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Native and Non-native English Language Teachers: Advantages and Disadvantages

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Autor:

Angel Eduardo Carrión Espinosa

CI: 0706627312

Correo electrónico (personal): angel_ce94@hotmail.com

Directora:

Magíster Ana María Calle Calle

CI: 0102305562

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RESUMEN

En este estudio, el análisis de las ventajas y desventajas que los profesores de inglés nativos y no nativos tienen para ofrecer, se centra en dos aspectos respecto a (1) las percepciones que diferentes sujetos tienen hacia cada grupo y (2) las habilidades en el idioma inglés que cada uno es mejor para abordar en el aula de clases. Siendo esta una investigación bibliográfica exploratoria, se seleccionaron dieciséis estudios sobre el tema para comparar la literatura disponible y crear una discusión entre los diferentes hallazgos que cada uno posee. Después de poner todas las opiniones acerca de ambos grupos docentes sobre la mesa, las percepciones comunes se hicieron notables. En todos los casos, las preferencias se inclinan hacia el grupo nativo de maestros. Sin embargo, la probabilidad de tener tal preferencia puede radicar en otros factores además de la natividad. Este estudio no solo se centró en las percepciones, sino también en las habilidades que cada maestro posee para ayudar a los estudiantes a mejorar. Ninguno de los estudios discute las habilidades escritas. A pesar de eso, se menciona la gramática y se considera como una habilidad adicional en este análisis de investigación. Finalmente, este estudio concluye mencionando los puntos clave, así como las limitaciones que pueden afectar los resultados y que vale la pena considerar para futuras investigaciones.

Palabras claves: NESTs, NNESTs, fortalezas, debilidades, percepciones y perspectivas



ABSTRACT

In this study, the analysis of advantages and disadvantages Native and Non-Native English teachers have to offer are focused exclusively on two aspects regarding (1) perceptions different stakeholders have towards each group and (2) the abilities in the English language each teacher is better at addressing within the classroom setting. Being this an exploratory bibliographical research, sixteen studies on the topic were selected to compare the available literature and create a discussion among the different findings each one draws. After stating all the opinions towards both teaching groups, the common perceptions became noticeable. In all cases, preferences leaned towards the Native party of teachers. Nonetheless, the likelihood of having such preference may dwell on other factors apart from nativeness. Not only did this study focus on perceptions, but also on the skills each teacher helps students enhance. None of the studies discusses the written abilities. Notwithstanding that, Grammar is mentioned and was considered as one extra skill in this research analysis. Finally, this paper concludes by mentioning the key points as well as the limitations that may affect results and are worth considering for future research.

Keywords: NESTs, NNESTs, strengths, weaknesses, perceptions, and perspectives.



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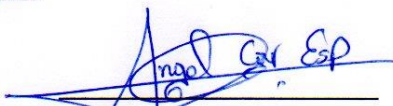
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Angel Eduardo Carrión Espinosa

C.I.: 0706627312



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DEDICATION

Dedicated to God, who gave me the strength to overcome difficult situations I went through. To my family, who have been always there to encourage me to achieve this and every goal so far.

To my best friend María Augusta Gómez, to whom I can always rely on.

Thanks for being there.



INTRODUCTION

Learning English has become a crucial step in every person's professional life, and the way in which it has been taught has changed drastically. From creating different methodologies for suiting everyone's needs to having people certified according to teaching frameworks of references; nowadays, English has become significantly more important than what it used to be. Understandably, English teachers have turned into the main subjects of attention in matters regarding the teaching-and-learning process. Many debates have come into existence in order to establish which one, native English-speaking teachers (henceforth NESTs) or non-native English-speaking teachers (henceforth NNESTs), can better guide learners in the acquisition of English as either a second or foreign language.

Additionally, the globalized and possible misleading thought that only teachers who are native speakers of English are suitable to provide correct and thorough learning experiences for learners in a foreign language brings forward one inquiry. Also, analyzing the different strengths NESTs and NNESTs have to offer to their students and the importance of having more experienced and well-educated people in this field rather than just considering birth backgrounds is relevant for the purposes of this study.



Chapter I

Description of the Research

1.1 Background

The fact that around the world English has become such an important means of communication, and that learning it has now become something compulsory in almost any field, has led me to analyze one of the most important subjects of the learning process – teachers. All over the world public institutions, Ministries of Education, as much as private ones have been giving exclusive job opportunities to teachers who learned English as a first language or since a very early age as Wang (2013) suggested happened in Taiwan. In our context, this discrimination has not been an unfamiliar issue. In fact, it has been noticeable to see that institutions hire exclusively NESTs. In this way, managers have made their institutions more appealing to their customers. One instance of this issue in our country was the governmental program “Time to teach in Ecuador” which showed how this tendency of preferring NESTs has also been happening in our country (Torazos, 2018).

Nonetheless and due to the high demand of English teachers today, setting aside an entire population conformed by non-native English-speaking teachers sounds unreasonable. Here is where the importance of analyzing the different advantages and disadvantages NNESTs have by focusing on how the teachers are perceived as well as the language skills they contribute to improve, comes into existence. Additionally, the necessity of comparing and contrasting those strengths and weaknesses to NESTs’ on such aspects comes up. Studies by Árva and Medgyes (2000), Florence (2012), Kiczkowiak, Baines and Krummenacher (2016), Medgyes (2001), and Pae (2017) have put a special focus on the pros and cons each one has. This demonstrates the importance of highlighting the features that both teaching parties have to offer.



1.2 Statement of the Problem

The way in which learners, managers, and governmental institutions have viewed non-native speakers teaching English has caused a new phenomenon that is evident even around media today as suggested by Wang (2013) in his study. The ‘almighty’ native speaker teacher has in some ways been overestimated to a point where businesses will focus mainly on their applicants’ birth backgrounds or perhaps the number of years they have lived surrounded by the language. It all does not sound that unreasonable as shown by Villalobos (2011), who proved that such common belief is not far from the reality. Indeed, it may be appropriate that students get used to using and decoding language presented in a natural way by someone with a native accent.

In spite of all that, it is not plausible to have only NESTs in institutions since there is a high demand for teachers considering the importance of English nowadays. Furthermore, most English teachers have learned English as a foreign language. Consequently, the inquiry of analyzing the strengths of NNESTs, as Farrell (2015) has detailed it, comes up since this is something that also occurs within our context. Having a better insight into the numerous perceptions and ways of addressing the different language skills which have been studied in regards to learning a new language from NESTs and NNESTs would help us get a wiser opinion of the topic. Also, it would lead us to realize our strengths and weaknesses as non-native speakers teaching English as well as the ones of our counterpart. In this way, it will enable us to work on our flaws as teachers and move forward in our professional lives.



1.3 Justification

Research around the topic of native and non-native English teachers has been led throughout the last decades. Some studies such as Farrell (2015) in which the author tries to look for an answer to the inquiry of what the best way of teaching English is as well as who plays a better role in the classroom environment (NESTs or NNESTs). Nonetheless, answering to such subjective questions may sound implausible since there are loads of aspects to be considered within the learning process. Studies, similar to that one, have left us with more questions than answers. Apart from that, some other pieces of research place important attention on the opinions different stakeholders have towards each of the groups. Some instances of this are the studies conducted by Agudo and Robinson (2014); Árvá and Medgyes (2000); Farrell (2015); Florence (2012); Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002); Levis, Sonsaat, Link, and Barriuso (2016); Llurda (2005); Medgyes (2001); Pae (2017); Villalobos (2011); Walkinshaw and Duong (2012); Tajeddin and Adeh (2016); and Wang (2013). Such list of studies is considered for the analysis of different perceptions in this research. In spite of that, a great body of research has been trying to put these two populations of English teacher in a much fairer position in which birth backgrounds are last to be considered when analyzing pros and cons tutors have. Being that the case, the importance of directing the attention of the present exploratory research towards the advantages and drawbacks of these two groups of teachers by considering the nativeness factor arises. This is due to the fact that recent research has located its attention towards the shortcomings and advantages each teacher presents.

Furthermore, being a trainee in English teaching and surrounding myself with proficient users of the language that are not native speakers makes me realize that the capabilities are not exclusively up to a person's birth background. Important mentioning as well is that the different



frameworks created for English teaching available now have started to give international recognition to teachers who are not native in the target language. Hence, the niche of analyzing the pros and cons that NESTs and NNESTs have by breaking down the list of studies in order to find common perspectives and ways of teaching each skill is brought into existence. Most of all, a possible area of study for further research in the future would be analyzing how competent NNESTs in our context are compared to NESTs. Hence, the following research questions will guide this research analysis.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Which are the most common perceptions of teachers and students regarding NESTs and NNESTs?
2. Which language skills can NESTs and NNESTs help EFL students develop and how are they addressed by those two?



Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This research seeks analyzing the pros and cons of NESTs and NNESTs by focusing on the perceptions and the way in which each teacher approaches the different English language skills. For that reason, some terms, which are of vital relevance in the subject matter, need to be defined.

2.2 World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

The concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has caught the attention of many researchers. One of those is Jenkins (2007, 2015), who divided this concept into three different phases. The first stage took place in the 1980s. At this point, the term English as a Lingua Franca had not been in use whatsoever. Instead, exclusively the term World Englishes had been already coined. In the second stage, the considerations of English as a Lingua Franca were evident and theorized as the use of English as a communicative means choice by a speaker whose first language was not English became common. In this stage, Jenkins started to mention some features of language accommodation such as negotiation of meaning as well as the intrapersonal dynamics of the interaction when using a foreign language. Finally, in the last stage, she mentioned a different approach to the conception of ELF. One that is currently recognized universally – a language used for communicative purposes among speakers whose mother tongues are different. The establishment of this mentioned conception has ended up in the creation of many Englishes around the world.



With so many Englishes nowadays, the concept of Standard English has become vital. Honey (1997) argued that standard English was a variety of language that shows how educated a speaker is. This claim suggests that many native speakers do not make use of a standard type of language. Another interesting study that placed emphasis on the current status of English highlights that English has been established as an international language due to the fact that its use today, especially in the context where non-native speakers use it to communicate, is something more common (Llurda, 2004). Furthermore, this researcher claimed that in spite of the fact that English was gradually becoming a Lingua Franca, one cannot talk of English as a Universal language and there is still a long path to go through before reaching that point. Based on the revised literature, however, the concepts of English as an International Language (EIL) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) are suitable to address this language according to this previously mentioned researcher.

2.3 Defining nativeness

Medgyes (2001) defined a native speaker as someone who has learned English as his or her first language, also known as the mother tongue. In an earlier study he also analyzed the inquiry of what being a native speaker of English was. He deepened into the perspective sociolinguistics had towards this topic. It defined being a native speaker as something debatable since many countries like India are not considered by some as native speakers of English. That is because there, English is a second language officially used in educational contexts. Furthermore, he posed that as far as the field of English language teaching (ELT) was concerned these concepts of “nativeness” were not relevant and they could not be based strictly on nationalistic views (Medgyes, 1992).



In a different study, Cook (2012) presented nativeness as a combination of several features such as the subconscious knowledge a person must have of the rules and the ability to use the language in a fluent way. She also suggested that learning English in a native-like way seemed to be an unattainable goal since every country had numerous dialects of the language: learning a standard form of English seemed to be more plausible.

2.4 Native speakerism

The term *native speakerism* has gained importance within the field of ELT. There lays its relevance to the present research project. Adrian Holliday, the scholar who coined this term, has defined it as characterized for having a pejorative connotation. In his work, Holliday (2006) stated that *native speakerism* has settled many paradigms in aspects such as professional life, employment policies, and teaching-learning techniques where the “native” speakers who teach their mother tongue have been placed in a superior locus. In more up-to-date research, Holliday (2015) took the concept a little bit forward and led it towards creating a cultural belief. He mentioned that the concept of *native speakerism* damaged the English Language Teaching field and at the same time created a dichotomy between being a native and non-native English speaker teaching the language. It put non-native teachers not only as lacking mastery in the language, but it also created a disbelief that left NNESTs as individuals whose contribution of the comprehension of the cultural aspects English speakers had, were limited.

2.5 The NESTs and NNESTs Debate

It has been stated by many different researchers that being a NEST or a NNEST has its implications. An instance of such claim could be seen in Medgyes (1994) whose book, “*The Non-native Teacher*”, pointed out that being identified as either a native or non-native teacher



has recently (over 20 years ago) become a very controversial topic to touch on, and to certain degree, it has caused more than a headache to professionals in this subject matter. As showcased by this author, NESTs might feel as though they lack knowledge on fields related to language learning processes or they ignored certain features of the grammar, whereas NNESTs would always feel a big gap between them and the mastery of English in a native-like way. The latter has made non- native teachers feel incapable of competing against native ones.

A similar outlook has been given by Florence (2012) in his study, where he concluded that indeed both sides of the English language teaching presented some strengths and weaknesses. On the one hand, NESTs were said to be more linguistically strong, but they presented a lower ability when it came to pedagogical strategies since they could not directly understand the constant struggle that involves going through learning English as a foreign language. On the other hand, NNESTs were thought to have a more numerous quantities of pedagogical strategies with them, despite the fact that they always faced several linguistic problems, such as unnatural accents, stress patterns, and wrong word choices. Those, among other issues, are faced by teachers around the world, and this study will give a special focus on some more.

2.6 NESTs' and NNESTs' teaching behaviors

NESTs are considered to provide a better pronunciation, and language accuracy in the EFL classroom, as Agudo and Robinson (2014) suggested. This is what makes students of English think that native teachers are more suitable in providing a better learning experience when compared to their counterparts. Another common behavior relevant inside the classroom setting is related to oral corrective feedback (OCF) and the way it is addressed by making use of different approaches by native and nonnative English-speaking teachers. Surprisingly, NESTs



employ proportionally more recasts, meaning correcting pronunciation or grammatical matters by restructuring and saying what is correct, whereas NNESTs are more likely to use prompts to encourage students to find out about their own mistakes (Demir & Özmer, 2017). Such researched aspects show partly some of the differences in teaching behaviors existing in both types of teachers.

2.7 Frameworks of teaching and from which they came into existence

There is an extensive background when it comes to talking about certifications for English teaching. As Borg (2005) mentioned in his case study, the CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) course was one of the most recognized certificates in the ELT field. He also provided an introduction and the origins from which this certificate came into existence. It was traced back up to 1962 time during which the purpose of founders of the International House was to offer their staff training in teaching techniques, as mentioned in Haycraft (1988, 1998). Borg (2005), in his study, also stated that the first courses for English teaching placed an important emphasis on theoretical aspects of education and the practical knowledge was rather tuned out. After that, professionals of the ELT area have been offered a variety of courses. Nowadays, certificates and diplomas like the CELTA or DELTA, which are offered for NESTs and NNESTs with a proficient level of English are worldwide accepted and in many cases are more recognized and valued than an extensive undergraduate degree as pointed out by Kiczkowiak, Baines, and Krummenacher (2016). This gives more reliability to NESTs and NNESTs since they have to be capable of showing a vast knowledge of the language as well as their teaching abilities, placing these two parties in a much fairer spot.



Chapter III

Literature Review

The topics which have already been discussed previously in the Theoretical Framework will now be broadened and illustrated by making use of some empirical studies in each subject matter. The first group of studies will deal with the status of being a native or nonnative English-speaking teacher and its effects. Then, aspects regarding the relevance English has nowadays in our globalized society, will be brought about. Likewise, empirical studies on the World Englishes as well as the teaching implications NESTs and NNESTs face in a classroom setting will be analyzed in more detail.

3.1 Nativeness

Aneja (2016), in her qualitative-designed study carried out with a graduate group of four pre-service teachers, dealt with the different subjectivities and archetypes in nativeness. By making use of recordings, observational field notes, and semi-structured interviews, the author concluded that every iteration of *native speakerism* creates in the social imagination subjectivities which will be taken as a bedrock of the future teaching processes and teacher-students' interaction.

In another study, Walkinshaw and Duong (2012) contextualized the issue of being a NESTs in Vietnam. The researchers tried to have some insights into whether being a NNESTs was valuable for students in his country or not. In order to find out this, they utilized a framework that included the attributes desirable in an English language teacher, “a [...] survey that employed bipolar semantic differential scales, and an open-ended self-report questionnaire”



(p.5). These instruments were applied to 50 participants and helped the author conclude that students considered that experience and enthusiastic teachers make their lectures more informative and meaningful. Hence, nativeness did not play such a major role for them. Additionally, he stated that there was a false premise that NESTs were employed instead of non-NESTs just because of customers' requests (Walkinshaw & Duong, 2012). As a consequence of these archetypes around the language teaching field, both NESTs and NNESTs have had to face different implications in their teaching.

3.2 Students' Motivation towards their Teachers

The first implication that teachers have to tackle has to do with students' attitudes and motivation toward learning English. In a study carried out in Asia by Pae (2017) with a total of 39 teachers (23 Korean and 16 NESTs) and the large number of 747 students (been women the majority of them) as participants, the researcher employed a questionnaire developed by using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). This instrument attempted to find out about students' motivation towards their language teachers. He found that learners that were taught by NESTs had stronger extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to learn English, more positive attitudes toward learning English, stronger desires and intentions to study English, and more powerful motivational intensity than those learning from Korean teachers (NNESTs). It is worth mentioning that there were two different groups of students that took part in the study: students from a Conversation class and some others from a Practical English class whose answers in the surveys were varied depending on the type of class. One thing about this study was evident and consistent; the fact that NESTs helped students to foster significantly



more favorable attitudes towards learning English and stronger intentions to study English than Korean teachers of English – NNESTs.

3.3 Perceptions towards NNESTs and NESTs

Agudo and Robinson (2014) posed the inquiry of what the EFL student teachers' perceptions and preferences for both NESTs and NNESTs were. By making use of a Likert-scale and a closed-ended questionnaire that were applied to 37 students in a pre-service teacher education program in Spain, they concluded three main things. The first one was a general preference for the native teacher. A result that could have been backed up since all the participants at some point in their educational path had been taught by native speakers of English. In spite of that, a high percentage of undecided responses was also evident in the study. Finally, by analyzing the data obtained from the questionnaire, it was determined that student teachers' preferences were undoubtedly prompted by their past classroom learning experiences with NNESTs. Thus, this bias result may have been caused by students' experiences with NNESTs rather than with actual and fair perceptions. Because of that, the researcher suggested having a more significant group of participants in future studies as well as more instruments to compile and analyze data.

Another piece of research was conducted by Wang (2013). In this research, a close-ended questionnaire, and interviews carried in the mother tongue were applied to 260 English language students from departments at five universities in different parts of Taiwan. He concluded that it was beneficial to English learners if Taiwanese English teachers teach English together with NESTs in the classrooms. In the interview, participants discussed their concerns about team teaching with NESTs, among which the most frequently mentioned concern was NESTs'



dominance and NNESTs' marginalization in the classrooms. Furthermore, since in Asian countries like Taiwan, some policies allowed easy recruitment of NESTs in the professional workforce, students showed they were concerned about this and claimed that it would be better and fairer to consider personal key qualifications over considering nativeness.

3.4 Self-perceptions and characteristics of NESTs and NNESTs

Apart from focusing only on the preferences and perceptions students have over their teacher, many researchers have placed their attention on one of the most important subjects – the teachers themselves. After applying surveys and interviews with a group of 17 nonnative speakers of English that were pursuing MA or Ph.D. in TESOL in the States, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) claimed that it was easy to identify a common insight regarding NESTs and NNESTs. The native teachers, on the one hand, were perceived as more fluent and having greater control of the language to make it flexible and natural to use. Nonnative English teachers, on the other hand, were seen as more sensitive when understanding students' learning struggles and difficulties as well as more text-centered and being more likely to contrast the L1 (first language) to the language being taught (in this case English).

Similarly, Villalobos (2011) applied an online survey to 113 teachers, 65 NESTs and 48 NNESTs working in ESL and EFL settings; the common belief that native speakers of English make language learning better was shown. Such a result, however, was taken only as a matter of perception, so the author concluded that recognizing the strengths of both NESTs and NNESTs in ESL and EFL settings must be considered for future research.



3.5 NNESTs' and NESTs' teaching behaviors

An empirical study carried on by Demir and Özmen (2017) was conducted with a group of 7 NESTs and 7 NNESTs who were observed over a period of 6 weeks. The observed teachers were teaching 20 tertiary-level EFL classrooms at one private and two state universities in Turkey. The students' proficiency level was A2. Class sizes varied from 16 to 25 students. By making use of observational field notes, transcribed recordings, and follow-up interviews, the researchers were able to draw up as conclusions that one of the most common cases in which learners are given feedback is when they commit phonological, grammatical, and lexical errors. Furthermore, they determined that the NNESTs corrected their learners' errors at a higher percentage than the NESTs. Finally, classroom observational data showed recast to be the most frequently resorted pedagogical intervention by NNESTs and NESTs for every type of error, and that these latter ones make use of recasting as a way of correcting mistakes more frequently.



Chapter IV

Methodology

For this exploratory bibliographic research which consists of looking for literature available in certain topics to determine what future niches of investigation are left to be studied, bibliographical and empirical studies that fell into any of the following criteria were chosen. Such criteria contain Native and non-native English-speaking teachers who teach English as a foreign or second language; perspectives, perceptions, and viewpoints of students, other teachers, and governmental institutions towards NESTs and NNESTs as well as self-perceptions; comparisons between NESTs and NNESTs regarding teaching techniques and methodologies and their effectiveness.

Also, the studies selected contained as mandatory fields: the fact that they were carried out during the last 20 years since English has been treated differently during these last years. Therefore, studies that came out during the previously mentioned period of time were given more attention. Nonetheless, some studies that have been relevant within this subject matter and were published before the stated time limits were also considered. Another mandatory field is that in the studies, the participants had to be only teenagers and adults. Finally, studies only written in English were accepted. It is worth mentioning that the selected empirical studies had a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approach. The searching engines used to collect the studies were: Google Scholar, BASE, ScienceDirect, WileyOnlineLibrary, and OxfordAcademic. After considering all these selection criteria, 16 studies were compiled for this analysis.

Finally, since it was not necessary, data was not taken from research that had other languages as the object of study, but if needed, some information taken from such studies could



be considered but not in the analysis. It will be compulsory to have a bearing on the previously listed selection criteria. (See Table 1).



Chapter V

Results

5.1 Analysis of the Results

In order to present in a more organized way the list of studies that are used in the exploratory bibliographic research, a chart is presented below. It contains the author's name as well as the date of each paper and four broad categories with their corresponding subcategories. This will allow us to have a clear idea of the topics that can be found in each of the papers, and thus, make the interpretation of the analysis easier.



Table 1

List of studies, topics, and subtopics covered in each of them

Author	Perceptions or perspectives				Teaching behaviors		Pros and Cons		Skills			
	Pupils	Each other	Self	Other	NESTs	NNESTs	Students motivation	Pros and cons	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Agudo & Robinson (2014)	X				X	X						
Árva & Medgyes (2000)		X			X	X	X	X	X			
Demir & Özmen (2017)					X	X						
Farrell (2015)				X								
Florence (2012)	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		
Kiczkowiak, Baines & Krummenacher, (2016)								X				
Kim (2009)					X	X			X			
Lasagabaster & Sierra (2002)	X											
Levis, Sonsaat, Link & Barriuso (2016)	X								X		X	
Llurda (2005)				X								
Medgyes (2001)	X				X	X		X				
Pae (2017)	X						X		X			
Tajeddin & Adeh (2016)		X	X					X				
Villalobos (2011)	X	X	X									
Walkinshaw & Duong (2012)	X											
Wang (2013)		X		X								
Total of topics and subtopics	8	5	3	3	5	5	3	4	5	1	1	0

N = 16



As can be seen in Table 1, most of the papers on NESTs and NNESTs focus their attention on the perceptions towards these two parties. The second most analyzed topic has to do with the behaviors teachers have in the workplace. The third most broken up aspects are the pros and cons of each group of teachers. These two categories will be useful to add more information to answer the first question stated in this study since very few articles focus their attention on the skills each group of teachers helps students develop.

5.1.1 Which are the most common perceptions of teachers and students regarding NESTs and NNESTs?

In order to provide an answer to the first question of this research paper, the tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 provide the number of studies that deal with the topic of perceptions, analyzed from the different stakeholders' viewpoints. The total number of studies that focus on perceptions is 13. It is important to mention at this point that as it is evident in Table 1, some studies deal with more than just one topic.

5.1.1.1 Students' perceptions

Table 2

Students' perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs

	Negative perception	Positive perception	Neutral perception
NESTs	2	5	3
NNESTs	4	2	7

N = 8

In eight of the papers analyzed in this exploratory research, the perceptions of the students could be found. It is easy to notice that the students, who were participants in the different pieces of research, show in the majority of them a positive outlook towards native



teachers. Agudo and Robinson concluded that students think that NESTs are able to provide better language learning results (2014). Additionally, native teachers are perceived by students as showing up to their classes readier to teach and have with them more innovative, and in general, better teaching strategies that are not limited to a textbook (Florence, 2012; Medgyes, 2001; Pae, 2017), being this something that increases motivation and improves the attitude students have towards the English language. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002) concluded that students' positive perceptions and preferences towards NESTs increase as levels of education advance, and these preferences are the result of the knowledge NESTs own in the four skills and in terms of vocabulary and cultural information.

On the other hand, NNESTs are perceived in a negative way by students as four studies suggest. One of the reasons that explain why this happens is given by Agudo and Robinson (2014) who conclude that the students considered NNESTs as only being ready to teach beginner classes since the results their students have are not satisfactory in long-term periods. Some other reasons are that pupils consider NNESTs as having a type of traditional pedagogical instruments and whose teaching techniques are book-centered as well as exam-oriented (Florence, 2012; Medgyes, 2001; Pae, 2016). In one of the studies in particular carried out by Florence (2012), he concludes that students feel less encouraged to use English in the class since having their NNESTs speaking in their L1 leads students to think that the language is not really necessary and complicated overall. Not everything is negative for NNESTs though. In some studies, students mention that they feel glad of having NNESTs in front of them since they can easily understand and anticipate problems students may come across with and they can serve as excellent role-models in the language learning path as long as their instructors are proficient users of English (Villalobos, 2011).

**5.1.1.2 NESTs' and NNESTs' perceptions about each other**

Table 3

NESTs and NNESTs perceptions towards each other

	Negative perception	Positive perception	Neutral perception
NESTs	3	2	1
NNESTs	2	2	1

N = 5

The next common perspective is related to how teachers analyze their counterparts. Opinions in this area are divided since both are considered to have advantages and disadvantages as a result of their nativeness statuses. Villalobos (2011) poses the idea of both parts as having advantageous techniques for students. Likewise, this researcher states that the nativeness factor is not what teachers consider as determining as how well the classes and contents are delivered to students. In spite of this, their strengths and weaknesses are highlighted by one another in some other pieces of research. NESTs, on the first side, are rewarded to provide students with better, more precise, and more authentic English as well as being more tolerant towards students' mistakes and errors. They are also helpful because listening skills are picked up in a faster way by their students (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Florence, 2012; Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016).

Notwithstanding, some negative perceptions can also be found in the available literature. In Wang (2013), the researcher concluded that the majority of NNESTs perceive native teachers as being unqualified for the job, and the only aspect considered when they are employed is their birth background as a consequence of governmental decisions. Other drawbacks NESTs are tagged with are discussed in Árva and Medgyes (2000), Florence (2012); Tajeddin and Adeh



(2016). These researchers found that NESTs are seen by their colleagues as having a more relaxed attitude towards students' work, grading, and formal educational requirements.

On the other side, native teachers also have some opinions on NNESTs. First off, Florence (2012) concluded that native teachers see NNESTs as more sympathetic with the students' needs and that communication is more constant with their student (making use of the L1 though). Furthermore, Tajeddin and Adeh (2016) concluded that this group of teachers is better at explaining grammatical content from the point of view of their counterparty. As for the negative aspects they perceive, non-native teachers are pointed out as not having the right language proficiency and the deficiencies in phonological features - pronunciation (Florence, 2012).

5.1.1.3 Self-perceptions and other perceptions

Table 4

NESTs and NNESTs self-perceptions

	Negative perception	Positive perception	Neutral perception
NESTs	0	1	0
NNESTs	2	0	0

N = 3

Not many studies touch on this topic; in spite of that, the ones that analyze these important perceptions deliver really startling results. Native teachers see themselves as being definitely preferred by students when it comes to learning a language unlike NNESTs, who consider and highlight their flaws in the analyzed studies. For instance, in Florence (2012) the self-reported problems NNESTs pointed are related to their almost unavoidable local accents, and their lack of fluency and confidence when using the language especially under pressure.



Another negative self-perception of non-native teachers is the fear they have at the workplace. Aspects such as being judged by their students and the presence of self-awareness when using English are reported (Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016).

Table 5

Other stakeholders' perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs

	Negative perception	Positive perception	Neutral perception
NESTs	1	2	1
NNESTs	2	1	1

N = 3

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that other perceptions are also given emphasis in some papers, but probably the most relevant one is presented in Wang (2013). This researcher inquires pre-service teachers to comment on the governmental decision of having local teachers coteach with native ones. It is posed in the research that the Government has an opinion of NESTs as being superior to NNESTs despite their lack of qualifications. Something highly criticized by the participants of the study since there has been evidence of these programs to generate marginalization towards NNESTs because native teachers would look down on their counterparts.

Following information which attempts to answer the second question of this study is provided.



5.1.2 Which language skills can NESTs and NNESTs help EFL students develop and how are they addressed by those two?

Table 6

Language skills that NESTs and NNESTs can help EFL students develop

Teachers	Skills	Number of studies
NESTs		5
	Speaking	5
	Listening	1
	Reading	0
	Writing	0
	Grammar	0
NNESTs		2
	Speaking	2
	Listening	0
	Reading	1
	Writing	0
	Grammar	2

N= 5

Note 1: Even though grammar is not considered a skill of the English language, it is included in this table since two studies highlight the way in which one group of teachers addresses it and how it can be beneficial for students.

Note 2: Florence (2012) in his study refers to both listening and speaking regarding NESTs. As for NNESTs, the researcher addresses speaking and grammar. In the same way, Levis, Sonsaat, Link, and Barriuso (2016) discuss both skills speaking, reading, and grammar.

5.1.2.1 Language skills and NESTs

Five of the studies selected in this research talk about how teachers help students develop speaking skills. In three of them, it is placed special value on how NESTs are better at provoking this skill to improve. Arva and Medgyes (2000) and Florence (2012) highlighted how native



teachers present language to their students in a more natural and authentic way, and because of this, students improve in a faster way their conversational skills. Nevertheless, the latter researcher also concludes that having a native teacher leading a beginner's class may end up in inadequate communication since pupils with low levels of English lack the knowledge of vocabulary to comprehend basic ideas. In addition, native teachers are proved to be capable of assessing spoken language production in a thorough way, and therefore, provide better feedback on this skill (Kim, 2009). Another language skill NESTs are better at addressing is listening. Florence (2012) suggests that native teachers help students to acquire listening abilities in a faster way. In some cases, this is done unintentionally, but the fact of presenting students natural and authentic samples of English daily helps students advance faster in the mastery of this language skill.

5.1.2.2 Language skills and NNESTs

On the contrary, NNESTs are also mentioned in some studies in matters of language skills development. Levis, Sonsaat, Link, and Barriuso mention in their study that teachers may be better at teaching reading abilities and printed material in general (2016). This, however, is a conclusion based only on the opinions and preferences students have towards local and non-native teachers of English. An interesting fact that could not be left out is that two of the studies used in this research analysis mention how well NNESTs present grammatical content. Whether being the clear explanations or the techniques used to make students understand this important aspect of the language, non-native teachers have been proved to be readier and more prepared to solve questions and anticipate problems regarding this aspect (Florence, 2012; Levis, Sonsaat, Link, & Barriuso, 2016).



In two further studies by Farrell (2015), and Levis, Sonsaat, Link, and Barriuso (2016), it is concluded that the nativeness factor does not play an important role in teaching speaking to students. Provided that the teachers that are non-native have proficient use of the language per se, they will be equally good at teacher pronunciation patterns as well as right speech production.



Chapter VI

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

Many things have been said towards NESTs and NNESTs. An important element is related to the birth place of teachers, but it could not and should not be taken as a crucial factor when criticizing the effectiveness of teaching. In fact, there are more aspects worth considering such as the qualification, teaching experience, degrees, and the mastery of language each teacher possesses. We have to keep in mind that in today's globalized world, English has become a must-learn language and the possibility of having only native teachers giving lessons is not feasible. Additionally, many non-native teachers have developed their abilities in the language that their proficiency and fluency enable them to produce native-like language in the class. Regardless where these teachers were born, each of the subjects analyzed in this study is equipped with some advantages and disadvantages in the classroom setting which help students develop their abilities in the language, but a great deal of the learning process is up to the students and the effort they put in every given task.

The concepts of perfect teacher and teaching are far from being stated. What is closer to reality is defining and posing a concept of ideal teacher which is the professional that has the knowledge in all language skills as well as the personality and readiness to be a teacher (Villalobos, 2011). Being labeled as native and non-native has brought into existence a problematic cause of discrimination of what today represents 80% of the English teachers as it is mentioned in the concept of *native speakerism*. Thus, instead of emphasizing their weaknesses, something that has hindered the overcoming of segregation against non-native teachers, we ought to focus on the strengths of both native and non-native teachers and think of ways of



cooperating with each other in order to achieve better results in the language learning field. Also, it will be important to consider characteristics that involve being an effective teacher. From that perspective, both native and non-native teachers can overcome their weaknesses.

6.2 Recommendations, Limitations and Future areas to be studied

In the studies analyzed in this paper, not all the skills are discussed or reported as being approached in a better way by the two groups of teachers presented in this exploratory analysis. Another aspect that might be considered as a potential limitation is that none of the studies were carried out in the context of South America let alone our country. If this was not like that, the results could have been different or shown some different tendencies. Therefore, carrying out empirical studies in our context would leave us having a better insight into the perceptions and behaviors teachers have inside the classroom.

Apart from that, in very few studies the self-perceptions were brought up. It might be suitable to have more research that focuses their attention on this aspect since teachers are the best to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. In this way, a future area to be studied would be ways to overcome self-perceived hindrances both groups deal with, and at the same time, tackle with conceptions that have ended up in discriminatory behaviors in the work force as well as in the English language teaching field in general.



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