

The Roles of a Native English Speaker Teacher (NEST) on the Students Motivation in Learning English: A Case Study at SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar

Darmanto

*Samawa University, Sumbawa Besar
Indonesia*

Abstract

The involvement of a native English speaker teacher (NEST, henceforth) in teaching English is a new phenomenon in Sumbawa Besar. SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar involved a NEST sent by the American Indonesian Exchange Foundation (AMINEF) through the Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETA) program. This study aims at describing the roles of a NEST on the students' motivation in learning English at SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar. The design of this study was descriptive qualitative. The subjects were 27 of the tenth-grade students of SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar. The following procedures such as observation, documentation, questionnaire, and an interview are used in collecting the data. The results showed that the existence of a NEST on the students' motivation in learning English had a vital implication on the following roles: pedagogical roles, psychological roles, language roles, and cultural knowledge roles.

Keywords: Native English speaker teacher, motivation, and learning

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language is still a great issue in the education system of Indonesia. Although the students have studied English since they were at junior high schools up to high schools (6 years), the facts show that the students' ability to master English is very far from satisfying. Most students are not able to communicate in English properly and correctly. Some of them are even unable to communicate in English at all. This fact is certainly very concerning. As we all know, the ability to communicate in English is strongly needed today. Since it will greatly affect the ability of our young generation to compete at the global level, it is alleged that the low ability of English teachers and a large number of students in each class are the factors that influence students' learning processes and outcomes (Gunarwan, 2004).

In addition to the two factors mentioned above, the students' ability to master a language, especially foreign languages, is also influenced by other factors. For example interest, motivation, attitude, and learning strategies. Motivation is considered as one of the factors that greatly determine success in the learning process since it plays undeniable function during the students' learning process (Yusri & Mantasiah, 2017). Furthermore, Rayhanna (2012) states that motivation in language learning should be the learners' consideration because it closely associated with the final result of a learning process. Students with high motivation will easily construct and develop their knowledge even with limited learning material. Conversely, students with low motivation will find it difficult to construct and develop themselves.

In line with the above problems and the importance of motivation in learning, especially in learning a foreign language, it is necessary to apply effective and appropriate strategies that are able to overcome the problem of teaching and learning English. The involvement of a NEST in English teaching and learning activities is considered as one of the appropriate and effective solutions.

Andreou and Galantomos (2009) define English native-speaker as someone who speaks English as a first language. Furthermore, Medgyes (as cited in Andreou&Galantomos, 2009) claims that English native speaker is someone who has the intuition to distinguish correct or wrong forms in English.

There are different views to differentiate native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English-speaking teachers (non-NESTs) as follows:Reves and Medgyes (1997) underline three differences between NESTs and

Non-NESTs. Firstly, NESTs are more aware of the correct language use, but non-NESTs are more aware of structural patterns and language learning processes. This makes the non-NESTs more rigid and knowledgeable at the same time. Second, NESTs are more natural and real with language (communication is more important than form). Whereas, non-NESTs are more concerned with the accuracy and formal features of English. Third, non-NESTs prepare their classes more carefully. This could be a strategy for overcoming the problem with language proficiency. On the other hand, NESTs tend to improvise more and do not follow the textbook as closely. Palfreyman (1997) states that NESTs tend to see learning as a matter of making their students consciously aware. On the other hand, non-NESTs are not concerned with the language, but with the ability to mean. Laderer (1997) points out that non-NESTs tend to consider morphological mistakes more serious. Whereas, NESTs emphasize on pronunciation and syntax. The reason is that word order is a structural pattern that NESTs learn subconsciously. However, even highly educated native speakers who were not educated in linguistics would not know how to elucidate word order in English.

The differences between NESTs and Non-NESTs also can be seen in terms of teaching behaviors. According to Medgyes (1999), there are the differences between NESTs and Non-NESTs in teaching behaviors as follows: NESTs own use of English (speak better English, use real language, use English more confidently), general attitude (adopt more flexible approach, more innovative, less empathetic, attend to perceived needs, and more casual), attitude to teaching the language (less insightful, focus on fluency, meaning, language in use, oral skills, teach items in context, prefer free activities, use variety materials, tolerate errors, set fewer tests, use no/less first language, resort no/less translation, assign less homework), attitude to teaching the culture (supply more cultural information). On the other hand, Non-NEST own use of English (speak poorer English, use bookish language, use English less confidently), general attitude (adopt more guided approach, more cautious, more empathetic, attend to the real needs, more committed), attitude to teaching the language (more insightful, focus on accuracy, form, grammar rules, printed word, teach items in isolation, prefer controlled activities, use a single textbook, correct/punish for errors, set more tests, use more first language, resort to more translation, and assign more homework), attitude to teaching culture (supply less cultural information).

Learning English can be seen like a complicated and time-consuming task. Understanding English slang and how native English speakers engage in conversation is something that cannot be learnt from a textbook. Learning English from a native speaker teacher has a number of advantages. According to Edwards (2011), there are seven advantages of learning English with the native speaker teacher as follows: *Authentic learning*. By learning with native speaker teacher, the students will be exposed to the authentic English language. Through learning activities such as games, students learn many things related to the culture and the way of native speaker's speaking. It includes the use of slang and accents.

Pronunciation and language use. Learning English words and grammar also will be easier with native speaker teachers since they provide a natural way of learning English words and grammar. Students will get the chance how to properly pronounce words and phrases, how to speak and write using proper grammar and vocabulary, and they can get instant and accurate feedback to overcome bad speech patterns. *Cultural questions*. Native speaker teachers can provide the proper answers to questions about customs or cultural practices that may come up during class. *Grammar*. The native speaker teacher will provide positive feedback to help a student. Students will begin to control their language use.

English conversation. By conversing with the native speakers, the students will be able to pick up on the meaning of phrases and the teacher will be able to make sure the student is applying the proper meaning of the words and phrases they use. The English teacher can explain why a phrase is spoken in a certain way. *Verbs*. NESTs have the capability to explain phrases much more easily, include the use of irregular verbs. *Strange vocabulary*. NESTs will be easy in explaining types of illogical words to the students easily.

Medgyes (1999) enumerates a few points on the advantages of learning English with the native English-speaking teachers (NESTs). First, NESTs cannot be a learner model, because they did not have to learn English as a second language. Second, non-NESTs can teach learning strategies more effectively. As the non-NESTs are teacher and learner at the same time, they have developed learning strategies that can be useful to the students. On the other hand, NESTs may lack of these strategies. Third, NESTs may not be aware of internal mechanisms operating in the acquisition of a second language, since for the NESTs language acquisition was unconscious.

According to Gardner (as cited in Degang, 2010) motivation is a combination of desire and effort to achieve the goals of learning that will stimulate positive or favorable attitude toward language learning. It elucidates that the effort

really depends on the motivation or desire as the effort to learn or to do something is the consequence of motivation leading someone. Motivation is a crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks on task at all, how much energy one devotes to it, and how long one preserves (Littlewood, as cited in Degang, 2010).

There are two common or recognized types of motivation. According to Degang (2010), those main types of motivation are integrative and instrumental motivations, which both are significant in determining language learning outcomes. *Integrative Motivation.* This type of motivation denotes self-applied and constitutes genuine or basic interest of a learner. This concerns a positive disposition toward the second language community and the desire to interact with and even become similar to the valued members of that society. In other words, it is concerned with the willingness to be like valued members of the language community. Furthermore, Deci & Ryan (2000) state intrinsic motivation as doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable. *Instrumental Motivation.* This type of motivation constitutes a motivation arousing a result from extrinsic sources like the involvement of rewards or punishments. In other words, it is pertaining to potential pragmatic gains or achievement of L2 proficiency like having a better job of a higher payment or salary. Deci & Ryan (2000) also define extrinsic motivation as doing something because it leads to a separable outcome.

It has been largely accepted that motivation plays a very significant part in language learning. Numerous experts have given their concern on motivation and language learning. Success or failure in language learning seems largely dependent on the learners' motivation to learn the target language. Gardner and Lambert (as cited in Degang, 2010) state that motivation plays a very significant role in language learning as it leads to positive attitude to the language community and to a desire to communicate with the respected or valued members of the community and to be similar to them.

Various theorists and researchers have found that it is important to look at the construct of motivation not as a single entity but as a multi-factorial one. Oxford and Shearing (as cited in Qashoa, 2006) identified six factors that impact motivation in language learning: attitudes (sentiments toward the learning community and the target language), beliefs about self (expectancies about one's attitudes to succeed, self-efficacy, and anxiety), goals (perceived clarity and relevance of learning goals as reasons for learning), involvement (extent to which the learner actively and consciously participates in the language learning process), environmental support (extent of teacher and peer support, and the integration of cultural and outside of class support into learning experience), and personal attributes (aptitude, age, sex, and previous language learning experience).

Method

The design of this study was a descriptive qualitative. The subjects were 27 students of the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar. In collecting the data from the site study, these following procedures were used: *Observation.* I observed the subjects' activities in the classroom (their interaction among each other or their responses when they were asked by the teacher and students' motivation showed in their attitude to respond to teacher and friends' questions). I performed a nonparticipant observer in this study. *Documentation.* I took the video and photos of the involvement of a NEST in learning process. *Questionnaire.* I used close questionnaire in this study. The questionnaire was delivered to the participants at their school. *Semi-structured interview.* To obtain the valid information from the participants, then I avoided the formal situation; I visited the participants' house after making deal with the participants. I allocated 10 to 15 minutes for a participant.

Findings and Discussion

In this subsection, firstly I presented a brief elaboration of the results of interview and questionnaire. Referring to the results of interview and questionnaire, I underlined a few main roles of a NEST that provided positive effect on the students' motivation in learning English. Those roles were pedagogical roles, psychological roles, language roles, and target cultural knowledge roles.

1. Pedagogical Roles

This roles covered the following aspects:

No.	Aspects
	Authentic learning
	Pronunciation and language use

	od motivator
	od language assistant
	odinformant about customs and cultural practices

The first was authentic learning. It was considered as the most important roles of a native-speaker teacher in English teaching learning, because, the students engaged in real and regular conversations that native-speakers use every day. The students also learnt about culture and how to speak like a native speaker:

“I really love this method, because it gives us a chance to speak English directly with the native-speaker”
(ARP, Trans).

“Emmm the existence of ETA teacher or a native-speaker teacher, I get many worth experiences in learning English, from her method in teaching us in the classroom and also from her stories during in USA”
(ADP, Trans).

“In my opinion, a native-speaker teacher is very helpful for us in learning English, because beside we are assisted to finish our task eee we also involve in the real English environment, thus we feel that we are learning in the overseas”
(IH, Trans).

The second was pronunciation and language use. A NEST provided natural way of learning English words and grammar. The students got a chance to learn how to pronounce words and phrases properly. The students also learnt how to speak and write using proper grammar and vocabulary. A NEST provided instant and accurate feedback to help students overcome bad speech patterns:

“My experience during learning English with a native-speaker teacher is very interesting and fun. She also enriches our knowledge about how to speak English better and correctly”
(RCA, Trans).

“She is very helpful, because she can help us how to read correctly and we know the accent of English,, yeah we get more knowledge about English”
(TIT, Trans).

“Yes, of course. A native-speaker teacher is very helpful in improving my pronunciation. When we are speaking then she listens the wrong pronunciation, thus she will repeat and tell us the correct one”
(TRS, Trans).

The third was good motivator in learning. A NEST was success to motivate and make the students to be enthusiastic in learning English. It could be seen from the students’ statements that they are confident and enthusiastic after joining the class that involved a NEST in English teaching learning. They were very confident in speaking and communicating with the foreigners outside of the school:

“It is a great experience, because my motivation in learning English is getting increase”
(KDW, Trans).

“Yes, because she always asks for us to come in front of the classroom to practice our speaking, thus it is really helpful to increase our confidence”
(ARP, Trans).

“She is very helpful in increasing my confidence to speak English, because we learn and use English every day, so we get used to speak English”
(TIT, Trans).

“A native-speaker teacher is very helpful for me to increase my confidence, because eee she always uses English fully, so I am getting used to speak English in my daily. I become more confident when I meet and talk with the foreigners outside of the school”
(RCA, Trans).

The fourth was good language assistant. A NEST who was categorized as the owner of the language was helpful for the students in learning English, because a NEST helped the students to overcome all of the students’ problems in learning English. For instance, a NEST was easier in explaining the strange vocabularies and English

phrases:

“She is very helpful, because she knows much about English than us,, thus she is very fluent and her teaching method is fun”

(RTK, Trans).

“Yeah, I am so motivated, because she is a native and she has much knowledge about English”

(RA, Trans).

“Emm the existence of a native-speaker teacher also very helpful for me.. She will not stop us directly when we make mistakes, but she will tell us step by step”(ADP, Trans).

The fifth was good informant about customs and cultural practices. A NEST was the ambassador and representative of his or her country in the place where she or he lived and worked. Thus, a NEST was able to provide the answer to the questions about customs and cultural practices that may come up during the class:

“My experiences to learn English with a native-speaker teacher are passionate and gratified, because we able to do the cultural exchange eee especially about language”

(TRS, Trans).

“In my opinion, my experiences during learning English with a native-speaker teacher are fun and passionate, because we can share our experiences during the learning process”

(IH, Trans).

“Passionate and fun, we also know about her country”

(RTK, Trans).

2. Psychological Roles

This roles covered the following aspects:

No.	Aspects	Percentage (%)
1.	Students enjoy the learning	100 %
2.	Students are enthusiastic	96.2 %
3.	Students are more confident	92.5 %
4.	NEST is a good motivator	96.3 %

3. Language Roles

This roles covered the following aspects:

No.	Aspects	Percentage (%)
1.	Improve students' pronunciation	100 %
2.	Enhance students' vocabulary	100 %
3.	Improve students' proficiency	92.6 %
4.	Improve students' listening skill	92.6 %
5.	Enrich students' experiences	88.9 %

4. Target Cultural Knowledge Roles

This roles covered the following aspects:

No.	Aspects	Percentage (%)
1.	Knowledge on culture of the target language	96.3 %
2.	Knowledge on customs and practices	96.3 %
4.	Knowledge of English speaking countries	88.9 %

Conclusion

Referring to the results of this study, it can be concluded that: a NEST plays a few main roles of a NEST that provided positive effect on the students' motivation in learning English. Those roles were pedagogical roles, psychological roles, learning roles, language roles, and target cultural knowledge roles. All of those points provided significant positive effect on the students, because the students got the clear information about English and the occidental culture from the teacher. The existence of a NEST in SMAN 2 Sumbawa Besar has given a huge effect on the students. The students were motivated and enthusiastic in learning English directly from the NEST.

Implications of the study

The findings of the study bear implications for education. Those implications are presented as follows: First, the involvement of a NEST in Indonesian formal education system is still needed since the existence of a NEST strongly provides a huge effect on the students. The students were motivated and enthusiastic in learning English directly from the NEST. Second, a new English environment to facilitate the English learners in improving and increasing their English proficiency should be created. Third, English teachers should be able to motivate their students to study English. Especially, their strategies in providing the English environment, for instance use full English during the class, create the class to feel free in learning process, try to use various of teaching methods to make the learners fun, enjoy, enthusiastic in learning process and confident to speak English inside the classroom or outside the classroom. Last, a quantitative research should be carried out to examine the effectiveness of NEST's in improving the learners' four skills.

References

- Andreou, G., & Galantomos, I. (2009). *Native speaker ideal in foreign language teaching*. Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, Vol. 6, No. 2 (pp. 200-208). National University of Singapore.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: classic definitions and new directions*. Contemporary Educational Psychology, No. 25 (pp. 54-67).
- Degang, Manusak. (2010). *Motivation toward English language learning of the second year undergraduate Thai students majoring in English business at an English-medium University*. Unpublished master's thesis of University of SRINAKHANINGWIROT.
- Edwards, C. (2011). *Learning English with native speaker teachers*. Retrieved from <http://article.abc-directory.com/article/9016>
- Gunarwan, A. (2004). Globalization and the teaching of English in Indonesia. In Ho Wah Kam & Ward, Christopher (Eds.). *Language in the global context: implications for the language classroom*, (pp. 312-325). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Medgyes, P. (1999). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. In Celce Marianne & Murcia (Eds.). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language (3rd ed)*. The United States: Heinle & Heinle Thompson Learning.
- Merino, I. G. (1997). *Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) versus Non-native English-speaking teachers (Non-NESTs)*. Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses, No. 10 (pp. 69-79).
- Qashoa, S. H. (2006). *Motivation among learners of English in the secondary schools in the eastern coast of the UAE*. Unpublished master degree dissertation, Institute of Education British University Dubai, UAE.
- Raine, P. (2011). *The role of native-speaker teachers in English language education*. Retrieved from <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/blogs/tefl-journey/2011/08/22/the-role-of-native-speaker-teachers-in-english-language-education/>
- Rayhanna, D.C. (2012). The Motivation For and Attitude Toward Learning English. *The Asian EFL Journal Professional Teaching Articles*, 63, 04-21
- Yusri, A.R. & Mantasiah, R. (2017). Intercultural approach in foreign language learning to improve students' motivation. *The Asian EFL Journal Professional Teaching Articles*, 98, 61-73
- Walker, E. (1998). *Roles of Native-Speaker English Teachers (NETs) in Hongkong Secondary Schools*. Asia Pacific Journal of Language in Education.

About the Author

Darmanto is currently working at Samawa University Sumbawa Besar, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Indonesia. His areas of interest and research include English teachers' professional development and new orientation in English language teaching. He wrote a thesis on a new orientation in English language teaching for his undergraduate program at STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong. Recently, he has accomplished his postgraduate thesis on English teachers' professional development at Postgraduate English Education Department, University of Mataram. He can be reached at otnamradsamawa55@gmail.com/dharmasamawa@gmail.com