

## Existing EFL Pedagogies in Thai Higher Education: Views from Thai University Lecturers

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### Abstract

Since English is extensively used among linguacultural users to access life opportunities, it has become a requisite foreign language in the Thai educational system. To prepare Thai learners for this new changing role of English and reduce English Language Teaching dependency on the native English variety, this study aimed to explore English lecturers' voices in Thai universities on existing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogies at the Thai tertiary level with the research question: how do English lecturers in Thai universities perceive EFL in Thai universities? Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 25 Thai EFL university lecturers selected from ten different universities in Thailand and analyzed using content analysis. The finding reveals that EFL-oriented pedagogy plays a dominant role in English language teaching (ELT) education in Thai classrooms, illustrating three main salient themes from the study: (1) EFL pedagogies; (2) EFL materials; and (3) EFL curriculums. The result shows that the pedagogy is less responsive in the changing roles of English use and its widespread worldwide, especially among diverse linguacultural interlocutors. Hence, English university lecturers should reconsider, adjust, and made more practical glocal changes in English language teaching for the purpose of language teaching, language planning and predicting language change.

*Keywords:* Cultural awareness, curricula content, EFL pedagogies, intercultural citizenship, Thai Higher Education

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## Introduction

Amid globalization, English will remain significant as a pedagogical key language in Southeast Asian countries. Thailand is an expanding-circle country or ‘periphery-English country’ where English is utilized as a common language among Non-Native English Speakers (NNES) (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020; Baker, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 2014). Since English is extensively used to access life opportunities: careers, businesses, tourism, technology, and knowledge, English has become a requisite foreign language in the Thai educational system and is considered as a compulsory course in primary, secondary, and tertiary curriculums (Kiely, 2014). According to Kitjaroonchai (2012), the Thai government is committed to strengthening the English skills in Thailand to grant its citizens a harmonious living in the 21st century and the globalization era. Although the commitment and sense of direction may seem like good news, the course of action is yet to be questioned. When examining ELT in the Thai context, the employed pedagogies are exceedingly conventional. Most ELT solutions remain narrow. They encourage ELT learners to follow the native English speaker (NES) paths (Jindapitak & Teo, 2012; Methitham 2009). Most teaching approaches in Thailand, e.g., audio-lingua, functional-communicative, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Methitham, 2009), revolve around western-based theories and NES pedagogical materials. This indicates that most of the solutions are standardized, produced, and approved by western institutions for the NNES to follow. Consequently, many policymakers, educators, and local teachers in Thailand agree on the teaching approaches that iconize NES. Hence, many English teaching conferences, training programs, and materials focus on the best strategies for learners to acquire that ‘standard English.’ Nevertheless, preparing English language learners for today’s English diversity requires more responsive pedagogies than conventional English as a foreign language framework (EFL) and English nativeness idealization. In this globalized world, as Jindapitak (2019) and Tantiniranat (2020) suggested, English has become a medium for intercultural communication, and most English dialogues take place outside of the native English contexts, involving interlocutors with linguacultural diversity raised to be familiar with different English varieties. Therefore, narrowing English language education to a limited number of mainstream English varieties tends to drive impractical results.

Since English is a global language entitled to the global ownership status for being widely learned and utilized by diverse ethnicities with different mother tongues and cultures (Jenkins, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2015, 2018), it is not surprising that multiple varieties emerge and exist across geographic territories as a communication solution for multilingual and multicultural environments (Akkakoson, 2019; Boonsuk & Ambele, 2019). It is crucial for educators in the ELT industry to recognize and understand the reality of this progression. Their ELT frameworks need to be reconceptualized, and their goals need to be reprioritized. Adherence to standard English, such as British English or American English, should no longer be the primary teaching focus. Approaches that address communication success in cross-cultural settings and the new linguistic landscape should receive prioritized attention (Jenkins, 2015; Galloway & Rose, 2015). The transformed and diversified sociolinguistic landscape of English makes the language less attached to specific English varieties or ethnic groups such as British and American (Jenkins, 2015; Rose & Galloway, 2019). Consequently, the language’s functions and scopes rapidly expand beyond geographical, social, and ethnic boundaries.

From past to present, the status of English has drastically shifted. Being so diverse, today's English users and learners began to realize that there are more nationally and internationally accepted English varieties other than the mainstream ones, e.g., British and American Englishes. There is a dire need to prepare learners for the new ELT by addressing the changing roles of English and reducing ELT knowledge gaps in Thailand currently causing dependency to native English, practicality mismatches, and negligence of modern linguistic landscapes. To contribute in bridging this research gap, this study therefore attempted to answer three research questions: how do English lecturers in Thai universities perceive EFL (1) pedagogies, (2) materials, and (3) curriculums? Based on these questions, it is clear that this study aimed to explore English lecturers' voices in Thai universities on existing EFL pedagogies at the Thai tertiary level.

## Literature Review

### *English Language Teaching Ideology in Thailand*

English education in Thailand has been shaped by policies and curriculums that, in most cases, are not locally generated. They are designed by the Office of Basic Education for the primary and secondary levels; and the Office of Higher Education for the tertiary level (Boonsuk, 2016). These institutions have the sovereign authority to mandate and control how education in Thailand flows. In contrast, teachers have minimal control over the educational designs despite the fact that they have the intelligence on what works best contextually and culturally, for the target learners. In addition to the limited control in policymaking and planning, all official mandates must be undeniably carried out, meaning that, in Thailand, English teachers have the obligations to foster native English proficiency using Britishized or Americanized ELT approaches and pedagogies (Prabjandee, 2020; Rajprasit & Marlina, 2019) developed by native English scholars according to what they perceived universally appropriate (D'Angelo, 2012; Jindapitak, 2019; Methitham, 2011).

With these unrealistic requirements as stated above, ELT practitioners in Thailand are left with little space to modify their curriculums based on what could have been more effective for their students' English language learning. Consequently, as time goes by and the world continues to evolve, ELT in Thailand remains highly traditional with EFL pedagogical dominance, this influence pressures Thai students to work hard to speak like a native English speaker using native linguistic conventions. Therefore, British English and American English remain the only approved ELT models in Thai and many other ELT markets (Boonsuk et al., 2021; Jindapitak & Boonsuk, 2018; Galloway & Rose, 2015, 2018; Rose & Galloway, 2019). The problem is that this traditional EFL teaching approach relies heavily on NES norms which cultivates Thai learners with a set of attitudes towards English language, i.e., NES's standard English varieties and Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs) are highly valued, efficient, widely accepted, correct, ideal, and professional; whereas NNESTs's non-standard English and non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) are less appreciated, inefficient, socially flawed, incorrect, impractical, and unprofessional (Boonsuk & Fang, 2020; Jindapitak & Teo, 2012). The approval of NEST and disapproval of NNEST in English language education is not a new phenomenon in Thailand. The social phenomenon signifies some severe misconceptions about NESTs and NNEST. To this notion, native English speakerism and linguistic imperialism are racist ideologies that should no longer be supported. Therefore, the practices and beliefs are inappropriate and should be reconceptualized.

***English Language Teaching Practices in Thai Classrooms***

As previously noted, conservative ideologies were the reason behind the dominance of EFL ELT models in Thailand. They tend to discriminate against other “non-standard” English varieties. They exclusively favor the use of “standard” British English and American English in education. Adhering to native linguistic conventions is recognized as correct English usage. In contrast, NESTs are a must and the only models with gold standards in producing acceptable English linguistic outputs. Since these ideologies are established in the Thai society, educators, learners, and parents involved in expanding-circle ELT markets, including Thailand, still perceive that EFL is the safest approach to master English (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020; Galloway & Rose, 2018; Ren, 2014; Rose & Galloway, 2019; Seidlhofer, 2011).

However, it is noteworthy to point out that English pedagogies developed by NES are poorly contextualized since they usually pay attention to western cultural and social contexts with little or no emphasis on that of the learners. Using western concepts as English teaching standards or models in different learning contexts, e.g., Thailand with significantly different socio-cultural conditions will require learners to work hard in familiarizing themselves with alien conceptions. Nevertheless, while learning the concepts will not be helpful in their everyday use full of diverse English users from every circle using different variety of world Englishes, nonetheless, adopting very western English approaches in Thailand’s language education continues to gain public approval. As a result, Thailand’s ELT courses and textbooks are in either American English or British English (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020; Jindapitak & Boonsuk, 2018). Contents in these textbooks are heavily filled with native English theories, linguistics, cultures, and ethnic biases. These curricular requirements reflected that Thailand promotes native English idealization, as evidence could be found in curriculums, textbooks, contents, and pictures. These westernized materials introduce serious discrimination to global Englishes as they recognize traits of NES and devalue NNEs conventions. This marginality arose from pedagogical biases, and it prioritizes “everything associated with the colonial Self and marginalizes everything associated with the subaltern Other. In the neocolonial present, as in the colonial past, methods are used to establish native-Self as superior and the non-native Other as inferior” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 541). The notion reflects that Thai ELT still prefers Inner-circle contents, styles, and materials, e.g., from the UK and the USA. Unfortunately, this pro-native practice reflects a significant level of educational negligence and failures to promote global citizenship amid English pluricentricity.

Learners, as global citizens, need more responsive ELT strategies to familiarize them with the English-speaking life filled with interlocutors of diverse mother tongues and cultures. A professor of a prominent university in Thailand stated in Boonyavatana (1996) that: "Take Thailand as a case study ... we are dealing with a new demand of cross-cultural communication between Thai and the English speaking people of different cultures, most of them are not even native speakers of English" (p. 6).

To address the changed English status quo, ELT should be reconceptualized with a new objective that addresses language pluricentricity and avoids idealization of NES to ensure that learners are equipped with desirable competencies to handle the current diversity and fluidity of English communication. On this note, Modiano (2009, p. 59) elaborated that "an understanding of the diversity of English, for production as well as for comprehension, makes one a better

communicator". This assertion is in line with Dewey (2012, p. 163) suggesting that educational practitioners should utilize the following objectives to explain, learn to accept, and incorporate the concept of language diversity:

- 1) investigate and highlight the particular environment and socio-cultural context in which English(es) will be used;
- 2) increase exposure to the diverse ways in which English is used globally; presenting alternative variants as appropriate whenever highlighting linguistic form;
- 3) engage in critical classroom discussion about the globalization and growing diversity of English;
- 4) spend proportionately less time on ENL forms, especially if these are not widely used in other varieties; and thus choose not to penalize non-native led innovative forms that are intelligible and;
- 5) focus (more) on communicative strategies.

This means that English should be learned with cultural and contextual flexibilities where NES norms could be used as references, not as any ELT goals. By so doing, ELT classrooms could potentially be a more powerful route towards English acquisition as learners are more equipped to communicate with linguistic conventions that exist in multilingual and multicultural contexts (Baker, 2015, 2016; Byram, Golubeva, Han & Wagner, 2017).

## **Methods**

### ***Participants***

The participants in this qualitative study were 25 Thai EFL university lecturers purposively selected from ten different universities in Thailand. They were chosen based on their suitability in teaching English language and GEs-oriented courses in addition to the fact that they lecture in some of the most prestigious universities within Thailand. The 25 lecturers consisted of five participants from each university who were purposively selected on the basis of their interest in participating in the study from among the many lecturers that were contacted to take part in the research. To gain the information needed to address the research objectives and questions appropriately, certain criteria were considered for participant selection. They should (i) have been teaching or taught GEs courses or related ones like English as an International Language, English Language and Culture, Sociolinguistics, Intercultural Communication; (ii) have some background experience and knowledge in learning, teaching, and using English with different groups of students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Without such experience, they might have no idea on how to answer the interview questions.

### ***Research Instrument***

This study employed a semi-structured individual interview to elicit qualitative data from the participants on their perception towards different aspects of GEs teaching and practices in universities in Thailand with regards to (1) EFL pedagogies; (2) EFL materials; and (3) EFL curriculums. The choice of an interview is because an interview can access in-depth information on the participants' attitudes, as well as understand their personal views in ways only possible by this tool as opposed to others like surveys or observation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The interview questions were adopted from different studies conducted on Global Englishes awareness in different EFL and ESL contexts (Galloway & Rose, 2015, 2018; Rose & Galloway,

2019; Jenkins, 2015) and adapted in the current study to suit the context of the research (see Appendix A). By utilizing this instrument, it will provide the participants with an opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts on the research phenomenon.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

The 25 Thai EFL university lecturers from each university were contacted and their interviews were scheduled individually through either email, phone calls, or face to face. Before the interview was conducted, each lecturer was provided with a brief overview of the goal of the interview and its procedures, and the researchers asked the interviewees for permission to audio record the sessions so that these logs could later be transcribed as a preventive measure against possible discrepancies in data analysis. To ensure that the interview session was a success, English was employed as the core interview language given the lecturers have all been teaching in English. During the interview sessions, the participants were free to express their ideas to avoid the researchers' interferences for an authentic data collection. To establish a sense of familiarity between the researcher and the participants, each interview began with general questions and then moved onto more specific ones. Once the interviews were over, the researchers thoroughly transcribed the interview logs. Subsequently, all the transcriptions were re-examined line by line to verify their completeness and consistencies with the audio logs. Once deemed accurate, the transcripts were handed to every participant for the final validations before the analysis could commence.

The researchers employed qualitative content analysis to process the data. Generally, the qualitative content analysis examines the meanings in particular contexts and attempts to provide core patterns and reliable conclusions (Patton, 2002). It is one of the research tools used to find the patterns of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Dörnyei (2007) presented two broad phases of content analysis:

- (1) taking each person's response in turn and marking in them any distinct content elements, substantive statements, or key points;
- (2) based on the ideas and concepts highlighted in the texts, forming broader categories to describe the content of the response in a way that allows for comparison with other responses (p. 117).

Thus, the content analysis procedures presented by Dörnyei were adopted in this study to analyze the qualitative data within this study. Dörnyei divides content analysis procedures into four different steps which were also implemented in the current study, namely, transcribing the data, pre-coding and coding, growing ideas-memos, vignettes, profiles, and other forms of data display, and interpreting the data and drawing conclusions.

Since the main focus of a qualitative analysis is on the content of the respondents' answers, not the manner in which they gave the information, any prosodic features that occurred in the interviews were not transcribed. Thus, after each participant cross-checked the transcript, the researchers began to identify emerging themes or patterns relevant to the research by reading throughout the transcriptions from beginning to end several times. The emerging themes were sorted and grouped in separate sets for consistency so that once the coding was completed, the thematic results would reveal interrelations. As a result, some themes were structured into subthemes, while others were discarded for being irrelevant to the study.

## Findings

This section presents key findings from the interviews of the 25 Thai EFL university lecturers who were the participants for the study. The excerpts are presented verbatim from the transcription and used here as examples that represent salient attitudes of the participants in the study. The results illustrated three main significant themes on the participants' perception towards GEs in ELT in Thai university classrooms: (1) EFL pedagogies; (2) EFL materials; and (3) EFL curriculums. The details of each theme are discussed hereafter.

### *EFL Pedagogies*

As elaborated in Excerpts 1-4, the native speaker ideology that projects inner circle speakers as the best teaching models still monopolizes the Thai ELT university context. In other words, the English language of NESTs is considered as good, correct, standard, beautiful, natural, and authentic, and this idea that they hold is greatly influenced by the native ELT ideologies in Thailand.

#### *Excerpt 1*

I think that the ELT education pedagogy in Thailand is heavily western-oriented. The reason for this, in my opinion, is because many of the ELT educational stakeholders in Thailand still perceive that effective ELT and learning in Thailand is ineffective without the native English speakers' influence. Our stakeholders still think that only native Standard English pedagogy is appropriate, and thus, such western pedagogical models are intentionally forced into Thai ELT pedagogy.

#### *Excerpt 2*

From my English language learning and teaching experience here in Thailand, I can say that our English language education is heavily embedded in native norms and cultural contents that are distant from what we know and encounter on a daily basis here in Thailand. This kind of pedagogy makes it difficult for us to have a Global Englishes awareness and experience quickly.

#### *Excerpt 3*

Thailand is an EFL context in the Expanding circle where English is used as a lingua franca given the changing global roles of English as an international language. With this reality, one would expect an integrated pedagogy that incorporates inner circle teaching models with ELF approaches to locally and globally prepare students for effective communication. However, our Thai pedagogy projects more of the inner circle teaching methods as the best and most suitable for an EFL context like Thailand. These native-speaking models have indeed monopolized the Thai ELT market.

#### *Excerpt 4*

If we have ELT pedagogies that actually prepare our learners for real-life communications and interactions, then, we can say that our learners will be able to use different English varieties and be more appreciative of variations in Englishes and not see them as bad English. But the fact that the manner in which English is taught or we are expected by policy and educational stakeholders in Thailand to teach English based on native countries' pedagogies makes this Global Englishes awareness a far-fetched reality for our learners.

***EFL Materials***

It is undeniable that teaching and learning materials are still important in English language teaching/learning, especially in EFL environments such as Thailand, where English is employed as a lingua franca. Teaching/learning materials can guide learners through L1 simulations and can help them (learners) to understand what is expected of them during interactions. However, overused exemplifications of scenarios from L1 contexts seem to have taken up most of the language learning opportunities in Thai EFL material contents. From this view, it is evident that implemented contents in English training programs, conferences, and classroom materials in Thailand are heavily western-oriented (see Excerpts five and six).

***Excerpt 5***

I believe that we mainly use teaching and learning materials to teach our students from western producers like Pearson and others because there's still the assumption that this group of producers publishes materials of authentic language use for anyone wanting to learn 'good English'.

***Excerpt 6***

English language materials from publishers like Macmillan and Cambridge in itself speaks of authentic English usage. This is the idea that most Thai educational stakeholders still have English teaching and learning materials in Thailand. While this may be good, however, given the shifted roles of English nowadays, using only materials from such western publishers may mean that our Educational stakeholders hold a strong belief in these producers as the place where good English can be learned regardless of the English learning background of the learners which does not realistically reflect the Global roles of English.

While learning English using western English materials may not necessarily be a bad idea, incorporating materials of local ELT publishers and contents, colors and descriptions may even be more apt and effective to the students' ELT and learning. In this way, the learners can compare and contrast the western cultural contents in the materials with that of their local context to ensure that the possible diversity is explored. To this point, some participants in this study share a similar view as seen in Excerpts seven and eight.

***Excerpt 7***

We can learn about the cultures of others from our English language teaching and learning materials and compare them with ours to make the most of our learning experiences if the English language pedagogies in Thailand recognize this Global role of English reality.

***Excerpt 8***

We can explore interesting cultural diversity if English teaching and learning materials contain cultural contents from different contexts. This will give us a broader and global perspective on what we learn and how we can engage in real-life communication with people from different parts of the world.

Furthermore, some informants suggested that most EFL pedagogies in Thailand are based on L1 English content materials. These claims seem authentic because most of the

teaching/learning materials approved by the Ministry of Education for primary, secondary, and tertiary education from international publishers tend to primarily have western depictions. Thai rural learners are forced to learn Christmas, snow, Big Ben, Cinco de Mayo, Halloween, apple pie, raspberry sauce, lasagna, hamburgers, fish and chips, French fries, pizzas, Bond Street, Corn Maze, Niagara Falls, autumn, snow, ice skating, and skiing (see Excerpts nine and 10).

*Excerpt 9*

As one might imagine, this weird list of things from the west is not entirely relevant to our context and our learners, nor are they easily comprehensible. What good does this kind of education do when the relevance and practicality factors are missing?

*Excerpt 10*

Our pedagogy encourages us to pile up a list of vocabularies and sets of dialogues that are not relevant to the real-life situations that our Thai learners will face where the vast majorities of them are non-L1 English speakers. Effective learning occurs when a learner can connect new exposures to past experiences.

***EFL Curriculums***

Most of the participants in this study show a preference for the adoption and implementation of this ELF approach in designing Thai English language curriculums as an alternative measure to achieve practical learning (see Excerpts 11 to 13).

*Excerpt 11*

It should be remembered that Thailand is a context where English is employed as a lingua franca with English language learners and users from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it will be most useful if the way that our curriculums are designed takes this sociolinguistic reality into consideration and adopt an ELF approach curriculum instead.

*Excerpt 12*

An English as a lingua franca approach seems to be a suitable framework to consider in addition to traditional western theories, of course, when curriculums are designed for Thai learners. In this way, we can be sure that our curriculums really prepare our Thai learners for real-world global English usage.

*Excerpt 13*

If our Thai English language curriculums would focus on teaching materials from both our local Thai context and that of the globe, then, learning English for Thai students would be most effective, relevant, and practical.

Designing an English language curriculum for EFL learning/teaching with an emphasis on the L1 norms does not reflect the current intercultural challenges of the global use of English. It used to be said that English is the important language for those who wish to communicate with westerners. However, the paradigms have shifted. English is now a global lingua franca serving greater purposes. Most of the participants seem to agree with this changing reality of the English language and calls for a paradigm shift in how EFL curriculums are designed (see Excerpts 11 and 13).

## Discussion

The three primary findings contributed by the participants' are discussed in this section, including EFL instructions, instructional materials, and curriculums in Thailand. The first finding serves as a strong indication that Standard British and American English varieties have long been accepted and promoted as the only (if not the most important) pedagogical models for ELT in Thailand that are internationally acceptable (Bolton, 2012; Jindapitak & Teo, 2012). However, English language pedagogies in Thailand should not neglect how diverse the English language has globally become, especially when it is used by people of different ASEAN nations. Contrarily, the Thai educational system is heavily western-oriented (see Excerpts one to four). It is therefore imperative for educators to raise this intercultural Global Englishes awareness in their pedagogical implementation policies in Thai Higher education so that the students who learn English can be more of global citizens instead of being limited or exposed to only western pedagogies.

If one would attempt to look at the English learning condition closely and unbiasedly, one should find that most story narrations in these contents largely focus on imaginative plots that take place somewhere far beyond imagining (Galloway & Rose, 2015, 2018; Fang, 2016; Fang & Ren, 2018; Ren, 2014; Rose & Galloway, 2019). It becomes time-consuming for many local EFL learners to digest because the contents do not focus on what most local learners need to know when they go out and speak English. In fact, these learning experiences can give local learners a hard time when it comes to transitioning and relating the westernized English lessons that they learned with the local situations that require them to realistically use English varieties in communication. Presently, English serves as a medium of communication among multilingual who study English as an additional language in ASEAN (Boonsuk et al., 2021; Kirkpatrick, 2012; 2014; Rose & Galloway, 2019). This phenomenon sheds new light on whether to teach and use English based on native contents (British or American English) or the contextual and environmental contents of the learners (e.g., where they live, how they use English in their societies, and with whom they mainly communicate). The goals, curricula, teaching contents and instructional and training materials of ELT may not necessarily be exclusively based on the EFL principle which regards inner circles varieties of English (British or American English) as the golden rule but more suitable English language pedagogies could be invented and integrated for these ELF learners and users so that the teaching reflects ELF, real-world utilization, and new linguistic landscapes (Jenkins, 2015; Rose & Galloway, 2019).

Concerning available EFL instructional materials in Thailand, most of the employed materials and learning supplements remain restricted to a limited number of producers such as Pearson, McGraw-Hill, Macmillan, Cambridge, Oxford, or Longman (Methitham, 2009) simply because national and local ELT practitioners trust that American and British institutions are the best place for everyone regardless of the English learning backgrounds, to learn English. Using both local and western English materials to teach English in Thailand will ensure that Thai learners have the opportunity to come up with flexible and natural ways of communicating with diverse interlocutors from varied linguacultural backgrounds. Such reflection can enhance the practicality of English in contextualized situations. Unfortunately, most English language practitioners in Thailand neglect to foster this second element in institutionalizing English learning in the university classrooms, unknowingly dragging learners to the monoculture edge and crippling their linguistic potential as quality 21<sup>st</sup>-century citizens.

On this note, Mauranen (2012) stated that EFL materials used in Thailand employ elements that are dissociative with local reality. The primary demonstration contains Inner-Circle stories with vague connections with the experiences of learners from other Circles. In addition, most lessons are biased. They do not usually mention the negative sides of the western world. Furthermore, many contents, both interactive and non-interactive, seem to unknowingly promote racial segregation by using more Caucasian characters in the stories. Since Thailand dominantly uses mainstream English materials, some learners and practitioners may be misled by false values hidden within them.

Furthermore, as described in Excerpts 9 and 10, the inconsistency between learners' background knowledge and contents of the teaching/learning materials could lead to several drawbacks, such as motivation. When tasked, many learners were found unable to produce conversation dialogues independently even though they had recently learned how to. This could be because the 'how' did not make much sense as everything sounded strange and unfamiliar. Unknown learning contents and example discourses lack personal touches. Hence, educational contents that are too broad and distant can deteriorate learning motivation. Instead of being supportive, they eventually give learners a difficult time learning a language.

Suffices here to mention that most English materials in Thailand implemented at any educational level and produced by Thai or L1 English speakers are not very practical nor responsive to the current ELT challenges in Thailand. Realistically, it is almost impossible that English learners in Thailand will only be using English to communicate with Inner-Circle individuals. Contrarily, there is a fair likelihood that they will encounter non-L1 interlocutors in many occasions whose linguistic and cultural backgrounds vary extensively (Jenkins, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2014). To enhance learners' self-understanding through English, prepare them for intercultural exposures, and train them to become effective cross-cultural communicators, EFL materials should be composed of a blend between global and local materials (i.e., glocal) (Rose & Galloway, 2019). Monocultural pedagogies create unnecessary learning restrictions which will only do more harm than good when realizing that learners will eventually be using English in multicultural encounters (Galloway & Rose, 2015).

One might not have realized that on many occasions, English conversations take place between interlocutors whose mother tongue is not English (Jenkins, 2015; Rose & Galloway, 2019). For instance, a group of Indonesian tourists could be asking a Thai hotel receptionist in English for directions whereas a Thai businessperson could be negotiating a trade deal with a Japanese counterpart using English. Many discussions such as these require English knowledge of local and contextual matters. More importantly, when more countries start adopting English, more English varieties emerge. That is why it is justifiable to reconsider not only to use westernized and monoculture ELT materials but also local materials. In ELF environments, English has become more dynamic and adaptive in its constant use. It is being adjusted to suit communicative circumstances (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011). Having been extensively altered to serve diverse social purposes, an ELF study reported that ELF involves 'multiculturalism, multilingualism, polymodels, and pluricentrism' which contrasts traditional ideologies where English is only about "monoculturalism, monolingualism, monomodels, and monocentrism" (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 134).

Regarding EFL curriculums in Thailand, which is the third primary finding contributed by the participants, Thai English classes are still lacking behind in terms of preparing learners to use English in today's multidialectal and multilingual world (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020; Boonsuk et al., 2021; Methitham, 2009). Therefore, dealing with this situation may involve the implementation of the conceptual and operational frameworks of ELF; how ELF curriculum can be designed and taught within Thai education. Amongst several studies of what is the most applicable local and global approach for ELT classroom context, a true reflection of the reality of ELT goal and curriculum in EFL contexts, is Kirkpatrick (2012, p. 40) 'Lingua Franca Approach' where he advocated for four principles:

- 1) The goal of the approach is not for learners to acquire native speaker proficiency and to sound like native speakers, but to enable them to use English successfully in lingua franca contexts; they will naturally sound like multilinguals.
- 2) The content of the curriculum needs to include topics of regional and local cultures that are relevant for lingua franca users in these contexts.
- 3) The curriculum must be designed to allow students to be able to engage critically on discussions about their own cultures and cultural values and interest in English.
- 4) The curriculum needs to include listening materials that familiarize students with the speech styles and pronunciation of their fellow multilinguals.

A key discussion here is integrating local and global (glocal) contents in designing ELT curriculums in Thailand, to prepare the learners for the glocal world. Put differently, ELF goals and curriculum should be applied to Thai EFL classroom. It is no doubt that ELF is different from NES model, therefore, teaching English through ELF's framework will become even more appropriate and practical in Thailand (see Excerpts 11 and 13). Kirkpatrick (2012) proposes that the aims of English language teaching and learning should not be to equip learners with some particular types of English (i.e. American or British English) by forcing native-English pedagogies and neglecting the fact that most local learners are already multilingual. To ensure a practical use of the language, ELT should not only be tied to concepts of EFL-oriented pedagogy or idealized pedagogical norms of L1. Instead, as Kirkpatrick (2012) suggested, it should emphasize multilingual feasibility.

Therefore, the learning curricula should stress more on local cultures and varieties rather than those of the inner circle as proposed by Kirkpatrick (2012) above as the starting guideline for policymakers, curriculum designers, teachers, and trainers to design ELF curriculum in Thailand. Kirkpatrick's proposal aligns with other educational stakeholders whose studies in different contexts confirm this (Seidhofer, 2011). Nevertheless, we acknowledge that implementing ELF teaching and learning curriculums in Thailand can be a very challenging task to accomplish since the current language policy, language ideology, teaching/learning materials, reference works and supplementary materials are exclusively published by western publishers with a massive focus on native English variety (such as Cambridge, Oxford, Pearson, McGraw-Hill, Macmillan and Longman (Methitham, 2009).

### **Implications of the study**

It is important to remember that English has adopted a changing role in this 21st century, thus, English teachers should recognize and be aware of global happenings for language

teaching, language planning and predicting language change. As discussed, it is clear that English has changed roles due to its widespread and use around the globe, so there is a need to make it more appropriate in different ELF contexts. Considering its shifted roles to ELF, how it should be taught, learned, and used should be reconsidered and made more practical (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2020).

To keep up with globalization and the transition of the English status as a world's lingua franca, English teaching materials that support cultural diversity should be considered suitable. Hence, teaching/learning materials and curriculums should help learners recognize international values. As English speakers from diverse backgrounds employ the English language as a lingua franca, English is figuratively a bridging language between them. To become a successful communicator, learners should learn to recognize cultures other than theirs while learning English. As global citizens with broader linguacultural awareness and competence, Thai learners could be anticipated to become more adept at accommodating to cross-cultural communication. If the aim is to widen international understanding, teaching English with variety and cultural limitations would cultivate a sense of comfort zone where learners could quickly disapprove of any English strategies deemed non-traditional. Through such rejections, learners might refuse to understand and make a premature judgment that causes communication breakdowns as they feel insecure from unfamiliar English-speaking cultures. Thus, to prepare learners as global citizens in using English, learning materials should be incorporated based on how well they can encourage learners to make cross-cultural reflections and comparisons, involving their own and other cultures so that the learning can help them form a sphere of interculturality. Furthermore, the concept of cultural diversity should be the learning emphasis in ELT, and cultural contents should be introduced to learners to help them establish an understanding that communication reactions and behaviors can be interpreted and discussed using many different cultural perspectives. As Kirkpatrick (2012) stated, "insisting on a single target norm is considered as inappropriate, impractical, and unnecessary" in multilingual societies like Thailand. Teaching a foreign language (English) should not focus on specific goals, norms, or cultures, but on skills development and how to communicate appropriately and effectively either in local, national, or international contexts.

If educators are allowed to integrate local and global cultures into ELT materials, they would have access to alternative teaching approaches that are more responsive to current teaching requirements and targets, including English practicality, linguistic diversity, and cultural contexts. Reconceptualizing ELT for adaptability is hoped to better prepare learners for communicative efficiency in settings of multicultural and multilingual interlocutors. Adopting this communicative capacity is considered a desirable trait of current global citizenship. In addition, English teachers will, with ease, shift from the unpleasant periphery to a position of authority (in their own right) and can develop or establish more appropriate teaching and learning materials and classroom teaching and learning environments for their students. To this end, teachers will adjust or adapt their teaching to suit their teaching context. To effectively adhere to internationally acceptable English in a global EFL classroom, there is a need for a revision in the goals and curricula of ELT pedagogy including teaching and learning materials in Thailand, thereby facilitating the process of building Thai learners into becoming global intercultural citizens.

## Conclusion

English has become a global language and a primary means of communication (Baker 2016; Boonsuk et al., 2021; Rose & Galloway, 2019). As a result, governments worldwide have inevitably adopted a national educational development policy to include English as an essential learning language. This phenomenon creates a significant rise in the number of non-native English language learners and a change to the status of English and its linguistic landscapes (Fang & Ren, 2018; Galloway & Rose, 2018; Jindapitak, 2019). This development produced a clear contrast between the new status quo and the past conditions, especially on the emergence of English varieties and their contextual applications among users with diverse linguacultural demographics. Therefore, this research aimed to explore English lecturers' voices in Thai universities on existing EFL pedagogies and evaluate if they indicate that their practices are responsive to the changing English landscapes. Unfortunately, the findings revealed that the teaching management in Thailand did not yet reflect any adaptation to embrace the changing roles or status of the English language, where English is now globally owned. More specifically, the participants agreed that the taught pedagogies, teaching materials, and curriculums remained more conforming to native-speaker norms. In this regard, the participants further pointed out that the current English language teaching approaches were not practical to a 21<sup>st</sup>-century education. Hence, educational stakeholders, including administrators, policymakers, and curriculum designers, should reconsider by making relevant instructional adjustments to produce concrete implementations that meet today's real-world requirements of English language utilization.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Interview Questions

1. From your perspective, what are the current roles of English?
2. Do you agree that English is a global language without a legitimate owner?
3. What are your views on the current ELT policy of Thailand?
4. How do you perceive the currently employed ELT approaches in Thailand?
5. What are your ideas on effective English teaching?

6. How satisfactory is the current English teaching at preparing you for global citizenship? Please elaborate.
7. How essential are English textbooks in today's English language learning?
8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your ELT textbooks?
9. What do you are today's characteristics of an excellent textbook?
10. Can your ELT textbooks help build confidence when you speak English with foreigners?
11. What are your attitudes towards the general contents of your current ELT textbooks?
12. What are your attitudes towards the cultural contents of your current ELT textbooks?
13. If you have the power to decide, would you prefer the ELT textbooks made in Thailand by Thai authors to the ones made by L1 English speakers? Why?
14. What are the strengths and weaknesses of ELT textbooks made in Thailand by Thai authors?
15. What are the strengths and weaknesses of ELT textbooks made by L1 English speakers?
16. What are your opinions on the incorporation of the learners' cultures into an ELT process?