Exploring the Implications of English as an International Language in Reading Instruction

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Abstract

The global expansion of the English language has sparked a growing demand for English education, transforming it into a tool for both local communication and international pursuits. This shift has led to a departure from mere imitation of native speakers towards embracing English as an International Language (EIL). English has evolved from being a language of a few dominant nations to a global lingua franca, resulting in profound implications for English language instruction. The English as an International Language (EIL) program emphasizes the multifaceted role of English in a globalized world. This paper discuss about English as an International Language (EIL) on the pedagogy of reading instruction within the Indonesian educational milieu, where English functions as a foreign language. It delves into the importance of reading as a fundamental skill for academic and professional success, highlighting the complexity of reading as an active cognitive process. Three theoretical perspectives on reading are discussed: the traditional bottom-up approach, the cognitive top-down processing approach, and the meta-cognitive perspective. Each perspective offers valuable insights into effective reading instruction. The paper provides the implication of English as the International Language for teaching reading, encompassing pre-reading activities that build vocabulary and background knowledge, during-reading strategies to promote active engagement with the text, and post-reading activities that encourage critical thinking and discussion. It emphasizes the need for a balanced approach that combines psycholinguistic and linguistic components in EFL reading instruction.

Keywords: *International Language; Reading Instruction; Foreign Language*

INTRODUCTION

The global spread of English has increased the demand for English education. English is now being used for local communication as well as for international objectives. To effectively communicate in English, the trend has changed from simply emulating native speakers. Nations where English as a foreign language (EFL) is taught have a larger percentage of non-native speakers of English in their social circles than do countries where English is the national language. The position of the English language has recently undergone a significant change. Numerous authors have speculated on the nature of English as an International Linguistic (EIL) discussing topics such as the variety of English dialects in use today and the language habits of ESL learners. As a consequence, EIL is considered to be both a variety of the English language and a strategy for making use of the English language (Tan, Farashaiyan, Sahragard, & Faryabi, 2020).

Furthermore, English has become a global language or *lingua franca* from a homogeneous and uniform language used by a few great nations (Galloway & Rose,

2018). Then, (Melitz, 2016) argued no one is solely responsible for maintaining a given language as a result of its increasing use and globalization." Since more people currently speak English as a second or foreign language than native English speakers, it has been widely argued in numerous studies that English does not only belong to communities where language is spoken by its native speakers (Llurda, 2017; Marlina, 2014; Schultz, 2019). Graddol (1997) reached the conclusion that those who use English as an international language (EIL) instead of its native speakers will determine the future of the English language. In addition, the manner in which this language ought to be conceptualized and instructed is significantly impacted by the English language's global expansion (Seidlhofer, 2004).This research lies on the explorationimplications of English language teaching in Indonesia, particularly in relation to English as an international language and the pedagogy of English as an international language (EIL). This research sheds light on the need for a comprehensive approach to English language instruction that integrates linguistic and psycholinguistic components to address the struggles students face in reading comprehension.

English is transformed into a global *lingua franca* and an international language as a result of globalization. As a consequence of this, it has ramifications for the classroom instruction of English as a second language (ESL). The English as an International Language (EIL) program emphasizes the significance of English beyond its role as a language in its own right. With the globalization of the English language, a multicultural way of thinking, doing, and being is increasingly viewed as a paradigm or framework. EIL acknowledges English variation, and it is time for language education to integrate EIL awareness, reading, and competence (Sharifian, 2017).

The globalization of the English language may be seen as occurring in three concentric rings: the inner, outer, and growing circles (Kachru, 1992). Nations with native English speakers and English as their mother language are considered members of the Inner Circle. The United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand are some of the nations that fall within this category. People who only speak English are sometimes referred to as monolingual English speakers or native English speakers. The term "Outer Circle" refers to a geographical region that encompasses a number of different nations, including South Africa, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. This is due to the fact that people living in these nations communicate in English on a daily basis in addition to their own language, which they use as their mother tongue language.

The expanding Circle represents the nations that recognize English as a foreign language. In these nations, the use of English is restricted to a small number of settings, such as educational institutions, diplomatic offices, and particular gatherings, such as seminars, conferences, and meetings; however, the language is predominantly taught in educational settings or language institutions. The Expanding Circles now consists of the following countries: China, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand, Germany, Poland, Italy, and Russia (Crystal, 2003; Kachru, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Lee McKay & Wendy, 2008).

The acknowledgment of English as a global language and a scientific language is accompanied by compulsory English training from junior high school through college. However, despite the fact that it is considered a foreign language, English is often used in settings other than schools. Even in the classroom, most Indonesian students would rather converse in Bahasa Indonesia, the national language of Indonesia, or their mother

tongue than in English. This situation has a direct impact on the English proficiency of Indonesian students (Lie, 2007; Thalal, 2010).

In general, it has been determined that the instruction of English in Indonesia as a foreign language has been unsuccessful. This is demonstrated by the fact that the vast majority of Indonesian students are unable to carry on a meaningful conversation in English once they leave school. Furthermore, people dislike reading because of their poor reading abilities. The inability to read at an appropriate rate might result in dissatisfaction and the adoption of alternative sources of amusement. Other explanations include a lack of reading experience as a youngster or a short attention span.

Commonly, a typical Indonesian student would pass well on exams of English competence yet have weak reading abilities. However, as it has been mentioned that the objective of the English curriculum is to acquire reading abilities, we cannot undervalue students' capacity to use English successfully once they have completed the learning process. Therefore, it is very suggested to encourage pupils to read about local culture in English. Reading about their local culture will give pupils with two benefits: increasing their cultural awareness and, since the topic is so familiar, enhancing their English abilities.

Reading is one of the most crucial abilities children acquire during their primary school years. As stated by(Mokhtari, Porter, & Edwards, 2010) that the primary basic skill for learning in schools is reading, and prospects for academic and professional achievement are directly correlated with reading proficiency. Reading is becoming increasingly important in these highly literate civilizations. It is also an important ability for children's academic performance. In addition, UNESCO (2005) emphasizes the relevance of early reading ability for future educational success, showing that third-grade reading ability is a substantial predictor of eighth-grade reading and ninth-grade course achievement even after controlling for demographic variables and school performance.

Reading is one of the most challenging human activities (Kendeou, McMaster, & Christ, 2016). Regardless of the various definitions found in literature, there is one common ground in all of them: reading cannot be viewed as a purely passive or receptive activity due to the various variables that come into play (N. J. Anderson & Nunan, 2008; Cirocki & Caparoso, 2016). These various parts correspond to the recognition of a variety of language signals, as well as the application of background information, inference, text interpretation, monitoring, and correction of understanding difficulties.

Although scholars recognize the complexity of reading, they assign different weights or equal signs to the parts that converge in this activity depending on the reading strategy or model that they prefer. Bottom-up approaches emphasize the importance of constructing meaning from letters, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. Reading is viewed as action-driven primarily by the reader's intentions and expectations in top-down approaches. While interactive or compensating approaches argue that reading is a blend of linear and nonlinear models, or that these processes compensate for one other when either process fails.

When students read a text, they are actively participating in the learning process. Students must not only memorize the text and understand its meaning, but they must also construct the meaning from the text (Bialostok, 2012). This encourages students to

think more deeply while reading a text, which is a frequent method. Most teachers advise and train students to read a lot to become strong readers. Reading helps students improve their prior knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, and other skills (Bialostok, 2012)

According to (Watson, Gable, Gear, & Hughes, 2012), having awareness about a topic helps students understand and recall information about the issue. Teachers should encourage students to read thoughtfully rather than just to take tests or succeed in exams (Ortlieb, 2013). Vocabulary is a key component of reading understanding (N. Anderson, 1999). There is a complex relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary in the process of literacy development; having vocabulary knowledge allows the reader to readily comprehend the text, and reading more will assist readers to expand their vocabulary (Grabe, 2012; Keiko Koda, 2012). It is hard for a reader to read a text if he or she is unfamiliar with the words included within it (Jeon & Yamashita, 2014). This study will discuss the impact of EIL on teaching reading-related topics, incorporating intercultural competence, reading evaluation, reading improvement approaches, and EIL teacher education.

THEORIES OF READING

There are now three fundamental concepts describing how reading is acquired. First, classical theory, or *bottom-up processing*, focuses on the written form of a text. In addition to the information that was presented on the page, the cognitive perspective, or *top-down processing*, enhanced the significance of background information. Third, the meta-cognitive perspective, which is based on the control and manipulation a reader has over the act of comprehending a text, emphasizes the reader's engagement in thinking about what he is doing while reading.

1. The Traditional Bottom-Up View

The theory of learning known as behaviorism emerged in the 1950s and proposed that it was founded on "habit development, as a consequence of an organism's habitual connection of a stimulus with a response," which had an impact on the traditional bottom-up approach to reading. The process of language acquisition has been conceptualized as a "response system acquired by humans through automated conditioning." To this paradigm, "Some language patterns are given positive reinforcement (rewards), while others are not, and "learning can only occur through those patterns"(Hadley, 1993). The audio-lingual approach, which utilized rote practice and correction of mistakes to foster the development of second-language "habits,", was founded on behaviorism.

Behaviorism viewed reading as a word-recognition response to written words (Debat, 2006), Thus, text comprehension requires word-clause meaning synthesis (N. Anderson, 1999). Recognition and memory are included because these lower-level abilities involve visual stimuli or text. This reading approach has virtually always been condemned as inadequate and flawed, owing to its reliance on formal features of the language, primarily words, and structure. Although it is possible to accept this rejection because of the over-reliance on structure in this viewpoint, it must be emphasized that understanding linguistic characteristics is equally necessary for comprehension. The cognitive approach to reading was developed to combat the conventional view's excessive emphasis on form.

2. The Cognitive View (Top-Down Processing)

In the 1960s, the cognitive sciences suffered a paradigm change. Psycholinguists argued that the new cognitive theory represented the mind's innate capacity for learning, which led to new explanations for how humans learned their first language and had a major influence on the field of English as a Second or Foreign Language (Hadley, 1993).

These innovative cognitive and top-down processing methodologies completely reimagined the way in which students acquire reading skills (Smith, 2004). In this perspective, reading is more than merely extracting meaning from a book; It entails linking textual material to the reader's existing knowledge. Reading is a conversation between the reader and the text, involving an active cognitive process in which the reader's prior knowledge helps generate meaning. (Tierney & Parsone, 1994).

Reading is a deliberate, purposeful action that depends on the reader's past knowledge and expectations. Not only is it important to convert print to sound, but also to comprehend written language (Smith, 1994). In essence, reading is essentially a game of psycholinguistic guesswork, in which the reader takes in information from the text in order to generate hypotheses, test those hypotheses, modify those assumptions, etc.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING READING IN ENGLISH

According to(N. Anderson, 1999), theoretical approaches to teaching reading in English refer to the underlying philosophies, principles, and strategies that educators and researchers use to guide the process of teaching individuals how to read in the English language. These approaches are grounded in theories about how reading development occurs and what methods or techniques are most effective in facilitating reading skills. The choice of a theoretical approach can significantly influence teaching methods, curriculum design, and the overall reading experience for learners. There are several key theoretical approaches to teaching reading in English according to (N. Anderson, 1999):

1. Phonics-Based Approach: This approach emphasizes the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and written symbols (graphemes). It teaches students to recognize letter-sound correspondences and decode words by blending sounds together. Phonics instruction is particularly relevant in English due to its complex spelling patterns.
2. Whole Language Approach: The whole language approach views reading as a holistic process where readers engage with complete texts to understand meaning. It emphasizes comprehension and encourages students to read authentic, real-world materials. Vocabulary development, context clues, and critical thinking are central components of this approach.
3. Balanced Literacy Approach: This approach strikes a balance between phonics-based instruction and whole language principles. It combines elements of both approaches to provide a comprehensive reading program that addresses a range of reading skills, including decoding, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development.
4. Sociocultural Approach: This approach emphasizes the role of social and cultural context in literacy development. It considers factors such as the learner's cultural background, prior experiences, and social interactions in shaping reading

abilities. It often incorporates culturally relevant texts and practices into the curriculum.

5. Cognitive-Constructivist Approach: This approach focuses on the cognitive processes involved in reading, including how readers use prior knowledge, make predictions, and actively construct meaning from text. It emphasizes meta-cognition (thinking about one's own thinking) and strategies for comprehension.

6. Multiple Intelligences Approach: Based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, this approach recognizes that learners have different strengths and preferences when it comes to acquiring literacy skills. It tailors instruction to accommodate various learning styles, such as linguistic, visual-spatial, or interpersonal.

7. Bilingual and Multilingual Approaches: In situations where learners are proficient in more than one language, educators may adopt approaches that acknowledge the role of the learner's native language(s) in reading development. These approaches may include strategies for transfer of reading skills between languages.

The choice of which theoretical approach to use in teaching reading in English can depend on various factors, including the learner's age, prior reading experience, cultural context, and educational goals. Effective reading instruction often integrates elements from multiple approaches to create a well-rounded and adaptable curriculum

IMPLEMENTING SCHEMA THEORY ON READING INSTRUCTION

In order to teach reading successfully, the teacher's participation in activating and developing schemata is essential. To do this, he must pick books that are relevant to the student's requirements, interests, personality traits, and cultural background. Then, following the selection of the text, he is required to carry out the three steps outlined below.

(1) Pre-reading activities include of the students' adopting strategies like as prediction, semantic mapping, and reconciling reading in order to think about, write down, and talk about all they already know about the topic. The purpose of this exercise is to check whether or not the pupils have the necessary schema to understand the material. (2) During-reading activities, the instructor guides and monitors the reader's interaction with the text. The ability to take notes, which allows students to compile new vocabulary and important information and details, as well as to summarize information and record their reactions and opinions, is an important skill that teachers can impart at this stage. (3) Post-reading activities that allow students to evaluate their interpretation's adequacy while keeping in mind that accuracy is a matter of perspective, and the "readership" should be respected, but only to the extent that the writer's goals arefulfilled (Tierney & Parsone, 1994). A range of questions with diverse meanings is the subject of post-reading practices.

CONSIDERATION OF READING MATERIALS

In the context of English as an international language, the selection of reading materials takes on heightened significance. As English serves as a bridge language for individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds, the reading materials chosen must reflect this global diversity. Educators must consider not only linguistic accessibility but also cultural relevance when selecting texts for reading instruction.

Incorporating reading materials that represent a wide array of cultural perspectives and experiences not only enhances students' linguistic proficiency but also

fosters intercultural understanding and empathy. By exposing learners to literature from various regions and communities, educators can promote inclusivity and broaden students' worldview.

Furthermore, the choice of reading materials can serve as a means of addressing global issues and promoting critical thinking skills. Texts that explore themes such as sustainability, social justice, and human rights provide opportunities for meaningful discussions and empower students to become informed global citizens.

IMPACT ON READING INSTRUCTION METHODOLOGIES

English's status as an international language significantly influences the methodologies employed in teaching reading. With English serving as a *lingua franca* in various global contexts, educators must adapt instructional approaches to meet the needs of learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. One key consideration is the implementation of strategies that prioritize language acquisition alongside reading comprehension. Instructors often employ techniques such as scaffolded instruction, where learners are provided with structured support as they navigate English texts. This approach allows students to build their language skills while simultaneously developing their reading abilities.

Additionally, the incorporation of culturally responsive teaching practices is essential in the context of English as an international language. Recognizing and valuing students' diverse cultural backgrounds fosters a sense of belonging and enhances engagement with reading materials. Therefore, integrating culturally relevant content and instructional strategies, educators can create inclusive learning environments where all students feel represented and empowered.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

A number of research investigations have examined the function and importance of reading(Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Dubravac, 2018; Chege, 2012; Grimm, 2008; Keskin, 2013; K Koda, 2007; Lerkkanen, Rasku-Puttonen, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2005; Snow, 2002) which have revealed that students who read effectively and use reading strategies are more proficient and achieve better academic results. These studies have consistently demonstrated that students who employ reading strategies and read proficiently exhibit enhanced academic performance. Engaging in reading activities enhances individuals' vocabulary storage and grammar proficiency(Carson, 2000; Kolawole, 2009). Furthermore, it promotes the growth of literacy skills, which are universally essential for proficient communication across different contexts.

In the realm of reading instruction within the framework of English as an international language, it is imperative to recognize and cater to the diverse demographics of students. Learners come from varied linguistic backgrounds, each with unique language proficiencies and educational experiences. Understanding these demographics is crucial for designing effective instructional strategies that meet the needs of all students.English language learners (ELLs), for instance, represent a significant portion of classrooms in many parts of the world. These students may possess varying levels of English proficiency, ranging from beginners to advanced learners. Educators must implement differentiated instruction strategies to scaffold learning and provide appropriate support tailored to the individual needs of ELLs.

Moreover, student demographics extend beyond language proficiency to encompass cultural backgrounds, socio-economic factors, and prior educational

experiences. Students bring with them a wealth of diverse perspectives and knowledge, which can enrich the learning environment when effectively leveraged.

CONCLUSION

The global expansion of the English language has led to a significant demand for English education, both locally and internationally. This transformation has shifted the focus from mere imitation of native speakers towards embracing English as an International Language, highlighting its multifaceted role in a globalized world. The implications of this shift are profound, particularly in the pedagogy of reading instruction within countries where English is taught as a foreign language, such as Indonesia. English, once the language of a few dominant nations, has now become a global *lingua franca*, reshaping educational practices worldwide. The emergence of English as an International Language has challenged traditional notions of language ownership and proficiency, emphasizing the importance of understanding English beyond its native speaker contexts. Tan et al. (2020), Galloway & Rose (2018), and Melitz (2016) have highlighted the evolving nature of English and its implications for language instruction.

Within the Indonesian educational context, where English is predominantly taught as a foreign language, the challenges of English proficiency are evident. Despite compulsory English education, many students struggle to communicate effectively in English, particularly in reading comprehension. This underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to English language instruction that integrates both linguistic and psycholinguistic components. Theoretical perspectives on reading, including the traditional bottom-up approach, cognitive top-down processing approach, and metacognitive perspective, offer valuable insights into effective reading instruction. These perspectives highlight the active cognitive processes involved in reading and emphasize the importance of building vocabulary, background knowledge, and critical thinking skills.

Incorporating schema theory into reading instruction provides a framework for pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities that promote comprehension and engagement with the text. Therefore, by activating and developing students' schemata, teachers can enhance their understanding and retention of the material. Guidelines for efficient teaching reading, including pre-reading activities to familiarize students with vocabulary and themes, during-reading strategies to promote active engagement, and post-reading activities to assess comprehension and encourage reflection, are essential for fostering reading proficiency.

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