspective on globalization and localization of the English language should be preceded in no time.

As mentioned earlier in the literature review that the final destination of globalization is to encourage localization. Nevertheless, localism is not likely to take root anywhere without a passion to perform it. Each community's member truly has to desire it. Thus, all the teacher practitioners who are not familiar with this ideology may begin to reset their mindsets in perceiving globally, performing locally, and teaching English interculturally.

To perceive globally, perform locally, and teach English interculturally in the classroom, Thai English language teachers may enhance their professional identity by considering using narrative to describe anecdotes, and novels about Thai culture that written or translated into English to inspire learners' self-actualization, cultural self-awareness, and language awareness. As Watkhaolarm (2005)'s study indicates that "Thai English has potential to develop further since English continues to have a strong presence in the professional lives of many Thais" (p. 145).

Besides, it is vital to make learners aware that the use of English is entirely dependent on each local context and practice. Consequently, the national and cultural identity of each country is naturally imbued with the use of their English. Accordingly, teachers need to cherish learners to proud of taking part as local representatives who use English to exhibit the local accent, invaluable wisdom, cultural heritage, and unique locality of their country to be visible to the world.

To this point, the more the English language teachers offer opportunities for these local representatives to communicate in intercultural situations with other English users, the more learners need to make use of pragmatic competence, sociolinguistic skills of dialect differentiation, conversational handling, and communicative strategies (Canagarajah, 2013) to convey their identity and achieve the fruitful shuttling between English varieties. This is truly teaching EIL for intercultural purposes.

Such capabilities that are rooted from perceiving globally, performing locally, and teaching English interculturally tend to gradually improve teachers and learners with an understanding of localization and several kinds of awareness and competencies, such as intercultural awareness, language awareness, linguistic competence, communicative competence, and intercultural

communicative competence. This awareness and competencies are relevant to ELT that can be applied in both the classroom practice and the real-world context.

## CONCLUSION

It is noteworthy to know that the findings in this study yielded the potential problems and challenges EILT poses to Thai academics, theorists, and curriculum designers to look at some particular hindrances from a teaching viewpoint, and call for more actions to help develop frameworks for a more practical utilization to move Thailand's ELT toward EILT.

The findings suggested all relevant stakeholders to investigate and analyze EILT's potentiality and practicality to cultivate its paradigm shift in respect of the prevailing use and users of English to learners. Such cultivation will help them become legitimate owners of English and overcome the English language barrier by knowing that there is no one English fit for all contexts. There is no real-world need for all humans but there are differences when English is used internationally. Those differences therefore should not be criticized as superior or inferior.

To this end, individual English learners will realize that English belongs to them when they use it and hence dignity. Given they will feel free to use English in their way to proudly transmit the uniqueness of the Thais to the world. Such qualifications tend to help learners obtain and achieve new knowledge, attitudes, and skills to engage in the global community.

Last but not least, how EIL is taught needs to be determined by local teacher practitioners who employ their critical consideration in justification for the proper materials and strategies of English instruction under their local circumstances. Therefore, it is imperative for these local teachers to be armed with local wisdom, yet well-informed sufficiently with the ideology and practice of EILT and current trends in ELT to meet both globalized and localized contexts.

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**Table 1: The EILT Perceptions reported by 15 teacher participants**

**4 3 2 1 Mean SD**

**The Four EILT Pillars Totally Somewhat Not Disagree 4.00 Agree Agree Sure**
**(Person) (Person) (Person) (Person)**

**1. Linguistic and cultural literacy**

1.1 EILT facilitates learners to learn from other 8 5 2 - 3.40 0.7 cultures.
1.2 EILT encourages learners to acquire and use 12 3 - - 3.80 0.41 the pragmatic rules of the target community.
1.3 EILT attempts to replace biculturalism with 7 4 4 - 3.20 0.86 interculturalism.
1.4 EILT encourages learners to acquire cultural 8 7 - - 3.53 0.52 heterogenization.
1.5 EILT discusses with learners that learning 5 10 - - 3.33 0.49 English preserves the local cultures around the globe.

**Revered Questions**

1.6 EILT puts focus on the culture of native 9 6 - - 3.60 0.51 English speakers.
1.7 EILT encourages learners to acquire and use 9 6 - - 3.60 0.51 the pragmatic rules of native English speakers.
1.8 EILT discusses with learners that learning 11 4 - - 3.73 0.46 English threatens the local cultures around the globe.
1.9 EILT considers English globalization as 13 1 1 - 3.80 0.56 the instrument of linguistic and cultural imperialism, and homogenization.

**Interpretation of score:** <u>**Greatly perceive "Linguistic and cultural literacy"**</u> <u>**3.56**</u> <u>**0.56**</u>

**4 3 2 1 Mean SD Totally Somewhat Not Disagree 4.00**

**Agree Agree Sure**
**(Person) (Person) (Person) (Person)**

**2. Awareness on the dispossession of English**

2.1 EILT informs learners that English with its 4 10 1 - 3.20 0.56 many varieties is utilized for a wide range of activities in different fields around the world.
2.2 EILT informs learners that English is 12 3 - - 3.80 0.41 everybody's language which belongs to all its users around the globe.
2.3 EILT informs learners that English language is 15 - - - 4.00 0.00 going to be influenced by both its native speakers and non-native speakers.

**Revered Questions**

2.4 EILT informs learners that English belongs to 14 1 - - 3.93 0.26 native English speakers.
2.5 EILT informs learners that the English language 9 6 - - 3.60 0.51 is going to be influenced by its native speakers

**Interpretation of score:** <u>**Greatly perceive "Awareness on the dispossession of English"**</u> <u>**3.71**</u> <u>**0.35**</u> **3. EIL interpretation**

3.1 EILT discusses with learners about the role of 15 - - - 4.00 0.00 the English language plays in the World and in neighboring countries.
3.2 EILT encourages learners to relate themselves 12 3 - - 3.80 0.41 to the international community as a whole Rather than any particular L2 group.

**Revered Questions**

3.3 EILT raises its significance in enhancing 12 - 1 2 3.47 1.13 relationship with the owner of the English language.

**Interpretation of score: <u>Greatly perceive "EIL interpretation"</u> <u>3.76</u> <u>0.51</u> 4. Proud localism**

4.1 EILT discusses with learners that English 4 9 2 - 3.13 0.64 language should be used as a means to present learners' language and culture and concerns to others around the globe.
4.2 EILT discusses with learners that globalization 3 8 4 - 2.93 0.70 is culminated in localization.

**Revered Questions**

4.3 EILT emphasizes learners with an essence of 12 - 1 2 3.47 1.13 local culture of native English speakers.

**Interpretation of score: <u>Somewhat perceive "Proud localism"</u> <u>3.18</u> <u>0.82</u> Overall interpretation of score:**

**Greatly perceive the role of EILT 3.55 0.56**