**English-speaking Teachers in Saudi international secondary schools**

**Introduction**

In the current dynamic era, The English language has become a widely spoken language across the world. After Mandarin & Spanish, it is the third–most common native language (Seth, 2007). Due to the prominence and eagerness of several people to learn this language, the *teaching and learning of English* happen to be matters of great significance to a number of countries and [educational](https://www.dissertationfirst.co.uk/education-dissertation-topics) institutions around the globe. Therefore, the number of English language teachers is subsequently increasing and greater attention is being placed on these teachers’ competency and their language proficiency.

Language speakers are frequently ranked into two groups, **native speakers (NESTs) and non-natives (NNESTs)**, this classification has been used as much in theoretical linguistics (Chomsky 1965) as in applied linguistics (Davies1991). According to Lasagabaster ‘, this resembles the common division between ‘us’ and the others’ (non-native speakers). This may be regarded as a form of discrimination (p.120). Despite the increasing number of people calling for equality between the two groups of teachers, the reality is different: thousands of language teaching jobs, advertised in many countries and institutions stating that only NESTs will be considered.

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In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), it’s a common practice for private schools to hire mainly native English speakers to teach in their schools. This reflects the widely held view in KSA that English language teachers are necessarily native speakers (Daif-Allah, 2010; Al-Issa, 2002; Philipson; 1996). The terminology “mystique” of the native speakers seems to take its prominence and develop gradually (Ferguson, 1982, p. xiii). Suarez (2000) stresses that non-native teachers of English are in an unfair situation as they are always compared to their native-speaking colleagues. This leads to “I-am-not-a-native-speaker syndrome” This discriminatory practice, whether it is created by parents, students, recruiting boards or other involved parties has negative impacts on non-native English teachers as educators and to their students who learn from them.

This study will investigate the perceptions of secondary international school students as well as the perception of school managers about their native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), regarding their competency in English language, teaching styles, cultural and classroom environment the teachers creates. The management has the better understanding of their staff knowledge and behaviour with the students. That can provide the key information about the ability of teachers along with any kind of differences they found in their native and non-native teachers. Such information can be gathered by having a face to face interview with them and asking them about their views. The interview will be scheduled according to for 30 to 40 minutes according to their convenient time. The focus of this interview will be on a behaviour of native and on non-native teachers with their students as well as management. By analysing the view of management deep understanding of the ability of native and non-native teachers can be made. A number of researches have been conducted in order to make out the characteristics of NESTs and NNESTs based on the perceptions of parents and school management, but a few of them has included the perception of students (Symposium, 2012). This study is carried out with a purpose to examine and expand previous studies' outcomes from the student’s point of view, as they are the major participates, and if there is any difference in NESTs and NNESTs then the effect of such differences can be identified by focusing on students perception and learning’s.

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**Research Rationale**

The greater majority of the recent studies on NESTs and NNESTs have focused on examining how the two groups of teachers perceived themselves as English language teachers. (e.g., Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Medgyes & Reves, 1994; Llurda & Huguet, 2003 in the EFL context, and Kamhi-Stein, Aagard, Ching, Paik, & Sasser, 2004; Moussa, 2006 in the ESL context). however a smaller number of these studies have focused on students perception of the two groups of teachers (Butler, 2007). Therefore, previous studies automatically fall short. The majority of these studies have been conducted in the Northern hemisphere and were small in size particularly with regard to students’ perspectives, which makes it very difficult to generalise their findings. Lastly, there is no prior study in KSA related to this topic. Therefore; to make a small contribution to the field I propose such an investigation.

The experience of teachers in this field will be noted and considered while analyzing the data so that the accurate conclusion can be drafted.

**Research objectives**

The study will be based on the perceptions of secondary students from private international schools. The reason behind investigating the secondary students is that it is the age group when a student can easily monitor the teaching ability and command over the language of a teacher. It has been investigated with an aim to assess the following research questions:

* + 1. With whom do students believe one learns more:
		2. with native or with a non-native teacher?
		3. What are the differences between native and Non-native teachers?
		4. How do Saudi international private schools students perceive their NESTs and NNESTs with regard to their competence in English language, according to linguistic factors (literacy & oral skills, vocabulary, grammar, culture, pronunciation / accent), teaching styles (ability to answer questions, teaching methodology and classroom management), personal factors, and cultural aspects.

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**Ethical considerations**

According to Cavan, ethics is: ….a matter of principled sensitivity to the right of others. Being ethical limits the choices we can make in the pursuit of truth. Ethical say that while the truth is good, respect for human dignity is better, even if, in the extreme case, the respect of human nature leaves one ignorant of human nature’ (Cavan, 1977, p.810)

Cavan’s notion of ethics will be followed by the study in question. The institution in question is the current place of study for the participants of the study and this should not be overlooked. It is therefore of utmost importance that methods are used that retain anonymity and the researcher is sensitive and not judgemental. The participation of a student in the sample should not hinder their future studies and they should be free to disclose their true views and concerns. Participants will be made aware of the use and identification of all collected data to ensure the integrity of the research

This will be carried out by receiving permission from the schools and participants for research and a letter of consent will be used to express that I will within my scope assure confidentiality by removing identifiable information such as names or descriptions and even institution names. There will also be a get out clause which will enable participants to withdraw if they feel their place at the school may be compromised or even if they just decide they don’t want to continue.

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