Exploring Reading Engagement in English as an International Language (EIL) Materials

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Abstract

The popularity of English as an International Language has been rapidly growing, contributing EIL materials to have become more widespread in learning. This study discusses students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials, which aims to (1) investigate students' engagement in reading EIL materials, (2) explore student perception of EIL materials, and (3) explore the relationship between students' level of reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials. 113 undergraduate students at one private college who use English as a medium for their instruction were participated in this study. A mixed-method study which Reading Engagement Questionnaire and EIL Perception Questionnaire were adopted and constructed to explore the findings and an interview protocol was designed to triangulate with the questionnaires' findings. The study revealed that students engaged in reading EIL materials in a neutral level and perceived EIL materials positively. Students possessed all four constructs of reading engagement in EIL materials: competence-related beliefs, task values, behavioral engagement in reading texts, and engaged readers. Furthermore, students perceived positively with four principles of EIL: current status of English, varieties of English, strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication and English reader's identities. Interestingly, there was a positive relationship between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials.

Keywords: EIL materials, reading engagement, student perception

1. Introduction

Currently, English is an international language since it is served as the most common language used as a second or third language for communication globally. English as an international language (EIL) can be defined as the varieties of English being spoken and as the use of English by people who are non-native speakers. According to Marlina (2014), EIL as a paradigm acknowledges the English's form internationally and its use in diverse economic and cultural dimensions by English speakers from various lingua-cultural backgrounds.

In an educational aspect, reading plays a significant role in English learning since students learn English or acquire information by reading. A majority of academic papers and research articles are published in English. Furthermore, readers who believe that reading is crucial and have intrinsic pleasure in reading tend to attempt and spend time understanding texts (Anderson, 2018; Grabe & Jiang, 2018; Guthrie & Klauda, 2014). This can be regarded as reading engagement. According to Guthrie & Wigfield (2017), reading engagement is driven by motivated actions, and the action with interest, purposes, emotions and other psychological processes together with consistent and effortful behavior. Nevertheless, the types of texts can have a considerable impact on reading engagement. Since all readers have their own preferences, they are interested in different types of texts (Anderson, 2018).

Given the increase in Global Englishes research highlighting on the use of EIL and a global lingua franca (Rose et al., 2021), research on the issue of EIL materials has gained academic attention. However, fewer studies have been conducted on reading engagement in EIL materials. To address this problem, this study aims to investigate students' engagement in reading EIL materials, explore student perception of EIL materials and explore the relationship between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials.

This study focuses on three main research questions:

1. To what extent do students engage in reading EIL materials?
2. What are student perceptions of EIL materials?
3. What are the relationships between students' level of reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials?

2. Literature Review

2.1 English as an International Language

Various definitions of English as an International Language (EIL) have been interpreted. English as an international language is defined as a language of intercultural communication in the current global context (Tajeddin et al., 2020). Tajeddin et al. (2020) proposed the global status of English has shifted the key goal of language pedagogy from the development of native speaker competence to comprehensibility and intelligible use of more English's varieties. The aspect in communication between non-native English's speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds and the increasing attention in local and global considerations has put emphasis on the investigation of English as an international language or EIL. McKay & Brown (2015) viewed English as an International Language as the diversities of English spoken at the present to the use of English by people who use English as a second language. Therefore, EIL is seen both as a type of English and as a way of using English. Moreover, McKay (2018) pointed out that EIL scholars identified the existence of several varieties of English used globally. These varieties are determinants both of the first language and the speaker's culture and the speaker's level of language expertise. It is said that EIL puts high emphasis on content. Furthermore, EIL scholars also acknowledge that what and how language is used is a factor for both of the goal of the communication and the speaker's first language, culture, and range of expertise in English. To clarify, EIL focuses on the fact that the language used in any interaction will rely on the investment of the speaker in being comprehended, his or her level of expertise in English and the English competency of the listener. EIL also acknowledges English varieties, including diverse dialects of English and World Englishes (Xu, 2018).

Furthermore, according to Lee & Chen (2018), there are four main principles of EIL which are current status of English (CE*)*, varieties of English (VE*)*, strategies for multilingual or multicultural communication (SMC*)* and English speaker's identity (ESI). For CE, it refers to how people perceive English as an international language for global communication in several aspects including, education, business, and culture (Lee & Chen, 2019*)*. McKay (2018*)* stated that English is a language with significant geographical and cultural extent allowing people to get involved in cross-cultural exchanges and to accomplish varieties of knowledge. Also, Lee et al. (2019) argued that over 80% of English communication is common among non-native English speakers (NNES*)*. For VE, it is related to attitudes about English-related varieties. It deals with how people accept diverse varieties of English and how teachers use listening materials consisting of interactions among non-native English speakers (Lee & Chen, 2018)*.* Tajeddin et al. (2020*)* also proposed that it is the acknowledgement of varieties of English from non-native speakers, such as Indian English. These varieties are the result of different pronunciation. For SMC, it is a self-adjustment in conversational behaviors and styles, dealing with the capability to specify personal cultural inclinations and customs and acknowledgement of foreign cultures (Lee & Chen, 2018). According to Canagarajah (2007)*,* instead of sharing a single norm whether British English or Nigerian English, if people can adopt context and interaction with specific communicative practices that aid them to achieve intelligibility, they are successful in communicating. For ESI, it refers to the identities people possess and the importance of mutual intelligibility of the use of English in preference to attain correct or native-like English (Lee & Chen, 2018). Kirkpatrick & Lixun (2020) illustrated that mutual intelligibility means the communication that is comprehensible for each other even though sometimes non-standard forms exist. Therefore, mutual intelligibility has nothing to do with a native speaker.

Moreover, EIL materials consist of many characteristics. The use of authentic texts and tasks is one main characteristic. Learners have to experience language used in the real world, not from textbooks (Anderson, 2018; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Rose & Galloway, 2019). Authentic tasks enable leaners to develop skills in artificial classroom tasks which they can use outside classrooms. Furthermore, the use of spoken interaction between non-native speaker is essential. Successful non-native speaker interactions can be positive models and motivate learners whilst struggling interactions can provide learners with typical reality and help them to develop strategies for dealing with it. Additionally, learning unstructured interaction is important. Reading texts consisting of unstructured interaction assists to improve communication competence and vocabulary. EIL materials should also include situations of problematic conversations among non-native speakers and pragmatic awareness activities that learners can make a use of any pragmatic feature which is useful for them (Tomlinson,

2016).

2.2 Reading

Reading can be defined as the ability to draw, or extract meaning and interpret the information purposively (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). It is also the ability to explore key component skills, helping reading comprehension to be improved. In addition, there are four main parts of reading including the reader, the text, strategies, and fluency. The first one is reader as all readers possess their own different skills and knowledge, leading to reading comprehension which is the goal of reading. The second one is the text as types of texts whether expository or narrative have a direct impact on the learner's comprehension whether. The third one is strategies as the learner has to employ many strategies which can help them to accomplish reading comprehension. The last one is fluency because the learner has to read at an appropriate rate with adequate comprehension. It can be said that fluency has to come with comprehension at the same time (Anderson, 2018).

In terms of reading's components, cognitive and linguistic components are essential. Learners have to take part in the use of language systems with systematic and ruled-governed, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and discourse structures. It they know these, they are able to comprehend better (Anderson, 2018; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2017). It is also crucial to have metalinguistics and metacognitive awareness. Metacognitive means the knowledge of what we know. It allows learners to go back from their reading and realize how they are not comprehending during reading. According to Grabe & Jiang (2018), this is a common way to comprehend learning strategies and especially explicit and conscious use of reading strategies. Additionally, motivations for reading in the L2 are another component. Each learner has different motivations to read and sense of attentiveness, self-esteem, engagement with reading and emotional reflection of reading. Most importantly, in order to have motivations, learners have to know why they read something and what they are going to do with it. Furthermore, the amount of print exposure and the genres of texts are important components. Each learner experiences a variety of text genres differently. L1 readers spend years developing fluency and automaticity while L2 readers might experience L2 reading differently as they might face reading in two different languages and as cognitive processing might involve 2 language systems. Furthermore, cultural knowledge and content schema are the last components. A reader's background knowledge plays a role in comprehending texts. Nevertheless, not all learners will have background knowledge. Hence, they have to be given background knowledge to connect what they read and what they already know. L2 readers who are unfamiliar with culturally based knowledge or content schema will struggle with reading since they might find it difficult to accept something **(**Grabe & Jiang, 2018**)***.*

2.3 Reading Engagement

Reading engagement refers to interacting with text in a strategic and motivated way (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). It is considered as the motivation to read and comprises of combination of behaviors and characteristics which are affection and enjoyment of reading and frequent and diverse reading practices (Ho & Lau, 2018; Barber & Kauda (2020). According to Guthrie et al. (2004), there are also several definitions related to reading engagement, but they all share two main basic similarities. One is that readers appear to be active, effortful, motivated and taking part in reading. The other is that readers use their cognitive systems with either cognitive tactics or conceptual knowledge. Reading engagement is considered to any type of effort such as completing a task quickly, effort from employing strategies or profound knowledge for learning from text. Essentially, the definitions of engagement focused considerably on behavior are crucial conditions for engagement (Guthrie et al, 2004). According to Guthrie and Klauda (2014), learners are more entirely engaged in reading when learners have their goals and values for reading and believe in themselves. In turn, active reading engagement enables readers to develop different cognitive processed to reading comprehension.

There are five major constructs of reading engagement. The first construct is competence-related beliefs which means a person's belief about his or ability to achieve reading task successfully. The second construct is task values which refer to the belief in the usefulness and importance of reading. The third one is perceptions of competence support which indicates a person's perception of his or her ability to accomplish reading tasks successfully. The fourth one is perceptions of importance support which is a person's perception of teacher's support. Assessing the practice of importance support assists students to enhance students' utility value for reading. The last construct is behavioral engagement with reading information text which is the act of students that is observed being engaged in learning. It is a direct engagement in several activities and possesses positive behavior, efforts to take action and participation in activities after class (Guthrie & Klauda, 2014; Ho & Lau, 2018).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Designs and Context

The study applied a mixed-method approach using quantitative and qualitative methods. There were 113 participants from second to fourth year undergraduate students from the Business Administration faculty, majoring in International Business at a private college located in Bangkok, Thailand. This college uses both Thai and English as the main language for their instruction. Most of them have studied English for more than 10 years and possessed different levels of English proficiency ranging from lower intermediate to upper intermediate.

3.2 Research Instruments

The instruments consisted of two questionnaires which were Reading Engagement Questionnaire and EIL Perception Questionnaire and an open-ended and a semi-structured interview. For Reading Engagement Questionnaire, it was measured by four main constructs which were competence-related belief, task value, behavioral engagement with reading texts and engaged readers. For EIL Perception Questionnaire, it dealt with four principles of EIL which were current status of English (CE), varieties of English (VE), strategies for multilingual/ multicultural communication (SMC) and English speaker's identity (ESI). Both questionnaires were evaluated based on a four-point likert scale. In terms of semi-structured interview, it consisted of eight questions, which four questions from reading engagement and four questions from EIL perception.

3.3 Research Procedure

After constructing the questionnaire, the data was validated by three experts for two times, and some were either adjusted or revised according to the experts' suggestion. Furthermore, pilot testing was distributed to 30 students who did not participate as a sample in the study. It was then computed by the Reliability Coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) formula. It was found that it achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.975 and 0.977 respectively for each questionnaire. In terms of semi-structured interview, three experts adjusted some items which were either revised or adjusted according to their suggestions. After the questionnaires and interview items were revised based on expert validity and pilot test, the revised version of both instruments was applied in the main study.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

After the validity and reliability process, the questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms to the participants. The data was analyzed applying the Descriptive Statistics and Correlations method using SPSS program. For a semi-structured interview, three participants were chosen to be interviewees based on the purposive sampling method from the sample of the study. The finding from the interview was employed to triangulate with the questionnaires' findings. Finally, the analyzed data was illustrated in mean and standard deviations (S.D.) and then the findings of questionnaires were analyzed by the Pearson Product Moment Correlations (PPMS) to find the correlations.

4. Findings

The findings were demonstrated into two sections: students' reading engagement in EIL materials and student perception of EIL materials.

4.1. Reading Engagement in EIL Materials

Mean score and standard deviation (S.D.) were applied to analyze students' reading engagement in EIL materials. According to the findings, the students agreed that they possessed competence related-beliefs, task values, behavioral engagement in reading texts, and characteristics of engaged readers. The mean score was 2.42 (S.D. =1.07), showing that students had all constructs of reading engagement.

The items gained the highest mean scores were "item 3.9 I do not let other activities distract me from reading EIL materials (Mean=2.63), "item 2.6 I think that reading EIL materials is more useful than most of the learning activities in English class (Mean=2.61), and "item 3.1 I spend as much time as needed to complete my EIL reading tasks (Mean=2.57), respectively. In contrast, the items possessed the lowest mean scores were "item 3.11 I reread university EIL materials that I do not understand (Mean= 2.34), "item 4.4 I have gained background knowledge from things I have read (Mean = 2.34), and "item 4.3I have many skills and knowledge that contribute to comprehension in reading EIL materials (Mean= 2.35).

The finding of each construct shows as follows:

Table 1. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Competence-Related Beliefs

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
1.Competence related-beliefs	2.43	1.03	Agree
1.1 I can understand all EIL materials that I read	2.49	1.08	Agree
1.2 I can correctly answer questions based on EIL materials that I have read for university	2.45	1.12	Agree
1.3 I understand what the author is trying to tell me when I read EIL materials	2.45	1.01	Agree
1.4 I can find the main idea of EIL materials	2.37	1.09	Agree
1.5 I can figure out what unfamiliar words mean in EIL materials	2.42	0.82	Agree
1.6 I can explain what I have read in EIL materials	2.38	1.08	Agree

n = 113

Table 1 presents students reading engagement in terms of competence-related beliefs. The mean score was 2.43 (S.D.=1.03). This implies that students possessed competence-related beliefs. Together with the interview finding, the students believed that reading something that is not written by native speakers has no difference compared to reading something written by native speakers.

"...reading something whether the writer is native or non-native is not matter. What is matter is about my understanding for a topic…" (Student#1)

"....there is no difference between reading something written by non-native and native writers…" (Student#2)

"....the language that non-native speakers write is similar to native speakers as it is English all" (Student#3)

Table 2. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Task Values

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
2. Task values	2.43	1.22	Agree
2.1 I think that EIL materials give me useful knowledge	2.40	1.30	Agree
2.2 I think that studying EIL materials is important to me	2.38	1.33	Agree
2.3 I think that understanding EIL materials for university is very important to me	2.40	1.31	Agree
2.4 I always learn something from EIL materials that I read at the university	2.41	1.18	Agree
2.5 I can use the knowledge that I learn from EIL materials	2.35	1.19	Agree
2.6 I think that reading EIL materials is more useful than most of the learning activities in English class	2.61	1.05	Agree
2.7 I think it is very important to me to be successful in reading EIL materials for university	2.50	1.15	Agree

n=113

Table 2 indicates students reading engagement in terms of task values. The mean score was 2.43 (S.D.= 1.22). This shows that students possessed task values in reading. However, students were not in total agreement that reading English written by native speakers is more beneficial than reading something by non-native speakers.

"...reading English articles written by native speakers is as beneficial as those written by a non-native speaker as it depends on a language they use..." (Student#1)

"...reading something written by non-native speakers is as useful as reading something written by native-speakers. Several writers who were non-native were able to use a language that was easy to understand. Thus, I could understand a message that he or she was trying to convey much more easily…" (Student#2)

"... reading English written by native speakers sometimes seemed not beneficial for me to understand as they might use some specific words that were too complex to be understood by me…" (Student#3)

Table 3. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Behavioral Engagement in Reading Texts

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
3. Behavioral engagement in reading texts	2.46	0.96	Agree
3.1 I spend as much time as needed to complete my EIL reading tasks	2.57	0.94	Agree
3.2 I carefully read the EIL materials my teacher has given	2.39	0.95	Agree
3.3 I make sure that I have enough time for my EIL reading assignments	2.46	0.97	Agree
3.4 I complete my EIL reading tasks at the university although they are difficult	2.37	1.08	Agree
3.5 I go above and beyond what is expected of me in reading EIL materials for my university	2.36	0.92	Agree
3.6 I put a lot of effort into reading my university EIL materials	2.50	0.95	Agree
3.7 I do everything I can to complete my EIL reading assignments	2.47	1.06	Agree
3.8 I try my best on all my EIL reading assignments even they are difficult	2.47	1.03	Agree
3.9 I do not let other activities distract me from reading EIL materials	2.63	0.88	Agree
3.10 I do not give up on difficult EIL reading assignments	2.54	0.88	Agree
3.11 I reread university EIL materials that I do not understand	2.34	0.99	Agree
3.12 I devote as much time as necessary to reading my university	2.50	0.89	Agree

n = 113

Table 3 presents students reading engagement in terms of behavioral engagement in reading texts. The mean score was 2.46 (S.D.= 0.96). This indicates that students had behavioral engagement in reading text. The interview findings also show that most of the students tended to feel enjoyable when reading EIL materials for hours.

"...I do not mind reading EIL materials as long as a topic is interesting for me" (Student#1)

"... when I continue reading EIL materials for hours, I sometimes feel bored. However, if I am interested in a topic I read, I can read or hours for sure..." (Student#2)

"... it depends on a topic. If a topic is interesting for me, I can read as long as I feel sleepy..." (Student#3).

Table 4. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Engaged Readers

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
4. Engaged readers	2.38	1.06	Agree
4.1 I always continue reading EIL material outside my class.	2.40	1.17	Agree
4.2 I enjoy reading EIL materials for hours.	2.39	0.97	Agree
4.3 I have many skills and knowledge that contribute to comprehension in reading EIL materials.	2.35	1.01	Agree
4.4 I have gained background knowledge from things I have read.	2.34	1.09	Agree
4.5 I am exposed to several strategies that facilitate me to comprehend in EIL materials.	2.43	1.05	Agree
4.6 I can read with adequate comprehension at an appropriate rate.	2.42	0.98	Agree
4.7 I think even if I do not understand all EIL materials, understand only 70% allows me to get through many texts that I am going to read more.	2.38	1.12	Agree

n= 113

Table 4 demonstrates students reading engagement in terms of engaged readers. The mean score was 2.38 (S.D.= 1.06). It indicates that students had all characteristics of engaged readers. Moreover, the students mentioned that most of the time they applied their background knowledge whenever they read EIL materials.

"... I have to use my background knowledge in certain topics that I read in order to have a bigger picture while reading EIL materials..." (Student #1)

"...applying my background knowledge seems necessary for me while reading EIL materials as some topics might contain some complicated structures for reading. Therefore, I have to apply my knowledge to have a better understanding..." (Student #2)

"...sometimes I use my background knowledge in order to understand some topics…" (Student # 3)

To summarize, the construct that achieved the highest mean score was construct of behavioral engagement in reading texts (Mean =2.46, S.D.=0.96) while construct of engaged readers was considered to have the least mean score (Mean = 2.38, S.D. =1.06) as shown in a Table 5

Table 5. The Summary of Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Perception of Reading Engagement Categorized by Construct

	Competence related-belief	Task values	Behavioral engagement with reading texts	Engaged readers
Mean (x̄)	2.43	2.43	2.46*	2.38**
S.D.	1.03	1.22	0.96	1.06
Meaning	agree	agree	agree	agree

*the highest mean score

**the lowest mean score

In response to research question 1 "To what extent do students engage in reading EIL materials?", the findings reveal that the students engaged in reading EIL materials in a neutral level according to 4 main constructs of reading engagement. The construct that gained the highest mean score was behavioral engagement with reading texts (Mean = 2.46, S.D.= 0.96) whereas construct of engaged readers received the lowest mean score (Mean 2.38, S.D.= 1.06)

4.2 Student Perception of EIL Materials

This section reveals student perception of EIL materials. The mean score was 2.39 (S.D.= 1.16), showing that students agreed with four principles of EIL materials.

The items possessed the highest mean scores were "item 2.2 I think that teachers can use EIL materials that are written by people who are non-native writers" (Mean = 2.49), "item 1.3 I believe that English is the language of business, culture, and education around the world today" (Mean = 2.45, "item 4.1 I think English teachers should not force me to read at the same rate as them", and "item 4.3 It is unnecessary to read only EIL materials" (Mean = 2.45). On the contrary, the items accounted for the lowest mean scores were "item 3.3 I am open-minded about accepting reading patterns that are different from those of native-speakers' writers" (Mean = 2.33), "item 2.3 I think that different varieties of English such as Indonesian English, Taiwanese English and Japanese English are acceptable today" (Mean = 2.34), and "item 3.4 I can adjust my reading styles based on writers from many nationalities" (Mean = 2.35), respectively. The finding of each principle as follows:

Table 6. The Mean and Standard Deviation of the Current Status of English

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
1.Current status of English	2.38	1.25	Agree
1.1 I believe that English is used today as an international language to communicate effectively with people from around the world	2.39	1.31	Agree
1.2 I believe that many non-native English speaking countries currently use English as their official or working language	2.37	1.14	Agree
1.3 I believe that English is the language of business, culture, and education around the world today	2.45	1.31	Agree

n= 113

Table 6 presents students perception of EIL materials in terms of current status of English. The mean score was 2.38 (S.D. =1.25), indicating that students perceived current status of English as an international language.

According to the interview findings, the students mentioned that reading something in English seemed to be more credible than reading something in Thai.

"…people around the world use English to communicate in their daily lives. This makes something written in English is much more credible than in Thai…" (Student#1)

"…reading in Thai seemed less credible and contains some bias, especially news…" (Student#2)

"…it is much more credible to read in English as it is accepted from people globally…" (Student#3)

Table 7. The mean and standard deviation of varieties of English

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
2.Varieties of English	2.39	1.2	Agree
2.1 I think that different varieties of English such as Hong Kong English, Indian English and Singaporean English are acceptable today	2.38	1.27	Agree
2.2 I think that teachers can use EIL materials that are written by people who are non-native writers	2.49	1.24	Agree
2.3 I think that different varieties of English such as Indonesian English, Taiwanese English and Japanese English are acceptable today	2.34	1.13	Agree
2.4 I think that teachers can include the texts between non-native and non-native English writers in EIL materials	2.36	1.16	Agree

n= 113

Table 7 indicates students' perception of EIL materials in terms of varieties of English. The mean was 2.39 (S.D. =1.2), revealing that students perceived varieties of English as an international language.

Based on the interview findings, the students mentioned that it was acceptable for them to read something in English written by writers from several nationalities

"...I don't mind reading something in English written by writers from several nationalities since it all depends on content, not a writer…" (Student#1)

"...it is acceptable for me to read any English articles written by writers from several nationalities as long as I can understand contents…" (Student#2)

"...reading something in English written by several nationalities of writers sounds interesting as I can get many points of views from them…" (Student#3)

Table 8. The Mean and Standard Deviation of Strategies for Multilingual/Multicultural Communication

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
3. Strategies for Multilingual/Multicultural Communication	2.37	1.04	Agree
3.1 I can adjust my reading styles based on EIL materials that I read	2.40	0.99	Agree
3.2 I can explain my own culture and customs clearly when reading EIL materials	2.42	0.98	Agree
3.3 I am open-minded about accepting reading patterns that are different from those of native-speakers' writers	2.33	1.12	Agree
3.4 I can adjust my reading styles based on writers from many nationalities	2.35	1.10	Agree

n = 113

Table 8 demonstrates students' perception of EIL materials in terms of strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication. The mean score was 2.37 (S.D. =1.04), showing that students agreed with strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication

Furthermore, according to the interview findings, most students claimed that it was necessary for them to adjust their reading styles while reading EIL materials based on writers from various nationalities.

"...each writer has his or her writing styles such as the use of words which might depend on his or her

nationality, so I have to adjust my reading styles accordingly…" (Student#1)

"...adjusting my reading techniques while reading EIL materials seems necessary, but it still depends on a topic that I read…"(Student#2)

"...it is unnecessary to adjust my reading styles since writers use English in writing still…"(Student#3)

Table 9. The Mean and Standard Deviation of English Reader's Identities

Construct	x̄	SD	Meaning
4. English reader's identities	2.44	1.15	Agree
4.1 I think English teachers should not force me to read at the same rate as them	2.45	1.19	Agree
4.2 I do not mind if people laugh at my reading rate when I read because it is my own rate	2.43	1.17	Agree
4.3 It is unnecessary to read only EIL materials	2.45	1.10	Agree

Table 9 demonstrates students' perception of EIL materials in terms of English reader's identities. The mean score was 2.44 (S.D. =1.15). It can be interpreted that students agreed with English reader's identities.

Together with the interview findings, it was found that each reader should not be pressured to read EIL materials at the same rate.

"...everyone has his or her own rate when it comes to reading…" (Student#1)

"...reading at the same rate with others does not help me to understand what I read…" (Student#2)

"...reading rate has nothing to do with my comprehension, so each person should not be forced to read at the same rate…" (Student#3)

To conclude, the principle that gained the highest mean score was English reader's identities (Mean = 2.44, S.D.= 1.15 whereas strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication was found to be the lowest (Mean = 2.37, S.D. = 1.04) as presented in a Table 10

Table 10. The Summary of Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Perception of EIL Materials by Principle

Principle / Result	Current Status of English	Varieties of English	Strategies for Multilingual/Multicultural Communication	English reader's identities
Mean (x̄)	2.38	2.39	2.37*	2.44**
S.D.	1.25	1.20	1.04	1.15
Meaning	agree	agree	agree	Agree

*the highest mean score

**the lowest mean score

In response to research question 2 "What are student perceptions of EIl materials?", the findings demonstrate that the students perceived EIL materials positively according to 4 principles of EIL. The construct that gained the highest mean score was English readers' identities (Mean = 2.44, S.D.= 1.15) while principle of strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication had the lowest mean score (Mean 2.37, S.D.= 1.04).

Table 11. The Correlations of Mean Scores of Students' Reading Engagement and Their Perception of EIL Materials

Principle Construct	Current Status of English	Varieties of English	Strategies for Multilingual/Multicultural Communication	English reader's identities
Competence-related belief	.793	.828	.989	.817
Task values	.894	.890	.903	.861
Behavioral engagement with reading texts	.817	.820	.865	.797
Engaged readers	.826	.842	.897	.804

In response to research question 3 "What are the relationships between students' level of reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials?", the Pearson Product Correlations *(*PPMC*)* coefficients used to find the strength of the relationship between 2 variables. Based on the findings, the correlation among these (0.793<r<9.89*)* implied that all the pairs were significantly correlated at the .01 level. It was then revealed that the construct of reading engagement: competence-related beliefs and the principle of EIL: strategies for multilingual/ multicultural communication was correlated the most, r= .989, p<.01 **(**n=113**)**.

5. Discussion

The discussion of the findings was divided into two aspects: 1) reading engagement in EIL materials, and 2) student perception of EIL materials.

5.1 Reading Engagement in EIL materials

According to the findings, the students agreed that they had competence- related beliefs. The majority of them believe that they could understand EIL materials they read. They also believed that reading something that was not written by native writers was similar to by native writers. This means they believe in themselves that they are capable of reading something regardless of a writer's nationality. Guthrie et al. (2012) and Rosenzweig et al (2018) found similar result that students' competence-related beliefs can lead to positive outcomes in comprehending texts. Moreover, most students claimed that reading something written by native speakers was not more useful than by non-native writers. This implies that they believe in task values. Specifically, they believe in something they read rather than focusing on a writer. This is consistent with Conradi et al's study (2014) which revealed that task values can be referred as a person's beliefs about to what extent which reading is enjoyable, important or beneficial. Furthermore, the students agreed that they had several behavioral engagements in reading texts and they were prone to enjoy reading EIL materials for hours. This can be interpreted that EIL materials can make students enjoy reading for a long time. Anderson (2018) also found similar result that students can read something for a long time if they are interested and the type of texts students read can have an impact on how long they can read. Thus, it is clear that EIL materials are type of texts that students are interested in, so they can enjoy reading for hours. Additionally, students agreed with all characteristics of engaged readers and they claimed that they always applied their background knowledge while reading EIL materials. This means that when they read, they use their own knowledge to facilitate their comprehension. This finding is related to Anderson's study (2018) and Grabe and Stoller (2013), which stated that all readers have to use their background knowledge in order to have a better understanding in texts and become engaged readers.

Furthermore, behavioral engagement with reading texts possessed the highest mean score among other constructs of reading engagement and the item gained the highest mean score stating that "I do not let other activities distract me from reading EIL materials" This can be implied that students considerably engage in reading EIL materials as they highly focus on reading regardless of distractions. This is related with previous studies (Barber and Klauda's study, 2020; Ho and Lau's study; Guthrie and Wigfield's study, 2017), which indicated that the times' students spend on reading is related with their behavioral engagement.

5.2 Student Perception of EIL Materials

Based on the findings, the students agreed with current status of English. They all believed that reading something in English tended to be more credible than reading something in Thai. This means that they accept that English as an international language that people globally acknowledge it. This finding is consistent with several studies (Tajeddin et al, 2020; Marlina, 2014; Rose et al, 2021; McKay & Brown, 2018) which stated that English currently is served as the most widespread language used as both second or third language for communication around the world. In addition, the students also agreed with varieties of English as an international language. They argued that reading something in English written by writers from several nationalities was acceptable for them. This can be interpreted that they considerably accept EIL. This finding has similar result to McKay's study (2018) and Xu's study (2018) which shown that there are several varieties of English used at the present time. Additionally, students agreed with strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication. They stated that it was essential to adjust their reading styles while reading EIL materials. This can be interpreted that each writer whose nationality is different has his or her own style in writing, so readers have to adjust their reading style according to a writer. Lastly, students agreed with English reader's identities. They found that all readers should not be forced to read EIL materials at the same rate. They might think that all readers have their own speed in reading and the reading rate might has nothing to do with comprehension. This finding shows similar finding with previous studies (Anderson, 2018; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2017) which argued that linguistic and cognitive components are crucial.

Additionally, English reader's identities received the highest mean score and the items possessed the highest mean score which were "I think English teachers should not force me to read at the same rate as them" and "it is unnecessary to read only EIL materials". This can be interpreted that students might think that all readers have their own reading rate and they are able to read both EIL materials and other materials as long as they want to. This is consistent with Anderson's study (2018) which concluded that there is no fixed reading rate as it depends on the type of texts that readers read. Reading expository texts which consist of new information can be slower than reading narrative texts. Therefore, it is obvious that readers should not be forced to read at the same rate with others.

5.3 The Relationship between Students' Reading Engagement and Their Perception of EIL Materials

The correlations of mean scores of students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials were $0.793 < r < 9.89$) which can be inferred that all the pairs were significantly correlated at the .01 level. Moreover, the construct of reading engagement: competence-related beliefs and the principle of EIL: strategies for multilingual/ multicultural communication shown correlated the most, $r = .989$, $p < .01$ (n=113). This indicates that there was a strong relationship between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials. Therefore, it is obvious that students perceived EIL materials positively which enables them to engage in reading EIL materials.

6. Conclusion

The study explored the relationship between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials. Students had all four constructs of reading engagement in EIL materials: competence-related beliefs, task values, behavioral engagement in reading texts, and engaged readers. This means they engage in reading EIL materials, but the findings shows that they engage in a neutral level. Also, four principles of EIL: current status of English, varieties of English, strategies for multilingual/multicultural communication and English reader's identities were perceived positively by students. Lastly, the findings reveal that there is a strong relationship between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials. However, this topic, EIL, seems to be new for some people. This makes them unable to clearly comprehend the meaning of EIL. Hence, a clear definition of EIL materials is required. Moreover, although a positive result is presented in this study, it is still inadequate to generalize as it highlights only a single context. Therefore, further studies should be conducted to support whether there is a positive correlation between students' reading engagement and their perception of EIL materials or not since this study pointed out a correlation. However, there was no other research to support this result.

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