An Observational Study on the Effects of Native English-Speaking Teachers and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers on Students' English Proficiency and Perceptions

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Abstract
This study investigated the effects of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST) on students' English proficiency and perceptions. The research methodology employed an observational study based using critical applied linguistic. Data collection was through a mixed method. The tools used were the Cambridge English: Key English Test (KET), classroom observation evaluation forms, and interviews. The participants consisted of 252 upper primary students from one private school in Chiang Mai, Thailand, during the academic year 2019. Results indicated that students' English proficiency was increased significantly at .01 level in both groups. The gain score suggested that NNEST can make a higher gain score than NEST in all grade levels. Student's answers show NNEST score a higher agreeability towards teachers' teaching abilities, English abilities, and the creation of an engaging learning atmosphere over NEST. Classroom observations implemented by three English Learning Teachers confirmed the results that NNEST is more agreeable than NEST in teachers' teaching ability and motivating learning atmospheres in classrooms. However, in teachers' English skills, the experts' perceptions were opposite that of the students. Lastly, the interviews with the students reflected three key aspects: their preferences of English teacher advantages, disadvantages, and strengths of both NNEST and NEST.

Keywords: Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST), Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST), *Cambridge* English: *Key* English test, students' proficiency (KET), Critical applied linguistics (CALx), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English Language Teachers (ELT)

Introduction:

Although English is not the official language in Thailand, it is compulsory in all curriculums like English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Lessons are usually taught by foreign teachers who can be either Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) or Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST).

Thailand, as well as other countries in Asian regions where English is not the native language, the educational goal is to use English as a bridge language, connecting it to the global world. Therefore, using English instructed by qualified English as a Foreign Language, and English as a Second Language (EFL/ESL) teachers is an invaluable opportunity for practice as most students do not have the chance to speak and use English with high regularity. (Jieyin & Gajaseni, 2018). The disparity comes when distinguishing the output and personal preferences in comparing both NEST and NNEST. The preferred norm is to have these classes taught by native speakers. Kiczkowiak (2014) reports that Korean schools usually reject applicants who are not native English speakers. Producing more effective communication with instruction by Native Speakers is the preferred consensius. This same phenomenon is beginning to arise in educational institutes, including schools in Thailand. Wahyudi (2012) also proposes that NNEST are less successful in finding employment, especially in Asian countries. This partnered with the largest voiced concern from both EFL students and parents that they prefer NEST instruct English over NNEST. The assumption is they will articulate English more accurately and have greater success. This thinking becomes a critical recruiting obstacle when hiring for schools.

Consequently, a lot of EFL scholars have recently recognized the differences between native speakers and non-native speakers (Mylnikova, 2016). Correspondingly, Jenkins (2015) suggests that the model in English Language Teaching (ELT) should focus on teaching skills and abilities of each English teacher. Also diversely, the native speakers of English should learn and adapt to other varieties of English usage (Jenkins, 2015). These ideas have introduced the terms World Englishes and the three concentric circles of English user counties by Kachru (1991). His three concentric circles are composed of the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. They present the new mindset of using the English language and its varieties by the term called, World Englishes. Kachru's claims alluded to a controversial dichotomy in English teachers' nationality among many teachers and administrators (Fithriani, 2018). After the work of Robert Phillipson in 1992 and Peter Medgyes in 1994, the issues relating to Non-Native English Teachers. The publication in 1999 encouraged several graduate students and scholars to research this native and non-native English speaker issue, (Moussu & Llurda, 2008).

Inclusive of all the research, theories, and studies noted, the output of students and gained competency does not depend solely on instruction presented by NEST or NNEST, but teachers characteristics and overall teaching skills trump all. Quirk (1990) suggests that more discussion of the native speaker as a model be studied in language teaching and the ideas of good model native speaker teachers. Therefore, this study will add more discussion and essential data related to student's English proficiency and perceptions that support the dichotomous issue of being NEST or NNEST in Thailand's EFL setting. In this paper, a standing myth that only NEST can provide a good language model (Kiezkowiak, 2014) is being investigated.

Research Question
1. What are the differences in English proficiency between students taught by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers' (NNEST)?
2. What are the students' perceptions of classes taught by NEST and NNEST?

Research Objectives
1. To investigate the differences in the English proficiency of students taught by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST).
2. To explore the students' perceptions regarding NEST and NNEST.

Literature Review
The spreading of English

The dispersal of the English language in the world has led to a new term World Englishes which Kachru's paper introduced in 1965. However, it became initiated with formal implications in 1978 (Kachru, 1991). According to the World Englishes concept, Kachru had drawn the Three Concentric Circles of English, showing circles classifying the different speakers (Kachru, 1985).

Figure 1: The spreading of English in the Three Concentric Circles
Adapted from Kachru, 1991 and Crystal, 2003

The Inner Circle symbolizes the Native English-Speaking countries where English acts as the primary language. These include Australia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, (Crystal, 2003). The Outer Circle countries are considered as norm-developing because they use English as a second language, and the Expanding Circle countries (which includes most other countries of the world) are considered norm-dependent due to their variety in English usage that differs from the standards set by the native speakers. The number of NNEST in the Outer Circle undeniably has increased these days according to the role of English as a global language. This is particularly true regarding the EFL context, which refer to the countries in the Expanding Circle, where learners have difficulty finding opportunities to use English outside the classrooms (Luo, 2016). English has taken a prominent role as a lingua franca

in Thailand. Most Thai English users primarily make English conversations with non-native English speakers, particularly people from Asian countries. (**Kongkerd, 2013).**

NEST and NNEST Dichotomy

Studies **have** confirmed a **belief** that only NEST can signify qualified English teachers. Although merely knowing how to speak a language does not automatically guarantee that one would be an expert teacher of it (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). According to Medgyes (1992), both native and non-native English-speaking teachers are variant in their teaching behavior, which cannot imply that non-native teachers are less efficient. The results of his investigation presented that both natives and non-natives have become successful teachers. It has been argued that teachers teaching style, English knowledge, effective methodology, and professional credentials make them qualified, not their native Language (Mahboob, 2015). Although the misperception of the superiority of native speaker teachers has put the challenges in the professional ELT literature, many continue to support this misguided belief, often resulting in discriminatory practices towards non-native speaking teachers. Richardson (2016) argued that the distinction between NNEST or NNEST cannot determine the proficient qualifications of good English teachers since speaking and teaching a language are two completely different phenomena. The former involving acquisition through listening and communication, the latter involving studying theories of how students learn and studying effective methods to deliver lesson content.

Thus recently, many scholars, especially in Asian countries, have tried hard to investigate the notion of being NEST and NNEST in ELT. Elyas & Alghofaili (2019) observed two groups of students taught by NEST and NNEST at Saudi Arabian University. Their findings indicated that teacher's native-ness and backgrounds have no significant effects on Saudi EFL learners speaking and listening skills. Besides, the students' perspective towards NEST and NNEST teaching styles and students' preferred teaching styles reflected in the study at the State Islamic University, Indonesia. The results of the study revealed that both NEST and NNEST were perceived to have a personal typical teaching style and distinctive roles in teaching-learning that are complementary to creating a thriving learning environment (Rahman & Yuzar, 2020). Therefore, the assumption that language teaching should best be placed in the hands of native speakers only, may not always be correct.

Related theories in English Language Learning

Krashen (1986) introduced the, Input Hypothesis. This emphasized the importance of understanding messages that teacher use will lead to the language acquisition or, in other words, through receiving comprehensible input. He suggested that as long as there are sufficient amount of clear, understandable inputs which should not exceed the learner's ability to comprehend it or as called i+1, are provided, and the students will acquire the target language automatically. The i+1 principle has done a dominant role in applied linguistics. In other words, languages could be acquired simply by exposing learners through meaningful and motivating input (Spada, 2007). This idea leads to the new teaching approach called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes the communication of messages and meaning. However, it should integrate grammatical, lexical, and socio-pragmatic features with communicative skills (Spada. 2007) Nunan (1991) has summarized CLT characteristics that it should focus more on learning processes,

not the language itself. Also, learners' personal experiences are invaluable contributions in the classroom. CLT requires teachers to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

Canale and Swain (1980) describe the four areas of students' language competencies which are: the ability to use linguistic rules, the use of proper language in the real-world setting, the use of flowery style, and strategies approached in solving language difficulties that arise in interlocution.   Nevertheless, according to Richards (2006) , there are three main forms of communicative competence. First is the knowledge of using language ability to produce sentences. This is as an understanding of the fundamental components of sentences (clauses, patterns, phrases, tenses, and parts of speech) and how they form proper sentences. The second point is the grammatical competence, which uses linguistic rules correctly and provides workbook exercises for comprehensive practice. Learners who master the language structure rules may not necessarily communicate effectively. The last one is the knowledge of using the language for a multitude of purposes relates to the specific participants and settings. The quality of communicative competence that learners must acquire depends on the abilities in knowledge and language usage or the ability to identify that something is accepted correctly or considered inappropriate in a particular context (Hymes, 1972).

Research Methodology
This study applied observational research to investigate the differences in the English proficiency of students taught by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST). Through the process of the Critical Applied Linguistics (CALx), which refers to the necessary analytical, critical process in the reasons behind the inequitable situations related to social, cultural, economic, and political topics such as identity, sexuality, ethics, and difference (Pennycook, 1999). The fundamental principle of this Critical Theory is to question and investigate the new suggested assumption or explain the new alternative supports, possibilities of the issues argued in some contexts. These issues possibly include some discriminated aspects (Suwanarak, 2010).
The data collected in this observational research uses the mixed methods, including both qualitative and quantitative, to collect and analyze data.

Population and Sample
The research population consists of 252 mixed ability students: 121 boys and 131 girls who are studying in Primary four to Primary six during the second semester of the academic year 2019 (P. 4/6 and P. 4/3, P. 5/3 and P. 5/4 and P. 6/1 and P. 6/2). Since this paper was aimed to observe the different effects between NEST and NNEST, the sample groups were purposively selected to be the representatives of English classes taught at each grade level.

Research Instruments
There are three research instruments in this study: Key English test, teacher observation evaluation form, and semi-structured interviews.
1. Cambridge English: Key English test
The Cambridge English Qualifications that are designed for young learners (YLE
Movers). It consists of 2 parts: 40 items evaluating reading and writing and 15 listening

questions (55 total points). The pre-test and post-test scores of each group will be analyzed comparing mean scores and t-test.

    2. Teacher perception questionnaire and classroom observation evaluation form.

    3. The Teacher perception questionnaire and classroom observation evaluation form

were designed to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluated aspects were applied from the two studies below:

    2.1 Characteristics of competent English teachers perceived by high school teachers and students in Korea (Park and Lee (2006). The researchers examine the characteristics of effective EFL teachers perceived by 169 teachers and 339 students in Korea. Their data collection tool was a self-report questionnaire. They summarized the main components of English as a Foreign Language Teacher (EFLT) in three dimensions which are, Subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills.

    2.2 In the Eyes of Turkish EFL Learners: What Makes an Effective Foreign Language Teacher? University Students' Perceptions of Native and Non-native Speaker Teachers of English (Çelik, Arikan & Caner (2013). This study was conducted in Turkey where English is taught as a foreign language done by a group of three researchers to find out the qualities of effective EFL teachers derived from 998 Turkish undergraduate students. They were enrolled at a state university in Turkey and had taken EFL courses for more than ten years. From analyzing data, effective EFL teachers should be fair and enthusiastic, and they must have skills in reducing students' anxieties, abilities to teach reading, speaking, and writing skills. They should be able to explain some problematic content in student's L1. They must have knowledge of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Lastly, they must be able to manage the class effectively.

    4. Semi-structured interviews.

        The interview was semi-structured to obtain qualitative data. The main questions:

        3.1 Have you ever learned with a Native English-Speaking Teacher (NEST) or a Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher (NNEST)?

        3.2 Whom do you prefer? Why?

        3.3 Is there any difference between the teaching performances between NEST and NNEST? (Regarding pronunciation, classroom management, and teaching activities).

The interview was done in groups of 5 mixed-ability students to make them feel safe and confident, expressing actual feelings. Each group interview lasted approximately 20-30 minutes. In total: 30 students (10 representatives from each grade level).   All students were informed that their responses would be used for research towards improvement purposes.

Data Collection and Analysis

    The Cambridge English: Key exam, was used to gather the pre-test and post-test scores. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to answer the research question #1 through T-Test comparing the pre-test and post-test scores of the same and different

groups. Following, the gain scores were calculated (% Post-test) - (% Pre-test) / (100 %) - (% Pre-test) to compare the impact of teachers teaching abilities on student's English proficiency. The interpretation of normalized gain scores are (g) < 0.3 understand as low gain, (g) 0.3-0.7 interpret as medium gain, and (g) >0.7 interpret as high gain (Hake, 2002). For question #2, the Likert scale was employed to analyze the students' perceptions and the three EFL experts' classroom observations. The researcher has applied the ranking scales from the calculation of Mohammed (2016). He determines the minimum and the maximum length of the 5-point Likert type scale, the range is calculated by (5 - 1 = 4) then divided by five as it is the highest value of the scale (4 ÷ 5 = 0.80). The value's interpretations are from 1.00 to 1.80 mean strongly disagree, from 1.81 to 2.60 mean to disagree, from 2.61 to 3.40 mean undecided, from 3.41 to 4.20 mean agree and from 4.21 to 5.00 mean "strongly agree. This present study applied the two-group independent T-test to see the similarities or differences between the students and the expert's evaluation results.

Additionally, the researcher applied content and thematic analysis to extract the results from the interviews. The findings were categorized into three themes, reflecting the three main interview questions.

Findings
Students' English proficiency
Results of the differences in English proficiency of students taught by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST).

Table 1. *English Proficiency of students before the observation study*

Class/Group	n	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	t	p-Sig.	Meaning
P.4/6 (NEST)	43	22.60	9.67	-0.44	0.66	Not-Different
P.4/3 (NNEST)	39	23.49	8.38			
P.5/3 (NEST)	41	29.60	9.67	-0.10	0.92	Not-Different
P.5/4 (NNEST)	44	29.82	8.38			
P.6/1 (NEST)	42	27.75	9.67	-1.46	0.15	Not-Different
P.6/2 (NNEST)	45	30.07	8.38			

The results from table 1 show that before using treatment (students were taught by NEST or (NNEST) English proficiency of students are not different.

Table 2. *Comparing Pre-test and Post-test English proficiency of students who were taught by NEST teachers.*

Class/Test	N	X	S.D.	t	p-Sig.	Meaning
P.4/6 (Pre-test)	43	22.60	9.67	4.77	0.000	Difference
P.4/6 (Post-test)	43	26.79	10.70			(Increase)
P.5/3 (Pre-test)	41	29.68	9.60	4.82	0.000	Difference
P.5/3 (Post-test)	41	34.90	9.70			(Increase)
P.6/1 (Pre-test)	42	27.75	6.19	5.38	0.000	Difference
P.6/1 (Post-test)	42	33.50	6.11			(Increase)

The results from table 2 show that the English proficiency of students in all classes taught by NEST teacher was increased significantly at .01 level.

Table 3. *Comparing Pre-test and Post-test English proficiency of students who were taught by NNEST.*

Class/Test	N	X	S.D.	t	p-Sig.	Meaning
P.4/3 (Pre-test)	40	23.00	8.83	9.76	0.000	Difference
P.4/3 (Post-test)	40	38.85	8.22			(Increase)
P.5/3 (Pre-test)	44	29.82	10.33	5.89	0.000	Difference
P.5/3 (Post-test)	44	35.77	9.61			(Increase)
P.6/2 (Pre-test)	43	31.17	6.73	9.76	0.000	Difference
P.6/2 (Post-test)	43	38.79	6.90			(Increase)

The result in table 3 show that the English proficiency of students in all classes taught by NNEST was increased significantly at .01 level.

Table 4. *Comparing Gain score of English proficiency Pre-test and Post-test of students who were taught by NEST and NNEST.*

Class/Group	n	Pretest	(%)	Posttest	(%)	g
P.4/6 (NEST)	43	22.60	41.09	26.79	48.71	0.13
P.4/3 (NNEST)	40	23.00	41.82	38.85	70.64	0.50
P.5/3 (NEST)	41	29.68	53.96	34.90	63.45	0.21
P.5/4 (NNEST)	44	29.82	54.22	35.77	65.04	0.24
P.6/1 (NEST)	42	27.75	50.45	33.50	60.91	0.21
P.6/2 (NNEST)	43	31.17	56.67	38.79	70.53	0.41

The results in table 4 show that NNEST gain scores are higher than NEST at all levels. In P.4, they are 0.13 and 0.50. P5 is 0.21 and 0.24. P.6 are 0.21 and 0.41.

Students' perceptions of NNEST and NNEST

This section presents the students' perception of NNEST and NNEST through questionnaires and interview. There are 121 boys and 131 girls responding to the survey. The answers can be analyzed as follows:

Table 5 . *The perceptions of students toward NEST.*

Perceptions	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	percentage	Level of agreement
1.Teaching Abilities				
1.1 I understand the English lessons taught by the teacher.	3.72	0.76	40.74	Agree
1.2 The teacher can teach me new English words.	4.18	0.85	60.83	Agree
1.3 The teacher teaches me to use English fluently.	3.56	0.93	20.71	Agree
1.4 The teacher teaches me to pronounce words.	4.10	0.97	0.820	Agree
1.5 The teacher teaches me to speak short phrases or basic sentences in English.	4.06	0.91	81.20	Agree
1.6 The teacher teaches me to read words, sentences, or passages in the textbook.	4.10	0.91	82.00	Agree
1.7 The teacher creates many exciting activities such as doing group work/pair work, playing games, watching video clips, singing songs, doing role-plays.	89.3	1.11	77.80	Agree
1.8 I can do the exercises both in the textbook and handouts according to the lessons taught by this teacher correctly.	86.3	92.0	77.20	Agree
1.9 The teacher can develop my English skills.	98.3	92.0	79.60	Agree
1.10 I can apply the lessons learned confidently in everyday life situations.	71.3	93.0	74.20	Agree
Teaching Abilities	**92.3**	**60.0**	**78.40**	**Agree**
2. Teacher's English Abilities				
2.1 The teacher always uses English in the class.	4.44	0.90	88.80	Strongly agree
2.2 The teacher's English accent sounds comprehensible.	3.93	1.00	78.60	Agree
2.3 The teacher explains content clearly.	4.01	0.92	80.20	Agree
2.4 I understand the content the teacher teaches.	3.73	0.91	74.60	Agree
2.5 The teacher can answer my questions.	4.12	1.00	82.40	Agree
Teacher's English Abilities	**04.4**	**68.0**	**80.80**	**Agree**
3. Motivating Classroom Learning Atmosphere				

Perceptions	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	percentage	Level of agreement
3.1 I enjoy studying English with the teacher.	3.79	1.00	75.80	Agree
3.2 The teacher makes me feel comfortable to ask questions, give answers, or share ideas.	3.61	0.93	72.20	Agree
3. 3. The teacher usually encourages me to learn by asking questions or playing games.	3.76	97.0	20.75	Agree
3.4 The teacher motivates me to learn by increasing my positive attitudes towards English.	3.83	95.0	60.76	Agree
3.5 The teacher creates a safe learning environment for English class.	4.10	92.0	00.82	Agree
Motivating Classroom Learning Atmosphere	**3.82**	**72.0**	**40.76**	**Agree**
Overall perceptions	**92.3**	**58.0**	**40.78**	**Agree**

The results in table 5 show that the overall perceptions of students to NEST are in agreeance regarding teaching potential; calculated at mean 3.92. The understanding of English abilities is the highest Mean at 4. 04, followed by teaching skills at 3. 92. The lowest agreeance is the teachers' abilities to motivate the classroom learning atmosphere at 3.82.

Table 6 **.** *The perceptions of students toward NNEST.*

Perceptions	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Percentage	Levels of Agreement
1.Teaching Abilities				
1.1 I understand the English lessons taught by the teacher.	3.88	0.85	77.60	Agree
1.2 The teacher can teach me new English words.	4.21	0.89	84.20	Strongly agree
1.3 The teacher teaches me to use English fluently.	3.73	1.02	74.60	Agree
1.4 The teacher teaches me to pronounce words.	4.07	1.07	81.40	Agree
1.5 The teacher teaches me to speak short phrases or basic sentences in English.	3.73	1.09	74.60	Agree
1.6 The teacher teaches me to read words, sentences, or passages in the textbook.	4.33	0.92	86.60	Strongly agree
1.7 The teacher creates many exciting activities such as doing group work/pair work, playing				

Perceptions	$\overline{x}$	S.D.	Percentage	Levels of Agreement
games, watching video clips, singing songs, doing role-plays.	3.95	1.06	79.00	Agree
1.8 I can do the exercises both in the textbook and handouts, according to the lessons taught by this teacher correctly.	3.98	0.98	79.60	Agree
1.9 The teacher can develop my English skills .	4.09	0.89	81.80	Agree
1.10 I can apply the lessons learned confidently in everyday life situations.	3.77	1.07	75.40	Agree
Teaching Abilities	**3.97**	**0.69**	**79.40**	**Agree**
2 .Teacher's English Abilities				
2.1 The teacher always uses English in the class.	4.38	0.90	87.60	Agree
2.2 The teacher's English accent sounds comprehensible.	4.23	0.94	84.60	Strongly agree
2.3 The teacher explains content clearly.	4.16	0.93	83.20	Strongly agree
2.4 I understand the content the teacher teaches.	4.07	0.92	81.40	Agree
2.5 The teacher can answer my questions .	4.09	1.06	81.80	Agree
Teacher's English Abilities	**4.19**	**0.69**	**83.80**	**Agree**
3. Motivating Classroom Learning Atmosphere(				
3.1 I enjoy studying English with the teacher.	4.09	1.07	81.80	Agree
3.2 The teacher makes me feel comfortable to ask questions, give answers, or share ideas.	3.69	1.19	73.80	Agree
3.3 The teacher usually encourages me to learn by asking questions or playing games.	4.03	1.03	80.60	Agree
3.4 The teacher motivates me to learn by increasing my positive attitudes towards English.	4.05	0.98	81.00	Agree

3.5 The teacher creates a safe learning environment for English class.	4.27	1.05	85.40	Strongly agree
Motivating Classroom Learning Atmosphere	**4.02**	**0.80**	**80.40**	**Agree**
Overall perceptions	**4.04**	**0.65**	**80.80**	**Agree**

The results in table 6 show that the overall perceptions of students to NNEST were calculated at mean 4.04, which is in agreeance level of NEST. The understanding of English abilities is the highest mean at 4.19, followed by the teachers' proficiency in motivating the classroom learning atmosphere at 4.02. The lowest Mean reflects understanding of teaching abilities at 3.97.

To triangulate the students' perception and the results of the English proficiency students test, three experts in ELT and research measurement observed all classes in this study. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 7.*The arithmetic means, the standard deviation of teaching evaluation between NEST and NNEST teachers.*

Class	NEST		NNEST		Meaning
	$\mathbf{\overline{X}}$	**S.D.**	$\mathbf{\overline{X}}$	**S.D.**	
Part 1 Teaching Abilities					
P.4	4.18	0.25	4.57	0.32	NEST< NNEST
P.5	4.47	0.24	4.32	0.27	NEST > NNEST
P.6	4.20	0.37	4.27	0.35	NEST < NNEST
Total Average	**4.28**	**0.07**	**4.39**	**0.04**	**NEST < NNEST**
Part 2 Teacher's English Abilities					
P.4	4.93	0.21	5.00	0.00	NEST < NNEST
P.5	5.00	0.00	4.67	0.21	NEST > NNEST
P.6	4.93	0.21	4.93	0.21	NEST = NNEST
Total Average	**4.95**	**0.12**	**4.87**	**0.12**	**NEST > NNEST**
Part 3 Motivating Classroom Learning Atmosphere					
P.4	4.20	0.26	4.47	0.21	NEST < NNEST
P.5	4.47	0.00	4.33	0.19	NEST > NNEST
P.6	4.07	0.81	4.71	0.21	NEST < NNEST
Total Average	**4.25**	**0.41**	**4.50**	**0.01**	**NEST < NNEST**

The results in table 7 show that means of NEST teaching evaluation were higher than NNEST in all evaluated aspects in grade 5. However, the means of NNEST of grades 4 and 6 were higher than NEST in teaching skills and motivating classroom learning atmosphere, but the evaluation

result in English abilities was equal in grade 6. The level of agreement calculated is at the strongly agree level.

The interview findings were translated from Thai into English. The results were categorized into three themes: preferences, strengths, and weaknesses. These three themes are supported by Abriel (2015).

Reasons supporting Preferences

All interviewed students were asked to compare their learning experiences between NEST and NNEST teachers and choose the teacher whom they prefer to study with and the reasons. There are many reasons why students prefer one teacher over another for instance, the ability to give more precise explanations partnered with more engaging activities.   The interviewees responded that they enjoy role play, singing, and games as a regular part of the class. The interviews reflected that students' preferences about learning depend on the ways the teachers teach, not because of the teacher's mother tongue.

Strengths and weaknesses of NEST

Regarding strengths, NEST was perceived by 30 interviewees to have bright, understandable accents. Some of them said NEST have a variety of teaching strategies. For example, ten interviewees mentioned that the NEST incorporated role-playing, songs, and games, which added enjoyment and motivated learning. Moreover, they stated that NEST provided an example of authentic language usage to practice, giving increased confidence.

For weaknesses, three students said that NEST seemed to speak more quickly than NNEST. The most significant weakness commented by students regarded the classroom management skills of NEST. There are 25 students who agree that their NEST cannot control the class effectively.

Strengths and weaknesses of NNEST

All 30 students agree that NNEST always provides slow language speed and clear instructions and explanations, which creates a more reliable connection to the lesson with more understanding. The students also reported that NNEST can create a productive classroom learning atmosphere and control the class better than the NEST. However, a few students who were taught by the same NNEST said that their NNEST were too strict.   One student reported that he felt uncomfortable with NNEST pronunciation, such as the Filipino teachers usually have a string sound of p and t.

Conclusion

This study explored the effects of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST) on student's English proficiency as well as investigated students' perceptions regarding the teachings of the two groups of teachers. The analysis of the research found from the pre-test and post-test showed that NEST and NNEST could develop students' English proficiency at a statistic level of 0.01. The gain score of both groups is interpreted in a low gained level based on Hake (2002).   However, NNEST produce a higher gain score on

all levels.

The questionnaire responses show the level at "strongly agree" for NEST and NNEST in evaluation of teaching abilities, English abilities, and motivational skills in the classroom atmosphere. From table 4.5 and 4.6, the responses from students reflect all teachers leverage their learning. It is interesting to note that NEST overscored (in percent) NNEST teachers in regarding, speaking English phrases and sentences (item 1.5), using English in the classroom always (item 2.1), and answering students' questions (item 3.5). All other items showed a higher percent for the NNEST performance in comparison to the NEST. Collectively these results show that students perceive both groups of teachers relatively equal with respect to measuring abilities to teach and include meaningful activities in the classroom. The results from comparing the total average of students' perceptions, inclusive of the questionnaires and classroom observations by the three experts, shows that the data are significantly similar in teachers teaching ability and motivating classroom teaching atmosphere at the statistically significant level of 0.05. In other words, both experts and students agree that NNEST can produce a higher score than NEST. These results suggested another perspective in perceptions of NNEST that is against an old belief: NEST is the only standard model of good English teachers (Kiezkowiak, 2014).

However, in the aspect of teachers' English abilities, the three experts gave higher scores to NEST than NNEST, which was significantly different from the students at a statistically significant level of 0.05. The reasons behind these differences are reveal in the questionnaire items 2.2 and 2.4 in the students questionnaire. In question 2.2, the students agree that the pronunciation of NNEST is easier to understand than NEST (84.60% and 78.60 %.). In question 2.4, 81.80% of students agree that NNEST makes them understand the lessons, while about 74.60% agrees that NNEST do. It is possible that the students likely agree that the language they comprehended more accessible and assumed that it refers to the teachers' English abilities. This finding is like previous studies that stated that NNEST is well appreciated overall for their keen knowledge in explaining grammar: (Mahboob, 2004). This result can be supported by the "Input Hypothesis" introduced by Krashen (1989). He claimed that the teachers should speak clearly and slowly or use short sentences to modify their speech so that it is comprehensible because these comprehensible inputs will lead to language acquisition.

Lastly, there were three main perceptions derived from the interviews with students: EFL teachers' preferences, strengths, weaknesses of NEST, and the strengths and weaknesses of NNEST. It was a common perception that students prefer to study with teachers either NEST or NNEST, who can explain the lessons clearly and provide an environment that keeps them engaged. Noted activities were role-playing, storytelling, and group games. These results were in line with the research conducted by Gudu, Benter Oseno (2015). They illustrated in their study that teachers should integrate various activities in a lesson to meet learners' needs. The findings of this present study also suggest that students did not prefer one type of teacher to another. They agreed that teachers' teaching abilities and classroom management affect their learning effectiveness the most. Students had strong feelings regarding the teacher's strengths and weaknesses, which were seen in both groups of teachers. They agreed that NEST, have clear comprehendible English pronunciation. Some of them found NEST spoke too quickly. This finding is like previous studies that stated that NNEST is well appreciated overall for their keen knowledge in explaining grammar

(Mahboob, 2004). Brown & Lee (2015) claimed that one of the advantages of NNEST is that they can provide useful explanations about target forms, meaning, and uses. The participants mentioned that NNEST has more interesting classroom activities, as well. This is mainly because NNEST can apply the teaching methods they like and consider useful when they were second language learners. NNEST are indicated to have slower, more precise, and more understandable explanations. However, with regards to the weaknesses of NNEST, few high-level students said they heard strange sounds pronounced by NNEST, such as too strong p and t, mainly by Filipino teachers. As Alseweed (2012), argued that higher-level students somehow prefer NEST while students who cannot catch up as quickly prefer the articulation of English from NNEST because their language proficiency was not as advanced.

The results of this study suggest that there is not one precise characteristic that can be singled out between NNEST and NEST, as often claimed by many other studies regarding the strength and weaknesses of NEST and NNEST. The students can understand language presented by NNEST as clearly as NEST if they spoke slowly and annunciated clearly. Another exciting aspect found both NEST and NNEST have equal possibilities to provide either engaging or dreadfully robotic and boring activities. It depends on the teachers' individual personality and creativeness. This leads to the results exemplifying the simple conclusion that both NEST and NNEST have equal ability to be effective, output building English instructors. Students of this generation are more focused on the deliverance of the lesson, and the overall capacity for them to understand well and apply the lessons. They are looking for clear explanations, engaging activities, and the opportunity to use their new language acquisition in a current manner that fits their interests and generation. Canale and Swain (1980) suggested the abilities to use the language correctly, are based on conquering grammatical correctness, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. They know vocabulary, grammar rules, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, and spelling. It can no longer be only conversational English. The all-encompassing demands of our times require students nowadays, to be taught a balanced ratio of English and feel control of each: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. English language acquisition is no longer memorization; it needs to meet any social setting or circumstance presented upon the student. All these tools are useful for normal development and importantly, when communication is required in a language that is not their native tongue. Therefore, successful teaching of English as a foreign language must cover all four skills. It cannot be restricted to grammar rules, vocabulary, or sounds. Kirkpatrick (2010) also argues that phonological proficiency of L2 learners in the Southeast Asian regions should not be judged based on the Native-Speaker standards. Still it should be measured alongside with the students' ability to use English as a lingua franca to communicate with other Asian nations where there are a variety of English speakers. It is crucial that English grammar and pronunciation based on the native English-speaking model, play a minor role in English lessons. Instead, a variety of English accents and learners' intercultural communicative competence should be essential to reach the primary goal of communication (Kongerd, 2013). The results of this research agree with the mentioned claim that English teaching goals in this globalization era must pay less emphasis on whether the teachers are native or non-native but instead hone in specifically on teachers' teaching ability, engagement, and overall output of developing students' intercultural communicative competence. Apart from the pedagogical implications mentioned above, this study also has professional associations, especially for practitioners. The school can improve areas that

both NEST and NNEST are still weak. The results suggest that teachers' development plans be required and inclusive of the expected qualifications of EFL teachers. They can propose a set of qualities that all teachers, regardless of their language or geographical backgrounds, should have (Floris, 2019).

Besides the applications in pedagogical aspects mentioned, this paper also can raise greater awareness among school administrators and stakeholders. They can be more informed about hiring decisions and educational practices since it offers suggestions on how ELT can promote non-native speaker teachers' professional credibility. Nonetheless, there are a few limitation points that should be brought into consideration. First, this present study was done with upper Primary students in a private school in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The results cannot be generalized to more extensive settings.   However, it can be used as the first step with other studies that aim to investigate higher application levels of students to see the possibilities of proficiency and perceptions.

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