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# LEARNING ENGLISH FROM THE NON-NATIVE SPEAKER TEACHERS: THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF GOOD ENGLISH TEACHERS.

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THIS PROJECT PAPER IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARDING OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (TESL).

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this dissertation is my own except for quotation and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

3.07.2010

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**BELAJAR BAHASA INGGERIS DARIPADA GURU BUKAN PENUTUR BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA PERTAMA : PERSEPSI PELAJAR UNIVERSITI TERHADAP GURU BAHASA INGGERIS YANG BAIK.**

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti perlakuan pelajar universiti terhadap guru Bahasa Inggeris yang bertutur dalam Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa ibunda dan sebagai bahasa kedua. Kajian telah dijalankan di dua buah universiti tempatan.. Kajian ini digunakan untuk mengenalpasti persepsi pelajar university terhadap guru Bahasa Inggeris dan ciri-ciri yang pelajar harapkan ada pada setiap guru Bahasa Inggeris. Jantina dan pengalaman pernah diajar oleh guru yang bertutur dalam Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa ibunda dianggap sebagai factor yang boleh mempengaruhi persepsi mereka. Sampel terdiri daripada 99 pelajar university yang pernah diajar oleh guru penutur Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa pertama. Instrumen kajian yang digunakan adalah soalan kaji selidik dan interbiu. Data dianalisa menggunakan SPSS dan data dari interbiu dikategorikan mengikut kesesuaian terhadap empat soalan kajian. Hasil kajian menunjukkan pelajar lebih cenderung untuk memilih guru penutur Baahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa ibunda, namun masih mengiktiraf kelebihan yang ada pada guru penutur bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua walaupun mereka mempunyai beberapa kekurangan. Implikasi dari kajian ini diharapakn dapat membantu guru Bahasa Inggeris di Malaysia untuk melakukan perubahan dari segi menyampaikan pengajaran dan juga pendekatan individual supaya persepsi pelajar terhadap guru Bahasa Inggeris tempatan boleh diperbetulkan.

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**LEARNING ENGLISH FROM THE NON-NATIVE SPEAKER TEACHERS: THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF GOOD ENGLISH TEACHERS.**

## ABSTRACT

This study is designed to identify university students' attitudes towards English Language teachers, both, native and non-native. It was carried out at two local universities. This research determines the university students' perceptions towards English teachers and good English Language teachers' characteristics. The students' gender and experience of being taught English Language by the native speaker teachers were regarded as possible factors which might influence their preferences. The samplings were 99 university students with experience of being taught by the native speaker of English teachers. The instruments used were questionnaires and interviews. The data from the questionnaires was analysed using the SPSS and the data from the interviews was categorized according to their correspondence with any of the four research questions. The results showed a slight preference towards the native speaker teachers, however, the non-native speaker teachers were also recognized as having their own strengths despite their limitations in the language they are teaching. As the implication, the local English Language teachers can adopt some of the preferred teaching styles and personal approaches so that the students' perception towards the non-native speaker teachers can be changed.

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### A – Non-native speakers of English (NNS)

For the purpose of this research, the writer wishes to make a distinction of terminologies between native and non-native speakers. The 'ideal native-speaker,' is someone who knows a language perfectly and uses it appropriately in all social interactions (Celce-Murcia, 2001). And thus, non-native speakers are those whose first language is not English, but acquired the language sometime later in their lives (Smith, 1992).

### B – Native Speakers (NS)

Native speakers are referred to the people whose mother tongue or first language is English Language. The notion of native speaker as one who has intuitive knowledge he or she as a native speaker of, and has linguistic as well as communicative competence ( Smith, 1992).

### C – First language (L1) and Second-Language (L2)

L2 refers to a second language spoken by an individual, for this research L2 always refers to English Language. L1 means the first language or the mother tongue of a speaker.

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the discussion of the background of the study, the statement of the problems, the significance of the study and the research questions.

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## 1.2 The background of the study

Malaysia is among the Asian countries which is keen on hiring native speakers of English teachers to teach their young generation. (*The Sunday Star*, April 4 2010). One of the reasons, according to Malachi E.Vethamani of Universiti Putra Malaysia, could be the fact that many of the young English-language teachers are from the Bahasa Malaysia medium of instruction (*NST* May 22 2008), whose level of proficiency in English is rather low. Though it is the prerogative of the non-native speaking countries to hire teachers whom they see fit to teach English to their students, they should look beyond what a language teacher really is. To teach English

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Language requires those who have the teaching background; credentials and skills. One cannot simply be hired because their mother tongue is English. Peck (1991, 364) says, " that teachers should individualize ESL instruction so that they teach in the ways in which students learn." Murcia and Goodwin (1991, 136) touch upon the quality, or at minimum, the desired quality of a 'teacher' saying; "The teacher is ideally a native or near native speaker of the target language..." The term 'near native' as used by Murcia and Goodwin can be interpreted as non-native speakers whose proficiency in English is high.

The non-native speaker teachers are helped through some teaching preparation programmes held in universities, colleges and higher learning institutions throughout the country, the non-native English Teachers are equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills for second language learners to learn English. (*NST* May 22 2008) .Through these programmes, these non-native teachers who are still on the process of learning how to teach English, all the possible problems to arise would be thoroughly discussed and evaluated even though some issues pertaining to the non-native speaker teachers maybe unusually sensitive to Malaysian culture's context. In Malaysia in the 90s, for example, the reversal of the national language policy toward favoring English indicates "compromise over its cultural convictions" (*The Economist*, January 15, 1994).

In Malaysia, where most English Language teachers are the non-native speakers, the commonly accepted view in language pedagogy has been that non-native English Speaker Teachers (NNESTs) are second in knowledge and performance to native speaker teachers (*The Sunday Star* April 4 2010). The non-native English-language teachers are also labelled as not very competent and proficient but have the

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passion and desire to teach. (*NST* May 22 2008). Acting on that belief, the Perak State Education Department started hiring native speakers as trainers for local non-native English teachers. These selected teachers were periodically given courses to enrich their proficiency in English. The writer herself attended three such training session in 2007. The most recent step announced by the Ministry of Education is the hiring of 350 native speakers to teach in various states (*The Star* April 4 2010). Some learning institutions have native English speaker teachers on their staff, for example, the Universiti Teknologi Petronas and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris in Perak. The native speakers are also hired by private institutions, and this is becoming common in primary, secondary and university education (Lipata 2008). This is becoming a trend because many still consider that foreign languages should be taught by native speakers of the language. ( Lasagabaster & Sierra 1999)

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Phillipson (1992) describes this situation as the "native speaker fallacy" where NSTs are hired solely based on their native status. Some countries, for example, Japan and Korea have actively recruited native speakers as their English teachers, even though, as Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) point out that the NNESTs teachers from these countries have opposed this policy, claiming that the NSTs often lack adequate qualifications, and gain entry into the profession only because they are native speakers. Some NSTs lacking Teach of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) qualifications have positions at language academies because of their native speaker status. Jung Sung–ki reported that the American GIs teach Korean soldiers conversational English, vocabulary and grammar during the one-and-half-hour weekly class as their bilateral partnership programme .(*The Korea Times Special* March 3 2008)

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Most non-English speaking countries will employ a native English speaker to "teach" English provided that person presents any degree from his countries university ( Lipata 2008) .That degree may range from Science with a major in Botany, to Psychology. In other words, anyone with a university degree can travel to non-English speaking country and become a "teacher of English as a second/foreign/another language." Often it is these teachers that fall within the negative connotation of being an "...elitist or purist..." teacher. (Offner, 1995). According to him also, these pseudo teachers often force 'their superior form of language' onto the foreign language students.

As pointed out by Offner (1995), it can be assumed that the majority of native English teachers teaching English in a given foreign country do not have formal second language teaching qualifications and often it is these teachers that fall within the negative connotation of being an "...elitist or purist..." teacher. They, nevertheless, are English teachers by virtue of their contract, albeit they may not have any idea or understanding of what it means to be a teacher, let alone the basic knowledge that goes to make up being an English teacher and its attendant responsibilities. This is mentioned by Lipata (2008) when she writes in her article:

"Teachers are trained to teach with their chosen field even if he/she is a non-native teacher of English. It is true that a native English speaker will be a good teacher of the language, but this is through imitation purposes only. Unless of course if the teacher is a qualified teacher who graduated as an English teacher. (Lipata 2008).

Many studies have been conducted to find out the differences between NSTs and NNESTs so that NNESTs can use the information to close the gaps. Some findings revealed that popular characteristics ascribed to native and non-native

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English teachers are native speakers can use English Language more fluently with accurate pronunciation. These teachers are also known to use various flexible teaching methods during their lessons and are not examination oriented which can sometimes lead to boring activities. The use of more informal communicative English is also an attractive factor why these NS teachers seem to have more advantages.

Generally speaking, the NNESTs are perceived by many as more examination oriented. Thus, their lessons become unattractive, monotonous and do not involve various techniques (Gardner & Lambert. 1972). Their lessons are especially void of communicative approaches, they rely heavily on printed materials and textbook too. Sometimes they tend to code-switch or code-mix in their first language. Medgyes (1994) also gives his opinion regarding this issue when he writes :

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"We suffer from an inferiority complex caused by glaring defects in our knowledge of English. We are in constant distress as we realize how little we know about the language we are supposed to teach."

But the point Medgyes is making is that native speakers do not need this knowledge in an explicit form, while NNS do because that is their way into the language. The non-native speaker teachers are said to rely on textbooks, materials, use L1 as medium and examination preparation oriented (Leon 2006) http://www.idiomas.ugto.mx/teachersinfo/irasema/students.pdf.

On the other hand, the NNESTs are accepted because they are known to be more sensitive to the learning needs of their students and more efficient because they know their students' backgrounds and are very aware of the psychological aspects of

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learning a second language (Willing 1988), partly because they also experienced the same difficulties during their second-language learning process.

Even if It is true that a native English speaker will be a good teacher of the language, but this is through imitation purposes only ( Lipata 2008) .Unless of course the teacher is a qualified teacher and graduated as an English teacher. The learners will surely imitate their teacher's diction and articulation and so on, because most second language learners believe in the power of learning by imitation (Fromkin & Rodman 1983). But, if the teacher has the knowledge, techniques and strategies on how to impart the language is another thing. Whether the teacher is a native English speaker or a non-native English speaker, as long as they both pass to a certain qualification and have the necessary requirement to teach English, both should be treated equally, as observed by Arva and Medgyes (2000), both types of teachers have assets and drawbacks to offer.

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## 1.3 The statements of the problems

The issue of English language in schools has been constantly debated in Malaysia lately. Gaudart (1987) states that Malaysian society is constantly regaled with opinions about the falling standards of English. The declining standard of English among school children and the younger citizens in general, has pushed the Ministry of Education to take a drastic measure in requiring Year 1, Form 1 and Lower Six students to learn Mathematics and Science in English from 2003 onwards.( Hassan & Selamat 2002) Lasagabaster & Sierra (1999 ) agree that teaching English as a second

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or foreign language is not an easy task because English Language has its standard which will determine whether the users are competent and proficient users or otherwise. The issues of Received Pronunciation (RP) and perfect grammar put NNESTs on constant evaluation by the society which has become more exposed to the language especially with the advent of the Internet. ESL teachers have been blamed for the negative feedback received from employers regarding their local university graduate workers (*The Star* October 28 2009) There have been many complaints about these graduates, published in major newspapers, who are said to lack communicative skills and competence in English Language. The university graduates still speak with both major and minor grammatical errors which is related to their insufficient knowledge of the basic structures of the language (*The Star* October 28 2009) This is what Lim (1994) found when he studied fluency and accuracy in spoken English through a survey questionnaire conducted among EFL in-service teachers. Her survey revealed 84.1% of the respondents who taught at the primary, secondary and *tertiary levels,* agreed that their learners were not able to speak English well and that speaking is the weakest skill among the four language skills.

## 1.4 The purpose of the study

This study is set forth to look into the university students' perceptions towards their native and non-native speaker teachers. It is also to understand what they think are the characteristics of good English teachers. Their attitudes and preferences will be explored and explained so that any advantageous conditions can be used to improve the way the students look at their teachers especially the non-natives. A similar

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suggestion was made by Madrid (2004) in his article in which he analysed Matsuda's (2001) "deficit model of teacher development". Madrid came up with new terms incuding incorporative, collaborative and additive elements of strengths between native and non-native speaker teachersl( Madrid 2004).

## 1.5 The significance of the study

This research will pave ways for Malaysian language researchers and educators, as well as the rest of the society to embrace the fact that English is spoken by more people as a L2 than as a mother tongue, which means the non-native users of English outnumber the native users. ( Kachru 1998). This will encourage people to think of English as a lingua franca, and is spoken in different accents and not as language exclusively owned by native speaking communities. Through this study, the public can be made more aware of the prime role of English Language teachers which is NOT to produce native English Language speakers but COMPETENT English speakers. The results of the study will be beneficial for native and non-native teachers in terms of realizing their deficiencies and raising awareness. As Braine (1999) observes:

"Perhaps the first thing of importance is the realization that teachers, like all other members of society, hold perceptions concerning different language varieties. They are not immune from the attributions of prestige (or the lack of it) made of certain language variants."

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## 1.6 The research questions

This study is aimed at uncovering the opinions and the attitudes of university students in Malaysia towards their English Language teachers . Specifically, four research questions will be addressed:

1. What are the Malaysian university students' attitudes towards the native and the non-native speaker teachers?

2. How does gender determine students' preferences towards native and non- native speaker teachers?

3. How does experience of learning English Language with the native speaker teachers influence the students' preferences towards the native speaker and the non-native speaker teachers?

4 . What are the characteristics of good English Language teachers according to Malaysian university students?

The research questions are complex with regard to perceptions and identity. The latter depends on the social context; and how you want to be identified is incomplete without considering how others might perceive you. Students' opinions are likely to reveal and challenge existing stereotypes or labels about teachers, cultural differences, and identity. Likewise, the former can only be assessed by inferring from their responses to questions in the research instrument.

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## 1.7 Summary

This chapter discusses the background of this study and the statement of the problems, its purpose and significance and the research questions. The next chapter will look at the previous researches as the literature reviews relevant to this study.

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# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the issues and previous studies pertaining to the perceptions towards the native speaker and the non-native speaker of English teachers. This chapter also highlights the objectives and findings of some previous studies.

## 2.2 Native vs non-native speakers

According to Braine (1999), any open debate or research on the self-perceptions of non-native speaker (NNS) English teachers, or the way they are perceived by their students is a fairly recent phenomenon. This may be due to the sensitive nature of these issues because NNS teachers were generally regarded as unequal in knowledge and performance to NS teachers of English, and issues relating to NNS teachers may have also been politically incorrect to be studied and discussed openly.

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Despite the pioneering work of Medgyes (1992, 1994), it took nearly a decade for more research to emerge on the issues relating to NNS English teachers. In fact, there has been a surge of such studies recently, partly as a result of the establishment of the Non-native English Speakers' Caucus in the TESOL organization in 1999 (Braine, 1999, or go to http://nnest.moussu.net/ for more information on the Caucus). At the TESOL 2003 conference in Baltimore, USA, more than 20 presentations included the acronym NNS in their titles, and most of these presentations were made by NNS English teachers themselves. This not only indicates that NNS English teachers appear to have a powerful new voice through the Caucus, but also that they are no longer reluctant to openly acknowledge themselves as NNS speakers.

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## 2.3 The general perceptions towards the native and the non-native English teachers

It has been recorded that English is spoken by about two billion users, and it is a fact that the non-native speakers have outnumbered the native-speakers (Huntington, 1996b). This growing number of the non-native speaker users in the outer circle – non-English speaking countries, has forced the governments of these countries to hire teachers among the locals to teach English Language. However, the 'native' status, always carries a better connotations for the native speaker teachers. The following electronic advertisement is among many evidences that some people's perceptions are merely based on the nativeness of a language speaker:

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Free Homestay in Penang, Malaysia in exchange for your teaching English to our children (native speaker)

By:**Estee** <Show E-Mail>

Date: **12 April 2009**

**We are a Chinese family live in a beautiful Penang island, Malaysia. If you would like to come here for studies/work or leisure/travel, i can offer homestay in exchange for your time to teach English to our children. English native speakers only. Any gender, husband & wife, retirees welcomed.**

**Background check required. Need to see passport for verification. Thanks for your understanding.**

**Kindly contact me if you are interested. Thanks.**

In the above advertisement, a family offers a free accommodation in exchange for teaching English to their children, and this offer is only open for native speakers, regardless their teaching qualifications.

Recently, the state of Terengganu has announced through the evening radio news dated 21st February 2010 that the state government had decided to add the number of the existing native speaker teachers to teach Arabic language to the students in several religious schools. This move was made because they claimed that the foreign teachers who are natives to Arabic Language had helped improve the students' achievements in the subject in general examinations. Eventhough this has nothing to do with the teaching of English Language in Malaysia, it can be construed that to many people, including those with important administrative posts, native speakers are the better choices.

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The stigmatic perception that the native speakers are better, however, had not been discussed until recently because it had always been seen as a taboo subject. For some, discussing this issue would mean exposing the inadequacy of the non-native teachers to the public's scrutiny. However, initial moves were made by researchers like Macmillan (1994), Reeves & Medgyes (1994) and Hueber (1999) who collected empirical data had actually proved that after years of exposure to good teaching techniques and training, the NNESts' proficiency in the language could be improved. This means that the perceptions towards the non-native teachers can be changed, depending on the amount of time that they have invested and the exposure to the language. It is hoped that many more empiricists will explore deeper into the truth set forth by Philipson (1996), that a non-native speaker, through effective training can acquire most of the other elements that native speakers have.

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## 2.4 The non-native speaker teachers' self-perception

This section presents several previous researches related to the self perception of the second language user teachers. The first one is Medgyes, who is also a non-native of English speaker. His two articles were published in the ELT Journal titled 'The schizophrenic teacher' (1983) and 'Native or non-native: who's worth more?' (1992), were also the forerunners of his groundbreaking book The Non-native Teacher (first published by Macmillan in 1994 and reissued by Hueber in 1999). In this book Medgyes mixed research with his own experience as a NNS English teacher and first-hand observations of other NNS teachers. In his reports, he boldly discussed previously untouched topics that would be considered controversial even today:

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'natives and non-natives in opposite trenches,' 'the dark side of being a non-native', 'and who's worth more: the native or the non-native'. The four hypotheses Medgyes advanced (1994), were based on his assumption that NS and NNS English teachers are 'two different species'. The hypotheses were that the NS and NNS teachers differ in terms of (1) language proficiency, and (2) teaching practice (behaviour), that (3) most of the differences in teaching practice can be attributed to the discrepancy in language proficiency, and that (4) both types of teachers can be equally good teachers on their own terms.

The overwhelming majority of the subjects, by their own admission, were NNESTs of English. In their responses, 68% of the subjects perceived differences in the teaching practices of NS and NNS teachers. Eighty-four percent of the NNS subjects admitted to having various language difficulties, vocabulary and fluency being the most common areas followed by spealung, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. Only 25% of the subjects stated that their language difficulties had no adverse effect on their teaching. Reeves & Medgyes (1994) suggested that 'frequent exposure to authentic native language environments and proficiency-oriented in-service training activities' (p. 364) might improve the language difficulties of NNS teachers. Furthermore, in order to enhance the self-perception of these teachers, they should be made aware of their advantageous condition as language teachers.

Based on the research by Reeves and Medgyes (1994), another research was carried out by Samimy & Brutt-Griffler (1999) which surveyed and interviewed 17 non-native graduate MA or Ph.D. students in TESOL at a university in the United States. These students were from Korea, Japan, Turkey, Surinam, China, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Russia. In addition to using a questionnaire to collect quantitative data, Samimy & Brutt-Griffler (1999) also gathered qualitative data through classroom

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discussions, in-depth interviews, and analysis of autobiographical writings of the subjects.

Nearly 90% of the subjects perceived a difference between NS and NNS teachers of English. They identified the former group as being informal, fluent, accurate, using different techniques, methods, and approaches, being flexible, using conversational English, knowing subtleties of the language, using authentic English, providing positive feedback to students, and having communication (not exam preparation) as the goals of their teaching. On the other hand, NNS English teachers were perceived as relying on textbooks, apply differences between the first and second languages, using the first language as a medium of instruction, being aware of negative transfer and psychological aspects of learning, being sensitive to the needs of students, being more efficient, knowing the students' background, and having exam preparation as the goal of their teaching.

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However, the subjects did not consider the NS teachers superior to their NNS counterparts. The differences in the teaching practices of NS and NNS teachers, as stated by the subjects of this study, could be attributed to contrasting sociocultural factors embedded in Western and Asian societies. Whereas Reeves & Medgyes (1994) focus on the differing levels of language proficiency and their effects on teaching practices, the differing teaching practices identified by Samimy & Brutt-Griffler (1999) may be attributed to cross-cultural differences.

In a 2003 study, Llurda & Huguet investigated the self-awareness of non-native English teachers in primary and secondary schools in a Spanish city. Through a set questionnaire (partially inspired by Medgyes, 1994) administered orally in one-on-one interviews with the subjects, the researchers aimed to determine how the subjects perceived their own language slulls, how these slulls affected their teaching, and how

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the skills had evolved over time; the subjects' teaching ideology as expressed through their preferences for designing a language course and their goals as language teachers; and the subjects' position in the NS-NNS debate, specifically with regard to the preference for NSs or NNSs as language teachers, and the need for cultural knowledge on the part of English teachers .

In the case of language skills, they found that the secondary teachers showed more confidence in their slulls than primary teachers, especially in general grammar, proficiency, knowledge of grammatical rules, and reading comprehension. Although primary teachers admitted that they did experience certain difficulties in teaching English, they did not attribute these difficulties to their proficiency in English. As for language improvement over time, the primary teachers displayed a greater awareness of their language improvement and believed that this improvement came through conscious study of the language.

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In terms of language courses and language teaching goals, the majority of primary teachers (81.6%) chose communicative functions and topics as the foundations for language courses. Only half the secondary teachers did so, although more of them (38.1%) opted for language structures and habit creation than their primary counterparts. In the case of teaching goals, almost all the primary teachers (97.2%) preferred communicative strategies, while only two-thirds of the secondary teachers did so. In the NSTs or NNESTsT debate, the primary teachers appeared to be more influenced by the native speaker fallacy, half of them stating that they would hire more NSs than NNESTs for a language school, although the other primary teachers did state that they would hire equal numbers of NS and NNS teachers. As for secondary teachers, nearly two thirds chose the balanced option of hiring teachers from both groups. In fact, most of the secondary teachers (65.6%) believed that being

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a NNS was an advantage. As for the need for cultural knowledge, the teachers clearly preferred British culture, with situations involving the English language being closely associated with British NS.

## 2.5 The students' perceptions of NNS English teachers

This section presents some researches on students' perceptions of the non-native teachers. One of the first studies in this area was by Moussu, (2002) whose M.A. thesis at Brigham Young University, USA, was titled 'English as a second language students' reactions to non-native English-speaking teachers'

Analysis of the data shows that from the beginning of the semester, the students had positive attitudes towards their NNS teachers. For instance, 68% of the students said that they could learn English just as well from a non-native speaker as from a native speaker, and 79% expressed admiration and respect for their non-native speaker teachers, and as many as 84% of the students expected their class with a such a teacher to be a positive experience. The Korean and Chinese students expressed negative feelings toward their NNS teachers more frequently than other students. Time and exposure to the teachers only made their opinions more positive by the end of the semester. For instance, when asked wether they would encourage a friend to take a class with non-native English-speaking teacher, only 56% of the students had answered 'yes' at the beginning of the semester. By the end of the semester, the percentage increased to76% to the same question.

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Liang's Master's research (2002) at California State University, Los Angeles, also investigated students' attitudes towards NNS English teachers. The results showed that, although the students rated pronunciational accent in the ESL teachers' speech as very important, pronunciational accent did not affect the students' attitudes towards their previous NNS English teachers in their home countries. In fact, the students held generally positive attitudes toward the teachers in their home countries, and believed that pronunciationl accent was not as relevant as it appeared in the first place. Further, personal and professional features as derived from the teachers' speech, such as 'being interesting', 'being prepared', 'being qualified', and 'being professional', played a role in the students' preference for teachers. In conclusion, Liang (2002) suggests that, instead of focusing on ESL teachers' ethnic and language background, the discussion on NNS English teachers should focus on their level of professionalism.

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Similar study was also carried out at a Chinese Hong Kong University by Cheung (2002), and the results showed that both students and teachers saw NS and NNS teachers having their respective strengths. A high proficiency in English, ability to use English functionally, and the awareness of the cultures of English spealung countries were the strengths observed in NS teachers. In the case of NNS teachers, the ability to empathize with students as fellow second language learners, a shared cultural background, and the emphasis they placed on grammar were seen as their strengths. As for teacher competency, both students and teachers stated that teachers should be well-informed about the English language, able to make learning relevant and fun, good at motivating students, able to encourage independent learning and thinking, sensitive and responsive to students' needs, and able to respect students as

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individuals with their own aspirations. Not all students and teachers were of the opinion that there was discrimination against NNS English teachers in Hong Kong.

Mahboob (2004) examined students' perceptions of NNS teachers. The analysis of the comments made by the students showed that both NS and NNS teachers received positive and negative comments. In the case of NS teachers, the majority of positive comments are related to oral skills, with vocabulary and culture also being viewed positively. Negative comments on NS teachers are related to grammar, experience as an ESL learner, ability to answer questions, and methodology. In the case of NNS teachers, experience as an ESL learner earned the most number of positive comments, followed by grammar, oral skills, methodology, hard work, vocabulary, culture, ability to answer questions, and literacy skills. NNS teachers received negative comments with regard to oral skills and culture.

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## 2.6 Summary

This chapter discusses several issues that stem from the increasing power of English Language in non-native English countries where the majority of the teachers are the locals whose English is their second language. The most obvious factor to emerge from the above description of research is that issues relating to NNS English teachers have now become a legitimate area of research. Some research objectives and findings are also presented to understand the bases of the arguments throughout this study. Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology applied in this study.

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# CHAPTER 3 :

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Introduction

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This study is conducted in two phases of data collection before the analyses of the data were performed. This chapter reveals all the procedures involved starting with the choice of the samples, the instruments used to collect data, the order of the data collection procedures, how the data was categorised so that the analysing process would be more systematic and the summary of the research methodology.

## 3.2 Samples

The criteria set for the subject of the study requires purposive sampling : only those who have experienced learning English from both native and non-native speaker of English teachers were selected. This is the prerequisite for completing the

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questionnaire on the belief that they would be able to use their experience to compare the two groups of English language teachers. The respondent samples consisted of 99 undergraduates: they were 51 males and 48 females aged between 18 to 36 years old. Their experience of being taught by native speaker teachers range from 1 to 12 years (Table 3.2 (a)).They are of mixed nationalities and currently enrolling in two local universities in Perak. These universities require certain credit hours in English course and major subjects are taught in English by both native and non-native English Language teachers. All of the students had been taught by a NST at some stage, either in English speaking countries or their own homeland which English is taught as a second or foreign language.

Table 3.2.(a)

Table of samplings and their criteria.

| Experience taught by native-speaker of English teachers | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | |
| 1 | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 3 | 18 | 12 | 30 |
| 4 | 7 | 14 | 21 |
| 5 | 2 | 8 | 10 |
| 6 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| 7 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| 8 | 3 | 0 | 3 |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| 12 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 51 | 48 | 99 |

## 3.3 Research instruments

This research combines both qualitative and quantitative data. Structured questionnaires and cross-validated interviews were used to gather the data. The hybrid use of quantitative and qualitative approaches can increase validity, and give us more insights ( Garrett & Shortall, 2002) on learners' judgements of classroom activities.

### 3.3.1 The Questionnaires

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The selected respondents completed a questionnaire comprising 5-point Likert's scales that sought responses on various factors related to their preferences for NSTs or NNESTs at primary, secondary and university levels. In addition, it focused on eliciting elements of their preference in terms of their English Language teacher's skills, knowledge, subject matter, effectiveness and practical knowledge. The questionnaires were first distributed and tested to fifteen secondary school English Language teachers in Perak Tengah area for pilot-testing purposes. These teachers have more than fifteen years of teaching experience. Their qualifications range from first degree in TESL to Master's degree. They felt that the questions were adequate to seek students' perceptions towards their English Language teachers. The feedback

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was used to revise the items in the questionnaire before it was administered again to a larger group of subjects in the study.

The questionnaires consist of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A contains the respondents' personal data: gender and years of being taught by the native speaker teachers. The writer believes that gender also influences preference. Their experience being taught by both native and non-native speaker teachers is a prerequisite because only this experience would enable them to compare and contrast between the two groups of teachers.

Section B contains fifty-five questions, seeking information about the underlying factors that establish the undergraduate students' perceptions of their native and non-native speaker teachers, so that their preference can be revealed. The questionnaire is divided into fourteen themes and the number of statements to be responded for each theme is different, based on the items which are necessary to determine preferences. Respondents were asked to respond to the statements given based on a five point Likert's scale. The interpretation of the scales is as the following:

1: Strongly Disagree

2: Disagree

3: Neither Agree Nor Disagree

4: Agree

5: Strongly Agree

Before completing the questionnaire, the instructions were read to the students, the purpose of the study was stated and the meaning of the terms 'Native Speakers Teachers of English' and the "Non-native Speaker Teachers of English" were explained.

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To avoid generalization in the pattern of repetitious responding to the questions, a cross-check was designed in which the subject of NST and NNESTs in the sentences were changed randomly. Some questions used the Native Speaker of English teachers as the subject of the sentence and some used Non-native Speaker of English teachers instead. They were asked, as written in the instruction section, to tick in the corresponding box to each of the statements.

### 3.3.2 The Data from The Questionnaires

The data elicited from the questionnaires are based on fourteen themes. Each theme is divided into categories as described in the table 3.3.2 (a) below. The themes are divided into those taught by the native speaker teachers or the non-native speaker teachers. The 55 items under Description equal the number of questions in the questionnaire .

Table 3.3.2 (a)

Summary of questionnaire items.

| | Themes | Description |
|---|---|---|
| A Preference (Native-Speaker Teachers) | | Pref 1-General |
| | | Pref2-Primary School |
| | | Pref3-Secondary School |
| | | Pref4-University Level |
| | | Pref5-Both groups of teachers |

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| | |
|---|---|
| B.<br>Grammar<br>(Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | Gram1-General |
| | Gram2-Primary School |
| | Gram3-Secondary School |
| | Gram4-University Level |
| C.<br>Vocabulary<br>(Native-Speaker Teachers) | Vocab1-General |
| | Vocab2-Primary School |
| | Vocab3-Secondary School |
| | Vocab4-University Level |
| D<br>Pronunciation<br>(Native-Speaker Teachers) | Pronun1-General |
| | Pronun2-Primary School |
| | Pronun3-Secondary School |
| | Pronun4-University Level |
| E<br>Listening<br>(Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | Liste1-General |
| | Liste2-Primary School |
| | Liste3-Secondary School |
| | Liste4-University Level |
| F<br>Reading<br>(Native-Speaker Teachers) | Read1-General |
| | Read2-Primary School |
| | Read3-Secondary School |
| | Read4-University Level |
| G<br>Speaking<br>(N0n-Native Speaker Teachers) | Speak1-General |
| | Speak2-Primary School |
| | Speak3-Secondary School |
| | Speak4-University Level |

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| | |
|---|---|
| H<br>Learning Strategies<br>(Native-Speaker Teachers) | Strate1-General |
| | Strate2-Primary School |
| | Strate3-Secondary School |
| | Strate4-University Level |
| I<br>Culture and Civilization<br>(Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | CulCiv1-Learn more about English speaking countries |
| | CulCiv2-Have more positive attitudes towards English speaking countries |
| | CulCiv3-Have more positive attitudes towards learning of English Language |
| J<br>Assessment<br>(Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | Asses1-Listening |
| | Asses2-Reading Comprehension |
| | Asses3-Speaking |
| | Asses4-Writing |
| | Asses5-Pronunciation |
| | Asses6-Grammar |
| K<br>Feedback<br>(Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | Feedb1-Listening |
| | Feedb2-Reading Comprehension |
| | Feedb3-Speaking |
| | Feedb4-Writing |
| | Feedb5-Pronunciation |
| | Feedb6-Grammar |
| L<br>Teaching Aids | TAids1-Different |
| | TAids2-Better |

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| | |
|---|---|
| (Non-Native Speaker Teachers) | TAids3-More Interesting |
| M<br>In Class Learning Activities<br>(Native Speaker Teachers) | InClsAct1-Interesting |
| | InClsAct2-Meaningful |
| N<br>Teaching Styles<br>(Native Speaker Teachers) | TeacStyl1-General |
| | TeacStyl2-Do not feel bored during English lesson |

The findings are reported in several manners: The scores Agree(4) and Strongly Agree(5) are categorised as agree because the writer feels that those scores indicate only one intention, that is an agreement. Likewise, the Disagree(2) and Strongly Disagree(1) are categorised as disagree. The middle score of 3, which indicates neither agree nor disagree is referred to as does not indicate any preference or neutral. The analysed data then are grouped according to their correlation with the four research questions.

### 3.3.3 The Interviews

Four undergraduate students who fulfilled the sampling criteria were contacted through the help of a friend. They were requested to fill in the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher. This was done to establish a good rapport before the real interviews took place. Using the same categories of themes, the interviewees were asked to elaborate more on the responses they gave to certain questions in the questionnaire: their native or non-native speaker teachers' language skills, vocabulary,

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pronunciation, teaching styles and strategies, culture and civilisation, attitudes, and assessment. These interviews served to confirm and broaden data from the questionnaire surveys. The first phase of the interviews elicited interviewees' personal experience of learning English Language in their pre-school, primary and secondary schools. The next questions sought their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of their teachers. Some questions focused on the qualities of a competent English Language teacher from their perspectives. All interviews were conducted in English, audio-taped and transcribed. Each interview took more than forty-five minutes.

## 3.4 The analysis of data

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A number of statistical techniques were applied to analyze all the data derived from the instruments used.

### 3.4.1 The Data Analysis from The Questionnaire

The data from the questionnaires was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) computer software. Frequency counts were used to analyze the demographic data (Section A) and 55 questions in Section B of the instrument. The complete report of the analysis is presented in Chapter 4. Hypotheses generated from the literature study were tested accordingly. A factor analysis was done to group the variables in Section B into several themes. A reliability analysis was carried out to determine the reliability of the questionnaire items.

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### 3.4.1 (a) Analysis of The Mean Scores

An analysis of the mean scores of all the thematic statements was carried out to look into the respondents' perceptions of their English language teachers. The levels of their preferences are based on scores obtained on each of the themes.

Theme One looks at the extent of preference towards either native or non-native speaker teachers. Higher mean score means the higher level of preference towards any group of teachers. This theme would be used to determine which group of teachers are preferred as their English Language teachers.

Theme Two, Theme Three, Theme Four, Theme Five, Theme Six and Theme Seven measure preference in regards to learning language skills; grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, reading and speaking consecutively, from either group of teachers. The higher mean scores would indicate their preference to learn the grammar skills from either group of teachers.

Theme Eight looks at the learning strategies taught to students. It is supposed to support further why a group of teachers is preferred to the other one. The higher mean score could be used to show that learning strategies is an important factor in determining preference to certain group of teachers.

Theme Nine probes the area of culture and civilization. The higher mean scores indicate that teachers are also preferred when they can teach culture and civilization better.

Theme Ten covers the assessments made by the teachers . The higher mean scores can be used to show the preferred group of teachers is closely related to their level of professionalism.

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Theme Eleven looks at the feedback the teachers give when evaluating their students' work. The higher mean scores indicate the importance of personal and professional approaches.

Theme Twelve, Theme Thirteen and Theme Fourteen measure the influence of teaching aids, in-class activities and teaching style consecutively. The higher mean scores can be used to indicate the strength of teachers' ability to handle their classes can benefit them both professionally and personally.

### 3.4.1(b) Reliability Analysis of the Instrument

The reliability analysis procedure in the SPSS program was utilized to show the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher conducted an analysis for all the variables chosen that are related to each theme. The Cronbach's Alpha value was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Fifteen raters comprised of all English teachers were identified to form a pool for the reliability check.

### 3.4.2 Data Analysis From the Interviews.

The qualitative data from the interviews were obtained based on the same themes in the questionnaire. The responses to the interview questions were used to look further into their preference throughout the interview sessions. Since the questionnaire did not allow respondents to further explain their reasons or share their opinions, the

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interviews became the platform to share their views about certain points that they want to highlight. The interviews were recorded and translated. Next, the verbatims were transcribed and the contents were coded and charted into different categories. The respondent's statements that correspond to the research questions were coded and highlighted.

### 3.5 The data collection procedure

The process of collecting data was arranged so that it will flow smoothly. The first step was to design the questionnaire. A pilot test was conducted to determine the validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was later distributed and administered. From there, interviews were carried out. The next step after the verbatim were transcribed was to code and categorize the interviewee's statements into several themes and sub-themes

Table 3.5(a)

The data collection procedures.

| Order | Steps | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Construct questionnaire | 53 Likert-scales |
| 2 | Administer pilot test | 10 secondary school teachers |
| 3 | Adjust questionnaire items | Use feedback given in pilot test |
| 4 | Distribute to samplings | 99 undergraduate students |
| 5 | Analyse data from | Use SPSS |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | questionnaire | |
| 6 | Conduct interviews | 4 respondents of the questionnaire |
| 7 | Transcribe verbatim | From recorded interviews |
| 8 | Code | Statements that answer research questions |

Table 3.5(a) lists the chronological orders of all the steps taken and what is done in each step.

### 3.6 The limitations of the study

There are some obvious setbacks to get the researcher's expectation fulfilled because of the following unforeseen limitations in

3.6 (a) the questionnaires:

3.6 (a).1 Most of the respondents do not read the questions in the questionnaire carefully and thus they gave the conflicting responses when cross-checked in different questions.

3.6 (a).2 The questions in the questionnaire were relatively long. Some questioning structures were repeated and became monotonous which hamper the respondents' interests to finish reading and they ended up completing the task without giving their well-thought out responses.

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3.6 (a).3 Most of the respondents have relatively inadequate experience of learning English Language from native speaker teachers which is not sufficient to gauge their teachers' true capabilities.

3.6 (a).4 The research instrument need to be improved especially the scales given to respond to each question in the questionnaire. The writer strongly feels that to elicit the students' preferences towards the native or the non-native speaker teachers, the respondents should only be given two choices of 'agree' and 'disagree' only.

3.6 (a).5 Most of the respondents are culturally biased and incapable of giving opinions without being emotionally influenced by their uncomfortable experience with their teachers. Some approaches made by their teachers are interpreted separately from cultural values and practices. For example, the local teachers are assumed to be unfriendly and uncaring because they prefer to be back at home as soon as the last bell rings as compared to those of the native speaker teachers who would stay up late after school hours.

3.6 (b) The interviews

3.6 (b).1 Many issues are perceived to be sensitive for open discussion, including the non- native status of the English Language teachers. This is true because most discussion would centre on the teachers' inabilities instead of on their capabilities or competencies. To uncover the students' opinions on this issue require them to speak the truth based on their experience, and this will unavoidably touch on many teachers' personally. They might not reveal their opinions totally.

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3.6 (b).2 It would be very difficult to determine whether their responses are genuine or faked out in their attempts to be seen cooperative.

3.6 (b).3 Finally, the understanding of the terms used in the questionnaires is also very crucial. If the respondents fail to grasp the concept of native and non-native speaker which only relevant to speaker of English Language, they might not perceive the debated issues from the required point of views.

## 3.7 Summary

This chapter discusses all the methods, procedures and limitations in gathering the data for this study. Each step was adequately described to give a picture of a systematic approach taken in this research as it can prevent many unforeseen difficulties. Chapter 4 will elaborate the findings of this study.

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# CHAPTER 4

# RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaire survey and the interviews. The data is presented in tables and figures, followed by explanation of the non-linear information and they are discussed according to their complementary correlation with the research questions.

## 4.2 Research Question 1: What are the Malaysian university students' attitudes towards the native and the non-native speaker teachers?

The students' preferences represent their actual attitudes towards the native or the non-native speaker teachers. The students' attitudes are measured from their verbal and written indication of preferences in general and at three different academic years of the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The preferences displayed range from general preferences, preferences to be taught the basic learning skills of English

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Language, preferences of assessments of six basic learning skills, preferences being exposed to the culture and civilization of the native speakers, preferences of being taught the learning strategies and preferences of getting the feedbacks.

### 4.2.1 Preferences in General, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Levels.

The students' perceptions are measured by their general preferences for either native or non-native speaker teachers at three different levels of primary, secondary and tertiary education. The findings are presented in the form of tables and discussed.

The following table 4.2.1.(a), shows the university students' general preferences for the primary level.

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Table 4.2.1(a)

General Preferences for Primary Level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 2.00 | 23 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 23.2 |
| | 3.00 | 22 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 45.5 |
| | 4.00 | 39 | 39.4 | 39.4 | 84.8 |
| | 5.00 | 15 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 99 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

In general, as shown in the Table 4.2 (a), for the primary school level, 23.2% of the respondents indicate their preferences to being taught by the native speaker teachers.

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22.2% students do not show any preference, while 54.6% of them agree that they prefer to be taught English Language by the native speaker teachers.

Table 4.2.1 (b)

Skills Preferences for Primary School Level

| Skills | Taught by Native Speakers | Skills | Taught by Non-native Speakers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | 58.6% | Grammar | 51.5% |
| Pronunciation | 58.6% | Listening | 40.4% |
| Reading | 62.6% | Speaking | 47.5% |

The above table shows 58.6% of the students prefer to be taught vocabulary by native speaker teachers at the primary level. The same number of percentage is shown for preference of being taught pronunciation. Reading is the most preferred skill to be taught by the native speaker teachers, which is by 62.6% students. For the skills to be taught by the non-native speaker teachers, grammar obtains the agreement from 51.5% students. Less than half of the total respondents agree to be taught listening and speaking by the non-native speaker teachers: the percentages are 40.4% and 47.5% students respectively. The complete score can be found in Appendix B.

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Table 4.2.1(c)

Pref3 – General Preference for Secondary School Level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 3.00 | 23 | 23.2 | 23.2 | 23.2 |
| | 4.00 | 38 | 38.4 | 38.4 | 61.6 |
| | 5.00 | 38 | 38.4 | 38.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 99 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The above table indicates quite a significant number of respondents, which is 76.8% agree and strongly agree that they prefer to be taught by native speaker teachers at secondary school level. 23.2% students do not show any preference.

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Table 4.2.1 (d)

Skill Preferences for Secondary School Level

| Skills | Taught by Native Speakers | Skills | Taught by Non-native Speakers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | 81.8% | Grammar | 39.4% |
| Pronunciation | 79.8% | Listening | 36.4% |
| Reading | 88.9% | Speaking | 38.4% |

The above table shows reading receives the highest number of preference towards the native, that is by 88.8% students whereas vocabulary and pronunciation are preferred by 81.8% and 79.8% students respectively. Since many students indicated their uncertainties ( a score of 3 on the Likert's scale), the skills to be taught by the non-

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native speaker teachers receive lower percentage of the students' agreement. For grammar, the percentage is 39.4%, for listening is 36.4% and for speaking is 38.4%.

### 4.3.1 - University Level

Table 4.3.1(a)

Pref4 – General Preferences for University Level

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 3.00 | 9 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 9.1 |
| | 4.00 | 55 | 55.6 | 55.6 | 64.6 |
| | 5.00 | 35 | 35.4 | 35.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 99 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

In general, 91% of the respondents felt that at the university level they should be taught by a native-speaker teacher. Only 9.1% students indicate uncertainties in their choice.

Table 4.3.1 (b)

Skills Preferences for University Level

| Skills | Taught by Native Speakers | Skills | Taught by Non-native Speakers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | 80.8% | Grammar | 46.5% |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pronunciation | 79.8% | Listening | 35.4% |
| Reading | 69.7% | Speaking | 35.4% |

The above table indicates that the native speaker teachers are preferred by 80.8% students for the teaching of vocabulary skills, 79.8% students for pronunciation and 69.7% students for reading. For the non-native speaker teachers, they are preferred by 46.5% students for the teaching of grammar, 35.4% students for listening and 35.4% students also for speaking. This is similar to the finding for the secondary level, many of the students were uncertain with their choice of preference over the non-native teachers. This is marked by the low percentage in listening and speaking.

### 4.3.2 Preferences For Assessments of Basic English Language Learning Skills

The questionnaires also contain questions regarding the students' preferences towards the native speaker and the non-native speaker teachers' assessments of vocabulary, pronunciation, reading, grammar, listening and speaking. The table below shows the students' preferences towards the non-native speaker teachers.

Table 4.3.2 (a)

Preferences for Basic English Language Learning Skills

| Skills | Scales | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Listening | 11.1 | 14.1 | 30.3 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 100% |

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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reading | 10.1 | 22.2 | 26.3 | 32.3 | 9.1 | 100% |
| Speaking | 15.2 | 20.2 | 26.3 | 33.3 | 5.1 | 100% |
| Writing | 11.1 | 44.4 | 17.2 | 21.2 | 6.1 | 100% |
| Pronunciation | 19.2 | 32.3 | 19.2 | 26.3 | 3.0 | 100% |
| Grammar | 17.2 | 18.2 | 12.1 | 38.4 | 14.1 | 100% |

The above table indicates listening is preferred to be taught by the non-native speakers by 44.4% students, whereas 30.3% students are neutral and 25.2% students do not agree. For reading, 41.4% students show agreement and 32.3% students show disagreement, while 26.3% students do not show any preferences. For speaking, 38.4% students agree and 35 .4% students disagree. 26.3% of them are neutral. Writing receives the highest number of disagreement; from 55.5% students and a much smaller percentage of agreement; from 27.3% students. For pronunciation to be taught by the non-native speaker teachers, 29.3% students indicates agreement and 51.5% students indicate disagreement. Meanwhile, 19.2% students do not indicate any preferences. Grammar is preferred to be taught by the non-native speaker teachers by 52.5% students and is not preferred by 35.4% students, while only 12.1% students do not indicate any preferences.

### 4.3.3 Preferences for exposure to culture and civilization of the Native Speakers

This study, through the use of the questionnaires, also investigates whether the university students learn more about the English speaking countries, whether they have more positive attitudes towards the English speaking countries and towards

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learning English Language if they have a native speaker teacher. The next table shows their preferences towards the native speaker teachers.

Table 4.3.3 (a)
Preferences for Exposure to Culture and Civilization of the Native speakers.

| Culture and Civilization (native speaker teachers) | Scales | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| CulCiv 1<br>Learn more about English speaking countries | 12.1 | 27.3 | 22.2 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 100% |
| CulCiv2<br>-have more positive attitudes towards English speaking countries | 0 | 3.0 | 23.2 | 48.5 | 25.3 | 100% |
| CulCiv3<br>-have more positive attitudes towards learning English Language. | 0 | 10.1 | 23.2 | 41.4 | 25.3 | 100% |

The above table indicates an almost equal number of respondents who agree and disagree that they learn more about English speaking countries if they have a native speaker teacher; 38.4% agree and 39.4% disagree, while 22.2% do not indicate any preferences. However, only 3.0% students disagree while the other 73.8% students agree that they will have more positive attitudes towards the English speaking countries if they have a native speaker teacher. 23.2% students are neutral. Almost similarly, 66.7% students agree and 10.1% students disagree that they will have more positive attitudes towards learning English Language if they have a native speaker teacher, while another 23.2% students do not indicate any preferences.

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### 4.3.4 Preferences for Being Taught the Learning Strategies

It is also important to explore the students' preferences towards native and non – native speaker teachers from the aspect of learning strategies. The table below provides the data.

Table 4.3.4(a)

Strate 1- General Preferences for the Native Speaker Teachers

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | 1.00 | 5 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| | 2.00 | 14 | 14.1 | 14.1 | 19.2 |
| | 3.00 | 31 | 31.3 | 31.3 | 50.5 |
| | 4.00 | 28 | 28.3 | 28.3 | 78.8 |
| | 5.00 | 21 | 21.2 | 21.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 99 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The above table shows that generally, 49.5% of the students agree that the native speaker teachers provided them more learning strategies. However, 31.3% students were uncertain.

Table 4.3.4 (b)

General Preferences for Learning Strategies at Different Levels

| Theme | Scale | Primary | Secondary | University |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strategy | 3 | 12.1 | 15.2 | 41.4 |

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 4 | 35.4 | 49.5 | 32.3 |
| | 5 | 25.3 | 20.2 | 16.2 |

The table above indicates 60.7% students agree that the native speaker teachers give them more learning strategies for the primary level, 69.7% students gives the same response for the secondary level and 48.5% students also have the same opinion for the tertiary level. The percentage of those who do not indicate any preferences for the three levels are 12.1%, 15.2% and 41.4% respectively.

### 4.3.5 Preferences for Giving Feedbacks

Giving feedback for certain learning skills in English Language is also a scope to gauge the university students' preferences towards the native and the non-native speaker teachers. The following table shows the students' preferences towards the non-native speaker teachers at giving feedback for 6 learning skills.

Table 4.3.5 (a)

Preferences for Giving Feedback

| Feedback from the Non-native speakers | Scales | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Listening | 24.2 | 31.3 | 19.2 |
| Reading comprehension | 27.3 | 35.4 | 12.1 |
| Speaking | 17.2 | 30.3 | 6.1 |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Writing | 8.1 | 39.4 | 13.1 |
| Pronunciation | 18.2 | 51.5 | 5.1 |
| Grammar | 20.2 | 34.3 | 22.2 |

The above table shows that the percentage of respondents who feel that they get better students are neutral. For reading comprehension, 47.5% students show their preferences and 27.3% students are neutral. Only 36.4% students show preferences for speaking and 17.2% students do not indicate any preferences. 52.5% students prefer feedback for writing to be given by the non-native speaker teachers and only 8.1% students do not show any preference. 56.6% and 56.5% students indicate their preferences for the non-native speaker teachers for both pronunciation and grammar respectively, with 18.2% do not show any preference for the former and 20.2% for the latter.

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### 4.4 Research Question 2 : How does gender determine students' preferences towards native and non-native speaker teachers?

In investigating how gender influences the students' preferences, the questionnaire provides the correlation between gender and their preferences in 6 learning skills of English Language, as well as in class activities, the teaching style and teaching aids of both the native and the non-native speaker teachers. The following table contains the students' preferences for the listed items.

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Table 4.4 (a)
Preferences for Learning Skills, In Class Activities, Teaching Style and Teaching Aids.

| **Native Speakers** | **1 (male)** | **2 (female)** | **Non-Native Speakers** | **1 (male)** | **2 (female)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vocabulary | 41.4 | 48.5 | Grammar | 26.3 | 23.2 |
| Pronunciation | 45.5 | 35.4 | Listening | 29.3 | 23.2 |
| Reading | 33.3 | 42.4 | Speaking | 18.2 | 16.2 |
| InClassAct | 33.3 | 35.4 | Teaching Aids | 20.2 | 11.1 |
| TeachingStyle | 36.4 | 42.4 | | | |

In the above table, more female respondents show that they prefer the native speaker teachers' teaching style, in class activities and their teaching of vocabulary and reading. On the other hand, more male respondents prefer the non-native teachers' teaching aids and their teaching of pronunciation, grammar, listening and speaking.

## 4.5 Research Question 3 – How does experience of learning English Language from the native speaker teachers influence the students' preferences towards the native speaker and the non-native speaker teachers?

The data from the demographic information from the questionnaires reveals that the respondents' earlier learning experiences from the native speaker teachers shape a certain perception about their English Language teachers. The following table indicates a correlation between the respondents' experience and their preferences towards the native speaker teachers.

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Table 4.5 (a)
ExWNTeac * Prefl Crosstabulation
Students' Learning Experience and Their Preferences

| Experience (Years) | | Prefl (Scales) | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 3.00 | 4.00 | 5.00 | |
| ExWNTeac | 1.00 | 0 | 12.1 | 3.0 | 15.2 |
| | 2.00 | 0 | 6.1 | 0 | 6.1 |
| | 3.00 | 0 | 12.1 | 18.2 | 30.3 |
| | 4.00 | 0 | 17.2 | 4.0 | 21.2 |
| | 5.00 | 0 | 8.1 | 2.0 | 10.1 |
| | 6.00 | 0 | 5.1 | 0 | 5.1 |
| | 7.00 | 4.0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| | 8.00 | 3.0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | 10.00 | 0 | 3.0 | 0 | 3 |
| | 12.00 | 0 | 2.0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | | 7.0 | 65.7 | 27.2 | 100 |

In general, the above table shows that students with experience of 3 years of learning English Language from the native speaker teachers state their strong agreement to having native speakers as their English Language teachers – 18.2% out of the total of 30.3% students who indicate their preference. 65.7% of all the respondents prefer to have native speakers as their English Language teachers. 27 students show they strongly agree. Only 7% of all the students do not indicate any preference.

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Table 4.5 (b)

Students' Experience and Preferences for Learning Skills

| Themes of skills | Scales | Years of Experience | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minimum | | | Moderate | | | High | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Vocabulary (native speakers) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 8 | 2 | 12 | 16 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 5 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Pronunciation (native speakers) | 3 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 9 | 2 | 12 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 5 | 6 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Reading (native speakers) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 9 | 6 | 18 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| | 5 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Speaking (non-native speakers) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Grammar (non-native speakers) | 3 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 5 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Listening | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **(non-native speakers)** | **5** | **0** | **0** | **3** | 3 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |

The above table shows the respondents' preferences towards the native speaker teachers to teach grammar come mostly from students with 4 years of learning English from the native speaker teachers. A total of 10 students with 3,7 and 8 years of experience do not indicate any preferences for pronunciation to be taught by the native speaker teachers, 19 students with 2, 3, 4 and 5 years of experience do not indicate any preferences. Meanwhile, 79 students indicate their preferences towards the native speaker teachers. For reading to be taught by the native speaker teachers, 16 students do not show any preferences and 75 students indicate their preferences towards the native speaker teachers.

For the non-native speaker teachers, 33 students indicate their preferences to be taught speaking and 13 of the respondents do not indicate any preferences. 32 students indicate uncertainty whether grammar should be taught by the non-native speaker teachers. Meanwhile 50 students state their agreements. For listening, 22 students indicate no preferences. 42 students agree to be taught listening by the non-native speaker teachers. Overall, students who are minimally and highly exposed to the native speaker teachers tend to show higher preferences towards the native speaker teachers.

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## 4.6 Research Question 4 – What are the characteristics of good English Language teachers according to Malaysian university students?

The interviews contain the respondents' opinions about the qualities and the characteristics that they look for in English Language teachers, regardless of their nativeness. The following findings are derived from the interviews full transcription. (Appendices 1,2,3 and 4). Throughout the following paragraphs, the characteristics of good English Language teachers as described by the respondents are listed.

### *1. Do not concentrate too much on the students' grammar*

According to Respondent 1, the non-native speaker teachers focus their teaching too much on the aspects of correcting their students' grammatical mistakes whereas the native speaker teachers do not:

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*1. "they used to speaking so they write the way they speak...not really concentrate too much in the grammar part."*

*2. "I think the non-native speakers..they concentrate a lot more on the grammar"*

Instead, the native speaker teachers think that the most important thing in English Language is when the speaker can convey the intended message. The students feel discouraged when their every grammatical mistake in writing or speaking is highlighted. This is also the characteristic listed by Medgyes (1994): since NSTs 'do notmake a fuss about errors unless they hinder communication' This relative tolerance of NSTs is well-documented in error gravity studies investigating

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grammatical errors (e.g. Derwing *et al.*,2002;Garrett & Austin, 1993; Hughes & Lascaratou, 1982; James, 1977; Sheorey,1986).

### 2. *Do not depend too much on textbooks or printed materials*

The second characteristic of a good English Language teacher is when they can teach without relying heavily on the use of the provided textbooks. According to Respondent 2, most local (non-native) English Language teachers are very attached to the textbooks and this will cause the learning and teaching activities to be very dull:

*1."Maybe there is a contra...between British punya (teaching style)...the way they teach and also Malay style. They don't use textbook that much, or they don't really ask the students to buy textbooks and all..,"*

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The respondent also recalled the use of textbook by the English Language teachers in United Kingdom, where she attended a school there, was very minimum. Without the textbooks, the students are exposed to various learning activities which are fun and interesting. In a study by Li, Wu, Shao & Wang (2005), the students who have registered in the courses given by foreign teachers complained that their teachers would choose material at will. The textbooks (normally textbooks compiled by Chinese authors) assigned by the designated department were left untouched. They prefer to use their own materials, pictures, movies, and other props. Finally, foreign teachers are flexible in evaluating students' performance:

*1."At first my English was very bad, yeah, a lot of red marks, but not as much as the one in Malaysia. In Malaysia, even very little mistake...no need to tell"*

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*2. "They just write, as I told you before, they concerned more on how you convey your idea, they don't really care about your grammar, as long as you convey your idea correctly, they say it's okay."*

### *3. Do not stress too much on grades*

The stress on grades, according Respondent 3, can cause the students to feel very pressured by their teachers. To this student, the approach by her previous native English Language speaker teacher, who only worked to improve the students' achievement in school is better accepted than those teachers who want their students to get straight A's in their examinations:

*1. "...when I was over there (England) – they didn't really stress on grades that much, they only want you to improve."*

*2. "...so they don't really stress on everyone to get A like in Malaysia"*

The examination-oriented lessons can be very seriously discouraging to the young learners.

### *4. Always conduct good and interesting in-class learning activities*

Good English Language teachers should be able to conduct their lessons in interesting ways. To Respondents 1 and 2, in class activities must be fun so that the students can

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learn more when they are happy. Some non-native teachers have well-planned lessons but missing the fun elements needed to attract the students' attention:

*1. "Lots of mixed activities, it's not just the same stuff."*

*2. "Teachers used to bring us to watch the play"*

Respondent 1 said they always had fun learning English in United Kingdom because their teachers took them out to watch the theatre and most of the time the lessons were of communicative types; the kinds of activities which are rarely or never held at all by the non-native speaker teachers:

*1. "Good activities ..like all communicative types of lessons"*

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***5. Vary in class activities and do not bore the students***

Most of the respondents in the interviews recalled their unhappiness of being bored during their English Language lessons because they were mainly doing the same things almost everyday. They also think that teachers should not only conduct interesting activities, but a mixture of various interesting activities.

*1. "...kind of it gets a little bit boring because we do the same thing everyday."*

*2. "The way she teaches the students is interesting in the way that...you learn this particular topic...they'll bring you to outside like in a practical way...sometimes you go to museum, sometimes to countryside – something to expose you, like how you practise this in your daily life'"*

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***6. Show concern, friendly and approachable, positive and committed.***

Certain personal traits can make the teachers more highly regarded by their students. The respondents in the interviews expressed their satisfaction of having teachers who are very concerned with their students, friendly, approachable, positive and committed in doing their work:

*1. "...friendlier compared to teachers in Malaysia"*

*2. "I can say that the teachers there are more friendly...they're like friends lah"*

*3. "they started off with a friendly talk ..we didn't have that kind of approach"*

The students feel they are well taken care of when their teachers asked how they were doing before the lessons started. The teachers should also show their care by asking about the students' families or their weekend activities like birthday parties they held:

*1. "How was birthday party last night, did you have fun?"*

*2. "And you know, when the teacher had started teaching and stuff, all the students would pay attention because we had our time to talk."*

The teachers who are unfriendly are seen as unapproachable and do not like to help students. Some respondents said that their native speaker teachers always tried to help their students in many ways and they always project positive attitudes whenever they are around their students. Some teachers would stay after school hours so that they could help their students, this is in contrast with most local teachers who, according to them, are hard to find after the last bell rings. Every time the native

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speaker teachers help their students, they would try by all means so that the students' academic or personal problems would finally be solved. This commitment is substantial in gaining the students' confidence in their teachers' credibility.

### 7. *Calm, tolerant and well-versed.*

During the interview sessions, the respondents also voiced out their respects for teachers who can control their anger. Teachers, according to these students, should always be calm and tolerant when facing with difficulties caused by their students. The students would be more anxious to learn English Language from teachers who know this language very well, who know when their students make mistakes but not necessarily who correct the students' every mistake. The teachers should show their tolerance by not punishing their students when they commit mistakes during the learning processes:

*1. "They seldom go ballistic (angry) with students"*

*2. "They would talk...they would make us understand what we did wrong in the sentence"*

### 8. *Different teaching style and approach*

According to the interview respondents, the locals teachers' styles and approaches are different in many ways compared to the styles and approaches of the native-speaker teachers'. The native speaker teachers always manage to make their students feel learning is relaxing:

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*1. "They give us a sense that – those (learning English ) are relaxing"*

*2. "So, although MacBeth is like really boring, and hard to understand but then bila campur dengan( also include) DVD and those, kind of make it interestinglah."*

## 4.7 Discussion

The university undergraduate students surveyed for this study generally showed a preference towards the NSTs compared to the NNESTs. Lasagabaster and Sierra's study (2002) also concluded that EFL students have a preference for native speaker teachers over non-native speakers, but they also show that a combination of native speakers and non-native speakers is even more appropriate. University students seem to be more inclined towards native speaker teachers than younger students. During the survey, more than half of the students reported that they are in favour of the NSTs largely due to the shortcomings of the NNESTs such as not very well-versed with English Language and thus resort to relying too heavily on the textbooks that will give negative impression to the students. This is also found in the research done by Samimy & Brutt-Griffler's (1999) study, in which they noted the differences in the area of linguistic competence in English, teaching methods, and general characteristics of the non-native speaker teachers.

Even though the native speaker teachers are preferred in general, some students feel that they prefer to learn some basic skills of learning English preferred to be taught by the non-native speaker teachers. A research done by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002) also found that it is a common belief that sharing knowledge of the

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students' L1 is an important source of confidence for the NNESTs, and in this way, then serves as a non-native model to learner, since this teacher went through the same stages of learning.

According to these students, the NSTs have better proficiency in English which helps them to conduct their classrooms more effectively as they can make the modification on the lessons whenever the needs arise. It is often found that the non-native English speaking teachers cannot fulfil the students' expectations in idiomatic and colloquial expressions. When students cannot find confidence in the ability of non-native English speaking instructors to communicate effectively, their experience with the instructors can be limited and negatively affected. Eventually this can translate into their evaluation of the non-native English speaking teachers' teaching quality (Neves and Sanyal, 1991). The NNESTs are also said to religiously utilize the textbook and rarely make adjustment to any of the pre-outlined lesson plans which inevitably end up being somewhat monotonous. This is highlighted greatly by the interviewees because they are very concerned with the outcome of a lesson; a boring lesson will not help the students to learn much.

As for fluency and accuracy, the students also recalled being constantly corrected by their non-native teachers during their English lessons and overly emphasized on the importance of examinations. These factors contribute to the strictly examination-oriented teachings. When these happen in the classroom, the fun of learning the language cannot be experienced. The examination results always become the focus of the NNEST of English and the students would be given a lot of homework or assignment to make them really work to achieve a certain target set for the subject. This phenomenon leads to teachers who correct their students' every mistake hoping they would make less mistakes in the future. More often than not, this

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is a discouraging factor for any young learners. Some feel strongly stressed out due to their extensive efforts on figuring out the meaning of the instructors instead of concentrating on learning (Clayton, 2000).

. Although some parents and education administrators have openly and oftenly displayed a negative attitude towards NNST, the university students in this study appear not to do so. There could be a number of reasons to this. First, it is not the administrators or the parents who are in the classrooms. The students, having experienced taught by both NST and NNST realized the fact that a well-qualified NNST is as good as a NST. They have also met NNST in many other disciplines whose English are easier to comprehend by local students. Indeed some students found that a local teacher with sound English Language command is as good as the native speaker teachers.

Many students become more matured after various encounters with the NNEST in other disciplines at the university and are willing to shed their prejudices built against the NNST . Such evidences come from Respondent 4 of the interview sessions who claimed that:

1. *"I think they can both teach" (L75)*
2. *"So the quality is still the same. The quality is still there" (L77-78)*

They become more aware of the more qualified and competent NNST, regardless of their non-native status, and hence do not really have a strong preference towards the NST. As for gender and experience of learning English from the native speaker teachers, these two factors do not seem to greatly influence the students' preferences towards the native or the non-native speaker teachers. The capabilities of

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the teachers in imparting knowledge to their students determine the students' perceptions towards either the native or the non-native speaker teachers.

## 4.8 Summary

This chapter discloses all the findings from both the questionnaire items and the interviews. The discussion that follows indicates the inclination of preference towards the native speaker teachers, however, there are also undeniable strengths of the non-native speaker teachers that put them at par with the slightly preferred native speaker counterparts.

Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the major findings and it will include the discussion derived from the study.

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# CHAPTER FIVE

# CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

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## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of five sections . The first section discusses the major findings of this study, the second section highlights the limitations, the third section looks at some of the implications of the findings and the fourth section provides some suggestions for future research in this area. The fifth section concludes the whole chapter.

## 5.2 Discussion of many findings

One significant finding of this study is that being native to English Language is not a guaranteed factor to attract learners to learn the language from because non-native

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speakers also have their advantages at teaching some aspects of the language. The learners may seem to show better preferences towards the native speaker teachers, however, the differences are not too significant. The same results were shown in a study by Cheung (2002) that both students and teachers saw NSTs and NNESTs having their respective strengths. A high proficiency in English, ability to use English functionally, and the awareness of the cultures of English speaking countries were the strengths observed in NSTs teachers. On the other hand, the NNESTs' ability to empathize with students as fellow second language learners, a shared cultural background, and the emphasis they placed on grammar were seen as
their strengths.

The other notable differences are the native speaker teachers are mainly preferred because of their authentic skills such as vocabulary and pronunciation, whereas the non-native speaker teachers are preferred because they are able to spot their students' difficulties because they also experienced the same problems during their struggle to master the language. Pickert (1978) suggests that "...good language learners..." want a teacher who is systematic, and logical, and easy to understand, but rather take charge of their own learning than have the teacher control this aspect, thus treating them as 'informants' rather than a stereotypical teacher. In other areas of assessment, especially in the 'production' skills of speaking, pronunciation, and writing, the students seem happier with NSTs.

It is clear that the longer a student is exposed to the language in their native surrounding – English speaking counties, the better they become at assessing the non-native teachers' abilities to teach certain aspects of the language. A teacher's nativeness is not a deciding factor, but their professional and interpersonal skills are.

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The native speaker teachers do not seem to mind the minor reading or pronunciation mistakes made by their students, whereas the non-native speaker teachers will try by all means to ensure their students to do well in these two areas. However, the gruelling tasks of teaching a second language can be well-accepted by the students if the teachers put together some elements of creativity, fun and different approaches in their teachings. Young learners are inclined towards having fun activities, so, teachers are considered good if they can prepare some effective lessons that fit the needs of the young learners.

## 5.3 The implications of the findings

The issues highlighted in this study can be used to improve the approaches to teach English as a second language in this country. There are several issues like the non-natives are seen as second to their native counterparts. It is high time that all English Language teachers and learners in Malaysia to focus on what these second language teachers can do instead of pursuing to unnecessarily highlight on what they will never become; a native speaker. Medgyes (1994) argues that superior knowledge of English grammar is exclusively owned by native speakers only. This is because native speakers rarely study grammar during schooling or university, unless when they are training specifically for that.. The non-native teachers can adopt their styles of teaching and approaches but they will never become native speakers.

The idea of World Englishes should be made aware of by all Malaysian citizens because most Malaysians are still of the opinion that Malaysian English has no or less standards compared to English spoken in other countries. They should be

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told, through the use of most widely used medium of spreading information, that Malaysian English is as distinctive and authentic as English spoken by the Singaporean or Indian.

## 5.4 Suggestions for future research

Based on the findings of this study, the writer would like to make suggestions for future researchers to investigate the university perceptions towards the native and the non-native speaker teachers:

5.4.1 The research instrument can be further modified to gain better insights of the university students' perceptions towards their native or non-native speaker of English teachers. For example, the scales can be reduced to Agree or Disagree only so that the respondents would not be discouraged by the long list of the questions.

5.4.2 A bigger sample with adequate experience of being taught English Language by the native speaker teachers would be a better representation of the university students' perceptions.

5.4.3 The research instrument can be used by relevant bodies to gauge attitudes towards native and non-native speaker of English teachers. However, the focus on both the native or the non-native speaker teachers should be separated into different studies so that a clearer picture of the students' perceptions can be easily obtained.

5.4.4 There is also a need to carry out research on the parental and employers' preferences towards the native and the non-native teachers. The findings will be able to give better views of this issue.

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5.4.5 A study on both native and non-native speakers of English students' performances, is it due to their teachers' nativeness or proficiencies?

5.4.6 Consider offering some sections for native speakers who have difficulties in teaching English courses to non-native students. This is to enable the writer to enrich the sources of data because of the similar students' backgrounds but the teacher is a native speaker. The finding can be a proof whether being native influences students' learning.

## 5.5 Conclusion

It is very obvious that on most of the variables measured, actual experience of having been taught by a NST did not lead to very significant differences in the university students' judgements. On the few variables where such experience did seem to have an effect, it was always in favour of NSTs. The professional and interpersonal skills of the teachers, however, did seem to have more effect, though still only on a minority of variables . It can be concluded that the nativeness of the teachers have a considerably little effects to English language learning compared to the other teacher factors that is a stronger inclination towards 'integrative' rather than 'instrumental' goals (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). And this leads them to have stronger preferences for NSTs in some areas. An integrative orientation is associated with a favourable disposition towards the L2 group and a desire to interact with and become a valued member of that community, and in some cases perhaps even wishing to pass for one of them (Piller, 2002). In contrast, an instrumental orientation is more related to outcomes such as getting a particular job and a higher income. One might expect those with a

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stronger and predominantly integrative orientation to have a greater preference for NSTs on some questions. This is an issue that could be further explored through more comprehensive studies in the future.

From the study it can be generalized that the native speaker of English teachers are preferred only slightly higher than their non-native counterparts. The study reveals that only the areas of pronunciation and in-class activities have won most students' attention towards their native speaker teachers. However, skills like grammar and reading, though still dominated by the native speaker teachers, have also been well-received by the students if they are taught by the non-native speaker teachers. Being friendly towards the students, approachable and fun oriented in-class activities seem to be the most popular reasons why the university students prefer to learn English Language from the native speaker of English teachers. It can be said that with the development of the market place, which grows significantly each year in the number of language learners, the number of schools teaching English, and the number of 'teachers' entering the market place, much greater consideration and emphasis will be placed on the qualities of the teachers, not only by the teaching institutions, but by the students themselves.

On the final note, this study is perceived as an important beginning for a better understanding of the current issue relating to teaching of English Language in Malaysia. Since ESL teachers are deemed responsible for their students' well-being in English Language subject, the society is monitoring their every failure and victory. However, the society has to be made understood of all the interrelated elements surrounding teaching and learning. The students and the society must be convinced that factors such as a teacher's nativeness is not the sole determiner in a student's academic achievement. Teachers, on the other hand must continue to develop their

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linguistic and teaching skills to supplement the areas in which they lack. It is time that everybody should shift their focus on the local teachers' performance instead of their nativity.

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