

Persian-Speaking Teachers' Perspectives on Methods and Materials for Teaching English as an International Language¹

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Abstract

Despite the global spread of English, it seems that voices from Persian-speaking teachers concerning English as an international language (EIL) teaching methods and materials are underrepresented. The present study set out to explore how nonnative Persian-speaking English language teachers respond to the increasing global dominance of EIL and native- and non-native-speakers' language norms within the general paradigm of ELT. Questionnaires and interviews were used to explore 210 teachers' beliefs about language teaching materials and methods in the context of EIL. Findings showed that the teachers noticed the need to expose English language learners to both native and nonnative varieties of English. Furthermore, the teachers acknowledged the significance of using standard English for language instruction. They seemed to be open to nonnative varieties of English, as they expressed their concern for what is communicatively acceptable. Findings contribute to our understanding of requisite language pedagogy in the EIL context.

Keywords: Nonnative Teachers; Teacher Beliefs; Language Pedagogy; English as an International Language (EIL)

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1. Introduction

The long-held ELT practices, as McKay (2002) argues, have been informed by native-speaker models and derived from the cultures of native-speakers. Whereas educators have come to recognize the global forces of English as an international language (EIL), Modiano (2009) maintains that native-speakerism has remained a dominant ideology in ELT practices. Furthermore, Kumaravadivelu (2016) notes that “all the center-based methods are clearly linked to native-speakerism. That is, they promote the native-speaker’s presumed language competence, learning styles, communication patterns, conversational maxims, cultural beliefs, and even accent as the norm to be learned and taught” (p. 8). In arguing this, Kumaravadivelu highlights the status of non-native-speakers to reconsider and reevaluate the politics of current dominant teaching methodologies and to develop principles and approaches that “take into account the local historical, political, social, cultural, and educational exigencies” (p. 16).

Teaching methods and materials primarily depend on the acknowledgment of the standard variety of English and/or nonnative local varieties. If pedagogical principles are based on the primacy of inner circle English (standard English), the decisions that major stakeholders, namely policymakers, syllabus designers, materials developers, teacher trainers, teachers, and learners, make will be rather different from those in a system that is oriented toward regional and local norms. The issue that has received increasing attention in EIL studies is the question of native- and non-native-speakers’ language norms within the general paradigm of ELT and the implications of this for the choice of international English pedagogy. However, it seems that it is not a debate in which the voices of nonnative Persian-speaking English language teachers about the teaching methods and material for EIL pedagogy have been heard. Therefore, the cultural and contextual realities need to be reconsidered from the perspectives of teachers in order to promote effective ELT principles and practices.

2. Literature Review

Central to the spread of English is the local spirit of language, alongside its obvious position as a global language, to serve the diverse local needs of multilingual and multicultural communities of EIL learners. It is this global appropriacy, as suggested by Alptekin (2002), with a local flavor that concerns EIL research. Nowadays, myriad varieties of the language are appearing, which are commonly referred to as World Englishes (Kubota & Ward, 2000). These varieties are extremely diverse, reflect local and indigenous cultures and languages (Yano, 2001), and differ from standard English (SE) in pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary, and discourse styles (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008). Many countries, including India,

Singapore, Nigeria, and China, have indigenized English (Kilickaya, 2004) to express their cultural values and identities (Yano, 2001). Thus, it remains to explore whether EIL would be a language that is acceptable and intelligible to EFL learners and teachers. This would seem to be the goal of EIL research, wherein native and nonnative models are required to be provided for teaching EIL.

The prevalent assumption that should inform EIL curriculum is “global thinking and local teaching” (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996, p. 200). For Kramsch and Sullivan, EIL teaching materials need to address the global concerns and be sensitive to the local cultural context. A key to the way forward, as suggested by Brown (2012), is to introduce different varieties other than American and British English in ELT materials which tend to expose students to a variety of norms and standards. Thus, along with a break from a native-speaker model, English varieties are a manifestation of different cultural and linguistic values.

To promote an awareness of both local and global concerns when teaching English as a global language, Brown (2012) calls for a break from the tradition of dependency on a native-speaker model and argues that, for decades, curriculum developers have assumed that students need to learn the English of native-speakers. In its place, Brown suggests various ways to develop EIL curriculum, including the use of “global appropriacy and local appropriation” (Alptekin, 2002, p. 63) to enable learners to become global and local speakers of English. Moreover, Matsuda (2012) argues that ELT materials should support and promote “awareness of and sensitivity toward differences—in forms, uses, and users—and learn to respect (or, at least, tolerate) those differences” (p. 170). Taken together, there is a need to promote appreciation for both local and global concerns in language teaching methods and materials in the context of EIL.

The literature to date (e.g., Jenkins, 2005; Llorca, 2007; Murray, 2003; Tajeddin, Alemi, & Pashmforoosh, 2018; Tajeddin & Eslamdoost, 2019; Young & Walsh, 2010) has revealed that nonnative teachers show a preference for the native model. They accept the native-speaker as a source of authority (Tsui & Bunton, 2000). According to Groom (2012), it can be argued that the teachers opt for the native-speaker ideology. The findings of earlier research (e.g., Young & Walsh, 2010) pointed out that teachers are unaware of the diversity of Englishes and the implications of this for language teaching pedagogy. They show that the teachers are reluctant to choose a variety of English to teach in the EIL context. According to Sifakis (2004), the nonnative teachers are norm-bound and are in favor of the native-speaker standards. Similarly, Groom (2012) found that the nonnative teachers encourage students to sound like native-speakers and promote the native-like accent.

An increased interest in the pedagogy of EIL, as Matsuda and Friedrich (2011) acknowledged, needs to explore the teachers' beliefs about ELT methods and materials in the context of EIL. As such, the changing pedagogical practices entail reevaluation of ELT practices to revisit the fundamental assumptions of EIL teaching practices. As a result, it appears that EIL teaching methods and materials from the perspective of major stakeholders (i.e., teachers, learners, materials developers, and policymakers) have received little attention in earlier empirical studies. Against this backdrop, the present research sought to explore how Persian-speaking English language teachers respond to the increasing global need for EIL-aware teaching methods and materials. Therefore, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are Persian-speaking English language teachers' beliefs about the teaching methods in the context of EIL?
2. What are Persian-speaking English language teachers' beliefs about the teaching materials in the context of EIL?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

A total of 210 Iranian English teachers took part in this study. Ranging in age from 24 to 52, the teachers consisted of 68 males and 142 females. The participants were all English language instructors in private English language institutes in Iran, where English language learners enrolled in noncompulsory English courses to learn EFL. The teachers taught different course levels, ranging from elementary to advanced courses. As to their educational backgrounds, 176 teachers were undergraduates and graduates of the English-related fields of study (83.8%) and 34 were non-English majors (16.2%). Most had not been to a foreign country ($N = 191$), and they all spoke Persian as their L1. As displayed in Table 1, the teachers had different years of teaching experience. They were categorized into two groups of less experienced teachers ($n = 93$), below five years of teaching, and more experienced ($n = 117$), over 5 years. Table 1 depicts the relevant characteristics of the teachers:

Table 1. *Teachers' Profile Summary*

| Variables | Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Degree | B.A. | 100 | 47.6% |
| | M.A. | 81 | 38.6% |
| | Ph.D. | 29 | 13.8% |
| | Total | 210 | 100% |
| Field of Study | English | 176 | 83.8% |
| | Non-English | 34 | 16.2% |
| | Total | 210 | 100% |

| | | | |
|--|-----------|-----|-------|
| Gender | Male | 68 | 32.4% |
| | Female | 142 | 67.6% |
| | Total | 210 | 100% |
| Years of Teaching English | 1-5 years | 93 | 44.3% |
| | 6+ | 117 | 55.7% |
| | Total | 210 | 100% |
| Residence in an English-Speaking Country | No | 191 | 91% |
| | Yes | 19 | 9% |
| | Total | 210 | 100% |

3.2. Instruments

To investigate the teachers' perceptions of EIL-aware teaching methods and materials, we developed a questionnaire based on the existing literature and also used semistructured interviews. The survey was designed and piloted for reliability and validity checks. It was, then, administered, accompanied by interviews to have an in-depth understanding of the teachers' beliefs about EIL methods and materials. In what follows, the two instruments are described.

3.2.1. The Questionnaire

Consisting of 39 items, the questionnaire focused on the exploration of teachers' beliefs about methods and materials for teaching EIL. Teachers' beliefs were investigated through different items on a 5-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). The questionnaire consisted of two subsections, addressing teachers' perceptions of (a) EIL teaching methods (30 items) and (b) EIL teaching materials (9 items). The items explored whether the teachers agreed or disagreed that English language learners should be taught to communicate intelligibly (i.e., in an understandable way), rather than following native-speaker norms, or whether ELT textbooks should exemplify the language norms of both native English and nonnative varieties of English. The first step in developing the questionnaire was to review the status of EIL in Iran, which is considered to be within the expanding circle. The diversity and complexity of using English internationally has resulted in more attention to appropriate interactions between non-native-speakers of English, whether sharing the same culture or not, as well as between native- and non-native-speakers of English. Dealing with the interaction types could form the basis for investigation of appropriate interaction between two non-native-speakers (NNS-NNS) or between two native- and non-native-speakers (NS-NNS). These interaction types informed the development of a few questionnaire items.

The questionnaire, originally developed for the purpose of this study, was piloted on the EFL teachers. As to the pilot phase, the items underwent expert reviews and were also read by a few teachers to receive their comments on the content of each item and its intelligibility. Next, the questionnaire was administered to 42 teachers.

The reliability index was also calculated using Cronbach's alpha. The results showed an acceptable reliability coefficient of .78 for the EIL teaching methods section of the questionnaire and .75 for the EIL teaching materials section of the questionnaire.

3.2.2. Interviews

The semistructured interviews were conducted with 35 teachers who agreed to participate. The notion of World Englishes provided the major conceptual framework for the development of seven interview questions to explore the teachers' perspectives on ELT methods and materials in the context of EIL. The interviews were conducted after the administration of the questionnaire, and the interview questions were similar to the questionnaire items in content in order to triangulate the data.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection was conducted in three phases: In the first phase, the questionnaire was piloted before use, and the results were subjected to validity and reliability checks. In the second phase, the main questionnaire study was conducted. A total of 210 EFL teachers were asked to fill out the demographic survey and the EIL questionnaire after their regular classroom hours. The respondents to the questionnaire were given consent forms before their participation. First, two experts were asked to give their comments on the content of each questionnaire item. The questionnaire was also pilot tested on 42 EFL teachers. As to the pilot phase, the teachers read the questionnaire items and gave their comments on the content of each item. Based on their feedback, certain items were reworded and some were added. Next, the items with low item-total correlation values (less than .3) were removed. The reliability was calculated, using an index of internal consistency of Cronbach's alpha.

Each teacher was interviewed individually and the interviews were conducted in English. A neutral position was also adopted during the interview about issues related to World Englishes and language pedagogy in EIL. The interviews lasted 30 min for each individual teacher. The interview consisted of seven questions, which corresponded to the main themes of the questionnaire. The notion of EIL-aware methods and materials provided the major conceptual framework for the development of interview questions to shed light on the teachers' understanding. As suggested by Kachru, Kachru, and Nelson (2006), the main theme is the existence of multiple norms of English in multilingual settings. The interview questions were considered as a starting point for a discussion so that the teachers were encouraged to express their views and real concerns about the topic.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the collected data were conducted. Descriptive statistics, including mean values, standard deviation, and measures of symmetry for the normality of distribution, were used for each of the items, and frequency counts were calculated as percentages. Reliability indices of Cronbach's coefficient alpha were calculated for each of the two sections of the questionnaire in this study. Interview transcriptions were analyzed for a better understanding of teachers' beliefs. A systematic coding approach, as proposed by Creswell (2012), was also adopted to extract the recurring themes of teachers' interviews. Drawing on Creswell's coding, we arrived at themes by comparison within a single interview and between interviews within the same group and/or different groups. The recurring themes from the teachers' interviews continued to be coded until there were no changes. Finally, a cross-analysis of the questionnaire data with the interview was conducted. For interview content analysis, Cohen's Kappa coefficient was calculated. An index of reliability between independent coders for interview content analysis, Cohen's Kappa coefficient was calculated. An index of reliability between independent coders was found to be .78, which is a good level of agreement. According to Peat (2001), a value above .70 represents good agreement.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Teachers' Perceptions of EIL Teaching Methods

4.1.1. Questionnaire findings

To probe the teachers' perspectives on EIL teaching methods and materials, the teachers' responses to each item of the questionnaire was analyzed. As shown in Table 2, the highest mean was for item # 16 ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.73$), suggesting that the teachers believed the native-speakers' norms of correct grammar should be taught to English language learners. Furthermore, over 70% of the teachers appreciated the spread of EIL, as many expressed a strong preference for teaching EIL for communication with both native- and non-native-speakers of English (item # 1, $M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.93$). Among the items with the highest means, the teachers accepted that English language learners should be taught to communicate intelligibly, that is, in an understandable way, rather than following native-speaker norms (item # 2, $M = 3.88$, $SD = .93$). In addition, the results revealed that 77% of teachers believed successful non-native-speakers of English can be a good model for language learners (item # 6, $M = 3.85$, $SD = .83$). As to the cultural norms of native-speakers of English, it was found that 67% agreed and 16% strongly agreed that the teachers should pay attention to those native cultural norms which conflict with learners' own culture (item # 24, $M = 3.89$, $SD = .80$). The teachers also agreed that English language learners should be encouraged to think critically about native-speaker culture in terms of its appropriateness for their own local contexts rather than accepting it (item # 26, $M =$

3.86, $SD = .89$). Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the teachers' perceptions of EIL teaching methods:

Table 2. *Teachers' Responses to EIL Teaching Methods Questionnaire*

| | 1 (%) | 2 (%) | 3 (%) | 4 (%) | 5 (%) | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| English language learners may learn English for communication with both native- and non-native-speakers of English. | 2.5 | 8 | 5.5 | 56 | 28 | 3.99 | 0.93 |
| English language learners should be taught to communicate intelligibly (i.e., in an understandable way), rather than following native-speaker norms. | 2 | 9 | 8 | 59 | 22 | 3.88 | 0.93 |
| As English is no longer limited to the native-speaker variety, learners should learn the language norms of both native and nonnative varieties of English. | 5.5 | 33 | 24 | 31 | 6.5 | 2.99 | 1.07 |
| A native-speaker is the best model for teaching language norms in English language classrooms. | 5 | 14 | 23 | 45 | 13 | 3.46 | 1.05 |
| A native-speaker is the best model for teaching cultural norms in English language classrooms. | 8.5 | 21.5 | 17 | 44 | 9 | 3.23 | 1.14 |
| Successful non-native-speakers of English can be a good model for language learners. | 1 | 7 | 15 | 60 | 17 | 3.85 | 0.83 |
| English language learners should be taught native-speaker accent (e.g., British or American accent) as the only correct model. | 6 | 14 | 12 | 47 | 12 | 3.61 | 1.15 |
| In every country where a nonnative variety of English is used, local accent should be taught. | 11 | 44 | 28 | 15 | 2 | 2.55 | 0.96 |
| English language learners should be taught nonnative varieties of English (e.g., Indian English and Singaporean English) for effective international communication. | 12 | 50 | 21 | 15 | 2 | 2.46 | 0.96 |
| English language learners should be exposed to nonnative varieties of English (e.g., Indian English and Singaporean English) from the elementary level. | 12 | 45 | 5 | 24 | 4 | 2.58 | 1.15 |
| English language learners should be taught intelligible (i.e., comprehensible) pronunciation, rather than native-like pronunciation. | 10 | 38 | 14 | 28 | 10 | 2.89 | 1.21 |
| English language learners should be taught intelligible (i.e., comprehensible) grammar and phrases, rather than native-like ones. | 15 | 40 | 15 | 25 | 5 | 2.65 | 1.16 |
| English language learners may get confused if they are exposed to different nonnative varieties of English. | 4 | 14 | 14 | 50 | 18 | 3.65 | 1.05 |
| English language learners should be exposed to both native- and non-native-speaker accents. | 5 | 22 | 18 | 41 | 14 | 3.35 | 1.14 |
| English language learners should be exposed to local nonnative English words and expressions not used by native-speakers. | 12 | 46 | 31 | 8 | 3 | 2.44 | 0.94 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|----|----|------|------|
| English language learners should learn native-speaker norms of correct grammar. | 2 | 3 | 5 | 72 | 18 | 4.00 | 0.73 |
| English language learners should learn to speak appropriately in English more than being grammatically correct when communicating with other speakers of English. | 2 | 16 | 16 | 58 | 8 | 3.54 | 0.92 |
| English language learners should abandon their own L1 language norms in order to acquire language norms of native-speakers of English. | 12.5 | 31 | 24.5 | 27 | 5 | 2.79 | 1.12 |
| English language learners should abandon their own L1 cultural norms in order to acquire cultural norms of native-speakers of English. | 25 | 45 | 15 | 13 | 2 | 2.21 | 1.03 |
| English language learners should be exposed to both native-speaker language norms as well as language norms of nonnative varieties of English. | 7.5 | 36.5 | 19 | 31 | 6 | 2.90 | 1.10 |
| English language learners should be exposed to both native-speaker cultural norms as well as the cultures of other nonnative English speakers. | 2 | 21 | 25 | 44 | 8 | 3.34 | 0.98 |
| Teachers should make English language learners conscious of their own linguistic norms. | 1.5 | 10.5 | 34 | 45 | 9 | 3.50 | 0.89 |
| Teachers should make English language learners conscious of their own cultural norms. | 1 | 14 | 25 | 47 | 13 | 3.57 | 0.95 |
| Teachers should pay attention to those native - speaker cultural norms which conflict with learners' own cultural norms. | 2 | 5 | 10 | 67 | 16 | 3.89 | 0.80 |
| English language learners should only learn the cultural norms of native-speakers of English. | 11 | 35 | 14 | 32 | 8 | 2.89 | 1.20 |
| English language learners should be encouraged to think critically about native-speaker culture in terms of its appropriateness for their own local contexts, rather than accepting it. | 1 | 9 | 17 | 50 | 23 | 3.86 | 0.89 |
| English language learners should modify their own language norms to establish mutual linguistic understanding when communicating with other speakers of English. | 1 | 18 | 22 | 50 | 9 | 3.48 | 0.92 |
| English language learners should modify their own cultural norms to establish mutual intercultural understanding when communicating with other speakers of English. | 3 | 24 | 24 | 45 | 4 | 3.22 | 0.98 |
| It is appropriate for English language learners to transfer their own language norms for international communication. | 3 | 32 | 29 | 34 | 2 | 2.98 | 0.93 |
| It is appropriate for English language learners to transfer their own cultural norms for international communication. | 3 | 20 | 35 | 38 | 4 | 3.20 | 0.91 |
| Total | | | | | | 3.30 | 0.31 |

Furthermore, the lowest mean was for item # 19 in which 46% disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed that English language learners need to abandon their own L1 cultural norms in order to acquire the cultural norms of native-speakers ($M = 2.21$,

SD = 1.03). The results also show that the second lowest mean was for item # 15, suggesting that 58% of the teachers disagreed with the statement that English language learners should be exposed to local nonnative English words and expressions not used by native-speakers. It was also found that the second lowest mean was for item # 9 (*M* = 2.46, *SD* = .96), in which over 60% of the teachers disagreed that English language learners should be taught nonnative varieties of English for effective international communication. The results also indicated that item # 8 was among the items with the lowest means in which 44% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed that English language learners should be taught the local accent in every country where a nonnative variety of English is used. Accordingly, over 40% of the teachers disagreed that English language learners should be taught intelligible (i.e., comprehensible pronunciation), rather than native-like pronunciation.

The 39 items measuring the teachers' perceptions of EIL pedagogy were also subjected to principal component analysis (PCA). The suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed, using KMO and Bartlett's Test. Inspection of correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .76 (above .6), exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1974), and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached the significant value (*Sig.* = .000), supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix (see Table 3):

Table 3. *KMO and Bartlett's Test*

| | | |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | .765 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 2378.343 |
| | <i>df</i> | 741 |
| | <i>Sig.</i> | .000 |

The PCA revealed the presence of nine components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 18.51%, 8.39%, 7.60%, 5.62%, 5.30%, 4.99%, 4.60%, 4.14%, and 3.76% of the variance, respectively. These nine components explain a total of 62.95% of the variance. The two-component solution explained a total of 38.78% of the variance, with component 1 contributing 19.54% and component 2 contributing 11.01%. An inspection of scree plot revealed a clear break (an elbow in the shape of plot) after the second component (see Figure 1). Using Catells' scree test, we decided to retain two factors for further investigation:

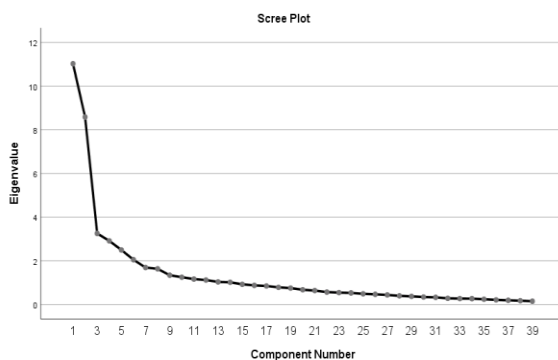


Figure 1. Scree Plot

This was, further, supported by the results of parallel analysis in Table 4, which showed two components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data:

Table 4. Comparison of Eigenvalue From PCA and Criterion Values From Parallel Analysis

| Component Number | Actual Eigenvalue From PCA | Criterion Value From Parallel Analysis | Decision |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|----------|
| 1 | 4.88 > | 1.92 | Accept |
| 2 | 2.75 > | 1.75 | Accept |

To aid in the interpretation of these two components, oblimin rotation was performed. The rotated solution revealed the presence of a structure, with both components showing a number of strong loadings substantially on two components.

4.1.2. Interview findings

The interviews were conducted to obtain a more detailed picture of the teachers' beliefs about language norms for EIL-aware methods. Interview transcripts were analyzed for the main themes in the interview content. Content analysis was considered appropriate for analyzing the qualitative data coming from the teachers' responses. A systematic coding method was adopted to extract the recurring themes emerging from the interviews. Several comments from the teachers' responses to interview questions were coded. The themes were extracted through comparison within each individual teacher's responses and between the responses from different participants. We continued to extract the codes from the interviews until there was no change in the emerging data. The teachers' responses derived from the interview data show their belief in (a) the significance of using standard English for teaching purposes and (b) the need to expose English language learners to non-native-

speakers' accents. In the section 4.1.2.1, the findings are presented along with the excerpts taken from the teachers' interviews.

4.1.2.1. Significance of using Standard English for teaching purposes.

It was found that when it comes to teaching, there is a widely shared aspiration among English language teachers for native-based standard English, rather than localized varieties. Most teachers believed that the standard variety of English, that is, American English or British English, should be the dominant educational model for English language learners. They maintained that the core materials need to be based on native-speakers' English and the supplementary materials might include other native and nonnative varieties of English. T20 and T26, respectively, commented:

- *English should not be limited to the marginalized sections of society or, let's say, the elite groups. The objectives for teaching English should be directed toward intelligibility of communication. [T20]*
- *At the early stages of language learning, students are equipped with a lot of linguistic resources. There are, in fact, many mismatches between the phonological features of students' mother tongue and English language. It is a matter of time and practice that the students become acquainted with unfamiliar sound systems and words. [T26]*

One of the teachers emphasized that the correct model is native-speaker English. T5 and T20 reflected on this:

- *It is confusing to expose English learners to different varieties that used in English today. [T5]*
- *Native English should be taught to English language learners so as not to make learning English even more difficult and confusing. After that native English is learned and, then, the students can learn other varieties of English. [T20]*

Very similar findings were obtained regarding a variety of native and nonnative Englishes where teachers opted for standard American or British English as the core instructional models. The results of earlier studies (e.g., Jenkin, 2005; Sifakis, 2004; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005) indicate that the teachers who aspire to native-based English regard standard American or British English as prestigious and socially acceptable varieties for English instruction. Most teachers believed that the standard version of English is the one that should be taught to English language learners. T8 and T12 commented:

- *I believe the native English should be taught to ELLs because that is the English that will be most useful. [T8]*

- *The proper American English should be taught because it will help students in their life better.* [T12]

4.1.2.2. *The need to expose English language learners to non-native-speakers' accent.*

Another theme emerging from the teachers' interview responses revealed their belief in the value of exposing native-speakers to different varieties of English to emphasize the importance of diversity and to build their awareness to acknowledge these differences. For instance, T9 stated:

- *I think it is good to teach different accents because students are more than likely be exposed to it in the real world anyway.* [T9]

Echoing the same idea, T22 maintained:

- *The English accents could be explained in a class so that all students know they exist.* [T22]

Some teachers believed that all of the English accents should be taught because they are used in the real context of communication. T25, for example, stated:

- *English language learners should be exposed to different varieties of English based on the likelihood that they will interact with a certain population of non-native-speakers.* [T25]

Teaching pedagogy, as Matsuda (2017) argued, should promote the awareness of diversity through the inclusion of varieties of Englishes in language teaching materials. Also, teachers and, above all, learners should be exposed to the diversities that exist in today's English. However, most teachers maintained that learning a variety of native and nonnative accents might be confusing. For example, T26 argued:

- *I think a little bit of everything should be taught to students because you never know what kind of person you may need to know how to communicate with one day. However, I think it could be overwhelming to expose students to too many accents.* [T26]

McKay (2002) believes that teaching an international language should address the functional diversities of non-native-speaker norms in addition to the standard native model to make language learners become internationally competent. EIL pedagogy should, then, legitimize the hybridity that characterizes EIL interaction in which both native and nonnative varieties of English are enacted. Moreover, native-speakers' language norms have a significant place in EIL pedagogy in which there is a need to highlight standard English while acknowledging the diversities. English language pedagogy should reflect the spread of EIL, in part through the

inclusion of varieties of Englishes in teaching methods and materials. The diversities of native and nonnative varieties of English as a major characteristic of EIL should be reflected in language pedagogy.

4.2. Teachers' Perceptions of EIL Teaching Materials

The second research question aimed at probing the teachers' beliefs about EIL teaching textbooks and materials. The second subsection of the questionnaire focused on the teachers' responses regarding the status of EIL teaching textbooks and materials. As shown in Table 5, item # 6 had the highest mean of 4.01, revealing that most teachers (60% = Agree, 26% = Strongly Agree) believed that ELT materials should include activities based on not only native-speaker situations but also international situations. Items # 5 and 9 received the second highest rating of 3.94, with over 70% of the teachers agreeing with the statements that (a) ELT textbooks should equip learners with communication skills they need for successful communication with both native- and non-native-speakers (item # 5, 63% = Agree, 20% = Strongly Agree), and (b) ELT textbooks should reflect the cultures of both native- and non-native-speakers to help intercultural understanding (item # 9, 51% = Agree, 27% = Strongly Agree). Moreover, the results suggest that over 70% of the teachers believed that ELT textbooks should exemplify not only the interactions between two native-speakers but also the interactions between two non-native-speakers (item # 3, 56% = Agree, 18% = Strongly Agree). Whereas the teachers appreciated the spread of EIL, it appears that many of them believed the cultures of both native- and non-native-speakers should be presented in ELT textbooks. As Table 5 shows, 48% disagreed and 17% strongly disagreed with the statement that ELT textbooks should only reflect the culture of native-speakers (item # 8, $M = 2.35$, $SD = 1.00$). The results show that the second lowest mean was for item # 4 ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.06$) in which only 33% of the teachers agreed that ELT textbooks used in a particular local context should reflect the use of English by two non-native-speakers both from the same context (e.g., two Persian speakers of English):

Table 5. Teachers' Responses to EIL Teaching Materials Questionnaire

| | 1 (%) | 2 (%) | 3 (%) | 4 (%) | 5 (%) | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| ELT textbooks should exemplify the language norms of both native English (e.g., British English and American English) and nonnative varieties of English (e.g., Indian English and Singaporean English). | 5 | 23 | 18 | 42 | 12 | 3.29 | 1.14 |
| 2. ELT textbooks should help learners develop the ability to understand nonnative varieties of English. | 2.5 | 15.5 | 18 | 50 | 14 | 3.57 | .99 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|------|------|
| 3. ELT textbooks should exemplify not only the interactions between two native-speakers but also the interactions between two non-native-speakers. | 1 | 10 | 15 | 56 | 18 | 3.77 | .94 |
| 4. ELT textbooks used in a particular local context should reflect the use of English by two non-native-speakers both from the same context (e.g., two Persian speakers of English). | 7 | 30 | 30 | 28 | 5 | 2.92 | 1.06 |
| 5. ELT textbooks should equip learners with communication skills they need for successful communication with both native- and non-native-speakers. | 1 | 7 | 9 | 63 | 20 | 3.94 | .82 |
| 6. ELT textbooks should include activities based on not only native-speaker situations but also international situations. | 2 | 4 | 8 | 60 | 26 | 4.01 | .88 |
| 7. ELT textbooks should be adapted to meet the local needs of English language learners. | 2 | 12 | 13 | 57 | 16 | 3.70 | .98 |
| 8. ELT textbooks should only reflect the culture of native-speakers. | 17 | 48 | 16 | 18 | 1 | 2.35 | 1.00 |
| ELT textbooks should reflect the cultures of both native- and non-native-speakers of English to help intercultural understanding. | 1 | 8 | 13 | 51 | 27 | 3.94 | .93 |
| Total | | | | | | 3.30 | .31 |

4.2.1. Interview findings

The interviews were conducted to obtain a more detailed picture of the teachers' beliefs about EIL pedagogy. The teachers' responses to the interview questions show their belief in (a) the use of a variety of interaction types in ELT textbooks and (2) the use of L1 culture, L2 culture, and global culture in ELT textbooks. In section 4.2.1.1, the findings are presented along with the excerpts from the teachers' interviews. To ensure the teachers' anonymity, pseudonyms are used for excerpts.

4.2.1.1. Use of a variety of interaction types in ELT textbooks.

The findings revealed that the teachers highlighted the pervasiveness of the interaction between non-native-speakers when using EIL. In view of their responses to this question, the teachers believed that language learners should be primarily exposed to the native-speaker model as NS-NS interactions, that is, the conversation between two native-speakers, provide a correct way of speaking. The inclusion of NS-NS interactions, in the opinion of some teachers, should be the dominant model in English teaching materials. T20, for example, commented:

- *The standard native model should be at the center of EIL context.* [T20]

Most teachers contended that a variety of interaction types, including NS-NS, NS-NNS, and NNS-NNS, should be incorporated in ELT textbooks. A

combination of all three types of interaction could be beneficial for English language learners. For example, T9 said:

- *If there is a voice of non-native-speaker, it may add variety and motivate learners. [T9]*

The teachers recognized the status of EIL and acknowledged that English is nowadays more international. Similarly, T3, emphasizing the need for learning a variety of Englishes, stated:

- *Language learners should be provided with a number of communicative strategies to comprehend the nonnative accents in the English classroom and, thus, a variety of interactions should be given in textbooks. [T3]*

One of the teachers (T2), for example, believed that EIL materials should reflect diverse interactions to get learners familiar with different accents that exist in World Englishes. T2 and T10 maintained:

- *We have different dialects of English. It is beneficial to include different dialects through different interactions between native- and non-native-speakers. [T2]*
- *All varieties of World Englishes should be touched on so students become aware of their existence and know how to respond to an encounter with a speaker of any variety of English. [T10]*

The teachers' interview responses support the need for a variety of interaction types between native- and non-native-speakers in ELT textbooks. The teachers believed that the number of non-native-speakers, nowadays, is more than native-speakers of English. Similarly, as evidenced in earlier research (e.g., Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011), the inclusion of a variety of interaction types as a way to increase learners' awareness of English varieties has been reported. Pedagogically speaking, this provides further support for the claim that developing an ability to use various communication strategies, rather than acquiring native-like communicative competence, is the goal of teaching EIL. Communicative resources and strategies, such as self-repair, clarification, and negotiation, have been studied in previous research on effective instructional models for teaching EIL (McKay, 2009; Murray, 2012). According to Matsuda and Friedrich (2011), a way to increase learners' awareness is to expose them to a variety of interaction types between native- and non-native-speakers in language teaching materials.

4.2.1.2. *Use of L1 culture, L2 culture, and global culture in ELT textbooks.*

English language pedagogy, as the teachers attested, should be localized and adapted to represent the culture of other countries in addition to native-speakers' culture. In fact, in the teachers' opinion, localization is needed to encourage English

learners to retain aspects of their own L1 culture as they learn the culture of native English speakers. T22, for example, stated that:

- *It is very beneficial to understand the differences in culture such as differences in greetings, gift giving and so on. All cultures should be represented equally in English language teaching textbooks. And, I believe that, for example, English culture has no priority over Chinese culture. [T22]*

As evidenced from the findings, the teachers, as non-native-speakers, expressed their desire to retain some aspects of their L1 culture when using English in NS-NNS and NNS-NNS interactions. This is in line with the findings of previous studies (e.g., House, 2003, 2009; Murray, 2012), which demonstrate that the transfer of L1 culture occurs frequently in using EIL. Similarly, T18 argued that:

- *When individuals come from the same culture, the transfer of L1 culture may not be that much problematic. But when they come from different cultures, the transfer of culture should be avoided if it makes difficulties in conveying meaning. [T18]*

The above excerpt prioritizes the role of context in using EIL. The teacher stressed the need for the use of context-specific, rather than native-like culture. The same teacher, further, stated:

- *We are all foreigners and we expect the native-speakers to understand these cultural differences. If you go with Persian cultural norms, for two Persian speakers, there is no problem as far as communication goes well. [T18]*

It seems that, in the teachers' opinion, a kind of flexibility is acceptable with regard to the use of L1 cultural norms when using EIL. The results suggest that the teachers tended to consider non-native-speakers' cultural competence to be on a continuum; therefore, they argued, non-native-speakers should not be forced to observe the culture norms of native-speakers, nor should they be forced to view them as unattainable. Furthermore, most teachers believed that traditional textbooks were mostly influenced by the culture of native-speakers. They noted that the culture of non-native-speakers coming from different language backgrounds should be also represented in ELT textbooks. One of the teachers (T14) argued:

- *It is, in fact, necessary to include the culture of other countries in the textbooks and materials provided for English language learners. It is of great value to familiarize the learners with the culture of the world. All native- and non-native-speakers' cultures should be given equal opportunity for getting introduced, particularly in General English courses. [T14]*

T14 went on further and added:

- *It is important to draw a border line between English for general purposes (EGP) and English for specific purposes (ESP). If the teachers are preparing learners who are to visit China, then it is important to teach the norms of that country, such as Chinese culture. For English for vocational purposes (EVP), it is also important for learners to know the norms of the country they are in negotiation and/or transaction with. [T14]*

Generally, the teachers believed that EIL pedagogy should focus more on the norms that facilitate communication. However, English language learners should be aware of the cultural norms that might be in conflict with their own L1 cultural norms. One of the teachers, T27, stated:

- *In the ESP class or EVOP, it is important for students to know the norms of different countries. But, in EGEP, I think there is no need to introduce the norms of non-native-speakers of English. [T27]*

In addition, T4 added:

- *The materials developers need to focus more on the diverse cultures that exist among various groups of individuals. For example, certain norms are practiced more by the people from the North America and certain are common among those coming from the South. [T4]*

In line with the teachers' responses, McKay (2002) argues that teaching an international language should address the cultural diversities of both native- and non-native-speakers to make language learners become more interculturally competent. In effect, as the English language teachers in the present study maintained, transfer of L1 culture makes English a legitimate variety in communication between native- and non-native-speakers. It needs to be recognized that non-native-speakers use English with a combination of native- and non-native-speakers' culture norms. Moreover, as evidenced in previous studies (e.g., Jenkins, 2000; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005), English language learners were able to retain some aspects of their L1 culture when speaking in English. Therefore, there is a need to establish a common ground where both native- and non-native-speakers can understand each other and negotiate their meaning. Similarly, earlier research (e.g., Shin, Eslami, & Chen, 2011) revealed that the inclusive representation of native-speakers as legitimate users of English language is still a widely shared aspiration among materials developers and textbook writers.

The findings from this study lend support to the claim that the use of a variety of speakers and a variety of Englishes such as American English, Indian English, and Chinese English in ELT materials, as evidenced in other studies (Matsuda, 2012; Yuen, 2011), may be a challenging task for language educators and materials developers. It appears that teaching materials continue to portray mainly

the interaction between native-speakers, that is, the inner-circle users of English, as legitimate users of the language in international communication. This actually leads to the argument in favor of a representation of native-speakers in current global communication encounters, suggesting the sense of ownership of English among native-speakers. Furthermore, previous research (Shin et al., 2011) indicated the dominance of native-speakers' linguistic and cultural norms, despite the spread of EIL in ELT textbooks. Once again, a more comprehensive representation of cultures is needed to represent EIL in language teaching materials, to emphasize a reduced representation of native-speaker cultural norms, and to represent a balanced combination of cultures of English and non-English-speaking countries.

5. Conclusion

Teaching English as a global language brings nations and cultures into contact. It privileges nonnative learners and teachers and fosters a new understanding of EIL. The teachers in this study opted for standard English as the core teaching model. From the findings, it can be concluded that the teachers acknowledged the significance of using standard English for language instruction. However, learning and teaching EIL entails the need to investigate the language norms of successful nonnative English language learners that use English alongside other languages. The status of EIL compels new ways of conceptualizing language which requires less dependency on native-speaker norms. The teachers in this study also believed that English, nowadays, is used internationally between native- and non-native-speakers. Moreover, the teachers confirmed the need to expose learners to different nonnative varieties of English. The findings revealed the importance of a variety of interactions between native- and non-native-speakers in ELT textbooks. Rather than aspiring to native-speakers' culture, teachers can regard a variety of cultures in ELT textbooks as legitimate. Thus, English language learners in nonnative English-speaking countries need to be exposed to diverse interactions to increase their intercultural knowledge and tolerance of varieties that exist in English among its users. It can be concluded that different varieties of English should be used in the classroom to make learners aware of World Englishes and of practical communication skills for intelligible and effective intercultural communication.

The findings from this study have implications for the implementation of EIL pedagogy: First and foremost, the sole reliance on the native-speaker model for the development of effective communication skills should be deemphasized. Rather, there is a need to reappraise the prevalent teaching practices as adhering to different varieties that exist in today's Englishes. Hence, nonnative English language teachers should equip learners with strategic communicative skills to enable them to communicate effectively while using both native and nonnative linguistic and cultural

norms in EIL interactions. English language pedagogy needs to reflect the spread of EIL, partly through the inclusion of varieties of Englishes in EIL teaching materials. Furthermore, there seems to be a consensus among researchers on the importance of preparing future teachers and educators within native English-speaking countries and worldwide by raising their awareness of the diversity of English and its varieties as well as promoting equity for speakers of nonnative and/or nonstandard varieties of English. Hence, nonnative teachers should expose English language learners to these concepts to (re)shape their understanding of English and users of English. English language pedagogy also needs to reflect the global spread of English, partly through the inclusion of a variety of interactions between native- and non-native-speakers in ELT materials. Likewise, using cultural materials from diverse sources to expose learners to different accents and facilitating an understanding of and sensitivity toward language and cultural diversity should be emphasized. Teaching pedagogy, as Matsuda (2017) argues, should promote the awareness of diversity partly through the inclusion of varieties of Englishes in ELT materials. Also, teachers should be exposed to the intricacies of the global spread of English and raise their awareness of the challenges these intricacies might have for their classrooms. The EIL-aware teacher education program, as suggested by Eslami, Moody, and Pashmforoosh (2019), is also needed for both native and nonnative teachers of English alike.

This study brings to the fore the need for more research on perceiving teachers' perspectives on EIL-based teaching methods and materials. This study was limited to nonnative teachers; therefore, further studies can be conducted on native teachers' beliefs. Also, it is required to carry out further research to understand how teachers integrate principles of EIL in their classroom teaching methods and materials. Finally, the nature and types of consciousness-raising activities which foster learners' awareness of the diversity of World Englishes require more research.

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