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NESTs and NNESTs linguistic features' impact on the Mexican context

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Abstract

This study explores and contrasts the perceptions of Mexican EFL learners' and teachers towards the issue of nativeness in ELT. It explores findings from two surveys: One conducted to English learners and the other conducted to native and non-native English teachers. Additionally, it further explores on perceptions through follow-up interviews. The results of the study show that overall both NNESTs and NESTs in Mexico feel comfortable with their linguistic and sociocultural knowledge of English. This comfort influenced their teaching decisions. Additionally, teachers in the study expressed that their mother tongues (English or Spanish) had a positive impact in their teaching practices. However, NESTs expressed that being able to switch from English to Spanish was something that put NNESTs in a more advantageous place than NESTs. On the other hand, NNESTs expressed that NESTs were usually favored in teaching positions or salaries due to their mother tongues and backgrounds. All teachers considered academic training in ELT as vitally important. Finally, beginner learners leaned towards non-native teachers while more advanced learners had a preference for native teachers.

Table of contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	8
1.1 Introduction to the problem	8
1.2 Significance of the study	9
1.3 Purpose of the study	10
1.4 Objectives of the study	10
1.5 Research questions	11
1.6 Overview of the research	11
1.7 Key terms	11
English as an international language	11
Native speakers	12
Non-native speakers	12
Native speaker teachers (NESTs)	12
Non-native speaker teacher (NNESTs)	12
Chapter 2. Theoretical framework and literature review	13
2.0 introduction	13
2.1 English as an international language	13
2.2 English as a lingua franca	15
2.3 Native speakers of English vs. Non-native speakers of English	16
2.4 Native speaker teachers (NESTs)	17
2.5 Non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs)	18
2.6 The native speaker fallacy	20
2.7 Identity in ELT	21
2.8 Communicative competence	22
2.9 Cultural awareness in ELT	23
2.10 The role of English in Mexico	24
2.11 Conclusion	25
Chapter 3. Methodology	26
3.0 Introduction and overview	26
3.1 Methodological process	26
3.2 Participants	27
3.2.2 The teachers	28
3.3 Data collection instruments	29

3.3.1 The questionnaires	29
3.3.1.1 The students' questionnaire	29
3.3.1.2 The teacher's questionnaire	30
3.3.2 The interviews	31
3.4 Procedure.....	31
3.5 Conclusion	32
Chapter 4. Results and discussion	33
4.0 introduction	33
4.1 Students' perceptions.....	33
4.1.1 Students' perceptions about NNESTs and NESTs' linguistic knowledge.....	34
4.1.2 Perceptions of learners towards NESTs' and NNESTs' sociocultural knowledge.....	40
4.1.3 Perceived Advantages of NESTs and NNESTs	42
4.2 NESTs and NNESTs perceptions about themselves.	46
4.2.2 NESTs and NNESTs perceptions towards their linguistic competence	47
4.2.3 Teachers' perceptions about their own sociocultural knowledge.....	49
4.3 Teachers' academic preparation in ELT	50
4.4 The influence of a teacher's mother tongue in their professional career.....	51
4.5 The ideal English teacher	53
4.6 Teachers' perceptions of students' preferences	55
4.7 Hiring processes and remuneration for teachers	57
4.8 Conclusion	59
Chapter 5. Conclusions.....	60
5.0 Introduction.....	60
5.1 Conclusions.....	60
5.2 Limitations.....	64
5.3 Directions for further research.....	64
5.4 Implications	65
References.....	66
Appendices.....	72
Appendix A	72
Appendix B	75
Appendix C	79
Appendix D.....	92

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the problem

In the present times, the English language possesses a prime status globally since it has become the most widely spoken language in the world. This status is the result of two factors: the expansion of the British colonization, and the economic and political power of The United States. The prestige of this language is present in over seventy countries, included Ghana, Nigeria, India, Singapore and Vanuatu (Crystal, 2003). Furthermore, English is considered the language for international communication. In fact, English is the only foreign language taught in public universities in Saudi Arabia (Alharbi, 2019). Similarly, in South America, English is used as a cognitive tool for accessing the world (Kamhi-Stein et al., 2017).

Almost three quarters of all English native speakers in the world come from the USA (Crystal, 2003). But in fact, it is non-native speakers of English who account for the majority of speakers of this language. It is estimated that about a quarter of the world's population speaks English at a fluent or competent level and this number continues to grow due to the relevance of the language worldwide (Crystal, 2003).

Al-Nawrasy (2013) defines native speakers of English as those who learned it in early childhood and have spoken it ever since. On the other hand, Non-native speakers are described as those whose first language is different from English and learned the language as an L2. In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) non-native English speaker teachers (NNESTs) outnumber native English speaker teachers (NESTs). In fact, Canagarajah (1999) states that 80% of the world's English language teachers are non-natives. Nevertheless, NESTs are

usually favored over NNESTs especially in contexts where English is learned as a foreign language. This discrimination is mainly due to what Phillipson called “the native speaker fallacy” that perceives NESTs as “unaccented” speakers with superior knowledge of grammar, idiomatic expressions and culture. Whereas NNESTs are associated with deficient language proficiency and “accented” speech (Faez & Karaz, 2019).

Having a foreign-accented speech might entail bias against speakers, especially towards NNESTs. Levis et al. (2016) explain that “research exploring ESL and EFL students’ perceptions and attitudes toward teachers has shown that native language is a major (through unfairly implemented) influence on teacher confidence, student beliefs about the effectiveness of a teacher, and administrators’ willingness to hire” (p.3)

With the above in mind, the current study aims to explore and contrast the impact of Native English Speaker Teachers’ (NESTs) and Non-Native English Speaker Teachers’ (NNESTs) on learners’ opinions and native and non-native teachers’ perceptions about themselves.

1.2 Significance of the study

Despite the fact that most English teachers worldwide are non-native speakers of the language. The issue of nativeness is still an object of concern among many scholars, teachers, learners and coordinators in the field of ELT. The manner in which NESTs NNESTs are perceived by learners and teachers themselves is reflected in many aspects. Some NNESTs might feel insecure about their own identity and competence as English teachers because they are not native speakers (Yazan, 2018). Similarly, the International Association of Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL) expressed its position towards this issue and expressed that the fallacy of the native speaker as the preferred language teacher has led

NNESTs to find themselves often discriminated against in hiring practices or working assignments in the field of ESL or EFL teaching (2006).

Thus, the significance of the current study is to have a critical understanding of how both NNESTs and NESTs are perceived in the defined context and raise awareness on the need of reevaluating current beliefs and practices in the field of ELT.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and contrast the perceptions of Mexican learners towards their native and non-native speaker teachers of English. Furthermore, it aims to explore and contrast the perceptions that NESTs and NNESTs in Mexico have about themselves. To fulfill this aim, this study will first apply a questionnaire addressed to learners and teachers in Mexico. The answers of the questionnaires will provide key information that will be further explored through exploratory interviews that follow up on questionnaires. The expected outcomes of this study might provide a richer understanding on what are the perceptions about both NESTs' and NNESTs' linguistic and sociocultural features, what influences these perceptions, and how being a native or non-native might impact teachers' self-perceptions about their competence and identity. It may also establish the grounds for further research in the field.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- To explore English learners' perceptions towards their Mexican English teachers and Native English speaker teachers.
- To explore and contrast the influence that linguistic and sociocultural features of NESTs and NNESTs has on teachers' self-perceptions of their own professional competence and identity.

1.5 Research questions

The research questions that lead this thesis are:

1. What are the English learners' perceptions towards their Mexican and Native English speaker teachers?
2. What are the Mexican English teachers' and Native English speaker teachers' perceptions of themselves in their work context?

1.6 Overview of the research

The current chapter presented an introduction to the research study and the key factors that support it: why this topic was researched and the significance of the study. It also established the context of the research, the aims and research questions. In the subsequent chapters, the theoretical framework, a literature review and the methodology will be presented as well as the data analysis and the conclusion that will derive from the data analysis. Finally, the limitations of the research will be described as well as some suggestions for further research in the subject.

1.7 Key terms

English as an international language

According to Jenkins. (2002) English as an international language (EIL) communication is perceived as international rather than oriented towards communication with native speakers. Speakers of EIL are not considered foreign, but international speakers who belong to an international community where all members have the right to express their L1 identity in English by means of their accent as long as they do not compromise international intelligibility

Native speakers

Al-Nawrasy (2013) defines a native speaker of English as the one whose first language is English and has spoken the language since early childhood.

Non-native speakers

Al-Nawrasy (2013) defines non-native speakers as those whose first language is not English and who learned it as an additional language.

Native speaker teachers (NESTs)

Selvi (2011) explains that Native speaker teachers have long been conceptualized by creating a dichotomy between native speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs). In the field of ELT, native speakers are usually preferred over non-native speakers as teachers of the language (Medgyes, 2001).

Non-native speaker teacher (NNESTs)

Almost three quarters of English teachers worldwide are non-native (Canagarajah, 1999) nevertheless, inequality is reflected in prejudices and discrimination against non-native speakers of English and speakers of the language who do not speak a mainstream US variety of the language (Lippi-Green, cited in Kubota, 2001).

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework and literature review

2.0 introduction

The current thesis work has two aims: Firstly, to carry out an exploration of the English learners' perception towards their Mexican English teachers and Native English speaker teachers. Secondly, to compare and contrast the Mexican English teachers' perceptions and Native English teachers' perceptions of themselves. In order to fulfill these aims it is vital to clarify some concepts that will be approached throughout the thesis work. Thus, the current chapter provides insight into the theoretical framework and literature review of relevant aspects related to the concepts of NNESTs and NESTs.

To start, the definition of English as an international language will be provided, followed up by the description of the concept of English as a lingua franca. Next, the concepts of Native English speakers and Non-native English speakers will be addressed and explained. Next, a description the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers will be given, followed by the concept of the native speaker fallacy. Later on, the definitions of linguistic and sociocultural aspects of English will be addressed as they are key concepts that might influence the perceptions towards English teachers. After that, the concepts of identity in ELT and cultural awareness in ELT will expand and contribute to the previous topics. Finally, given that the current study takes place in the Mexican context, the role of English language in Mexico will be described. The chapter closes with a conclusion.

2.1 English as an international language

Nowadays English is spoken by more non-native than native speakers (Crystal, 2003). This fact raises questions on the impact it might have on how English is taught. For instance, Cook (1999) states that English pedagogy would benefit from paying closer attention to the L2

speaker, rather than the native speaker since the former outnumber the latter significantly. Nevertheless, most teaching pedagogies still focus on emulating the native speaker's pronunciation. In this regard, Rose and Montakantiwong (2018) explain that the growth of English language has caused many professionals to call for a change of paradigm in English teaching, moving from teaching English as a foreign language to teaching English as an international language.

English as an international language (EIL) perceives international communication rather than communication with native speakers as the goal for language pedagogy. Speakers of EIL are not considered foreign, but international speakers who belong to an international community where all members have the right to express their L1 identity in English by means of their accent as long as they do not compromise international intelligibility (Jenkins, 2002). For EIL, native speakers only represent "a part of a much larger group of speakers of the language" (Llurda, 2004 p. 317). On the other hand, the notion of EIL has been reflected in some countries like Britain, where there is a growing belief that regional accent differences are actually the rule rather than the exception. Thus, it seems reasonable that the goal for language teaching evolves and aims to make students speak like a foreigner, but pronounce in a way that is intelligible enough to communicate with native speakers (Jenkins, 2002).

Nonetheless, in most parts of the world "the native speaker remains a given, and the native speaker standard measure still reigns supreme" (Jenkins, 2002). In this regard, Kachru and Ferguson (1992) state that: "*The whole mystique of the native speaker and the mother tongue should probably be quietly dropped from the linguist's set of professional myths about language.*" (p.320). Furthermore, they question that if the native speaker standard were

universal, what implications would it have for language acquisition and use? And what would they add to the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism?

2.2 English as a lingua franca.

The English language has held the prestigious status of lingua franca since the end of World War II, and with the effects of globalization, now stands as the language of freedom, prosperity, and success in personal, educational, and professional lives worldwide (Moussu, 2018. P.1).

The term *English as a lingua franca* (ELF) should not be confused with English as an international language. The two concepts are similar in that both of them refer to communication among speakers with a different L1. However, what differentiates them is that ELF is considered a “contact language” for people of not only different native languages, but also different countries and cultures who choose English as their means of communication across linguacultural boundaries (Seidlhofer, 2005).

The concept of ELF not only includes speakers with an L1 different to English, but also those who speak English as a mother tongue and who belong to the inner circle countries. These people not only participate in speaking English as a lingua franca, but in fact they add to its variability (Mauranen, 2018). Furthermore, it seems relevant to highlight that there have existed other languages as lingua franca. nonetheless, the global extent of English as a contact language is unprecedented (Dewey, 2014).

For Mauraneen (2018) English as a Lingua Franca provides unique insights for understanding second languages, due to its diffusion and its contact with other languages worldwide.

Finally, ELF is mostly seen as non-controversial and widely accepted by many professionals worldwide (like businesspeople and technicians), although their positive orientation is rarely

verbalized, and thus, not published. In contrast, it is the negative judgments towards ELF that are usually published (Jenkins, 2009).

2.3 Native speakers of English vs. Non-native speakers of English.

From the perspective of English as a lingua franca and English as an international language, English belongs to everybody who speaks it. Thus, the origins of the teachers are not relevant in their professional career. Nonetheless, the field of English language teaching (ELT) worldwide still classifies teacher's competence within the dichotomy of native and non-native speakerism (Fithriani, 2018). This dichotomy has led to racial and linguistic discrimination towards those teachers who are not native speakers of the language. In fact, many people hold the belief that a native speaker teacher would make the ideal English teacher due to their superior command in the language.

Al-Nawrasy (2013) defines a native speaker of English as the one whose first language is English and has spoken the language since early childhood. It is remarkable how the indisputable element in this definition is that a person is considered a native speaker of the language they learned first. Any other characteristic added to the definition, even those related to language competence, seem to be secondary. Furthermore, the definition suggests that someone who did not learn the language in childhood cannot be considered a native speaker (Cook, 1999). Additionally, Stern (1983) expands the definition by claiming that native speakers share certain characteristics among them and lists them as follows: 1) subconscious knowledge of the rules of the language, 2) intuitive grasp of meanings, 3) the ability to communicate across different social settings, 4) a wide range of language skills, 5) creativity of the language use.

On the other hand, Al-Nawrasy (2013) defines non-native speakers as those whose first language is not English and who learned it as an additional language. Today, the number of non-native speakers of English is bigger than native speakers (Crystal, 2003) and the same trend is repeated in ESL/EFL contexts where non-native English speaker teachers (NNESTs) outnumber NESTs (Canagarajah, 1999). In spite of this fact, NNESTs are usually discriminated due to their origins.

2.4 Native speaker teachers (NESTs)

The current status of English as a lingua franca has caused a massive need for English teachers worldwide. This need has appeared not only in countries where English is a national language, but also in countries where it is a foreign language. Furthermore, this massive need has also brought forth the question of whether or not Non-native speakers of English are qualified to teach the language or, if native speakers are the only ideal of an English teacher (Moussu, 2018). Thus, the debate about what makes the ideal language teacher has been going on for at least the last twenty years and this issue is still subject of discussion (Al-Nawrasy, 2013).

Native speaker teachers have long been conceptualized by creating a dichotomy between native speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs). Such dichotomy has only resulted in discrimination towards NNESTs. Even if there have been attempts to re-conceptualize the terms, the field of applied linguistics is still far from reaching consensus to adopt any concept (Selvi, 2011). For Chomsky (2014) the authority of native speakers is due to their facility to demonstrate fluent language. However, as Rampton (1990) states, this authority is complex and problematic because being born with certain language does not mean that a person is an effective speaker of it. In the field of ELT, native speakers are usually preferred over non-native speakers as teachers of the language. This preference is due to

different factors, for instance, being taught by native teachers can be motivating for some students, furthermore, there exists a belief that native speaker's knowledge of the language can increase students' learning potential. However, some authors believe that the effectiveness of teachers in motivating their students and developing their language skills should be more important than their nativeness (Alghofaili & Elyas, 2017).

This idealization of the native speaker is based mainly on the importance attributed to oral production in the target language. Furthermore, it has been stated that the main advantage of native English speaker teachers (NESTs) lies in their superior communicative and linguistic competence of the language, which is after all their mother tongue (Al-Nawrasy, 2013). On the other hand, research has provided no evidence of the superiority of NESTs. In fact, (Levis et al., 2016) explain that the effectiveness of a language teacher does not lie in their origins, but it is true that NNESTs bring tremendous advantages to learners since they have been through the process of learning the language and have become aware of the tricks and pitfalls learners might fall into.

2.5 Non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs)

In the present, native language is a common and unfairly implemented aspect that usually places native teachers in advantage over non-native teachers in hiring practices. In spite of findings that learners consider both NESTs and NNESTs as equally efficient language instructors, discrimination practices towards NNESTs continue in different parts of the world (Levis et al., 2016). One example of the discrimination that NNESTs face is that not all MA TESOL programs allow their non-native speaker students to participate in practicums because they are concerned about the noticeable accents of their student teachers, as well as their poor communication skills, fluency and limited cultural awareness in English. This lack of

opportunities for NNESTs results in decreased teaching experience (Moussu, 2018). On the other hand, while many non-native speakers of English tend to pursue improvement in their communicative competences by attending ESL/EFL classes, most native English speakers rarely receive training to develop awareness and communicative skills that allow them to interact with speakers of other varieties of English. This lack of balance often imposes blame of miscommunication in non-native speakers of the language and even native speakers who belong to the outer circle. As a result, this inequality is reflected in prejudices and discrimination against non-native speakers of English and speakers of the language who do not speak a mainstream US variety of the language (Lippi-Green, cited in Kubota, 2001).

In spite of this fact, NNESTs have gained some recognition in the last few years. For instance, TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), the largest international organization in the world for teachers of English as an additional language, with more than 12,000 members from 140 different countries, had always been represented by native speakers of English. In 2005 the organization elected a non-native speaker as editor of TESOL quarterly, the most remarkable journal in applied linguistics. Furthermore, a year later, in 2006, the first non-native English speaker president was elected by the organization's general membership (Braine, 2012). These two events represent a tremendous recognition to NNESTs in the field of language teaching and more often non-native speakers are recognized as competent speakers of the language.

Additionally, Llurda (2004) explains that NNESTs usually advantage NESTs, particularly monolingual NESTs. Bilingualism is a privilege that NNESTs possess, which allows them to understand the learning demands of students. This understanding makes NNESTs the ideal teachers to guide learners in their process of acquiring or learning a second language. Finally,

Holliday (2006) highlights that despite some authors claim that the terms “native” and “non-native” are unviable in linguistics and used only to preserve a privileged group, the way these terms are used every day actually reveals the perception of the profession about itself.

2.6 The native speaker fallacy

In the last few years the field of ELT has shown concern about native speakers. This concern comes from the fact that Native English Speaker Teachers (NESTs) are usually favored over non-native speakers since they are perceived as the ideal language teacher. This preference might be due to the native speakerism concept. Holliday (2006) defined native speakerism as “an established belief that ‘native speaker’ teachers represent a “Western culture’ from which springs the ideals of both the English language and of English language teaching methodology.” (p.385).

Additionally, Stern (cited in Cook, 1999) states that the native speaker’s knowledge and competence of the language make them the ideal point of reference for the concept of proficiency in second language teaching. In spite of this assertion, several program coordinators have acknowledged that some NESTs might in fact lack grammatical knowledge of the language and pedagogical preparedness (Moussu, 2018).

On the other hand, Canagarajah (1999) explains that the label of *native speaker* is controversial and questionable since there exist indigenized variants of English, a result of colonialism. Many of the speakers of these variants, may consider themselves as native speakers and might have learned English as a first language simultaneously with another language. To describe these speakers who are native speakers of two or more languages, we need to use the term *parallel bilingualism*, coined by Hamers and Blanc (1989).

2.7 Identity in ELT

Language pedagogy has always been influenced by the cultural dimension of language. Given the relationship of culture and language, it results difficult to teach the language without mentioning the cultural context where it is used. Moreover, culture has also been a component in the communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972) as he emphasizes the relevance of sociocultural knowledge. Nonetheless, with the use of English as a global lingua franca in different cultural contexts, a correlation between the English language and a particular culture and nation seems quite problematic. (Baker, 2012). In the past, language teachers were seen as technicians whose duty was to apply the appropriate methodologies in class to make students learn the target language. Nonetheless, it has become evident that classrooms are in fact complex settings where teaching methodologies of cause and effect are inadequate and where teachers play a crucial, non-neutral role that goes beyond the application of teaching methodologies (Varghese et al., 2005). Thus, teachers have recently become the focus of attention in research.

Research showed that in order to identify how language teaching was played out, it is necessary to focus on teachers' identity in the classroom (Varghese et al., 2005). Norton (2017) defines identity as “the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed over time and space and how the person understands possibilities for the future” p. 4. For Norton (2017), the nature of language is not only linguistic, but also social. In this social practice, identities and desires are negotiated.

This definition recognizes that the language teacher identity comprehends social structure and human agency. Moreover, the identity of a teacher is intimately connected to the professional

decisions they make and their construction of their identity as teachers is essential to their process of professional growth (Cheung et al., 2014).

By the same token, research also revealed that some of the most relevant aspects of teacher identity in the classroom are matters of race, gender, and sexual orientation (Varghese et al., 2005). In the last few years, there has been a prevailing aspect in the discourse of teacher identity. English language teachers have been classified as belonging to certain nationalities, ethnicity and language histories. Teachers have been situated in a debate about who owns the English language, and issues of language and identity. Furthermore, teachers have been categorized in polarized concepts of “native” and “non-native speaker” which has led to a great deal of identity searching as well as debate within the English language teaching community (Cheung et al., 2014).

Thus, with the above in mind, it seems like the study of teachers’ identity can go deeper. Furthermore, it is necessary to continue digging into teachers’ identities since the manner in which teachers perceive themselves and their environments and the different interconnected areas involved in language teaching might influence their pedagogy and their students’ learning.

2.8 Communicative competence

Wiemann and Backlund (1980) express that it is possible to state that one person is able to function appropriately in society as long as he/she achieves communicative competence. The authors express that this competence involves the use of language and non-linguistic behavior for the purpose of communication. Given this previous fact, communicative competence has situated at the heart of research in second language teaching and learning (Granado, 1996).

First, it seems relevant to begin by defining the grammatical and communicative approaches. These two terms will acquire relevance in defining communicative competence more in depth. Canale and Swain (1980) explain that a grammatical approach is mainly focused on the basis of linguistic or grammatical forms such as lexis, phonological forms, syntactical forms, etc. On the other hand, the authors state that a communicative approach is based on communicative functions, which learners need to know and be able to navigate through. Such functions may include describing, inviting, refusing, promising, apologizing, etc.

Hymes (1972) in response to Chomsky's concept of language competence, stated that grammar rules would be useless without paying attention to social rules of use. This response was certainly one of the bases for what today is known as communicative competence (Leung, 2005).

Building on the works of Hymes and other important scholars, Canale and Swain (1980) presented a model for communicative competence. This model initially included three sub-competences (grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence), however it was later expanded to four sub-competences as discourse competence was added. This model became popular since it represented a practical guide for syllabus design, teaching materials and teacher education (Taş & Khan, 2020). Communicative competence meant a shift from a grammar-based teaching pedagogy to communicative language teaching (Leung, 2005).

2.9 Cultural awareness in ELT

The use of English as a lingua franca in diverse global settings where it is not an L1 nor an official L2 calls into question the notion of the ownership of the language. This questioning

also problematizes native speaker-based conceptions of English use and the dichotomy of native versus non-native speakers (Baker, 2012).

With the above in mind, it seems relevant to explore the concept of cultural awareness. The term cultural awareness has long been used by several different authors, but Byram (1997) formulates it as critical cultural awareness, which is the core to the concept of intercultural communicative competence (ICC), an attempt to expand the perception of communicative competence in language teaching. The focus of ICC is on communication among participants with different linguacultural backgrounds. The relevance of cultural awareness comes as it provides the foundation for evaluating one's own and other's perceptions and practices (Byram, 1997).

Despite that concepts of intercultural competences have been criticized for simplifying and essentializing other cultures, their advantage lies in the fact that these concepts provide a wider and more holistic perspective on successful than the concept of communicative competence in language teaching (Baker, 2015).

2.10 The role of English in Mexico

In Mexico, English language is given a high level of importance since the economies of Mexico and the United States are socially, culturally and historically intertwined (Borjian, 2015). Furthermore, the economic imperialism of the United States has led people, particularly university students to hold the belief that learning English is mandatory if they aspire to a better social and economic life (Despaigne, 2010). Indeed, according to a 2007 Mitovsky poll, being bilingual in Mexico is associated with speaking English since from the 9% of citizens who

speaking a language other than Spanish, 86% speak English and only 2% speak French. The rest speak a non-specified language (Despaigne, 2010).

On the other hand, despite the fact that English is a mandatory subject for both public and private education, it is actually the private sector which leads in terms of proficiency. The teaching of English in public education traditionally begins in secondary education, while in the private sector, students are exposed to the language since preschool. Furthermore, it takes a lot of teacher training and years of planning to implement changes in English language policies at a national level (Grounds, 2017) and despite governments have started to take actions that attempt to narrow the inequalities between the privileged and less-privileged sectors of the population, the success rate of the implemented programs has been very low (Moore, 2017).

2.11 Conclusion

Chapter two presented the theoretical framework and literature review that lead the study. First, the definitions of English as an international language and English as a lingua franca were presented. Then, the definition of English speakers and the dichotomy of native and non-native speakers were discussed. After that, the characteristics and some research results about NESTs and NNESTs were described and contrasted. This was followed by the concept of communicative competence. Further on, the concepts of identity in ELT and cultural awareness in language teaching were presented. Finally, the chapter closed with a brief description of the role of English language in Mexico.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.0 Introduction and overview

The current chapter introduces the methodological process followed in order to fulfill the objectives of this research project. First, a complete explanation of the methodology adopted in this work is presented. Next, participants of the study are thoroughly described. Immediately after that, the instruments used to collect information are introduced and a description of them is offered. Later, the procedure of data collection is explained. Finally, a description of the data analysis is presented. The chapter ends with the conclusions of the information discussed in the chapter.

3.1 Methodological process

Mixed methods

In order to fulfill the aims of the current research work, a mixed methods methodology was adopted. Creswell (2009) defines mixed methods as the mixing of both, quantitative and qualitative methods in one study. The author explains that this type of method is a little less common than the others and originated in 1959. This approach encourages researchers to employ multimethod matrixes that allow them to examine multiple approaches to data collection. The current study follows a sequential mixed method methodology. In this kind of procedure, the researcher tries to expand on the findings from one method by using a different method. For instance, this study begins data collection by applying survey questionnaires and based on the outcomes of them, follow-up interviews are conducted.

3.2 Participants

3.2.1 The learners

The type of sampling in this study was convenience sampling as the questionnaires were posted on Facebook groups of university English learners in Tabasco and Puebla, Mexico asking for their participation. They were also sent through WhatsApp messages. The survey questionnaire was answered by 87 English learners at university level from Tabasco and Puebla, Mexico, who at the time of answering the questionnaire were enrolled in English teaching training programs in public universities of Tabasco and Puebla. The field of study of all participants was English teaching and learning. 27 of the participants were from Puebla and 60 participants were from Tabasco. All participants spoke Spanish as their mother tongue. 59 of the participants were female and 28 were male. 42.5% of participants expressed they had taken or were currently taking English lessons with native speaker teachers, while 57.5% of participants had only taken lessons with non-native speaker teachers. 67.8% of all participants were female, whereas the other 32.2% were male. The ages of the participants were between 17 and 40 years old. The most common age was 17 years old where 20.6% of the participants accounted for this age. 60% of the participants were taking English lessons in the semester they took the questionnaire. The students were contacted through Facebook groups and WhatsApp messages. All participants gave their consent to take part in the study. Their participation was voluntary and overall, they showed interest and cooperation towards the research. Some of them even asked further information about the research and expressed they would be willing to participate in the interviews if necessary.

3.2.2 The teachers

Due to the nature of the study, it was necessary to invite both native and non-native speaker teachers of English in Tabasco and Puebla. Nevertheless, one teacher who worked in Hidalgo and one teacher who worked in Guanajuato also took part in the study. The survey questionnaire was answered by 119 English teachers in Mexico. The teachers who agreed to participate taught in the states of Tabasco, Puebla, Hidalgo and Guanajuato, Mexico. 80 teachers were teaching in Tabasco, 37 were teaching in Puebla, one teacher was teaching in Hidalgo and one teacher was working in Guanajuato. At the time of answering the questionnaire all of them were in-service teachers. 48 participants were male and the other 71 were female. The ages of the participants were between 23 and 65. The teachers who agreed to participate were invited through Facebook, WhatsApp messages and e-mail. Some teachers also shared the questionnaire link with some co-workers. The participation was voluntary and all of them were informed about the purpose of the survey and interviews. All teachers gave their consent to participate and were explained that their information would remain confidential and would be used only for the purposes of the thesis study. 54.7% of participants taught English in B.A programs while 35% of participants taught in high school programs. 28.2% of participants stated they taught in elementary schools. 22.2% of teachers taught in junior high schools. 9.4% of teachers worked in kindergarten, finally 2.6% of teachers taught in master's programs. Most teachers worked in more than one educational level and school, and the survey allowed them to choose more than one option. Given that the participation was voluntary, it was more difficult to find native speaker teachers. Thus, only 7.7% of participants were natives and 92.3% were non-native speaker teachers. The years of residency of NESTs in Mexico were not stated by the NESTs participants, however it can be inferred from their

answers to the questionnaires and interviews that they had lived in Mexico for at least 15 years. In terms of the educational sector where the teachers worked 60 of them taught in the private sector whereas 59 of them worked in the public sector. Most teachers had extensive experience in language teaching. 29.1% of teachers had between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience, 25.6% of teachers had between 2 and 5 years of experience, 14.5% of teachers had between 11 and 15 years of experience and 12.8% of teachers had more than twenty years of experience.

3.3 Data collection instruments

In order to fulfill the objectives of the current work, two types of data collection instruments were used. The first type of instrument was a questionnaire. Two questionnaires were created in total. One of them addressed to English teachers and the second addressed to English learners. The second kind of instrument used were semi-structured interviews which followed up on the questionnaires. The instruments will be described in the next paragraphs.

3.3.1 The questionnaires

Two questionnaires were administered to the participants. The first questionnaire was aimed for students of English and the second one was designed for English teachers. Both questionnaires were supervised by two researchers with extensive experience in research in the field of ELT and linguistics. The instruments will be further explained next.

3.3.1.1 The students' questionnaire

The questionnaire was created on google forms. It was written in English, and addressed to learners of English at university level, particularly those enrolled in B.A programs in English teaching. It was sent to participants through Facebook groups and WhatsApp messages. The questionnaire consisted of 33 questions divided into three sections. The first section addressed

some general information about the student participants, such as gender, age, e-mail addresses, whether or not they were taking English lessons at the time and whether or not they had taken English lessons with a native speaker teacher. The second section addressed students' beliefs about native speakers. The main aspects covered the perceived language and teaching competence of native speakers, the level of difficulty that students had to communicate with their teachers and how much they could understand information and instructions due to their teachers' accent. Also, this section addressed the perceived advantages and disadvantages of taking lessons with native speaker teachers. Finally, the third section addressed the perceptions that students had about non-native speaker teachers in terms of their language and teaching competence, as well as the intelligibility of their accents and the advantages of disadvantages of taking classes with non-native speaker teachers. (For more detail see appendix C)

3.3.1.2 The teacher's questionnaire

The questionnaire applied to English teachers consisted of twenty-two questions. This instrument was created on google forms. The first four questions dealt with general information about the participants, like age, email, gender, etc. Questions 5 to 11 dealt with teachers' academic preparation in ELT and work experience in the field. Finally, questions 12 to 22 addressed teachers' beliefs about their teaching skills, knowledge about grammar and culture in the target language, their opinions about perceived preferences of learners regarding their teachers and their beliefs about job benefits that teachers may have based on their mother tongue. All questions were written in Spanish. The type of answers requested were multiple choice, check boxes, agree or disagree with a statement, and for a pair of questions, participants could type an answer if none of the options fit their beliefs (For more detail see appendix D).

3.3.2 The interviews

To examine in greater depth, the findings from the surveys, follow-up interviews were conducted to English teachers and English students. Seven interviews were applied to English teachers. The main subject discussed in the interviews were the perceived preferences towards certain teachers and the reasons for those preferences, also the perceived inequality between native and non-native teachers in hiring processes and economic matters and the perceived linguistic and sociocultural competence of teachers were discussed. The participants were chosen based on their answers and willingness to be interviewed. On the other hand, there were six interviews to English learners at university level. The learner participants were also chosen based on the answers they provided in the survey questionnaires and their willingness to participate in the interviews. All interviews took place in zoom meetings. They all lasted between 15 and 35 minutes. Interviews were transcribed and then analyzed. The procedure of data collection processes will be next described.

3.4 Procedure

The procedure followed in the data collection process will be described next:

1. Piloting the questionnaires: In order to do so, the questionnaire for students was answered by five randomly chosen students of English at university level who provided their answers and even some comments about how clear the questions were.
2. The teachers' questionnaire was piloted with four teachers who also commented on it.
3. The comments and answers provided during the piloting phase served to edit and improve the questionnaires.
4. After having completed the editing of the questionnaires, they were sent to two experienced researchers who commented on the appropriateness of the questions and the topics to be addressed according to the objectives of the study.

5. To apply the questionnaires, students and teachers were invited to answer through social media sites such as Facebook and WhatsApp. The invitations were answered enthusiastically by teachers.

6. After reading the answers provided to the questionnaires and organizing the information, semi-structured interviews that followed up on questionnaires were designed and scheduled with some learners and teachers who were willing to participate in the second part of the data collection process.

7. The second stage of the data collection process dealt with the follow-up interviews that derived from the answers of the questionnaires.

8. Interviews were recorded and then transcribed for analysis.

The learners' questionnaire was answered by eighty-seven students of English at university level from Tabasco and Puebla, whereas the teacher's questionnaire was answered by 119 participants. 103 of them non-native speaker teachers and 16 of them native speaker teachers.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research methodology was described. First, the methodology adopted in the study was presented. This was followed by a description of the participants of the study. After that, the instruments used to collect information were described. Finally, the data collection process was reported. Overall the information collected in both instruments provided relevant insights which will be described and analyzed in chapter 4.

Chapter 4. Results and discussion

4.0 introduction

The current chapter presents the results obtained from the data collection instruments applied to the participants of the research. Such results respond to the two research questions that lead the research. The first question deals with Mexican learners' perceptions about their native and non-native English speaker teachers. The second question explores the perceptions that both native, and non-native English speaker teachers in Mexico have about themselves.

The information related to students' perceptions is first presented in order to answer the first research question, followed by teachers' perceptions that respond to the second research question. The extracts presented in the current chapter are not translations, as the questionnaires and interviews were held in English. They represent the exact words of the participants. In addition, the terms participant 9, 10, 36, etc. in the extracts are employed for both, privacy purposes and to illustrate better the examples provided.

4.1 Students' perceptions

The questionnaire applied to learners consisted of two sections, the first one about native and the second about non-native teachers. Each section contained 13 statements and two questions about the perceptions students had about English teachers. Learners were asked whether or not they had taken lessons with native speakers and based on their choice, they were redirected to one of the sections.

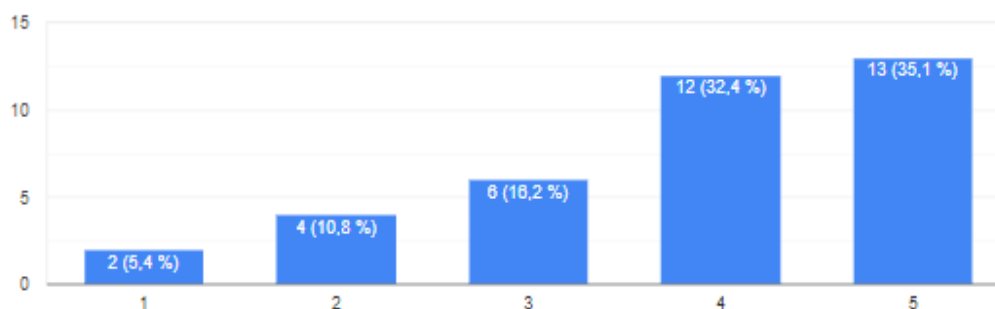
The findings of the questionnaires along with some comments and information from the interviews to English learners will be described next.

4.1.1 Students' perceptions about NNESTs and NESTs' linguistic knowledge

In this section, the perceptions of learners towards their native and non-native teachers' linguistic knowledge will be addressed. In this study, linguistic knowledge also refers to knowledge of grammar forms. This concept is based on (Canale & Swain, 1980) who use the terms linguistic and grammatical forms interchangeably, such terms include lexis, phonological forms, syntactic patterns and morphological forms. Furthermore, Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams (2018) lend support to this concept and define linguistic knowledge as the awareness of the structure, phonetic system and lexis of a given language.

4.1.1.1 Pronunciation

Graph 1 shows students' opinions towards the statement "*I consider that native speaker teachers are the best option for learning pronunciation.*" In this statement, number 1 stood for strongly disagree and number 5 stood for strongly agree. Results show that 35.1% of learners strongly agreed that native speaker teachers are the best option for learning pronunciation. Additionally, 32.4% of participants expressed they agreed with this belief. Only 10.8% disagreed and 5.4% strongly disagreed with native teachers being the best option for learning pronunciation. Finally, 16.2% of participants remained neutral.



Graph 1. Mexican learners' preferences for native teachers for pronunciation learning.

In this regard, as can be seen in (1), (2) and (3) during the interviews, participants expressed that they believed they could acquire better pronunciation with native speaker teachers.

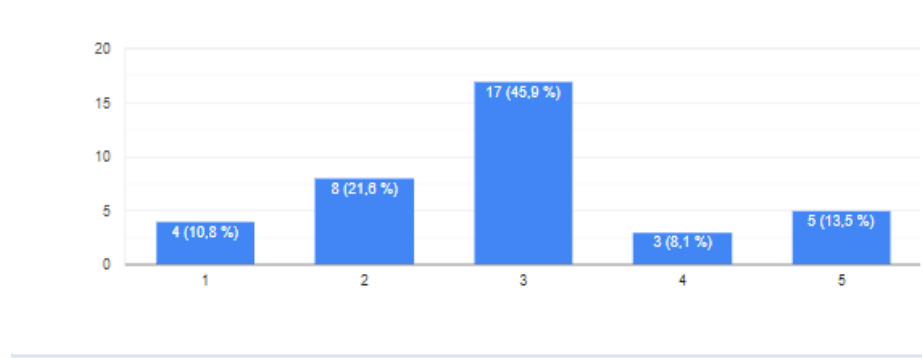
- 1) *“I always try to be in the class of native teacher because I think I can have a good pronunciation in their classes. I can speak like an American person if I take classes with them.”* (Participant student 9)
- 2) *“...pronunciation is something I always take into account... if I can choose a teacher and I know the teacher is native or speaks like a native, I take that class. I want to speak very well English.”* (Participant student 10)
- 3) *“I have seen that the people who learn English in the United States speak like an American person, that is the reason why I think natives are the best option for pronunciation because you can imitate the way they speak.”* (Participant student 22)

Based on (1) (2) and (3) it can be said that native speaker teachers are preferred as a model for emulating pronunciation. As can be seen in (1) and (3), the preference particularly points to American accent, so it can be inferred that the preference of a native speaker teacher for a pronunciation model is oriented towards those teachers with “a standard American accent.” To lend support to this finding, Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006) explain that American English is usually considered the standard accent of the language. Additionally, a study carried out by Scales, Wennerstrom, Richard and Wu (2006) found out that the pronunciation models that students usually prefer to learn are standard-inner circle models like the general American and received pronunciation (British accent).

4.1.1.2 Grammar

One relevant aspect to consider in terms of linguistic knowledge is grammar competence. Grammar competence is defined as the knowledge of the rules of grammar (Canale & Swain,

1980). Graph 2. illustrates the perceptions of students regarding their native teachers' knowledge of grammar to teach English.

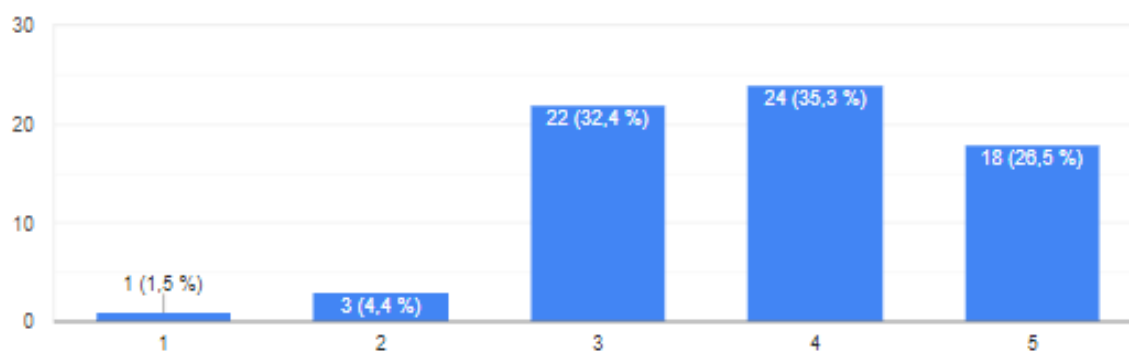


Graph 2. *perceived native teachers' skills for grammar teaching.*

According to the answers provided by the learners illustrated in graph 2, it can be seen that in terms of grammar instruction, students do not perceive native speaker teachers as the best option. According to graph 2, 21.6% disagree and 10.8% of students strongly disagree with the statement that a native speaker teacher explains better the grammar of the language. only 8.1% of participants agree with this statement and 13.5% strongly agree. Surprisingly, 45.9% of participants remained neutral in this question. On the other hand, students did express certain preference towards non-native speaker teachers in terms of grammar instruction.

4.1.1.3 perceived grammar teaching skills

As graph 3 illustrates, 35.3% of learners agree and 26.5% of learners strongly agree that a non-native speaker teacher is able to explain grammar in a better way. Only 1.5% of participants strongly disagreed and 4.4% of participants disagreed with this statement. 32.4% of participants remained neutral in this regard. Moreover, as can be seen in (4) and (5), during the interviews students expressed their perception that sometimes native speaker teachers tended to take for granted their knowledge about grammar since it was their mother tongue. Also, as can be seen in (4) students perceive that NNESTs are more effective at grammar teaching as a result of having received instruction of English as a foreign or second language.



Graph 3. *perceived non-native teachers' skills for grammar teaching.*

Visibly, participants expressed their preference towards NNESTs in terms of grammar teaching. Interestingly, as can be seen in (4) participants stated that the reason why they believe NNESTs make a great fit for grammar instructors is the fact that they have been through the process of learning a foreign language or L2 as well. Direct quotes from the interviews are presented below.

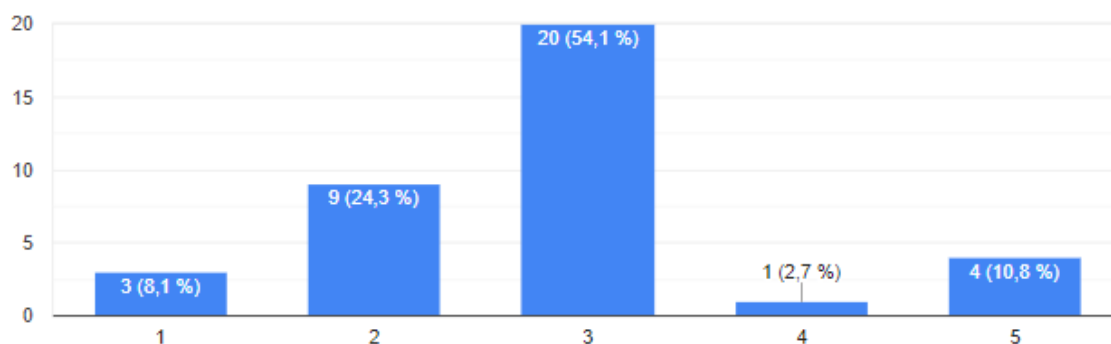
- 4) *“...Before... when I took classes in other schools or in private institutes, the non-natives were always better at explaining grammar, maybe because they were students first, like me. So, they had to learn the language correctly to be good teachers.”* (Participant student 36)
- 5) *“In my opinion native teachers sometimes don't pay attention to many details of grammar because it is their native language. They know it, but for example in my case, sometimes I asked my teacher, who was native, about certain things in grammar ... sometimes he said that just because or sometimes he didn't know, but in another school my teacher was Mexican and she always told me why something was like that, so...maybe teachers who are natives don't think too much about grammar.”* (Participant student 22)

To lend support to these findings, a study carried out by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002) on the perceptions of university students about their native and non-native English teachers showed that NESTs were perceived as inefficient grammar instructors. Another study carried out by Beckett and Stiefvater (2009) showed that NESTs were perceived more flexible, fluent and colloquial in their language use, whereas NNESTs were believed to be more knowledgeable and able to apply their expertise in their teaching. Similarly, a study carried out by Mahoob (2004) showed that NNESTs were perceived by learners as aware of culture and metalinguistic. NNESTs were also perceived as empathetic, good at teaching reading, writing and grammar and more efficient than NESTs because they could understand learners' needs. By the same token, questionnaires showed that 29.4% of participants agreed and 44.1% strongly agreed that NNESTs were able to understand the learning process of an L2 better than NESTs. (Levis et al., 2016) lend support to these opinions and explain that even if the origins

of a teacher do not interfere with their effectiveness in the classroom, it is true that NNESTs bring tremendous advantages to learners since they have been through the process of learning the language and have become aware of the tricks and pitfalls learners might fall into.

4.1.1.4 Teachers' perceived clarity in instructions

On the other hand, as graph 4 illustrates, when questioned about which kind of teacher made them understand better how to perform activities in class, only 10.8% of participants expressed that they strongly agreed and 2.7% agreed that native speaker teachers were clearer. 24.3% of participants disagreed with this statement and 8.1% of participants strongly disagreed. 54.1% remained neutral.

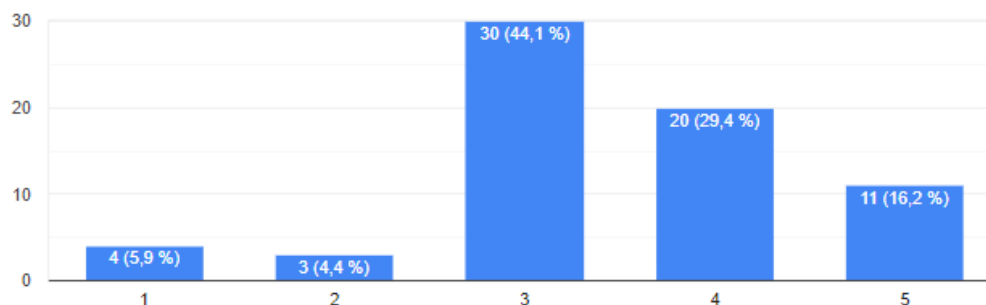


Graph 4. *Perceived clarity of NESTs in tasks instructions.*

In contrast, as graph 5 shows, 29.4% agreed and 16.2% of learners strongly agreed with the statement that non-native teachers made them understand how to perform the activities better. In contrast with NESTs, the number of participants who disagreed and strongly disagreed was smaller. Only 5.9% of participants strongly disagreed and 4.4% of participants disagreed with the statement that NNESTs were clearer with tasks instructions. The rest of the participants, who accounted for 44.1%, remained neutral in this aspect.

I understand better how to do an activity with a non-native speaker than with a native speaker

68 respuestas



Graph 5. *Perceived clarity of NNESTs in tasks instructions.*

As can be seen in (6), during the interviews, participants were asked about this topic and expressed that they perceived that perhaps the fact that most of their teachers were NNESTs influenced the comprehension of instructions.

- 6) *“It’s not an absolute true that all non-natives are more clear or anything. Probably is because most of our teachers are non-natives and we are used to them. Or maybe is because we have the same culture and that makes understanding easier.”* (Participant student 45)

Based on (6) it can be inferred that culture has a major relevance in the perceptions of learners towards both NESTs, and NNESTs. The perceptions about NESTs’ and NNESTs’ sociocultural knowledge will be addressed in the following section.

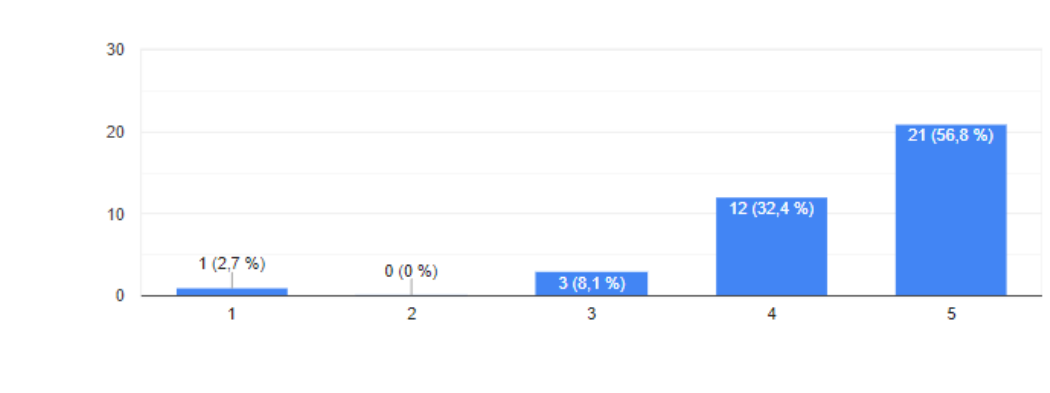
4.1.2 Perceptions of learners towards NESTs’ and NNESTs’ sociocultural knowledge

Sociocultural knowledge is explained by Alpetkin (2002) as:

“... the knowledge that deals with the social rules of language use, which involve an understanding of the social context in which language is used. Such factors include the

role of the participants in a given interaction, their social status, the information they share, and the function of the interaction” (Alpetkin, 2002, p. 58).

Graph 6 illustrates learners’ perceptions about teachers’ sociocultural knowledge. 56.8% of participants strongly agreed that in their perceptions, NESTs have a good sociocultural knowledge, which allows them to enrich lessons. Similarly, 32.4% agreed with the statement.



Graph 6. *Perceived sociocultural knowledge of NESTs.*

Furthermore, NESTs’ cultural background was pointed out by 81.1% of participants as an advantage of teachers that would add to the learning process, just behind pronunciation. During the interviews, participants explained that the cultural background of their teachers had little impact on their perceptions about the competitiveness of the teachers as can be seen in (7) and (8). On the other hand, one participant expressed his view that sociocultural knowledge was highly relevant to acquire more competence in the language (see extract 9). Finally, one participant stated that no matter the origins of their teacher, a good English class is made up of different elements. Interestingly, one of the most relevant elements of a class, according to them, is culture since it allows learners to develop and interact in a globalized society (see extract 10). Conversely,

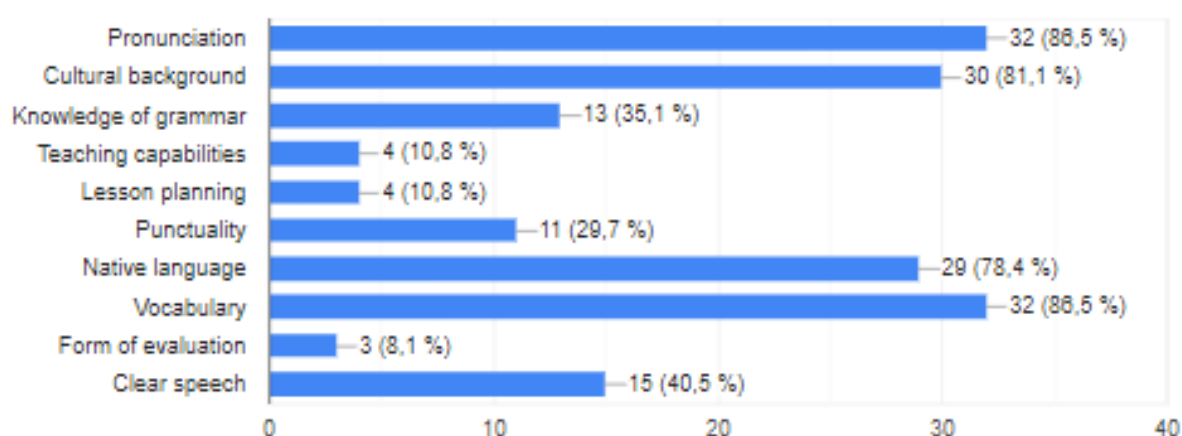
NNESTs' sociocultural knowledge of English was described by learners as sufficient to teach the language. Nevertheless, students perceived that the cultural aspects were not often explored in the lessons, as can be seen in (11).

- 7) *"A teacher who is prepared for the job can speak about culture and enrich the lessons, it doesn't matter if it's native or not."* (Participant student 22)
- 8) *"I think cultural aspects in the classes are very important, but I think only good teachers know how to teach that correctly, not only natives."* (Participant student 36)
- 9) *"Only a native speaker can teach about their culture, for example I am Mexican and I know about my culture and traditions. The same with native teachers...Also I think is very important to include culture in the class."* (Participant student 9)
- 10) *"I think culture is essential in English teaching nowadays. We live in a globalized society and students need to be able to interact with people from different backgrounds. It doesn't matter where the teacher is from, the important thing is how prepared he is to help students communicate correctly with different people in the society."* (Participant student 42)
- 11) *"I think non-native teachers know a lot about culture. I think they can teach the culture very well, but it's not common. They sometimes focus on other things like grammar."*
(Participant student 65)

4.1.3 Perceived Advantages of NESTs and NNESTs

English learners who participated in the study were inquired about the advantages and disadvantages they perceived in both native and non-native teachers. As can be seen in graph 7. Among the advantages of native speaker teachers, 86.5 % of participants selected pronunciation as an advantage of native speaker teachers. Furthermore, as participants were free to choose as many options as they needed, another 86.5% of participants selected that one of the main

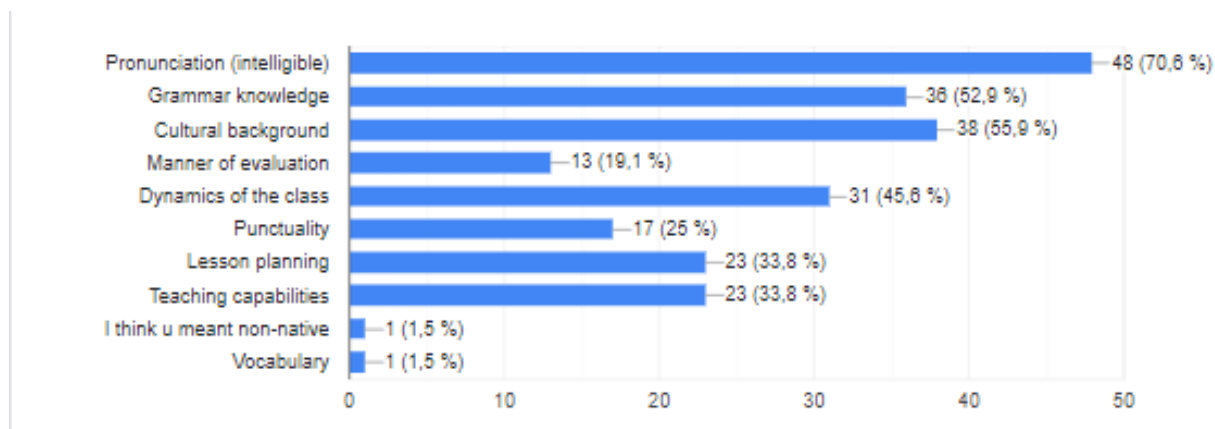
advantages of native speaker teachers was their lexical repertoire, or vocabulary. Furthermore, the choice of cultural background as an advantage of native speakers accounted for the 81.1% of the options. Less popular choices were knowledge of grammar which was chosen by 35.1% of participants, teaching capabilities and lesson planning with 10.8% respectively and finally form of evaluation, selected by 8.1% of participants.



Graph 7. *Perceived advantages of native speaker teachers*

On the other hand, participants expressed their beliefs about the advantages of non-native speaker teachers, where the most popular choice was intelligible speech with 70.6% of participants selecting this option. Moreover, the second most popular advantage selected by 55.9% of participants was cultural background. Followed by grammar knowledge, which accounted for 52.9% of choices. Other relevant advantage chosen by participants were dynamics of the class, lesson planning and teaching capabilities. Interestingly, these aspects in NESTs were only mentioned by 10.8% of participants. While with non-native speaker teachers these aspects accounted for 45.6% regarding dynamics of the class and 33.8% for lesson planning and teaching capabilities. The results from the questionnaires about the perceived advantages of English

teachers suggest that learners consider native speaker teachers as ideal models for pronunciation learning and acquisition of vocabulary. Nonetheless, in terms of teaching skills and lesson planning, learners seem to prefer non-native speaker teachers. This might be a sign that students perceive NNESTs as more professionally prepared.



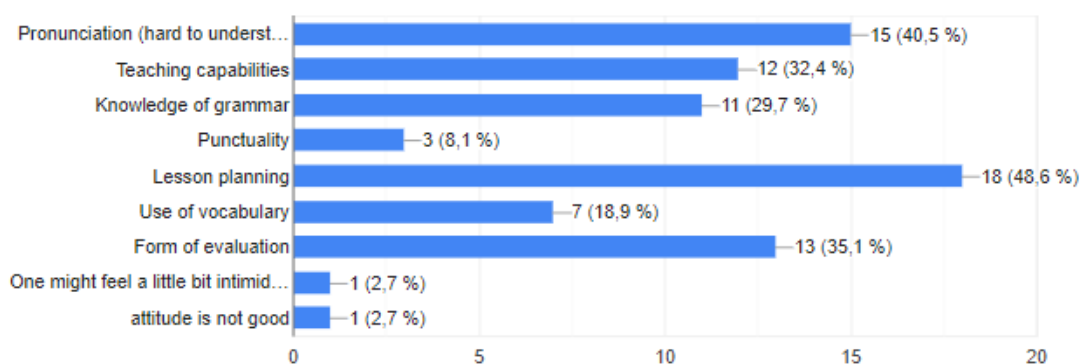
Graph 8. *Perceived advantages of non-native speaker teachers*

During the interviews, one of the participants expressed his beliefs in this aspect (see 12)

12) *“I believe it is easier that a native with no preparation gets a job. That’s why non-natives are more prepared, because it is more difficult to find a job if you are not native and have little preparation.”* (Participant student 42)

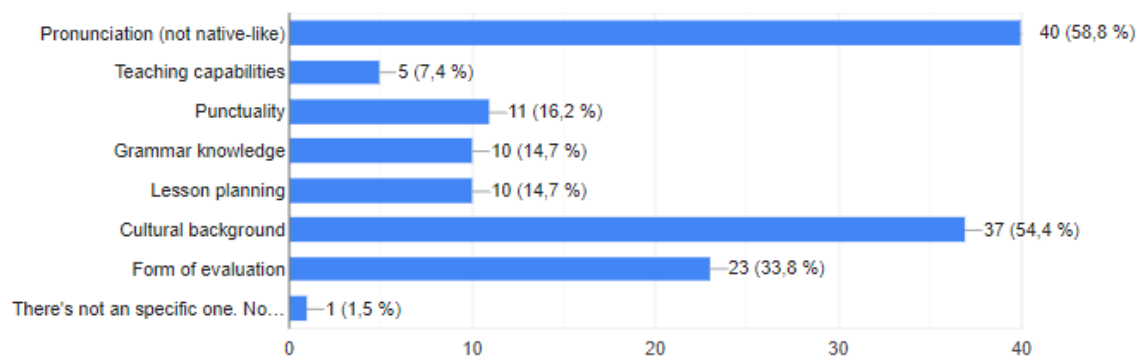
4.1.4 Students’ perceptions towards having a native or non-native English language teacher.

By contrast, graph 9 illustrates the perceived disadvantages of NESTs. For NESTs 48.5% of participants selected lesson planning as the main disadvantage of native teachers, followed by form of evaluation and teaching capabilities with 35.1% and 32.4% respectively. Furthermore, 29.7% of participants also pointed grammar knowledge as a disadvantage of NESTs.



Graph 9. *Perceived disadvantages of NESTs.*

Finally, In the case of NNESTs, graph 10 illustrates the perceived disadvantages identified by participants. Among these disadvantages were a non-native-like pronunciation which accounted for 58.8% of choices. Moreover, 54.4% of participants expressed that another relevant disadvantage of NNESTs is their cultural background. Interestingly, the least popular options among the disadvantages of NNESTs were lesson planning and grammar knowledge with 14.7% each, and teaching capabilities which was selected by only 7.4% of participants. The results obtained from the questionnaires applied to English learners suggest that overall learners consider NNESTs as competent teachers with high knowledge of grammar and skills for lesson planning.



Graph 10. *Perceived disadvantages of NNESTs.*

The perceptions of language learners towards their English language teachers have been reviewed. In the next section, the perceptions of English teachers towards being NESTs or NNESTs will be discussed.

4.2 NESTs and NNESTs perceptions about themselves.

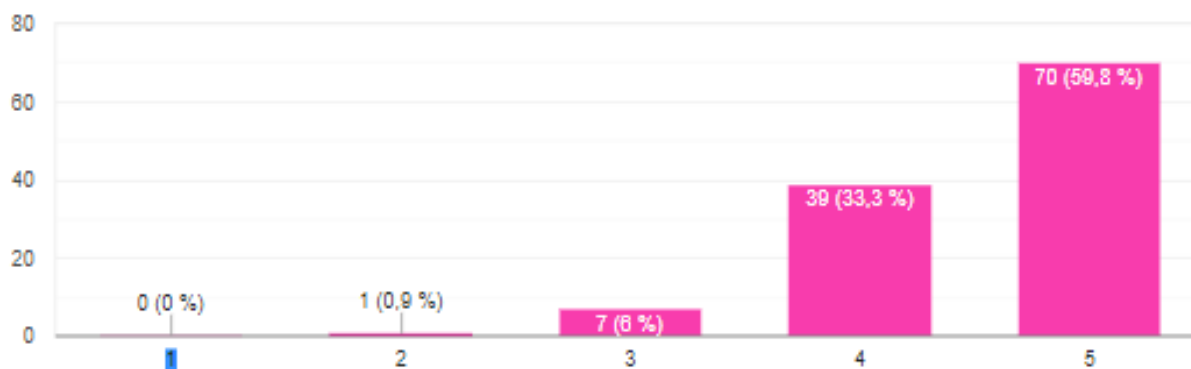
The current section deals with the perceptions that both NESTs and NNESTs have about themselves. Such perceptions are related to their linguistic and sociocultural knowledge in English, as well as work and economic matters of the ELT profession. Teachers self-perceptions are worthy of research because these perceptions might influence their teaching decisions and because NNESTs are usually compared with NESTs in terms of grammar knowledge, vocabulary and accent (Medgyes, cited in Ma, 2012).

119 participants answered the questionnaire. 16 of them spoke English as their first language and the rest spoke Spanish as their first language and English as their second or third language. Plus, 92.3% of participants identified themselves as NNESTs while 6% of participants identified themselves as NESTs. On the other hand, 0.84% of participants identified themselves as English language teacher educators. 60% of participants were female and 40% of participants were male.

The findings of the questionnaires along with some comments and information from the interviews to NNESTs and NESTs will be described next.

4.2.2 NESTs and NNESTs perceptions towards their linguistic competence

Both NESTs, and NNESTs might consider that their linguistic knowledge of English can have some of impact on their teaching work. In fact, according to Borg (2001) the level of grammar proficiency of teachers might impact their teaching decisions. At the same time, teachers' lack of knowledge might affect their teaching style and the methodology implemented in class. Furthermore, it might affect the dynamics of the class and reduce learners' opportunities to make the most out of the lessons. Graph 11. Illustrates NNESTs' and NESTs' perceptions of their linguistic knowledge to teach English. In this regard, 59.8 % of participants expressed that they felt strongly comfortable and confident with their linguistic knowledge. Additionally, 33.3% stated they felt confident with their linguistic knowledge, while 6% of participants remained neutral in this subject. Only 0.9% of participants stated they did not feel very comfortable with their linguistic knowledge to teach English.



Graph 11. Teachers' confidence in their linguistic skills for language teaching

In spite of their mother tongue or background, it was evident that the sampled participants felt confident about their knowledge of grammar and pronunciation. In the interviews, NNESTs participants stated that based on their academic preparation and knowledge they felt confident to teach English in all levels from beginner to advanced (see 12) nonetheless, as can be seen in (13) one NEST participant also expressed that even if his knowledge of grammar and pronunciation made him feel comfortable to teach, it was not the only thing to be considered a good teacher. On the other hand, some NNESTs teachers also expressed that even a teacher with extensive experience sometimes had to review some structures before class because they were not part of their everyday speech (see 14).

12) *“Based on my preparation and knowledge. Yes, I have the confidence to teach English I know the grammar rules, there are some differences between American and British, I know a lot of vocabulary, of course, I’ve got a C1 Yeah, I think I have the tools, that’s my tool English. I feel confident to teach from beginner to advanced levels.”* (NNEST participant 6)

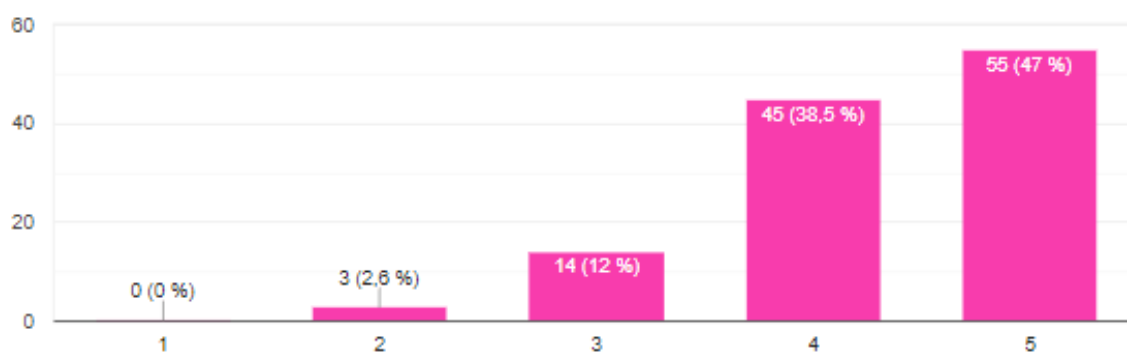
13) *“that part has always been easy for me... Knowing grammar and having a big vocabulary and knowing a different bunch of different registers...of course it’s advantageous, at least I know nobody’s going to embarrass me in a class by asking me a question about grammar that I don’t know. 99% chance I’m going to know. So of course that makes me feel more comfortable. As I said, does that makes me a better teacher? maybe no. Because there’s other skills, and it makes me more comfortable and confident and that certainly has to help.”* (NEST participant 105)

14) *“Even after more than 6 years of being a teacher, I sometimes don’t feel very sure about my knowledge because you know that there are structures that we don’t usually use in an everyday conversation or even a class. So when I run into these types of vocabulary, expressions or*

structures even. I'm not sure and I have to study them well to avoid errors, or to be able to tell my students the right things.” (NNEST participant 9)

4.2.3 Teachers’ perceptions about their own sociocultural knowledge

Graph 12 shows native and non-native teachers beliefs about their sociocultural knowledge. 47% of teachers stated that they strongly trusted their sociocultural skills to teach English. Another 38.5% of participants agreed with this statement and selected that they agreed and felt confident of their skills. 12% of participants remained neutral in this subject and only 2.6% disagreed and explained that they did not feel confident with their sociocultural knowledge for language teaching. To follow up on questionnaires, teachers were interviewed about their confidence on their sociocultural knowledge to teach the language. During the interviews, one NEST participant stated that in his opinion, sociocultural and linguistic knowledge and skills were things that required years of teaching experience and academic training to be developed. In the participant’s view, there existed a correlation between the years of experience a teacher had and the confidence he/she had in their linguistic and sociocultural skills. (see 15)



Graph 12. Teachers’ confidence in their sociocultural knowledge.

15)“...I think that's more about experience. Because I mean, I'm comfortable now, with all of that kind of knowledge... And that was more about experience because, you know, nobody ever really taught me, but you learn all of that, as a teacher.” (NEST participant 117)

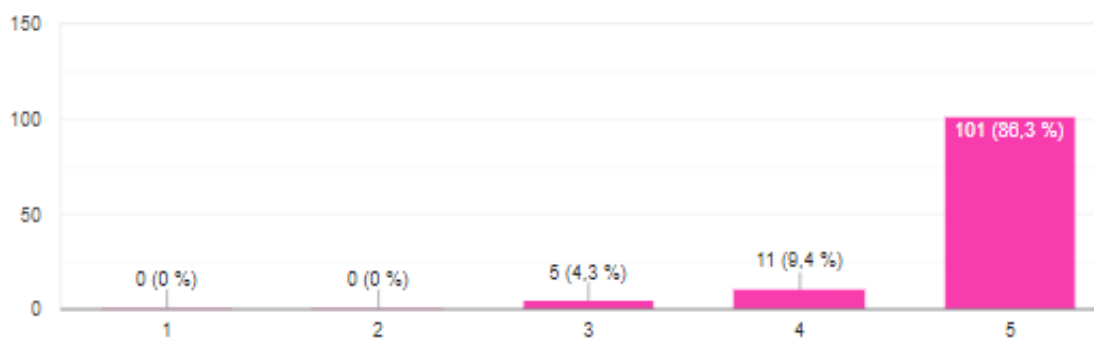
4.3 Teachers' academic preparation in ELT

In terms of academic preparation in the field of ELT, 93.28% of participants had academic preparation in ELT. Only 6.72% of participants did not have any preparation in ELT. 77.3% of participants held a B.A in English Teaching or equivalent, 16.8% held a master's degree and 3.36% of participants held a doctoral degree in linguistics or applied linguistics. Additionally, teachers also expressed that besides their degrees, they also had academic training and certifications in ELT from other institutions. In the interviews, teachers expressed that training and certifications made them feel more comfortable and confident to teach English, as can be seen in (16), one NNEST expressed that academic preparation made him feel capable of teaching from beginner to advanced levels. On the other hand, one NEST participant expressed that when he began teaching, he did not have any kind of preparation, which made him feel inexperienced and unprepared for the job. See (17) Finally, as graph 13 illustrates, 86.3% of teachers believed that is very important to have academic preparation in order to teach English.

16)“Based on my preparation and knowledge I have the confidence to teach English I know the grammar rules, there are some differences between American and British, I know a lot of vocabulary, of course, I've got a C1... I think I have the tools... I feel confident to teach from beginner to advanced levels.” (NNEST Participant 14)

17) “when I was first starting out a long time ago ...I was a terrible teacher; I had never done it before. It was a disaster. I didn't know how to create my own lessons, I tried to teach out of the book but I was terrible at that it was a torturous experience for me and for the students... but then later in my life I started to change my mind... So I got a TEFL certificate which is not a lot of training, but it really helped me get a sense of the job and what I needed to do.” (NEST participant 105)

Graph 13. NNESTs and NESTS perceptions of the relevance of academic training in ELT.



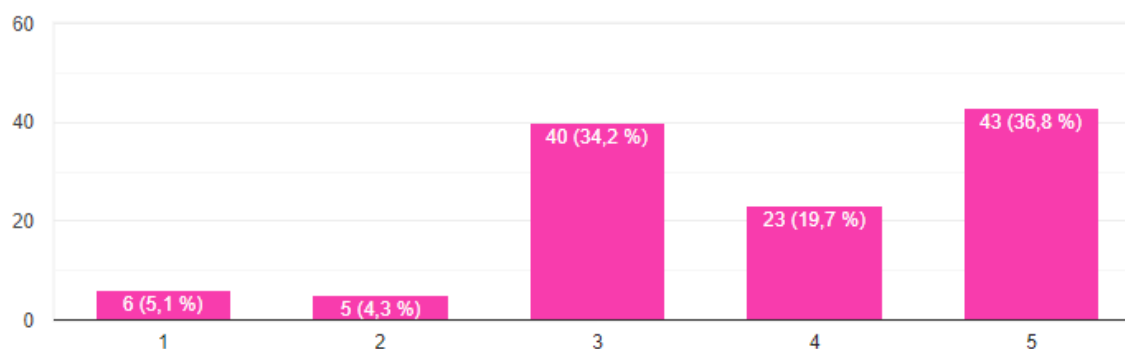
4.4 The influence of a teacher's mother tongue in their professional career

Both NESTs, and NNESTs were inquired about the impact their mother tongue had had along their teaching career. As can be seen in graph 14, 36.8% of participants expressed that their mother tongue, English or Spanish, had had a profound impact in their careers as English teachers. Additionally, 19.7% of participants also stated that their mother tongue had had some impact in their teaching career. 34.2% of participants remained neutral about this subject. On the other hand, 4.3% of participants stated that their mother tongue had had little impact in their careers.

Moreover, during the interviews one NNEST stated that her mother tongue had had a positive impact in her teaching career. In her experience, speaking Spanish as her mother tongue was useful for behavior correction and for explaining certain points of the class to beginner students (see 18). Additionally, one NEST participant expressed that in his view, being able to speak English and

Spanish was extremely useful for teachers. He added that in his opinion, the best teachers were able to switch back and forth from one language to the other, that is why he believed the best teachers were those whose first language was Spanish and spoke and understood English very well (see 19). To lend support to this opinion, Phillipson (1996) concludes that NNESTs, particularly those who share their mother tongue with learners, have developed awareness on students' needs. This awareness allows teachers to identify and tackle learners' linguistic problems which in turn becomes an advantage in teaching English.

On the other hand, one NEST participant explained that his mother tongue had had an economic impact at the beginning of his teaching career because he was offered job positions and higher salaries due to his mother tongue. Nonetheless, this situation changed as he got a better reputation and experience since he started to receive job offers based on his knowledge and skills (see 20).



Graph 14. *The impact of teachers' mother tongue in their teaching careers.*

18) *"I think my mother tongue has impacted mostly positively. In one of my jobs I was required to give certain tips or help to my beginner students in Spanish. In other cases, it has helped me correct students' behavior. So, I think it has been a positive impact."* (NNEST participant 6)

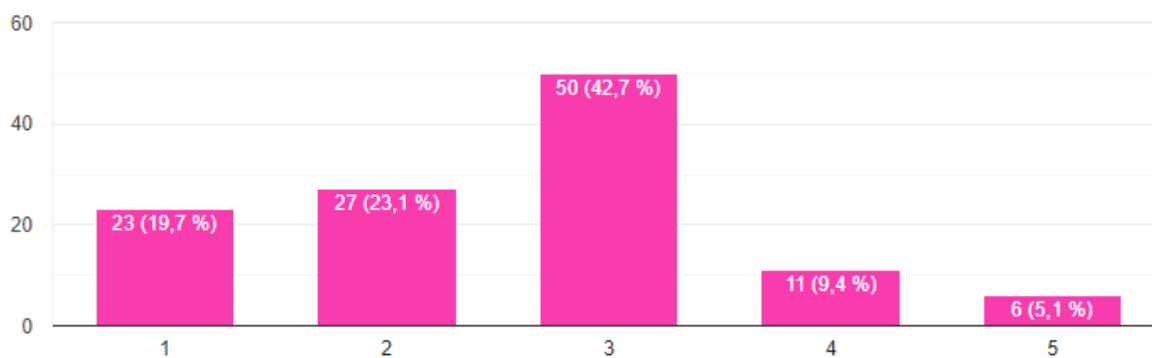
19) *...The ability to be able to switch into Spanish for classroom management situations or explaining a quick point. Those are huge advantages for teachers. You're aware of things like cognates that you can use to help students you can you're aware of things where there's no overlap. That's why you guys from teacher training programs in Mexico are the best, because you're totally fluent in both languages and you've reflected on that and thought about it and can use those tools.*" (NEST participant 105)

20) *...15 or 20 years ago, that was all that anybody cared about. People always came, told me, you know, these people are looking for a native speaker... And then I got my master's degree and I think I was getting a better reputation... but I do extra work that nobody else or that very few people could do. And they don't care if I'm a native speaker or a non-native speaker anymore. It's just there's only five people in Mexico that really could do this work and so they want to give me money for that"* (NEST participant 117)

4.5 The ideal English teacher

There has long existed the belief that native speakers represent the ideal language teacher. Holliday (2006) defined this as native speakerism: "an established belief that 'native speaker' teachers represent a "Western culture' from which springs the ideals of both the English language and of English language teaching methodology." (p.385) This idea might bring discrimination and bias towards NESTs. Therefore, participant teachers were questioned about their opinion about this belief. As can be seen in graph 15, 42.7% of teachers remained neutral in their opinions. Nonetheless, 23.1% disagreed and 19.7% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement. Interestingly, 9.4% of participants agreed with it and 5.1% expressed they strongly agreed with the statement. Furthermore, during the interviews one NNEST participant indicated that in her view, the backgrounds of the teachers made people believe that they were the role model of an

English teacher, plus they brought “prestige” to the programs (see 21). On the other hand, one NEST participant stated his opinion about the idea that NESTs are the role model of an English teacher. In his view, there exists a misconception of native speakers, as they are believed to be good teachers just for the fact that they come from an English-speaking country, particularly The United States or Great Britain. He agrees that there may be unqualified NESTs. However, well-trained teachers are almost never recognized by their academic preparation or teaching skills. NESTs’ only recognition is speaking English as an L1. He added that sometimes students intended to compliment teachers telling them that they would learn a lot about pronunciation and vocabulary with them, but their academic training and expertise was never taken into account (see 22).



Graph 15. Teachers’ opinion about the idealization of NESTs as role models for teaching English.

21) *“I think native teachers are seen as the role model because they come from places like USA. And if schools have a native teacher, that brings a sense of prestige to the program. When I was younger I agreed with them, now I know that they can be natives, but not everyone has the knowledge to be a teacher.”* (NNEST participant 6)

22) *“I mean don't get me wrong ... but I always felt a little bit insulted when students told me things like you're such a good teacher because you're a native speaker and I'm going to get better pronunciation and maybe that sounds like a compliment to them ... That's not*

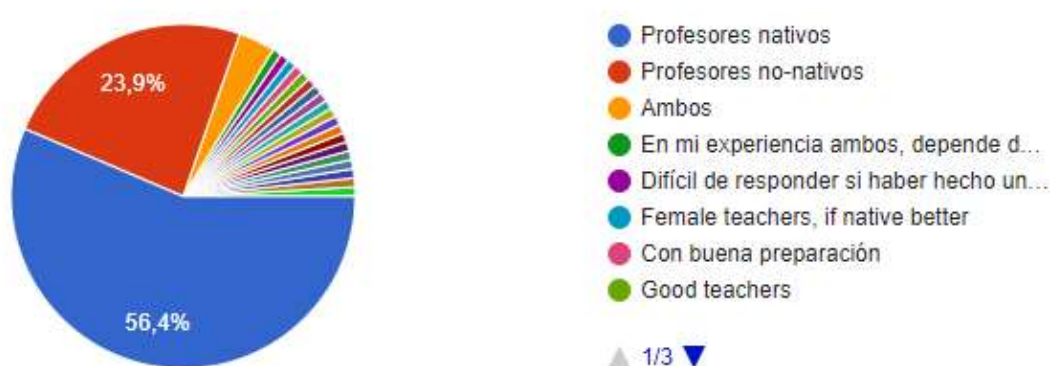
how I want them to think of me. I am like, super competent. I know how people learn and I tried to make my teaching, complementary to help people learn and I work really hard, like finding good materials and creating good classes. And if you know anything about second language acquisition, you know that my native speaking pronunciation isn't going to influence yours at all.” (NEST participant 117)

4.6 Teachers’ perceptions of students’ preferences

Participants were asked their opinions about kind of teacher learners prefer. As can be seen in graph 16, participants expressed their opinions broadly. Although 56.4% of participants stated that in their view, learners preferred native speaker teachers, 23.9% explained that learners tended to prefer non-native teachers. Some participants explained that well prepared teachers who helped learners achieve their learning goals were preferred. Furthermore, other participants expressed that some learners had a preference for female teachers. Finally, a few participants also stated that they did not perceive a marked preference towards teachers in terms of their mother tongue or background. However, they explained that competent teachers with empathy towards learners were usually popular among students.

During the interviews, one NNEST participant expressed that students’ preferences varied depending on their level of English. He stated that learners in basic levels usually preferred NNESTs. The reason for this preference, in his view, was the fact that learners might feel frustrated to speak the language with a native speaker at an early level of their learning process (see 23). A study conducted by Alseweed (2012) brings support to this finding by concluding that learners tend to prefer NNESTs at lower levels of education as they need someone who makes them feel less anxious about the language. Nonetheless, NESTs are usually preferred in higher levels. Similarly, one NNEST participant stated that in her view, students preferred NNESTs as they

understood the learning process students went through and were able to guide them in a better way (see 24). By contrast, one NEST participant expressed that it is clear that learners have a strong preference towards native speaker teachers, nonetheless this preference varies from one country to another. In his view, in countries like Asia a native speaker is what learners expect from an English teacher, while in Mexico there is more acceptance towards both NNESTs and NESTs. He added that most students only care that they have a good teacher (see 25).



Graph 16. Teachers' beliefs about Learners' preferences for English teachers.

23) I have seen is that they prefer nonnative because they feel sometimes frustrated that they don't have the enough level to speak with native speakers. Of course. Some students prefer NESTs because they think they will learn more and acquire better pronunciation. Some students prefer a nonnative for basic levels because they can communicate with a person who speaks their same language, instead of one that they may not understand which will force them to speak in another language and that scares them. (NNEST participant 6)

24) *“In my experience students prefer non-native teachers because they know what it’s like to learn English and they can offer more help and guidance to students in their learning process. (NNEST participant 12)*

25) *“I think lots of students care deeply that they have a native teacher, especially in Asia. I think there might be more tolerance in Mexico and Latin America. I don't know if I have the correct reason, but there are so many more Mexicans who speak perfect English in Mexico, or because we're close to United States. I think there's more cultural similarities, affinity, acceptance of Mexicans who teach English. Also, a lot of students don't care who is their teacher as long as they are good at what they do.” (NEST participant 105)*

4.7 Hiring processes and remuneration for teachers

The last aspect covered in the questionnaire and later in the interviews was the perception teachers had towards hiring processes and job benefits English teachers received. In the first case, participants were asked whether or not they considered hiring processes fair for both NNESTs, and NESTs. As can be seen in graph 17, in this regard, 74.4% of participants expressed that hiring processes were unfair. While 22.2% of participants stated that hiring processes were fair for all teachers. A small number of teachers expressed that depending on the sector and institutions, hiring processes could be more or less fair.

During the interviews, one NNEST participant indicated that hiring processes tended to be unfair since some schools gave more importance to nativeness than academic preparation. He added that sometimes native speaker teachers with little preparation and experience were chosen over very competent non-native teachers (see 26). Similarly, as can be seen in (27), another NNEST participant commented that in spite that he has not experienced inequality in the hiring processes, some of his former co-workers have shared their experiences of inequality.



Graph 17. *Perceived fairness in hiring processes.*

26) *“they have this idea that a native speaker will teach better the language. Sometimes that's not true because they maybe know how to communicate, but they probably don't know how to teach the language. I've seen that natives with little preparation are hired over people with a B.A or a lot of experience in ELT. That's why I think some schools tend to be unfair in their hiring processes.”* (NNEST participant 6)

27) . *Well, it hasn't happened to me personally. But I have heard some experiences from other colleagues that have told us that in their schools, for example, there are native speakers who are given the best classes, and they are a paid more even if they do the same job. The only difference is that they are native speakers. So, I think in some schools, some authorities*

consider that they are preferred, just because they're native speakers. (NEST Participant 9)

4.8 Conclusion

Overall, results of the study show that Mexican learners have certain preferences for native speaker teachers of English. This preference is more visible in terms of learning/acquiring pronunciation and at advanced levels. On the other hand, non-native speaker teachers are preferred by learners at beginner levels. Additionally, both NESTs and NNESTs are aware of the preferences of learners. Nonetheless, a big percentage of teachers are confident with their teaching skills and knowledge of the language and have rarely experienced inequalities. Both NESTs, and NNESTs have benefitted from speaking English or Spanish as their mother tongues in their teaching careers. More detailed conclusions will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 5. Conclusions

5.0 Introduction

In this final chapter, the aims of the study, as introduced in chapter one, will first be presented and discussed, which in turn will be followed by the conclusions that answer the research questions of the current study, contrasted with relevant information from experienced researchers in the field. Later on, the limitations and implications with recommendations and suggestions for possible further research will be presented. Finally, the chapter will be concluded with a reflective account referring to the study as a whole.

The aims of the present study were:

- 1) To explore and contrast the perceptions of Mexican English learners towards their native and non-native teachers.
- 2) To explore and contrast the perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs have about themselves.

In examining these aspects, the present study yields two important findings, with the first suggesting that learners' preferences towards their language teachers seems to be selective and based on learners' proficiency level of the language and learning objectives, rather than teachers' cultural backgrounds. The second relevant finding suggests that most teachers do feel comfortable with their linguistic skills in order to teach the target language, nonetheless some of them have experienced unfair hiring processes that ...

5.1 Conclusions

Regarding the research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis, the data show the following:

How do linguistic and sociocultural features of NESTs and NNESTs influence the perceptions of learners from the cities of Puebla and Tabasco, Mexico regarding their teachers' competence?

Overall, results show that learners from Puebla and Tabasco consider NESTs as the ideal role models for emulating pronunciation, particularly an American pronunciation. Results showed that learners perceive their native teachers' pronunciation as a point of reference for their English pronunciation. In this regard Levis et al. (2016) remark that although learners tend to prefer NESTs for pronunciation learning, research has shown no evidence that a teacher's L1 has a positive or negative impact on learners' pronunciation. Furthermore, findings of the study suggest that NESTs are believed to have a wide lexical repertoire, which in turn might lead learners to believe that NESTs are more effective for vocabulary teaching.

On the other hand, evidence from the study suggests that there exists a preference towards non-native teachers in terms of grammar instruction. Furthermore, results show that learners believe NNESTs have a better command of grammar structures and are able to explain it in a better way. Moreover, learners consider that the fact that NNESTs have been through the process of learning English represents a major advantage since that makes them more understanding about the challenges students might face. A study conducted by Beckett and Stiefvater (2009) lends support to this result. According to the authors' findings, learners perceive NNESTs as empathetic and more efficient teachers aware of learners' needs. Furthermore, they were seen as having more cultural and metalinguistic awareness with equally competent abilities to teach all language skills. In terms of sociocultural features of teachers, results from the study demonstrate that learners consider that NESTs enrich lessons due to their cultural background. Learners value culture and consider it a key factor to enhance their learning process. Thus, they perceive NESTs positively

due to their knowledge of English-speaking culture. Interestingly, according to the findings of the study, learners consider that sharing the same background with NNESTs represents an advantage. In their view, teachers who share their background tend to be more empathic and understanding. Finally, some opinions pointed that any teacher could enrich lessons by adding cultural aspect of the target language in spite of their cultural backgrounds.

Among the general advantages of NESTs, students identified their cultural background, vocabulary and pronunciation. Nonetheless, they were also seen as unprepared teachers in contrast with NNESTs. Aspects such as lesson planning, form of evaluation and teaching skills were almost not mentioned. In the case of NNESTs, the main positive aspects students identified in them were related to dynamics of the class, lesson planning, academic preparation and grammar knowledge and instruction. Interestingly, their cultural background was also mentioned among their advantages, while a wide range of vocabulary was highly unpopular.

To sum up, as stated earlier, in most cases learners tend to value and respect both NESTs and NNESTs equally. However, it results evident that certain teachers are perceived as more efficient than others for teaching certain aspects. Furthermore, NESTs are perceived as great models for emulating pronunciation and learning vocabulary, but they can be seen as less prepared teachers compared to NNESTs, who were assessed more positively in terms of lesson planning and teaching skills. Notwithstanding, no matter a teacher's origin or mother tongue, learners value empathic teachers who encourage them to learn the language and understand their learning process. Also, learners feel comfortable working with teachers from any background. If their teacher has a different cultural background, learners see it as a learning opportunity. While if their teacher shares their cultural background, learners will feel comfortable and understood.

In order to answer the second research question, conclusions will be drawn from the results obtained in the study. Such conclusions are presented in the following paragraphs.

How do linguistic and sociocultural features of NESTs and NNESTs influence teachers' self-perceptions of their own professional competence?

Overall, teachers in Tabasco and Puebla feel comfortable with their linguistic and sociocultural skills to teach English. Both NNESTs, and NESTs have also expressed that their mother tongues have influenced their careers positively. Contrary to what would be expected, NNESTs considered that speaking two or more languages represented a major advantage for their teaching practice. This advantage lies in the fact that at times they could switch to Spanish for behavior correction or to help students understand better something from class. Similarly, NESTs expressed they had extensively benefitted from their mother tongue. However, NESTs explained that at the beginning of their careers they had little or no academic preparation to teach English and discovered that their knowledge of their mother tongue was not sufficient without proper training. Additionally, both NESTs and NNESTs expressed that a major aspect that contributes to their confidence is teaching experience. Teachers agreed that in the field of ELT experience is as equally important as academic preparation.

On the other hand, teachers acknowledged unfairly implemented hiring practices that benefitted NESTs with the best classes and higher salaries. Teachers expressed that the issue of nativeness represented a major advantage for NESTs when applying for a job. Furthermore, teachers expressed that sometimes institutions' interests caused NESTs to be hired over highly qualified non-native professionals. The reason for this preference is the fact that parents and institutions share the belief of native speakerism, where a native teacher is seen as the ideal English teacher.

Interestingly, teachers agree with learners that depending on their proficiency level and skills they are interested in developing, learners will have a particular preference towards teachers. Results show that in the teachers' views learners with basic and elementary levels of proficiency tend to prefer NNESTs since they are perceived as more empathic and patient. Furthermore, according to the participants, having a NNEST in elementary and basic levels might reduce students' anxiety towards learning and speaking the language. While for more advanced levels or fluency development learners are believed to enjoy more being taught by NESTs. These last assertions result relevant since they suggest that NESTs are not always "the ideal English teacher".

One last thing implied by participants was that even if NESTs were usually favored for job positions, those who were benefitted needed to fulfill certain social and racial requirements. The concept of NEST involved not only speaking English as their first language, but aspects such as country of origin, accent and skin color were also implicit.

5.2 Limitations

To carry out the current research project, some challenges and limitations were faced. The first limitation encountered was that some aspects that were not considered at first to develop the questionnaires turned out to be highly relevant, which caused that some information that could have served the research was not considered or further studied. A second limitation was presented due to the limited number of native speaker teachers to take part in the research. A similar number of NESTs and NNESTs could have added even more relevant information and different opinions from both perspectives. Nonetheless, the information gathered in the study was extremely interesting and enriching.

5.3 Directions for further research

The current directions for further research are based on the limitations described in the previous section. In case a researcher would wish to further expand this study. It is advisable to find a bigger sample of native teacher participants, this would help the study become a little bit more accurate and fair. It would also add even more interesting experiences that can be contrasted with those of NNESTs. Additionally, it is recommended to further expand the learners' questionnaire so that the information obtained from it can be richer.

5.4 Implications

The present study will shed some light on how NNESTs and NESTs are perceived by English learners in the Mexican context. Furthermore, it will also provide understandings on how native and non-native teachers perceive themselves and how these perceptions influence their teaching practice. Additionally, it is expected that the current study raises awareness on the need of reevaluating current beliefs and practices in the field of ELT in Mexico. Finally, the present study provides a critical view about the ideal English teacher in Mexico. Even if the issue of nativeness still has certain influence on the perceptions of many learners, the study reveals that in the present the ideal English teacher is someone who is not only fluent and accurate in the language, but also possesses extensive academic preparation and substantial experience in ELT.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Table 1. Information about student participants

Code	Age	Gender
PS1	20	female
PS2	22	male
PS3	31	female
PS4	22	male
PS5	20	female
PS6	22	male
PS7	23	male

PS8	20	female
PS9	19	female
PS10	22	female
PS11	20	male
PS12	26	female
PS13	19	female
PS14	19	female
PS15	24	male
PS16	20	female
PS17	22	male
PS18	22	female
PS19	22	male
PS20	20	female
PS21	21	male
PS22	24	male
PS23	22	female
PS24	26	female
PS25	19	female
PS26	19	female
PS27	22	female
PS28	25	male
PS29	19	female
PS30	26	male
PS31	20	female
PS32	23	female
PS33	27	female
PS34	23	female
PS35	18	female
PS36	30	female
PS37	20	male
PS38	25	female
PS39	21	male
PS40	21	male
PS41	22	male
PS42	21	male
PS43	27	female
PS44	22	female
PS45	25	female
PS46	21	female
PS47	26	male
PS48	21	female

PS49	27	female
PS50	30	male
PS51	18	female
PS52	20	female
PS53	20	female
PS54	31	female
PS55	25	female
PS56	21	male
PS57	22	female
PS58	23	female
PS59	23	female
PS60	20	female
PS61	20	female
PS62	22	female
PS63	24	female
PS64	27	female
PS65	28	female
PS66	26	female
PS67	27	female
PS68	27	female
PS69	22	female
PS70	24	female
PS71	20	female
PS72	17	male
PS73	17	male
PS74	20	female
PS75	23	male
PS76	23	female
PS77	21	female
PS78	20	male
PS79	26	male
PS80	28	male
PS81	22	female
PS82	40	female
PS83	20	female
PS84	19	female
PS85	21	female
PS86	22	female
PS87	23	female

Appendix B

Table 2. information about the teacher participants

1	Female	25-30	Spanish
2	Female	25-30	Spanish
3	Male	25-30	Spanish
4	Female	31-35	Spanish
5	Female	31-35	Spanish
6	Female	25-30	Spanish
7	Female	41-45	Spanish
8	Female	25-30	Spanish
9	Male	25-30	Spanish
10	Male	36-40	Spanish
11	Female	41-45	Spanish
12	Female	31-35	Spanish
13	Female	41-45	Spanish
14	Male	25-30	Spanish
15	Female	46-50	Spanish
16	Female	25-30	Spanish
17	Masculino	41-45	Spanish
18	Female	41-45	Spanish
19	Female	46-50	Spanish
20	Female	41-45	Spanish
21	Male	31-35	Spanish
22	Female	31-35	Spanish
23	Male	36-40	Spanish
24	Female	31-35	Spanish
25	Female	36-40	Spanish
26	Female	25-30	Spanish
27	Female	31-35	Spanish
28	Male	25-30	Spanish
29	Male	25-30	Spanish
30	Female	31-35	Spanish
31	Female	31-35	Spanish
32	Male	41-45	Spanish
33	Male	36-40	Spanish

34	Female	31-35	Spanish
35	Male	36-40	Spanish
36	Male	36-40	Spanish
37	Female	36-40	Spanish
38	Female	46-50	Spanish
39	Male	46-50	Spanish
40	Female	31-35	Spanish
41	Male	46-50	Spanish
42	Male	31-35	Spanish
43	Female	31-35	Spanish
44	Female	36-40	Spanish
45	Female	36-40	Spanish
46	Male	46-50	Spanish
47	Female	25-30	Spanish
48	Female	25-30	Spanish
49	Female	41-45	Spanish
50	Female	36-40	Spanish
51	Female	31-35	Spanish
52	Female	31-35	Spanish
53	Female	31-35	Spanish
54	Female	Less than 25	Spanish
55	Male	31-35	Spanish
56	Female	36-40	Spanish
57	Female	41-45	Spanish
58	Male	25-30	English
59	Female	25-30	Spanish
60	Male	Less than 24	Spanish
61	Female	Less than 25	Spanish
62	Female	36-40	Spanish
63	Male	25-30	Spanish
64	Female	less than 25	Spanish
65	Male	31-35	Spanish
66	Female	25-30	Spanish
67	Male	25-30	Spanish
68	Male	36-40	Spanish
69	Female	31-35	Spanish
70	Female	41-45	Spanish
71	Male	25-30	Spanish
72	Female	31-35	Spanish
73	Male	less than 25	Spanish

74	Female	less than 25	Spanish
75	Female	36-40	Spanish
76	Female	41-45	Spanish
77	Male	less than 25	Spanish
78	Female	less than 25	Spanish
79	Male	41-45	Spanish
80	Female	36-40	Spanish
81	Male	31-35	Spanish
82	Male	25-30	Spanish
83	Female	36-40	Spanish
84	Female	41-45	Spanish
85	Female	25-30	Spanish
86	Male	25-30	Spanish
87	Female	25-30	Spanish
88	Male	25-30	Spanish
89	Female	25-30	Spanish
90	Male	less than 25	Spanish
91	Female	less than 25	Spanish
92	Male	25-30	Spanish
93	Female	31-34	Spanish
94	Female	31-35	Spanish
95	Female	less than 25	Spanish
96	Female	31-35	Spanish
97	Female	less than 25	Spanish
98	Male	31-35	Spanish
99	Female	less than 25	Spanish
100	Female	25-30	Spanish
101	Female	31-35	Spanish
102	Female	25-28	Spanish
103	Female	25-29	Spanish
104	Female	25-30	Spanish
105	Male	51-55	English
106	Female	31-35	English
107	Male	46-50	Spanish
108	Female	51-55	Spanish
109	Male	56+	Spanish
110	Male	25-30	English
111	Female	56+	English
112	Female	less than 25	Spanish
113	Male	46-50	English
114	Male	46-50	English
115	Male	36-40	Spanish

116	Male	46-50	English
117	Male	46-50	English

Appendix C

Learners' questionnaire

Questionnaire for learners

This questionnaire is aimed for learners of English. All your answers will remain confidential and will be used only for the purposes of the study. It will take less than five minutes. I would really appreciate your answers.

**Obligatorio*

1. Gender *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Male

Female

2. Age *

3. E-mail address *

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

4. Are you currently taking English lessons? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Yes

No

5. Have you had classes with native speaker teachers? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Yes

No *Salta a la pregunta 21*

Native speaker
teachers

How much do you agree with the following statements? Select from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree)

6. In classes with native speakers I feel I learn more than with non-native speakers *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

7. I consider that native speaker teachers are the best option for learning pronunciation *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

8. A native speaker teacher explains better the structural aspects of the language (grammar) than a non-native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

9. I feel native speaker teachers have good sociocultural knowledge that enriches lessons *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

10. I feel more frustrated when I speak in the target language with a native speaker than with a non-native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

11. I can communicate better in the target language with a native speaker teacher than with a non-native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

12. I understand every word that is said by a native speaker teacher. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

13. I understand better how to do an activity with a native speaker than with a non-native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

14. The native speaker teacher used more activities to learn the language than a non-native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

15. I always try to be in a class where the teacher is a native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

16. I feel native speaker teachers are more punctual than non-native speakers *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

17. I feel native speaker teachers understand the learning process of an L2 better than a non-native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

18. In my opinion, native speaker teachers are more strict than non-native speaker teachers. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly agree

22:20:59

Questionnaire for learners

19. What are the main advantages you perceive in native speaker teachers? (You can select as many options as you need) *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Pronunciation
- Cultural background
- Knowledge of grammar
- Teaching capabilities
- Lesson planning
- Punctuality
- Native language
- Vocabulary
- Form of evaluation
- Clear speech

Otro: _____

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

20. What are the main disadvantages you perceive in native speaker teachers? (You can select as many options as you need) *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Pronunciation (hard to understand)
- Teaching capabilities
- Knowledge of grammar
- Punctuality
- Lesson planning
- Use of vocabulary
- Form of evaluation

Otro: _____

Non-native speaker
teachers

How much do you agree with the following statements? Select from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree)

21. In classes with non-native speakers I feel I learn more than with native speakers *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

22. I feel non-native speaker teachers understand the learning process of an L2 better than a native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

23. A non-native speaker teacher explains better the structural aspects of the language (grammar) than a native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

24. I feel more confident in classes with non-native speakers *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

25. I think non-native speaker teachers are more strict than native speaker teachers *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

26. A non-native speaker explains better the structural aspects of the language than a native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly Agree

27. I understand every word that is said by a non-native speaker teacher *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

28. I can communicate better in the target language with a non-native speaker teacher than with a native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

29. I feel more frustrated when I speak in the target language with a non-native speaker than with a native speaker.

*

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

30. I understand better how to do an activity with a non-native speaker than with a native speaker *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

21/02/2019

Questionnaire for learners

31. The non-native speaker teacher used more activities to learn the language than a native speaker. *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

32. What are the main advantages you perceive in non-native speaker teachers? (You can choose as many options as you need) *

Seleccione todos los que correspondan.

Pronunciation (intelligible)

Grammar knowledge

Cultural background

Manner of evaluation

Dynamics of the class

Punctuality

Lesson planning

Teaching capabilities

Otro: _____

2/1/22 20:59

Questionnaire for learners

33. What are the main disadvantages you perceive in non-native speaker teachers? (choose as many options as you need) *

Seleccione todos los que correspondan.

- Pronunciation (not native-like)
- Teaching capabilities
- Punctuality
- Grammar knowledge
- Lesson planning
- Cultural background
- Form of evaluation

Otro: _____

34. I don't mind if my teacher is non-native or native as long as he/she is good at his/her job *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

Appendix D

Teachers' questionnaire

Questionnaire for English teachers

The current questionnaire is aimed at English teachers in Mexico. The purpose of the research is to analyze the perceptions that English teachers have about their preparation as professionals in teaching a second language.

All responses provided will remain confidential and will be used only for the purpose of this investigation. It will take less than five minutes to answer.

I greatly appreciate your time and support for the development of this research.

*Obligatorio

1. 1. Gender *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Male
 Female

2. 2. Age *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Less than 25
 25-30
 31-35
 36-40
 41-45
 46-50
 51-55
 56 +

4. 4. What is your mother tongue? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- English
 Spanish
 Otro: _____

5. 5. With which of the following do you feel most identified? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Native speaker teacher of English
 Non-native speaker teacher of English
 Otro: _____

6. 6. How many years of teaching experience do you have? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- 1 or less
 2-5
 6-10
 11-15
 16-20
 More than 20

7. 7. In which sector do you work? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Private

Public

8. 8. In which level do you mainly work? *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

Kindergarten

Elementary school

Secondary school

High school

University

Master's degree

Doctoral degree

Otro: _____

9. 9. Do you have academic preparation in English teaching? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Yes

No

10. 10. Which of the following corresponds to your academic preparation in English teaching?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Bachelor's degree in English teaching or equivalent
- Master's degree in English teaching or equivalent
- Doctoral degree in English teaching or equivalent

11. 11. Which of the following do you have? (You may select as many options as you need) *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Certificate in English teaching
- Courses in English teaching
- I don't have any preparation in English teaching

Otro: _____

12. 12. How important is it for you to have academic preparation for language teaching? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4 5

Not important Very important

13. 13. To what extent has your mother tongue influenced your teaching career? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

14. 14. To what extent do your linguistic skills (pronunciation, grammar knowledge) make you feel comfortable and confident to teach English? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

15. 15. In what level your sociocultural knowledge of English language (knowledge of social rules, ways to address the interlocutor) make you feel comfortable and confident to teach English? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

16. 16. To what extent do your knowledge of the English language and teaching skills allow you to teach quality lessons? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

17. 17. "Native speaker teachers are the ideal language teachers" How much do you agree with this statement? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

18. 18. In your view, what kind of teacher do students prefer? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Native speaker teachers
- Non-native speaker teachers
- Otro: _____

19. 19. In your view, which of the following might represent an advantage when applying to a position as an English teacher? (You may select as many options as you need) *

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Academic preparation in language teaching
 Mother tongue
 Certified level of English (E.g. B2, C1...)
 Number of certifications
 Teaching experience
 Teaching skills

Otro: _____

20. 20. In your experience, are hiring processes fair for both native and non-native speaker teachers? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Yes
 No
 Otro: _____

21. 21. In your experience, who receives a higher salary? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Native speaker teachers
 Non-native speaker teachers
 Both receive the same amount
 Otro: _____
-

22. 22. In your view, what aspects might cause that some English teachers receive a higher salary than others? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Academic preparation
- Duties in the position
- Academic level where he/she teaches (E.g. Elementary school)
- Certified level of the language (E.g. B2, C1)
- Teaching experience
- Mother tongue
- Sector (Public or private institutions)
- Otro: _____