

Examining Student Perspectives on the Differences between Native and Non-native Language Teachers

Enchong Liaw

Chung Yuan Christian University, Taiwan

This study investigates Taiwanese university student attitudes toward native English speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) and examines the fallacy of native speaking from a student perspective. In total, 206 university students from Northern Taiwan responded to the questionnaire. The results suggest that (a) language skills, (b) purposes, and (c) levels of learning affect student selection of language teachers. More important, NNESTs were believed to be better at various aspects of learning, especially test preparation. This study examines NESTs and NNESTs from a student perspective and reminds English educators and parents that they should re-examine the role and influence of NESTs, especially in English as a foreign language contexts.

Key words: native speakers, non-native English speaking teachers, EFL, university students

INTRODUCTION

Studies have examined how native and non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) perceive their differences in teaching English (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2006; Reves & Medgyes, 1994). Limited research has focused on language students, for whom passing English

proficiency tests is their ultimate goal, and native English speakers who are favored with little consideration for qualifications. An investigation into such groups of English learners would assist in clarifying whether native English speakers are better English teachers. This is important to parents, administrators, and language learners. This study examines language student perspectives in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context to determine whether (as commonly believed by parents) language learners consider native speaking crucial in EFL teachers.

Foreign English teachers appear more frequently in English classrooms at different ages and levels in Taiwan. This phenomenon indicates the increasing influence of this group of teachers in Taiwanese English education. With various cultural and educational backgrounds, these English teachers provide a learning environment and atmosphere that is different from those of local English teachers who share a linguistic and cultural background with students. For Taiwanese students, the chances of interacting with teachers from diverse social and cultural backgrounds increase, and more potential challenges emerge.

Based on the number of remote schools, ratio of qualified teachers required, and number of schools in each city, the Taiwanese Ministry of Education has recruited and sent hundreds of native English speaking teachers (NESTs) from the United States, Canada, England, and Australia to Taiwanese cities. The recruited foreign teachers are paid double or even more than local teachers who have similar or higher qualifications. Additionally, families of foreign teachers are provided benefits such as living expenses and are well looked after during their stay in Taiwan (Jiang, 2003). This policy creates heavy financial burdens on central and local governments. The practice also stimulates heated debate on the differences between local and foreign teachers and what they contribute to student learning.

This study examines Taiwanese college student attitudes toward NESTs and NNESTs. Although several studies have examined student attitudes toward NESTs (Moussu, 2010; Pacek, 2005), few have investigated the effect of NESTs in a context where passing language proficiency exams is believed

to be crucial for determining future career success. These types of students participated in this study to compare local (NNESTs) and foreign (NESTs) English teachers on aspects of differences reported in previous studies. Student opinions could help further evaluate the pedagogical effect of foreign English teachers and their contribution to the teaching force, especially when passing English proficiency exams is considered crucial. Additionally, student opinions on the differences between native and non-native speaking teachers provides valuable information on the effectiveness of hiring native speaking teachers in a context where certification in different international English proficiency tests is believed to be crucial for future careers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Myth in Language Learning

“One thing that we do when we recruit is that we tell students that they will only be taught by [native speakers]. After all, these students do not come so far to be taught by someone who doesn’t speak English” (Thomas, 1999, p. 6).

This statement accurately describes the hiring policy in numerous English as a second language (ESL) and EFL institutions. This reflects the mentality that only native speakers are good language teachers. Two issues also emerge from this statement, the definition of native and the existence of native speakers.

Although some scholars have identified native speaker intuition as an element that ensures the pedagogically superior status of native speakers (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2006; Medgyes, 1994), other scholars have considered native speaking as one of many elements in language teaching. When discussing the role of native speaker intuition in developing pragmatic competence in classrooms, Rose (1997) raised several concerns on the primary reliance on native speaker intuition when creating language-teaching materials.

Cook (1999) identified the “comparative fallacy” observed in many second language acquisition studies that language learner language use is compared with native speaker language use and “success and failure are associated with the phrase native speaker” (p. 189). Cook urged language educators to acknowledge the significance of language learners’ first language. He suggested that “[second language] users have to be looked at in their own right as genuine [second language] users, not as imitation native speakers” (p. 195). The notion of using native speakers as references to determine the proficiency of language learners ignores the creative nature of communication and limits second language learner linguistic inputs to the language use of native speakers.

Nevertheless, the belief that NESTs are essential to good language learning prevails in many EFL countries. Without careful examination, parents and school administrators perceive NESTs, especially with Caucasian appearances, as more qualified and efficient language teachers than local NNESTs. Many parents do not want their children taught by foreign teachers who do not look like foreigners or who appear to be of Chinese heritage (Shao, 2005). Some ESL students assume that only White people can be English native speakers and only native speakers know “real” and “proper” English (Amin, 1999). However, few studies have investigated whether these assumptions hold true when passing English exams is essential (as is the case in most EFL contexts).

The debate on what constitutes a good language teacher inevitably relates to the issue of NNEST qualifications. The native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992), referring to the reverence for native speakers in various aspects of language learning, implies that NNESTs have less effective pedagogical and linguistic knowledge. Despite the confidence in and favoring of native English speakers, research shows that NESTs face challenges in EFL contexts. For example, Su (1998) researched children’s English education in Taiwan and identified the faith present in the Direct Method used to create a bilingual environment in Taiwanese English language teaching. The belief that NESTs are better and more qualified to be Direct Method teachers stems from parent and school misunderstandings of the core of children’s English teaching. Su

concluded that native proficiency does not guarantee that a teacher is a language teaching professional. Furthermore, NESTs are not proficient at teaching elementary school students and do not share the cultural background of their students.

Differences between NESTs and NNESTs

The less desirable image of non-native speaking teachers has encouraged research on the differences between native and non-native speaking language teachers, especially in the field of English language teaching. In an international survey on English-speaking EFL or ESL teachers (Reves & Medgyes, 1994), three areas of teaching behaviors were explored: use of English, general teaching approach, and specific language teaching approach. Non-native English teachers reported a lack of fluency and accuracy in their oral proficiency and that they struggled with the appropriate use of English. They also had limited knowledge of context and tended to teach an unfamiliar language in context-poor environments or in isolation. By contrast, native teachers taught language in more creative and authentic contexts, while using more effective and innovative teaching techniques.

In the study, English ability, especially oral proficiency, affected the self-evaluation of the non-native ESL or EFL teachers. Teachers with poor self-evaluations taught in environments where the opportunity to use English was limited. By contrast, teachers with higher self-evaluations had more experience living in English-speaking countries and taught better. Other studies have also observed the effects of English proficiency (Chacon, 2002; Shin, 2001). These studies have demonstrated the effects of language proficiency on teacher efficacy and teaching methodology. Language teachers with higher levels of language proficiency used more interactive and communication-orientated activities in classrooms.

A study on non-native EFL professional perceptions of native and non-native issues showed that native-speaking teachers used authentic English in interacting with students, used different techniques and methods,

and emphasized communication rather than exam preparation (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Non-native speaking teachers were aware of the psychological aspects of learning, were more efficient at teaching, and emphasized exam preparation.

Arva and Medgyes (2000) investigated the differences between native and non-native teachers in three aspects of teaching: use of English, general attitude, and attitude to teaching the language. With a superior command of English, native English-speaking teachers tended to set fewer tests and homework and preferred free activities, such as group work, and more flexible approaches using various material. By contrast, their non-native counterparts preferred more controlled activities, such as translation exercises or drills, and used a more guided approach requiring a textbook and more homework. Native teachers were perceived as less committed to teaching and less empathic to student learning, whereas non-native teachers were more cautious and strict and had more realistic expectations of student learning. Native teachers tended to emphasize elements such as fluency, oral skills, or colloquial register, whereas non-native teachers focused more on accuracy, grammar rules, or formal register.

These studies clearly indicate the strengths and weaknesses of language teachers at either ends of the native language continuum. However, regardless of the differences found, these studies examined teachers' perspectives. Some studies have examined student perceptions on such issues (Cheung, 2007) and identified several factors that could affect student perceptions toward their non-native speaking teachers (Fox, 1992; Moussu, 2010). Not enough research has been conducted in contexts where passing English exams is crucial for future careers. Manboob (2004) concluded that students praise and criticize native and non-native English teachers for different reasons. Native English speaking teachers are favored for their cultural knowledge and oral skills, but are criticized for their poor grammar and knowledge of student learning. Non-native speaking English teachers are preferred for their structural grammar lessons and empathy for student learning difficulties, but criticized for their poor oral skills and cultural knowledge.

In addition, student perceptions do not necessarily reflect how teachers perceive themselves. Liu (1999) discovered a perceptual discrepancy between instructors and ESL students when judging the native speaking ability of the instructor. Two of seven instructors received different native ability assessments from their students. Other studies on ESL students have also found differences in attitudes toward NESTs and NNESTs between students and administrators (Moussu, 2010). This indicates a need for more information on student perspectives on native speakers in language teaching.

METHOD

Purpose of the Study

To investigate variables that affect student perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, this study examines student perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs when learning English for different reasons, such as passing proficiency tests or completing courses. This study also focuses on student opinions of NESTs and the differences between NESTs and NNESTs in areas such as classroom instruction and interaction. Specifically, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do (a) linguistic and exam taking skills, (b) the role of English as the subject or medium of a course, and (c) aspects of English learning affect student perceptions and encourage them to favor NESTs over NNESTs?
2. How do Taiwanese students perceive NESTs and NNESTs differently for interaction and instruction in the classroom?

Instrument

According to important factors found in previous studies, this study investigates factors that affect student perceptions toward these two types of

English teachers in a context where learning English is popular and passing English exams is crucial for future development. The questionnaire used in this investigation was based on interviews and literature relating to (a) native speakers in language teaching and (b) the differences between native and non-native language teachers. To avoid subjectivity in generating the questionnaire, 10 university students with extensive language learning experience with native and non-native speaking teachers were selected and interviewed on their learning experiences and concerns. Each interviewee had been taught by language teachers of different nationalities while learning English or other foreign languages. Interview data were analyzed for emerging themes that were incorporated into the first and second parts of the questionnaire. Results from two studies (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999) on the pedagogical differences observed by language teachers were summarized and incorporated into items in the third part of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was composed of three main sections. Section 1 referred to student learning preferences and whether NESTs should learn and understand the Chinese language and culture. Section 2 focused on whether students prefer NESTs or NNESTs when learning various aspects of language. Section 3 examined student perceptions of the differences between NESTs and NNESTs commonly perceived by language teachers in previous studies. The content of this questionnaire was verified and confirmed by three experts familiar with native speaking issues in language education. They confirmed that the questionnaire could be used to investigate the issues raised by this study (Appendix A).

To eliminate the language barrier for students answering the questionnaire, the researcher translated the questionnaire into Chinese. The questionnaire was sent to a panel of experts for content verification. It was concluded that the questionnaire could be used to investigate important aspects relating to the effect of native speakers on English learning.

Participants

Participants were randomly selected from a private university in Northern Taiwan. The questionnaire was distributed to 250 non-English majors enrolled in freshman English. In total, 206 students responded and returned the questionnaire, yielding a return rate of 82%. Majors and years of learning English varied for each participant, but all had English learning experience with NESTs and NNESTs for different periods and in various learning contexts. Of the participants, 70% were female. The uneven gender distribution and diverse academic majors and years of learning characteristic of the participants is believed to represent Taiwanese university students throughout Taiwan.

RESULTS

Factors Affecting Student Perceptions toward NESTs and NNESTs

Focused Skills

Two main issues constituted the second section of the questionnaire. The first issue related to student preferences for native or non-native English teachers when learning different language skills and preparing for tests (Table 1). Data showed that students prefer native speaking English teachers when learning speaking and listening techniques (NESTs = 94.2%; NNESTs = 5.8%). However, students preferred non-native speaking teachers when learning reading and writing techniques. When preparing for standardized English tests, such as TOEFL or government-funded general English proficiency tests (GEPT), students also preferred non-native speaking English teachers (NESTs = 44.3%; NNESTs = 55.7%). The results indicate that students seem to trust NNESTs, especially for reading and writing techniques and when preparing for important tests that could affect their

future. These results suggest the important role of non-native English teachers who were English learners before they were teachers. Their experience in learning English and completing different tests grant them such privilege among students.

TABLE 1
Preference for NESTs and NNESTs When (%)

Tasks	Prefer NESTs	Prefer NNESTs
Taking English proficiency tests, such as GEPT or TOEFL	44.3	55.7
Learning reading and writing skills	16.5	83.5
Learning speaking and listening skills	94.2	5.8

Role of English

Another issue discussed in Section 2 of the questionnaire was whether native speaking ability affects student selection of teachers when English plays different roles, that is, as the subject of learning or the medium of instruction, in a course. When English is the subject of learning, almost two-thirds of students consider native speaking ability an important factor (Important = 61%; Not important = 39%). Table 2 shows that students prefer native speaking teachers in high-level English classes (Prefer NESTs = 84.3%; Prefer NNESTs = 15.7%) and non-native teachers at elementary levels (Prefer NESTs = 7 %; Prefer NNESTs = 93%). These results indicate the stronger support that non-native speaking teachers provide to beginner learners. Students felt that native speaking teachers better stimulate and support language use in various contexts for more advanced requirements, but not for completing English proficiency exams.

Students did not rank being a native English speaker as the most important teacher characteristic (Table 2). Conversely, instruction design was ranked most important when selecting teachers for English language courses.

Students were also asked to choose the top three characteristics of teachers for professional courses. Table 2 shows that professional knowledge and teaching experience are more important than being a native speaker. Language students did not select being a native English speaker as the most important teacher characteristic, not even of language teachers. This suggests that parent and school administrator preferences for NESTs may not be shared by students.

TABLE 2
Prioritized Characteristics of Teachers for Different Courses (%)

Characteristic \ Type of course Priority	English language course			Professional course		
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Native English speaker	3.0	4.5	69.5	5.1	3.6	72.9
Teaching experience	23.8	19.9	4.4	14.4	33.3	2.0
Understanding of the learning experience	10.9	18.9	16.7	4.1	8.2	21.6
Friendliness	18.8	23.4	8.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Design of instruction	43.6	33.3	0.5	20.5	27.7	2.5
Professional knowledge	N/A	N/A	N/A	55.9	27.2	1.0

Note. “Professional knowledge” and “friendliness”, were not chosen by students as the top three characteristics of teachers teaching English language courses and professional courses respectively.

Aspects of English Learning

The last part of the questionnaire investigated student preferences for NESTs and NNESTs in different aspects of language learning. The data indicate that students prefer native speaking teachers when learning pronunciation, Western culture, and oral skills (Table 3). This confirms the results from previous sections of the questionnaire and implies that oral communication, such as pronunciation and listening skills, is the aspect of language learning where native speaking teachers can contribute the most. However, it does not suggest equal preference for the linguistic knowledge

and communicative competence of native speaking teachers.

TABLE 3
Students' Preference for NESTs and NNESTs in Difference Aspects of Language Learning (%)

Aspects of language learning	Prefer NESTs	Prefer NNESTs
Grammar	5.5	94.5
Language usage	30.3	58.6
Pronunciation	92.9	17.1
Western culture	69.2	11.8
Language learning skills	36.9	63.1
Oral skills	72.3	17.7

Perceptions on the Differences between NESTs and NNESTs

Students, based on their learning experiences, responded to the characteristics of NESTs and NNESTs found in previous studies (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). A *t* test was then performed to investigate whether students perceived NESTs and NNESTs differently. The test showed that, with the exception of two items (“easy to talk to” $t = -1.796, p = .074$; “become the model of learning” $t = .527, p = .599$), all items were significantly different for classroom instruction and student interaction.

Classroom Interaction

Both native and non-native English teachers were believed to be friendly and patient with students (Table 4). However, students seemed to favor NNESTs over NESTs in several aspects. For example, non-native teachers were believed to communicate with fewer difficulties and could better understand and answer learning difficulties of students than native speaking teachers. They were also believed to empathize better with students and provide solutions in more efficient ways. Native speaking teachers were believed to better motivate students to learn.

TABLE 4
Students' Perception on the Differences between NESTs and NNESTs
for Classroom Interaction (NESTs/NNESTs)

Classroom interaction	Agree/strongly agree (%)	No Comment (%)	Disagree/Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	SD
Teachers are friendly	71.3/64.6	18.9/25.2	6.3/6.3	2.17/2.47	.80/2.29
Teachers are easy to talk to*	41.7/75.7	41.7/18.4	13.2/2.4	2.66/2.04	.81/.69
Teachers are patient.	45.6/33	42.2/48.5	8.8/14.5	2.52/2.78	.80/.80
Teachers understand how Taiwanese students learn English	23.8/84.5	51.5/10.7	21.4/1.5	2.96/1.92	.73/.61
Teachers can be my learning model*	56.8/59.3	33.0/32.0	9.3/5.3	2.36/2.32	.78/.75
Teachers understand my learning difficulty	26.5/73.8	46.6/21.4	33.1/1.5	3.16/2.07	.77/.69
Teachers can quickly answer my questions	37.4/67	38.3/26.7	20.9/2.9	2.80/2.22	.83/.69
Teachers can inspire learning English	60.1/30.1	32.0/56.8	4.4/9.8	2.27/2.77	.80/.69

Note. Mean scores range from 1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree*.

Number/number = (the respond to the statement for NESTs)/(the respond to the statement for NNESTs)

*= $p > .05$

Classroom Instruction

The last item in the questionnaire investigates classroom instruction, including activity design, teaching material selection, and teaching methods

and preferences (Table 5). In classes taught by NNESTs, students perceived instruction as more test-oriented and drill-focused. Students particularly favored the lectures on linguistic aspects of English in these classes for their clear presentation and summary of grammar rules. However, more homework and frequent mechanical drill practices usually followed lectures on linguistic knowledge. Therefore, a serious and inflexible learning atmosphere was often experienced when learning with non-native teachers. By contrast, being humorous and flexible with fewer homework assignments seemed to be characteristic of classes taught by native language teachers. From student observations, native speaking teachers supplemented textbooks with information from magazines, news, or anecdotes. Additionally, native speaking teachers connected issues presented in textbooks with information from Western society. The experience of growing up in an English-speaking environment enables them to provide extra information and different material to students. Students in this study confirmed that NESTs better explain the meaning and usage of words in contexts, as perceived by native speaking language teachers in previous studies. Students reported that both native and non-native speaking teachers use group work in their teaching. This does not correspond with other studies (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Chacon, 2002) which found that only native English speaking teachers favor group work.

TABLE 5
Students' Perception on the Differences between NESTs and NNESTs
for Classroom Instruction (NESTs/NNESTs)

Classroom instruction	Agree/ Strongly agree (%)	No Comment (%)	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	SD
Teachers are flexible and humorous	80.6/38.9	14.1/51	3.9/8.8	2.01/2.68	1.10/65
Teachers often use group works	78.2/50.5	18.4/48.1	1.9/9.2	1.97/2.54	.72/.73
Teachers use various materials	63.1/41.8	28.6/48.1	6.8/9.2	2.26/2.62	.83/.72
Teachers have few tests and homework	48.6/7.3	30.1/34.5	19.9/57.3	2.65/3.53	.94/.74
Teachers provide information on Western culture	79.6/16.5	15.0/62.1	3.9/19.9	2.02/3.02	.74/.64
Teachers are strict	19.4/48.1	54.9/45.1	24.2/5.9	3.01/2.53	.82/.70
Teachers use textbooks only	7.8/31	41.3/42.2	50.0/25.3	3.45/2.92	.73/.82
Teachers clearly teach or explain grammar.	6.3/58.8	37.4/28.6	55.4/11.7	3.55/2.42	.80/.88
Teachers focus on tests/examination	6.8/75.7	44.7/18	47.5/5.3	3.46/2.15	.71/.71
Teachers often use exercises and drills in the classroom	4.9/46.6	34.5/39.8	59.2/12.7	3.63/2.61	.76/.79
Teachers often only explain the meaning of a word instead of its usage in context	8.8/25.2	21.4/40.8	66.0/30.5	3.70/3.05	.84/.83

Note. Mean scores range from 1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree*.

Number/number = (the respond to the statement for NESTs)/(the respond to the statement for NNESTs)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The definition of native speakers and their role in language teaching has attracted great debate and scholars have not yet resolved this issue. Studies on the differences between native and non-native speaking language teachers have reached various conclusions and have provided insights that generally depict the characteristics of language teachers from two sides of the native speaking continuum. Results from this study confirm those of previous studies (Benke & Medgyes, 2006; Lasagaster & Sierra, 2006; Manboob, 2004). University students in this study generally prefer native speaking teachers when learning communication skills and culture. However, student preferences do not reflect the overall preference of native speaking teachers by parents and administrators, especially when passing English proficiency tests is involved. Conversely, NNESTs were believed to be better for test preparation because of their past experiences studying for English tests.

University students recommended NESTs for better pronunciation and cultural knowledge and NNESTs for better understanding learning difficulties and classroom interaction. Students believe that NESTs support language used in various contexts and provide better assistance when learning oral communication. However, students rely heavily on NNESTs when preparing for English proficiency tests, such as the TOEFL and GEPT. These findings suggest that factors such as areas of and reasons for learning affect student selections of language teachers. The findings relate to the different advantages of different language learning experiences (Crook, 1999). Linguistic aspects of communication—such as grammar, sentence structure, or semantic choice—and language learning strategies were selected as areas where non-native speaking teachers contribute the most. Their experience as language learners enables non-native speaking teachers to acquire explicit knowledge on language structures to better respond to linguistic questions raised during the learning process. They also develop and collect various learning strategies to cope with learning difficulties. By contrast, native speakers learn the language from birth and as the first language they

encounter. Their experience learning English as a first language makes them better pronunciation and listening skill models. Their experiences also provide authentic information on Western culture.

In the global village, English language ability is a crucial requirement for employment in Taiwan. English ability has become a requirement in many professional fields, such as business or science and technology. International English language proficiency tests, such as TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS, are popular in Taiwan. Obtaining high scores in these tests is important for Taiwanese university students to demonstrate their English ability when applying for jobs after graduation. This study suggests that students rely on NNESTs for better instruction on grammar, learning strategies and techniques for taking tests. Therefore, NNESTs could be better language instructors in these circumstances.

NESTs and NNESTs are believed to contribute to different aspects of student learning. However, students did not select native speaking ability as an important qualification for language instructors or course lecturers. Students ranked subject knowledge, teaching experience, and instruction design as the most important teacher qualifications. This contradicts previous studies (e.g., Arva & Medgyes, 2000) and shows that students emphasize practical learning requirements, but not native speaking ability. Particularly in English language courses, passing different tests is the main goal of most students. Therefore, experience and knowledge at taking English tests is more significant when selecting English teachers. However, preferences are different for different tasks. For example, if English learning requires high-level writing or communication skills, such as thesis writing, teachers with advanced or near-native English proficiency are required and preferred. Nonetheless, because English for university students remains at a test-taking level and not a professional organization and communication level, teachers with similar experiences are favored. In this case, these are NNESTs.

This study clarifies the fallacy of native speakership from student perspectives. Student perceptions of the differences between NESTs and NNESTs show English educators and parents that the role and influence of

native speaking English teachers in Taiwan should be re-examined. Student preferences for types of teachers can help academic institutes establish criteria when recruiting foreign teachers. Future studies should focus on cooperative teaching models where native and non-native speaking teachers can best contribute to student learning.

THE AUTHOR

Enchong Liaw is an assistant professor in Department of Applied Linguistics and Language Studies of Chung Yuan Christian University in Taiwan. Her current research interests cover teacher education and World Englishes. Her recent publication include *Teacher Efficacy of pre-service teachers in Taiwan: The influence of classroom teaching and group discussions* (2009), *Teaching Critical Reflection through Online Discussions, Face-to-face Dialogues, Method Course and Practicum: How Pre-service Teachers Bridge the Gap between Theory and Practice* (2011), and *The Effect of Demonstration on Facilitating the Acquisition/Realization of Diverse EFL Teaching Approaches* (2011).

Email: liawec@cycu.edu.tw

REFERENCES

- Amin, N. (1999). Minority woman teachers of ESL: Negotiating white English. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching*, (pp. 93-104). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Arva, V. & Medgyes, P. (2000). Native and non-native teachers in the classroom. *System*, 28(3), 355-372.
- Benke, E., & Medgyes, P. (2006). Differences in teaching behavior between native and non-native speaker teachers: As seen by the learners. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp.195-217). New York: Springer.
- Chacon T. C. (2002). *Teacher efficacy and selected characteristics of selected English as a foreign language Venezuelan middle school teachers*. Unpublished

- doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.
- Cheung, Y. L. (2007). The attitudes of university students in Hong Kong towards native and non-native teachers of English. *RELC Journal*, 38(3), 257-277.
- Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33(2), 185-332.
- Fox, W. (1992). *Functions and effects of International Teaching Assistants at a major research institution*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN.
- Jiang, S. B. (2003). A monk from afar can recite the sutras: On the small country of employing foreign English teachers. *Examination Information*, 34, 18-22.
- Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2006). What do students think about the pros and cons of having a native speaker teacher? In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 217-243). New York: Springer Science and Business Media, LLC.
- Liu, J. (1999). From their own perspectives: The impact of non-native ESL professionals on their students In B. George (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 159-177). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Manboob, A. (2004). Native or non-native: What do students enrolled in an intensive English program think? In Kamhi-Stein (Ed.), *Learning and teaching from experience: Perspective on non-native English-speaking professionals* (pp. 121-149). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Medgyes, P. (1994). *The non-native teacher*. London, UK: Macmillan.
- Moussu, L. (2010). Influence of teacher-contact time and other variables on ESL students' attitudes towards native and non-native-English-speaking teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 44(4), 746-768.
- Pacek, D. (2005). Personality not nationality: Foreign students' perceptions of a non-native speaker lecturer of English at a British university. In E. Llurda, (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 243-262). New York, NY: Springer.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Reves, T., & Medgyes, P. (1994). The non-native English speaking EFL/ESL teachers' self-image: An international survey. *System*, 22(3), 353-367.
- Rose, K. R. (1997). Pragmatics in teacher education for non-native-speaking teachers: A consciousness-raising approach. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 10, 125-138.
- Samimy, K. K., & Brutt-Griffler, J. (1999). To be a Native Speaker: Perceptions of

Examining Student Perspectives on the Differences between Native and Non-native Language...

“non-native” students in a graduate TESOL program. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 127-145). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Shao, T. (2005, October 7). Teaching English in China: NNESTs need not apply? *NNEST Newsletter*, 2.

Shim, J. (2001). *The efficacy beliefs of Korean teachers of English as a foreign language*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University Ohio.

Su, F. S. (1998). Children's language education is not bilingual education. *National Institute for Compilation and Translation Communication*, 11 (4), 50-60.

Thomas, Jacinta. (1999). Voices from the periphery: Non-native teachers and issues of credibility. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 5-15), New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

APPENDIX A

Dear students:

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this study is to understand your English learning experience with native and non-native speaking teachers in the past. Please carefully answer questions in this survey because your precious opinions will be beneficial to the collaboration between native and non-native teachers in the future.

Please circle the item(s) that best answer the following questions.

Part I

1. What should be the proportion of Chinese and English in classroom instruction?

- English only
- Chinese only
- Half English and half Chinese
- Primarily English

2. How do you like to learn English in the classroom? (May choose more than one)

- Use textbooks as the primarily resources
- Use textbook with some other recourses in the class

- Activities in the class
- Group works
- Individual works
- Reading and grammar exercise
- Others: _____

3. Should native speaking teachers learn how to speak Chinese?

- Yes, they should.
- No, they should not.

4. Should native speaking teachers be familiar with Taiwanese culture?

- Yes, they should.
- No, they should not.

Part II

5. Whom do you prefer to learn from when you prepare for English proficiency tests, such as GEPT or TOEFL?

- Native speaking teachers
- Taiwanese English teachers

6. Whom will you prefer if you learn reading and writing skills?

- Native speaking teachers
- Taiwanese English teachers

7. Whom will you see as a model if you learn speaking and listening skills?

- Native speaking teachers
- Taiwanese English teachers

8. Will the level of English class, such as elementary or intermediate, affect your choice of English teachers?

- No.
- Yes. Native teachers are more suitable in teaching elementary intermediate advanced English class
- Native teachers are more suitable in teaching elementary intermediate advanced English class

9. When you choose the teacher for freshman English course, how would you prioritize different characteristics of teachers when making the decision? Please order them in accordance with: (1) most important, (2) very important, (3) important, (4) less importance, (5) not important.

Examining Student Perspectives on the Differences between Native and Non-native Language...

- Native English speaker.
- Teaching experience.
- Understanding of the learning experience of Taiwanese students.
- Friendliness.
- Types of instruction.

10. If you have a chance to choose the teacher for English course for specific purpose, such as English literature, how would you prioritize different characteristics of teachers when making decision? Please order them in accordance with orders: most important (1), very important (2), important (3), less importance (4), not important (5).

- Understanding of the learning experience of Taiwanese students.
- Native English speaker.
- Professional knowledge.
- Teaching experience.
- Types of instruction.

Part III

11. In which areas listed below would you prefer to ask help from native speaking English teachers? (Can choose more than one)

- Grammar language usage pronunciation cultural aspect of English
- language learning skills oral skills
- Others: _____

12. In which areas listed below you would prefer to ask help from Taiwanese English teachers? (Can choose more than one)

- Grammar language usage pronunciation cultural aspect of English
- language learning skills oral skills
- Others: _____

13. The followings describe the interaction between teachers and students. Please respond based on your experience and indicate to what extent you would agree with these statements based on 5-point scale as following.

- 1=strongly agree, 2= moderately agree, 3= agree,**
4= moderately disagree, 5= strongly disagree.

- Native teachers are friendly.....1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers are easy to talk to.....1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers are patient.....1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers understand how Taiwanese students learn English...1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers can be my learning model.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers understand my learning difficulty.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers can quickly answer my questions.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers can inspire learning English.1...2...3...4...5

14. The followings describe the interaction between teachers and students. Please respond based on your experience and indicate to what extent you would agree with these statements based on 5-point scale as following.

**1=strongly agree, 2= moderately agree, 3= agree,
4= moderately disagree, 5= strongly disagree.**

- Non-native teachers are friendly.....1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers are easy to talk to.....1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers are patient.....1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers understand how Taiwanese students learn English..1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers can be my learning model.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers understand my learning difficulty.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers can quickly answer my questions.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers can inspire learning English.1...2...3...4...5

15. The followings describe types of instruction. Please respond based on your experience and indicate to what extent you would agree with these statements based on 5-point scale as following.

**1=strongly agree, 2= moderately agree, 3= agree,
4= moderately disagree, 5= strongly disagree.**

- Native teachers are flexible and humorous1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers often use group works.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers use various materials.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers have few tests and homework.....1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers provide information on Western culture.....1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers are strict.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers use textbooks only.1...2...3...4...5

Examining Student Perspectives on the Differences between Native and Non-native Language...

- Native teachers clearly teach or explain grammar.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers focus on tests/examination.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers often use exercises and drills in the classroom.1...2...3...4...5
- Native teachers often only explain the meaning of a word instead of its usage in context.....1...2...3...4...5

16. The followings describe types of instruction. Please respond based on your experience and indicate to what extent you would agree with these statements based on 5-point scale as following.

**1=strongly agree, 2= moderately agree, 3= agree,
4= moderately disagree, 5= strongly disagree.**

- Non-native teachers are flexible and humorous1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers often use group works.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers use various materials.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers have few tests and homework.....1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers provide information on Western culture.....1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers are strict.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers use textbooks only.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers clearly teach or explain grammar.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers focus on tests/examination.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers often use exercises and drills in the classroom.1...2...3...4...5
- Non-native teachers often only explain the meaning of a word instead of its usage in context.....1...2...3...4...5

Background Information:

Major/Year: _____ / _____ Gender: _____

English score in the Entrance Exam:

- under 60 61~70 71~80 81~90 above 91

Experience with native speaking teacher(s):

- No.
Yes, one to two teachers three to four teachers above five teachers.