NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE EFL TEACHERS' PRACTICE: TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES IN KYIV, UKRAINE

Ian Edward Firth
University of Leeds, UK

ABSTRACT

This article reports on a study to obtain teachers' and students' perceptions of native English speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native English speaker teachers (NNESTs) - terms employed here for pragmatic research purposes - in EFL teaching practice in Kyiv, Ukraine. The study found a number of perceived strengths and shortcomings for both teacher groups. NESTs were viewed as models of pronunciation and lauded for language range and accuracy. Moreover, they presented an invaluable source for cultural learning. However, NESTs were deemed to perhaps lack understanding of learners' difficulties and to be hampered by intercultural miscommunications. In contrast, NNESTs were viewed as successful L2 learner models, and consequently well-positioned to teach the grammar and deal with associated learning issues. Furthermore, NNESTS were advantaged by their translation capabilities and familiarity with the local environment. In terms of shortcomings, range of language and possible underappreciation of attributes were reported. Overall, teachers and students tended to place higher value on teachers' pedagogical talents and attributes over background origin, and recognised the unique and often complementary skillsets of NESTs and NNESTs alike.

Keywords: EFL, Expert user, Native English-speaking teachers, Native speaker dichotomy, Non-Native English-speaking teachers, Teaching strategies, Ukraine

INTRODUCTION

A host of variables may impact successful EFL teaching practice; the perceived merits of learning English from a symbiotic clan of native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) – including the distinction of the terms themselves - gives rise to impassioned debate within the English language teaching milieu.
Many scholars (Kiczkowiak, 2018; Walkinshaw & Hoang Oanh, 2014) indicate a premise appears to persist of the native speaker teacher model as a 'gold standard' of spoken and written language. Nonetheless, this premise exists beside a widely developing body of research to the contrary that indicate regard for teaching skills and personal qualities over linguistic origin. (Gurkan & Yuksel, 2012; Kurniawati & Rizki, 2018). Furthermore, many contemporary scholars (Jenkins et al., 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2010) contend the idealized native speaker models may play a subservient role to the value of L2 users' capacity to communicate amongst one another within the backdrop of English as a lingua Franca.

Phillipson (2013) coined the phrase 'native speaker fallacy' to invalidate the notion that the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker. In response to this fallacy, and following the assumption of the teacher groups as 'different species', Medgyes (2014), states that NESTs' shortcomings may be strengths of NNESTs and vice versa. Therefore, rather than viewing one

to be more ideal to the other, Medgyes argues the viewpoint that simply differences may exist-with no value judgment attached.

Study on NESTS and NNESTS specifically is comparatively modern and within the eastern European EFL context the scope is limited. Moreover, replication of inquiry, yet within a new context, addresses the important connection between existing and new knowledge (Schmitd, 2009). Taking the aforementioned issues into account, the present study contributes to this area by reporting on teachers' and students' perceptions to native and non-native teachers of English as a foreign language in Kyiv, Ukraine.

The current study explores principally the following research areas:

- Is there a preference for teaching/learning from either, or both NESTs and NNESTs?
- Are there any perceived advantages/disadvantages of NESTs and NNESTs in terms of teaching attributes?

This article is organized as follows. The first section explores the global spread of the English language and notions of language ownership. Secondly, the NEST vs NNEST dichotomy is examined, including associated ideologies, followed by a review of literature. The next section details the study findings and finally, there is a discussion which concludes with the implications the study may have in the EFL field.

Globalization

The English language has journeyed a long way from the one first found in Anglo-Saxon Britain to ultimately becoming the language of world-wide communications (Algeo & Butcher, 2013). English reigns as the main language of international business, science, information technology, diplomacy etc., and its global dominance shows no immediate heir. For instance, the number of people who speak English as an additional language now exceeds the number of first language speakers of English. In fact, it has been implied that the English language is no more the privilege of native speakers and the suggestion that English as an international language could supersede standard British and American English for example is increasingly heard (Crystal, 2012). Moreover, Widdowson (1994, p. 385) argued that the fact that English is an international language means no nation may have custody over it: "[English] . . . is not a possession which they lease out to others, while still retaining the freehold. Other people actually own it". However, he also emphasised that it was important for a common standard of English to be upheld to maintain standards of communicative effectiveness.

One of most influential models, which illustrates the spread of English, is Braj Kachru's (1992a) 'three circles of English' is shown in Figure 1.
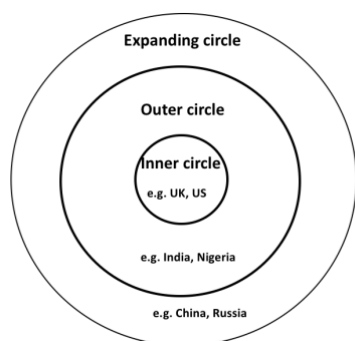

Figure 1: Kachru's 'Three concentric circles of world Englishes'
(adapted from Kachru, 2006, p. 364)
In the inner circle, English is the primary language, as for instance, in the monolingual contexts of the UK and the US. The outer circle includes the spread of English through past imperial

expansion, as in Asia and Africa, where English serves as a second language between different language groups and is generally the intranational means of communication. The outermost, expanding circle, includes countries such as China, and Russia that have accepted English as the international language of communication and teach English as a foreign language (Kachru, 2006; 1992b). Although the model has been criticized for its oversimplification of reality, for instance, as well as the notions of language ownership evident in the inner circle (Al-Mutairi, 2019; Modiano,1999), Kachru (2006) acknowledges that the circles are not meant to be static, rather they are intended to be dynamic and changing. Indeed, irrespective of circle-setting and country of origin, an individual may, of course, speak English with native-like command for various reasons.

The NEST vs NNEST dichotomy

According to Davies (2004, cited in Walkinshaw & Hoang Oanh, 2014, Section 1), the key tenets of 'nativeness' are "(a) childhood acquisition of the language, (b) comprehension and production of idiomatic forms of the language, (c) understanding regional and social variations within the language, and (d) competent production and comprehension of fluent, spontaneous discourse." As all the tenets, aside from the first, may be acquired after childhood it may be argued that childhood acquisition is the immutable distinction between a native (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) of a language.

In recent times, the native English-speaking teacher (NEST) and non-native English-speaking teacher (NNEST), including the subordinate native and non-native speaker terms, have been subject to scrutiny. Consequently, a number of scholars have identified ambiguities and questioned the terms' political correctness (Dervić & Bećirović, 2019). Arguments for the terms' legitimacy is perhaps reasoned on the grounds that most teachers and students *do* come from both English or non-English speaking countries such that most are either native or non-native speakers of English (Medgyes, 2001). Nevertheless, the dichotomy has been criticised as the native and non-native terms may have negative 'in-group' and 'out-group' associations i.e. based on whether a person belongs to the 'exclusive' group of first language (L1) speakers or not. Secondly, the terms fail to reflect either the complexity or diversity of language use and expertise of English speakers world-wide (e.g., world Englishes, indigenized varieties etc.). In addition, many people have native-like command of more than one language; thus, it may often difficult to say which language is their native language or which language group they identify with (Liu & Berger, 2015; Moussu & Llurda, 2008; Thornbury, 2017). As a result, some scholars have proposed alternative classifications; for instance, *expert user* for a proficient speaker of the language irrespective whether it is the mother tongue or not (Council of Europe, 2003).

It has been suggested that in many teaching contexts, preferences may appear to exist for NS teachers regardless of teaching expertise. Holliday (2018) refers to the notion of 'native speakerism' – an assumption that native speaker teachers are the best models as they represent the target culture (e.g., British) from which springs ideals of the English language and its methodology. Nonetheless, this view has been challenged; for instance, many learners may not necessarily aspire to native speaker norms, particularly when learning English for international purposes (Subtirelu, 2013). Moreover, Benke and Medgyes (2005) found that language learners tend to place higher value on teachers' pedagogical talents and attributes than linguistic background. Without doubt, the NS/NNS area remains an impassioned one; and according to Medgyes (2017), perhaps, even more so in current times.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Medgyes (1992, 2001, 2014, 2017a) is renowned for ground-breaking research into NESTs and NNESTs. He reminisced on his pioneering paper, 'Native or non-native: Who's worth more?' (Medgyes, 2017b, p. ix), stating: "I had the gut feeling that I was going to open a can of worms. However, not in my wildest dream did I imagine that there were going to be so many worms in that can". Focusing on raising awareness of the respective strengths and shortcomings of NESTS and NNESTS in the interests of progressing standards, he advanced the following hypotheses grounded on the assumption that the teacher types were 'different species'. These were: (i) NESTs and NNESTs differ in terms of language proficiency, (ii) they differ in teaching behaviour, (iii) discrepancies in language proficiency account for most of the difference found in teaching behaviour, and (iv) NESTs and NNESTs can be equally good teachers on their own terms Medgyes, 2001, p. 434).

In his subsequent research, one aspect he investigated asked participants, who comprised 325 teachers from 11 countries, whether the NEST or NNEST was viewed as the ideal teacher (Medgyes, 2014). Interestingly, approximately an equal number of votes were attributed to both pedagogue types as the ideal (27% for NESTs, 29% for NNESTs), whereas the remainder (44%) rated both – an alternative that had not been even an overt choice in the questionnaire. However, he believed the proportion that chose NNESTS as the ideal teacher was high and as a consequence formulated a further set of assumptions detailing NNESTs' unique features as follows: (i) they provide a better learning model, (ii) they teach language-learning-strategies more effectively, (iii) they supply more information about the English language, (iv) they better anticipate and prevent language difficulties, (v) they can be more sensitive to their students and (vi) there is a benefit from their ability to use the students' mother tongue. In summarising these six points, Medgyes (2014) noted that any linguistic deficit of NNESTs could be viewed paradoxically as a blessing, on the grounds that the deficit would help them to develop capacities that NESTs could not possess. Finally, he also concluded that NESTs and NNESTs could be equally good teachers as their respective strengths and shortcomings balance one another out. In other words, Medgyes (2014) concluded each group may offer competences of which the other may be lacking.

Other studies, in the modern era, have examined perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs within a broadening range of learning contexts (Huang, 2018; Martinez Agudo, 2017). Thus, supporting Schmidt's (2009) advice that replication of study elements is one of the most important tools for the verification of facts within the empirical social sciences. For instance, Benke and Medgyes' (2005) study focused on difference in teaching behaviour as perceived by 422 Hungarian learners of English from across a variety of institutions. The advantage most commonly ascribed to NNESTs related to grammar instruction. It was reported that they had a more structured approach and were better able to deal with difficulties encountered by Hungarian learners. Furthermore, owing to intimate familiarity with the local educational environment NNESTs were perceived as able to provide more thorough examination preparation. Although they were seen as an invaluable help with translation skills some NNESTs were seen to be prone to overuse and side-tracking in the mother tongue. In addition, a recurrent criticism was levelled at their pronunciation and perceived outdated language use.

Regarding NESTs, respondents spoke highly of their ability to teach conversation and to serve as models for imitation. Many respondents considered NESTs as more friendly and developing more lively and colourful sessions than their NNEST counterparts. However, lower level learners often found NESTs difficult to understand and differing linguistic and cultural backgrounds often created a communication gap.

Benke and Medgyes (2005) also reported that the study provided evidence for the existence of distinctive features between the two teacher groups. The study reiterated that the establishment of differences carried no value judgement i.e., neither group was viewed to be better on account

of teaching style. This was confirmed by the learners who argued, in an ideal situation, both NESTs and NNESTs could effectively teach them, stressing they would be ill-prepared if they dispensed with either teacher group.

Similarly, in Lasagabaster and Sierra's (2005) study of 76 university students in the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain, these participants, in general, were found to favour a NEST (61%). However, given the possibility of being taught by both a NEST and NNEST, the preference was higher at 72%, although NESTs authenticity was valued with regard to pronunciation and vocabulary usage, including slang/idioms. Having a NEST was viewed as making students use English more and better able to augment knowledge of other cultures. Nevertheless, if they had never studied another language themselves, they were perceived less able to deal with learning difficulties. Conversely, NNESTs were prepared to deal with learners' difficulties and able to benefit learners through their bilingualism. They were praised by students in the domains of grammar and intelligibility, who also made reference to NNSTs demonstrating achievable models. But they were also seen as having potential shortcomings, which included the areas of desirable accents, vocabulary, culture, and English language proficiency.

Vesterinen (2016) studied students' views of NESTs and NNESTs in a Finnish university. It was found that they also preferred a combination of both native and non-native speaker teachers. The students reported a range of factors as more important than the teacher's mother tongue. For instance, pedagogical skills, capacity to motivate and support students, having a friendly disposition, and being enthusiastic about English were highly valued. In addition, almost all the respondents (94%) reported they could learn as well from both native and non-native teachers, on the condition the teacher was professional. Half of the participants also stated that NNESTs offered perfectly adequate teaching even at advanced levels. One participant who reported a preference for NNESTs argued English was so prevalent in Finland that NESTs were not needed anymore for offering native level input. NNESTs' personal experiences were viewed more positively. A further study examining students' perceptions in the contexts of EFL in Vietnam and Japan (Walkinshaw & Hoang Oanh, 2014) also supported the findings of Medgyes (2014), in highlighting the unique and often complementary skillsets of NESTs and NNESTs. They lauded their findings as "one more nail in the coffin" (p. 8) to contradictions to notions of parity between the teaching group counterparts.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the present study was to obtain teachers' and students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, with these acronyms being employed here for pragmatic research purposes with regards to the EFL teaching practice in Kyiv, Ukraine, where the research was conducted. In this EFL context, Ukrainian is the official language alongside Russian in a bilingual environment (Ukrainian/Russian). However, English is the leading foreign language in Ukraine and its importance has further grown in the modern era, where Ukraine has recently undergone a period of educational reform under the auspices of the *New Ukrainian School*. This reform acknowledged the importance of student voice and critical thinking, and brought changes to attitudes to language learning with 'communication in foreign languages' being identified as a key competence for development (Ministry of Education & Science, 2016, p. 11). Since the EF English Proficiency Index, ranks Ukraine/Kyiv in Europe moderately at 30/34 (Education First, 2020), and although proficiency levels are on the rise, the present research targets a vital issue in the need to improve EFL educational outcomes.

Research Design and Sample

Participants in the study were randomly selected from one of the largest EFL institutes in Kyiv; the study included a balance of genders, wide range of ages, and participation was voluntary. As a comparative study, it involved 77 respondents, including both NNESTs and NESTs (25), and fifty-two students of all levels, A1 – C2 (Council of Europe, 2003). The research employed Medgyes' (2017) study's survey as a foundation, with the author's blessing, as well as the hope of being able to compare findings. Participants were requested to complete the surveys at their institute, chiefly to ensure and manage an immediate level of response. Tutors distributed the student surveys, and this ensured precise sampling and kept potential researcher bias to a minimum. The surveys included both multiple-choice and Likert-scale items, which were ideal for the degree of nuances to measure attitudes and opinions. Moreover, the study also employed open-ended questions, allowing for flexibility of response where appropriate; thus, allowing participants thoughts to roam freely, unencumbered by a prepared set of responses (Oppenheim, 2005). In addition, survey translations and interviews for students were carried out for English, Ukrainian, and Russian by the language specialist Oleksandra Kosach.

As mixed methods research, the qualitative findings complemented the quantitative data with the common purpose to use the results from one to enhance or elaborate the results from the other. As well, in order to increase the response rates, the survey length was kept to a minimum, advanced warnings were provided to tutors, and confidentiality of data results and anonymity of participants were confirmed. However, it is acknowledged that there were some limitations to the present study. While sample sizes were relatively small it is also noted that the interpretation of results should be exercised with caution as the survey reflects teachers' *stated* rather than *actual* behaviours. Furthermore, as participants were Kyiv-based, findings may not be generalized globally, although important 'food for thought' for other EFL contexts along with the research design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceptions of the Ideal Teacher and Languages Use

The first item on the student survey was designed to give an overall feeling, by asking students whether they viewed NESTs[1] or NNESTs as the 'ideal' teacher; the vast majority (87%) declared both. This supports Medgyes (1992, p. 348) notion that 'the ideal teacher' is "not one

Students' perceptions towards the ideal teacher as being a NEST / NNEST

---
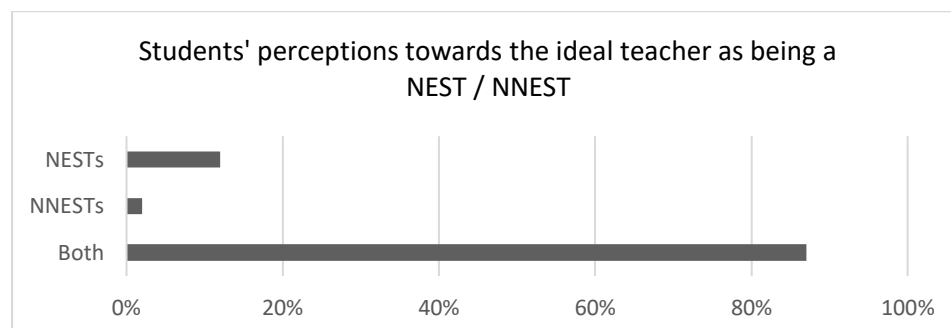
[1] *Note: NEST = native English-speaking teacher; NNEST = non-native English speaking teacher; S= EFL student; L1= first language; L2= second language.*

Figure 2: Students' perceptions towards the ideal teacher as being a native or non-native English speaker

reserved for either . . . apart from a host of variables affecting teacher efficiency . . . the ideal NEST and NNEST stand close together". However, this contrasts with the finding shown in Table 1 that half of the NESTs and 80% of the NNESTs believed that when given a direct choice, the students might tend to favour a NEST. Yet, one NEST alluded to Holliday's (2018) 'native-speakerisms' and the possible '*under appreciation of NNESTS without considering strengths'* (NEST1). Although a general preference by students for NESTs appeared relatively high compared with preferences for NNESTs it is worth noting that students pointed to NESTs' value (76.5%) in providing information about L2 culture compared to NNESTs (46.2%) as an appealing feature aside from language instruction. Moreover, presented with the possibility of both NESTs and NNSTs, Table 1 shows the percentage was substantially higher; as a total of 71% of students agreed that in an ideal setting both NESTs and NESTs would instruct.

Table 1: Students' and teachers' beliefs regarding teaching instruction from NESTs and NNESTs

In an ideal situation both native and non-native teacher teach you.
В идеале, студент должен проходить обучение у двух учителей: носителя и неносителя

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Students	15%	56%	17%	6%	6%

In an ideal situation both native and non-native teachers teach Ss.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	40%	40%	20%	-	-
NESTs	36%	14%	29%	21%	-

A significant number of participants viewed the combination as the ideal way to learn the language and pointed to the perceived complementary strengths of NESTS and NNESTs in teaching various skills and levels. Tables 2 and 3 show respondents highlighted the perceived strengths of NNESTs working with lower proficiency learners/beginners and NESTs with higher proficiency learners. Student 1commented:

> '(NNESTs are commonly) very effective in beginning levels and if it's advanced/proficiency students, NS are a great help' (sic.) [S1]

Indeed, while the survey findings appeared to support the merits of NNESTs working well with beginners, for NESTs working with students at the advanced levels the results were less conclusive. One of the thorniest issues in language methodology is the use of the learners' mother tongue. Much research, nevertheless, advocates the judicious use of the mother tongue, particularly at lower proficiency levels, citing, among many advantages, cognitive and affective benefits for learners (Firth, 2018; Lynch, 2005). In relation to this one teacher commented as follows:

'(NNESTs are) able to translate quicker from Russian or Ukrainian, (and). . .. they might be better able to help beginner students who are struggling and therefore help reduce any associated anxiety' [NNEST1]

Table 2: Beliefs regarding NNESTs' capacity to give more help to beginners

A non-native teacher can give more help for a beginner
Учитель-неноситель может больше помочь студенту, только
начинающему учить английский

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	10%	90%	-	-	-
NESTs	21%	57%	14%	-	7%
Students	25%	44%	18%	10%	4%

Table 3: Beliefs regarding NESTs teaching advanced level

Native speakers should teach at a more advanced level
Носители языка должны преподавать на более продвинутом
уровн

	strongly agree	agree	neither disagree nor agree	disagree	strongly disagree
NNESTs	10%	20%	40%	20%	10%
NESTs	-	43%	36%	14%	7%
Students	15%	29%	33%	19%	4%

According to Calafato (2019) monolingual ideologies dominate the language education landscape; but despite this, NNESTs are proficient multilinguals by default and their unique affordances might best embody the successful language learner model for emergent multilinguals.

It is also worth noting support for the bilingual pedagogy of translanguaging, which can be defined as "accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential" (García, 2009, p. 140). This approach has grown and risen to the forefront of much contemporary ELT research and is applicable to the bilingual context of Ukraine. According to Yuvayapan (2019) translanguaging does not merely refer to switching between two languages, rather it is the systematic use of two languages in a particular teaching activity. Translanguaging strategy is evident in the following comment by NNEST 2:

'*students usually find grammar more difficult . . . so, some students expect a Ukrainian teacher to switch to Ukrainian/Russian when explaining difficult bits*' [NNEST2]

In addition, translation ability was lauded by students with Student 2 stating:

'*you can always ask (NNESTs) for a translation if you don't know it in English . . . sometimes it's hard for native speakers to explain some words to students*' (sic.) [S2]

Although a large number of students and teacher supported the notion of an 'English-only' classroom, this study found much leeway of opinion as shown in Table 4. Almost three-quarters of students were positive regarding it being essential that everything being in English in an English classroom with 39% strongly agreeing, in contrast to only half of both groups of teachers agreeing. There was also some uncertainty of NNESTs (30%) and students (23%) with a fifth of NNESTs disagreeing and almost a third of NESTs disagreeing.

Table 4: Opinions regarding the importance of an English-only classroom

It is essential that everything should be in English in an English classroom Важно, чтобы урок английского языка проходил исключительно на английском языке

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	-	50%	30%	20%	-
NESTs	7%	50%	7%	29%	7%
Students	39%	33%	23%	4%	2%

Further insights are gained through students responses to whether the two teacher types used Ukrainian or Russian to clarify unfamiliar terms. Table 5 shows as would be expected that almost 80% of students did not see NESTs using their L1 to clarify unfamiliar terms. However, over half of the students (54%) did not see NNESTs using their L1 to explain unfamiliar terms either. In fact, only 29% of students reported NNESTs used this strategy compared with a mere 6% of NESTs. Indeed, 30% of NNESTs and, perhaps unexpectedly, 36% of NESTs agreed to the judicious use of the learners' L1. NEST 1 commented:

> '(I would use the learners' L1) . . . when clarifying the meaning of concrete nouns. These words tend to have a direct and easily quantifiable translation, and although I would present them in English, I would certainly confirm with a "yes" or quick translation if the word was causing problems . . .' [NEST 1]

Table 5: Students' views regarding NNEST & NESTS use of the students L1 to clarify unfamiliar terms

The Non-native/Native speaker teacher . . . uses Ukrainian / Russian to clarify unfamiliar terms
Учитель-неноситель / Учитель-носитель использует украинский / русский для объяснения незнакомых терминов

NNEST uses Ukrainian/Russian to clarify unfamiliar terms					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Students	10%	19%	17%	27%	27%
NEST uses Ukrainian / Russian to clarify unfamiliar terms					
Students	-	6%	17%	21%	56%

Further to this NEST 2 noted that L1 could be appropriately used by teacher and learners interchangeably:

> '*Using the learners' L1 can help reduce anxiety (for lower-level learners), allows the checking of comprehension. In addition, students can support one another with the stronger student increasing his/her confidence and intake of content by explaining, and the weaker student improving his/her overall understanding.*' [NEST 2]

In addition, NNEST 3 accounted for the use of the L1 on the following grounds:

> '*If I've tried to explain a word/phrase with pictures/gestures/in the context and my students still have no idea what I'm talking about.*'
> '*It prevents students from understanding how to do an exercise*' [NNEST 3]

Thus, EFL environments may typically employ English-only pedagogies, but EFL instructors' language ideologies and orientations may impact the shaping of their pedagogical practices and classroom language policies in different ways (Burton & Rajendram, 2019).

Pedagogical Attributes

The following section asked participants to consider whether pedagogical attributes and related issues 'trumped' the significance of a teacher's native language. Table 7 shows teachers' and students' percentage agreement with the statement "*It doesn't matter what the teacher's native language is, the only thing that matters is how they teach*". While the NNESTs and NESTs generally agreed half of NESTs strongly agreed compared with only 30% of NNESTs. However, there was greater variation among students. Although almost 60% agreed, only 21% strongly agreed, whereas 37% neither disagreed or agreed. Moreover, a small percentage of NESTs (14%) and students (6%) generally disagreed. Thus, the overall consensus from students and teachers, was of a higher placement value on teaching talent than linguistic background.

Table 7: Beliefs regarding the importance of teaching talent over teachers' native language

It doesn't matter what the teacher's native language is, the only thing that matters is how they teach

Не важно, каков родной язык учителя, важно только то, как он преподает

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	30%	70%	-	-	-
NESTs	50%	36%	-	7%	7%
Students	21%	37%	37%	4%	2%

Student 3 pointed to the importance of teaching skills taking precedent; however, this student also recognised an individual's particular needs may impact on pedagogy:

> '*It's more important that the style of teaching is tailored to class needs and level than the teacher's native language . . . (but) if the object is a specific accent then yes (better a NEST)*' [S3]

NEST 3 also critically evaluated possible advantages and shortcomings, explaining:

> '*A teacher who shares an L1 with the students, or a related L1, may have a better understanding of the challenges the students face, particularly if that teacher also had to learn the target language in a classroom setting. The teacher's L1 can also have negative side-effects like a culture of over-use or over-dependence of the L1 creeping into the classroom.*' [NEST3]

However, another NEST considered international English, arguing that NNESTs may provide students with '*more useful cultural specific content related to how their local culture may use English*' [NEST4]. But also pointed to the importance of pedagogical skills and language proficiency with regard to issues of parity:

> '. . . *If a teacher can explain certain things so that students understand how to correctly use a new word/phrase or grammar, the teacher's native language isn't a problem. However, if the teacher isn't proficient enough, it is certainly a problem because students will repeat after the teacher and make mistakes. So, I'd say it doesn't matter what the teacher's native language is as long as the teacher knows how to deliver new information, is proficient and fluent enough.*' [NNEST 4]

Table 8 and 9 also show comparative data on students' and teachers' views of NESTs and NNESTs teaching differently. They show percentage agreement ratings in answer to the following questions, respectively: *Do you feel non-native and native teachers teacher differently*?; *Do you feel you teach differently from a non-native/native teacher?* In terms of pedagogical variations, 56% students perceived NESTs and NNESTs to teach differently, and with 37% rating "Somewhat" this reflects strong support from students that there are differences from their perspective. Yet only 36% of NESTs and 20% of NNESTs were firm on their view that they taught differently from their respective counterpart. Nevertheless, almost 30% of NESTs responded 'No', that they did not teach differently from NNESTs and when it is considered alongside NNESTs showing 40% 'somewhat' teach differently and 20% unsure, these data reinforce that the majority of both teacher groups perceive differences. This is also in keeping with students' views.

Table 8: Students' view regarding NNESTs and NESTs teaching differently

Do you feel non-native and native teachers teacher differently? Как Вы считаете, отличается ли стиль преподавания преподавателей-носителей и неносителей?

	Yes	No	Somewhat	Not sure
Students	56%	4%	37%	4%

Table 9: Teachers' views regarding teaching differently

Do you feel you teach differently from a non-native/native teacher?

	Yes	No	Somewhat	Not sure
NNESTs	20%	-	40%	20%
NESTs	36%	29%	21%	14%

Qualitative responses helped to explain these views which are well represented in NEST 4's foregrounding of professionalism, teaching experience and qualifications as impacting on perceptions:

> '*We know the old stereotypes of strict and archaic local teachers compared to fresh, modern and communicative native speaking teachers, but I feel this is generally untrue. Non-native teachers have done CELTA . . . as the foreign teachers, so it becomes about the level of planning and enthusiasm of delivery more than whether they are native or non-native. I also feel there is another unhealthy stereotype, that of the underqualified and overpaid native speaker who gets by on their innate knowledge of language and foreign-ness instead of dedication (like the local teachers). This is equally misguided and damaging and reinforces the fact that it is more about the teacher than their mother tongue'*. [NEST 4]

In accounting for possible pedagogical difference that Medyes (2014) attributes to divergent language backgrounds, his study found that NNESTs tended to show a heightened preoccupation with accuracy and the grammar of English. Students' responses to the statement that "*The non-native/native speaker teacher puts more emphasis on grammar rules"*, as shown in Table 10, appear to support this notion, with almost 70% generally agreeing in contrast to 43% of agreement that NESTs emphasise grammar rules. But the teachers' responses, shown in Table 11, are similar to each other in that only approximately 20% of both groups agreed that they put more emphasis on grammar rules. However, while there is also similarity of response to 'neither agreeing or disagreeing', (NNESTs, 60%; NESTs, 50%), this left 20% and 29% general disagreement, respectively, thus presenting a strong case that the teachers didn't see themselves as necessarily overemphasising grammar rules.

Table 10: Students' beliefs regarding NESTs and NNESTs emphasis on grammar rules

The non-native/native speaker teacher puts more emphasis on grammar rules.
Учитель-неноситель/ / Учитель-носитель делает упор на грамматику

NNEST puts more emphasis on grammar rules					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Students	15%	54%	25%	4%	2%
NEST puts more emphasis on grammar rules					
Students	8%	35%	48%	8%	2%

Table 11: Teachers' beliefs regarding emphasis on grammar in their practice

I put more emphasis on grammar rules.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	-	20%	60%	10%	10%
NESTs	-	21%	50%	29%	-

NNEST 5's elucidation of the issue takes a practical view in that NNESTs bring a background in having learnt at least one other language, and the target language of English in this study, thus highlighting this as an advantage:

> *'[NNESTs are] usually good at explaining grammar . . . [and] having had to learn (the language) themselves . . . can understand more easily what a student wants to say and help them*, . . .' [NNEST 5]

This supports Bekes and Carrasco's (2017) stance that the competitive advantage of NNESTs may be the fact that being lifelong learners of English themselves [they] are well-positioned to teach it. In contrast, NNEST 6 raised the issue of the influence of the respective education system on EFL teachers' pedagogical approach, referring to knowledge of the local environment and learning strategies as having relevance:

> '*. . . it is related to the educational system - there's a great emphasis on grammar at state schools and universities. So, they (students) know how we studied the language . . . I often share my "tricks" with the students (how I remembered this particular rule or exception when I was a student). I think it might be easier for them to remember these little tricks 'cause we think in a similar way, listen to similar music, watch similar films, . . . live in the same country, you know.*' [NNEST 6]

Both these NNESTs' explanations are confirmed by Student 4's comment that:

> '*some grammatic rules can be more obvious from the 'side view' of a non-native speaker*' (sic.) [S4]

The final question explored the participants' views on whether they native speaker teachers were more effective at teaching speaking skills and conversation. The results, as shown in Table 12, suggest that the NNESTs and NESTs held similar views with approximately 40% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 30% disagreeing. The remaining 35% of NESTs' responses are more widely distributed than the 30% of NNESTs who agreed, thus showing 14% of NESTs strongly agreed and the same proportion strongly disagreed. But consideration of students' views showed a distinct contrast in two thirds being of the opinion that NESTS teach speaking skills/conversation more effectively.

Student 5, elaborated on this, citing the appeal of NESTs as pronunciation models, and having language range:

> '*A native teacher has the perfect pronunciation . . ., but non-native can be great too, NSs are better [at] speaking skills, and accuracy, [they] can compare the same words in different English-speaking countries . . .*'(sic.) [S5]

Table 12: Beliefs regarding whether NESTs teach speaking skill more effectively

A native speaker teacher teaches speaking skills/conversation more effectively.

Преподаватель-носитель языка преподает навыки речи более эффективно

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
NNESTs	-	30%	40%	30%	-
NESTs	14%	7%	36%	29%	14%
Students	31%	35%	21%	10%	4%

The support for NESTs with regard to speaking and conversation skills was also supported by NNESTs. For example, NNEST 7 further praised NESTs' linguistic scope, pronunciation, cultural knowledge:

> '[*NESTS*] *are better . . . teaching colloquial language . . . can tell students more about British/American culture etc. . . . about traditions etc; pronunciation matters . . . students get used to listening to different accents'* [NNEST 7]

This is in keeping with Luk's (2001) research that found NESTs were valued as linguistic models. The participant language learners felt that NESTs enriched their linguistic resources and personal experiences. Yet this has been challenged by other research in terms of measuring actual effect on students' achievements in speaking skills. For instance, Al Noursi (2013) reported the 'nativeness' of teachers had no significant impact on students' actual performance in speaking, thus raising the issue of the need to investigate both evidence of performance and relationship to perceptions.

Summary of teachers' perceptions of teaching behaviours and importance of contact

In an overall analysis of the study's qualitative data, the perceived general pros and cons in teaching behaviours are summarised in Table 13 and 14 as applied to the analysis of the teachers' responses and the students' responses, respectively. The emergent attributes, sorted into 'pros' and 'cons' reflect the potential for NESTs and NNESTs to work collaboratively where students can best benefit from their complementary roles.

Table 13: Summary of NESTs' and NNESTs' perceived teaching behaviours – teachers' views

Analysis of teachers' responses	
NESTs	NNESTs
Pros	
- Colloquial language/idioms. - Sharing of British/American culture etc. - Pronunciation. - Vocabulary range. - Speaking skills/language accuracy.	- Serve as a successful learning model. - Language learning strategies. - Grammar knowledge and explanation. - Understanding of/dealing with learners' problems/needs. - Understanding L1 interferences. (Functional) speaking skills. - Awareness of students' community schooling. - Able to translate.
Cons	
- May not understand learner difficulties. - May lack grammar awareness (e.g., newly qualified). - May lack knowledge of how to learn English (L2) successfully. - May be considered 'intimidating' for some lower level learners.	- May lack vocabulary depth. - Students may not fully appreciate the teacher's strengths.

• May be over reliant on origin and not prepare thoroughly. • Expensive.	

Table 14: Summary of NESTs' and NNESTs' perceived teaching behaviours – Students' views

Analysis of students' responses	
NESTs	NNESTs
Pros	
• Models different accents. • Force students to use the target language – Teacher would (commonly) not know the students' L1. • Possibly considered 'cool'.	• May explain words and terms better than native speakers (in a way that is understandable). • Clear pronunciation.
Cons	
• May not be understandable/talk too fast. • Sometimes misunderstandings may occur between teachers and students (owing to lack of knowledge of students' culture). • Cannot translate (usually).	• May lack proficiency. • May lack familiarity with modern words/phrases.

Teachers' Perceived Need for Contact with Native Speakers of English

The last main item on the teachers' survey inquired how important it was for NESTs and NNESTs to have regular contact, asking the question: "*How necessary is it for a non-native English speaker to have contact with native English speakers and vice versa*?" Figure 3 reports the results where the teachers rated the choices of Not at all; A little; Somewhat and Very much. These show that overwhelmingly NNESTs saw the need for contact with native speakers of English (90%) compared with only 50% of NESTs. The remaining NNESTs also recognised the need by choosing 'Somewhat'. The remaining NESTs' responses were distributed across the remaining choices with approximately a fifth rating 'Somewhat', thus suggesting half of NESTs did not place a high value on any professional need to have contact with non-native speakers of English.
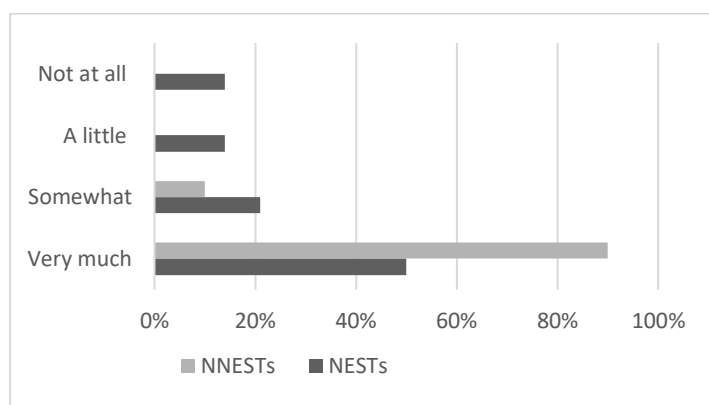

Figure 3: NESTS and NNESTS views to the importance of non-native English speakers having contact with native English speakers and vice versa?

Teachers who devalued the importance of having contact revealed their perceptions of various purposes of international communication. NEST 5 remarked: 'very *useful if one wishes to live in the USA or UK etc.',* while NEST 6 did not recognise the need by arguing: *'world*

Englishes do not require contact'. However, the NNESTs saw it as an opportunity for empowerment through being able to collaborate with peers. With respect to this NNEST 6 commented that:

> '*Nonnative teachers [can] enlarge vocab. on some useful slang, etc., pick up some conversational phrases and learn about British/American culture. (Likewise) Native teachers can consult nonnative teachers regarding some common mistakes their students make (e.g., false friends, etc.) as well as discuss the usage of grammar'*. [NNEST 6].

This raises the issue of the need for language maintenance among NNESTs and increasing cultural experiences but also the importance of professional development for NESTs, who can benefit from contact with non-native speakers of English to keep abreast of the languages' worldwide use/world Englishes, as well as holding pedagogical conversations with their NNEST peers.

CONCLUSION

These findings further support NNESTs and NESTs as equally effective teachers on their own terms. A substantial number of students favoured learning from NESTs and NNESTs alike and respondents reported several perceived advantages and disadvantages, depending on proficiency level and skills being taught. NESTs were often considered as models of pronunciation and having language range and accuracy. Furthermore, NESTs presented an invaluable source for cultural learning. Conversely, shortcomings included lack of understanding of student difficulties and intercultural miscommunications. On the other hand, NNESTs were viewed as successful learning models for EFL students and well-positioned to teach, and to understand and deal with learners' problems. Moreover, ability to translate, and provide grammar instruction, combined with their familiarity with the local context were lauded. However, vocabulary and proficiency range were cited as a possible shortcoming, in addition to the possible underappreciation of other attributes such as translanguaging.

The research, however, focused on stated generalisations of experiences rather than identification of actual individual, teacher behaviours, which needs to be taken into account when interpreting the results. In addressing notions of 'native-speakerisms', although predilection was indicated for NESTs, given the possibility of both NESTs and NNESTs, the percentage was significantly greater. Higher value tended to be attributed to perceived pedagogical talents, training, experience, and attributes related to background origin. In particular, the study supported Medgyes' research findings, and identified the participants' perceived unique and often complementary skillsets they attributed to NESTs and NNESTs.

As the English language forefronts a truly global culture, for many, English is not aligned to solely native speaker interactions. Accordingly, many scholars (Xiaoqiong & Xianxing, 2011) have examined the value of native-speaker models particularly when English is increasingly used in international contexts. Indeed, non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers, and the majority of English teachers worldwide are non-native speakers. In spite of these facts, and according to Liu and Berger (2015), supposed breakdowns of the NEST-NNEST dichotomy, has produced few studies leaving studies such as this on NESTS and NNESTS, specifically, relatively modern.

In 2006, TESOL International Association elected a nonnative English speaker president, Professor Jun Liu of China, for the first time. Liu (2001, p.63) stated success "does not depend on whether [teachers] are native speakers or non-native speakers of English", albeit success arrives through different routes, such that teachers may require different instructional

approaches. Thus, the importance of teacher empowerment and peer collaboration is recommended in pursuit of more effective and rewarding teaching; NESTs and NNESTs may have interdependent skills and competencies and stand together to meet learners' eclectic styles and needs.

In accordance with Medgyes' (2014) research, this paper echoes the ideal EFL institute as one that schools their clientele with a harmonious marriage of NESTs and NNESTs, utilizing and developing symbiotic skills and qualities in pursuit of professional excellence. As he emphasised:

> NESTs and non-NESTs may turn out to be equally good teachers, because their respective strengths and weaknesses balance each other out. Since each group can offer competences of which the other group is short of, the ideal school is one in which there is a good mix of NESTs and non-NESTs, who work in close collaboration with one another (Medgyes, 2014, p. 177).

Numerous forms of collaboration are possible both in and outside the classroom environment, where both NESTs and NNESTs can be used as language consultants, for example, or implementing tandem teaching or translanguaging. An area for further investigation could be a study into complementary skillsets; for instance, examining the relationship between the principles of NESTs/NNESTS teaching tandems and its application and realization in EFL classroom communicative work. Moreover, the study may also serve to advance academic interest in bilingual pedagogies. Bilinguals, particularly NNESTs, capacity to switch between languages may allow employment of a richer variety of methods or approaches in EFL classrooms, of which translanguaging has received considerable scholarly interest in modern times.

REFERENCES

Al Noursi, O. (2013). The effect of native and nonnative English language teachers on secondary students' achievement in speaking skills. *Jordan Journal of Educational Sciences*, *9*(2), 243-254.

Algeo, J., & Acevedo-Butcher, C. (2013). *The origins and development of the English language* (7th. ed.). Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Al-Mutairi, M. A. (2019). Kachru's three concentric circles model of English language: An overview of criticism and the place of Kuwait in it. *English Language Teaching*, *13*(1), 85-88.

Bekes, E., & Carrasco, M. (2017). *Why NNESTs*? Cambridge, UK: Academic Study Kit.

Benke, E., & Medgyes, P. (2005). Differences in teaching behaviour between native and nonnative speaker teachers: As seen by the learners. In Llurda, E. (Ed.), *Nonnative language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession.* (pp. 195-215). New York: Springer.

Burton, J., & Rajendram, S. (2019). Translanguaging-as-Resource: University ESL instructors' language orientations and attitudes toward translanguaging, *TESL Canada Journal*, *36*(1), 21-47. doi.10.18806/tesl.v36i1.1301

Calafato, R. (2019). The non-native speaker teacher as proficient multilingual: A critical review of research from 2009—2018. *Lingua,* 227, 1-25. doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2019.06.001

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching and assessmen*t. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2012). *English as a global language* (2nd. ed.). New York. Cambridge University Press.

Dervic, M., & Bećirović, S. (2019). Native and non-Native EFL teachers dichotomy: Terminological, competitiveness and employment discrimination. *Journal of Language and Education*, *5*(3), 114-127.

Education First. (2020). *EF English proficiency index: A ranking of 100 countries and regions by English skills*. Retrieved from https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/

Firth, I. E. (2018, January). English only: Un problema? *ETp*, *114*, 4-6.

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Gurkan, S., & Yuksel, D. (2012). Evaluating the contributions of native and non-native teachers to an English language teaching program. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 2951-2958.

Holliday, A. (2018) Native-speakerism. In J. I. Liontas (Ed.), *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching*. New Jersey. Wiley-Blackwell.

Huang, Z. (2018). *Native and non-native English speaking teachers in China: Perceptions and practices*. Singapore, Gateway East: Springer Nature and Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press.

Jenkins, J., Cogo, A., & Dewey, M. (2011). Review of developments in research into English as a lingua franca. *Language Teaching*, *44*(3), 281–315. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000115

Kachru, B. B (1992a). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Kachru, B.B (1992b). World Englishes: Approaches, issues, and resources. *Language Teaching*, *25*(1), 1-14. doi: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800006583

Kachru, B. B (2006). English: World Englishes. In K. Brown & S. Ogilvie (Eds.), *Concise encyclopedia of languages of the world* (pp. 363-364). Oxford, UK: Elsevier Ltd.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in ASEAN: A multilingual model*. Hong Kong, China: Hong Kong University Press

Kiczkowiak, M. (2018). *Native speakerism in English language teaching: Voices from Poland.* (Doctoral thesis). University of York, USA.

Kurniawati Kurniawati, K., & Rizki, D. (2018). Native vs. non-native EFL teachers: Who are better? *Studies in English Language and Education*, *5*(1), 137-147.

Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2005). What do students think about the pros and cons of having a native-speaker teacher? In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Nonnative language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 217-242). New York: Springer.

Liu, J. (2001). Confessions of a non-native English-speaking professional, *The CATESOL Journal*, *13*(1), 53-68.

Liu, J., & Berger, C. (2015). *TESOL: A guide*. London, UK: Bloomsbury.

Luk, J. C. M. (2001). Exploring the sociocultural implications of the native English speaker teacher scheme in Hong Kong through the eyes of the students. *Asia Pacific Journal of Language in Education, 4*(2), 19-50.

Lynch, L. (2005). *English only in the EFL classroom: Worth the hassle?* Available at https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Larry_M._Lynch/14967

Mason, A., & Payant, C. (2019). Experienced teachers' beliefs and practices toward communicative approaches in teaching English as a foreign language in rural Ukraine. *Tesol Journal*, *10*(1), 1-15. doi.org/10.1002/tesj.377

Luk, J. (2001). Exploring the socio cultural implications of the Native English- speaker Teacher Scheme in Hong Kong through the eyes of the students. *Asian Pacific Journal of Language in Education*, *4*(2), 19-50.

Martinez Agudo, J. de D. (Ed.). (2017). *Native and non-native teachers in English language classrooms*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.

Medgyes. P. (1992). Native or non-native: Who's worth more? *ELT Journal, 46*(4), 340-349.

Medgyes, P. (2001). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd.ed., pp. 415-428). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Medgyes, P. (2014). The native/non-native conundrum revisited. In J. Horváth & P. Medgyes (Eds.), *Studies in honour of Marianne Nikolov* (pp. 176–185). Pécs, Hungary: Lingua Franca Csoport.

Medgyes, P. (2017a). *The non-native teacher* (3rd. ed.). Callander, Scotland: Swan Communication.

Medgyes, P. (2017b). *Foreword.* In J. de D. Martinez Agudo (Ed.), *Native and non-native teachers in English language classrooms* (pp. ix-xii). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.

Ministry of Education and Science. (2016). *The new Ukrainian school: Conceptual principles of secondary school*. Retrieved from https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/zagalna%20serednya/Book-ENG.pdf

Modiano, M. (1999). International English in the global village. *English Today*, *15*(2), 22-28. doi.org/10.1017/S026607840001083X

Moussu, L. & Llurda, E. (2008). Non-native English-speaking English language teachers: History and research, *Language Teaching*, *41*(3), 315–348.

Oppenheim, A. N. (2005). *Questionnaire design: Interviewing and attitude measurement* (2nd. ed.). London, UK: Continuum.

Phillipson, R. (2013). *Linguistic imperialism continued*. New York: Routledge.

Schmidt, S. (2009). Shall we really do it again? The powerful concept of replication is neglected in the social sciences. *Review of General Psychology*, *13*(2), 90 –100

Subtirelu, N. (2013).What (do) learners want(?): A re-examination of the issue of learner preferences regarding the use of 'native' speaker norms in English language teaching, *Language Awareness*, *22*(3), 270–29. doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2012.713967

Thornbury, S. (2017). *The new A-Z of ELT: A dictionary of terms and concepts*. Oxford, UK: MacMillan.

Vesterinen, S. (2016) *Native and non-native teachers of English according to their students: Finnish university students' point of view.* (Master's Thesis), University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Retrieved from https://jyx.jyu.fi/bitstream/handle/123456789/50119/URN:NBN:fi:jyu-201606062889.pdf?sequence=1

Walkinshaw. I., & Hoang Oanh, D. (2014). Native and non-native English language teachers: Student perceptions in Vietnam and Japan. *Sage Journals*, *4*,1-9. doi:10.1177/2158244014534451

Widdowson. H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *28*(2), 377-388.

Xiaoqiong, B. H., & Jiang Xianxing, J. (2011). Kachru's three concentric circles and English teaching fallacies in EFL and ESL contexts. *Changing English*, *18*(2), 219-228.

doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2011.575254

Yuvayapan, F. (2019). Translanguaging in EFL classrooms: Teachers' perceptions and practices. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *15*(2), 678-694. doi:10.17263/jlls.586811