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## Native versus non-native speaker teachers' perceptions about English varieties in designing/developing EFL Curriculum Development

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## **Native versus non-native speaker teachers' perceptions about English varieties in designing/developing EFL Curriculum Development**

### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the perceptions of native speakers, and non-native speakers regarding the influence of teaching English varieties on EFL curriculum development. Using data from the Teaching Varieties Influence Survey (TVIS), 126 respondents of native-speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native-speaker teachers (non-NESTs) reflected their views on dialect variations' influence on EFL learners' curriculum development. Both groups perceive English variety as influential in determining other factors that contribute to the development of an EFL curriculum. NESTs believe that the English curriculum developers will determine the variety to teach, while non-NESTs believe that other factors will determine how the English curriculum is developed.*

**Keywords:** Variety; EFL; EIL; curriculum development; native-speaker teachers; non-native-speaker teachers

## Introduction

Accent variation and language varieties have been studied in fields other than pure sociolinguistics, such as language teaching pedagogy and curriculum development, where the role of native-speaker English teachers (NESTs) and non-native-speaker English teachers (non-NESTs) in EFL curriculum development has been a topic of debate. NESTs argue that they should have a significant influence on determining the variety of English to be taught, while non-NESTs argue that other factors should play a role in shaping the English curriculum. This paper aims to explore the perspectives of both NESTs and non-NESTs regarding university EFL teachers' involvement in curriculum development. It also seeks to examine the potential benefits and challenges that arise from incorporating the insights of both NESTs and non-NESTs in shaping the English curriculum.

Additionally, this paper will discuss the importance of promoting collaboration and mutual understanding between these two groups in order to create a more comprehensive and effective EFL curriculum. The focus is on how these factors impact the design and implementation of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curricula. The role of native-speaker English teachers (NESTs) and non-native-speaker English teachers (non-NESTs) in curriculum development has been a topic of debate, particularly in relation to the choice of variety to be taught. While NESTs tend to believe that the variety should be determined by curriculum developers, non-NESTs argue that other factors, such as the learners' needs and goals, should also be taken into consideration. Additionally, the cultural context in which the curriculum will be implemented plays a crucial role in determining the appropriate variety of English to be taught. This includes considering whether a standardised global English or a localised version is more suitable for the learners' future communication needs.

These perceptions and perspectives highlight the importance of incorporating diverse voices and perspectives in curriculum development. It is essential to recognise that language learning is not a one-size-fits-all approach, and acknowledging the unique needs and goals of learners can lead to more effective and relevant curriculum design. Furthermore, understanding the cultural context helps to ensure that learners are equipped with the necessary language skills to navigate real-world communication situations in their specific environment “because of the significance people attach to different accents” (Stockwell, 2002, p. 27). Different accents are often

linked to mental images and social stereotypes, with English having some of the most varied accents (Foulkes & Doherty, 2006; Kaur, 2014).

Traditionally, designing an EFL curriculum in Egypt, North Africa, and the Middle East was assumed to be the work of native English speakers (NSs) who should plan, participate in, or at least consult the EFL curriculum development processes. It was for this reason—especially in nations where Britain had once been an imperial power—that native English speakers were seen as the "guardians" of the language. The traditional view of curriculum development favoured British and North American English as the model and standard for teaching English due to their intelligibility (Lanteigne, 2006; Pickering, 2006; Seidlhofer, Breiteneder, & Pitzl, 2006). By extension, the target culture was taught the "big C" cultures of the U.K. and USA, rather than the "small C" cultures. Communicative language teaching is considered the most productive method, as it helps students communicate with native speakers. This approach has been criticized for not adequately addressing the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds (see Alptekin, 2002; Cortazzi & Jin, 1999; Hinkel, 1999; Kachru, 1985, 1986).

However, in recent years, there has been a shift towards recognizing the importance of involving local experts and educators in the curriculum development process. This change reflects a growing understanding that language teaching should be culturally relevant and tailored to the specific needs and contexts of learners in these regions. Classically, native speakers were hired to do so either by writing the textbooks or, if the curriculum was specifically designed and developed for the Ministry of Education (MoEs), by guiding, advising, or controlling the national EFL curriculum development from primary to secondary education phases.

In this vein, native-speaker experts were viewed as guardians of the English language, so they should supervise the EFL curriculum in these countries, including Egypt, or so the story went on for decades. Even later, with the assuagement of native speakers' fist, MoEs further brought experts from the inner circle to advise and supervise the process. Meanwhile, the views of local students and teachers were primarily ignored or belittled and downgraded in importance because they felt that their views were likely based on "backward ideas" (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Braine, 1999; Brown, 2019).

This study seeks to compare the fundamental assumptions and perceptions about traditional curriculum development practices with what is generally called English as a foreign language

assumption, entertained by two samples of teachers: native English-speaking teachers in non-Egyptian contexts and non-native teachers in the Egyptian context. The ideas contained in this article draw primarily on curriculum theorists in the English Language Teaching field (e.g., Brown, 2012, 2014; Grzega, 2005a; 2005b; Jenkins, 2009; Kirkpatrick, 2007; McKay & Brown, 2016; Seidlhofer, Breiteneder, & Pitzl, 2005).

More specifically, this study also seeks to identify which factors affect the curriculum practices of designing and implementing a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum using a specific dialect or variety. These factors vary substantially in crucial and significant ways that EFL teachers and curriculum developers should consider before designing or developing an EFL curriculum, as well as recognising teachers' viewpoints concerning teaching standards versus specific accents of English.

The English language curriculum developers have not adequately considered the choice of language variety and target culture, as these factors are often too broad or difficult to include for non-native speakers. Therefore, there is a need to explore factors affecting the choice of English language curriculum, such as teaching purpose, reasons for learning, role of teachers and course developers, students' needs assessments, and units of analysis in the ELT curriculum development process, especially in the context of teaching English as a foreign language.

EFL learners face limited opportunities to interact with English speakers in monolingual/monocultural environments, as English is not used for communication with foreigners outside the classroom (e.g. (Bosuwon & Woodrow, 2009; Mori, 2004). This makes learning English challenging and highlights the importance of EFL teachers as a foundational source of English input (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Braine, 1999). Local teachers who have not been exposed to native or native-like language input are often the only available English interlocutor. The effectiveness of the curriculum documents, teachers' instructional approaches, and the interaction between teachers and students inside the classroom depend on how learners perceive their teachers' English and the core dialect the TEFL curriculum relays to them.

That is, the study seeks to identify the perceptions of teachers, native speakers, and non-native speakers as to the influence of teaching varieties of English on EFL curriculum development and design of teaching and which of these factors could predict the curricular elements that should be regarded when designing and developing an English curriculum. The views of teachers, natives,

and non-natives are solicited from the perspective of using English as an international language in the design/development of the English curriculum.

### **Review of Literature**

In TEFL pedagogy, several approaches recognise the value of including varied dialects of English or world Englishes, including inner-circle Englishes (of the native speakers of the U.K., US, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia), outer-circle Englishes (where English has official status and prestige, being considered a second language as in Spain, Portugal, or Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, and Sweden), and expanding-circle Englishes (where English is spoken as a foreign language, but is nonetheless important and widely spoken as in India, Japan, Germany, etc.) (see Kachru, 1985, 1986). English as an International Language (EIL) is thought to be an inclusive variety that recognises the local cultures of countries where English is spoken as a foreign or a second language of communication and is considered an essential variety that should inform the curriculum development process and its related teaching and learning decisions (Brown, 2019; Mckay, 2018; Dogancay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2018; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019).

EIL is often the focus of teaching because it recognises the importance of communicating, not just with native speakers of English but also with outer circle speakers of English and with non-native speakers (or rather, bilingual speakers) of English from expanding circle countries, where English could be used as a lingua franca (Bhowmik, 2015; Leyi, 2020). Instead of a native speaker model, the EIL curriculum focuses on bilingual English speakers as the model and standard. In addition, local and international cultures are respected above and beyond U.K. and U.S. cultures. Finally, the EIL curriculum recognises that local cultures of education are essential and should inform all teaching and learning decisions (Brown, 2012; Dogancay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2018; Liu, 2021; Medina, 2017; Oral, 2015; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019).

English as an International Language (EIL) provides an additional perspective to delimit the amount and curriculum content that English learners must learn or acquire through the formal TEFL curriculum in contexts where English is spoken only as a foreign language (Brown, 2006; 2009; 2012; Byrd, 1995; Graves, 2000; Grzega, 2005; Jenkins, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 2008; Matsuda, 2003). English vocabulary, grammar, and conversational structures can be learned in manageable amounts to improve linguistic competency in a course or series of courses within the mainstream curriculum of EFL by concentrating on particular dialects of the language that are essential and

helpful for communicating internationally (Brown, 2012; McKay, 2001; 2002; 2003a; Nunn, 2005). This is particularly true of the locally defined EIL that Brown (2012) advocates.

The design of the English curriculum has been grounded in research and theory that provides a rational foundation for the use of an ever-growing list of EFL syllabuses, including structural, situational, topical, skills-based, functional, notional, lexical, and task-based syllabuses (Farrel, 2008; Graves, 2000; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Mauranen, 2003; McKay, 1978; 2002; 2003b; Melchers, G., & Shaw, 2003; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005). These syllabuses have often been used in layered or alternating combinations (Brown, 1995; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Long, 2005; Murphy, 2018; Nunan, 1999).

The EIL curriculum model has been proposed to replace the unrealistic model of native-speakerism by ignoring the bi-polar model of British versus American English and focusing on using a variety of English intelligible enough to serve as a model and standard in TEFL curricula, including local and international cultures beyond the cultures of the U.K. and the U.S., as promoted in extant research (e.g., Holliday, 2006; 2015; Kachru, 1985; Liu, 2021; Oral, 2015).

Commonly, since native speakers of English are seen as the best models for teaching English and viewed as knowing English better than local non-native teachers of English, non-native speakers are also considered to be better and more effective teachers of English if they know the know-how and different methods and approaches to teaching the language (Brown, 2006; Dauer, 2005; Graves, 2000; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Lanteigne, 2006; Llurda, 2005; Medgyes, 2001; Medina, 2017). Hence, a good model for teaching and learning English could be that of a bilingual teacher of EIL in EFL contexts, as they better know their students' native culture, their first language, and their methods of learning English as a foreign language that they can use to relay to their students by simplifying the curriculum content, explaining the influences of L<sub>1</sub> interference and interlanguage, and understanding how English varieties developed and could be compared linguistically (Brown, 2016; 2019).

However, the pedagogical approaches and curriculum models proposed for EIL have so far tended to examine and apply TEFL educators' knowledge of EIL phonology, syntax, lexis, and pragmatics grounded in research and verified by TEFL practices (Dauer, 2005; Jenkins, 1998; 2000; 2002; 2004; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; Mauranen, 2003; Nunn, 2005). As a result, the EIL literature has produced new syllabuses, blueprints, and guidebooks for an EIL-based language

curriculum. These resources have created new opportunities for appropriate pedagogy and have included recommendations for employing EIL topics, discourse units, and genres as analytical units in EIL materials and curricula (Brown, 2006; 2012; Byrd, 1995; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996).

Furthermore, considering the basic units of the EFL curriculum, traditional curriculum developers in EFL contexts tend to promote the language varieties and cultures of the U.K., the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand – the inner circle of the language. They also advocated for knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge to communicate students' meanings with native speakers in the form of functions, notions, tasks, or activities, primarily in conversational, audiolingual, situational, and notional-functional presentation methods of English as a foreign language (McKay, 1978; 2002; Mauranen, 2003).

Therefore, TEFL educators who promote the inclusion of EIL as the foundational theory for EFL curriculum development believe that an effective TEFL curriculum must include successful bilinguals who know well about the English language and its pedagogical models or teaching methods and who can foster linguistic and cultural behaviours in EFL instruction that are likely to assist EFL learners in engaging in efficient communication with their teachers, peers, and English language speakers from any culture (Brown, 2019). Researchers who advocate the application of EIL theory and practice to the development of the English language curriculum have suggested that an EIL pedagogy can help learners attain a level of intelligibility and linguistic competency upon communicating with English speakers coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, whether they are native speakers or non-native speakers of English (Brown, 2016; Kirkpatrick, Deterding, & Wong, 2008; Pickering, 2006). These suggestions would help practitioners in the TEFL field bypass the dilemma of the bipolar model of British versus American English and any other similar adoption of a particular dialect or variety of English to be a guiding, restrictive gospel for TEFL practitioners.

### **Research purpose and questions**

Issues related to the use of one or more of the varieties of English when developing the EFL curriculum have not been sufficiently investigated in TEFL research, and teacher type (native speaker, non-native speaker, or bilingual) has not been examined satisfactorily in the fields of TEFL or TESOL. This study was conducted in an EFL context in which the participants were surveyed to introspect their perceptions of how teaching varieties of the English language or using



an EIL variety would influence EFL curriculum development. Considering the literature review and the underlying research problem, the present study addresses two research questions.

1. How do native-speaker teachers and non-native-speaker teachers perceive the influence of English language variety on other factors related to EFL curriculum development?
2. Which sub-components of the Teaching Varieties Influence Survey (TVIS) had the most influence on EFL curriculum development in EFL classes?
3. Which factors in TVIS predict the influence of native variety and culture on EFL curricula?

## **Method**

### *Participants and context*

Two samples of 130 TESOL teachers, comprising 98 non-native-speaker teachers (non-NESTs) and 32 native-speaker teachers of English (NESTs) from different schools in Egypt and abroad were randomly selected to participate in the Teaching Varieties Influence Survey (TVIS). The purpose was to introspect their views on the effect of teaching different language varieties of English on EFL curriculum implementation and development. Non-native speaker teachers are all graduates of English departments from the faculties of education, arts, and humanities, with education diplomas and teaching licensures. They were chosen from different levels of education, from primary to high schools and tertiary education institutions. Non-native speakers were randomly invited via email or other social media to participate in this study, provided they practised teaching native English contexts or abroad to non-native speakers of English. Both types of participants had different experience levels with TEFL/TESOL and were of different ages, ranging from 29 to 47 years.

Non-NESTs reported that they had been involved in teaching the national curriculum of English in public schools, all sharing a teaching experience in which they manipulated different methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, communicative approach, notional-functional, and audiolingual teaching methods. NESTs were briefed on the general objectives and guidelines for teaching English as a Foreign Language in Egypt and on samples of the general English curriculum in Egypt. The instructors were of mixed genders in both samples.

### *Instrumentation*

The Teaching Varieties Influence Survey (TVIS) developed by the researcher was used in this study. An initial draft of this TVIS was piloted with 25 teachers and teacher educators in Egypt and 25 other NESTs with a profile similar to that of Egyptian participants. The TVIS was administered online to the participants, as they were informed of the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained. TVIS administration took approximately 15 min on average for both samples.

The post-pilot study edits and revisions included rewording some questionnaire items and deleting and adding others upon revision. The inter-raters' views examined face validity and construct validity as to what the survey fully measured and what it aimed to assess, and whether the survey content appeared suitable for the study aims. All edits per language and content are included in the final draft. The TVIS comprises six sub-sections, addressing six aspects of the constructs this study sought to investigate. To assess the internal consistency and reliability of the TVIS, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed, summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Cronbach Alpha coefficients for the TVIS*

Divisions	Correlations
<b>Target language variety and culture</b>	0.77
<b>Reasons for learning EIL</b>	0.81
<b>Who designs/develops the English curriculum</b>	0.78
<b>Factors to consider in dialect choice</b>	0.71
<b>Specifications of the English curriculum in EIL</b>	0.91
<b>Units of Analysis of the EFL curriculum development</b>	0.92

The Cronbach alpha coefficient was computed, ranging between 0.71 and 0.92, thus indicating that the TVIS was reliable at 0.94 – a high-reliability coefficient.

### **Data analysis**

Before running the statistical analysis, the data related to each variable were closely examined to identify outliers. As a result, (126) participants were found to have extreme outliers

in one or more variables. After removing these outliers, the data of the total (126) final participants were entered into the SPSS analysis. The researcher employed t-tests, correlation coefficients, and stepwise multiple regression analysis to analyse data collected from both samples using SPSS Ver. 22.

## Results

To test the statistical differences between the means of native speaker-teachers (NESTs) and non-native speaker-teachers (non-NESTs) as to their perceptions of the influence of English language variety on other factors related to EFL curriculum development, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted, the results of which are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*T-tests of the Differences between NESTs versus non-NESTs on the (TVIS)*

Variables	Teacher Type (N)		Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Target language and culture (Including a native variety and culture in EIL)	Non-TESTs	96	8.26	.997	-3.93	.000
	NESTs	30	9.00	.454		
Reasons for learning EIL	Non-TESTs	96	6.99	.61	-10.22	.000
	NESTs	30	8.20	.41		
Who designs/develops the English curriculum	Non-TESTs	96	9.35	1.34	-3.28	.001
	NESTs	30	10.17	.38		
Factors to consider in dialect choice	Non-TESTs	96	29.47	3.82	-7.17	.000
	NESTs	30	34.53	.97		
Specifications of the English curriculum in EIL	Non-TESTs	96	5.95	1.30	-12.13	.000
	NESTs	30	8.87	.35		
Units of Analysis of the EFL curriculum development	Non-TESTs	96	10.21	1.48	-6.62	.000
	NESTs	30	12.00	0.00		
<b>Total</b>	Non-TESTs	96	70.23	8.85	-7.67	.000
	NESTs	30	82.77	2.03		

The NESTs' group ( $N = 30$ ) was associated with their views favouring the inclusion of a native variety in teaching English as an International Language  $M = 82.77$ ( $SD = 2.03$ ). In comparison, the non-NEST group ( $N = 96$ ) was associated with a numerically less inclusive view of a native variety and culture in EIL as an influential factor in the design and development of the TEFL curriculum ( $M = 70.23$ ( $SD = 8.85$ ). To explore whether any of the two groups of NESTs and non-NESTs were associated with statistically significantly different mean views on the influence of adopting a native variety and culture in EIL, an independent samples  $t$ -test was performed. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied using Levene's  $F$  test,  $F(124) = 19.58, p \leq .001$ ). The independent samples  $t$ -test indicated no statistically significant difference between NESTs and non-NESTs' views of the influence of English variety in EIL on curriculum development for EFL learners, indicating that both groups perceive English variety in EIL as influential in determining other factors that contribute to the development of an EFL curriculum ( $t$  value =  $-7.67, p \leq .001$ ).

Table 3 presents the correlation coefficients among the TVIS sub-components in the NESTs and non-NEST groups.

**Table 3**

*Correlations among the sub-components of the TVIS*

<b>TVIS sub-components (NESTs)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Target language and culture	1.00	.559**	.600**	0.238*	0.00	0.205*	.560**
2. Reasons for learning EIL	.559**	1.00	.894**	.766**	0.19*	0.201*	.894**
3. Who designs/develops the English curriculum	.600**	.894**	1.00	.685**	0.17*	0.421**	.859**
4. Factors to consider in dialect choice	0.238*	.766**	.685**	1.00	.629**	0.392**	.921**

5. Specifications of the English curriculum in EIL	0.00	0.19*	0.17*	.629**	1.00	0.527**	.544**
6. Units of analysis of the EIL curriculum	0.20*	0.201*	0.421**	0.392**	0.527**	1.00	0.525**
<b>Total</b>	.560**	.894**	.859**	.921**	.544**	0.525**	1.00
<b>TVIS sub-components (non-NESTs)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Target language and culture	1	.457**	.845**	.876**	.765**	.905**	.914**
2. Reasons for learning EIL	.457**	1	.627**	.733**	.559**	.624**	.718**
3. Who designs/develops the English curriculum	.845**	.627**	1	.958**	.628**	.830**	.934**
4. Factors to consider in dialect choice	.876**	.733**	.958**	1	.769**	.887**	.987**
5. Specifications of the English curriculum in EIL	.765**	.559**	.628**	.769**	1	.837**	.838**
6. Units of analysis of the EIL curriculum	.905**	.624**	.830**	.887**	.837**	1	.943**
<b>Total</b>	.914**	.718**	.934**	.987**	.838**	.943**	1

\*\**. Correlation significant at 0.05 (2-tailed).* \**. Correlation significant at 0.01 (2-tailed).*

Three significant patterns emerged for these relationships. First, the participants' perceptions of the role of target language variety and culture in EIL curriculum development were not correlated with any variables to be considered in EFL curriculum development in the non-NEST group. Second, NESTs' perceptions of the role of the target language and culture in EIL curriculum development were not correlated with the fifth variable (specifications of the English curriculum in EIL). Third, the NESTs group's perceptions of the role of the target language and

culture in EIL curriculum development were highly and positively correlated with the fourth variable (Factors to consider in dialect choice) ( $r = 0.238^*$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ) and with the sixth variable (units of analysis of the EIL curriculum) in the same group ( $r = 0.205^*$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ). In addition, the variables of language and culture in the EIL curriculum were highly and positively correlated with the second variable of reasons for learning English as an EIL ( $r = .559^{**}$ ) and with the third variable of “who designs/develops the EIL curriculum” ( $r = .600^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), and with the total of all variables ( $r = .560^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ).

Simply put, the variable of target language variety and culture in the EIL curriculum was positively correlated with the total correlations in the non-NEST group to varying degrees (ranging from  $r = .905^{**}$  to  $r = .457^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). As shown in Table 3, all correlations are significant at 0.01, with the highest correlation between the variable of target language variety and culture in EIL and the total correlations ( $r = .914$ ), followed by the variable of units of analysis of the EIL curriculum ( $r = .905^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). The lowest correlation was between the variable of the target language variety and culture in the EIL curriculum and the variable of reasons for learning an EIL curriculum ( $r = .457^{**}$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ).

### Predicting the influence of native variety and culture on the EFL curriculum

The second research question concerned the extent to which the sub-components of TVIS could predict the influence of native variety and culture on the development of the English curriculum grounded in EIL. The results of the multiple regression model for each group are presented individually in Tables 4 and 5 for the NEST group and Tables 6 and 7 for the non-NEST groups, respectively.

**Table 4**

*NESTs' ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	2.160	1	2.160		15.750	.000
Residual	3.840	28	.137	0.34		
Total	6.000	29				

ANOVA results for the NESTs group in Table 4 indicate a significant effect of the factor “Who designs/develops the curriculum” as a predictor of the criterion variable ( $F= 15.750$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 5**

*Multiple regression analysis for NESTs group (Criterion variable: the Target language variety and culture)*

Predictors	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	$\beta$	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.680	1.846		.910	.0370
Who designs/develops the English curriculum	.720	.181	.600	3.969	.000

The regression model for the NESTs group was significant ( $F = 15.75$ ,  $p < .001$ ). For this group, one predictor (who designs/develops the English curriculum) accounted for approximately 34 per cent of the variation in the criterion variable ( $R^2 = .34$ ). Among the other predictors, it was found that the factor “Who designs/develops the English curriculum” had a statistically significant relationship with the target language variety and culture (choosing a native variety and culture as the basis for EIL curriculum development ( $\beta = .60$ ,  $t = 3.96$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

**Table 6**

*Non-NESTs' ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	Adjusted $R^2$	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Regression	85.770	4	2.160		223.786	.000
Residual	8.719	91	.137	.904		
Total	94.490	95				

The regression model for the non-NEST group was significant ( $F = 223.78$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, for this group, three different predictors were identified as influential in determining

any variations in the criterion variable.

**Table 7**

*Multiple regression analysis for the non-NESTs group (Criterion variable: the Target language variety and culture)*

Predictors	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	$\beta$	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.734	.377		9.907	.000**
Units of analysis of the EIL curriculum	.362	.048	.537	7.587	.000*
Reasons for learning EIL	-.645	.084	-.393	-7.666	.000*
Factors to consider in dialect choice	.215	.043	.824	5.006	.000*

\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$

Among the other predictors, it was found that three factors, namely “Units of analysis in EIL curriculum,” “Reasons for learning EIL,” and “Factors to consider in dialect choice”, had statistically significant effects on the choice of the target native language and culture as the basis for EIL curriculum development ( $\beta = -.537$ ,  $t = -7.587$ ,  $p < .01$ ), ( $\beta = -.393$ ,  $t = -7.666$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and ( $\beta = .824$ ,  $t = 5.006$ ,  $p < .01$ ) respectively. The most influential predictor was the variable of factors to consider in dialect choice, followed by EIL curriculum analysis units, and finally, by reasons for learning EIL.

### Discussion

In summary, the findings from this study revealed that both samples (NESTs and non-NESTs) showed no statistically significant differences in their views on the influence of English variety in EIL on curriculum development for EFL learners, indicating that both groups perceive English variety in EIL as influential in determining other factors that contribute to the development of an EFL curriculum ( $t$  value =  $-7.67$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ). To answer RQ1, the perceptions



of NESTs and non-NESTs were revealed to be correlated, indicating that the target language variety and target culture in the EIL curriculum were positively correlated with factors such as units of analysis, reasons for learning EIL and with the total correlations in the non-NEST group, as it was highly positively correlated with the reasons for learning EIL and who designs/develops the EIL curriculum factors.

As for RQ2, seeking to identify which factors assessed by the TVIS had the most influence on EFL curriculum development in EFL classes, stepwise regression analysis results showed that for the NESTs group, the factor "Who designs/develops the English curriculum" is a good predictor of the target language variety and culture chosen to base EIL curriculum development. For non-NESTs, three factors were identified in a stepwise regression analysis as the most influential variables: units of analysis of the EIL curriculum, reasons for learning EIL, and factors to consider in dialect choice. The differences between the two groups indicate that NESTs believe the character of the curriculum designer or developer determines the EIL curriculum's target language variety and culture base. However, in the non-NEST group, there were three significant factors: EIL curriculum units of analysis, students' reasons for learning EIL, and the factors EIL curriculum designers consider in dialect choice, which are noteworthy predictors for this group.

Traditionally, the EFL curriculum in Egypt was a product of native speakers, preliminarily from Britain and then from the U.S., adopting a British North England dialect and receiving pronunciation or a North American English dialect to serve as the model and standard for teaching and learning English. In addition, when the culture was taught, it was the so-called big C (i.e., literature, opera, drama, classical music, etc.) cultures of the U.K. and USA that were taught rather than the small C (i.e., the family, work, education, etc. of ordinary people) cultures that were usually excluded. Even though the EIL approach recognises the value of all Englishes in the inner, outer, and expanding circles (Kachru, 1985; 1986), the two samples in this study would still appreciate the variety and culture of the inner circle to base the process of curriculum development for EIL.

The study findings also showed that non-NESTs appreciated the reasons for learning EIL as an appropriate basis for developing the EFL curriculum in their light. To clarify, EIL curriculum designers/developers should consider real-world local reasons EFL learners

entertain upon learning English, such as communicating locally with peers and natives in social interactions, business milieus, political discussions, or academic settings, working locally with foreign tourists or with workers in business situations, speaking with friends using English as a lingua franca, or even gaining the prestige of speaking English as an international language.

It is thus noteworthy to recognise how varied global and local reasons for teaching/learning English are and how global reasons should be the most likely to be considered by educational institutions and governments, consequently corresponding to the goals and perspectives of students who aspire to study at university or are likely to study abroad. Even though the vast majority of students may have no plans or opportunities to go to university or study abroad, the local reasons are perceived by both samples as more critical in developing EFL curricula grounded in EIL principles than global reasons. This implication is congruent with several views cited in the literature (Brown, 2006; 2009; 2012; Dogancay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2018; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Liu, 2021; Medina, 2017; Oral, 2015; Vodopija-Krstanović & Marinac, 2019).

To reiterate, the English as a Foreign Language curriculum design in Egypt, North Africa, and the Middle East was primarily handled by native English speakers (NSs), who were seen as guardians of the language. However, recent years have seen a shift towards involving local experts and educators in the curriculum development process, recognizing the importance of culturally relevant language teaching. This shift reflects a growing understanding that language teaching should be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of learners in these regions. The non-NEST informants in this study held a similar view, perceiving the curriculum process should still be guided or controlled by native-speaker experts in TESOL.

However, NESTs believe that curriculum development of English as an international language should be undertaken by the stakeholders likely to be involved in the curriculum design process, including local communities, students, textbook writers, English teachers, content course teachers, institutional administrators, politicians, and other decision-makers, assessment and evaluation institutions, and anyone else who has an actual stake in the EFL curriculum. The view that the curriculum should be developed to teach English as an EIL considers the real-world local reasons students have, such as communicating with local people who speak the language, working with foreigners in domestic contexts, undertaking business

dealings with foreigners, using the internet and social media in English, or even gaining prestige locally by speaking English as an international language—reasons that have been advocated in the literature (See for instance, Brown, 2019).

The EIL view suggests that bilingual teachers from non-NESTs should control the curriculum design and development, as they are qualified to understand and consider the views of all stakeholders. They believe that an EFL curriculum should be developed from scratch. Bilingual non-native English-speaking teachers are perceived as having the ability to understand the rationale for English as a foreign or international language acquisition among learners. They are also better at identifying the fundamental components of the curriculum, such as situational, topical, functional-notional, communicative, or structural principles. They are also more proficient in identifying structural, lexical, and task-based components that EFL syllabuses should incorporate. These perspectives align with various justifications found in relevant literature (e.g., Brown, 1995; 2019; Llurda, 2005; Long, 2005).

Therefore, English curriculum design specialists (e.g., Brown, 2019) advocated the participation of successful bilinguals in developing the English language curricular and pedagogical models to foster linguistic and cultural behaviours that will help EFL learners to use English efficiently in daily situations or contact with ESOL speakers from other cultures. More importantly, they can improve learners' access to and capacity to harness the target language and culture, thus contributing to a global body of knowledge and erudition in which the status of English as a world language would become eminent.

Moreover, bilingual non-native speaker teachers can scaffold EFL learners in their journey towards mastering the language as they replicate their successes and progress with learning the language, knowing better about the linguistic and cultural differences in the various contexts in which English is learned. As for culture, bilinguals involved in EFL curriculum design and development can engineer an EIL curriculum that pays homage to the local culture and promotes a sense of ownership of English even in the outer circle, inducing learners' confidence in learning and understanding the other varieties of English without sticking to one standard variety or culture. NESTs also believe that bilingual non-native speaker teachers can integrate materials, activities, and tasks grounded in national and international situations applicable to students' lives in non-native–native interactions or non-native–non-native

interactions, with these implications commensurately recurring in prior research (Bhowmik, 2015; Brown, 2012; 2019; Leyi, 2020; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Long, 2005; Murphy, 2018; Nunn, 2005).

In addition, NESTs highly estimate the role of the factors to consider in dialect choice, in agreement with previous research (Brown, 2009; Grzega, 2005; Jenkins, 1998; Kirkpatrick et al., 2008; Lanteigne, 2006; Matsuda, 2003; Medgyes, 2001; Pickering, 1999). These include curriculum designers' knowledge of the learners' preferred dialect, the student's first language, and the target culture related to the variety selected for the curriculum. In addition, EFL curriculum designers should also draw on the similarities and differences between English and Arabic to choose the appropriate dialect for teaching, identifying, and understanding the influences of L<sub>1</sub> interference and interlanguage.

In this way, curriculum designers, teachers, and learners alike should understand that different varieties of English are legitimate and complete systems of the language, making no preferences or discrimination of one variety over another unless other factors such as intelligibility or educational expectations of students, parents, or learning institutions are considered (Dauer, 2005; Deterding & Kirkpatrick, 2006; Jenkins, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Kirkpatrick et al., 2008; Lanteigne, 2006). Furthermore, both NESTs and non-NESTs believed that curriculum designers should simplify the language portions selected for the curriculum to provide more comprehensible input, as was also suggested in prior research (Long, 2005b; McKay, 2003b; Mauranen, 2003; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005).

### **Conclusion**

This study aimed to analyse the perceptions of two samples of teachers of English from Egypt and native-speaker teachers of English who had experience teaching English as a foreign language in contexts similar to that of Egypt. The EFL curriculum is deeply established from the traditional perspective of curriculum development, which states that the English curriculum must be established on one of the two major dialects in the inner circle, British English and North American English, with their standard lexicons, accents, and pronunciation.

This traditional view also considers culture teaching in the universals of British or American cultures, asserting previously expressed views on native-speakerism (Holliday, 2006;

2015). Looking at it this way, the study tried to find the factors that people think have the most impact on how the TEFL curriculum is designed and used in relation to either one of these two important dialects or English as an international language, regardless of these dialects. In the Egyptian context, as is also the case in many similar contexts where English is learned as a foreign language, EFL learners have, in actuality, very few opportunities to interlocate with native speakers, given that these contexts are essentially monolingual and/or monocultural (Bosuwon & Woodrow, 2009; Mori, 2004). This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that learners tend to have limited opportunities to utilise the language in real-life contexts, unless they engage in interactions with foreign visitors or in professional settings inside international companies.

The findings of this study further showed that both groups perceived the importance and influence of choosing a standard English variety to base the EFL curriculum, but which standard variety to choose depends on the learners' reasons for learning English as an EIL. Confirming the ideology of native-speakerism (for example, Holliday, 2006; 2015), the NESTs view that the target variety and culture selected in EFL curriculum design and development is significantly related to who designs/develops the EFL curriculum. However, non-native speaker teachers believe that the choice of the target variety of English and the target culture to teach is predicted by three factors: units of analysis in the EFL curriculum, students' reasons for learning EIL, and factors to consider in dialect choice.

Considering the reasons for learning English, both samples believed that with the curriculum being directed towards a view of English as an international language, the curriculum design should consequently focus on English as a lingua franca or as a language for communication in international contexts, regardless of how standard the variety is. Even though NESTs appreciated the idea of native-speakerism in the curriculum from design to teaching, both groups still believed that curriculum developers and teachers should capitalise on linguistic and cultural similarities and differences between Arabic and English, including knowledge of interference and interlanguage, as this would help teachers and learners implement and make use of the EFL curriculum.

Curriculum developers and teachers should also understand that different varieties of English have developed and can be compared linguistically and that these differences in English

varieties are legitimate with no prestige of one over the other. Therefore, the variety that may be selected in an EIL curriculum should be intelligible enough to be valuable and easily taught and learned.

Finally, the implications of these perceptions analyses indicate that EFL curriculum designers and teachers should know the educational expectations of learners and educational institutions, the educational system, and the local classroom culture for the curriculum to be effectively implemented.

#### **Data Availability Statement**

Raw data were generated at the Statistics Department Unit of the Faculty of Education in Beni Suef. The derived data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author [MAM] on request.

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