

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 English as International Language

This section discusses several aspects related to English as an International Language (EIL), including the definition of EIL, its characteristics, and EIL pedagogy. In addition, this section also explains the teacher's role in the implementation of EIL and briefly discusses the differences between EIL, EFL, and ESL.

There are various interpretations regarding the definition of English as an International Language (EIL). English as an International Language is considered a language used for intercultural communication in today's global context (Tajeddin et al., 2020). According to Llurda (2004), English as an international language refers to the worldwide use of English as a means of communication among people who use English either as a native language or a non-native language. This view is consistent with the argument proposed by Sato and Storch (2022), who emphasize that EIL focuses on the concept of "ownership" of a nativized language, meaning that users are able to adopt English to communicate their own cultures and ideas to others. Those ideas are also supported by other scholars, including McKay (2018), who states that EIL focuses on content and interaction which according to experts is based on the purpose of the communication and the speaker's first language, culture, and level of expertise in English. Based on several definitions above, it can be understood that English as an International Language (EIL) refers to the use of English as a global means of communication among people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In this context, English is not only used by native speakers, but also by non-native speakers to express their own ideas, cultures, and identities. Therefore, EIL emphasizes communication and interaction based on the purpose of communication, cultural background, and the users' level of English proficiency rather than focusing only on native-speaker standards.

To gain a deeper understanding of EIL, it is also important to discuss the main characteristics that distinguish EIL from other English language paradigms.

One of the main characteristics that distinguishes English as an International Language (EIL) from traditional paradigms such as EFL and ESL is the shift in focus from following native-speaker cultural norms toward intercultural communication and the acceptance of different varieties of English. This change is closely related to the increasing use of English among people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds worldwide. The growing use of English by people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds has led to the need for adjustments in English language teaching practices that are still cantered on Western norms and standards. This situation has encouraged changes in English language teaching paradigms, including the development of Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL). Therefore, an EIL-oriented course was designed and implemented to improve learners' understanding and awareness of the diversity of English use, develop more positive attitudes toward differences, and enhance English proficiency (Çetinkaya & Kayaoglu, 2022).

Another important characteristic of EIL is the emphasis on intelligibility rather than native-like accuracy. In EIL contexts, successful communication becomes more important than imitating native-speaker pronunciation or accent. This perspective is also highlighted by Nowacka and Nowacki (2025) who state that intelligibility is valued over nativeness, and immersion in a multi-accent community improves recognition and familiarity with English accents, with native accents being easier to understand than outgroup ones.

An additional aspect is that EIL also encourages learners to maintain their local cultural identity while using English as a tool for international communication. This clearly supports the implementation of English as "Mulok" in Indonesian primary schools, where integrating local culture into English curriculums enhances students' engagement and understanding of English language, while preserving their cultural identity (Ratri et al., 2025).

For this reason, Indonesian teachers actually have the right to use English without feeling inferior, since in the EIL perspective, English is viewed as a language that belongs to all of its users, including non-native speakers. In other

words, English ownership is not limited to native speakers. Although this perspective has gradually gained recognition, its implementation in educational contexts still faces several challenges. Based on several previous studies (Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2018; Matsuda, 2003; Tajeddin et al., 2020; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019), many teachers and students have started to recognize and positively respond to the concept of EIL, particularly regarding the acceptance of various English varieties beyond native-speaker standards. However, in practice, many of them still tend to prioritize Standard English and experience difficulties in fully implementing EIL in classroom learning. This indicates that although awareness of EIL has gradually developed, the influence of native-speaker norms and the lack of practical guidance remain major challenges in applying EIL in educational contexts.

The discussion of EIL is not only limited to its definition and characteristics, but also extends to how the concept is implemented in English language teaching through EIL pedagogy. But what does pedagogy actually mean? Merriam-Webster (2026) describes pedagogy as the art, science, or profession of teaching. In addition, Shah (2021) states that pedagogy refers to the art and science of teaching children, whose meaning has developed through various definitions and models across different disciplines. In the context of EIL, EIL pedagogy can be understood as a teaching approach that encourages learners to develop awareness of the diversity and dynamic nature of English while preparing them to communicate effectively in multilingual and multicultural contexts (Marlina, 2014). This perspective is further explained again by Marlina (2018) who states that EIL pedagogy emphasizes English learning that prepares students to use English flexibly, communicatively, and across different cultural contexts in diverse global situations. However, it is important that increasing students' awareness of the diversity and complexity of English does not mean that learners are free to use English without any consideration of language rules. In EIL pedagogy, linguistic errors are still seen as important to address, particularly when they occur due to a lack of understanding rather than as part of meaningful language variation or communication strategies (Marlina, 2018)

In relation to its implementation in classroom learning, EIL pedagogy also emphasizes several important principles in English language teaching. In classroom practice, EIL pedagogy encourages teachers to create learning environments that emphasize effective communication, intercultural awareness, and exposure to different varieties of English. Rather than focusing solely on native-speaker standards, EIL pedagogy supports the use of English as a tool for global communication while still respecting learners' local culture and identity (McKay, 2018). Therefore, teachers are expected to help students develop confidence in using English flexibly and meaningfully in multilingual and multicultural contexts (Marlina, 2018).

Since the implementation of EIL pedagogy in classroom learning is closely related to teaching practices, teachers play an important role in supporting the application of EIL in English language teaching. Li (2017) highlights that teacher play an important role in the implementation of TEIL, especially as English continues to expand globally and the number of English learners and users keeps increasing worldwide. In fact, this idea had been emphasized much earlier by Sandra Lee McKay in her book *Teaching English as an International Language* (as cited in Renandya 2012) where she points out that teachers are one of the key factors in the successful implementation of EIL in English language teaching. Renandya (2012) further explains that, in order to implement an EIL approach effectively, teachers need to understand various aspects of teaching English within the EIL context. They are expected to recognize the roles they should take in supporting EIL pedagogy while also being critical of teaching practices that may not align with EIL principles. In addition, teachers need to be open to developing new knowledge and skills in order to adapt to their roles in EIL-based English language teaching.

In this context, teachers' understanding and perceptions of EIL become important since they may affect how English is taught and practiced in the classroom. As highlighted by Matsuda, 2012; McKay and Heng, 2008; Sifakis, 2004, teachers may shape classroom learning through the selection of teaching materials, classroom interaction, language models, and the way they introduce

cultural aspects in English learning. Therefore, teachers are expected to create learning environments that support intercultural communication, expose learners to different varieties of English, and encourage the use of English as a tool for meaningful global communication rather than merely focusing on native-speaker norms.

2.2 English Young Learners

The discussion of English language teaching is also closely related to the context of teaching English to young learners (EYL), particularly because young learners require different learning approaches in the classroom. Harmer (2007) classifies learners into three age groups: children, adolescents, and adults. Specifically, within the category of children, he further divides them into two groups. Young learners are generally those aged between 5 and 9 years old, while very young learners are typically between 2 and 5 years old. More specifically, P. McKay (2006) defines young language learners as learners who study English as a foreign language or a second language at the primary school level. In terms of age, they are generally between 5 and 12 years old.

Stakanova and Tolstikhina (2014) argue that introducing English at an early age can give long-term advantages for learners and support more effective language learning. The teaching of English at the primary school level is also based on the belief that early exposure to English plays an important role in developing learners' language skills (Gawi, 2012). In addition, Penny Ur, as cited in Suwoto (2021), explains that children tend to respond positively to attractive, colourful, and visually clear images. Similarly, Dar, F.R (as cited in Rahmat & Fauzi, 2022) points out that language development can be supported more effectively when teachers use interesting and suitable learning materials related to the lesson being taught. Moreover, Harmer (2007) suggests that teachers should optimize the use of English in the classroom through facial expressions, gestures, acting, puppets, and other teaching aids to help learners understand meaning more easily.

Understanding the characteristics of young learners is important because children have different ways of learning compared to adolescent and adult learners.

According to Scott and Ytreberg (2004), young learners generally learn through direct experiences involving their senses, such as seeing, hearing, and touching. They also tend to understand situations more quickly than the language itself and learn more effectively when they are actively involved in enjoyable activities. In addition, young learners usually have relatively short attention spans and may easily lose interest when classroom activities are repetitive or monotonous. This idea is supported by recent studies showing that young learners are more engaged in language learning when they participate in interactive, playful, and visually supported activities (Lena & Nikolov, 2025). Therefore, learning activities for young learners should be varied, interactive, and engaging in order to maintain their attention and motivation during the learning process.

Furthermore, Harmer (2007) explains that young learners are generally active, curious, and enthusiastic learners who respond well to activities involving movement, games, stories, songs, and visual media. They also tend to understand meaning more easily through concrete contexts rather than abstract explanations. Similarly, Cameron (2001) states that children learn languages more effectively when language is presented in meaningful and contextualized situations. For this reason, teachers need to create supportive and enjoyable classroom environments that encourage young learners to participate actively in English learning activities.

Since young learners have distinctive learning characteristics, teachers need to apply appropriate teaching strategies that can support children's engagement and understanding in the learning process. Recent studies suggest that effective teaching strategies for young learners should involve interactive and enjoyable activities such as games, songs, storytelling, role-play, and the use of visual media to maintain learners' attention and motivation during classroom learning (Riyadi et al., 2024). In addition, young learners tend to learn more effectively when they are actively involved in meaningful and contextualized learning activities that allow them to interact with others and use language naturally in classroom situations (Cameron, 2001; Harmer, 2007). Furthermore, teachers need to adjust teaching strategies to learners' needs and learning objectives in order to support effective English learning. According to Hayati et al. (2021), various teaching strategies such as

discussion, cooperative learning, role play, and problem solving can be applied in the English language learning process. Therefore, the selection of teaching methods, learning materials, and classroom activities becomes an important aspect in supporting effective English learning for young learners.

In addition to selecting appropriate teaching strategies, the selection of teaching materials is equally important in supporting English learning for young learners. Since children tend to learn through concrete experiences, meaningful contexts, and enjoyable activities, teaching materials should be appropriate to their cognitive development, interests, and daily experiences. Effective teaching materials for young learners may include stories, songs, games, pictures, flashcards, videos, and other interactive resources that encourage learners to actively participate in classroom learning (Cameron, 2001; Shin & Crandall, 2014). Furthermore, recent studies emphasize that teaching materials for young learners should not only facilitate language learning, but also promote meaningful communication, learner engagement, creativity, and opportunities for interaction in authentic contexts (Ghosn, 2019). Therefore, the selection of appropriate teaching materials becomes an essential aspect of creating enjoyable and meaningful English learning experiences for young learners.

2.3 The Application of EIL in Teaching EYL

The discussion of EIL and EYL is closely connected in the context of English language teaching, particularly because the principles of EIL are relevant to the characteristics and learning needs of young learners. In EYL classrooms, English is not only taught as a subject, but also introduced as a means of communication that exposes learners to linguistic and cultural diversity from an early age. As explained by Cameron (2001) and Scott and Ytreberg (2004), children tend to learn more effectively through meaningful communication, interaction, and contextualized learning activities that are closely related to their daily experiences. In line with this perspective, S. L. McKay (2018) emphasizes that EIL views English primarily as a tool for communication rather than as a language that must strictly follow native-speaker standards. For this reason, the implementation of EIL

in EYL classrooms may help learners use English in more meaningful, communicative, and culturally relevant ways from an early age.

In the context of English as an International Language, the selection of teaching materials should also reflect the principles of EIL. Rather than presenting English solely through native-speaker language models and cultures, EIL-oriented teaching materials are expected to expose learners to the diversity of English use across different linguistic and cultural contexts. S. L. McKay (2018) argues that English language teaching materials should be relevant to learners' local contexts while at the same time preparing them to communicate with people from various cultural backgrounds. Likewise, Matsuda (2012) emphasizes that teaching materials should introduce learners to different English varieties and intercultural perspectives in order to reflect the global role of English today. In the context of young learners, this can be achieved by selecting stories, songs, visual media, games, and classroom activities that integrate learners' local culture with global perspectives in age-appropriate and meaningful ways. Therefore, the selection of teaching materials becomes one of the practical ways through which teachers can implement EIL principles in teaching English to young learners.

In classroom practice, the implementation of EIL in EYL can be reflected through various learning activities and teaching practices designed by teachers. According to S. L. McKay (2018) and Matsuda (2012) teachers may introduce learning materials that expose learners to different varieties of English while still considering learners' local cultural backgrounds and everyday experiences. At the same time, activities such as games, storytelling, role-play, songs, and group interaction, as suggested by Harmer (2007) and Cameron (2001), can support meaningful communication and encourage learners to use English more naturally in classroom situations. Through these activities, English learning is not merely focused on grammatical accuracy, but also on helping learners communicate confidently and meaningfully with others. Therefore, teachers hold an important role in creating communicative and culturally relevant learning environments that support the principles of EIL in teaching young learners.

The implementation of EIL in teaching English to young learners may provide several benefits for learners from an early age. Through EIL-oriented learning, young learners can develop the understanding that English is a global language that can be used by people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, not only by native speakers (S. L. McKay, 2018; Sato & Storch, 2022). This perspective may also help learners become more confident in using English while still maintaining their own cultural identity. However, the implementation of EIL in EYL classrooms still faces several challenges in practice. Some teachers may still prioritize native-speaker norms and Standard English in classroom learning due to the strong influence of native-speaker ideology (Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2018; Tajeddin et al., 2020). In addition, the limited availability of EIL-oriented teaching materials and teachers' lack of understanding of EIL principles may also influence the implementation of EIL in English language teaching contexts (Matsuda, 2012; Renandya, 2012). Several previous studies also indicate that although awareness of EIL has gradually developed among teachers and students, many educators still experience difficulties in fully implementing EIL principles in classroom learning due to the continuing influence of native-speaker norms and limited practical guidance (Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2018; Tajeddin et al., 2020; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019). Therefore, teachers' perceptions and understanding of EIL become important aspects in supporting the application of EIL in teaching English to young learners.

2.4 Teachers Perception Toward EIL

Besides understanding the concepts and implementation of EIL in English language teaching, it is also important to discuss teachers' perceptions toward EIL, since teachers' perceptions may influence how EIL principles are understood and applied in classroom learning. Before discussing the main topic, it is important to first understand the definition of perception itself. According to Wurarah (2022), perception can be understood as a process of receiving, selecting, organizing, interpreting, and responding to information or stimuli obtained through the senses. This idea is further supported by Nisa et al. (2023) who explain that perception refers to an individual's way of viewing and understanding something based on the

processing of thoughts and experiences. In this sense, perception is closely related to external factors that are responded to through the senses, memory, and psychological processes.

In educational settings, teachers' perceptions play an important role since they may affect how teachers interpret teaching approaches, classroom practices, and learning objectives. Basically, the concept of perception in general is not significantly different from its meaning in the educational context. In education, perception can generally be understood as the way individuals interpret and respond to their surrounding environment based on their experiences, knowledge, and expectations (Byiringiro, 2024; Fadhila & Wafa, 2025). Taken together, these studies suggest that perception in education covers how students and teachers see the classroom, teaching quality, learning activities, and their own learning. Research shows these perceptions matter for motivation, engagement, and achievement (Chew et al., 2021; Lizzio et al., 2002; Patil & Chaudhari, 2016; Singh et al., 2022).

In educational contexts, teachers' perceptions and beliefs may influence classroom practices, students' learning experiences, and even the implementation of teaching approaches and educational policies (Chand, 2025; Li & Ma, 2025). According to Turner et al. (2008) and Li and Ma (2025), teachers generally tend to have positive attitudes toward student learning and educational innovation. Nevertheless, differences between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom practices are still commonly found in educational contexts.

In the context of EIL, teachers' perceptions may include their views toward English ownership, different varieties of English, intercultural communication, and the role of native-speaker norms in English language teaching. Several previous studies have shown that many teachers have started to recognize and positively respond to the concept of EIL, particularly regarding the acceptance of English varieties beyond native-speaker standards. For example, Tajeddin et al. (2020) found that teachers generally acknowledged the legitimacy of non-native English varieties as long as they remained understandable in communication. Similarly, Lee and Chen Hsieh (2018) reported that students and teachers showed positive

responses toward the idea of English as an international language, although some of them still questioned the position of English beyond native-speaker ownership. However, despite these positive perspectives, many teachers still tend to prioritize Standard English and native-speaker models in classroom learning due to the continuing influence of native-speaker ideology and limited practical guidance for implementing EIL principles (Matsuda, 2003; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019). Therefore, teachers' perceptions toward EIL become an important aspect because they may influence how EIL principles are interpreted and implemented in English language teaching practices.

2.5 Previous Studies Review

Several previous studies related to EIL, EYL, and teachers' perceptions have been conducted by previous researchers. The following table presents some previous studies that are relevant to the present research.

Table 2.1 Previous Studies Review

Researcher	Focus	Findings	Relation to Present Study
(Tajeddin et al., 2020)	Teachers' perceptions toward EIL, English varieties, and native-speaker norms	The findings showed that although teachers recognized the legitimacy of non-native English varieties, many of them still tended to prioritize Standard English in classroom learning.	Similar to the present study in discussing teachers' perceptions toward EIL, but different in research context and participants because the present study focuses on EYL teachers.
(Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2018)	Students' perceptions toward EIL, English ownership, and English varieties	Students' perceptions toward EIL, English ownership, and English varieties	Similar to the present study in discussing perceptions toward EIL, but different in participants and research context because the present study focuses on

Researcher	Focus	Findings	Relation to Present Study
			teachers in EYL classrooms.
(Çetinkaya, 2021)	EIL-oriented classroom implementation and pedagogical practices	The findings showed that the implementation of EIL in classroom learning helped increase learners' awareness of the sociolinguistic diversity of English, developed positive attitudes toward cultural and linguistic diversity, and improved learners' motivation and confidence in using English.	Similar to the present study in discussing the implementation of EIL in classroom learning, but different in research focus because the present study specifically explores teachers' perceptions toward EIL in EYL contexts.
(Tsatzali & Beazidou, 2023)	Intercultural communication practices in early English language learning	The findings indicated that various teaching methods, classroom activities, and digital learning tools could support intercultural learning and communication in early English language teaching contexts.	Similar to the present study in discussing English language teaching for young learners and intercultural learning, but different in research focus because the present study specifically explores teachers' perceptions toward EIL in EYL classrooms.
(Nguyen, 2024)	The incorporation of EIL principles in teaching materials	The findings showed that although material developers had positive perceptions toward the incorporation	Similar to the present study in discussing the implementation of EIL and challenges in English language teaching, but different in research focus and

Researcher	Focus	Findings	Relation to Present Study
		of EIL, the implementation of EIL principles in teaching materials was still limited. The study also found that native-speaker culture was still more dominant in material design compared to local and international cultures.	context because the present study focuses on teachers' perceptions toward EIL in EYL classrooms.

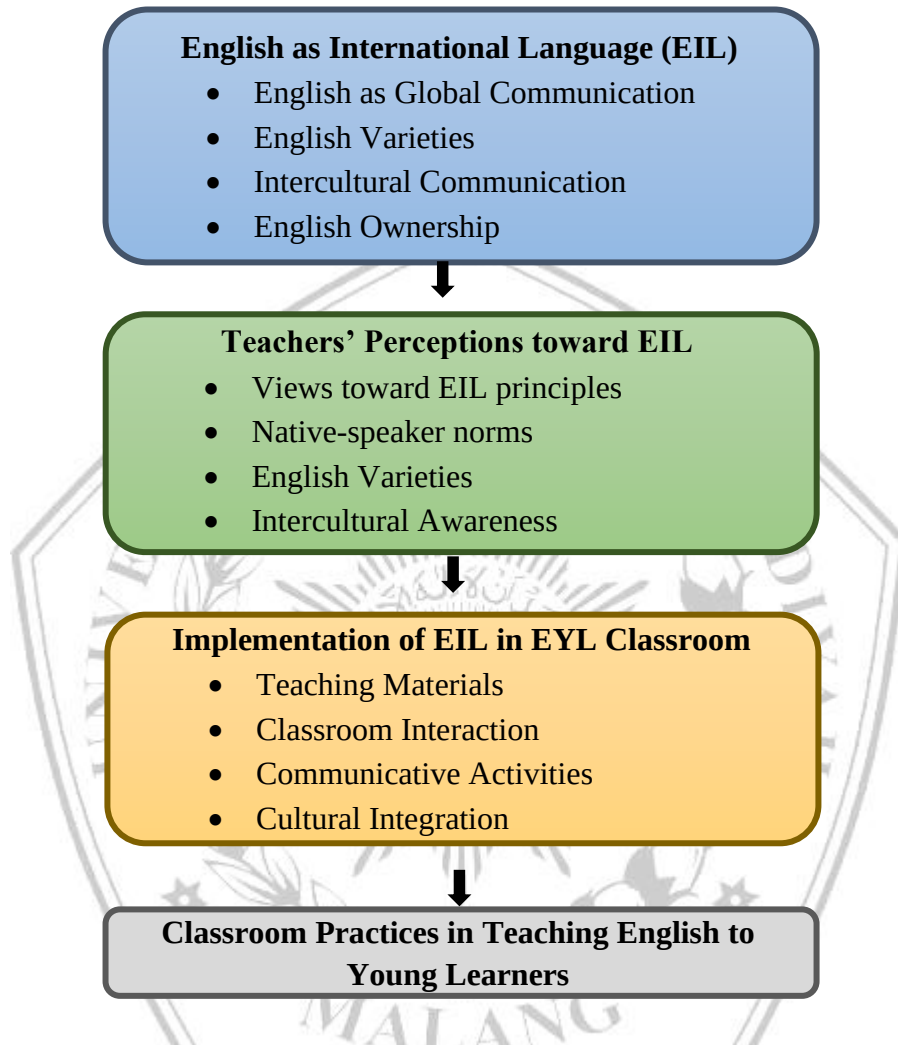
Based on the previous studies above, it can be seen that many researchers have discussed English as an International Language (EIL) from various perspectives, including teachers' and students' perceptions toward EIL, classroom implementation, intercultural communication, and the incorporation of EIL principles in teaching materials. The findings of those studies generally show that EIL has received positive responses in English language teaching contexts, particularly regarding the acceptance of English varieties and the importance of intercultural communication in language learning. However, several studies also reveal that the implementation of EIL principles in classroom practices is still influenced by native-speaker norms and limited practical application in teaching and learning processes. In addition, most previous studies were conducted in university or general ELT contexts, while studies focusing on teachers' perceptions toward the implementation of EIL in teaching English to young learners are still limited. Therefore, the present study is important to provide a deeper understanding of how teachers perceive and interpret the implementation of EIL principles in EYL classrooms, especially considering the important role of teachers in shaping young learners' English learning experiences from an early age.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This study is based on several main concepts, namely English as an International Language (EIL), English for Young Learners (EYL), and teachers' perceptions toward

the implementation of EIL in classroom learning. The framework below illustrates the relationship among those concepts in the present study.

Table 2.2 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework above shows that the implementation of EIL in EYL classrooms may be influenced by teachers' perceptions toward EIL. Teachers' understanding and perceptions of EIL can affect how EIL principles are interpreted and applied in classroom practices, including the selection of teaching materials, classroom interaction, communicative activities, and the integration of cultural aspects in English language learning for young learners.