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Research Paper

Transformative Learning Theory and Raising Awareness Towards EIL in ELT Classes in Expanding Circle Countries

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Abstract

The worldwide spread of English, globalisation and more predisposition towards varieties of English necessitates a paradigm shift towards teaching English as an international language (TEIL) approach to promote multilingualism and embrace multiculturalism. The present study investigates the implementation of TEIL principles in English language teaching (ELT) classes through teacher professional development in the context of Iran. Employing transformative learning (TL) theory by Jarvis (2009), the professional development was implemented to help 88 Iranian pre-service English teachers experience disjunctures via a sequence of TL activities. Data from an EIL perception questionnaire complemented by researchers' field notes and interviews with some teachers reveal that the professional development activities effectively enhanced participants' understanding of the EIL concept and reshaped their attitudes towards varieties of English. The findings emphasize the importance of incorporating local and international cultural elements in ELT syllabi to facilitate learners' integration of diverse cultural experiences. Suggestions for more research in the future are proposed

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along with practical ideas for policy-makers to consider integrating EIL concepts in teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher Education, EIL, Intercultural Communication, Teacher Beliefs, World Englishes

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1. Introduction

Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL) is a novel framework in the realm of ELT that has emerged as a reaction to the exponential growth in the worldwide dissemination of English, resulting in various structural, functional, and demographic alterations in the language (Chen & Le, 2019). These alterations encompass the notion that the majority of communicative occurrences in English take place between individuals referred to as "non-native" speakers of the language (Dewaele, 2018). It is widely accepted that approximately 2 billion individuals worldwide now employ English on a day-to-day basis, and English holds an officially recognized status in over 70 countries and territories (Crystal, 2001). The rapid expansion of English among speaker communities across the globe has also given rise to the localization of the language and the diversity of Englishes (Monfared, 2020).

The sociolinguistic truth of English, localisation, diversification and the emergence of English language varieties brings challenges in ELT classes, where inclusion of appropriate content in a foreign-language curriculum and the use of productive pedagogy and changing teaching strategies is mandatory to prepare learners for intercultural communication with other English speakers (Kirkpatrick, 2021; Matsuda, 2018; Rose, 2021). An educational system based on EIL principles not only preserves the local

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cultural values but also familiarizes learners with other cultures, enabling them to establish friendly relationships with speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds (Rose & Galloway, 2019).

The transition from conventional pedagogy of English as a native language (ENL) to more EIL-focused pedagogies has incited numerous scholars to investigate teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding the concept of EIL in the realm of teacher education (Ahn, 2017; Kirkpatrick, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Low, 2022; Matsuda, 2012, 2019; McKay, 2018; Sadeghpour & D'Angelo, 2022; Sharifian, 2009, 2017; Sharifian & Sadeghpour, 2021; Sifakis, 2021). While many studies have explored teachers' attitudes or developed activities to help students understand the EIL concept, they have rarely created a paradigm shift in teacher education (Christou et al., 2022; Prabjandee, 2019; Soruç & Griffiths, 2021). This study aims to contribute to the field by implementing EIL in ELT classes through teacher professional development.

TEIL can be seen around the world, but ELT and teacher education in Iran as an expanding circle (EC) country based on Kachru's model (1992) seem to be mostly unaffected by this development. Iran provides a fertile context for implementing EIL professional development for several reasons. First, there is evidence that Iranian teachers and learners have proclivity towards native-speakerism and native varieties of English (Standard British and American English) are at the centre of attention (Monfared, 2020; Sadeghi & Richards, 2016). Secondly, reports indicate a preference for native-speakerism in the educational system of Iran (including the corresponding cultural norms) (Sadeghi & Richards, 2016; Salehpour et al., 2023; Tajeddin et al., 2019; Ziaabadi et al., 2023). Thirdly, there is a positive societal attitude towards native-speakerism in Iran, leading to the marginalisation of the varieties of English (Sadeghi & Richards, 2016).

Lastly, there is evidence that policy-makers prescribe native-speakerism in the educational context of Iran (Tajeddin et al., 2019). Based on these realities, it can be drawn that native-speakerism is deeply ingrained in Iran's educational and socio-political contexts, highlighting the need to equip teachers with an understanding of EIL and varieties of English to prepare learners for globalized intercultural communication.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 English as an International Language (EIL)

The global expansion of English language has led to the appearance of new research paradigms like World Englishes (WE), EIL, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and Global Englishes (GE). Although these paradigms are commonly replaceable, Matsuda (2019) and McKay (2018) believe that these terms possess distinct features and points. In this particular investigation, our attention will be directed towards EIL, which characterizes the utilization of English for intercultural communication in our globalized world. Based on the concept of EIL, English is used both on a worldwide level for international communication between nations, as well as on a local level as a means of broader communication among individuals with diverse multicultural backgrounds, whereby the cultural standards may not essentially be linked to L1 norms in Intercultural Communication (IC). As noted by Matsuda (2017), EIL contexts are those in which English is utilized among users with diverse cultural and national backgrounds.

2.2 EILism in Language Teaching and Learning

In her research, Mete (2009) indicates that the term "international" in EIL signifies "intercultural" communication, as engaging in international communication necessitates navigating between different cultures. One of the tasks of language teachers is, therefore, to help learners acknowledge the importance of intercultural competence and become competent speakers of

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English, who will have to handle English both in multiple language varieties and in multiple culture varieties. In the context of EIL, such issues as intercultural communication and intercultural communication competence have increasingly attracted the attention of many scholars (Matsuda, 2019; McKay, 2018; Monfared, 2020; Sadeghpour & D'Angelo, 2022; Sharifian & Sadeghpour, 2021).

The status of EIL encourages the appearance of new trends of language teaching and learning. A recent trend is intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT), which has attracted attention from many scholars. The term iCLT is used to describe the particular concept of language teaching under the framework of principles suggested by Liddicoat et al. (2003), Liddicoat (2004), and Newton et al. (2010). This approach concentrates on enhancing students' recognition of the interconnected relationship between language and culture, as well as incorporating culture as an essential element of language teaching (Alsagoff, 2012; Baker, 2011; Byram, 2021; Low, 2022; Shemshadsara, 2012). Cross-cultural competence, as the core of iCLT approach, recognizes that there are regional, social, and international varieties preferences. It also includes the awareness of what can be an obstacle to learning and demonstration of learning among non-native speakers. If institutions of higher education promise to create educational opportunities and supportive environment for diverse populations of students, cross-cultural competence on the part of educators in action will be their understanding of what they can do to create optimal learning environment for all, including non-native English speakers. Taking into account the iCLT model with a focus on culture, Brown (2013) proposes that in order to establish standards for EIL, it is crucial to strengthen the sense of ownership and self-assurance in the local varieties of English, while also cultivating students' awareness of linguistic and cultural disparities across various

contexts. Moreover, motivation for EIL can be attained by including accomplished bilingual individuals as models for language and pedagogy, and by providing learning materials and activities that are grounded in both local and global scenarios, which students can readily relate to and apply in their daily lives. Ultimately, the development of EIL fluency entails equipping students with strategies to navigate linguistic and cultural differences, fostering language and cultural practices that facilitate effective communication, and enhancing their ability to proliferate the international body of knowledge in English.

Harumi (2002) also suggests a novel framework encompassing three kinds of culture within the framework of EIL: Culture around language – which focuses on the customs of diverse English-speaking populations around the world; Culture through language – which involves getting familiar with global cultures while utilizing English as the medium of instruction; And lastly, culture in language – which pertains to the underlying belief systems of users of English within the language itself.

2.3 Challenges to Employ EILism in ELT Classes

While the prior studies were promising, the influence is restricted. In order to have a paradigm transition, it is important to actively involve all English teachers to bring changes in their teaching. However, it might be difficult to achieve such an important goal in ELT context.

To implement TEIL it is important to raise awareness of teachers and policy makers towards diversity of Englishes and increase their exposure to this diversity. This awareness needs to have teacher education programs for teachers and convince policy makers that in the global world moving towards multilingualism and multiculturalism is a need. Sifakis (2021) points to this fact that prompting teachers' awareness through teacher education and fostering their local identities is a need in ELT context. Soodmand Afshar,

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Fazelimanie & Doosti (2017) believe that professional development is an important element in teacher education. Monfared (2020) also refers to the pseudo identity of the teachers in Iranian context due to the theory and practice divide in the educational system of Iran. Phongsirikul (2017) also mentions that in some educational contexts, teachers learnt English in the twentieth century and must teach learners in the twenty-first country and this demand a paradigm shift towards new teaching concepts.

The second important issue in employing TEIL is to revise teaching materials and testing based on EIL concepts (Ahn, 2104; Galloway & Rose, 2017; Hsu, 2016; Zhang, 2022). It is really important to consider the sociolinguistic reality of English in the globalized world and design material and tests based of global Englishes. (Hamid, 2014)

3. Theoretical Framework

Transformative learning (TL) theory developed by Jarvis (2009) was utilized in this study to show how English teachers develop critical self-reflection to deal with their old beliefs and shape new identity toward EIL and culture.

Transformative learning (Jarvis, 2009; Mezirow, 2018) is classified into three phases; critical considerations, reflective conversations, and achievements. Teachers observe some attitudes toward English in a new way and find new senses to these attitudes. The theory of transformative learning is three-dimensional. These include changes in teachers' self-understanding (phase 1), improvements in their belief systems (phase 2) and changes in their way of life (phase 3). TL can be applied as basis for the improvements of teachers' attitudes so they can critically self-reflect on their previous teaching practice which can eventually lead to new attitudes towards English in the global world which is called disjuncture dilemma (Jarvis, 2009).

Resolving disjuncture can help teachers to reconstruct their beliefs about how to teach and manage their ELT classrooms.



Figure 1. Transformative learning theory (Jarvis, 2009)

4. Methodology

4.1 Objectives

This study aimed at reshaping teachers' attitudes towards EIL by providing teacher professional development which helped teachers to resolve their disjuncture dilemmas through transformative learning activities and shape new attitudes towards EIL and varieties of English. To further investigate this area of research, the subsequent research questions were devised:

1. What are Iranian teachers' attitudes towards EIL and varieties of English before participating in the EIL teacher professional development?
2. What are Iranian teachers' attitudes towards EIL and varieties of English after their participation in the EIL teacher professional development program?

4.2 Context

The professional development project for EIL involved a 20-hour workshop that was meticulously planned based on TL theory (Jarvis, 2009).

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Three fundamental concepts from TL theory were employed in designing workshop activities: disjuncture dilemma; resolving disjuncture and integrating new perspective into the teachers' professional lives. Four activities were developed based on these concepts and the specific details of these activities can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.*Activities in EIL Teacher Professional Development*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Disjuncture</i>
Understanding the status of EIL	To reconsider the ownership of English	Non-native English users outnumber native English users
EIL and varieties of English	To respect varieties of English	Rate variety of accents and acceptability of them
EIL and intercultural communication	To raise awareness towards multilingualism and multiculturalism	Respecting different cultures in ELT classes
EIL and identity	to treat your own cultural identity with respect	Questions regarding EIL and identity in ELT context

4.2.1 Understanding the status of EIL

In the first activity, teachers were presented with Kachru's concentric model of English users in the inner circle (IC), outer circle (OC) and EC countries and they were asked to guess the number of the users of English in each circle. After the participants made their guesses, they were presented with the statistical data gathered from Crystal (2003) and Hu (2012). They were informed that non-native speakers of English currently outnumber native users of Standard Englishes. The participants were also informed that all varieties of English along with their cultures should be highly valued. Subsequently, several questions were raised. Who, in your opinion, is the true proprietor of the English language? Do you employ the concept of "global appropriacy and local appropriation" (Alptekin, 2002, p. 63) to assist your students in becoming "both international and local users of English" (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996, p. 211)? How can learners effectively function within their domestic culture as well as on a global scale?

The fundamental message conveyed by this activity is that educators should comprehend that the standardization of English should not be based solely on Inner Circle native speakers. Instead, there should be an acknowledgement of the pluricentric nature of English usage in the present day, with standards based on the language utilized and accepted within the local context. Consequently, discussions on WE place great emphasis on the cultural embeddedness and distinctiveness of each English variety. The prominent purpose of this activity was to raise teachers' and learners' awareness towards EIL and education in the globalized world.

4.2.2 EIL and Varieties of English

The main goal of this activity was raising teachers' awareness towards varieties of English accents and intelligibility. The participants were presented with six distinct accents based on Kachru's model, including two from the EC (Iran and China), two from the OC (India and Pakistan) and the remaining two accents from the IC (the USA and England). Using a five-point Likert scale, the teachers rated each accent. Following the disclosure of the results, the participants engaged in a discussion about the different accents. The main takeaway of this activity was that teachers should prioritize the development of intelligibility and acceptability in pronunciation when teaching English.

4.2.3 EIL and Intercultural Communication

The objective of this activity was to raise participants' awareness of the close relationship between language and culture and teaching culture as an essential component of ELT classes (Byram, 2021; Low, 2022; Shemshadsara, 2012; Sifakis, 2019; Spitzberg & Chagnon, 2009). In this activity the participants were presented with Harumi's model (2002) for teaching culture.

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The overarching message of this activity is to encourage participants' confidence in their own English varieties to prioritize intercultural communication and cultural identity. These goals can in part be accomplished by overtly explaining the need for fostering respect for the local culture of learners and local varieties of English. In an ELT class, it is vital to take into account fundamental principles such as the advancement of multilingualism and embracement of multiculturalism, the adaptation of L2 language planning and policies to local contexts, raising awareness of English users towards diversity of Englishes, and ensuring equitable opportunities for all individuals aspiring to acquire English.

4.2.4 EIL and Identity

In this activity the teachers worked collaboratively in groups of six. They were presented with issues regarding WE and identity. After this, they put their studies in a poster. Then, all groups shared their posters with one another and engaged in a meaningful discussion about the questions raised: Do you prefer to keep your identity when speaking English? Do you encourage your students to be proud of their own identity in intercultural communication among English speakers from different nations? Do you get angry if someone laughs at you while speaking English with your own accent?

4.3 Participants

This study collected data from 88 Iranian pre-service English teacher participants, who enrolled in a teacher education workshop regarding EIL and varieties of English. Participants' average age was 30 (ranged from 21 to 51). Most of the participants male and were chosen based on purposive sampling technique. The authors informed participants of the research goals and what they were expected to do.

Table 2

General Profile of Participants

<i>Participants' General Information</i>	<i>Expanding Circle Teachers</i>
Gender	
Female	39
Female	49
Educational Background	
BA degree	33
MA degree	25
PhD	30
Age	
25-30	15
30-35	22
35-40	28
40+	23

4.4 Data collection

To document participants' attitudes towards EIL and intercultural communication, four instruments were applied in this study: a perception a questionnaire, researcher's field notes; completed tasks by the participants' reflection. All teachers completed the questionnaire before and after participating the professional development programs for teachers.

After the completion of the survey questionnaire, four consecutive activities were conducted. The tasks completed by the participants were also obtained. During the activities, observations were made. The observation scheme was utilized in this study and its content validity was confirmed through the expert judgement approach.

The professional development program was a 20- hour workshop, developed based on TL theory (Jarvis, 2009) and the activities developed based on EIL concepts. During the workshop, researchers provided the participants with activities regarding EIL and varieties of English and the way that EIL has promoted intercultural competence and multiculturalism in English language curriculum. All workshop sessions were video recorded in order to supplement the observation. The instructions were presented through

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PowerPoints slides and in the form of a lecture. Activities were designed based on research papers, textbooks, videos, workshops and seminars related to EIL and culture. At the end of the workshop, the teachers replied to the same questionnaire to assess their attitudes towards EIL and culture.

Finally, ten days following the completion of the teacher professional development courses, an online link was sent to all participants and they were requested to reflect on their experiences and evaluate all the workshop activities on a five-point Likert scale of how the activities helped teachers to have a new attitude towards EIL and multiculturalism in their ELT classes. Finally, in order to obtain teachers' reflection, some open-ended questions were asked: How did the workshop raise your awareness towards culture and EIL; What other activities do you think are helpful to understand the concept of EIL? Out of 88 teachers, 55 completed the reflection, which is a 62.5 per cent response rate.

5. Results

5.1 Feedback on activities in EIL teacher professional development

The participants were invited to provide their opinions on the teacher professional development workshop. Overall, it was determined that all the participants had positive feedback for all the five activities. For example:

All activities in the workshop raised our awareness towards varieties of English and we understood that we should value multiculturalism and help learners to foster a sense of ownership over local varieties of English. (Teacher 45)

The data from the post-test questionnaire aligned with the participants' feedback. The feedback for each activity is shown in Table 3.

Table 3.*Feedback on Activities in EIL Teacher Professional Development*

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Mean</i>
The status of EIL and a shift to teaching World Englishes	4.6
EIL and varieties of English	4.4
EIL and intercultural communication	4.5
EIL and identity	4.3

5.2 Understanding the status of EIL

Upon being informed with statistics regarding the large number of non-native English users in the world, the subsequent questions regarding the ownership of English and the use of global appropriacy and local appropriation in language education prompted a disjuncture among the participating teachers. The participants expressed that these questions raised their awareness of the status of EIL and its expansion in the globe, particularly within the context of teacher education, and the need to prepare learners to function as both local and global users of English. However, one participant voiced concerns about the current educational system in EC countries:

I think that English teachers are primarily tasked with preparing learners for high-stakes entrance exams, such as university entrance exams. Additionally, the emphasis on native-speakerism in the educational systems of EC countries has forced the participant to feel compelled to adopt a pseudo identity in order to be accepted by their learners, resulting in a misalignment between their personal ideology and their teaching practice. (Teacher 20)

Table 4

Teachers' Feedback on the Status of EIL

<i>Items</i>	<i>Pre-test Mean</i>	<i>Post-test Mean</i>
1-English is used today as an international language to communicate effectively with people from around the world.	3.6	4.7
2- Many non-native English-speaking countries currently use English as their official or working language.	3.8	4.6
3- English is the language of business, culture, and education around the world.	3.6	4.7

5.3 EIL and Varieties of English

The analysis revealed that this activity raised teachers' awareness towards varieties of accents. First teachers believed that American and British accents are the best ideal accents but when they became familiar with Jenkins's Lingua Franca Core (LFC) and the concepts of intelligibility and comprehend-ability, they understood that intelligibility standards put more emphasis on communication rather than nativism and impart learners with an awareness of linguistic and cultural distinctions in the diverse contexts in which English is acquired.

Table 5.
Teachers' Attitudes Towards Varieties of Accents

<i>Accents</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Iran	3.2	4.5
China	3.4	4.4
Pakistan	3.1	4.3
India	3.2	4.4
American	4.8	4.3
British	4.7	4.3

Table 6.
Teachers' Attitudes Towards EIL and Varieties of English

<i>Items</i>	<i>Pre-test Mean</i>	<i>Post-test Mean</i>
4- Different varieties of English, such as Hong Kong English, Indian English, and Singaporean English, are acceptable today.	2.8	4.5
5-Teachers can use English listening materials that include different varieties of English so that they can develop a comprehensive understanding of accent varieties of English such as Indian English/Singaporean English in their real-world encounters.	3.1	4.6
6- Different varieties of English, such as Indonesian English, Taiwanese English, and Japanese English, are acceptable today in ELT materials.	2.9	4.5
7-Teachers can include the interaction between non-native and non-native English speakers (e.g., Indonesian, Japanese speakers) in English listening materials.	3.2	4.5

Here is a comment by one participant that shows a change in her view:

Transformative learning theory ...

First, I thought that Native accent is the ideal model for my students, but this activity helped me to understand that accent doesn't matter and English learners should be understandable and intelligible when they are among other English speakers. (Teacher 75)

5.4 EIL and Intercultural Communication

This activity received positive feedback from the participants. After being presented with Harumi's model (2002) for teaching culture, the teachers understood that it is crucial to respect multiculturalism and encourage a sense of confidence in multiculturalism and cultural identity. They also realized that ELT materials should raise learners' awareness towards local and international cultural differences in various contexts. However, some teachers highlighted that policy makers should support local culture to assist learners in becoming both global and local speakers of English. For instance:

I think that most ELT sources in EC countries are inundated with texts that mainly represent native speakers' history and culture simply because policy makers support ideologies of native speakers . . . but students do not need to be informed how people live in UK and America. What students need is to be aware of their own country and own culture. (Teacher 52)

Table 7.
Teachers' Feedback on EIL and Intercultural Communication

<i>Items</i>	<i>Pre-test Mean</i>	<i>Post-test Mean</i>
8-I can adjust my conversational style according to my interactions with people of other cultural backgrounds.	3.2	4.4
9-I can explain my own culture and customs clearly in English to people from other cultures.	3.1	4.3
10- I am open-minded about accepting speaking/pronunciation patterns that are different from those of my home country.	3.1	4.7
11-I can behave appropriately according to English users' cultures I speak with.	3.2	4.5

5.5 EIL and Identity

In this activity the questions regarding EIL and identity prompted disjunctures for participants. After engaging in meaningful discussions, the teachers expressed that it is important for English speakers to keep their own cultural identity when they communicate with other speakers from different cultures. For example:

It is important for teachers to be aware of the impact of EIL on identity and to promote a pluralistic approach to teaching English pronunciation. (Teacher 16)

Table 8.
Teachers' Attitudes Towards EIL and Identity

<i>Items</i>	<i>Pre- test Mean</i>	<i>Post- test Mean</i>
12-English teachers should keep their own identity when they speak English.	3.4	4.8
13-I don't mind if I speak English with my own local accent when I speak because it is my own English.	3.5	4.2
14-It is unnecessary to speak like American or British English speakers as long as my English is intelligible (or understandable) to others.	3.3	4.6

6. Discussion

The results of this study highlight the benefits of teacher education that has been echoed in other previous studies (e.g., Canagarajah, 2021; Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Jenkins, 2009; Prabjandee, 2019; Soruç, 2020; Torres-Rocha, 2023; Zein, 2019; Zhang, 2022).

With regard to the first activity, all participants through TL theory became aware of the notion of EIL and understood that Non-native speakers outnumber native speakers and all varieties of English should be respected. Majority of the teachers believed that teacher professional development courses impacted their awareness, leading them to have unbiased attitudes towards all varieties of English in the global world. Similar findings have been echoed in other studies (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020; Jenkins, 2012;

McKay, 2012, 2015), emphasizing the importance of EIL in teacher education.

The second activity pertained to the teachers' attitudes towards EIL and its relation with multilingualism and multiculturalism. All teachers through TL theory recognized that all accents should be respected. All participants valued the presence of other English varieties and prioritized intelligibility and comprehensibility over the acceptance of native-like accents which shows a deviation from native-speakerism. According to Low (2021), it is important for teachers to prioritize mutual intelligibility over achieving native-like speaking skills in EIL communicative environments. Consequently, the pursuit of native-like proficiency among L2 learners should be acknowledged as an unrealistic goal. This aligns with previous studies that intelligibility and comprehensibility should be emphasized in ELT classes and teachers and learners should be conscious towards this reality (Alptekin, 2002; Dewey, 2021; Jenkins, 2012; Rose and Galloway, 2017; Soruç & Griffiths, 2021).

The third activity dealt with intercultural communication. All the participants after the EIL workshop obviously mentioned that culture has an important role to play in ELT classes and local and international cultures should be highly respected. As McKay & Brown (2016) argue the IC countries alone cannot anymore provide sufficient cultural content in TEIL and thus ELT materials should be based on both the learners' culture and the international culture. In a recent empirical investigation, Soodmand Afshar and Moradifar (2021) conducted a study to ascertain the positive relationship between cultural awareness, self-efficacy, teacher identity and job performance in the educational context of Iran. Similarly, the importance of culture has been emphasized in other studies (Byram, 2021; Kirkpatrick, 2021; Nguyen, Marlina & Cao, 2020; Prodromou, 1992; Sadeghi & Sepahi,

2018; Shin, Eslami & Chen, 2011) indicating the importance of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

The fourth activity pertained to EIL and identity. One of the main challenging issues in the realm of EIL is nativism and non-nativism and its link to identity. According to Kachru (1992), EIL is a "pluralistic entity" that reflects the diversity of cultures and identities of its users. This diversity is reflected in the way English is spoken, as non-native speakers often bring their own accents and intonations to the language. As English spreads worldwide, it is being adopted by non-native speakers who use it to express their own cultural identity and to communicate with others from different cultures. This activity resolved teachers' disjuncture that keeping your identity while learning English is highly respectable (McKay, 2018; Monfared, 2018; Ziaabadi et al., 2023).

The results of the study also show a misalignment between value and practice of the teachers. Although majority of the teachers are in favour of the implementation of EIL and culture in ELT classes, due to the high demand for focusing on nativism by policy makers and language centres and also focusing on standardized, high-stakes tests, they have to represent a pseudo reflection of their own identities. In this regard, Ahn (2014), points to the nativism in most teaching and testing methods in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). He further emphasizes the significance of developing and executing methodologies that are better suited to the local context. It is of utmost importance for policy makers and teachers to have a comprehensive understanding of the present usage of English in order to modify the curriculum in a manner that more effectively addresses the requirements of users of English as an International Language (EIL) today (Matsuda, 2019; McKay and Brown, 2016; Sharifian & Sadeghpour, 2021). The English language instruction that pre-service teachers receive prior to

enrolling in teacher education programs tends to be focused on native speakers. Therefore, teacher education programs play a vital role in raising awareness among teachers about the linguistic and cultural diversity of English, as well as how the language can either unite or divide the global community.

7. Conclusion

The participants' voices documented in the present investigation have implications for both scholars in WE and educators. Scholars in WE may need to enhance the awareness of English teachers regarding the diverse forms of English and the significance of culture in English Language Teaching (ELT) courses, in order to modify their negative attitudes towards these forms. This objective can only be achieved through comprehensive teacher education workshops that acquaint educators with the concepts of WE and the associated pedagogical implications in teaching. Regarding the pedagogical implications of this investigation, Jenkins (2006) asserts that instead of adhering strictly to norms based on Native Speakers (NS), educators should attempt to raise learners' consciousness of the various forms of English and assist them in enhancing their self-assurance, while also discouraging them from blindly adhering to closed-minded attitudes towards other forms of English, which are no longer justifiable.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

1-English is used today as an international language to communicate effectively with people from around the world.

2- Many non-native English-speaking countries currently use English as their official or working language.

3- English is the language of business, culture, and education around the world.

4- Different varieties of English, such as Hong Kong English, Indian English, and Singaporean English, are acceptable today.

5-Teachers can use English listening materials that include different varieties of English so that they can develop a comprehensive understanding of accent varieties of English such as Indian English/Singaporean English in their real-world encounters.

6- Different varieties of English, such as Indonesian English, Taiwanese English, and Japanese English, are acceptable today in ELT materials.

7-Teachers can include the interaction between non-native and non-native English speakers (e.g., Indonesian, Japanese speakers) in English listening materials.

8-I can adjust my conversational style according to my interactions with people of other cultural

Backgrounds.

9-I can explain my own culture and customs clearly in English to people from other cultures.

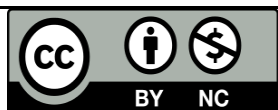
10- I am open-minded about accepting speaking/pronunciation patterns that are different from those of my home country.

11-I can behave appropriately according to English users' cultures I speak with.

12-English teachers should keep their own identity when they speak English.

13-I don't mind if I speak English with my own local accent when I speak because it is my own English.

14-It is unnecessary to speak like American or British English speakers as long as my English is intelligible (or understandable) to others.



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