

*“Student and Teacher Perceptions of Native and Non-native English
Speaking Teachers in the Lebanese Context”*

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Ziad Hadla
Signed:

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ABSTRACT

While most of the teachers of English around the world are non-native speakers, numerous cases of discrimination against non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) have been reported in the literature (Braine, 1999). The present study examines the perceptions of students, native English speaking teachers (NESTs), and non-native English speaking teachers towards NESTs and NNESTs in three Intensive English Programs (IEPs) from three universities in the Bekaa governorate of Lebanon. The study examines the similarities and differences between the perceptions of teachers and students and those of NESTs and NNESTs towards the definition of the labels NEST and NNEST, learning with NESTs and NNESTs, strengths and weaknesses of each of the two groups, and classroom behavior and responsibility. Finally, the study examines students' and teachers' perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interactions with their students. The study administered Likert-scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews for teachers and students. The findings revealed that for both groups, teachers are considered native if they grew up in a native speaking country and if they carry any of the accents of the countries of the "middle" (Kachru, 1982). The findings also showed that NESTs are better teachers of oral skills, such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking whereas NNESTs are perceived as better teachers of grammar and culture, more capable of predicting students' difficulties, and more empathetic to the needs of students. Both groups also agreed that NESTs vary their use of materials more than NNESTs do and that NNESTs communicate better with students because they share their culture and first language and because they are more empathetic with them.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following acronyms and terms will be used in this dissertation.

EFL: *English as a Foreign Language.*

ESL: *English as a Second Language.*

IEP: *Intensive English Program.*

NEST: *Native English-Speaking ESL/EFL Teacher.*

NNEST: *Non-Native English-Speaking ESL/EFL Teacher.*

NNS: *Non-Native Speaker (of English in this case).*

NS: *Native Speaker (of English, in this case).*

NES: *Native English Speaker.*

NNES: *Non-native English Speaker.*

TESOL: *Teaching of English (or Teachers of English) to Speakers of Other Languages or Teaching English as a Second or Other Language.*

TOEFL: *Test of English as a Foreign Language.*

CELTA: *Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults.*

ESP: *English for Specific Purposes.*

EAP: *English for academic purposes.*

ELT: *English Language Teaching.*

EIL: *English as an International Language.*

EGL: *English as a Global Language.*

ELF: *English as a Lingua Franca.*

ELPR: *English Language Proficiency Requirement.*

ISA: Ideological State Apparatuses.

ESB: English Speaking Backgrounds.

NESB: Non-English Speaking Background.

ALT: Assistant Language Teacher.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the field of Teaching English as a Foreign language (TEFL), there is an argument about who is going to be the most competent to teach English to foreign students. It is often assumed that teachers who teach their own mother tongue have a number of advantages over teachers who are not native speakers of the language they teach. Non-native English speaking teachers still find a problem when it comes to finding a job as an English language teacher despite having spent several years studying for a degree in Teaching of English as a Foreign language (TESOL) (Celik, 2006). However, it is worth noting that the issue of NESTs and NNESTs is limited to certain contexts such as the Arabian Gulf or Japan, where there is competition of jobs and where institutions can afford to employ expatriate NESTs. In other contexts around the world, such as China, Egypt, or Lebanon for example, most NNESTs teach in their own countries and NNESTs from these countries constitute the teaching body in public and private schools and universities.

This dissertation is an attempt to address the controversial issue of native English speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) from the perspectives of students and their teachers in private universities in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context of Lebanon.

When talking about NESTs and NNESTs it is of first importance to define a “native speaker of a language.” This issue becomes particularly important when school administrators have to decide what variety or dialect of English the students will learn or the teachers are allowed to teach—American, British, South African, Australian, Indian, Singapore, Canadian, Chicano, South Asian, Jamaican, African American, Irish English, or one of the regional and localized varieties (Prasad, 1997). Many linguists say that a “true” native speaker (NS) of a language becomes increasingly difficult to find (Paikeday, 1985). For example, Kramsch (1995) explains that the distinction is so difficult to make, that a native speaker can only be defined as someone who is “accepted by the group that created the distinction between native and nonnative speakers” (p. 363).

It has been assumed that NESTs have an advantage over NNESTs when it comes to language proficiency. Medgyes (1992, p. 342), for example, remarked that on a language proficiency continuum, even the best non-native speakers (NNSs) of English will never reach “native competence” in spite of all their efforts. Non-native speakers might be able to come quite close to “native competence” but will always be “halted by a glass wall”, a kind of invisible “plateau” where their language competence will stay blocked. This assumption might have stemmed from the fact that non-native speakers of a language do not use the language habitually as native speakers of a language do. They are not emotionally attached to the target language. Saville-Troike, (2006) states that when there is little or no perceptible difference between the language performance of the NNSs and that of NSs, the second language speakers will have achieved “near-native” or native-like” competence. Because one’s L2

system is “never exactly the same as the native speaker’s, most of us would not consider the final state of L2 development to be completely “native” although we may allow for some rare exceptions” (p. 179).

For NNESTs, English is their second or third language. Their first language is their native language which they have naturally acquired from birth. Such teachers may have acquired English later in childhood, adolescence, or even adulthood.

Philipson (1992) suggests that there is no “scientific validity” (p. 195) to support the proposition that a NEST is a better teacher than a NNEST. He labels this the “*native speaker fallacy*” and he believes that “it served the interests of the center” (p. 199). The term *center* is similar to what Kachru (1982) referred to as the *Inner Circle*, a term that represents the native English-speaking countries. The Inner Circle thus represents the traditional historical and sociolinguistic bases of English in regions where it is now used as a primary language as in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, Australia, Malta, South Africa, and the Caribbean. The peoples of these countries are referred to as native speakers of English. On the other hand, the *Outer Circle* of English includes countries such as India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Malaysia. In these regions, English is not the native tongue, but serves as a useful lingua franca between ethnic groups. Kachru (1982) also refers to a third circle which he termed the *Expanding Circle*. This circle encompasses countries where English plays no historical or governmental role, but where it is nevertheless widely used as a

medium of communication. This circle includes countries like China, Russia, or Japan, or the United Arab Emirates.

On the other hand, NNESTs have been reported to have several advantages over native speakers, especially over those who are monolingual speakers of English. As Kramsch (1999: 34) puts it, “it is the teaching of ESL within an assimilationist ideology that has canonized (or beatified) the native speaker around the world,” but an alternative is clearly possible. Most non-native-speaker teachers, in both ESL and EFL contexts, have an adequate level of language proficiency to perform their task. However, if we pause to reflect on the options that lie ahead of them in the new framework of English as an International Language (EIL) or English as a global language (EGL) rather than English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL), we will see that many teachers in EFL settings (particularly non-native speakers) do not seem to be very sensitive to the new perspectives that are opening up in front of them, and are still anchored in the old native-speaker dominated framework in which British or American norms have to be followed and native speakers are considered the ideal teachers (Llurda, 2004).

The transformation of English from being the language of a few powerful countries (i.e. the UK, USA) to becoming the international language it is today has brought with it many changes in the language teaching profession. Proposals are currently being made to move beyond the native speaker as the model in language teaching. In fact, as Modiano (1999) argues, proficiency in speaking English is no longer determined by birth but by the capacity to use the

language properly, a capacity that is shared by some – but not all – speakers, be they native or non-native.

In the Lebanese context, the attitude towards foreign teachers has always been positive since they are considered the right models for their students in pronunciation, intonation, appropriate and authentic language use and idiomatic use (see Hadid, 2004, p. 1). In university English language programs in Lebanon, the tradition has been to have as many NESTs as the institution could afford because of the positive image such a practice could create. In their eagerness to have NESTs at their institutions to help attract students, many administrators have hired NESTs without relevant qualifications (Yusuf, 2004, p. 3). This discrimination against the NNESTs, has affected them in terms of jobs, promotion, and pay. The interest in NESTs goes beyond administrators to parents who want their children to be taught by native speakers of English because they want them to speak like native speakers of English when they grow up (Yusuf, 2004, p.3).

1.2 Research Aims

Much research has been conducted to demonstrate that the “native speaker” construct is unsound and that the preference of the native English speakers (NESs) over non-native English speakers (NNESTs) on the mere basis of their first language is unfair (see Medgyes 1992, 1994). Research has also been trying to confirm that NNESTs have many qualities that can make them successful teachers appreciated and valued by their students, their colleagues, and their supervisors (see Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Mussou, 2006).

Previous research studies conducted by Cheung (2002), Mahboob (2003), Moussu, (2002), and Moussu (2006) in various contexts came to the conclusion that students do appreciate NNESTs for their knowledge, preparation, experience, and caring attitudes and that they do realize that NESTs and NNESTs complement each other with their strengths and weaknesses (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2001). Questions about the effectiveness of NESTs and NNESTs in teaching English in Lebanon sound similar to those raised in ESL contexts in USA and EFL contexts in many parts of Asia. Despite their complexity, these four major questions remain essential and critical: “Can a non-native English speaker be a good English language teacher? (Lee, 2000, p.1), “Are the perceptions of students of their native and non-native English language teachers of major importance in this issue, as they are most directly affected?”, “Are the native and non-native EFL teachers’ self perceptions important?”, and “What characteristics should a teacher maintain to ensure positive teacher-student personal interactions that lead to better quality of education?”

Within this perspective, this study aims at investigating students’ and teachers’ perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs: their perceptions about the labels NESTs and NNESTs, overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, perceived strengths and weaknesses of these teachers, and classroom behavior and responsibility. Teacher-student personal interaction is another essential issue which was found to be worth examining in this study. This issue was realized to be closely related to the teachers’ identities as being NESTs or NNESTs. In this sense, students’ perceptions of their NESTs’ and NNESTs’

personal interactions were found to be crucial in determining which of the two groups responds better to students' personal concerns.

1.3 Rationale and Research Questions

One of the main goals of this study is to fill in gaps in previous research. Indeed, several studies were conducted about the teacher's self-perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses and students' perceptions of their teachers (see Moussu, 2006). However, in the Lebanese context, there have been only a few studies that examined the perceptions of teachers or those of their students towards NESTs and NNESTs (see Yousuf, 2004; Hadid, 2004). Hadid's (2004) study, for example, examined students' perceptions at school level; and Yousuf's (2004) study did not include students' perceptions. However, to date there has been no research in the Lebanese context that covered both teachers and students' perceptions together in one study. Students in the private universities in Lebanon are in a unique position of being exposed to NESTs and NNESTs. Consequently, their opinion of the relative teaching effectiveness of their teachers would add meaningful input to NESTs-NNESTs controversy reported in the literature. The lack of extensive research about students' perceptions in the Lebanese context is regrettable since the research studies that examine teachers' perceptions only give a one-sided perspective on the issue. Student feedback is of great importance because this is an issue that concerns them directly. Furthermore, these opinions could help program administrators and coordinators in their choice of the most effective EFL teachers for their programs as students' input into this matter could be valuable. Teacher feedback is also crucial because teachers will be reflecting

on their own classroom behaviors, weaknesses, and strengths. By presenting both teachers and students' perceptions, I will be giving a holistic picture about this important issue in the Lebanese context.

The overarching goal of this research is to challenge the assumption which claims that the native English speaking teachers are the best teachers of English. It is not the goal of this study, however, to claim that native English speaking teachers are incompetent EFL teachers or that non-native English speaking teachers are better. The study aims to raise the awareness of administrators, employers, EFL students, NESTs and NNESTs of the *native speaker fallacy* in the Lebanese context and to reveal the strengths of the NNESTs to give them an equal chance in the field of TESOL as their NEST-counterparts.

By revealing their points of strengths, the study will raise the NNESTs' self-esteem and make them realize that they should by no means be regarded as inferiors to their NEST colleagues. NNESTs should take any weak points revealed about them in this study as a chance to improve themselves so that they may be better teachers in the future. The study aims at raising the NNESTs' confidence so that they may realize that they have a chance to excel where NESTs may fail. NESTs will also realize their weak points and work on improving themselves to be better teachers in the future. It is thus important to conduct this study and share its results with the academic community so that those in charge of the hiring process may give qualified teachers a better opportunity to find teaching jobs and thus EFL students a better quality of education.

This research aims to answer the following five research questions:

- 1- What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 2- What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 3- What are the main similarities and differences between teachers' perceptions of themselves and students' perceptions of their teachers?
- 4- What are the main similarities and differences between NNESTs' and NESTs' perceptions of themselves?
- 5- What are students perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interaction with their students?

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. After this first chapter which outlines the research aims and questions and the rationale of the study, the second chapter sums up the history of English language in Lebanon, provides details about English language teaching and learning in compulsory and university education in the Lebanese context, and discusses the situation of the NESTs and the NNESTs in Lebanon. In the third chapter, the review of literature examines the theoretical framework that underpins this research study, the conceptual definitions of the terms NESTs and NNESTs, the perceived strengths and weakness of each group of teachers, the definition of *perceptions* and the discussion of other empirical research studies that influenced and shaped the present research study. Chapter four, the methodology section, includes the rationale behind using the mixed methods approach, research design, and research methods. Chapter five presents the data collected and

the results of statistical analyses performed on the data. Chapter six includes a discussion of the results, limitations, implications of the study, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND

In order to investigate the topic of teacher perceptions, it is necessary to consider the context in which many NESTs and NNESTs operate, in particular the Lebanese context. To understand the topic better, this chapter will provide information about the Lebanese educational system and English language teaching in Lebanon, including the situation of the NESTs and the NNESTs.

In a study conducted by Abou et.al (1996) about Francophone community (cited in Joseph J. E. 2004), more than 61.5 percent of the Lebanese Francophones answered that besides Arabic, English would be the most useful language for the future of Lebanon. This reflects the positive attitudes that the Lebanese people have towards English as an international language. Even the Christian Maronites, who have always had strong bonds between the French language and their identity, are coming to believe that English is the language of the future in Lebanon and thus they are changing their attitudes towards it in order to cope with the demands of the future. The reason for the introduction of English in all educational institutions, even the ones run by the French missions, was to give students the opportunity to compete in a world that is dominated by English, especially in the employment market of the Arabian Gulf (Bikar, 1998; Shaaban & Ghaith, 2000; Zakaria, 1992, Smaily-Hajjar, 1996).

2.1 The Lebanese Educational System

The Lebanese educational system is divided in two sectors: private schools and universities, for which there is a charge for admission, and public (government) schools and universities that are practically free of charge. Lebanon maintained this advanced educational system structure by well-training its teachers before the civil war that started in 1975. Secondary education is three years education, and composes of general education (humanities, economics, life sciences, science) and technical education (about 55 different fields of study). Higher education in Lebanon composes of Technical and Vocational Institutes, University colleges, University Institutes, and Universities. The Lebanese University is the only public institution. Following high school, Lebanese students may choose to study at a university, a college, or a vocational training institute.

2.1.1 The Lebanese University

Around 200,000 students are enrolled in Lebanese higher education institutions. Half of these students are in the Lebanese University, the sole public university in the country. The Lebanese University is the only public institution for higher learning in Lebanon. Founded in 1951, it has 17 faculties as of 2006 and serves various cultural, religious, and social groups of students and teachers. The independent university enjoys administrative, academic, and financial freedom. The university aims at creating a unique mix of cultures and providing the basic and necessary education to allow students to enter various professions. At the Lebanese University, French is considered a main language

of instruction besides Arabic. English is beginning to be a language of instruction in some faculties besides French.

2.1.2 Private universities

A large number of the Lebanese students are distributed over 40 private higher education institutions. Among these private establishments, there are universities, institutes, colleges of technology, or faculties of religious studies. Most of the 40 higher education institutions currently running in Lebanon were legalized in the late nineties when the private sector flourished in a sudden and rapid expansion following the 15-year civil war that affected Lebanon between 1975 and 1990 and which had a very damaging impact on the sector of higher education of the country. The freedom and the independence of the Lebanese higher education are protected by the Constitution. Some of the most prestigious universities in Lebanon are the American University of Beirut, the Lebanese American University, the American University of Science and Technology, Beirut Arab University, the Lebanese International University, the Université Saint-Joseph, the University of Balamand, and the Notre Dame University.

2.2 English Language Teaching (ELT) in Lebanon

Like most countries around the globe, Lebanon recognizes the importance of the English language in communication and education. The teaching of English in Lebanon dates back to the middle of the 19th century, the time of the arrival and settlement in the country of Protestant missionaries from the United States and Britain. The teaching of English has witnessed steady

expansion since 1946, the year the government of the newly independent Lebanon introduced English as a foreign language (EFL) into the Lebanese public school system on par with French, the language of the former colonizer (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999). From then on, “the bilingual education tradition was nurtured and strengthened and came to exercise a firm hold on the Lebanese education system” (Shaaban, 1997 in Shaaban & Ghaith, p. 7).

During the last 25 years, English has been experiencing exponential expansion at all levels of education. This new state of affairs has been motivated by the various sectors of the Lebanese society that have realized the importance of English as *Lingua Franca* (Crystal, 1997; Heller, 1999; McArther, 1998) and its importance as a gatekeeper for better jobs.

After the civil war that erupted in 1975 and continued until 1990, few English-medium universities, such as the Lebanese International University (LIU) and the American University of Science and Technology (AUST) were established in traditional French territory (Bashshur, 1997). The Lebanese Ministry of Education accredited about 43 such institutions at a later stage (Abi Najm, 2003). Universities such as Beirut Arab University, St. Joseph University, and Universite Siant-Esprit Kaslik, known to be Arabic and French medium universities, have added English language courses and some new programs and subject matter courses in English in order to ensure that their students are not left behind in a world increasingly dominated by English (Bashshur, 1997; Baydoun, 1998; Koussaifi, 1998).

The Intensive English program (IEP) which is offered at these universities consists of several levels of English classes that slightly vary from one university to another. These levels are designed to improve the English language proficiency of the applicants who took the TOEFL test but were still considered deficient in English proficiency and as such, are not yet considered ready to study an English curriculum at the college level.

2.2.1 ELT in university education in Lebanon

In Lebanon, English is taught in most Lebanese universities especially those that follow the American credit system. The aim is to equip students with the requisite knowledge of English that prepares them for the other subjects in their fields of study. English is the language of teaching in almost all private higher education establishments. However, French is the primary language of instruction at Saint Joseph University, the Holy Spirit University, the Ecole Supérieure des Affaires, and few others.

Lebanese University students aim at learning English because they know its importance in the marketplace. It helps them find a job in a country whose economy depends mainly on the strength of its tourism, financial services, and trade. The Lebanese government realized that these three sectors will be greatly enhanced if the Lebanese force commands a high level of proficiency in English (Shaaban, 1997). Bobbit (1918) in his famous book *The Curriculum* stated that the curriculum is a way to prepare students for their future roles in the new industrial society. This view is applicable to the curricula of the Lebanese Educational institutions. The curricula in these institutions focus on training students to meet certain pre-specified objectives that prepare

them to cope with the market outside. The purpose of the institution “shifts subtly to that of a service provider, of getting students into employment and thus re-defining the purpose of education as being instrumentalist and utilitarian in scope” (McKernan, 2008). English, the language of instruction of all subjects is considered a gatekeeper for better jobs and the main instrument that prepares students for the marketplace.

2.2.1.1 Objectives

The main objectives of ELT in University Education in Lebanon are:

- 1- Language is learned to gain information and to learn about the world.
- 2- Language is most effective when it takes place through meaningful, interactive tasks.
- 3- Learning a new language is becoming familiar with a new culture.
- 4- Language skills are interdependent.
- 5- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are not thought of by language users as independent skills; they are rather perceived as interdependent where one skill often activates the other skills as well as the paralinguistic skills for the achievement of effective communication.

To sum up most of the objectives of the English courses found on the websites and in catalogues of some Lebanese private universities, language learning in these universities is looked at as a means of communication and interaction with others.

Guided by the above basic principles, the curriculum for English as a foreign language attempts to develop the use of English for three major purposes: social interaction, academic achievement, and cultural enrichment. The most effective way to achieve these purposes is through the adoption of a thematic, integrated, content based approach to teaching and learning.

2.2.2 Focus of the Intensive English Program courses

The ELT in private universities consists of an Intensive English Program (IEP) and an advanced English program. Each of the universities that follow the American credit system has an IEP. The IEP consists of levels of English classes that slightly vary from one university to another. These levels are designed to improve the English language proficiency of accepted applicants at these universities who have satisfied all admission requirements to their respective fields of study, except the English language proficiency requirement. This program helps students master English language writing, reading, listening, speaking, and grammar skills. It provides training in both oral and written communication and research skills required of university students. The IEP students are accepted in various study majors at the university based on their high school scholastic records SAT 1 and SAT 2 scores. However, these applicants have not scored the required minimum on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and for this reason they are considered deficient in English proficiency, and as such, are not yet considered ready to study an English curriculum at the university level. The minimum requirement for the TOEFL varies from one university to another. Besides TOEFL, course participation is also determined by an English Entrance Exam

(EEE) or English Placement Exam (EPE) used to assign students to ability-level.

2.3 The Teaching Situation in Lebanese Universities

The English departments in most of the universities specify which books are to be used for each level of English. Based on personal experience, and on interviews with some teachers in some of the Lebanese universities, it was realized that teachers have no say in choosing the books; however, they are free to get extra material to support the university books as long as they cover a syllabus given to them at the beginning of the semester. The books chosen for the IEPs in these universities are mainly brought from native English speaking countries. These universities have arrangements with agencies that provide them with the required textbooks such as Houghton Mifflin, Pearson, or Longman. Some of the most common series used are American Headway, Cutting Edge, Straightforward, or Focus on Grammar.

The IEP moves from the traditional system of language education based on rote learning, linguistic correctness, and cramming of information that was taught by Lebanese schools, to a system that promotes autonomous learning, thinking skills, and communicative competence. It highlights the role of group work in the development of communicative language skills thus stressing the need for the creation of an interactive classroom environment.

As for the class size, there is no standard size for the classes in the private Lebanese universities in Lebanon. In private universities, the number of students ranges from 20 to 35 students per class. This number rises to more

than one hundred in the Lebanese University being the only public university in the country.

In most universities, English is offered 12 hours a week for a period of 4-month semesters. In some universities the number may rise up to fifteen hours per week. The advanced courses in most universities carry 3 credits each and thus are offered for 3 hours a week.

Teachers in Lebanon are usually under the direct supervision of the coordinators and the heads of English departments who conduct frequent meetings for these teachers and control their departments. In the 20th century, the rise of the communicative approach implied a lowering of the emphasis on grammar. However, the teaching of grammar continued to have a major role in the Lebanese classrooms. The books chosen to teach English at the universities in Lebanon are all international book series that teach English as integrated skills, but grammar is usually used as a separate skill that takes more focus than other skills of English. The English language curriculum in the Lebanese universities is exam-oriented where teachers prepare their students to pass the exams in order to move to another stage.

Based on personal experience and interviews of many teachers and administrators in some private Lebanese universities, it was realized that there is no specific teaching approach that teachers are asked to adopt. Teachers are left free to use their own approach of teaching as long as they cover the syllabus in hand. In most universities, teachers are eclectic in their teaching approach. They vary their styles according to the sizes of their classes and the levels of their students. They use group work in small size classes and pair

work in larger classes. They use various methods of teaching refrain from using the teacher-centered approach of instruction to give a chance to students to interact with them instead of being passive recipients. Teachers learn these techniques when they take their degrees and they enhance them in professional development sessions offered by most of the universities on regular basis. Some universities ask the teachers to participate in international conferences and some create conferences and workshops on campus and invite other universities to participate. This is done frequently to develop the skills of teachers and to help them be up to date with new research and approaches. However, one common aspect amongst all these universities is that they encourage the application of the monolingual approach in the classroom. The rules in these universities invite both students and teachers to communicate in English only for the purpose of creating an atmosphere where the students are forced to communicate in the target language. However, it has been argued that the exclusion of the mother tongue is a criticism of the mother tongue and renders it a second-class language. This degradation of the mother tongue has harmful psychological effects on learners (Nation, 1990).

My personal experience as a learner and teacher of English as a foreign language has shown me that moderate and judicious use of the mother tongue can aid and facilitate the learning and teaching of the target language, a view shared by many colleagues of mine. However, the value of using the mother tongue is a neglected topic in the TEFL methodology literature. This omission, together with the widely advocated principle that the native language should not be used in the foreign language classroom, makes most experienced and non-

experienced teachers in Lebanon feel uneasy about using L1 or permitting its use in the classroom, even when there is a need to do so.

2.4 The Situation of NESTs and NNESTs in the Lebanese Context

In Lebanon, the expansion of English, especially in the field of education, has not been without its share of problems. Together with the spread of English in Lebanon came questions about the quality of English language education being offered and the incorporation of this language in the Lebanese curriculum. English language program directors and administrators were confused about the kinds of programs they ought to use, the objectives and goals they needed to set for their program, the kinds of faculty they ought to employ, and the kinds of qualifications they ought to look for in their faculty members (Yusuf, 2004).

The history of having English language teachers from different countries goes back to the second half of the 19th century when American and British countries established schools in Lebanon, the most prominent of which was the Syrian Protestant College, now the American University of Beirut (AUB), established in 1886. Furthermore, many elitist private schools and international schools in Lebanon try to get NESTs for all cycles of education, with emphasis on early childhood education. The attitude of the Lebanese towards these foreign teachers has always been positive as they are considered the right models for their students in pronunciation, intonation, appropriate and authentic language use, and idiomatic usage. In university English language programs in Lebanon, the tradition has been to have as many Native English Speaking

Teachers (NESTs) as the institution could afford because of the positive image such practice could create.

2.4.1 Number of NESTs and NNESTs

The attitude of the Lebanese towards foreign teachers has always been positive; however, economic and social realities of life make it impossible to have native speakers in large numbers, so NNESTs constitute the majority of the teaching body in universities. Based on data taken from four universities in Lebanon, it was realized that the number of NESTs was approximately 0.25% of the total number of teachers in these universities. This means that for every 4 teachers in a given university, there are three NNESTs and one NEST. The reason as one of the administrators put it was the inability of the institution where she works to afford a large number of NESTs. She adds that NESTs need to be tempted financially to teach in a foreign country and they require a certain standard of facilities that is costly for the university where she works. This is the reason why NNESTs constitute the teaching body in public and regular private schools in Lebanon.

2.4.2 Differences between NESTs and NNESTs in ELT in Lebanon

2.4.2.1 Qualifications

Lebanese teachers begin their careers by earning a bachelor's degree in education from an accredited university. Depending on the grade level they wish to teach, they take courses in child psychology, curriculum design, teaching methods, and literacy instruction. A bachelor's degree is enough to teach in an IEP, but a master's degree is required to teach in higher education

and community colleges. Teachers are allowed to be full time instructors in the Lebanese University and in some other private universities only if they hold a doctorate degree. Neither the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) nor an independent TEFL certificate alone is sufficient qualification to teach in a university in Lebanon, though the practical training required as part of the certification process greatly enhances teaching skills.

2.4.2.2 Hiring Practices

Hadid (2004) claims that in the job market of English teaching in Lebanon, most of the hiring practices give preferential treatment to applicants who are native speakers of English. Medgyes (1994) believes that administrators feel justified in setting this hiring criterion since they believe that NESTs are better public relations items and have a better business draw. In their eagerness to have NESTs at their institutions, many Lebanese administrators have hired NESTs without relevant qualifications (Hadid, 2004). It was realized that in some universities in Lebanon, when recruited, NESTs are sometimes asked to teach advanced English courses even though they do not hold a master degree in TEFL, TESOL, or linguistics which is considered a requirement for a teacher to be eligible to teach core English university courses. The data taken from the four sample universities in Lebanon revealed that some NESTs with only a CELTA were teaching core courses of English.

2.4.2.3 Roles

In most Lebanese universities, the NESTs are assigned to teach communication courses, reading, and speaking classes while the other skills like grammar, vocabulary, and writing are mostly taught by NNESTs. It is believed that the spoken English that comes from the NESTs is more authentic because it comes from the real model. The grammar courses might be given to NNESTs based on the belief that they know more about the grammar of the language, having studied it at school and in their training (Ghaith, 1991).

2.4.2.4 Pay

Based on personal experience and on interviews with some administrators in the four sample universities in Lebanon, it was realized that university administrators in Lebanon still view the NEST as a more competent and proficient teacher. This was supported by an English language teacher from one of the four sample universities. He claimed that The NNESTs have always been under the pressure of whether they are going to be hired for EFL teaching job if the native speaker/non-native speaker dichotomy is maintained. He added that when recruited, NESTs are paid higher salaries, offered fancy accommodation, given suitable transportation allowance, are fully insured, and are offered renewable contracts. However when Lebanese NNESTs are hired, they are offered semester contracts, no insurance, very low salaries (it may reach half of that of a NEST), and no accommodation or transportation allowance. This, in his opinion, have left detrimental effects on the status of the NNEST and have negatively affected their self-image, confidence and

motivation and driven them to seek better jobs abroad, mainly in the Arabian Gulf regions where the pay is better.

2.4.3 Expectations

2.4.3.1 Teachers' Responsibilities

Just like other university teachers around the world, university teachers in Lebanon have many responsibilities. They have to plan lessons, teach and assess students, take attendance, and assign grades. In some universities, they often perform some extra duty assignments like visiting schools to recruit students or participating in social clubs. Teachers are also required to attend regular staff meetings and professional development sessions which help them hone their teaching skills. They are asked to spend a specific number of office hours to give extra attention to low-level students. In addition to marking their exams, university teachers in Lebanon usually participate in writing the exams. In some universities, teachers are required to write all their exams and this takes a lot of their time. The exam written by the teacher must be checked by the supervisor or the head who gives his/her consent on it or asks the teacher for further modifications. Teachers should have strong oral and written communication skills and must be adaptable and willing to adjust their plans in order to meet specific needs.

Teachers also have many other responsibilities like identifying, selecting, and modifying instructional resources to meet the needs of the students with varying backgrounds, learning styles, and special needs. They may be asked to assist in assessing changing curricular needs and to offer

plans for improvement. They have to maintain effective and efficient record keeping procedures and to communicate effectively, when necessary, both orally and in writing, with students and parents and other professionals. They are required to collaborate with peers to enhance the instructional environment, to take responsibility for meeting course and student performance goals, and to meet professional obligations through efficient work habits such as: meeting deadlines, honoring schedules, and coordinating.

Moreover, in some universities, teachers are asked to participate in orientation programs where they visit schools and advertize for their university in order to recruit students after they finish high school. These are mainly the profitable universities that view students as a customer and the teacher as an agent whose job is not only to teach but to bring as many students as he or she can to study in the university.

2.4.3.2 Classroom Observations

In some universities in Lebanon, teachers are frequently observed by supervisors who suddenly jump into their classes without prior notice to assess them. The teacher assessment is not always done for job satisfaction purposes like improving the teachers. From my personal experience of teaching in three universities in Lebanon, I have realized that teachers never received any feedback at all about these evaluations. In these universities, the main aim behind teacher evaluation is to threaten teachers that they might lose their job at any moment if they fail to reach the previously specified objectives. Evaluation in this sense is used as “a stick with which to beat

teachers” (Smith, 1996, 2000). In this sense, many educators feel as does Aaron Eyler, who argues on the website *Synthesizing Education*: "Currently teacher observations are a waste of time...We need to revamp the practice and work diligently to provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to learn from each other." However, this is not the case in all Lebanese universities. In some universities, observers know the real objective behind evaluation and execute their observation accordingly. Instead of assessing the teachers' personal methods of teaching and hence restrict their freedom, their objective is to encourage faculty members to articulate their course and assignment goals more clearly and to develop sound rubrics.

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Chapter three, the theoretical constructs underpinning this study will be introduced. The chapter starts with a theoretical framework and then it introduces and discusses literature about the educational and professional situation of native and non-native English speaking teachers. It presents conceptual definitions of the terms NESTs and NNESTs, the advantages and disadvantages of NESTs and NNESTs, and some empirical research about students' perceptions and teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs.

The chapter starts with a discussion of the role of English in the world and then it discusses the power of language before it moves to discuss linguistic imperialism, ownership of language, and language discrimination. These issues are inextricably related to each other, and their effect on the NEST/NNEST dichotomy, which is the core of this research study, is immense. Examining these issues from a critical perspective gives the reader a broader perspective on the debatable issue of NESTs and NNESTs.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Linguistic imperialism (Philipson, 1992), the ownership of English and its role and spread in the world are very important issues that affect the status of NESTs and NNESTs. English was originally imposed on a number of countries in the periphery (Philipson, 1992, p. 129) and has through deliberate contrivance, successfully displaced, or replaced some of the indigenous languages of these countries. The dominance of English has also resulted in the imposition of the Anglo-Saxon Judeo-Christian culture that goes with it so that indigenous cultures have been undervalued and marginalized” (Bisong 1995: 123). However, with its global extension throughout the world, English can no longer be considered as a property belonging to its native speakers. English according to Shaw (1981, p 21), "has become a property of the world.” In such a condition, English can be taken as a means of expressing the speakers’ culture, not one for imitating the culture of Great Britain, the U.S. or any other English speaking country. Now, the ever-increasing body of English language learners can take advantage of this globally recognized means of communication to express the variant cultural treasures in their background. Therefore, with this shift in the role of English from an imperial language to a global means of communication, it is about time for the world to recognize the role of the NNESTs as equal to the NESTs and to form a new image of them as competent teachers who through their knowledge of their students L1 and through sharing their students cultures can sometimes surpass the NESTs in their competency of English language teaching.

3.1.1 The role of English in the world

At the national level, English continues to serve as our window to the world and thereby function as a language of development. This is so because of the access provided to the growing funds of knowledge in Science, Social Sciences, and Humanities (Parashar, 2012, p. 1). The increasing use of English in the world arises from complex economic, technological and socio-cultural processes. It is seen by some as an inevitable consequence of economic globalization (see: Graddol, 1997, 2006) and by others as a legacy of colonialism and imperialism (see: Philipson, 1992).

The development of English as a universal language is a fact that we cannot deny. English has developed to become a “lingua franca” (Graddol, 1997), or common language, in many regions throughout the world. It is now the current lingua franca of international business, science, technology, and aviation. This status given to English, has had a profound effect on both the ways English language teaching (ELT) is practiced and the language itself. However, this global predominance is seen to be changing and the role of English in the world is gradually diminishing despite the fact that more people are thriving to learn English every day. English, however, will remain a powerful language for quite some time before another language takes over. The gradual diminishing of the leading position of English will affect all the sectors of life where English is used.

A great deal of criticism is commonly made of the aggressive expansion of English at the cost of other languages, which has prompted some scholars to use the labels “killer language” (Pakir, 1991; Mühlhäusler, 1996) and

“tyrannosaurus rex” (Swales, 1997) to refer to it. In less politically charged domains, linguists are also paying attention to the current situation of English as a global language (Crystal, 1997) and developing models that help us speculate about its future evolution (Graddol, 1997, 2006).

3.1.2 Reasons for the spread of English

3.1.2.1 Historical Reasons

Historical events such as the Pilgrims’ emigration to the Americas, the wholesale transportation of British convicts to Australia and the expansion of the British Empire, initiated the spread of the English language to territories which Britain claimed as its own. However, it is only relatively recent, since the 1920’s (Kachru, 1994: 137), or the end of World War II (Kaplan, 1987: 138), that the influence of English as an international language (EIL) has extended to most other parts of the world. Indeed English is now so widespread and considered so influential that the ‘BANA’ countries (Britain and the Australasian and North American nations) (Holliday, 1994: 4), which use English as their first language, are often charged with hegemony (Kaplan, 1987: 139) and ‘linguistic imperialism’ (Phillipson, 1992).

3.1.2.2 Economic Reasons

The world is in various stages of economic transition. Economically the world has changed more rapidly in the past few years than at any time since 1945. The emerging global economy is both competitive and interdependent. It reflects the availability of modern communications and production technologies in most parts of the world. The future of English as a global language will

depend very largely on the economical trends in the world. Faster economic globalization is going hand in hand with the growing use of English. The English language is closely associated with this economic modernization and industrial development. Information is sent and received at increasing speed. The competitive demands of governments, industries, and corporations, both national and multinational, for technological progress require an understanding of English, the language of that technology.

3.1.2.3 Demographic Reasons

The global spread of English over the last 40 years is remarkable by the increasing number of users of the language, by its depth of penetration into societies, and by its range of functions. Graddol (2006) argues that demographic change, technology and economy are the most important factors affecting language spread, shift, and change. It is estimated that over 1 billion people are currently learning English worldwide. In a globalized world, the number of English learners around the world is only expected to further grow. According to the British council, as of the year 2000 there were 750 million English-as-a-foreign-language speakers. Also, over 70% of the world's scientists read English. About 85% of the world's mail is written in English, and 90% of all information in the world's electronic retrieval systems is stored in English. The massive increase of the people learning English will reach a peak of around 2 billion in the next 10-15 years (Graddol, 2006:14). This increase in population affects different countries and languages in different ways.

3.1.3 The future of English

According to The Economist (1996), English continues to be the world standard language, and there is no major threat to its global popularity. On the other hand, Graddol (1997) claims that the next 20 years or so will be a critical time for the English language and for those who depend upon it. The patterns of usage and public attitudes to English which develop during this period will have long-term effects for its future in the world. Graddol (2006) argues that non-native speaking teachers from Asia and Europe will create a major competition for native English speaking countries. Technology is another factor that affects the future of English. Other world languages, such as Spanish, French and Arabic, are being adopted by the new media. The dominance of English on the internet is declining and lesser used languages are proliferating. Mandarin and Spanish are challenging English for educational resources and lesser-used languages are flourishing on the internet (Graddol, 2006). Economy is yet another factor that affects the future of the English language. Japanese, French, and German are growing on the basis of the economic development in their countries of origin and this tremendously affects the future of English. In other words, the competitive advantage which English has historically provided its acquirers will ebb away as English becomes a near-universal basic skill. The need to maintain the advantage by moving beyond English will be felt more acutely.

However, this does not mean that the power of English will cease to continue at least for the near future. Hasman (2000) claims that English has been an international language for only 50 years. If the pattern follows the

previous language trends, we will still have 100 years before a new language dominates the world. Moreover, Hasman adds that during this time, English will not replace other languages as many fear. Instead, it may supplement or co-exist with languages by allowing strangers to communicate across linguistic boundaries. It may become one tool that opens windows to the world, unlocks doors to opportunities, and expands our minds to new ideas.

English is no longer the “only show in town.” It is facing major challenge from other languages and its role is seen to be changing. The frequent use of the term World English in the literature, together with EIL and ELF is an indication of the increasing interest in the global expansion of English (Eoyang, 1999; Modiano, 1999; Seidlhofer, 2001).

3.1.4 The power of the English language

Power is defined in *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* (1999) as: “The ability of its holders to exact compliance or obedience of other individuals to their will” (p. 768). Power, according to Webber (1978), is “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance.” If abused, power may lead to unfortunate results such as inequality, disparity, and oppression. According to Pennycook (2001), power underlies all critical or political analyses and operates through all areas of life, and it is the core of questions of difference, discourse, and disparity. Power may mean lack of voice and of choices, the power of the ideology, or a discourse imposed by the sector in the classroom, in the ministry, or in the government.

Ashman and Lee (2006: p. 2) state that language teaching and learning has a long history where power, politics, and various social issues are involved. A language is not just a linguistic system. It is deeply embedded in socio-cultural discourse and its role in education should be viewed beyond the school discourse. As a result, many terms have been introduced in the educational discourse such as native language, English-speaking background (ESB), non-English-speaking background (NESB), foreign language, second language, indigenous language, and languages.

3.1.5 Linguistic imperialism

The theory of *Linguistic Imperialism* has attracted attention among scholars of applied linguistics since 1990. Phillipson's (1992) book *Linguistic Imperialism* has led to a considerable debate about the worth and limitations of the theory. In his book, Phillipson defines Linguistic Imperialism as "the dominance asserted and retained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (p. 47). He claims that English is spreading widely due to deliberate policies of English speaking nations to protect their interests. This is done through universities, colleges, programs, and publications or in other words, through the continuation of the colonialist movement through cultural and educational means and not through weapons. Quoting an English-language entrepreneur who said, "Once we used to send gunboats and diplomats abroad; now we are sending English teachers," Phillipson advanced the idea of 'linguistic imperialism': that is, that the spread of English as a post-colonial plot

on the part of the core English-speaking countries, which hoped to maintain their dominance over “periphery” (Kachru, 1996) (mostly developing) countries.

The power of English over other languages is based on the following rationale:

- English is well-established world-wide
- English is a gateway to the world
- English stands for modernity
- English is a symbol for material advance and efficiency. (Wikipedia, “Linguistic Imperialism”, 2010).

Philipson’s theory critiques the historic spread of English as an international language and its continued dominance not only in postcolonial settings such as India, Pakistan, Uganda, Zimbabwe, but also increasingly in "neo-colonial" settings such as continental Europe. The central theme of Philipson’s theory is the complex hegemonic process, which he asserts continue to sustain the pre-eminence of English in the world today.

Another term introduced by Phillipson (1992) was “linguicism”, a situation where the imposition of a language is equated to the imposition of the cultural, social, emotional, and linguistic norms of the dominating society onto the dominated society, thus maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources. Philipson (1992) also speaks of “The colonial linguistic inheritance” where people are forced to adopt their “masters’ language” (p. 109).

Moreover, Philipson (1992, p. 185), in a similar vein to what Kachru (1985), Canagarajah (1999), Skutnabb-Kangas (2001) and others have stated,

argues that TEFL profession is still bound to several restrictive tenets. These are the notions that English is better taught monolingually, the ideal teacher of English is the native speaker, the earlier English is taught, the better the results, the more English is taught, the better the results, and that if the L1 is used much, standards of English will drop. Philipson as well as many other researchers consider these tenets as “fallacies” because there have not been any clear-cut findings to prove their efficacy in the EFL context. They believe that they are the direct result of the power and hegemony of the Center (Kachru,1985), to monopolize the English language with all its social, cultural, political, and economical privileges.

Philipson (1992) warns people not to be mere receiver consumers and to be aware of the hegemony and dominance in cultural forms that might come with English whether in textbooks, education content or different forms of media. On the other hand, Brutt-Griffler (2002), based on Kachru’s (1983, 1990), contradicts Philipson’s (1992) seminal work on linguistic imperialism claiming that English is the consequence of a process of macroacquisition by several speech communities in the world. Brutt-Griffler refuses to consider as passive recipients of a colonial language but rather as active agents of appropriation of the language. She argues that colonized people have used the colonizers’ language as a fundamental tool in their quest for freedom.

Along the same lines, Chew (1999) states that it is just too simplistic to ascribe the growth of the foremost international language merely to the notion of linguistic imperialism without considering the relentless march of globalism and the pragmatic perspective of newly formed nations which have recognized

this trend early in their history. Pennycook (1994) suggests that “the spread of English is considered to be natural, neutral and beneficial” (p. 7, 9, 11, 141). This claim, however, is increasingly being disputed (see Pennycook, 1994; Skuttnabb-Kangas, 2000; Tollefson, 2000). The hegemony of English is beneficial on one hand and detrimental on the other. When one considers its universality, its role as *lingua franca*, and its communicative and instrumental functions, it is easy to see why the spread of English is often viewed as “natural, neutral, and beneficial.” In the countries of the outer circle (Kachru, 1982), where English is acquired through formal education, the detrimental effects of the hegemony of English are seen clearly in “social stratification, exclusion, and problems associated with education and literacy, status of languages other than English, and language rights.” (Bamgbo, 2003, p. 419). Pennycook (2001) states that the spread of English “is seen as neutral because it is assumed that once English has in some sense become detached from its original cultural contexts [particularly England and America], it is now a neutral and transparent medium of communication.” Some critics like Phillipson (1992) and Pennycook (1994) argue that discourses and practices in ELT have their roots in the colonial period, and it was suitable for ELT to define language and teaching as a value-free activity so that the countries of the core may hide their ideological interests. Thus, in their opinion, English is not detached from the outside world. It is the bond between the cultures of the native English countries and the non-native English countries. It is a political means used by the countries of the “core” to reach their desired hidden goals.

3.1.6 Ownership of the English language

Language researchers and educators are increasingly embracing the fact that English is spoken by more people as an L2 than as a mother tongue, and, consequently, they are taking on board the notion that English is no longer exclusively owned by the native-speaking communities but that its ownership is also shared by newly arrived members of the English-speaking community (i.e. non-native speakers), who therefore have a right to be heard in matters affecting the language (Widdowson, 1994).

3.1.6.1 Who Owns English?

One of the consequences of English being global is that “no one owns it anymore. Or rather, everyone who has learned it now owns it” (Crystal, 2003 b). It is divesting itself of its political and cultural connotations as more people realize that it is not the property of only a few countries. Instead, it is a vehicle that is used globally and will lead to more opportunities. It belongs to whoever uses it for whatever purpose or need. Graddol (2006) states that the status of English as the only global language available at such a fateful moment in history is being transformed. Being an international language, English must be owned by those who can speak it and they have the right to use it as a tool to serve their own purposes. Crystal (1997) argues that people in many countries “are changing the language [English] to suit themselves.”

3.1.6.2 Varieties of English

English has become an indigenized language in many of the countries that Kachru (1976, 1981, 1982, 1985) categorized as the “Outer Circle”, a term used in juxtaposition to another term used by Kachru also called the “Inner Circle”. The “Inner Circle” is a term used by Kachru to refer to countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Canada. The “Outer Circle”, on the other hand, refers to the countries where English has official or historical importance. This includes most of the countries of the Commonwealth of Nations, including populous countries such as India, Pakistan, and Nigeria. Speakers of English in the “Outer Circle” countries cannot be considered nonnative speakers of English just because they do not speak the center variety of the language, in the same way as Australian speakers of English are not considered nonnative just because their English is neither British nor American (Moussu & Llorca, 2008, p. 317). Mufwene (1998) points out, “it is misguided to split new varieties of English around the world into those said to be ‘native’, such as British and American Englishes, and those identified as ‘nonnative’ such as Indian and African Englishes” (p. 12). Higgins (2003), following Norton (1997) suggests that the concept of “ownership” can provide an alternative to the NS-NNS dichotomy, as speakers have “varying degrees of ownership because social factors, such as class, race, and access to education, act as gate keeping devices” (p. 641).

3.1.6.3 Anglo-centrism

Nayar (1994) argues that whether NESs own English or not, they have claimed ownership to “the rights and responsibilities not only of controlling the forms and norms of English globally, but also of dominating the theory and practice of its teaching and research” (p. 4). Nayar (1994) points out that every language speaker is a native speaker of a given language, and therefore native speakers of English should not be treated as if they have a given quality just because English is their first language, and similarly, nonnative speakers should not be treated as if they do not have the same quality just because English is not their first language. In her opinion, this shows the unfairness of Anglo-centrism, through which English is taken as the only language in the world that deserves attention, and speakers are accordingly classified regarding their relationship with that language: either they belong to the exclusive group of L1 speakers or they do not. Nayar attributes the prevalence of this dichotomy to linguistic imperialism (p. 5).

3.1.7 Language discrimination

Language discrimination occurs when a person is treated differently because of that person’s native language or other characteristics of that person’s speech. As far as English is concerned, issues of power, hegemony, and linguistic imperialism perpetuate a false discourse in the minds of people that the closer an individual’s accent is to that spoken by any of the people from the countries of the “Inner Circle” (Kachru, 1982) the better that individual’s English is. A person’s accent determines his or her social recognition or acceptance by a community as one of its members. This will thus determine the

social recognition of the NS and NNS identity. People have a high ability at marking accentedness in speech (Munro & Derwing, 1994; Fledge, Munro & Mackay, 1995; Munro & Derwing, 1995). If there is a difference between the speaker's accent and the listener's accent, and this listener is unable to recognize the speaker's accent as any of the "established" accents, the speaker will be placed within the nonnative speaker category. Lippi-Green (1997) argues that language discrimination is rarely considered a true discriminatory practice and that judges tend to believe that accented speakers may not be suitable for certain jobs where language plays a key role.

Perhaps the native English accent that the native English speakers acquire naturally is the most important privilege that makes them ideal teachers in the eyes of many people. Accent has always been a source of power for a native English speaker and a gatekeeper for better jobs. However, the myth that the ideal teacher is the native English speaker has been deconstructed by showing the lack of substantial evidence behind such a concept. Philipson (1992) argued that NNSs are better equipped to teach L2 to other adults than those who had learned it as their L1 as children because NNSs had learned their second language as adults.

Kramsch (1997) believes that nonnative teachers should refrain from pursuing nativeness and should rather concentrate on finding their own voices as nonnatives in order to contribute with their language learning experiences and their multicultural backgrounds (p. 359).

A number of authors argue against the linguistic discrimination towards nonnative speakers of English. Cook (1999, p. 187) for example, calls for

language teaching to go beyond the privileging of native speakers and for a thorough examination of this issue to be made in relation to language teaching. He maintains that it is a matter of “adjusting the perspectives about models that underlie language teaching ... to bring language teaching to the realization that it is helping people use L2s, not imitate native speakers” (p: 204).

3.2 Conceptual Definitions of NES and NNES

The use of the terms “native” and “non-native” is admittedly a very debatable matter, especially in the sociolinguistics of English and its pedagogical dimensions. Although researchers provide us with a variety of definitions for the terms native speaker and non-native speaker, the exact meaning of those terms remains an issue of great debate (Simon and Rebrova, 2001). According to Bloomfield (1933), the first language a person learns to speak is his native language while according to Stevens (1982) a native speaker of English is one who has acquired English during infancy and childhood. The reason the NES and NNES are not easily definable is partly because the language itself has so many varieties. English has official status, or is widely used in over 75 territories in the world (Crystal, 2003a, p. 109) and it is a matter of debate which of the world’s Englishes are native varieties. Singaporean English, for example, is both a home language and a second language (Foley, 2006), and thus Singaporeans could be seen by some as NESs and by others as NNEs. Even in traditionally monolingual, “inner circle” (Kachru, 1985) countries, such as England, there are growing numbers of bilingual or multilingual people as a result of immigration (Clark and Paran, 2007). Existing ethnic and linguistic categories may not adequately describe

the complexity of an individual's or a community's language use, as the person's so-called native language may not necessarily be their strongest or the one they identify most closely with (Leung et al., 1997).

The consensus of many linguists as to who may qualify as a native speaker (as cited in Lee, J.J., 2005) is as follows:

- 1) An individual acquires the language in one's infancy and continues to maintain using the language (Davies, 1991; Philipson, 1992),
- 2) the individual's knowledge of his/her native language is intuitive (Davies, 1991; Philipson, 1992),
- 3) the person has the ability to produce spontaneous and fluent discourse (Medgyes, 1992),
- 4) the person possesses communicative competence, he or she has the knowledge and the ability to use language within various social contexts (Medgyes, 1992; Stern, 1983).
- 5) The speaker identifies himself/herself with a particular language community, or is identified by that community as one of their own (Johnson & Johnson, 1998), and
- 6) The speaker is free from a foreign accent (Scovel, 1988).

Cook (1999) believes that languages learned beyond a certain age can never be native languages. Medgyes (1994) relates the native-nonnative issue to fluency and competence. He notes that in spite of all the effort that non-native English speakers put, they will never reach "native competence." They might be able to come close to it, but they will always be stopped by a "glass wall" (p. 342), which is an invisible "plateau" where their language competence

will stop improving. Medgyes (1994) argues that despite the various ways for measuring language proficiency, the degree of native versus non-native fluency and spontaneity cannot be easily identified; furthermore, there are no clear yardsticks with which native speakers can be differentiated from non-native speakers. For example, in certain types of discourse, such as that of creative speaking or writing, the native speakers might stop to find the right terms. Would their lack of spontaneity in such instances make them less native?

Basing his analysis on Stern's (1983), Crystal's (1985), Richard et al's (1985) and Davies' (1991) definitions, Medgyes (1994; p: 10) gives his own definition as follows: The native speaker is someone who:

- 1- was born in an English speaking country; and/or
- 2- acquired English during childhood in an English speaking family or environment;
- 3- speaks English as his/her first language;
- 4- has native-like command of English;
- 5- has the capacity to produce fluent spontaneous discourse in English;
- 6- uses the English language creatively;
- 7- has reliable intuitions to distinguish right and wrong forms in English;

According to Bloomfield (1933), a native speaker is one who uses a language from birth, habitually. However, in an attempt to reject the criterion of "accident of birth," suggested by Fukumura (1993) and Bloomfield (1933), as a basis for defining a native speaker of language and show how narrow the scope of such a definition is, Medgyes (1994) asks a series of questions to illustrate its shortcomings. He asks, for example, about those children who

moved at a very young age with their English speaking families to a non-English speaking country, or those who, after acquiring English as children, lose this language once they move to live in a non-English country (p.10). In another example, he asks whether a child would be labeled as a native speaker of English if only one of his parents is a native speaker of the language. This last question is answered by Nayar (1994 in Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999, p:416) who gave her own definition of a native speaker giving considerable emphasis on the speaker's primary in order of acquisition.

Cook (1999) focuses more on the socially related qualities that distinguish the native speaker from the non-native speaker of a language. He bases his distinction on Stern's (1983) and Davies' (1996) definitions of the qualities that native speakers possess when it comes to their native language. In his opinion, "native speakers have: (a) subconscious knowledge of rules, (b) an intuitive grasp of meanings (c) the ability to communicate within social settings (d) range of language skills (e) creativity of language use, (f) identification with a language community (h) the ability to produce fluent discourse, (i) knowledge of differences between their own speech and those of the standard form of the language (j) the ability "to interpret and translate into L1 of which she or he is a native speaker" (p:186). It is worth noting here that within Cook's definition, "accident of birth" or "country of birth" are no longer defining criteria of the native speaker. Furthermore, someone whose L1 is not English can still be considered a native speaker of English if the criteria above apply to him/her.

Liu (1999b) proposes a language proficiency continuum similar to Crystal's. He touches on the idea of "cultural identity" like Kramsch (1995), and emphasizes the multidimensional complexity of the definition of native speaker: (a) sequence, (b) competence, (c) culture, (d) identity, (e) environment, and politics.

By politics, Liu (1999b) goes so far as to say that if native speakers want to be accepted as such, they must look like typical white Anglo Americans. This traditional argument is supported by Amin (1997), who tells of her difficulties in being accepted as a native teacher because of the color of her skin or the variety of English she speaks. The traditional view of a native speaker of English is that a NES is white and comes from countries as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. But this view may be challenged by a more modern view which is based on the fact that there is an increasing number of people who are not white and live and work in these countries and who may qualify to be regarded as native speakers of English due to their flawless and natural use of English.

In response to this controversial issue, some scholars have argued that "native speaker" and "non-native speaker" are simplistic or even misleading labels that should be replaced by more precise definitions. Rampton (1990) expressed his dissatisfaction with the use of the term "native speaker" and because of the absence of agreement on its meaning, he proposed the categories of "expertise" to describe proficiency, and "language loyalty" to describe levels of social identification with a language. Rampton argues that "expertise" does away with the implication that language abilities are of

necessity inborn. Expertise can be achieved, and levels of expertise vary. The term “language loyalty”, he maintains, expresses the symbolic and emotive qualities found in “native speaker” and “mother tongue” while not conflating them with linguistic issues.

Crystal (2003a) claims that “In the ideal native English speaker, there is a chronologically based awareness, a continuum from birth to death where there are no gaps” (p. 18). Paikeday (1985) suggested the terms “proficient” and “competent” to replace the term “native” (p. 48). However, Medgyes (1992) argues that these replacements do not stand up any better to close examination than the original terms.

My definition of who may qualify as a native speaker is based on the analyses of Bloomfield (1933), Davies (1991), Philipson (1992) Medgyes (1992, 1994) and Johnson & Johnson (1998). I believe that a native speaker is an individual who:

- 1- uses a language from birth, habitually (Bloomfield, 1933)
- 2- acquires the language in one’s infancy and continues to maintain using the language (Davies, 1991; Philipson, 1992).
- 3- speaks English as his/her first language (Medgye’s, 1994)
- 4- has a native like command of English (Medgye’s, 1994)
- 5- has an intuitive knowledge of his/her language (Davies, 1991; Philipson, 1992)
- 6- has the ability to produce spontaneous and fluent discourse (Medgye’s, 1992)

- 7- identifies himself/herself with a particular language community, or is identified by that community as one of their own (Johnson & Johnson, 1998)

3.3 The Status of NESTs and NNESTs in the English Language Teaching (ELT) Profession

One of the concerns of EFL programs around the world is finding the most proficient teachers who could help learners attain a high level of proficiency in English, which in turn, would allow the learners to communicate effectively in the newly learned language in various social and academic contexts. Consequently, administrators, educators and researchers strive to identify the traits, skills, and abilities that best characterize the ideal teachers in English, who cater to all students' needs and adapt their teaching to the EFL context. Equipping EFL teachers with the required abilities and skills through teacher preparation and professional development programs helps them with their choice of teaching methods and activities, inside and outside the classroom. Of these qualities that are included within the "effective teacher" package, and one that has become a separate issue of controversy lately, is whether the teacher is a native speaker of English or a non-native speaker of English.

Today, nearly a billion people around the world speak English, which means that more people speak English as a second language than there are native speakers (Tapia, 2010). Keeping these facts in mind and considering that there are a limited number of native speakers who choose to be English

language teachers, it can be concluded that the large majority of English language teachers are non-native speakers.

Despite being the majority, NNESTs have been treated as “step-children” (Mahboob *et al.*2004) and in many places preference is given to NESTs. The literature deals extensively with the distinction between the two terms: NESTs and NNESTs (Liu, 1999; Almeida Mattos, 1997; Medgyes, 1992; Reves & Medgyes, 1994) and discusses the marginalization and the unfair treatment of NNESTs in the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession. Philipson (1992) states that the native speakers are taken for granted as the automatic best teachers, and all other teachers looked up to them. Medgyes (1999:178), however, warns against the danger of equating a competent speaker with a competent teacher because doing so will create a problem. Very often it has been assumed that the native speaker makes a better teacher because he or she provides a better model of the language – more fluent, more idiomatic, more current and with “better” pronunciation. The view of nonnative teachers as a second best ignores the tenet that not only subject knowledge but also pedagogical skills are crucial to good teaching (Richards, 1998). As Widdowson (1992) reminds us, a teacher is both informant and instructor, and while native speakers may be better informants, they are not necessarily better instructors. They have more experience as English language users, but nonnative speakers have had experience as English language learners. Liu (1999a) asserts that it is undeniable that the English learning experiences of nonnative teachers are helpful for learners. O’Neill (1991) also argues that nonnative teachers have one enormous advantage: that “they have actually

learned the target language as foreigners and have direct insight into and experience of the process involved for other nonnative speakers” (p. 304).

The concept of “native speaker” as a model for language learners and against which they are measured is reflected in most English textbooks. What follows from the assumption that the native speaker is the model for language learners, is the view that the native speaker should be the one teaching them, too. This idea was reinforced theoretically by the Chomskyan (1965) conceptualization of the ideal NS as the source of knowledge about language. However, Crystal (2003b, p. 67-69) puts the number of English speakers in the world at 1, 500 million, of whom only 400 million are L1 speakers. Moreover, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is emerging as a variety in its own right, and thus NESs have lost the ownership over the language (see Jenkins, 2000; Widdowson, 1994). Also, language competence is only one of the skills needed to teach language successfully. The results of a study conducted by Reves and Medgyes (1994) showed that NESTs being more fluent speakers does not automatically make them better teachers.

On the other hand, Philipson (1996) goes a step further to suggest that the ideal teacher of English is the non-native speaking teacher. Brainne (1999) confirms Philipson’s views by stating that the very fact that non-native speakers of a language have undergone the process of learning a language makes them better qualified to teach the language than those who are born to it. Medgyes (1994) characterized NESTs as informal, flexible, and confident and characterized NNESTs as good role models, effective providers of learning strategies, suppliers of information about the English language, better

anticipators of language learning difficulties, sensitive to language learners' needs and facilitators of language learning as a result of shared mother tongue.

3.4 Perceived Strengths of the NESTs and the NNESTs in ELT

Ellis (2003; p. 40) states that in the context of EFL/ESL, the linguistic experiences of NNESTs differ from those of the NESTs. Despite the moves towards abolishing this distinction, the issues of varying skills and abilities between the two groups continue to be perplexing in the profession and deserve review here as a foundation for discussion in the study.

Maum (2002) states that the term *non-native-English-speaking-teachers* has created a division among professionals in the ELT profession. Those who support the term believe that distinguishing between native and non-native-English-speaking-teachers is necessary because their differences are, in fact, their strengths and should be recognized. Those who oppose the dichotomy feel that differentiating among teachers based on their status as native and non-native speakers perpetuates the dominance of the native speaker in the ELT profession and contributes to discrimination in hiring practices. In both cases, the NEST/NNEST dichotomy still exists and teachers of each group have perceptions of their own strengths and abilities. These strengths are reinforced by the views of many researchers in the field and they are related to certain areas of language teaching like: cultural aspects, the command of the language, language proficiency, teaching styles, and some other general attitudes. The points of strength of each group will be discussed in more details on the basis of these points.

3.4.1 Advantages of NESTs

3.4.1.1 Knowledge of the L2 Culture

NESTs are steeped in cultural background knowledge of English and have an advantage over NNESTs in this regard. NNESTs, who may have not had the opportunity to go to an English speaking country and be exposed to the target culture, are less successful in integrating the culture of the target language community into their courses, and in their confidence to teach about it. This might have negative effect on the students' language development given that students reach high levels of proficiency in linguistic skills, but still need to acquire the sociolinguistic rules to communicate successfully in English. Arva and Medgyes (1999) state that NESTs supply more cultural information to their students than do NNESTs, and Burns (2009) believes that native speaking teachers have more to offer adult students in the target area than their non-native counterparts. He believes that the non-native teachers can learn to understand the nuances of communication culture through many years of study and prolonged immersion within a community that uses the target language as its mother tongue, yet native speakers acquire it innately throughout their lives

3.4.1.2 Command of the Language

One of the perceived advantages of NESTs is their command of the language as they are more proficient than NNESTs especially in the areas of colloquial and idiomatic English and their appropriate uses (Medgyes, 1994; Reves & Medgyes, 1994). It has been argued that NESTs use authentic English and have a feel to its nuances. It has also been claimed that NESTs are more fluent and accurate than NNESTs in using the English language. They know its subtleties better, and are comfortable using its idiomatic expressions (Mc Neill, 1994; Maum, 2002; Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Leon, 2006). Most NNESTs can only aspire to this. One of the respondents in a study by Medgyes (1994) said, "Native speakers [of English] are living the language, rather than adopting it." Hence, students have more trust in them because of their confidence and authoritative use of the language. In addition, students feel that when a NEST is teaching, English has a genuine relevance in the classroom because it is the only form of verbal communication between the teacher and their students. NESTs teach *the* language rather than *about* language unlike their NNESTs counterpart (Medgyes, 1994). These perceptions are translated into preference for NESTs over NNESTs in many ESL as well as EFL contexts.

In the ESL contexts, studies showed that many administrations in California expressed their belief that only native English speakers could be good teachers of ESL (Kamhi-Stein, 1997 in Al-Mutawa, 2000). Tang (1997) conducted a study where she asked 47 NNESTs teaching ESL contexts about their perceptions of the proficiency and competence of NESTs and NNESTs. A

high percentage of respondents believed that NESTs were superior to NNESTs in speaking (100%), pronunciation (92%), listening (87%), vocabulary (79%), and reading (72%). Likewise, Medgyes (1994), found NESTs to be better listeners, speakers, readers, and writers of the English language than NNESTs. These findings reiterate the fact that NESTs are more often respected as models of English language learning.

3.4.1.3 The NEST Model

Although overt discussion of the native speaker as a model is rare in language discussion, indirect evidence for the importance of the native speaker in English language teaching is indeed the perennial issue of which kind of native speaker should be the model for language teaching” (Quirk, 1990 in Cook, 1999, p. 188). Obviously this preference for NESTs over NNESTs has its roots in the fact that native speaker’s competence, proficiency, or knowledge of the language is a necessary point of reference for second language proficiency concept used in language teaching (Stern, 1983 in Cook, 1999). Moreover, learners of English need to get an idea of how the new language is used by native speakers of English.

In Japan, parents insist on having their children taught by NESTs since they want them to acquire native-speaker proficiency in English. This attitude by parents has filtered to their children who stated that they admire the native speaker accent and want to emulate it (see Tokada, 2000, p. 2). They look up to the native speaker as their model. Tang (1997, in Tokada, 2000) shows how the perceptions of the parents coincide with the perception of Japanese NNESTs themselves who believe that NESTs are superior to them in the areas

of listening and speaking. Hence, the teachers' self-image suffers and students' skepticism about the ability of their teachers is reinforced.

3.4.1.4 Teaching Styles

As for the teaching styles, Avra and Medgyes (2000) claim that NESTs adopt a more flexible approach, are more innovative in the classroom, are more casual, have far-fetched expectations, and attend to perceived needs. Also, Avra and Medgyes (2000) state that NESTs focus on fluency, oral skills, and colloquial registers. They teach items in context, prefer free activities, and favor groupwork and pairwork. In their teaching, they use a variety their materials, tolerate errors, and resort to less translation and less use of the first language.

3.4.2 Advantages of NNESTs

There is some support in the literature for the belief that non-native speakers of English could be highly effective as TESOL professionals (Medgyes, 1992, 1994). The characteristics of the NNESTs are summarized by Medgyes (1994, p. 51) who claims that NNESTs have an advantage in "providing a good model" for learners because they have successfully mastered the English language, have teaching language learning strategies, supply information about the English language, anticipate and prevent language difficulties, show empathy, and benefit from the mother tongue. Moreover, NNESTs can estimate students' potentials, read their minds, and predict learning difficulties.

3.4.2.1 Knowledge of L1 Culture

Philipson (1996) considers NNESTs to be potentially the ideal ESL teachers. Where NESTs are more aware of the cultural background knowledge of English, NNESTs, who most of the time have no opportunity to be exposed directly to the target culture, have more knowledge of the local (L1) culture that might guide them to better teach in harmony with the cultural expectations of the students, parents, and schools. Native speakers, consciously or unconsciously, sometimes might not be sensitive to the students' culture, and this might make the students feel that their identities are threatened and this might affect their learning.

3.4.2.2 Command of the Language

NNESTs might not be as proficient in English as NESTs, but proficiency does not mean success in teaching because teaching may or may not be achieved at a high level of proficiency (Medgyes, 1994). Sometimes, students' reactions and feelings are mixed. They might complement a certain teacher for his/her excellent command of the language or they might feel intimidated rather than encouraged. They might feel that the teacher demands a high degree of excellence from his/her students because his/her command of the language is impeccable (Liu, 1999). Medgyes (1992, p. 341) contends that "a deficient command of English may even have hidden advantages."

3.4.2.3 Sharing Students' L1

McNeill (1994) conducted a study on teachers' language awareness and their sensitivity to students' language difficulties, particularly on their ability to anticipate the problems which EFL/ESL students encounter when reading particular texts; the results of his study suggested that teachers who are native speakers of their students' L1 are at a distinct advantage when identifying their students' vocabulary needs in connection with reading texts. Hence, students find the shared mother tongue a useful instructional tool in teacher-student interaction where some of the weak students found approaching the teacher an easy matter (Tang, 1997). It has to be noted though that in countries where English is spoken as a native language, the knowledge of the students' L1 ceases to be an advantageous factor. There, students come from worldwide and the language of instruction is necessarily English, meaning that the NNESTs do not have the advantage of being able to act as "double agents" or experts mediating between two languages and cultures (Seidlhofer, 1999). Instead, NNESTs face entrenched linguistic discrimination, in both their daily and professional lives.

3.4.2.4 Understanding Students' Difficulties and Needs

NNESTs' previous L2 learning experience offers them a privileged understanding of the problems and weaknesses of their students (Tang, 1997). Moreover, NNESTs have gone through the process of acquiring English as an additional language and thus they have first-hand experience in learning and using a second language and their personal experience has sensitized them to the linguistic needs of their students. Many NNESTs, especially those who

have the same first language as their students, have developed a keen awareness of the differences between English and their students' mother tongue. This sensitivity gives them the ability to anticipate their students' linguistic problems, to display an acute sensitivity to their students' needs and to develop an effective curriculum and pedagogy (McNeill, 1994; Luksha and Solovova, 1996; Seidlhofer, 1999). Medgyes (1992) emphasizes this point by saying that, "more than any native speaker, he [NNEST] is aware of the difficulties his students are likely to encounter and the possible errors they are likely to make" (p.6). Medgyes (1994) claims that because they were learners of English themselves, NNESTs are more empathetic towards their students than NESTs. They empathetically attend to their students' errors, especially those that are due to language transfer (see: Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Barratt & Kontra, 2000; Nemtchinova, 2005). The linguistic distance between teacher and learner is a disadvantage faced by the NEST. NESTs according to Mc Neill (1994) seem to be less sensitive to their learners' language needs because they have less access to their students' language and to the way their students process English as a foreign language.

Medgyes explains that if NNESTs are able to remedy their "deficiencies", they will have equal chance as the NESTs to achieve professional success. While NESTs' involvement with the target country is far less thorough (Medgyes, 1994), NNESTs usually build good relationships with their students. They have sufficient cultural awareness of the target culture and thus understand the students' needs, give them positive feedback most of the time and fair evaluations, and communicate well with them. Along the same lines, Tang (1997) argues that NNESTs play "an important pedagogical role in their

classrooms, and serve as empathetic listeners for beginning and weak students, need analysts, agents of change, and coaches of public examinations in the local context” (p. 579). Also, NNESTs tend to be stricter than their native counterparts since they know the requirements students have to meet; NNESTs are more able to set realistic goals for the students by matching their individual potential with social demands (Medgyes, 1994). Finally, Avra & Medgyes (2000) claim that NNESTs adopt a more guided approach in their teaching. They are more cautious and committed. They have realistic expectations for the students, and they attend to real needs.

3.5 Definition of Perceptions

Research revealed that NESTs and NNESTs have their own perceptions of their strengths and abilities (Maum, 2002; Burns, 2009; Medgyes, 1994; Philipson, 1996). Research also showed that students as well hold different perceptions about their teachers’ strengths and weaknesses (Mussou, 2002; Liang, 2002; Mahboob, 2003). It is thus of great importance for the purpose of this research to look closely at what the term *perceptions* mean in relation to the NESTs and NNESTs dichotomy, and to this study before presenting related empirical research about the topic.

In this research study, my definition of the term perception is based on the following definitions from the literature: 1- Perception is the process of interpretation (Engel & Snellgrove, 1989) 2- Perception is the thoughts, personal point of view, understanding, knowledge or values that influence behaviors (Edwards, 1989). 3- Perception describes one’s ultimate experience of the world and the process whereby sensory stimulation is translated into organized

experience (Lindsay & Norman, 1977). How people analyze what they perceive is greatly influenced by many factors including their past experiences, feelings, imagination, values, memories, beliefs and cultural setting. Because the content and degree of these influences will be different for everyone, the same object or event can be perceived very differently by different people.

3.6 Empirical Research Studies on NESTs and NNESTs

3.6.1 Research

Research on the self-perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs or the way they are perceived by their students is a fairly recent phenomenon. This may be due to the sensitive nature of these issues because NNESTs were generally regarded as unequal in knowledge and performance to NESTs and issues relating to NNESTs may have also been politically incorrect to be studied and discussed openly (Llurda, 2005). Despite the pioneering work of Medgyes (1992, 1994), it took nearly a decade for more research to emerge on these issues.

A movement in an educational context could be relevant and popular, but it cannot develop without the backing of sound research and pedagogy. The purpose of this chapter is to critically examine the main findings of empirical research studies on NESTs and NNESTs. One characteristic of these studies is that they have been conducted mainly by NNESTs. Another characteristic is that these studies have been conducted in both EFL and ESL contexts. These studies incorporated various methods including classroom observations, questionnaires and interviews. Based on their objectives, the

studies have been classified into two categories: Teacher perceptions and student perceptions.

3.6.1.1 Empirical Research about Teacher Perceptions

Several scholars have asked non-native teachers, student-teachers, and teacher educators directly for their opinions and self-perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses. For example, Reves & Medgyes' (1994) research study showed that the constant fear of their students' judgment made the participating EFL teachers feel constantly self-conscious of their mistakes. According to Reves & Medgyes' participants, this 'self-discrimination' often leads to a poorer self-image, which further deteriorates language performance, which, in turn could lead to an even stronger feeling of inferiority. This point of view may seem extreme, and yet other language teachers, new teachers of all languages, or any teacher with poor self-esteem, might experience similar feelings. It is interesting to notice, however, that it seems acceptable for NESTs to make some occasional mistakes while teaching, or not to know all the details about the English language (Amin 2004). In contrast, when NNESTs make the same mistakes or do not know everything about the English language, their teaching abilities and competencies are often immediately questioned (Canagarajah 1999, 2005). This attitude from the students, NESTs, and often even from the NNESTs teachers themselves, will often lead to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubts (Braine 2004; Morita 2004). According to Reves & Medgyes (1994), the way to salvage NNESTs' self image is to publicly acknowledge the difference between the two cohorts' linguistic competence and NNESTs should strive to narrow the linguistic gap.

Arva and Medgyes (2000) conducted another research in the Hungarian context. Their research involved investigating how NESTs and NNESTs perceived their own teaching behaviors and those of the other cohort of teachers. Also, their perceptions were compared with teaching behaviors to see if there are any discrepancies. The participants were five Hungarian and five British teachers. Each of them was observed for one lesson and then interviewed. The findings showed that NNESTs perceive their NEST-counterparts as less professional because they do not prepare for their classes even though the observations showed that NESTs were very well-prepared in their lessons. Another finding showed that NESTs perceive their NNESTs' English as imperfect and sometimes contained inappropriate usages and mistakes. It is interesting that NNESTs themselves admitted that in the research even though the observations showed that they were fluent in English and that their proficiency level was higher than expected.

In another study about self-perception, Samimy & Brutt-Griffler (1999) investigated how seventeen NNEST- TESOL graduate students perceived themselves as future NNESTs in a university in the United States. The aims of the study were to determine how these graduate students perceived themselves as professionals in the field of English language teaching, if they thought there were differences in the teaching behaviors of NESTs and NNESTs, what these differences were, and if they felt handicapped as NNESTs. The respondents seemed to be aware that factors such as the age and level of the students, the goals and objectives of the program, and the personality and teaching skills of the teachers made a significant difference in how successful a teaching/learning experience could become. The participants

also felt that it was sometimes harder for them to feel qualified and appreciated in an ESL context, where their competences are more often questioned. In contrast, they thought it easier to see themselves as role models 'in social, cultural, emotional, or experiential terms' (138) and to be valued and respected as professionals when teaching in their own countries.

Amin (1997) interviewed five 'visible minority' women about their teaching experiences in Canada. These women believed their students thought that only Caucasian teachers could be native speakers of English. They also believed that only Caucasian native speakers of North American English could know 'real' and 'proper' English. Consequently, those teachers felt constantly judged and compared with native, white, teachers. Gender also seemed to be a serious issue for women teachers who have difficulties establishing their authority. According to Amin, ESL students' referent thus seems to be a white, native-English-speaking Anglo male. This attitude towards 'whiteness', as well as its resulting conflicts with identities and legitimacy, was also hinted at by Golombek & Jordan's (2005) interviewees.

Maum's (2003) study in the US context showed that, more than the native speaking teachers, the non-native speaking teachers found the ESL teachers' cultural background and training in linguistics to be very important. It was surprising though that the NESTs were not aware of any kind of discrimination against NNESTs, while NNESTs clearly expressed their frustration towards the isolation and "marginalization in the profession" (162).

In another study conducted in an EFL setting by Kamhi Stein, Aagard, Ching, Paik & Sasser (2004) results showed both groups to be confident in

their language skills with NNESTs' responses slightly less positive than NESTs' responses. NNESTs did not rate their pronunciation and communication skills as negatively as expected, and grammar was not ranked as NNESTs' strongest skill.

In the Japanese context, Butler (2007) investigated the attitudes of Japanese teachers towards the privileged status of NESTs and their self-evaluations of their English proficiency. She found that around 60% of her 112 respondents supported the notion that native speakers of English were the best EFL teachers and only 13% did not. These teachers also believed that only American and British English should be taught to EFL students. Butler's respondents also self-evaluated themselves as having stronger reading skills than writing and oral (fluency, grammar, and vocabulary) skills.

In Turkey, Dogancay-Aktuna (2008) asked 21 NNEST educators about their status as non-native speakers of English, professional identities, and self-perceived skills. Most of these participants rated their language skills and competences in English as high, overall, although some noted a need to improve their knowledge of idiomatic expressions and conversational English. At the same time, slightly more than half of the participants had experienced prejudice because of their non-native status and many felt that this status was disadvantageous to their professional careers and teaching experience. They agreed, however, that being NNESTs in an EFL context allowed them to understand the issues related to this context better than if they were NESTs. Bayyurt (2006), who interviewed 12 Turkish NNESTs about their beliefs regarding the teaching of culture in the EFL classroom, additionally showed

that NNESTs were aware that EFL students regarded them as good language learning models and guides.

In the Lebanese context, a study conducted by Yusuf (2004) investigated the differences and similarities in NESTs and NNESTs' perceptions of their teaching effectiveness in the EFL intensive, freshman, and sophomore classrooms in universities. The results showed that as far as language proficiency is concerned, NESTs are generally more proficient in English than NNESTs. The latter admitted to linguistic weaknesses in the areas of vocabulary, pronunciation, idioms, and communicative appropriateness. Also, NESTs and NNESTs showed many differences in perceptions regarding various aspects of the teaching/learning process and had different definitions of who a native speaker is.

3.6.1.2 Empirical Research about Student Perceptions

Research on students' perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs is as crucial as the self-perceptions if not greater and has a more recent history. Although native and non-native teachers can bring interesting and useful insights about their perceived differences, strengths, and weaknesses, their perceptions about their own strengths and weaknesses cannot always be objective and does not provide a complete picture. This is why several studies have investigated ESL students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs in different settings.

One of the first studies in the area was carried out by Lucie Moussu. Moussu's (2002) project was conducted based on the assumption that ESL students at a US university would not like to be taught by NNS teachers at first, but might change their mind with time and exposure to NNS teachers.

The results of Moussu's study showed that the first language of both the students and their teachers made a significant difference in how teachers were judged. In addition, students who intended to go back to their countries after their ESL studies held a more negative attitude towards NNESTs than students who wanted to stay in the US for a longer period of time. Finally, students' attitudes towards NNESTs were not as negative as expected at the beginning of the semester and had become quite positive by the end of the semester. Later, Moussu (2006) repeated her first study on a much larger scale and confirmed her initial results.

Kristy Liang (2002) investigated students' attitudes towards NNESTs. The study was designed specifically to investigate 20 ESL students' attitudes towards six ESL teachers' accents and the features of these teachers' speech that contribute to the students' preference for teachers. Five of the teachers were NNESTs from different language backgrounds and the other was a NES.

The results showed that, although students rated pronunciation/accent in ESL teachers' speech as very important, pronunciation/accent did not affect the students' attitudes towards their previous NNESTs in their home countries. In fact, the students held generally positive attitudes toward the teachers in their home countries, and believed that pronunciation/accent was not as relevant as it appeared in the first place. Further, personal and professional features as

derived from the teachers' speech, such as "being interesting", "being prepared", "being qualified", and "being professional", played a role in the students' preference for teachers. In conclusion, Liang (2002) suggests that the discussion on NNESTs should focus on their level of professionalism instead of focusing on ESL teachers' ethnic and language background.

Cheung (2002) studied the attitudes and opinions of university students in Hong Kong towards NESTs and NNESTs, the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers from the students' perspective, and the capability of these teachers to motivate students. She also attempted to determine if there was any discrimination against NNESTs in Hong Kong.

Participants agreed that professional skills (such as motivating students, preparing lessons and knowledge of the subject, etc.) were more essential than language skills. The results also showed that language proficiency and fluency as well as cultural knowledge were appreciated with native speaking teachers. The ability to empathize with students, the shared cultural background and the strict expectations were seen as strengths with NNESTs. Participants also agreed that professional skills, such as preparation and knowledge of the subject and motivating students, were more essential than language skills.

Mahboob (2003) conducted another study on students' perceptions of NNESTs in USA. His findings revealed that both native and non-native English speaking teachers received positive and negative comments. Native speakers were praised for their oral skills, large vocabulary, and cultural knowledge, but criticized for their poor knowledge of grammar, their lack of experience as ESL learners, their difficulties in answering questions, and their teaching

methodology. Non native speakers were valued for their experiences as ESL learners, and the respondents also recognized their knowledge of grammar and their “stricter methodology,” hard work, ability to answer questions, and literacy skills. Unsurprisingly, as with Moussu (2002), negative responses about NNESTs included poorer oral skills and lack of knowledge about the “English-speaking” culture.

In the Lebanese context, the results of a study conducted by Hadid (2004) showed significant differences in students’ perceptions of the practices and effectiveness of their NESTs and NNESTs in and outside the classroom.

A very important factor to emerge from the above research is that issues of NESTs and NNESTs have now become a legitimate area of research. It is also apparent from these studies that different variables and contexts could influence students’ attitudes towards native and non-native speaking teachers, and that students in general do not seem to have a strongly negative attitude towards their ESL/EFL NNESTs. They tend to realize that professionalism and experience are more important than native language backgrounds. Building on these studies which were conducted in various contexts worldwide, further research on NEST-NNEST debate at university level was found to be necessary in the Lebanese context to fill in the gaps in literature.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The main objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions of students and teachers towards NESTs and NNESTs, thus filling in the gaps of previous research in the Lebanese context. In Lebanon, there have been only a few studies that examined the perceptions of teachers and students towards NESTs and NNESTs (See: Yusuf, 2004; Hadid, 2004); however, no research study in the Lebanese context has yet covered both teachers and students' perceptions together in one study. The overarching goal of this research is to challenge the assumption that the NESTs are the best teachers of English is. It is not the goal of this study, however, to claim that native English speaking teachers are incompetent EFL teachers or that non-native English speaking teachers are better. Specially, this research asks the following research questions:

- 1- What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 2- What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 3- What are the main similarities and differences between teachers' perceptions of themselves and students' perceptions of their teachers?
- 4- What are the main similarities and differences between NNESTs' and NESTs' perceptions of themselves?
- 5- What are students' perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interaction with their students?

This chapter introduces the paradigm that underpins the study and the rationale behind using the mixed methods data collection procedures. It also includes the research design of the study, procedure, questions of trustworthiness, ethical issues, and limitations.

4.2 Philosophical Underpinnings

Research is a systematic and methodical process of inquiry and investigation that increases knowledge and/or solves a particular problem (Sekaran, 1992; 4). The purpose of research can be summarized as follows: to review and synthesize existing knowledge, to investigate existing situations or problems, to provide solutions to a problem, to explore and analyze more general issues, to construct or create a new procedure or system, to explain a new phenomenon, or to generate new knowledge (Sarantakos, 1993; 31-35).

Educational research is essentially concerned with exploring and understanding social phenomena which are educational in nature, mainly pertaining to formalized and/or spontaneously occurring social, cultural, psychological processes. In doing so, it deals with educational questions that can be investigated, and the methods which enable such investigation and the utility of results emanating from such investigation (Dash, 1993). Since theoretical questions in education emerge from different conceptions and interpretations of social reality, different paradigms have been evolved to determine the criteria according to which one would select and define problems for inquiry.

4.2.1 Definition of paradigm

A research paradigm or approach is a wide world view that includes major assumptions about the nature of knowledge, known as epistemology, the nature or reality and social reality, known as ontology, and assumptions about research methodology (Crotty, 1998). A paradigm provides a conceptual framework for seeing and making sense of the social world. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979; 24), "To be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way." Paradigm has been termed a "world view"(Patton, 1990; 37); however, it was Kuhn (1970; viii) who introduced the term as "universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners," and suspected that (Kuhn, 1970; 113) "something like a paradigm is a prerequisite to perception itself". In the postscript to his second edition, Kuhn (1970) provides a useful definition stating that a paradigm "stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values and techniques, and so on shared by the members of a community" (p; 175).

The significance of paradigms is that they shape how we perceive the world and are reinforced by those around us, the community of practitioners. Within the research process the beliefs a researcher holds will reflect on the way the research is designed, how data is both collected and analyzed, and how research results are presented. For the researcher, it is important to recognize their paradigm, it allows them to identify their role in the research process, determine the course of any research project and distinguish other perspectives.

There are mainly three paradigms to the verification of theoretical propositions, namely, positivism, interpretivism, and critical theory. Positivism stands for objectivity, measurability, predictability, and controllability and constructs laws and rules of human behavior. Interpretivism or anti-positivism emphasizes understanding and interpretation of phenomena. Critical theory focuses on oppression and seeks to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them.

4.2.2 The Interpretivist paradigm that guides the research

The interpretivist paradigm can also be called the “antipositivist” paradigm because it was developed as a reaction to positivism. It is influenced by hermeneutics or the study of meaning and interpretation (Ernest, 1994).

The interpretivist paradigm is appropriate in this context for four reasons. First, I believe that people cannot be studied using models developed for the physical sciences because humans are different from natural events. Second, the interpretivist paradigm supports the belief that reality is constructed by subjective perception and predictions cannot be made. Third, people have free will, purposes, goals, and intentions, so they should be studied as active agents. Finally, my aim as a researcher is to explore and understand a particular social phenomenon, namely, student and teacher perceptions towards native and non-native English speaking teachers, and because I am interested in the social construction of meaning, this paradigm allows me to interact with the students in their social context and to ask them open-ended questions in order to make sense of their perceptions and experiences.

The interpretivist ontology is relativistic. Interpretivism is concerned with the meaning and it seeks to understand social members' definition of a situation. There are multiple realities and knowledge is relative to the observer unlike the positivistic theory which is based on the ontology of being a realist, and where the world operates by laws of cause and effect. Interpretivists believe that reality and the individual who observes it cannot be separated. Reality to them is not something that exists outside the observer, but is rather determined by the experiences, social background, and other factors of the observer. Interpretivism deals with reality as a social construction; hence interpretivism is also known as constructivism where truth exists only as individuals' interpretation of what they are dealing with, constructed within the framework that makes sense to the individual. In this sense, the concepts of truth and meaning become interchangeable.

Unlike the epistemology of positivism which relies entirely on objectivity, the epistemology of interpretivism is subjective and knowledge is the result of the interaction between the inquirer and the subject. In other words, to the interpretivists, the social world can only be understood by occupying the frame of reference of the participant in action. To them, the knower and the known are interdependent and the nature of social science is essentially subjective. With positivism, the observer remains distant and does not interact with the observation or experiment whereas with interpretivism, as argued by Cohen & Manion (2000, p. 22) "Efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand him from within" Researchers bring with them their experiences, their understanding of events, and how they make sense of them and of the setting. Then, they construct meaning based on their ontology of the world, but

this meaning that the researcher has started with is shaped by the meaning of the others.

This research study is guided by the interpretivist view which believes that reality is multi-layered and complex (Cohen et al, 2000) and that a single phenomenon has multiple interpretations. The ontological and epistemic perspectives of the interpretivist paradigm lie with the idea that the researcher and reality are inseparable (Weber, 2004). Because human beings are dehumanized without their intention, individualism and freedom taken into account in viewing and interpreting social reality, this research tries through interviews to gain insights into participants' views to provide socially constructed interpretation of a concept. In collecting data, I interacted with my participants on the basis of my experience and social background, and I constructed meaning based on the ideological positions that I possess and on the ontology of my world.

4.3 Rationale behind Using Mixed Methods Research

Mixed methods research is formally defined as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed methods research designs can be traced back to Campbell and Fiske’s (1959) article on measurement validation in which the authors criticized the “over reliance upon, and overconfidence in, any single type of research method” (as cited in Brewer and Hunter, 2006, p. 65). For the past 50 years, researchers have argued the validity of mixed methods designs (using both quantitative and qualitative methods) as

compared to strict adherence to a single method or paradigm (quantitative or qualitative). Purists from both the quantitative and qualitative camps have battled in what Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) have termed “the paradigm wars” (p. 3). Philosophically, Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner’s (2007) recent conceptualization of mixed methods research is helpful: “In the history of ideas, new antitheses and syntheses continually develop in response to current theses. Mixed research is a synthesis that includes ideas from qualitative and quantitative research” (p. 113).

Gaining an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research puts a researcher in a position to mix or combine strategies and to use what Johnson and Turner (2003) call the “fundamental principle of mixed research”. According to this principle, researchers should collect multiple data using different strategies, approaches, and methods in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination is likely to result in complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses (see Brewer and Hunter, 1989). Effective use of this principle is a major source of justification for mixed methods research because the product will be superior to non-method studies. If for example, researchers add qualitative interviews to experiments as a manipulation check and to discuss directly the issues under investigation and to tap into participants’ perspectives, they will be helping avoid some potential problems with the experimental method. On the other hand, the researcher might want to supplement his qualitative observation and interview with close-ended instrument to systematically measure certain important factors.

Quantitative methods (scientific research methods) consist of the collection of numerical data and the analysis of such via statistical methods (Moody, 2002). Quantitative methods tend to be employed when a theory is already well developed and is just being confirmed. It is best used in “objective” studies. Qualitative research methods (humanistic research methods), on the other hand, are ones that gather data qualitative in nature, such as observations and case studies. They use qualitative data analysis to process data (Moody, 2002). This is often used best for conducting research on human behavior or any other subjective field of study like educational research (Richards, 2003). The most familiar quantitative methods, according to Moody (2002), are experiments and surveys. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, rely more on the experience and knowledge of the researcher for analysis and include such things as case studies, action research, and ethnographic research (Gibson et al, 2008). This is usually subjective in nature.

In this research, it is expected that the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in combination will provide a better understanding of research problems than either one alone. Bryman (1988) argued for a “best of both worlds” approach and suggested that qualitative and quantitative approaches should be combined. This research study uses a mixed methods approach to gain greater insight into the phenomenon at hand than is possible from a single-method approach. Quantitative teacher and student survey data collection were combined together with semi-structured interviews to obtain a better understanding of teacher and student perceptions regarding NESTs and NNESTs in Lebanese ELT.

My rationale for using the mixed methods approach of data collection for the purpose of this study is based on four reasons. The first reason is “triangulation” where multiple methods could lead to convergent data on the topic and bring together the different strengths and “nonoverlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods with those of qualitative ones” (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 62). The second reason is “complementarity” where rich qualitative findings complement quantitative findings and seek “elaboration, enhancement, illustration, clarification of the results from one method with the results from another” (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989, p. 260). I consider the two approaches, qualitative and quantitative, as more of a continuum rather than a dichotomy, complementary rather than competitive. The third reason is that mixed methods research has its direct engagement in the complexity encountered by researchers in culturally diverse communities and complex social or educational contexts. Finally, mixed methods research allows me to address a wider range of questions than quantitative methods alone would allow.

The selection of an appropriate research method and techniques is derived from the research questions (Moody, 2002). Techniques are the specific procedures used in the conducting of research. Researchers using the interpretivist paradigm may choose from a variety of techniques: interviews, focus groups, field notes or diaries etc. If a researcher is a positivist at heart, he or she may employ techniques like questionnaires, tests, or surveys. Various researchers have depended only on questionnaires to measure teachers’ and students’ perceptions (See: Cheung & Braine, 2007; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Brown, 2001). Schuman & Presser (1996) claim that using a

questionnaire with specific multiple-choice questions and statements to rate on a Likert scale provides the participants with a single frame of reference in choosing their answers. Brown (2001) also explains that using a close-response format allows for more uniformity across questions that respondents are more likely to skip questions because of their length or complexity, and that responses are relatively easy to interpret. On the other hand, Mussou (2006) acknowledged that quantifying attitudes and beliefs has its limitations and that balancing quantitative data with qualitative data would have triangulated her research design better (p. 44).

Richard and Lockheart (1994) explain that surveys are a useful tool to gather “information about affective dimensions of teaching and learning, such as beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and preferences” (p. 10). However, interviews (see Maum, 2003) complement and balance the quantitative data. While quantitative method is used to measure objectively, and in accurate numbers, the responses of student and teacher participants, qualitative research is used to arrive at findings that cannot be arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification because human beings have perceptions, intentions, opinions, experiences, attitudes and culture, and these attributes are too sophisticated to be measured quantitatively. Therefore, by using face to face open ended interviews, the researcher tried to accurately describe, decode, and interpret the participants’ perceptions about the native versus non-native teachers’ debate and to give them the freedom to say whatever they want without limiting their responses to the boundaries of a predesigned instrument because this will affect the reliability of the findings.

4.4 Research Design

This section describes participants, data collection tools, sampling procedures, questions of trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and limitations.

4.4.1 Context and participants

Three Intensive English Programs (IEPs) from three different universities, namely the American University of Science and Technology (AUST), the Lebanese International University (LIU), and the Arts, Sciences & Technology University in Lebanon (AUL), all branches located in Bekaa governorate of Lebanon, participated in this study. These universities were all established in the late 1990s after the civil war in Lebanon.

The IEPs which are offered in these three universities consist of several levels of English classes that slightly vary from one university to another. The courses offered in these IEPs aim at equipping students with the requisite linguistic skills for pursuing university education in their fields of specialization and developing students' critical thinking skills. Classes offered in these IEPs were the usual grammar, reading, listening, writing, conversation, speaking, and oral communication skills. The levels of proficiency offered at these IEPs ranged from beginners to advanced. The three IEPs vary slightly in terms of the number of levels offered at each one of them, but most programs offered courses at three to five different levels. In all the branches of these universities, English is used as the medium of instruction with faculty recruited from all over the world and with a large number of students estimated by 15000. Table 4.1

shows the number of questionnaires filled out by the different groups of participants in the three participating IEPs.

Table 4.1

Number of participating students and teachers in IEPs

| IEPs | STUDENTS | NNESTs | NESTs |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| AUST | 62 + 4* | 8 | 4 |
| LIU | 79 + 6* | 12 | 2 |
| AUL | 39 + 12* | 2 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 180 + 22* | 22 | 9 |

*Unusable

4.4.1.1 Students

Three hundred IEP students from the three previously mentioned universities in Lebanon were asked to take part in this study. A total of 202 students actually responded to the questionnaires. Twenty-two of these questionnaires (10.9%) were unusable for various reasons. The total number of usable questionnaires were 180, answered by 98 males (54.4 %), 78 females (43.4%), and 4 students (2.2 %) who did not specify their gender. The student participants were of different genders, various nationalities, and different age groups ranging from 17 to 32 years old. Arabic is the first language for most of the student participants. However, for some of them, English, French, or Armenian is their first language (Table 4.2). The three mentioned universities follow the American credit system and use English is the language of instruction for all subjects.

Out of the 180 participating students, 53 showed interest in a follow-up interview. Twenty of these 53 students were chosen on the basis of convenient sampling and were contacted and asked to participate in a semi-structured interview.

Table 4.2

Number and percentage of participating students on the basis of their first languages

| First language | Students |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Arabic | 161 (89.4%) |
| English | 6 (3.3%) |
| French | 8 (4.4%) |
| Armenian | 5 (2.7%) |

4.1.1.2 Teachers

Twenty-two NNESTs and 9 NESTs of both genders and various nationalities and academic qualifications were invited to take part in this research. Twelve (54.5%) NNESTs were females and ten (45.5%) were males, and five (55.5%) NESTs were females and four (44.5%) were males. Twenty (91%) of the NNESTs responded that Arabic was their mother tongue. Two (9%) NNESTs responded that French was their mother tongue (Table 4.3). All nine NESTs (100%) responded that English was their mother tongue. As for the academic qualifications, fourteen (63.6%) of the NNESTs stated that they held a Master degree in TEFL, TESOL, Linguistics, or English Languages and Literature and four of them (18.1%) stated that they had received a doctorate in TEFL, TESOL, and Linguistics. Four (18.1%) of them responded that they held a Bachelors degree in education (see Table 4.3).

Five (55.6%) of the NESTs who took part in this research study were Canadian, two (22.2%) were Australian, and two (22.2%) were American. It was estimated, although not stated in the questionnaire, that these NESTs were of Lebanese origins born and raised in Canada, Australia, and the United States of America. One (11.1%) NEST responded that she held a doctorate degree in TESOL. Five (55.6%) of these NESTs responded that they held a Master degree in TEFL, TESOL, or Linguistics, two (22.2%) responded that he held a Bachelors degree in education and one (11.1%) did not respond to this question (see Table 4.3).

The years of teaching experience of these teachers varied. Nine (40.9%) out of the twenty-two NNESTs responded that they have between 1 and 5 years of teaching experience, eight (36.3%) responded that they have between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience, three (13.6%) responded that they have between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience, and two (9%) responded that they have above 15 years of teaching experience. As for the NESTs, two (22.3%) responded that they have between 1 and 5 years of teaching experience, four (44.5%) responded that they have between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience, only one responded that she has between 11 and 15 years of teaching experience, and finally, two NESTs responded that they have above 15 years of teaching experience (see Table 4.3)

Table 4.3

Teacher demographics

| Questions | Responses | |
|---|---|---|
| | NNESTs | NESTs |
| <i>Native or non-native English speaker teacher</i> | n = 22 (71%) | n = 9 (29%) |
| <i>Gender:</i> | Male: 10 (45.5%) Female: 12 (54.5%) | Male: 4 (44.5%) Female: 5 (55.5%) |
| <i>Years of teaching experience:</i> | 1-5 years: 9 (40.9%) 6-10 years: 8 (36.3%) 11-15 years: 3 (13.6%) 15 and above: 2 (9%) | 2 (22.3%) 4 (44.5%) 1 (11.1%) 2 (22.3%) |
| <i>Country of origin:</i> | Lebanon: 20 (91%) France: 1 (4.5%) Armenia: 1 (4.5%) | Canada: 5 (55.6%) USA: 2 (22.2%) Australia: 2 (22.2%) |
| <i>Mother tongue:</i> | Arabic: 20 (91%) French: 2 (9%) | English: 9 (100%) |
| <i>Academic qualifications:</i> | Doctorate: 4 (18.1%) Masters: 14 (63.6%) Bachelors: 4 (18.1%) No response: 0 | 1 (11.1%) 5 (55.6%) 2 (22.2%) 1 (11.1%) |

4.5 Data Collection Tools

For the purpose of this mixed methods research, and in order to better discuss issues under investigation, I used close-ended questionnaires which enabled me as a researcher to systematically measure certain factors, and qualitative semi-structured interviews which gave me access to participants' perspectives and helped me tap into their perceptions.

4.5.1 Questionnaires

Literature in two fields has informed the decision on the type of instruments that were used for this research study: 1) Literature discussing studies done regarding NNESTs and NESTs, and 2) literature describing the measurement of perceptions.

The main reason for using questionnaires as instruments was that many research projects were conducted in various contexts that asked teachers and students for their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. In order to build on these projects, the items of the teacher and student questionnaires were chosen, and sometimes modified, from the questionnaires that were used in these projects. This allowed for the developing of an instrument whose items had been tested and validated by experts of this type of research (see Table 4.4).

Richard and Lockhart (1994) explain that a questionnaire is a useful tool to gather “information about affective dimensions of teaching and learning, such as beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and preferences” (p. 10). Brown (2001) explains that several aspects of questionnaire writing need to be carefully considered when writing questions: The form of the questions (their length and ambiguity), the meaning of the questions (embarrassing, biased, double barreled), and the respondents (the level of language used). Wegener and Fabrigar (2003) explain that the content and the wording of the questions and statements used in questionnaires is a fundamental step and that careful consideration of the format, the order of the questions, and the number of items needs to take place.

Krosnick *et al.* (2005) claims that measurements of perceptions are a way to assign values to the expression of perceptions and depend on how those perceptions are being expressed in their context. To determine the perceptions of people towards an object, people used many different techniques of measurement. Some of these measurements are explicit measures (the participant knows that the aim is to measure his/her perception towards a certain object), and implicit measures (the subject is not told what is really being measured). The Likert-scale method, which is used in this study, is an explicit measurement. In this method, all the points of the scale are labeled (e.g. strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree) (see Appendices A and B). The creation of questions might be time consuming and the time it takes to respond to all the questions might also be demanding for participants, yet measuring one perception with several different items allows for the final results to be quite precise and helpful for the interpretation of the data (Krosnick *et al.*, 2005).

Following all questionnaire construction procedures I developed two versions of the questionnaires: one for the teachers (Appendix A) and one for the students (Appendix B). Each of the questionnaires is divided into two sections. The first section consists of demographic information and the second section is developed on a Likert type of 5- point scale for data collection. The first section asks about gender, country of origin, age, and mother tongue. There are only slight differences between the two questionnaires. These differences lie mainly in the first part. While teachers are asked about their academic qualifications and years of teaching experience, students are asked

about their age and whether or not they were taught by native or nonnative teachers (see Appendices A and B).

The second part of the questionnaires, which consists of 30 items presented on a Likert type of a 5-point scale ask the participants about their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. It is divided into four sections, namely, *Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs*, *Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs*, *Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs*, and *Classroom behavior and responsibility*. Due to the students' relatively weak command of English, the student questionnaire items were translated to Arabic by a certified English-Arabic translator to make it easier for students to understand (Appendix C).

The items on the questionnaires were borrowed and modified from previously used questionnaires, mainly from Moussu (2002, 2006), Cheung & Braine (2007), Medgyes (1992, 1994), Arva & Medgyes (2000), and Lasagabaster & Sierra (2002) (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Number of questionnaire items from previous research studies

| <i>Items</i> | <i>Number of questionnaire</i> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Section I of Student Questionnaire (Background information) | |
| Research study by Moussou (2002) | (1) (2) (3) (6) |
| Research study by Cheung & Braine (2007) | (4) (5) |
| Section I of Teacher Questionnaire (Background information) | |
| Research study by Moussou (2002) | (1) (2) |
| Research study by Cheung & Braine (2007) | (3) |
| Research study by Arva & Medgyes (2000) | (4) (5) (6) |
| Section II of Student and Teacher Questionnaires (Likert Scale) | |
| Research study by Moussou (2002) | (14) (20) |
| Research study by Moussou (2006) | (1) (15) (16) (22) (23) (28) |
| Research study by Lasagabaster & Sierra (2002) | (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (17) |
| Research study by Cheung & Braine (2007) | (2) (26) (27) (29) (30) |
| Research study by Medgyes (1992) | (18) (19) (21) (24) (25) |
| Research study by Medgyes (1994) | (3) (4) (5) (6) |

For example, in the first section of the student questionnaire (Background Information) questions 1, 2, 3, and 6 were borrowed from Moussou (2002) titled *English as a Second Language Students' Reactions to Nonnative English-speaking Teachers* whereas questions 4 and 5 were borrowed from Cheung & Braine (2007) titled *The Attitudes of University Students towards Non-native Speakers English Teachers in Hong Kong*. In the first section of the teacher questionnaire (Background Information), questions 1, 2, were borrowed from Moussou (2002), question 3 was borrowed from Cheung & Braine (2007), and questions 4, 5, and 6 were borrowed from a study by Avra & Medgyes (2000) titled *Native and Non-native Teachers in the Classroom*. In the second section of both student and teacher questionnaires (Likert Scale), questions 14 and 20 were borrowed from Moussou (2002). Questions 1, 15, 16, 22, 23, and 28 were

borrowed from a study by Mussou (2006) titled *Native and Non-native English Speaking English as a Second Language Teachers: Student Attitudes, Teacher Self-perceptions, and Intensive English Administrator Beliefs and Practices*.

Questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17 were borrowed from a study by Lagasabaster & Sierra (2002) titled *University students' Perceptions of Native and Non-native speaker Teachers of English*. Questions 2, 26, 27, 29, and 30 were borrowed from Cheung & Braine (2007). Questions 18, 19, 21, 24, and 25 were borrowed from Medgyes 1992. Finally, questions 3, 4, 5, and 6 were borrowed from Medgyes (1994).

After the Likert Scale section in the second part of the questionnaires, I asked students and teachers an open-ended question borrowed from Mussou (2006) about what makes a “good” English language teacher (see Appendices A and B). I believed that this question would allow me to elicit additional perceptions from teachers and students regarding NESTs and NNESTs and would help me gather some written qualitative data.

4.5.2 Interviews

The researcher of this study used Interview to complement the quantitative data and to cover some gaps that were not reflected upon in the questionnaire or that might have occurred from the implementation of close-ended questions. The interview questions differ from the multiple choice questions in the sense that though the multiple choice questions are easy to grade and analyze, they do not allow the participants to make any personal comments or add details if the students feel that the given choices do not truly reflect their opinions. The qualitative approach of data collection gives the

participant a chance to emphasize some points that were mentioned in the questionnaires or to add details on them when possible.

There is more than one type of interview to be used for research studies. The type of interview chosen for the purpose of this research study was semi-structured interviews (eg, Seliger and Shohamy, 2001). This process is used to explore specific topics and to ask open-ended questions to the interviewee. Greef (2002) emphasizes that semi-structured interviews are especially suitable when the issue is controversial and personal. In this regard, students' and teachers' perceptions are both controversial and personal. Another reason for choosing semi-structured interviews is that these interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allow for focused, conversational, two-way communication. They can be used both to give and receive information allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. Unlike the questionnaire framework, where detailed questions are formulating ahead of time, semi structured interviewing starts with more general questions or topics and then relationship between these topics become the basis for more specific questions which do not need to be prepared in advance. In semi-structured interviews, not all questions are designed and phrased ahead of time. The majority of questions are created during the interview, allowing both the interviewer and the person being interviewed the flexibility to probe for details or discuss issues. However, it is generally beneficial for interviewers to have an interview guide prepared, which is an informal "grouping topics and questions that the interviewer can ask in different ways for different participants" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Another important point is that semi-structured interviews are less intrusive to those

being interviewed as they encourage two-way communication. Those being interviewed can ask questions to the interviewer. In this way it can also function as an extension tool. Finally, this kind of interviews provides the opportunity for learning. Often the information obtained from semi-structured interviews will provide not just answers, but the reasons for the answers.

For the purpose of this research study, an interview protocol for teachers (Appendix A1), consisting of five categories, and an interview protocol for students (Appendix B1), consisting of six categories, were prepared. The categories are: *A- Definition of terms, B- Advantages and disadvantages, C- Certain areas of language, D- Cultural awareness, E- Teacher's responsibility in the classroom, and F- Personal interaction*. The last category (F) was not part of the teacher interview protocol and was not reflected upon in the student questionnaires but was realized at a later stage to be of considerable importance and thus aimed at bringing additional data from the student-participants.

Each of the 6 categories of enquiry was followed by a set of probes to help the researcher lead the conversation. As an interviewer, I found these probes helpful to keep me on track and to elicit additional information about the area I am exploring. They were also helpful for the interviewees whom I allowed at times to stray from the topic and who at other times paused and waited for me to ask them follow-up questions to continue their talk. However, the probes on the interview section were not the only ones used. At many times I found that I needed to ask further questions that were not written in the interview. This is one of the advantages of the semi-structured interview.

In the interview, and in order to allow a natural flow of the conversations between the interviewee and myself, I did not always follow the given order of questions. Some rephrasing or repetition took place especially with the students who did not understand the questions or did not know what to answer. In these cases, I resolved to use the Arabic translated version of the questionnaire (see Appendix C) and to receive their responses in Arabic. Students' responses were translated back from Arabic to English at a later stage for data analysis.

Just like the student interviews, the teacher interviews were all conducted separately and were also recorded; however, they were conducted in English only. The interviews lasted for about 45 minutes each and took place at the teachers' place of work. Before conducting the interviews, I gave the teachers a detailed description of my study and asked them to sign the ethics consent form (see Appendix E). They were completely cooperative and they showed interest in contributing to my study.

4.6 Procedure

4.6.1 Data collection

The data for this study are drawn from four different sources:

- 1- Student questionnaire
- 2- Teacher questionnaire
- 3- Interview with students
- 4- Interview with teachers

I gathered empirical data as follows:

- 1- I distributed a student questionnaire translated to Arabic to 300 students. I received responses from 202 students and dropped out 22 invalid questionnaires. I had a final number of 180 filled out questionnaires from three IEP programs from three different universities.
- 2- I asked 36 teachers from the three previously mentioned universities to participate in my study. Five teachers from these universities refused to participate in the study for various reasons such as lack of time or excessive work. I distributed the teacher questionnaire to 31 English language teachers working at the university. All the teachers who received the questionnaires responded to them. Their number was twenty-two NNESTs and 9 NESTs.
- 3- On the basis of convenience sampling, I chose to interview 20 out of the 53 students who showed interest in a follow-up interview. The interviews were conducted in Arabic and students felt free to respond in Arabic or in English. The data were translated to English at a later stage to be reported.

- 4- I interviewed 10 NNESTs and 5 NESTs. By the time of the interview, these teachers had already filled out the teacher questionnaire. Many teachers apologized for different reasons such as lack of time or excessive work.

In all, I conducted 35 interviews, 20 with students, 10 with NNESTs, and 5 with NESTs from 3 different universities. The interviews took place in the informants' universities.

The participating teachers were the ones who distributed the questionnaires to their students. They received files from me that contained:

- 1- Precise directions for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires (Appendix D).
- 2- The English version of the questionnaire (Appendix B).
- 3- The Arabic translated version of the questionnaire (Appendix C).
- 4- A number of return envelopes.

After students filled out the questionnaires, teachers were asked to return the closed envelopes to me directly or, when I am not available, to the office of the Head of English department in each of the three universities.

4.6.2 The questionnaire pilot

The term *pilot study* is used in two different ways in social science research. It can refer to so-called feasibility studies which are "small scale version[s], or trial run[s], done in preparation for the major study" (Polit et al., 2001: 467). However, a pilot study can also be the pre-testing or 'trying out' of a particular research instrument (Baker 1994: 182-3). Some of the advantages of conducting a pilot study are that it might give advance warning about where the

main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated. It is also beneficial in assessing the proposed data analysis techniques to uncover potential problems, in training a researcher in as many elements of the research process as possible and in calling attention to any mistakes, problems, or ambiguity that might arise from the questionnaires or interviews.

After the necessary permission was granted, thirty university students and eight teachers responded to the piloted questionnaires for this study. The students were chosen on the bases of convenience sampling. Ten students were chosen from each participating university. The reason the student questionnaire was piloted with students at university level and not at intensive English level was that those students had a high level of English proficiency and metalanguage awareness that enable them to call attention to vague and unclear questions or to questions that they thought should be modified, should not be included, or do not belong.

The teacher questionnaire was distributed on four native and four nonnative English-speaking EFL teachers chosen on the basis of convenient sampling from the three participant universities. These teachers, who were experienced in EFL teaching, were asked to answer the questionnaire and to provide feedback on potential mistakes and problems. The teachers were approached in their offices during their office hours.

On the basis of convenience sampling, eight students out of the 30 students who took the questionnaire were chosen to participate in the follow-up interview. Four of the teachers who filled out the questionnaires took the follow-up interview. Two of them were NESTs and two were NNESTs. The participants were asked to give general feedback about the interview questions mainly feedback related to ambiguity and relevance.

The feedback received from students and teachers from the pilot study helped in clarifying some ambiguous questions and in modifying others. Feedback from students showed that some statements on the questionnaires needed to be rephrased and others needed to be omitted and replaced.

As for the interviews, students noted that some questions were not easy to understand in English and that they will be too difficult for intensive English students to answer in the English language. They advised that an Arabic translation would make it much easier for students to understand and that if students are given the chance to reply in Arabic, then they will be able to elaborate more on the topic. No feedback regarding the piloted interviews came from the four teachers.

I did the necessary modifications on the questionnaires and decided to provide an Arabic translated version of the student questionnaire but not before sending it and the interview questions to experts in the field of research in order to receive additional feedback. Three of the professors were from the American University of Beirut, and one from the Lebanese American University. These expert professors considered issues of clarity, content validity, and significance. This helped me to narrow down my focus and to rewrite some of the

statements more accurately. None of these professors commented on the interview questions.

Finally, the data collection tools were sent to the two supervisors of this research study who provided ample feedback on them and asked me to rephrase, rearrange, and omit certain items and to clarify some of the instructions in order to make the statements more reader friendly.

Examples of the changes in the questionnaire:

- Question number 10 on the student questionnaire read as follows: “Non-native English speaking teachers communicate with students more effectively than native English teachers do.” Some students reported that the word “effectively” needed more elaboration and clarification. This is why I added some clarification to it to become: “Non-native English speaking teachers are more capable of understanding and answering student questions.” However, when the supervisors read the questionnaires, they advised me to modify it or omit it because I can’t measure two aspects, understanding and answering, in one statement.
- On the other hand, 4 of the eight participating teachers complained on the item that asked about their age in the demographic section, so I had to change it to “Years of EFL/ESL teaching experience”.
- Question number 22 in the initial questionnaires was completely discarded because it was a double-barreled question. The question touches upon more than one issue, yet it allows for only one answer which may result in inaccuracy in the teacher and student perceptions

being measured for this question. The question read as follows: “The best English language teacher is measured by his/her experience, training, and academic qualifications.” And most likely all the respondents will strongly agree which will negatively affect the accuracy of the results.

Moreover, the two supervisors asked me to modify some of the instructions on the questionnaires, to define the acronyms NESTs and NNESTs right from the start, to add introductory instructional paragraphs and to change the font and color of some statements and words in order to make them clearer and less confusing to the participants.

The biggest change, however, was on my interview section. I was advised by my supervisors to follow the semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions and prompts for such a controversial topic which would allow for a two-way communication to take place and thus for more data to be elicited (see Appendices A1 and B1).

In order to avoid contamination, the data gathered from the pilot study were not included in the main results because data could then be flawed or inaccurate (see Peat et al. 2002: 57). In addition, the students who participated in the pilot study were not included in the main research study. The reason was that the pilot study was conducted on university students and not on intensive English students, so the participants in the pilot study were not considered true representatives of the target population. However, the eight teachers who participated in the pilot study were included in the main research study. This might have had a negative effect on the results because having already been

exposed to the intervention, these teachers may have responded differently from those who have not previously experienced it. However, this may be positive because these teachers may have become more adept at using the new questionnaire.

4.6.3 Sampling procedures

4.6.3.1 Sampling of Student Questionnaire

Student participants were sampled using modified systematic random sampling. Systematic random sampling is a random sampling technique which is frequently chosen by researchers for its simplicity and its periodic quality. This type of sampling adds order to random sampling. The first element of the population is selected randomly. After that, starting from this randomly selected element, every n th element is selected, where n is equal to the population size divided by the sample size. This type of sampling was selected so that all samples of the same size have an equal chance of being selected from the population. This systematic random sampling technique is called modified because the researcher of this study already identified the needed sample size. The identified sample size of this research was hoped to be 300 students, a hundred from each of the three specified universities. In each university, the total number of the student population was divided on the sample size (100 in each university). The sampling fraction obtained will then be used as the constant difference between subjects. Thus, say the total number of the population of students in a given university is 400 students. Then the number 400 will be divided by the sample size 100 to receive a sampling fraction of 4. This means that on a numbered class list of students, the researcher will start

with number 4 and choose every 4th student until he reaches a total number of 100 students. He will then repeat the same process in the other two universities until he reaches the identified sample size of 300 students.

Systematic random sampling has many advantages. First, it is simple to execute. Second, it allows the researcher to add a degree of system or process into the random selection of subjects. In other words, with systematic random sampling there is more uniform coverage of the entire sampling area. A third advantage of systematic random sampling is the assurance that the population will be evenly sampled. Finally, systematic sampling has no elements of subjectivity. For example, there are no subjective decisions if the researcher samples every fourth student and counts until he reaches the number 100 (see Barnett (1991)).

At each participating university, the 100 sampled student participants were gathered in one hall where they met with the English teachers who explained on my behalf that rationale behind the research and clarified to them that they were given the choice to accept or reject to participate. Teachers also clarified to their students that, if they accepted to participate, they had to sign a consent letter before filling out the questionnaire (see Appendix E). Students were also notified that this research will not affect their grades and that their teachers will not see their responses. English teachers were given instructions on how to distribute and collect the questionnaires (Appendix D).

Only 202 students out of the notified 300 students filled out and returned the questionnaires. Out of these 202 questionnaires, 22 were not usable for various reasons such as, not signing the consent letter, answering only the

demographic section of the questionnaire, or answering all the questionnaire items the same. I sorted and dropped out these invalid questionnaires with the help of a colleague who is experienced in statistics.

4.6.3.2 Sampling of Student Interviews

Fifty-three of the 180 participating students showed interest in a follow-up interview. Twenty of these 53 students were chosen on the basis of convenience sampling and were contacted to assign a specific date and to come and sign a consent letter for their participation. The student interviews were conducted in Arabic. The Lebanese IEP students were at a low level of English, so it was realized that they lack the fluency and the right terms and vocabulary to express their thoughts clearly. Thus, in order to obtain as much information as possible, and to make students comfortable, it was realized that communicating in Arabic would be much more convenient.

Students were informed that the data they were about to reveal would be used for research purpose only, that their answers would be kept confidential, and that they would remain anonymous, so all of them signed the consent forms.

All 20 students were interviewed at their educational institutions. The students responded freely and openly in their first language. They seemed happy to express their opinions about their teachers. Their Arabic responses were translated back to English by a certified Arabic-English translator.

4.6.3.3 Sampling of Teacher Questionnaire

Teacher questionnaires were distributed on the basis of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. I chose convenience sampling because it is flexible and it allows me to obtain basic data and trends regarding my study without the complications of using a randomized sampling. Also, convenience sampling is fast, inexpensive, and easy. In addition, the participants are readily available.

Before I approached the teachers, they had already been informed through the heads of their English departments about the purpose of the interview and about my expected visit to their offices. I was handed a list of the names of all the English language teachers and their office hour times, so I approached them in their offices during their office hours.

Except for five teachers, all the other teachers in the three participating universities accepted to participate in the study. The number of participating teachers was 31.

4.6.3.4 Sampling of Teacher Interviews

Teachers who were interested in taking part in a follow-up interview were asked to leave their phone numbers and email addresses at the end of the teacher questionnaires. All the participants who left their phone numbers and email addresses were considered interested in taking part in the interview and were thus contacted either by phone or via email. A number of 15 teachers were interviewed, each one of them individually. The interviews were

conducted in English and were recorded. Ten of these teachers were NNESTs and five were NESTs. These teachers were of both genders, nationalities, academic qualifications, and teaching experience. Six out of the ten NNESTs were females and four were males. Four of the five NESTs were females and one was male.

Table 4.5 shows the instruments used for each of the research questions.

Type of data used to answer research questions

| Research Questions | Type of Data | |
|---|---|--|
| 1- What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs? | Quantitative data collected through the student questionnaire. | Qualitative data collected through interviews with students. |
| 2- What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs? | Quantitative data collected through the teacher questionnaire. | Qualitative data collected through interviews with teachers. |
| 3-What are the main similarities and differences between teachers' perceptions of themselves and students' perceptions of their teachers? | Quantitative data collected through student and teacher questionnaires. | |
| 4-What are the main similarities and differences between NNESTs' and NESTs' perceptions of themselves? | Quantitative data collected through teacher questionnaires. | |
| 5-What are students' perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interaction with their students? | | Qualitative data collected through interviews with students. |

4.7 Data Analysis

The data set that I assembled consisted of:

- One-hundred eighty student questionnaires.
- Thirty-one teacher questionnaires (22 received from NNESTs and 9 received from NESTs).
- Twenty transcribed student interviews.
- Fifteen transcribed teacher interviews (10 from NNESTs and 5 from NESTs).

4.7.1 Data analysis process

The analysis of questionnaire data was planned to reveal the perceptions of students and teachers in relation to the four categories on the questionnaires 1- definitions of the labels, 2- overall learning, 3- strengths and weaknesses, and 4- classroom behavior and responsibilities of NESTs and NNESTs.

Before any analysis could be performed, the quantitative data received from 9 NESTs, 22 NNESTs, and 180 students were input into the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 to allow for statistical analysis of the information. The quantitative data was entered by two different individuals to increase the reliability of the entries. The discrepancies were checked and the correct answers were saved for analysis.

Frequencies and percentages were then calculated for each question using the Likert-scale formats. The significance level was set to 0.05 and then the coefficient of variation was calculated. Since standard deviation, mean, median, and mode are all absolute data on statistical samples, they do not permit a direct comparison of variation between samples with different means or different units of measurement. One way to obtain a measure of variation that has no units, is to divide the standard deviation by the mean, and multiply by 100 to give a percent. This quantity is called the coefficient of variation (C_v), and can be used to compare methods that give different units. The mere comparison of the means or the standard deviations of two samples is misleading and does not make sense. It was realized that it makes more sense to compare the two C_v values of the teachers and students' perceptions first and then of the NESTs and NNESTs. The coefficient of variation is a precise and accurate statistic for comparing the degree of variation from one data series to another, even if the means are drastically different from each other.

The qualitative data collected from the interviews and the open-ended question at the end of each questionnaire were transcribed, unitized, and categorized. These qualitative data were used to triangulate and support the quantitative data from the questionnaires. The student interviews were transcribed in Arabic first and then translated back to English by a certified Arabic-English translator before any categorizing was conducted.

With the help of a statistician, I read the three sets of data carefully to familiarize myself with their contents and to identify the key themes and then constructed a category system that allowed the data to be categorized

systematically. Attempts were made so that each segment fit only in one category. This involved a period of going back and forth between the data, the coded themes, and the research questions (see Neuman, 2003, p. 441). Each category was assigned a number, and then transcriptions of interviews were coded. After the data were coded, they were displayed and organized so that they could be interpreted. In order to analyze the data, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software named EZ-Text was used. This program helped in linking code with text in order to perform complex model building and to help in data management. It also helped in to quantify the results of the analysis, indicating the frequency of particular responses to each question. Coding, interpreting, and quantifying data were essential in order to draw conclusions.

4.8 Questions of Trustworthiness

4.8.1 Validity, reliability, and generalizability issues

In statistics, validity refers to the extent to which a measurement is well-founded and corresponds to the real world. While reliability is a characteristic of the instrument itself, validity comes from the way the instrument is employed and if the questionnaire cannot be shown to be reliable, there is no discussion of validity.

In quantitative research, reliability refers to the ability to replicate the results of a study. In qualitative research, there's no expectation of replication. It is common to see the terms quality, rigor or trustworthiness instead of validity, and dependability, instead of reliability in qualitative studies (Davies &

Dodd, 2002, Stenbacka, 2001). Because this research yields mainly qualitative data which is subjective in nature, the conventional standards of reliability and validity cannot be applied. Therefore, the extent to which the findings of the thesis can be replicated or generalized to wider EFL contexts is limited.

To ensure trustworthiness, I approached the issue as objectively as possible and I made every effort to consider issues of bias in the analysis of data. For example, in order to avoid measurement bias, where participants may tell the researcher what they think he or she wants to hear, I controlled the manner in which data was collected by using a considerable number of interviews with students and teachers and by ensuring anonymity in questionnaires. In order to avoid procedural bias, which can occur when the researcher puts too much pressure on the participants, I gave my participants enough time to answer my interview questions. Also, to avoid reporting bias, I made sure that the results are accurately recorded in the literature. I also made sure that the research participants are independent, free, and treated with respect so that they are protected from exploitation. They were given the freedom to withdraw from the interview at any time, which ensures that they are not selected on the basis of a desire to prove specific research objective.

Moreover, in qualitative studies, there is an ongoing process of categorizing and coding during the data analysis process. A category system was established. Each category was given a number and interview responses were coded, displayed, and organized. To ensure trustworthiness, this was done by two different individuals, the researcher and a professional statistician. The discrepancies were taken care of and data were ready for analysis.

Furthermore, the interview questions were piloted and were also checked by a panel of experts to ensure their dependability (reliability).

To ensure quantitative validity, I made sure that my participants agree on the definitions on the questionnaires and understand the meaning of the items on the Likert-scale. For example, the acronyms NESTs and NNESTs were clearly defined at the beginning of the questionnaires. Also, it was made clear for the teachers who administered the questionnaires that they had to explain what is meant by NESTs and NNESTs as well as other confusing terms such as “culture” or “empathy” before they administer the questionnaire.

The validity of a measurement tool is the degree to which the tool measures what it claims to measure. To ensure content validity, I carefully selected which items to include (see Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). My intention was to measure perceptions, so I did not include any other items that were not valid for this purpose. In order to improve the validity of this instrument, the questionnaire was piloted and students and teachers gave their feedback on it. Then a panel of experts was asked to review the selection of items and to comment on whether they really assessed “perceptions”. After that, the supervisors of this research, who are experts on the field, also gave their feedback on the questionnaires. This helped me clarify, rephrase, rearrange, and omit some items that were found irrelevant for measuring “perceptions.”

Moreover, in addition to the statement on the questionnaire that says, “All individual responses will be kept confidential” which in my opinion is not enough a statement to make students provide candid answers, I emphasized to the teachers who administered the questionnaires to their students that issues

of confidentiality should be made clear and that the participants should be given the freedom to decide which information about themselves they wish to withhold.

Since it was not possible to make the whole population of students participate in the study, a modified random sampling was administered with students. Usually, results that are based on random sampling are considered generalizable. However, random sampling does not always guarantee generalizability. If the targeted population is a small subpopulation within a larger population, the results may not be generalizable to the larger population because it may not be adequately represented in the random sample. This was the case with student participants. The number of students who participated in the questionnaire were not adequate to represent the larger population of students found in all the universities in Lebanon. This means that what is answered by students in the three participating IEPs in Bekaa governorate might not be generalized to the larger population of students in the other governorates in Lebanon. The same thing applies to the teacher questionnaire. In order to avoid sampling bias, I tried to include as many EFL teachers as possible from the three participant universities. This sample might be enough to represent the targeted population but cannot be generalizable to the larger population of teachers in all other universities in Lebanon.

The first and most important element that ensures reliability in the questionnaires implemented in this study is the reliability within the Likert-scale. All the statements designed to measure a particular trait are indeed measuring the same trait. This is justified because all the statements on these

questionnaires were taken from previous questionnaires already implemented by other expert researchers in other studies. Also, the statements were carefully chosen and checked by experts in the field. If we consider for example the first trait which is “Definition of Labels”, we will find that all the items under this trait, such as color of skin, accent, accident of birth, and spontaneity are intended to define the labels NESTs and NNESTs.

Careful attention was taken regarding the number of items on the rating scale. Because too many items will make the participants answer mechanically and imprecisely and will make the questionnaire seem vague, and because a small number of items will make the results inaccurate (Mussou, 2006), it was realized that a number of 30 items on the Likert-scale is the most suitable. I based my decision on the many questionnaires that I revised while reading the related literature (See Mussou, 2002, 2006; Cheung & Braine, 2007).

4.9 Ethical Considerations

In this research, the guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) were deliberately followed and all the aspects of the process of conducting educational research in the Lebanese context have been weighed up. The purpose was to reach ethically acceptable positions in which the actions of the participants are justifiable and sound.

4.9.1 Respect

Guideline 6 in the Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) states that the Association considers that all educational research should be conducted within an ethic of respect for the person, knowledge, democratic values, the quality of educational research and academic freedom. In guiding researchers on their conduct within this framework, the Association set out its guidelines (Guideline 7) under the following headings:

- Responsibilities to participants
- Responsibilities to Sponsors of research
- Responsibilities to the Community of Educational Researchers

The “responsibilities to participants” is the most relevant point in this research. Codes of ethics governing research in social science have tended to focus mainly on the rights of participants in research. The Association considers that “educational researchers should operate within an ethic of respect for any person involved directly or indirectly in the research they are undertaking, regardless of age, sex, religion, political belief, and lifestyle or any

other significant difference between such persons and the researchers themselves or other participants in the research.” The ethics of respect according to the Association, implies responsibilities on the part of the researchers.

4.9.2 Voluntary informed consent

In this research, student and teacher participants were invited to sign a consent letter in which they understood and agreed upon prior to the research, without any duress. This consent letter was the condition to their participation in the research study. The classroom teachers who administered the questionnaires in the classrooms made sure that all the student participants in the research understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including why their participation was necessary, how it will be used and how and to whom it will be reported. Student and teacher participants who showed interest in taking a follow-up interview had to sign another consent letter as a condition to their participation in the interview.

4.9.3 Right to withdraw

In this research, and based on Guideline 13 in (BERA 2004) the right of the participant to withdraw was strictly adhered to. Students and teacher participants were informed that it was their right to withdraw from the research for any or no reason and at any time. A number of 98 students and 5 teachers did not fill out the questionnaires and their decisions were respected and they were not forced to do so by any means. On the contrary, it was made clear to students before they filled out the questionnaires that filling out the

questionnaires or not will not affect their grades and that their teachers will not see their responses.

4.9.4 Privacy

Participants in this research were accorded their rights to confidentiality and anonymity based on Guideline 23 in (BERA, 2004) which states that “the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants’ data is considered the norm for the conduct of research” (p. 8). This was made clear to participants right at the beginning of the teacher and student questionnaires (See Appendices A and B) and also in the consent form (Appendix E) on the interview that their participation is entirely anonymous and voluntary. Students were told that their teachers will not see their answers and that their participation will not affect their grades in any way. Participants were also told that they had their rights recognized in terms of how the data will be used or on the publications of their inputs. They were reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed.

In compliance with the legal requirements in relation to the storage and use of personal data as set down by the Data Protection Act (1998) which is mentioned in Guideline 24 in (BERA, 2004), records of the data collected (including transcripts and any audio recordings) were stored in a secure and safe place. I was the only one who had access to the electronic information with my username and password. The information was stored on a secure system with recognized virus protection. Electronic and paper information were locked in a secure building. Information was also coded to ensure anonymity.

Collected written information was destroyed by shredding and securely disposing when it was no longer required. Any audio recording was also disposed of digitally.

4.10 Summary

This chapter presented and discussed several aspects of the research methods used for this study. First, it examined the philosophical paradigm that guides the research. Second, the rationale behind using the mixed methods research was explained. The data collection tools, and the questionnaire pilot were also presented as well as the revisions of the instruments that took place afterwards. Third, the participating, IEPs, teachers and students were presented with some general demographic information given about each group. Fourth, the data collection procedures and the analysis of data were explained. Finally, questions of trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations were presented.

The following chapters will answer each of the five research questions that guided this study and discuss the significance and implications of students and teachers' responses.

CHAPTER V: RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analyzes and presents the results and main findings obtained from the 180 questionnaires administered to students, the 31 questionnaires administered to teachers, the 20 interviews conducted with the students, and the 15 interviews conducted with teachers. The data collected from the questionnaires will be presented with the aid of illustrative tables. In addition, teachers' comments from the open-ended question on the questionnaire and from the semi-structured interview questions will be written verbatim, without any corrections in order to support the findings. Also, students' responses will be written in English after being translated from the students' first language.

This research aims at answering the following questions:

- 1- What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 2- What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?
- 3- What are the main similarities and differences between teachers' perceptions of themselves and students' perceptions of their teachers?
- 4- What are the main similarities and differences between NNESTs' and NESTs' perceptions of themselves?
- 5- What are students' perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interactions with their students?

5.2 Question 1: What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?

In order to address the first research question of this study, I will use questionnaire data collected from 180 students and interview data collected from 20 students. Table 5.1 below illustrates details of students' responses to the first section of the student questionnaire.

5.2.1 Definition of Labels

Table 5.1

Students' responses to "Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she has a white color of skin. | 38 (21.1%) | 79 (43.4%) | 24 (13.4%) | 25 (13.9%) | 14 (7.8%) |
| 2- I can categorize my teacher as a native or a non-native English speaker of English based on his or her accent. | 20 (11.1%) | 29 (16.1%) | 12 (6.7%) | 76 (42.2%) | 43 (23.9%) |
| 3- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was born in an English speaking country. | 9 (5%) | 24 (13.4%) | 12 (6.7%) | 52 (28.9%) | 83 (46.2%) |
| 4- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she grew up in an English speaking country. | 20 (11.2%) | 31 (17.3%) | 15 (8.4%) | 39 (21.7%) | 75 (41.7%) |
| 5- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she can produce spontaneous discourse in English. | 45 (25%) | 43 (23.9%) | 17 (9.5%) | 44 (24.5%) | 31 (17.3%) |
| 6- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a Native speaker of English if he or she was raised with native speaking parents. | 29 (16.2%) | 49 (27.3%) | 9 (5%) | 65 (36.2%) | 28 (15.6%) |

When student participants were asked about their perceptions of the definition of NESTs and NNESTs (Appendix B), it was realized that they perceived the birthplace of a teacher, his or her accent, and the place where he or she grew up as the most relevant indicators of nativeness. 75% of students

agreed with statement 3 (46.2% strongly) that birthplace is their primary indicator for a native speaker. This was followed by another important factor which is the teacher's accent where 66.1% of the students agreed (23.9% of them strongly) that a native speaker of English is recognized by his or her accent. Another important factor is the place where the teacher grew up. Data revealed that 63.4% of the students agreed (41.7% of them strongly) that the place where the teacher grew up is an essential factor in defining a teacher as native or non-native and only 20 (11.2%) students strongly disagreed with this statement (see Table 5.1). This view is also reflected in student interviews Appendix B1). For example, student 8 stated in the interview, "For me a NEST is the teacher who is born in the USA, England, Australia or any country where English is spoken as the first language." Student 13 said, "It is not a matter of being born in a native speaking country. A teacher must have grown up in that country to be called native, for what if he was born in the USA for example and travelled to an Arab country at a young age?"

Skin color does not seem to be an important indicator for nativeness from students' perspectives. Only 21.7% of the students agreed (7.8% strongly) that the color of skin is an important factor that defines a teacher as being a NEST or a NNEST. Student 9 stated, "For me, an American might be black or white. The color of skin is not an essential factor here." Also, student 13 said, "I don't think that nativeness is determined by color. We see on TV and in the movies many native speakers who are not white Americans."

Some of these results did not show any consistency with previous literature. Philipson (1992) for example refuted the element of birth as an essential factor in determining a teacher's nativeness. Medgyes (1994, p. 10), basing his analysis on Stern's (1983), Crystal's (1985), Richard et al's (1985) and Davies' (1991) definitions, gave his own definition of a native English speaker as someone who was born in an English speaking country provided that he or she must have acquired English during childhood in an English speaking family or environment. Moreover, Amin (1997, 2004) and Mahboob (2003) emphasized that they, themselves, have been discriminated against in many instances in TESOL based on their color of skin. Furthermore, according to the literature, there is a widely held perception that in many contexts, students want to be taught by native speakers (Braine, 1999; Cook, 1999; Mahboob et al., 2004, Medgyes, 1992) and that a native speaker is of an Anglo (White) origin (Amin, 1999, 2004; Paikeday, 1985). However, the results of this research study suggest that any discrimination on the basis of color of is not applicable in the Lebanese context because students do not consider the color of skin an essential factor that determines a teacher's nativeness.

5.2.2 Overall learning

With regard to students' perceptions of the overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, (Appendix B), it was realized that students perceived the NNEST as more helpful in developing their grammatical skills, vocabulary skills and writing skills, whereas the NEST was perceived as more helpful in developing their oral skills such as pronunciation, fluency and listening skills. Table 5.2

below illustrates details of students' responses to the second section of the student questionnaire.

Table 5.2

Students' responses to "Perceptions about the overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|---|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 7- I will develop better grammatical skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 58 (22.2%) | 87 (48.3%) | 5 (2.8%) | 7 (3.9%) | 23 (12.8%) |
| 8- I will learn more vocabulary words when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 34 (18.9%) | 67 (37.2%) | 29 (16.1%) | 36 (20%) | 14 (7.8%) |
| 9- My pronunciation will improve better when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 24 (13.3%) | 36 (20%) | 6 (3.3%) | 68(37.8%) | 46 (25.6%) |
| 10- My listening skills will improve better when I am taughtby a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 11 (6.1%) | 35 (19.4%) | 3 (1.7%) | 78 (43.3%) | 53 (29.4%) |
| 11- I will develop better reading skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 55 (30.6%) | 49 (27.2%) | 7 (3.9%) | 42 (23.3%) | 27 (15%) |
| 12- I will become a more fluent speaker when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 25 (13.9%) | 35 (19.4%) | 17(9.4%) | 43 (23.9%) | 60 (33.3%) |
| 13- I will become a better writer of English I when am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 78 (43.3%) | 53 (29.4%) | 7 (3.9%) | 23 (12.8%) | 19 (10.6%) |
| 14- I will learn better about different cultures when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 35 (19.4%) | 39 (21.7%) | 29 (16.1%) | 37 (20.6%) | 40 (22.2%) |
| 15- In my opinion, native English speakers make the best English language teachers. | 22 (12.2%) | 66 (36.7%) | 27 (15%) | 39 (21.7%) | 26 (14.4%) |
| 16- I can learn English just as well from a NEST as I can from NNESTs. | 17 (9.4%) | 44 (24.4%) | 37 (20.6%) | 59 (32.8%) | 23 (12.8%) |

When students were asked to respond to whether a NEST makes the best English language teacher (statement 15), a large number of the students (48.9%) disagreed with this statement (12.2% strongly) whereas 36.1% of them agreed with it (14.4% strongly). This was clear in the response of student

number 8 who stated that a NEST is better when it comes to communicating with students. Then he adds, "Teaching is not only communication. Students need grammar and structure. A NNEST is definitely better at this. This is why it is unfair to over-generalize and claim that A NEST is always a better teacher."

Along the same lines, when students were asked whether they can learn English from a NEST just as well as they can from a NNEST (statement 16), nearly half the students agreed (with 12.8% strongly), 33.8% did not agree (with 9.4% strongly), and 20.6% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Student 11 offered his view based on his experience, "I've been taught by both NESTs and NNESTs and I have realized a lot of differences in their teaching styles, however, this does not mean that as a student I learn better from a NEST. In fact I learn from both. I feel they are complementary. They both have advantages and disadvantages."

With regard to the area of grammar, this research emphasized the results of previous studies that grammar is NNESTs' "favorite hunting range" (Medgyes, 1992). It was realized that the vast majority of students do not perceive the NEST to be a better grammar teacher. Only 16.7% of the students responded that they strongly agree (12.8% strongly) that a NEST helps students develop better grammatical skills (see Table 5.2). This is supported by student number 14 who stated, "I believe my Lebanese teacher took pains to learn English. It is not her first language, so she must have put a lot of effort and spent a lot of time to learn its grammatical rules." Student number 12 said, "My NEST might be better in teaching other skills, but because English is her

first language, I don't think she had exerted any effort to learn its grammar and thus she doesn't know enough grammatical rules."

Research in this field has shown that NNESTs have better command of grammatical rules than NESTs (Medgyes, 1994) because they had gone through the process of learning English, its rules, structure and methods (Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Barrat & Kontra, 2000; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Benke & Medgyes, 2005). Many native speakers of a language may be less able to explain "grammatical insights systematically (Paikiday, 1985, p: 29).

With regard to vocabulary development, there was a strong view that NESTs were less able to help their students learn more vocabulary items. 56.1% of the student participants disagreed (18.9% strongly) with statement 8 whereas a considerable number of students 29 (16.1%) seemed to neither agree nor disagree with it. Student interview-participant number 3 stated, "I believe my NNEST is a rich source of vocabulary. I never asked him a word that he did not know its meaning. Not only that, but he can explain it to me in Arabic which makes it much easier for me to understand." Student number 11 said, "Because our NNEST knows Arabic, we learn more vocabulary items from her than we do from our NEST."

In previous findings of Liang (2002), Mahboob (2004), and Mussou and Braine (2006), students held mainly positive attitudes towards the NESTs in the area of vocabulary. Medgyes, (1994) and Cheung's (2002) students perceived the NESTs to be better at teaching vocabulary because they are known to have a larger reservoir of vocabulary of English being their mother tongue. The

English language is estimated to have over 400,000 words. It is something that cannot be completely mastered. However, native speakers have a sense that can often help them know if a word used by a student is right or not. On the other hand, NNESTs frequently experienced problems with certain types of vocabulary (Arva and Medgyes, 2000, p. 261). This however, did not seem to be the case in the Lebanese context. The results of this study show that with regard to vocabulary development, students' perceptions of their teachers in the Lebanese context are in favor of NNESTs.

With regard to the area of writing skills, a large number of students 78 (43.3%) strongly disagreed that they will become better writers when they are taught by a NEST (statement 13). Only a small number of students 19 (10.6%) responded that they strongly agree with this statement (Table 5.2). Student number 12 stated, "My NEST expects a lot from me in writing. He doesn't take it step by step like my NNEST does. She is more tolerant of my errors. She guides me better and always realizes my mother tongue interference...My NEST expects me to write like a native American very quickly and this is frustrating for me."

On the other hand, results have shown that NESTs were perceived as being more overall proficient in teaching oral skills. Results revealed that the vast majority of students 72.2 % agreed (29.4% strongly) that a NEST helps them improve their listening skills (Table 5.2). Also, 63.4% of the students agreed (25.6% strongly) that their pronunciation will improve better when they are taught by a NEST. Furthermore, results have shown that students perceive their NESTs at an advantage in the area of speaking (statement 12). More than

half the student participants 57.2% agreed (33.3% strongly) that they will become more fluent speakers of English when they are taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST. Student number 13 summed it up saying, “There is no doubt that my NEST speaks better English than my NNEST. He pronounces the words correctly because he is American. This doesn’t mean that he teaches English better but we benefit from him a lot in our listening and speaking skills.”

In previous literature, the main advantage of NESTs is known to be in their superior communicative competence “since it is their mother tongue and they can thus use it with greater spontaneity and naturalness” (Madrid and Canado, 2004; p. 128). NNESTs may experience problems in pronunciation and colloquial expressions (Arva and Medgyes, 2000: 261). Furthermore, students in the studies of Medgyes (1994, 2001), Sung (2010), and Mahboob (2004), believe that NESTs’ pronunciation is more accurate.

With regard to culture, previous literature has always given the NEST the privilege of being a “rich source of cultural information” (Arva and Medgyes, 2000; p. 365). However, in this research, the views of students were surprisingly equally divided. 42.8 % of the students agreed with statement 14 (22.2% strongly), 41.1% of them disagreed with it (19.4% strongly), and 29 (16.1%) of the students neither agreed nor disagreed with it. Student number 10 claimed, “No one can teach a culture better than a native speaker who was born and raised in that culture.” Student number 13 disagrees claiming, “You don’t have to be born in a certain country to know its culture. The world has turned into a small village and you can learn about any culture online or through books.”

Allwright and Bailey (1991) argue that learning a new language involves the learning of a new culture because language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next (Emmitt & Pollock 1997). Consequently, teachers of a language are also teachers of culture (Byram, 1989). Having been born in a native English speaking country and having lived in that country for quite a long time, NESTs have acquired certain aspects of their own culture that cannot be learned by NNESTs and thus they are more equipped to teach these cultural aspects to their students.

5.2.3 Strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

The data analysis of the third section on the questionnaire, strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs, revealed some data that mainly supported previous literature (Appendix B). Students' responses showed that students perceive the NNESTs as more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to the needs of students, better teaching models, and more knowledgeable of the students' culture. On the other hand, students perceived NESTs as having higher self-confidence and as more competent in using the English language.

TABLE 5.3

Students' responses to "Perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 17- A NEST helps his/her students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than a NNEST | 38 (21.1%) | 37 (20.6%) | 10 (5.6%) | 42 (23.3%) | 53 (29.4%) |
| 18- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language. | 10 (5.6%) | 26 (14.4%) | 13 (7.2%) | 78 (43.3%) | 53 (29.4%) |
| 19- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language shows more empathy to the needs of his or her students in learning the English language. | 14 (7.8%) | 27 (15%) | 11 (6.1%) | 68(37.8%) | 60 (33.3%) |
| 20- A NNEST provides a better learner model to his/her students than a NEST does. | 21 (11.7%) | 23 (12.8%) | 12 (6.7%) | 51 (28.3%) | 73 (40.6%) |
| 21- The NEST has higher self-confidence using the English language than a NNEST. | 11 (6.1%) | 27 (15%) | 23 (12.8%) | 55 (30.6%) | 64 (35.6%) |
| 22- The accent of the NEST makes him/her a better teacher than the NNEST. | 29 (16.1%) | 37 (20.6%) | 17(9.4%) | 65 (36.1%) | 32 (17.8%) |
| 23- The NNEST who speaks the students' first language (L1) is more knowledgeable about the students' culture than NEST. | 5 (2.8%) | 13 (7.2%) | 7 (3.9%) | 89 (49.4%) | 66 (36.7%) |
| 24- The NEST is more competent in using the English language than a NNEST, | 27 (15%) | 39 (21.7%) | 21 (11.7%) | 22 (12.2%) | 71 (39.4%) |
| 25- A NNEST can provide students with more information about the English language. | 28 (15.6%) | 43 (23.9%) | 17 (9.4%) | 65 (36.1%) | 27 (15%) |

Results showed that from students' perspectives, predicting students' difficulties was one of the most important points of strengths of NNESTs (statement 18). Most of the students 72.7% agreed (29.4% strongly) that a NNEST is more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language (Table 5.3). NESTs' lack of Arabic, the mother tongue of the

majority of the students, influenced their ability to realize the difficulties that students pass through in learning English. Most of the students' interview responses supported these results. Student number 2 emphasized, "My Lebanese teacher learned the English language at one point in time and of course he knows how we [students] think because at many times we tend to translate to English from our Arabic tongue." Student interview-participant number 5 claimed, "It is much better to have a teacher who speaks Arabic. When you have a problem, he can explain it to you in Arabic."

With regard to showing more empathy to the needs of students (statement 19), the vast majority of students (71.1%) agreed (33.3% strongly) that their NNESTs show more empathy to their needs in learning the English language than their NESTs (Table 5.3). The first student who participated in the interview put it clearly saying, "I give more credit to my Lebanese teacher who, in my opinion, passed through the same stages of learning the English language as I am currently doing now. This gives him an advantage over any NEST because he is more aware of our [students] areas of difficulties which he had already passed through before." Student number 13 added, "Having acquired the language without any effort exerted, a NEST does not empathize with us as students. He doesn't know how it feels and what we pass through while learning a second language."

These results are consistent with previous literature. NNESTs are considered more empathetic than NESTs because NESTs have acquired the language rather than learned it (Medgyes, 1994). NNESTs have developed awareness towards the different stages and accompanying problems to

language learning. Thus they are better equipped to prevent or deal with their students' learning difficulties.

With regard to providing a better learner model to students (statement 20), the results of this study were consistent with previous literature. The vast majority 73 (40.6%) strongly agreed that a NNEST provides a better learner model than a NEST. Only 21 (11.7%) strongly disagreed with this claim. The reason is as Krashen (1981) puts it, "Only non-NESTs can be set as proper learner models since they *learned* English after they acquired their native language, unlike NESTs who *acquired* English as their native language." Student interview-participant number 7 emphasized these results stating, "I am always surprised how American or Canadian teachers come to Lebanon or to any other Arab country and stay in it for more than ten years without learning Arabic, yet they want to teach us [students] a second language. How can they be good models for me?" Also, student number 11 stated, "NESTs acquired the language while the NNESTs learned it. If they can do it why can't I?"

In the area of culture, the vast majority of the student participants (86.1%) agreed (36.7% of them strongly) with statement 23 that a NNEST who speaks the students' first language (L1) is more knowledgeable of students' culture. Student interview number 4 stated in the interview, "My Lebanese teacher knows how we [students] think and thus he knows how to deal with us accordingly."

The relationship between language and culture is deeply rooted. Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Hantrais

(1989) puts forth the idea that culture is the beliefs and practices governing the life of a society for which a particular language is the vehicle of expression. Behaviors form the basis of different cultures (Brooks, 1986) and thus the NNESTs who share the students' language are more capable of understanding the way their students think or behave.

When it comes to self-confidence and to competency using the English language, students perceived their NESTs at an advantage over NNESTs. With regard to self-confidence, 64 (35.6%) of the students responded with "strongly agree" and 55 (30.6%) with "agree" that a NEST has higher self-confidence in using the English language than a NNEST does. These results were emphasized by the responses of the students to the interview questions. Student number one stated, "When it comes to oral skills, I believe that the NNEST is less confident than the NEST. This is normal because a NEST of English will be speaking his own mother tongue and thus he will pronounce English better and speak it spontaneously without any effort and this will definitely boost his self confidence." This is supported by literature and research. NNESTs' lack of proficiency in oral skills reflects badly on their image and thus makes them less confident (see Samimy and Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Amin, 1997; Sung, 2010).

When students were asked whether they perceive a NEST as more competent using the English language than a NNEST (statement 24), 71 (39.4%) of them replied that they strongly agree and a considerable number of students 21 (11.7%) replied with "neither agree nor disagree". Student number 3 stated, "My NEST speaks the real English. No matter how hard my NNEST

tries, English is not his mother tongue and it will always sound as an imitation of the real.”

Medgyes (2001) argues that the primary advantage attributed to NESTs lies in their superior linguistic competence of the L2. In his opinion, “their superiority was found particularly spectacular in their ability to use the language spontaneously and in the most diverse communicative situations” (p. 434). Madrid and Canado (2004) stated that NNESTs usually “display a poorer competence, acquired through study and effort, which disallows spontaneity. In addition, they normally experienced problems with pronunciation” (p.128). Along the same lines, Medgyes (1992) claims that “for all their efforts, non-native speakers can never achieve a native speaker’s competence...A select few come close to native speaker competence but sooner or later they are halted by a glass wall” (p. 342). Perhaps the reason why non-natives speaking teachers cannot turn into native speakers lies in the fact that their use of English is but an imitation of some form of native use (Medgyes, 1992, p. 343) and because their linguistic competence is “very much influenced by textbook language” (Madrid and Canado, 2004). It is worth mentioning that this area is very controversial and it is partly related to the labels *NEST* and *NNEST* themselves and partly to the current views of what makes a good language communicator.

With regard to who gives more positive attitudes to students (statement 17), more than half the student participants (52.7%) agreed (29.4% strongly) that NESTs help students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than NNESTs do (Table 5.3). Student number 10 put it clearly, “My

NEST is more fun to deal with. He is more casual and makes friends with us [students]. He keeps motivating us and telling us that English is an easy language and that we can learn it if we put some effort.”

5.2.4 Behavior and responsibility

When student participants were asked about their perceptions about their NESTs and NNESTs’ classroom behavior and responsibility (Appendix B), data analysis revealed that their responses were mainly consistent with previous literature. Their responses showed that they perceive the NNESTs as teachers who are more exam-oriented and who prepare their lessons more carefully than the NESTs. On the other hand, the NESTs were perceived by their students as teachers who vary their use of materials in class unlike the NNESTs who abide by the printed word.

Table 5.4

Students’ responses to “Perceptions about classroom behavior and responsibility”

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 26- A NEST prepares his or her lesson more carefully than a NNEST does. | 51 (28.13%) | 63 (35%) | 11 (6.1%) | 29 (16.1%) | 26 (14.4%) |
| 27- A NEST is a better teacher than a NNEST because he does not use the students’ first language in class. | 27 (15%) | 52 (28.9%) | 19 (10.6%) | 65 (36.1%) | 17 (9.4%) |
| 28- A NEST is more strict in class than a NNEST. | 39 (21.7%) | 44 (24.4%) | 5 (2.8%) | 61(33.9%) | 31 (17.2%) |
| 29- A NEST uses a variety of materials in the classroom more than a NNEST does. | 11 (6.1%) | 21 (11.7%) | 18 (10%) | 89 (49.4%) | 41 (22.8%) |
| 30- A NNEST is more exam-oriented than a NEST. | 12 (6.7%) | 23 (12.8%) | 22 (12.2%) | 84 (46.7%) | 39 (21.7%) |

When student participants were asked about their perceptions of whether a NEST prepares his lesson more carefully than a NNEST does (statement 26), more than half the student participants 63.3% disagreed (28.3% strongly) (Table 5.4). Student number 5 stated, “My Canadian teacher is very casual. Most of the times, she comes to class with a CD player and some handouts. She never carries books. My Lebanese teacher is more formal and he covers the book chapter by chapter. He never skips an exercise in the workbook. He is more consistent and we know exactly what is expected of us to study.”

Based on the responses of some students who took the interview, NNESTs might be perceived as better prepared for their lessons because they follow the book and are very formal in their way of teaching while NESTs are perceived as less prepared because they give more handouts and are more casual. These perceptions might be related to culture and to the traditional image that these students have for their teachers.

With regard to the area of exam-orientation (statement 30), there was a strong view that NNESTs are more oriented towards preparing their students for exams. 68.4% of the students agreed (21.7% strongly) that a NNEST is more exam-oriented than a NEST. 12.2% of the students neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Table 5.4). Student number 9 said, “My Lebanese teacher is traditional. All he cares about is for us to pass the exam. My previous NEST used to play games with us on the computer. We loved it more and we learned from it a lot as well.”

Cheung and Braine (2007) stated, that Local NNS teachers have long been criticized for their over-emphasizing the two public examinations in their day-today-lesson (p. 269). Thus, in their study, exam-oriented teaching approach was considered a shortcoming. This might be true in the sense that “examinations distort students’ motivation and learning by over-emphasizing the importance of scores as outcomes and measures of students’ abilities” (Paris, 1995). Exams also can redefine students’ goal for learning in counterproductive ways that make the outcome more important than the learning as inquiry, reflection, and process. However, exam-oriented teaching approach might be considered an advantage instead of a disadvantage. Since the end goal is to excel during the examination, this will give a sense of direction for the students. They will be more focused in their studies and this will make teaching much easier for teachers. Student number 7 emphasized this saying, “I prefer my NNEST’s way of teaching. We know what is expected of us and we utilize our time in class for this purpose.” Student number 11 stated, “I want good grades on my exams. I don’t want to suffer later to find a job.”

When students were asked whether NESTs vary their use of materials in the classroom more than the NNESTs do (statement 29), 72.2% of them agreed (22.8% strongly). It is worth noting that 18 (10%) of these students neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Interview responses revealed that NNESTs resort to the book more than NESTs. Student interview-participant number 10 noted, “NNESTs consider English as a university subject so they are more concerned with the printed word and formal registers.” On the other hand, interview questions revealed that from students’ perspective,

NESTs consider English as an integrated means of communication in which students should be trained, using all media and the different learning skills, to express themselves. Medgyes (1992) states that NNESTs avoid using alternative sources to teach pronunciation such as radio, video, or cassette recorder. The reason is that they try to hide their deficiencies, such as their foreign accent, from their students. It is a way to save face in the classroom. Student interview-participant number 12 commented, "Arab teachers always give us worksheets to do or let us write a composition and then focus on grammatical mistakes... It is boring and very traditional. My NEST varies his materials. He uses the Smartboard, puts English songs for us, or makes us watch movies." Moreover, students perceived that their NESTs focus more on trying to build an English-speaking environment and on developing their listening skills. Student interview-participant number 9 said, "I can learn a lot from games...When I was singing the "karaoke" songs, I was improving both my reading and my listening skills and at the same time enjoying it."

In summary, this research question investigated students' perceptions of their NESTs and NNESTs in regard to the definition of labels, overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, their strengths and weaknesses, and their classroom behaviour and responsibility. In the Lebanese context, student participants of this research perceived birthplace, accent, and the place teachers grew up as the most crucial factors that determine whether a teacher is defined as native or non-native. Colour of skin was not perceived by students as an important factor in determining nativeness. Students also perceived NNESTs as more helpful in developing their grammatical skills, vocabulary skills and writing skills and the NESTs as more helpful in developing their oral

skills such as pronunciation, fluency and listening skills. Also, students perceived the NNESTs as more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to the needs of students, better teaching models, and more knowledgeable of the students' culture. They perceived the NESTs as having higher self-confidence and as more competent in using the English language. Furthermore, their responses showed that they perceive the NNESTs as more exam-oriented who prepare their lessons more carefully than the NESTs. On the other hand, the NESTs were perceived by their students as teachers who vary their use of materials in class unlike the NNESTs who abide by the printed word.

5.3 Question 2: What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?

In order to address the second research question of this study, I will use questionnaire data collected from thirty-one teachers (twenty-two NNESTs and nine NESTs). I will also use interview data collected from fifteen teachers (ten NNESTs and five NESTs).

5.3.1 Definition of labels

Table 5.5

Teachers' responses to "Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she has a white color of skin. | 4 (12.9%) | 6 (19.4%) | 2 (6.5%) | 8 (25.8%) | 11 (35.5%) |
| 2- I can categorize my teacher as a native or a non-native English speaker of English based on his or her accent. | 3 (9.7%) | 5 (16.1%) | 3 (9.7%) | 8 (25.8%) | 12 (38.7%) |
| 3- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was born in an English speaking country. | 4 (12.9%) | 7 (22.6%) | 7 (22.6%) | 6 (19.4%) | 7 (22.6%) |
| 4- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she grew up in an English speaking country. | 2 (6.5%) | 6 (19.4%) | 5 (16.1%) | 9 (29%) | 9 (29%) |
| 5- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she can produce spontaneous discourse in English. | 4 (12.9%) | 7 (22.6%) | 2 (6.5%) | 8 (25.8%) | 10 (32.3%) |
| 6- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was raised with native speaking parents. | 5 (16.1%) | 4 (12.9%) | 6 (19.4%) | 9 (29%) | 7 (22.6%) |

When teacher participants were asked about their perceptions of the definition of NESTs and NNESTs (Appendix A), it was realized that they perceived the teacher's color of skin, accent, spontaneity, the place where the teacher grew up, and whether he or she was raised with native speaking parents as relevant factors that determine a teacher's nativeness. Table 5.5 above illustrates details of teachers' responses to the first section of the teacher questionnaire.

The majority of the teachers responded that accent and color of skin are the most important indicators of a teacher's nativeness with 64.5% and 61.3% respectively. In regard to accent, 64.5% of the teachers agreed (38.7% strongly) that accent is the primary factor that defines the nativeness of a teacher. (Table 5.5). In agreement with the results of this research, Medgyes (2001, p.434) states, "In no area of English-language proficiency can they [NNESTs] emulate NESTs." NEST number 4 stated, "It is easy to tell who is native and who is not. NNESTs always have accent no matter how hard they try to hide it." NNEST number 7 agreed with this claim saying, "We [NNESTs] try hard to sound like native speakers and we try to hide that we are non-natives, but usually it doesn't work."

As for the color of skin, 61.3% of the teachers agreed (35.5% strongly) that a teacher's white color of skin is an indicator of a teacher's nativeness. This is consistent with some of the previous research studies such as those of Amin (1997, 2004), Musso (2000), and Mahboob (2003). NNEST number 6 commented, "Sadly, people tend to look at any white teacher as a native English speaking teacher without trying to trace his or her origin. This teacher

might be a non-native English speaker from Poland for example or even Russia; however, when it comes to a teacher with a darker skin, people unconsciously think of him as a non-native and trace his origin back to Asia or Africa.”

Data also revealed that from teachers’ perspective, other factors such as growing up in an English speaking country, producing spontaneous discourse in English, or being raised with native speaking parents are also important factors that determine the nativeness of a teacher. For example, 58% of the teachers agreed (29% of them strongly) that a teacher has to grow up in an English speaking country to be considered a native speaker of English, although for some teachers (16.1% in this case) growing up in a certain country alone is not enough (Table 5.5). This was also confirmed in the interview responses where NNEST number 3 contemplated, “How can a teacher be a native speaker of English if he did not grow up in an English speaking country?” Then she added, “There are other factors included as well in defining a NEST like the place of birth of the teacher.”

Furthermore, when it comes to producing spontaneous discourse in English as a factor that determines nativeness, 58.1% of the teachers agreed (32.3% strongly) that spontaneity is a crucial factor that determines whether a teacher is native or non-native. Medgyes (2001) confirmed, “Their [NESTs] superiority was found particularly spectacular in their ability to use the language spontaneously and in the most diverse communicative situations” (p. 434). Also, Madrid and Canado (2004, p. 128) stated that NESTs can use English with greater spontaneity and naturalness because it is their mother tongue. In

contrast, Arva and Medgyes (2000, p. 361) reported that NNESTs have been accused of having faulty command of English because it is a learnt language and it doesn't come spontaneously. NNEST number 9 put it clearly saying, "I consider myself a proficient English language teacher with near-native speaking abilities, but to be fair to the NESTs, I have to admit that no matter how hard I try, at many instances I have to stop and think of the word in Arabic before I say it in English. It is their [NESTs] mother tongue and it is only normal for them to speak it more spontaneously."

Moreover, 51.6% of the teachers agreed (22.6% strongly) that a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was raised with native speaking parents (statement 6). 19.4% of the teachers responded that they neither agree nor disagree with this statement. Teacher number 7 stated, "I don't think a person was born in the UK but was raised with another family in Hong Kong can be considered a native English speaker just because he holds the English passport." Thus, it seems that for some teachers, the element of birth alone is not enough to determine the nativeness of a teacher. This was also supported by the results of statement 3. When teachers were asked whether a teacher's nativeness is determined by birthplace, 42% of them agreed (22.6% strongly) while 35.5% disagreed (12.9% strongly).

These results reveal that unlike students, teachers seem to be more aware that the element of birth alone is not enough to indicate whether an individual is considered native or non-native (see Medgyes, 1994; Stern, 1983; Crystal, 1985; Richard et al, 1985; Davies, 1991). This view is reflected in teacher interviews, for example NNEST number 5 stated, "I see nativeness as

an accumulation of factors which when combined make a teacher labeled a native speaker. For example, if we take the scenario of a person who was born in a certain country but had to leave it as a child to grow up in another place where English is not the first language then the issue of nativeness will be debatable.”

In agreement with the results of this research, Philipson (1992) and Medgyes (1994) did not perceive birth as an essential element that determines the nativeness of a teacher. Philipson believes that “teachers are made rather than born” and Medgyes (1994) defines a NEST as someone who was born in an English speaking country provided that he or she must have acquired English during childhood in an English speaking family or environment.

5.3.2 Overall learning

Regarding the overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs (Appendix A), data revealed that teacher participants gave most of the credit to the NEST. Whereas NNESTs were perceived as better teachers of grammar, NESTs were perceived as more helpful in developing students’ oral skills, such as pronunciation, listening and fluency. Table 5.6 below illustrates details of teachers’ responses to the second section of the teacher questionnaire.

Table 5.6

Teachers' responses to "Perceptions about the overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 7- A student will develop better grammatical skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 10 (32.3%) | 13 (41.9%) | 2 (6.5%) | 3 (9.7%) | 3 (9.7%) |
| 8- A student will learn more vocabulary words when he or she is taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 8 (25.8%) | 7 (22.6%) | 2 (6.5%) | 6 (19.4%) | 8 (25.8%) |
| 9- A student's pronunciation will improve better when he or she is taught by a NEST than when am taught by a NNEST. | 2 (6.5%) | 4 (12.9%) | 3 (9.7%) | 8 (25.8%) | 14 (54.8%) |
| 10- A student's listening skills will improve better when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST. | 2 (6.5%) | 4 (12.9%) | 3 (9.7%) | 7 (22.6%) | 15 (48.4%) |
| 11- A student will develop better reading skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST. | 6 (19.4%) | 8 (25.8%) | 3 (9.7%) | 6 (19.4%) | 8 (25.8%) |
| 12- A student will become a more fluent speaker when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST. | 3 (9.7%) | 2 (6.5%) | 5 (16.1%) | 3 (9.7%) | 18 (58.1%) |
| 13- A student will become a better writer of English I when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST. | 8 (25.8%) | 6 (19.4%) | 4 (12.9%) | 5 (16.1%) | 8 (25.8%) |
| 14- A student will learn better about different cultures when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST. | 7 (22.6%) | 6 (19.4%) | 5 (16.1%) | 6 (19.4%) | 7 (22.6%) |
| 15- In my opinion, native English speakers make the best English language teachers. | 8 (25.8%) | 5 (16.1%) | 5 (16.1%) | 7 (22.6%) | 6 (19.4%) |
| 16- In my opinion, a student can learn English just as well from a NEST as he or she can from a NNESTs. | 8 (25.8%) | 6 (19.4%) | 4 (12.9%) | 7 (22.6%) | 6 (19.4%) |

When teachers were asked to give their opinions on whether a NEST makes the best English language teacher (statement 15), 41.9% of the teachers disagreed (25.8% strongly) that a NEST makes the best English language teacher. A NNEST said, "The native speaking teacher being the best

teacher of English is a fallacy. NNESTs have proved to be as good and in certain areas even better.” When asked whether a student can learn English from a NEST just as well as he or she can from a NNEST (statement 16), the results were nearly equal. 45.2% of the teachers disagreed (25.8% strongly) whereas 42% of them agreed (19.4% strongly). Another NNEST said, “Whereas a student might learn more communication skills from a NEST, he will definitely learn more grammar from a NNEST.”

With regard to grammar, teachers like their students seemed to perceive the NNESTs as better teachers of grammar. 74.2% of the participant teachers disagreed (32.3% of them strongly) that students will develop better grammatical skills when they are taught by a NEST (Table 5.6). These results support the results of previous literature (see Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Mahboob *et al.*, 2001, 2004; Arva & Medgyes, 2000, 2001; Barrat & Kontra, 2000; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Moussou, 2006) and were also reflected in the response of the third NEST who said, “Whenever I am asked about a certain grammatical rule, I tell my students that I will get back to them tomorrow. I seek help from a non-native English teacher because they are more proficient in this area.” This was also emphasized by teacher number 7 who stated, “NESTs don’t often teach their students grammatical rules and structure because they don’t know them themselves. Students expect rules in grammar, but at many instances NNESTs answer that there is no rule. They say it is like this because it sounds correct.”

On the other hand, results have shown that NESTs were perceived by teacher participants as more overall proficient in teaching oral skills. Results revealed that 80.6% of the teachers agreed (54.8% strongly) that students' pronunciation will improve better when they are taught by a NEST. Along the same lines, 71% of the teachers agreed (48.4% strongly) that students' listening skills will improve better when they are taught by a NEST. Also, 67.8% of the teacher participants agreed (58.1% strongly) that NESTs help students better than NNETs to become more fluent speakers of English. In previous literature, the teaching of oral skills was considered the forte of NESTs. Previous research mainly gave credit to the superiority of NESTs in their communicative competence. Madrid and Canado (2004) believe that NESTs can use English spontaneously and naturally. Medgyes (1994, 2001), Sung (2010), and Mahboob (2004), believe that NESTs' pronunciation is more accurate than NNETs' pronunciation. NNETs according to Arva and Medgyes (2000) may have problems in their pronunciation.

These results were supported by data from teachers' semi-structured interviews. The third NNET interview-participant stated, "We [NNETs] have to be fair and admit that NESTs excel better than we do in oral skills. It is their language and they use it without any effort which reflects positively on the student." NNET number ten adds, "I believe that it's a matter of input and output. The NEST provides the correct input which helps his or her students produce the correct output." The third NEST emphasized, "Listening and pronunciation are very closely related. For a student to pronounce correctly, he or she has to listen to correct English. When students have a NEST in class, they are forced to practice their listening skills. They have no other choice."

This same NEST later added, “Fluency in speaking is also related to listening. It’s a matter of practice and when students have a NEST in class, they practice their speaking skills much more.”

Previous research has mainly given the NESTs the advantage of being a better source of cultural information. Arva and Medgyes (2000) believe that NESTs have a big reservoir of cultural knowledge. The results of this research, however, were surprising. Teachers’ responses were divided equally. 42% of the teachers agreed with statement 14 (22.6% strongly) 42% of them disagreed (22.6% strongly), and (16.1%) of the teachers neither agreed nor disagreed with it. This was reflected in the interview responses where NNEST number 7 stated that a teacher can learn about any culture through media. NEST number 9 disagreed saying, “Living the culture is completely different that learning about it.”

5.3.3 Strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

Regarding the third section on the questionnaire (Appendix A), results revealed favorable attitudes towards the NNETs. Teacher participants stated that NNESTs are more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to the needs of students, and more knowledgeable of the students’ culture. Also, data revealed that NESTs were perceived as more competent in using the English language than NNESTs. However, they were not perceived to have higher self-confidence and were not privileged on the basis of their native English accent.

Table 5.7

Teachers' responses to "Perceptions about the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs"

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 17- A NEST helps his/her students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than a NNEST | 6 (19.3%) | 7 (22.6%) | 8 (25.8%) | 6 (19.3%) | 4 (12.9%) |
| 18- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language. | 2 (6.4%) | 3 (9.6%) | 4 (12.9%) | 8 (25.8%) | 14 (45.1%) |
| 19- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language shows more empathy to the needs of his or her students in learning the English language. | 3 (9.7%) | 5 (16.1%) | 4 (12.9%) | 6 (19.4%) | 13 (41.9%) |
| 20- A NNEST provides a better learner model to his/her students than a NEST does. | 5 (16.1%) | 7 (22.6%) | 4 (12.9%) | 9 (29%) | 6 (19.4%) |
| 21- The NEST has higher self-confidence using the English language than a NNEST. | 12 (38.7%) | 5 (16.1%) | 5 (16.1%) | 5 (16.1%) | 4 (12.9%) |
| 22- The accent of the NEST makes him/her a better teacher than the NNEST. | 14 (45.2%) | 9 (29%) | 2 (6.5%) | 4 (12.9%) | 2 (6.5%) |
| 23- The NNEST who speaks the students' first language (L1) is more knowledgeable about the students' culture than NEST. | 1 (3.2%) | 5 (16.1%) | 2 (6.5%) | 7 (22.6%) | 16 (51.6%) |
| 24- The NEST is more competent in using the English language than a NNEST, | 3 (9.7%) | 5 (16.1%) | 3(9.6%) | 5 (16.1%) | 15 (48.4%) |
| 25- A NNEST can provide students with more information about the English language. | 5 (16.1%) | 6 (19.4%) | 8 (25.8%) | 6 (19.4%) | 6 (19.4%) |

Results of this research revealed that from the teachers' perspective the NNESTs' ability to predict the difficulties that students might face in their learning of the English language is considered a very important point of strength for these teachers (statement 18). The majority of the teacher participants in this research (70.9%) agreed (45.1% of them strongly) that a NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting

students' difficulties in learning the English language (Table 5.7). Previous research has shown that NNESTs are better prepared to deal with the difficulties that students may encounter in their learning of the English language (Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001). Medgyes (1992), for example, asserts that NNESTs "are more able to anticipate language difficulties" (p.347). Also, McNeill (2005) in his research in Hong Kong concluded that teachers who share their students' L1 "have a distinct advantage in knowing where their students' language difficulties lie" (p. 116). In her response to the semi-structured interview questions, the second NEST stated, "It is difficult to know how they [students] think sometimes. It doesn't make sense to me." The fourth NNEST confirmed, "Having passed through the same experience as my students in learning English, I am now more sensitized to the difficulties that face them."

Regarding empathy to the needs of students (statement 19), the results revealed that the vast majority of teacher participants (61.3% agreed (41.9% of them strongly) that NNESTs show more empathy to the needs of students in learning the English language than their NESTs (Table 5.7). NESTs, in Arva and Medgyes (2000), revealed that they realize their own shortcoming in being unable to appreciate the process that their students are going through. Their results corroborate with those obtained by Barratt & Kontra (2000) who claim that NESTs are often unable to empathize with students going through the learning process. According to Arva & Medgyes (2000), NNESTs can empathize with their students' learning difficulties and understand what it is to be homesick and to experience cultural shock in ESL contexts. One of their participants stated, "Being a native speaker, it is difficult for you to appreciate

what the students are going through when they are learning English.” (Arva and Medgyes 2000, p. 362). Similarly, in this study, the fourth NNEST stated, “Most of the times I can’t figure out how my students feel while learning English because I didn’t learn it as a second language.” On the other hand, NNEST number 8 stated, “I can put myself in my students’ shoes when I prepare a lesson. Even when I ask a question in class, I can tell why they think this way and how they feel.”

When teachers were asked whether a NNEST who speaks the students’ first language is more knowledgeable of their culture (statement 23), 78.7% of them responded that they agree (51.6% of them strongly). Only 1 (3.2%) teacher responded that he strongly disagrees with this statement (Table 5.7). These teachers might have answered this way because of their awareness of the importance of language as an essential factor of culture. This is reflected in their interview responses. The second NNEST stated, “Speaking the students’ language means being familiar with all the aspects that this language carries with it.” The third NNEST professed, “Language and culture go hand in hand and because I don’t know Arabic, I can’t understand my students from within, or know how they think or why they react in a certain way.”

On the other hand, when teachers were asked whether NNESTs have higher self-confidence than NNESTs in using the English language, only 29% of these teachers agreed (12.9% strongly) with this statement and these results were surprising because they are not consistent with previous literature (see Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Seidlhofer, 1999). In an empirical study conducted on the self-perceptions of Austrian teachers,

Seidhofer (1999) found that “the majority of teachers were rather insecure than confident being NNESTs”. To support this, one of Llurda’s (2006) student participants noted, “I am absolutely positive that native teacher is more confident and can teach the language much better” (a 22 year-old female university learner, p. 207). Burns (2005) asserts that the discrimination in the hiring process against the NNESTs impacts negatively on their confidence (see also Filho, 2002). Other researchers argued that the NNESTs’ lack of self-confidence is due to their deficiency in oral skills such as pronunciation and speaking (see Asato, 2008; Kamhi Stein, Aagard, Ching, Paik & Sasser, 2004). This however does not seem to be the case of the teachers in the Lebanese context who seemed to perceive the NNESTs as teachers with high self-confidence. These teachers, who are mainly Lebanese in origin, have a crucial advantage which is their ability to use and understand their students’ first language in the classroom and this may be their source of confidence (see Seidholfer, 1999). This was summed up by NNEST number 9 who asserted, “NNESTs are usually classified as teachers of low self-confidence due to their deficiency in their oral skills, but one should not forget that they share the students’ first language and culture and they know exactly how students think. Add to this the rapport they develop with their students and the trust that their students put in them on the personal level.”

When teachers were asked whether NESTs’ accent makes them better teachers (statement 22), only 19.4% of them agreed (6.5% strongly). These results do not support previous research where foreign accent was found to be one of the disadvantages of being a nonnative speaker (Jenkins, 2005; Medgyes, 1994; Llurda, 2005). The fifth NEST stated in the interview, “I see my

accent as an advantage which helps me in finding a job and in the perceptions of others towards me.” The ninth NNEST professed, “Native accent gives the teacher a bigger chance in finding a job especially that it is demanded in many job advertisements, yet it is not an attribute that makes a NEST better than a NNEST.”

5.3.4 Behavior and responsibility

When participant teachers were asked about their NESTs and NNESTs’ classroom behavior and personality (Appendix A), their responses showed that they perceive the NESTs as teachers who prepare their lessons more carefully and NNESTs as stricter in class. It was surprising that NESTs were not perceived as better teachers on the basis of not using (L1) in class.

Table 5.8

Teachers’ responses to “Perceptions about classroom behavior and responsibility”

| Items | 1-Strongly Disagree | 2- Disagree | 3- Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4- Agree | 5- Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 26- A NEST prepares his or her lesson more carefully than a NNEST does. | 4 (12.9%) | 5 (16.1%) | 3 (9.7%) | 8 (25.8%) | 11 (35.5%) |
| 27- A NEST is a better teacher than a NNEST because he does not use the students’ first language in class. | 11 (35.5%) | 3 (9.7%) | 6 (19.4%) | 7 (22.6%) | 4 (12.9%) |
| 28- A NEST is more strict in class than a NNEST. | 8 (25.8%) | 10 (32.3%) | 4 (12.9%) | 6 (19.4%) | 3 (9.7%) |
| 29- A NEST uses a variety of materials in the classroom more than a NNEST does. | 6 (19.4%) | 7 (22.6%) | 5 (16.1%) | 6 (19.4%) | 7 (22.6%) |
| 30- A NNEST is more exam-oriented than a NEST. | 8 (25.8%) | 7 (22.6%) | 2 (6.5%) | 7 (22.6%) | 7 (22.6%) |

With regard to lesson preparation (statement 26), 61.3% of the teachers responded that they agree (35.5% strongly) that NESTs prepare their lessons more carefully than NNESTs do. These results do not corroborate with previous literature. Arva and Medgyes (2000) for example revealed that a NNEST prepares his or her lessons meticulously and more professionally and this was not the case with teachers' perceptions in this study. NNEST number 11 said, "I believe NESTs have many advantages, yet when it comes to lesson preparation, they don't usually exert enough time at home to prepare their lessons. They depend on their communication skills more."

Regarding who is stricter in class NESTs or NNESTs (statement 28), 58.1% of the teachers disagreed (25.8% strongly) that NESTs are stricter than their NNEST-counterparts in class. The results of this research study corroborated with the results of previous research. In their research, Arva and Medgyes (2000) concluded that "non-natives were found to be stricter teachers, possibly because they had an enhanced feeling of responsibility, as well as an awareness of being more restrained by school regulations and administrative tasks like giving marks." Along the same lines, Medgyes (1994) found that NNESTs perceived NESTs as more casual and less strict than NNESTs are in their teaching style. NNEST number 3 said, "Most NESTs are very casual. They care less about disciplining their classes. This informality in my opinion reflects unprofessionalism in teaching."

Also, when asked whether a NEST is a better teacher on the basis of not using the students L1 in class (statement 27), 45.2% of the teachers responded that they disagree with this statement (35.5% of them strongly). The issue of

using L1 in class has been debatable. The Direct Method of the early 20th century, the Audiolingual Method (1940's to 1960s) and Krashen's Natural Approach to language acquisition proposed that students learn their second language through massive amount of exposure to the language with limited time spent using L1. However, in recent years, focus has been shifting towards inclusion of L1 in the language classroom. Research has shown that the occasional use of L1 by both students and teachers increases both comprehension and learning of L2 (Cook, 2001; Tang, 2002; Wells, 1999). It seems that most of the participant teachers in this research are aware of these new methods of teaching and this is why they did not perceive not using the L1 in class as a privilege for the NESTs. NNEST number 8 said, "Using L1 should be used for clarifying purposes but should not be the first means of communication between the students and their teacher in the L2 classroom. However, it is not fair to prevent NNESTs from using their L1 which is an asset that facilitates student comprehension."

In summary, teachers perceived the teacher's color of skin, accent, spontaneity, the place where the teacher grew up, and whether he or she was raised with native speaking parents as relevant factors that determine a teacher's nativeness. Also, NNESTs were perceived as better teachers of grammar whereas NESTs were perceived as more helpful in developing students' oral skills, such as pronunciation, listening and fluency. Furthermore, NNESTs were viewed as more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to the needs of students, and more knowledgeable of the students' culture whereas NESTs were perceived as more competent in using the English language than NNESTs. Finally, NESTs

were perceived as teachers who prepare their lessons more carefully and NNESTs were perceived as being stricter in class than NESTs.

5.4 Question 3: Teachers' perceptions of themselves compared with students' perceptions of their teachers.

In order to identify the similarities and differences between students' and teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, questionnaire data were compared between these two groups in the areas of definition of labels, learning with NESTs and NNESTs, strengths and weaknesses, and classroom behavior and responsibility. The comparisons of the teachers' and students' perceptions did not depend solely on comparing the mean or the standard deviation because, statistically, this can be misleading. For more accurate results, the standard deviation is divided by the mean and then multiplied by 100 to give what is known as the coefficient of variation (C_V). The coefficient of variation is a precise and accurate statistic for comparing the degree of variation from one data series to another, even if the means are drastically different from each other. In this research, the lower the coefficient of variation is, the more importance the element measured yields.

5.4.1 Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.9

Coefficient of variation and rank of teachers' and students' responses to "Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs"

| Definition of Labels | Coefficient of variation (c_v) Teachers | Rank for teachers | Coefficient of variation (c_v) Students | Rank for students |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1- Skin Color | 42.0454546 | 3 | 49.05349794 | 5 |
| 2- Accent | 38.0434783 | 2 | 37.32954545 | 2 |
| 3- Birth place | 43.3227848 | 6 | 30.9798995 | 1 |
| 4- Growth | 36.2535211 | 1 | 39.42622951 | 3 |
| 5- Spontaneity | 43.216374 | 5 | 51.57894737 | 6 |
| 6- Raised up | 42.4012158 | 4 | 44.80519481 | 4 |

Regarding the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs, teachers and students share similar views in some areas and hold totally different views in others. As Table 5.9 clearly indicates, there was an agreement from both groups that accent was significant in determining a teacher's degree of nativeness, and this was rated in second place by both groups. This is in consistency with previous research. Momenian stated, "A native-like accent appeared as the most wanted paraphernalia both by students and teachers, with the latter being more after that" (2011; p: 2). Agreement was also considerable with regard to being raised with native parents, and spontaneity, though both of these were considered less important. There was less agreement, with regard to skin color and place of growing up, but the aspect which resulted in the most significant difference between teachers and students' views is the teacher's birthplace and is considered most important by students, but least important by teachers.

In this research, both student and teacher participants agreed that spontaneity is not an essential factor that determines nativeness and this item ranked fifth for teachers and sixth for students. However, these views were not consistent with those of the participants of Avra and Medgyes (1999), who believed that spontaneity is a privilege for the NESTs. They reported that for NNESTs, English does not come spontaneously and NNESTs have a faulty command of English because they learn the language and do not acquire it like their native English speaker counterparts do. Also, the results of this study were not consistent with previous literature when it comes to color of skin. Furthermore, with regard to the place of birth, teachers, unlike students, were not convinced that the element of birth alone is enough to determine whether a teacher is native or not and this is why they gave it a rank of 6 with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 43.32$). On the other hand, birth place was considered most important by students who gave it a rank of 1 with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 30.97$). Teachers' views are consistent with previous literature such as those of Medgyes (1994), Stern (1983), Crystal (1985), Richard et al (1985) and Davies (1991).

5.4.2 Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.10

Coefficient of variation and rank of teachers' and students' responses to "Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs"

| Overall learning | Coefficient of variation (c _v) Teachers | Rank for teachers | Coefficient of variation (c _v) students | Rank for students |
|------------------|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| 7- Grammar | 57.5336323 | 10 | 58.94009217 | 9 |
| 8- Vocabulary | 53.939394 | 9 | 46.7816092 | 6 |
| 9- Pronunciation | 33.333333 | 1 | 40.99415205 | 3 |
| 10-Listening | 33.375635 | 2 | 33.66576819 | 1 |
| 11-Reading | 49.86928 | 4 | 56.18867925 | 8 |
| 12-Speaking | 43.75 | 3 | 42.71137026 | 4 |
| 13-Writing | 53.232323 | 8 | 63.44036697 | 10 |
| 14-Culture | 50.2 | 5 | 47.66447368 | 7 |
| 15-NEST better | 51.156463 | 6 | 44.42906574 | 5 |
| 16-learn English | 52.172414 | 7 | 38.19047619 | 2 |

Regarding the overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, the table clearly shows that teachers and students agree that: a NEST is not necessarily a better teacher of English; a NEST is a better teacher of oral skills such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking; a NEST is not a better teacher of grammar, writing, or culture. At the same time, teachers and students hold different views about which of the two cohorts of teachers is better at teaching reading or whether a student can learn English from a NEST just as well as he or she can from a NNEST.

Both teachers and students shared similar views that NESTs are not better than NNESTs and this is consistent with previous literature (see Medgyes, 2001) although they do agree that NESTs have advantage over

NNESTs with regard to oral skills, namely pronunciation, listening, and speaking (presented in items 9, 10, and 12 in Table 5.10). Previous studies such as Medgyes (2001), Lasagabaster & Sierra (2002), Mahboob (2004), and Benke and Medgyes (2005) suggest that students prefer to be taught speaking and pronunciation by NESTs.

Furthermore, as clearly indicated in Table 5.10, both teacher and student participants shared similar views that a NEST is not a better teacher of grammar, writing, or culture (presented in items 7, 13, and 14 in Table 5.10). This is consistent with previous literature where grammar has been mentioned as being important in determining the characteristics of a NNEST (Medgyes, 1994; Tang, 1997; Llurda, 2006). It has been cited as the NNESTs' "favorite hunting range" (Medgyes, 1992) and constituting NNESTs' point of strength in comparison to NESTs.

However, the aspects that resulted in the most significant differences between teachers and students were *reading* and *learning English*. These are presented in items 11 and 16 in Table 5.10. Reading was rated 4 by teachers with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 49.86$) and 8 by students with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 56.18$). Learning English was rated 7 by teachers with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 52.17$) and 2 by students with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 38.19$). This shows that while students do not agree that NESTs are better teachers of English (Item 15), they strongly agree that they learn English better from them (item 16) and this means that their responses for items 15 and 16 are contradictory.

5.4.3 Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.11

Coefficient of variation and order of teachers' and students' responses to "Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs"

| Strengths and weaknesses | Coefficient of variation (c _v) teachers | Rank for teachers | Coefficient of variation (c _v) students | Rank for students |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| 17-Positive attitude | 46.443662 | 7 | 48.934169 | 9 |
| 18-Difficulties | 32.055838 | 2 | 31.35278515 | 2 |
| 19-Empathy | 38.668478 | 4 | 34.19786096 | 4 |
| 20-Better learner model | 44.9840256 | 6 | 37.6675603 | 5 |
| 21-Self-confidence | 59.677419 | 8 | 33.5828877 | 3 |
| 22-Accent | 62.572816 | 9 | 43.1661442 | 7 |
| 23-Students' culture | 31.042184 | 1 | 23.63414634 | 1 |
| 24-Competency | 38.567639 | 3 | 41.73076923 | 6 |
| 25-More information | 44.607843 | 5 | 43.37620579 | 8 |

Regarding the perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs, teachers and students also share similar views in some areas and hold different views in others. Table 5.11 clearly shows that both groups agree that the NNEST is more knowledgeable of students' culture, more capable of predicting students' difficulties, and more empathetic to the needs of students (these items were rated 1, 2 and 4 by both groups). Also, there was less

agreement with regard to learner model, positive attitude, accent, and competency. However, the aspects which resulted in the most significant difference between the views of teachers and students are related to confidence and to whether a NNEST can provide more information about English to their students.

Both teachers and students agreed that NNESTs' knowledge of the students' culture is their most important point of strength. This is represented in statement 23 and was rated first by both groups (Table 5.11). Medgyes (2001) argues that the NNEST "teaching in a monolingual class has far more background information about his or her students than even the most well-informed NEST" (p. 438). As for predicting student difficulties, which is presented in statement 18, it was perceived by both groups as the second most important point of strength for NNESTs (Table 5.11) and these findings are consistent with previous literature (see Medgyes, 1992; 2001; Mizuno, 2005; McNeil, 2005). Also, both teachers and students agreed that empathy to the needs of students, which is presented in statement 19, is a very important point of strength for NNESTs and this is why it was rated in the fourth place (Table 5.11).

On the other hand, it was realized that there was less agreement between the two groups on statements 17, 20, 22, and 24. For example, teachers and students agree less that NESTs develop more positive attitudes towards learning English. This is presented in item 17 and received a rank of 7 from teachers and a rank of 9 from students. These results do support previous literature who mainly gave credit to the NESTs in developing more positive

attitude towards learning the language (see Sahin, 2005). Statement 20, which states that a NNEST is a better learner model received a rank of 6 from teachers and a rank of 5 from students (Table 5.11). These results are not consistent with previous literature. It has been claimed that that NNESTs are the only ones that can be set as proper learner models because these teachers learned the English language after acquiring their first language, unlike the NESTs who acquired English as their native language (see Medgyes, 2001, p. 436). Along the same lines, teachers and students agreed with rates of 9 from teachers and 7 from students on statement 22. This means that both groups agreed that NESTs' accent does not necessarily make them better English language teachers. These results do not support previous literature where nonnative English language speakers were viewed as less advantaged on the basis of their foreign accent (Jenkins, 2005; Medgyes, 1994; Llorca, 2005).

With regard to competency using the English language, which is presented in statement 24, it was realized that teachers perceived the NEST to be more competent using English and gave statement 24 a rate of 3. Students gave statement 24 a rank of 6. This reveals that teachers and students view the NESTs as more competent than their NNEST counterparts with students showing a lower degree of agreement. These results are consistent with previous literature such as Medgyes (1992) who states that non-native speaker's competence is "limited" and that "only a reduced group can reach near-native speaker's competence" (p: 71).

On the other hand, it was realized that both teacher and student participants hold the most significant difference in their views with regard to items 21 and 25. The most considerable difference lies in item 21 where students seemed to view the NESTs as more confident than NNESTs, unlike the teachers who did not seem to view them as such. Item number 21 was rated 8 by teachers with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 59.67$) and 3 by students with a coefficient of variation ($c_v= 33.58$). This means students perceive “self confidence” as a very important point of strength for a NEST. Previous literature gave a great deal of importance to the factor of self-confidence in determining the strength of a NEST. Most of the previous studies (See Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Luk, 2001; Mussou, 2006; Ling & Braine, 2007) concluded that the NNESTs are at a disadvantage of being less self-confident than their native counterparts. Teachers of this research, however, did not seem to agree with this statement.

With regard to providing more information about English, which is presented in item 25, it was realized that there was significant difference between the responses of teachers and students. Whereas teachers gave item 25 a rank of 5, students gave it a rank of 8. This is indicated clearly in Table 5.11 and reveals that teachers agree to a certain extent that NNESTs provide more information about English while students do not agree. The responses of the teachers are inconsistent with previous literature such as Medgyes (2001) who states that NESTs are “less able to give their students relevant information about the target language” (p: 437).

5.4.4 Classroom behavior and responsibility

Table 5.12

Coefficient of variation and order of teachers' and students' responses to "Classroom behavior and responsibility"

| Behavior and responsibility | Coefficient of variation (c_v) teachers | Rank for teachers | Coefficient of variation (c_v) students | Rank for students |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 26-Lesson preparation | 41.042254 | 1 | 56.126482 | 5 |
| 27-First language | 55.671642 | 5 | 43.20945946 | 3 |
| 28-Strictness | 52.4705882 | 3 | 48.73754153 | 4 |
| 29-Variety of materials | 48.580858 | 2 | 30.35040431 | 1 |
| 30-Exam-oriented | 53.367347 | 4 | 31.64835165 | 2 |

Finally, with regard to the teacher's behavior and responsibility in the classroom, it was also clear that teachers and students share similar views in some areas and hold totally different views in others. Table 5.12 clearly indicates that there was agreement from both groups that NESTs vary their use of materials in classroom more than NNESTs do and this was rated in first place by students and in second place by teachers. Less agreement was also realized with regard to strictness in class and using the first language in class; however, the aspects which resulted in most significant difference between teachers and students' views are related to exam orientation and lesson preparation (Table 5.12).

Both teacher and student participants shared similar views that a NEST uses a variety of materials more than a NNEST does. This is presented in item 29 in Table 5.12 and was rated second by teachers and first by students. This

means that both teachers and students perceive the NESTs as teachers who vary their materials in the classroom and do not stick to the book like NNESTs do. This supports previous literature such as Arva and Medgyes (1999) whose student participants perceive their NESTs as improvisers who do not use books because they feel that books limit their work. Arva and Medgyes' (1999) student participants believe that unlike NESTs who vary their use of materials, NNESTs prepare their lessons very carefully and stick to the book (p. 363). As for item 27, it was ranked last by teachers and third by students. This reveals that teachers and students are perhaps aware that knowing the students' first language is an asset and they probably agree that current language teaching which has mostly tried to minimize the use of the first language in the classroom (Cook, 2001) should not be prevailing.

With respect to exam-orientation, statement 30, it was realized that teachers and students did not share the same views. Teachers gave this statement a rate of four whereas students gave it a rate of two (Table 5.12). This shows that teachers do not perceive a NNEST as more exam-oriented whereas students do. Finally, with regard to lesson preparation, statement 26, teachers and students did not share similar views. For teachers, this statement was rated first while for students it was rated fifth. This reveals that teachers agree that NESTs prepare their lessons more carefully than their NNEST counterparts whereas students do not agree that they do. Students' views are consistent with previous research. Arva and Medgyes (2000) claim that NESTs put less effort into preparing their lessons, and this might sometimes influence the quality of education whereas NNESTs prepare their lessons meticulously and more professionally.

To summarize, there was agreement from both groups with regard to accent as a significant factor in determining a teacher's degree of nativeness, with regard to being raised with native parents, and with regard to spontaneity. Both groups also agreed that a NEST is not necessarily a better teacher of English, a NEST is a better teacher of oral skills such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking, and a NEST is not a better teacher of grammar, writing, or culture. Also, both groups agree that the NNEST is more knowledgeable of students' culture, more capable of predicting students' difficulties, and more empathetic to the needs of students. Finally, there was agreement from both groups that NESTs vary their use of materials in classroom more than NNESTs do. There was less agreement between the two groups with regard to skin color, place of growing up, learner model, positive attitude, and accent. Less agreement was also realized with regard to strictness in class and using the first language in class.

On the other hand, the aspects which resulted in the most noteworthy difference between teachers and students' views are birth place, teaching reading, confidence, competency, exam-orientation, and lesson preparation. In addition to that, there was difference between teachers and students' views on whether a student can learn English from a NEST just as well as he or she can from a NNEST and whether a NNEST can provide more information about English to their students.

5.5 Question 4: Perceptions of NNESTs compared with the perceptions of NESTs?

To answer this question, quantitative data were compared between the two groups of teachers in the areas of definition of labels, overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs, and classroom behavior and personality. Just like in question 3, the coefficient of variation (C_v) was collected by dividing the standard deviation over the mean for each item and multiplied by 100 to give accurate statistic of the degree of variation between the two groups of teachers. The lower the coefficient of variation is, the more important the element measured.

5.5.1 Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.13

Coefficient of variation and rank of NNESTs' and NESTs' responses to "Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs"

| Definition of Labels | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NNESTs | Rank for NNESTs | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NESTs | Rank for NESTs |
|----------------------|---|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 1- Skin Color | 42.338028 | 4 | 43.866279 | 5 |
| 2- Accent | 38.434066 | 1 | 39.179894 | 3 |
| 3- Birth place | 43.608247 | 5 | 39.179894 | 3 |
| 4- Growth | 39.171429 | 2 | 30.463215 | 1 |
| 5- Spontaneity | 47.452229 | 6 | 30.625 | 2 |
| 6- Raised up | 41.143695 | 3 | 47.133333 | 6 |

Regarding the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs, the two different groups of teachers share similar views in some areas and hold different views in others. Table 5.13 clearly shows that there was agreement from both groups that the place a teacher grew up is an important indicator of a

teachers' nativeness and this was rated second by teachers and first by students. There is also significant agreement from both groups of teachers that skin color and place of birth are not important determiners of nativeness. At the same time, the most significant difference between the two groups of teachers is related to spontaneity and whether a teacher was raised with native speaking parents.

For NNESTs, a teacher can be categorized as native speaker based on his or her accent and this item was rated first, whereas for NESTs accent didn't receive the same level of importance and ranked 3.5. These results match previous literature (see Momenian, 2011). As for the place where a teacher grew up, which is presented in item 4 in Table 5.13, both groups of teachers gave it a great deal of importance as a determiner of nativeness. NNESTs consider the place where the teacher grew up as the second most important indicator of nativeness after accent and NESTs consider it the first indicator of nativeness. This is consistent with previous literature (see Liu, 1999b). On the other hand, both groups of teachers shared the views that skin color is not necessarily an indicator of a teacher's nativeness. Item 1 was rated 4 by NNESTs and 5 by NESTs. These results are consistent with previous studies (see Braine, 1999; Cook, 1999; Mahboob et al., 2004, Medgyes, 1992). Similarly, both groups shared the views that the element of birth is not an important indicator of nativeness. For NNESTs, item 3 was rated 5 and for NESTs it was rated 3. This means that neither of the two groups of teachers was convinced that the element of birth alone is enough to determine whether a teacher is native or not. These views are consistent with previous literature such as those of Medgyes (1994), Stern (1983), Crystal (1985), Richard et al

(1985) and Davies' (1991). With regard to the element of spontaneity, NNESTs and NESTs did not share the same views. This was presented in item 5 Table 5.13 and was considered by NESTs a very important indicator of nativeness with a rate of 2 while it was not viewed as an important indicator of nativeness by NNESTs. The views of the NESTs were consistent with those of Avra and Medgyes (1999) who reported in their research that English comes spontaneously when it is acquired by a person and not when it is learned as a second language.

Whereas NESTs gave item 6 a rank of 6 in importance, NNESTs gave it a rank of 3. This shows that NNESTs do not agree that the mere factor of being raised with native speaking parents renders a teacher native while to some extent NESTs do. The views of the NNESTs match those of Ortigas (2012) who claims that a person raised in a non-English-speaking country by native-English speaking parents is considered a native English speaker.

5.5.2 Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.14

Coefficient of variation and order of NNESTs' and NESTs' responses to "Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs"

| Overall learning | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NNESTs | Rank for NNESTs | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NESTs | Rank for NESTs |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 7- Grammar | 57.025862 | 9 | 23.094688 | 4 |
| 8- Vocabulary | 46.163522 | 5 | 31.798942 | 6 |
| 9- Pronunciation | 38.429319 | 4 | 15.921053 | 3 |
| 10-Listening | 37.453581 | 3 | 9.225941 | 1 |
| 11-Reading | 56.313559 | 8 | 25.869565 | 5 |
| 12-Speaking | 35.129534 | 1 | 9.225941 | 1 |
| 13-Writing | 55.098039 | 7 | 46.311475 | 9 |
| 14-Culture | 51.666667 | 6 | 52.958801 | 10 |
| 15-NEST better | 63.364486 | 10 | 41.395349 | 8 |
| 16-Learn English | 35.549296 | 2 | 33.890675 | 7 |

Regarding overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs, Table 5.14 clearly indicates that both groups of teachers share the views that NESTs are better teachers of oral skills such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking. They also share the views that they are not better teachers of writing and not necessarily better teachers of English (Item 15). Furthermore, there was less agreement between the two groups about reading and culture. However, the items that hold the most significant difference between the two groups were grammar (Item 7) and whether a student can learn English from a NEST just as well as he or she can from a NNEST (Item 16).

Regarding oral skills, the results of this study were not surprising. Both groups of teachers agreed that the NEST is a better teacher of oral skills, namely speaking, listening, and pronunciation. These are presented in items 12, 10, and 9 and were rated 1, 3 and 4 consecutively (Table 5.14). Many

researchers in previous literature agreed that NESTs are better at teaching the oral skills of English (see Medgyes, 2001; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002).

With regard to Item 14, the responses of the two cohorts of teachers were surprising. Both groups of teachers did not agree that students will learn better about different cultures when they are taught by NESTs. Whereas this item was rated 6 by NNESTs, it was rated 10 by NESTs. This shows that NESTs do not agree at all with this statement. Arva & Medgyes (2000) state that “NESTs were rich sources of cultural information, highbrow as well as lowbrow, about any topic around which the lessons were structured” (p. 365).

On the other hand, it was realized that each of the two groups of teachers holds a different view about who of the two cohorts of teachers is better at teaching grammar. Grammar has always been known to be the most comfortable area of teaching for NNESTs. Previous research in this area has shown that NNESTs have better command of grammatical rules than NESTs (Medgyes, 1994) because they had learned the rules and structure of English (Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Barrat & Kontra, 2000; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Benke & Medgyes, 2005). However, the results of this research were surprising because NESTs did not share the same views as the mainstream literature and as their NNEST counterparts that NNESTs are better grammar teachers. While NNESTs gave item 7 a rank of 9, NESTs gave it a rank of 4, thus considering themselves better teachers of grammar.

The results of items 15 and 16 were interesting. Item 15 asked if the NEST is a better teacher and Item 16 asked if students can learn English from both groups equally. Item 15 was rated 10 by NNESTs and 8 by NESTs and

this clearly indicates that neither of the two groups of teachers agrees that NESTs are better teachers of English. Item 16, on the other hand was rated 2 by NNESTs and 7 by NESTs and this shows that NNESTs believe that NESTs are not better teachers and that students can learn English from NNESTs just as well as they can from NESTs. Surprisingly, the results reveal that NESTs agree that NNESTs are better teachers of English and this is clear because in Item 15, they did not agree that NESTs are better teachers and in Item 16 they did not agree that students learn from each group equally. NNESTs, on the other hand, seem to agree that each of the two cohorts has its advantages and disadvantages and that neither of them is better than the other.

5.5.3 Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

Table 5.15

Coefficient of variation and order of NNESTs and NESTs' responses to "Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs"

| Strengths and weaknesses | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NNESTs | Order for NNESTs | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NESTs | Order for NESTs |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 17-Positive attitude | 47.184116 | 7 | 58.945313 | 8 |
| 18-Difficulties | 34.011142 | 2 | 22.579075 | 2 |
| 19-Empathy | 35.478261 | 3 | 41.395349 | 5 |
| 20-Better learner model | 39.553571 | 5 | 58.945313 | 8 |
| 21-Self-confidence | 47.412587 | 8 | 30.463215 | 4 |
| 22-Accent | 59.219512 | 9 | 49.78979 | 6 |
| 23-Students' culture | 32.335165 | 1 | 21.65 | 1 |
| 24-Competency | 39.692308 | 6 | 23.033175 | 3 |
| 25-More information | 36.128134 | 4 | 54.144144 | 7 |

Regarding the perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs, it was realized that both groups of teachers share similar views in some areas and hold completely different views in others. Table 5.15 shows clearly that there was total agreement from both groups that NNESTs who speak the students' first language are more knowledgeable of students' culture and this was rated first by both groups. Also there was total agreement that NNESTs are more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language and this was rated second by both groups. Agreement was also considerable with regard to NESTs' developing more positive attitudes towards learning English. This was rated 7 by NNESTs and 8 by NESTs. There

was less agreement on whether NNESTs show more empathy to the needs of students, on whether NESTs' accent makes them better teachers, and on whether NNESTs make better learner models to students. However, the aspect which resulted in the most significant difference between teachers and students' views is related to self confidence, competency, and providing more information about English.

With regard to students' culture (Item 23), it was realized that both groups agree that NNESTs who speak the students' first language are more knowledgeable of their culture and this is consistent with previous research studies such as those of Medgyes (2001). Medgyes (2001) argues that the NNESTs who speak their students' first language have more background information about their students than even the most knowledgeable NESTs. Similarly, both groups agree that a NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting their difficulties in learning the language (Item 18) and this also supports the results of previous research studies (see Medgyes, 1992; 2001; Mizuno, 2005; McNeil, 2005).

As for Item 17, it was rated 7 by NNESTs and 8 by NESTs and this means that both groups of teachers share the views that NESTs do not help students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than NNESTs. These results do not support the results of previous literature such as Sahin (2005) who contends that "learners who are exposed to native speaker teachers of English have more positive attitudes towards the target language" (p. 29).

There was less agreement between the two groups regarding empathy. This was presented in Item 19 and was rated 3 by NNESTs and 5 by NESTs. This shows clearly that both groups regard NNESTs as more empathetic towards the needs of their students with NNESTs agreeing more. Medgyes (1992) confirms that NNESTs can be more empathetic to the needs and problems of their learners because “they never cease to be learners of English” and this is why “they encounter difficulties similar to those of their students” and this “constant struggle”, in his opinion “makes non-natives more sensitive and understanding” (p. 347). Arva and Medgyes (1999; p. 362) argue that the low level of empathy of NESTs might be attributed to their inability to speak the local language and this is why they cannot appreciate what the students are passing through when they are learning English. Along the same lines, there was less agreement between the two groups of teachers with regard to accent. This was presented in Item 22 and was rated 9 by NNESTs and 6 by NESTs. This shows clearly that NNESTs do not agree at all that NESTs’ accent makes them better English teachers whereas some of the NESTs do. Barlow (2009) argues that there is no empirical evidence to verify or disprove the opinion that accented English is difficult for students to comprehend.

Similarly, Item 24 received a rank of 6 from NNESTs and a rank of 3 from NESTs. This shows that NESTs agreed that they are more competent while NNESTs did not. NESTs’ superiority sprang mainly from their capability of using the language “spontaneously and in the most diverse communicative situations” (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; p. 360; Medgyes, 2001; p. 434). Medgyes (1992) contends that non-native speaker’s competency level is limited and that very few are the ones who can reach near-native speaker’s competence (p:

71). Medgyes (2001) argues that NESTs cannot emulate NESTs in any area of English-language proficiency and that his participants viewed themselves as poorer listeners, speakers, readers, and writers.

The aspects that resulted in the most significant difference between the two groups of teachers were self-confidence and information. These were presented in items 21 and 25. The results of Item 21 were surprising. In previous literature, NNESTs were perceived as teachers with lower self-confidence as a result of the inferiority complex they have developed on the basis of their deficiency in the oral skills such as speaking and pronunciation (see Asato, 2008; Kamhi Stein, Aagard, Ching, Paik & Sasser, 2004) or because of the discrimination they have always faced in the hiring process (see Filho, 2002). In this research, NNESTs did not agree that NESTs have a higher self-confidence and thus gave item 21 a rate of 8. NESTs, on the other hand, seemd to agree with that and gave item 21 a rate of 4.

Finally, regarding item 25, NESTs in this research did not seem to agree that NNESTs provide students with more information about the English language and this was rated 7 by them. On the other hand, this item was rated 4 by NNESTs and this supports previous literature such as those of Medgyes (2001) who contends that NNESTs supply more information about the English language because they have “amassed a wealth of knowledge about the English language during their own learning” (p. 437).

5.5.4 Classroom behavior and responsibility

Table 5.16

Coefficient of variation and rank of NNESTs' and NESTs' responses to "Classroom behavior and responsibility"

| Behavior and responsibility | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NNESTs | Rank for NNESTs | Coefficient of variation (c_v) NESTs | Rank for NESTs |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 26-Lesson preparation | 40.171429 | 1 | 42.462462 | 3 |
| 27-First language | 45.186567 | 4 | 31.741573 | 1 |
| 28-Strictness | 57.79661 | 5 | 40.833333 | 2 |
| 29-Variety of materials | 41.143695 | 2 | 46.834532 | 4 |
| 30-Exam-oriented | 43.425076 | 3 | 51.961415 | 5 |

With regard to the teacher's behavior and responsibility in the classroom, it was clearly indicated in Table 5.16 that the two groups of teachers do not share any similar views in any of the areas. With respect to lesson preparation, and contrasted with previous literature defined by Medgyes (2001), the results of this study were surprising. The table shows that NNESTs agree strongly that NESTs prepare their lessons more carefully. Item 26 was rated first by NNESTs and third by NESTs. Another surprising result was that of item 29. Whereas NNESTs seemed to agree that NESTs vary their materials in the classroom more than NNESTs do, it was surprising that NESTs themselves did not seem to share their views with their NNEST counterparts. As for Item 30, it was clear that both groups of teachers did not agree that NNESTs are more exam-oriented. This item was rated 3 by NNESTs and 5 by NESTs.

The results of item 27 were interesting. It was realized that NESTs agree strongly that they are better teachers because they do not use the students' first language in class. They rated this item first whereas NNESTs rated it fourth (Before the last). This shows that NESTs agree with the current language teaching advocated by (Cook, 2001, p. 412) that students should be shown the importance of L2 through its continual use and maximum exposure, whereas NNESTs do not.

As for strictness in the classroom which is presented in item 28, NESTs gave it a rate of two. This contrasts previous literature such as Arva and Medgyes (2000) whose study concluded that NNESTs were found to be stricter teachers because they have a strong feeling of responsibility and awareness and because they are more restricted by rules at work and by administrative tasks. NNESTs, on the other hand, rated this item fifth and last. This means that they do not believe that NESTs are strict in class and this supports Medgyes (1994) who found that NNESTs perceived NESTs as more casual and less strict than NNESTs are in their teaching style.

In this question, it was realized that there was agreement from both groups of teachers that the place a teacher grew up is an important indicator of a teachers' nativeness. There was also significant agreement from both groups of teachers that skin color and place of birth are not important determiners of nativeness. Both groups also agreed that NESTs are better teachers of oral skills such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking and that they are not better teachers of writing and not necessarily better teachers of English. Furthermore, there was total agreement from both groups that NNESTs who speak the

students' first language are more knowledgeable of students' culture and that NNESTs are more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language. Both groups of teachers also agreed that NESTs do not help their students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English.

At the same time, there was less agreement between the two groups about reading and culture. There was less agreement on whether NNESTs show more empathy to the needs of students, on whether NESTs' accent makes them better teachers, and on whether NNESTs make better learner models to students.

However, the items that hold the most significant difference between the two groups were related to grammar, self confidence, competency, spontaneity, providing more information about English, whether a student can learn English from a NEST just as well as he or she can from a NNEST, and whether a teacher was raised with native speaking parents.

With regard to the teacher's behavior and responsibility in the classroom, the two groups of teachers do not share any similar views in any of the areas.

5.6 Question 5: Students' perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interactions with their students.

For the purpose of this question, qualitative data were gathered from students on the area of personal interactions. It was realized that this area is very important and was not reflected upon in the questionnaires. The interview responses were categorized into: (1) the effect of sharing the same culture and first language on students, (2) the aspects of empathy and (3) motivation.

Teaching is complex and cannot be reduced to concrete tasks that can be mastered one at a time. Teachers must “win their students' hearts while getting inside their heads” (Wolk, 2003, p. 14). As Haberman (1995) suggested, this winning of the hearts occurs through personal interactions.

5.6.1 The effect of culture and first language

When students were asked to give their opinions about the difference between the type of relationship NESTs and NNESTs have with their students, they responded that sharing the students' culture and their first language helps the teacher in building up a good rapport with the students. Thus, in their opinion, NNESTs who speak Arabic and share their students' culture are at an advantage over the NESTs. Student number 12 stated, “NNESTs know how we think, how we feel, how we react and behave. They are more sensitized to our habits and behaviors in class, and speaking Arabic makes it easier to establish good rapport with us and to gain our trust.” Student number 8 confirmed this by stating that “NESTs try hard but fail at many instances to understand their students' behavior in class. They need to know more about the Lebanese way of thinking if they were to build a firm relationship with their students.” Student

number 13 states, "The language, the culture, the habits, the traditions and sometimes the religion makes it more comfortable for me to discuss my problems with my NNEST and I feel that he will understand me and respond to my problem better than the NEST."

5.6.1 Building empathy

Probably the most important aspect of a positive helping relationship is empathy on the part of the helper (Garfield, 1994; Goldfried, Greenberg, & Marmar, 1990; Luborsky, Crits-Christoph, Mintz, & Auerbach, 1988; Orlinsky, Grawe, & Parks, 1994; Sexton & Whiston, 1994). Adler (1956) defined empathy as "seeing with the eyes of another, hearing with the ears of another, and feeling with heart of another" (p. 135). The end result of having been shown empathy is that the person "feels understood." This is crucial to reaching and relating to young adolescents (Hanna, Hanna, & Keys, 1999).

The interview responses of the students reveal that they perceive the NNESTs as more empathetic to their needs in learning English and more understanding of their problems. Having passed through the same stages of learning the language as their students and having passed through the same difficulties make the teachers more empathetic to their students' needs. Many teachers simply assume that they understand the student's problems and dilemmas, and mistakenly try to communicate their understanding in ways that only distance the student. For example, student number 19 stated in the interview that she once told her NEST that things were really hard at home and studying was difficult. The NEST responded by saying, "Well, you have to get past it and study anyway. I have been teaching for a long time, and there isn't

any excuse I haven't heard." The student, of course, had no indication that the teacher understood at all and was actually discouraged by the teacher's unempathetic response. If this teacher had taken the time to show that she understood the student's dilemma, she would have learned that the student's parents were verbally fighting with each other every day and threatening each other with divorce. When this same student discussed her problem with her NNEST, she encouraged her with an empathetic response saying, "It must be really difficult trying to study while listening to your parents fighting and wondering what is going to happen with your family." Such a response communicated understanding to the student and enhanced the level of respect she had for the teacher.

5.6.3 Motivation

In addition to sharing the students' culture and language and to being empathetic with them, motivating students is essential to driving them to define and achieve their future dreams and goals. Motivation is a necessity so that learning becomes a continuing, improving, interesting and enjoyable process. Students in this research study showed that there is a big difference in the way NESTs and NNESTs motivate them in the classroom. Student number 13 stated, "I find my NNEST more motivating for me in the sense that he learned the language in the same way I am doing now. He didn't acquire it like native speakers did, but he speaks it perfectly and this motivates me to do the same." On the other hand, student number 5 stated, "I find my NEST more motivating for students. She takes it easy with us and keeps pushing us to work harder. She is not strict and she does that with a continuous smile on her face."

In this question, it was realized that NNESTs who share their students' culture and first language were perceived by students as more successful in their personal relationships with their students. It was also realized that NNESTs develop better personal relations with their students because they are more empathetic with them. Furthermore, NNESTs were viewed as better motivators for their students especially that they are role models for them in learning the English language.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research study was aimed to understanding better the perceptions of EFL students and those of the NESTs and NNESTs. Previous chapters presented the responses collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews administered at 3 IEPs from three universities in the Bekaa governorate in Lebanon. This chapter will now summarize and discuss the key findings and their implications for teacher education before it concludes with the limitations of this study and contributions for future research.

6.1 Students' Perceptions

This study's first question was, "What are students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs?" Responses to this question as answered by students on the questionnaire and in the interview revealed that according to students, accent, birthplace and the place teachers grew up were perceived as the most important factors that determine nativeness. Students also perceived NNESTs as more helpful in developing their grammatical, vocabulary, and writing skills whereas the NESTs as more helpful in developing their oral skills such as pronunciation, fluency and listening skills. Also, NNESTs were perceived by students as more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to their needs, and more knowledgeable of their culture. Students also perceived the NESTs as having higher self-confidence and as more competent in using the English language. Furthermore, students' perceived the NNESTs as more exam-oriented teachers who prepare their lessons more carefully. On the other hand, NESTs vary their use of materials in class unlike the NNESTs who abide by the printed word.

6.2 Teachers' Perceptions

This study's second research question asked, "What are teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs? It was realized that teachers perceived the teacher's color of skin, accent, spontaneity, the place where the teacher grew up, and being raised with native speaking parents as relevant factors that determine a teacher's nativeness. Also, NNESTs were perceived as better teachers of grammar whereas NESTs were perceived as more helpful in developing students' oral skills, such as pronunciation, listening and fluency. Furthermore, NNESTs were viewed as more capable of predicting student difficulties in learning English, more empathetic to the needs of students, and more knowledgeable of the students' culture whereas NESTs were perceived as more competent in using the English language than NNESTs. Finally, NESTs were perceived as teachers who prepare their lessons more carefully and NNESTs were perceived as stricter in class.

6.3 Corroboration between Students' and Teachers' Perceptions

This study's third research question was, "How do the teachers' perceptions of themselves corroborate with, or differ from, the perceptions of students towards their teachers?" The key findings of this research question can be summarized as follows: There was agreement from both groups with regard to accent and the place the teacher grew up as significant factors in determining a teacher's degree of nativeness. As for teacher's birthplace, which was considered by students as the most important aspect that determines nativeness, it was considered by teachers as the least important aspect and

this resulted in the most significant difference between teachers and students' views.

Furthermore, both groups agreed that NESTs are not necessarily better teachers of English. In their opinion, NESTs are better teacher of oral skills such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking but not of grammar, writing, or culture. Also, both groups agreed that the NNEST is more knowledgeable of students' culture, more competent using the English language, more capable of predicting students' difficulties, and more empathetic to the needs of students. Finally, there was agreement from both groups that NESTs vary their use of materials in the classroom more than NNESTs do.

The most significant differences in the opinions of students and teachers are teachers' self-confidence and lesson preparation. While students perceive their NESTs as more self-confident using the English language, teachers did not share the same views. Also, while students did not agree that NESTs prepare their lessons more carefully than NNESTs, teachers responded that they do agree.

6.4 Corroboration between NESTs' and NNESTs' Perceptions

The study's fourth research question was, "How do the perceptions of NNESTs corroborate with, or differ from, the perceptions of NESTs?" Both groups of teachers agreed that the place where a teacher grew up is an important indicator of a teachers' nativeness. Both groups also agreed that skin color and place of birth are not important determiners of nativeness. Both groups of teachers also agreed that NESTs are better teachers of oral skills

such as pronunciation, listening, and speaking and that they are not better teachers of writing and not necessarily better teachers of English. Furthermore, there was total agreement from both groups that NNESTs who speak the students' first language are more knowledgeable of students' culture and that NNESTs are more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language.

However, the items that hold the most significant difference between the two groups of teachers were spontaneity as a determiner of nativeness, as well as who is perceived to be a better teacher of grammar, who has higher self-confidence, who is more competent in English, and who provides more information about English. Finally, there was a significant difference between the teachers regarding whether students learn English from a NEST just as well as they do from a NNEST.

6.5 Teacher-student Personal Interaction

This study's fifth question was, "What are students perceptions regarding NESTs' and NNESTs' personal interactions with their students? Responses to this question as answered by students in the interviews revealed that in cases where a teacher shares the same culture and first language of the students, has empathy towards their needs and motivates them constantly, then a strong teacher-student relationship will develop which will reflect positively on their performance in class.

6.6 Summary

To sum up, it is evident in the present study that Lebanese IEP students do not necessarily prefer NESTs over NNESTs in every aspect of language teaching. Even when it comes to teaching oral skills, not all of the students prefer NESTs. In the interviews, some of the students and teachers even mentioned the disadvantages of NESTs as being oral teachers. In other words, we should refrain from asking the broad question of who is better NESTs or NNESTs. Instead, we should focus on students' and teachers' preferences of these two groups of teachers in specific areas of teaching such as grammar, oral skills, and writing and on their behavior in the classroom to understand a more nuanced picture of students' and teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs.

Based on these key findings, the following research has raised very important issues related to nativeness, learning with NESTs and NNESTs, strengths and weaknesses for each of the two groups of teachers, behavior and responsibilities of each of the two groups of teachers, and teacher-student personal interaction.

6.7 What Makes a Native English Speaking Teacher?

What this research revealed is a complex picture of the conception that students and teachers hold about the issue of a teacher's nativeness. While this research might have confirmed some of the findings from previous research, it also carried the issue a step further. Just like previous research, accent in this research was a strong attribute that from the perspective of

students and teachers distinguishes a NEST (see Scovel, 1988; Lee, 2005). According to teachers and students, to be termed native a teacher must have grown in one of the countries of the “middle” and must have thus acquired an accent of any of these countries.

A foreign or non-native-like accent has always been a pressing challenge in Lebanon because NNESTs are perceived as less qualified, less effective, and as a result, are compared unfavorably to native English-speaking teachers and portrayed as less competent (see: Medgyes, 1994, 2001; Arva & Medgyes, 2000). Worldwide globalization has spread English into a “global language,” Much of this evolution can be attributed as much to the media and to the prescription of English as a second or foreign language in the schools of almost every country of the Outer and Expanding Circles today and to its usage as the primary lingua franca of business, navigation, science and technology, and academia. Under the effect of globalization, and buying into the *native-speaker fallacy*, many Lebanese administrators in their attempt to hire EFL teachers, prefer to hire teachers with native or native-like accents. As a result, many Lebanese people strive to speak like Americans or British in order to find better jobs and to be treated differently. They do this without any consideration of the detrimental effects English might have on their native Arabic language or on their identity. Unfortunately, this is causing the Lebanese people to lose their identity and their Arabic language. However, it is not the teachers’ accent, birthplace, or the place they grew up that makes them good English teachers (see Rubin, 1992), rather, it is the drive, the motivation, and the zeal within them to help their students make a difference that makes them better (Lee, 2000, p. 2).

On the other hand, the participants of this study showed a great deal of awareness when they disagreed to label teachers as native or non-native on the basis of their skin color. This was not consistent with Liu (1999b) who claimed that for a teacher to be termed native he or she must look like a white Anglo American. These findings also came to be contradictory to Amin (1997) who tells of her difficulties in being accepted as a native teacher because of her skin color. This shows that the participants carried the issue of nativeness a step further. To them a native speaker of English is not the stereotypical white Anglo-Saxon because English is international and is not limited to one ethnicity or race.

Moreover, both factors of being raised with native speaking parents and producing a spontaneous discourse in English proved to be unimportant indicators of nativeness from the perspectives of teachers and students. However, one factor which showed the most significant difference between the views of the teachers and students was the place the teacher was born. For students, it was enough for a teacher to be born in a native speaking country to be termed native and this was completely unacceptable for teachers who perceive that the mere fact of being born in a certain country is not satisfactory to determine a teacher's nativeness. According to teachers, to be termed NEST, a teacher has to grow up in a native English speaking country, and this seems to be more logical especially if we ask the same set of questions asked by Medgyes (1994) to illustrate the shortcomings of what is known as "accidental birth" (Fukumura, 1993). Medgyes asks, for example, about those children who moved at a very young age with their English speaking families to a non-English speaking country; or those who, after acquiring English as

children, lose this language once they move to live in a non-English country (p.10). Students in this research were not wise enough to consider such scenarios which might exist in real life situations. Teachers, however, were able to think more widely and logically thus refusing the element of birth alone to be a determiner of a teacher's nativeness.

6.8 Learning with NESTs and NNESTs

Beliefs about learning experience with NESTs and NNESTs show that each of the two groups has its own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the common myths about NNESTs as incompetent teachers surely need to be challenged. Students and teachers in the Lebanese context under study proved a great deal of awareness in this regard when they showed that they do not necessarily buy into the *native speaker fallacy* that a native speaker of a certain language is a better teacher of that language (Philipson, 1992, p185). They agreed that considering a NEST as the best English language teacher is a generalization.

Teacher and student participants believe that NESTs are undoubtedly better teachers of oral skills of English whereas NNESTs are considered better teachers of grammar. The results of this research support the results of previous literature (see Medgyes 1994, 2001).

NNESTs are criticized as being poorer listeners and speakers and thus as being poorer teachers of English oral skills. The primary advantage attributed to NESTs lies in their superiority to use language in most diverse communicative situations (Medgyes, 2001). Medgyes (2001), for example,

perceives that NESTs “speak better English” and “use the real language.” Sung (2010) and Ezberci (2005) also give credit to the NEST in teaching oral skills to their students.

It has been argued, for example, that only native speakers should teach English because they have the best pronunciation (Sung, 2010). Students have always believed that in order to acquire a “true” and “correct” pronunciation, teachers must follow native speaker models. Despite the fact that some empirical evidence indicated that bad pronunciation leads to some unintelligibility (Mitchell & Brumfit, 1991 in Medgyes 1994), the same does not apply to “mild” accents. In fact, some researchers believe that pronunciation should not be the primary focus of ESL/EFL teaching as it could hinder the fluency and communication ability of the learners, which should be the main objective (Krashen & Terrell, 1983 in Medgyes 1994).

Teachers and students in this study shared the views that students will develop their listening and speaking skills better when they are taught by NESTs. They assume that this is true because when they are taught by NESTs, they are exposed to the correct pronunciation of English as spoken by native speakers of English and because they are forced to speak in English only without referring to their first language and this is known as *monolingual fallacy* (see Phillipson, 1992). NNESTs in the Lebanese context are usually preoccupied with accuracy, grammar, the formal registers, and the formal features of English and many of them lack fluency and proper English pronunciation and have poor listening and speaking skills. On the other hand,

English is used fluently, spontaneously, and more communicatively by the NESTs because it is their native language.

With respect to grammar, both students and teachers perceived grammar as the forte of NNESTs and their “favorite hunting range” (Medgyes, 1994). Teachers, mainly NNESTs, agreed that NNESTs are better at teaching grammar since they had studied it in depth and were capable of providing scientific explanations for the constructions and use of the English language thanks to their pre-service training and learning experience. In their opinion, among the gaps perceived in the NESTs’ repertoire, grammatical knowledge ranked at the top. The findings of previous studies revealed that due to NNESTs’ learning of the rules of the language and going through the process of learning English, NNESTs were more proficient in teaching grammar than NESTs who subconsciously attained grammar knowledge (Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Barrat & Kontra, 2000; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Moussou, 2006). Along the same lines, Sung (2010) states that students rely on NNESTs to explain the difficult grammatical structures because “English grammar is difficult to master and they [students] may not be able to understand what the NESTs mean if they explain grammar in English” (p. 13). Medgyes (2001) confirms that unlike the NESTs, NNESTs are preoccupied with “the nuts and bolts of grammar” (p. 434).

Lebanese students rely on Arab NNESTs to teach them the difficult grammatical structures in Arabic because they believe that English grammar is very difficult to learn. In order to make it easier for students to understand the grammatical structures of the English language, NNESTs tend to compare it

with Arabic. In their opinion, this makes it much easier for the Lebanese students to understand English grammar.

6.9 Strengths and Weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

With respect to the perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNEST, both students and teachers agreed that NNESTs are more knowledgeable of the students' culture, more capable of predicting student difficulties, and more empathetic to their students' needs. On the other hand, NESTs were perceived as more competent teachers who have higher self-confidence. Furthermore, it was realized that students who are taught by NESTs do not necessarily develop more positive attitudes towards learning English.

There was total agreement from student and teacher participants of this study, both NESTs and NNESTs, that the NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more knowledgeable of students' culture. Medgyes (1994) argues that the NNEST "teaching in a monolingual class has far more background information about his or her students than even the most well-informed NEST" (p. 438). Anderson and Lightfoot (2002) argue that the way we think and view the world is determined by our language. This is logical since language is not just the medium of culture but also is a part of culture. Language is a major carrier of, and inseparable from, a people's culture and familiarity with the local language can bring NESTs closer to their students' cultural roots and shed light on the students' inability to comprehend a specific language element. Instances of cultural language differences are evidenced in that some languages have specific words for concepts whereas other

languages use several words to represent a specific concept. If we take Arabic, the language of the Lebanese students for example, we realize that it includes many specific words for designating a certain type of horse or camel (Crystal, 1987). To make such distinctions in English, where specific words do not exist, adjectives would be used preceding the concept label, such as quarter horse or dray horse. For this reason, all participants agreed that NNESTs who share students their language are more knowledgeable of their culture.

All the participants in this research agreed that NNESTs who speak the students' first language are more capable of predicting their difficulties. Medgyes (2001) states, "Having jumped off the same springboard as their students, non-NESTs are intrinsically more perceptive about language difficulties than NESTs." Also, Muzino (2005) confirms that "Only the teachers that have studied a foreign language can understand how their students feel and realize the importance and difficulty of the learning process" (p. 181). In fact, NNESTs have passed through the same process of learning the English language and have faced the same difficulties that their students are facing. NNESTs never cease to be learners of English and this is why they know exactly the amount of frustration that these students are suffering and thus they empathize with them and provide them emotional support. NNESTs encounter difficulties similar to those of their students, albeit at an obviously higher level. As a rule, this constant struggle makes non-natives more empathetic to the needs and problems of their learners and more sensitive and understanding of their needs.

Teachers' ability to predict students' difficulties in learning English is related to their empathy to the needs of these students. In this research, students and teachers agreed that NNESTs are more empathetic to their students' needs, however, NESTs did not seem to have the same degree of agreement as the NNESTs and this was reflected in the results of question 4. Paran and Clark (2007) stated, "Empathy, or the ability to view the learning of English from the students' perspectives, may be particularly valuable in the teachers' home countries where they share the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds" (p. 410). Sharing students' language and culture makes the Lebanese teachers of English more sensitized to the problems of the students and more capable of predicting their difficulties, and thus more empathetic to their needs in learning the English language. NESTs are not as sensitized to these problems as the NNESTs are because they have acquired the English language without any effort and this makes them less empathetic to their students' needs in learning the English language (see Medgyes, 1994).

Despite teachers and students' awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of both NESTs and NNESTs, the quantitative and qualitative data of this research showed that the majority still tend to perceive the NEST as a more competent teacher. This superiority is attributed mainly to the NESTs' ability to use their first language spontaneously. The main advantage of native speakers lies in their superior linguistic and communicative competence of the English language since it is their mother tongue and thus they can use it with greater spontaneity and naturalness in a considerable variety of situations. NNESTs, on the other hand, usually display a poorer competence, acquired through study and effort, which disallows spontaneity. They also normally

experience problems with pronunciation, colloquial expressions, and certain types of vocabulary (see Arva and Medgyes, 2000, p. 360, and Madrid and Canado, 2004). Their competence is limited to a reduced group that can reach near-native speaker competence, but sooner or later this group will be halted by a glass wall (see Medgyes, 1994; p. 342). This is logical in the sense that non-native speakers are by nature norm-dependent and thus their use of English is an imitation of the native model. This is why non-native speakers are better able to reach communicative goals in their first language. No matter how hard they try, NNESTs will not be able to reach the NESTs' competency in communication, especially in using the idiomatic expressions and slang terms.

In this research, it seems that NESTs' teaching style, the materials they use in class, and the leniency that they practice with their students in the Lebanese context were not enough factors to convince students or the teachers in this study that NESTs help students develop more positive attitudes towards English. Probably students related the positive attitudes with NNESTs' ability to speak Arabic in class. Using the first language as an asset to support the second language teaching makes it much easier for students to learn and is much more motivating for them. NNESTs' use of Arabic saves time and levels the stress that students have.

In the introduction of his book, *Non-native Language Teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession*, Llurda (2006) expressed his concerns regarding the cause of thousands of teachers of English who "have had to struggle with the language and overcome the threats to their self-confidence posed by the perceived inferiority of non-natives in lieu

of native teachers” (p. xi). In this study, students and NESTs shared the views that NESTs have a higher self-confidence using the English language than NNESTs do. However, NNESTs did not seem to be convinced with this claim. Although they reported in the interviews that their linguistic deficiencies lie especially in speaking, fluency, and pronunciation, the majority of them did not agree that NESTs have higher self-confidence than they do. On the other hand, NESTs were found to agree more with their superiority and thus with their higher self-confidence. Students shared the NESTs’ views and in the interviews, they attributed the NESTs’ confidence to the spontaneity and fluency of their spoken English.

In the Lebanese context, the preference of the NESTs on the expense of the NNESTs in the eyes of students, students’ parents, and administrators and the unfair treatment (see Philipson, 1992, p. 185), and employment discrimination (see Selvi, 2010) that the NNESTs are subjected to, in addition to the NNESTs’ deficiencies in oral skills, cause them to develop low self-confidence in their use of English and this reflects badly on their teaching and on their image in front of their students and gives credit to their NEST counterparts.

6.10 Classroom Behavior and Responsibility

In this research study, there was a total disagreement between teachers and students on the aspects of lesson preparation, exam-orientation, and strictness and there was total agreement on the use of a variety of teaching materials in the classroom.

In support to previous literature, students in this study did not agree that NESTs prepare their lessons better than NNESTs do. NESTs have always been accused of not following the book in their teaching and of being very casual in the classroom. They have been known to give students handouts and to depend on their communication skills. Arva and Medgyes' (1999) student participants believe that unlike NESTs who vary their use of materials, NNESTs prepare their lessons more carefully and stick to the book (p. 363). However, this was not the case with the NESTs and NNESTs of this study who most of them agreed that NESTs prepare their lessons more carefully.

From the teachers' perspective, the reason NESTs prepare their lessons better could be that the NESTs of this study had been teaching in Lebanon for a long time and got used to the system and thus got accustomed to lesson preparation and to following heavy syllabi whose objective is to cover the chapters of the books. On the other hand, Lebanese students, who are used to a teacher who follows the chapters of the book, might consider a NEST who distributes handouts and assigns activities that are not in the book an unprepared teacher.

Regarding exam orientation, the results of this study showed that students perceive a NNEST as more exam-oriented whereas teachers, both native and non-native, did not share the same views. In the Lebanese context under study, NNESTs have been known to set more tests than NESTs. They are preoccupied with measuring students' level of L2 acquisition and keep testing the students concretely to set their minds in peace and reassure themselves that they are doing their job satisfactorily. On the other hand,

NESTs have been known to use alternative assessment or informal testing procedures. This shows clearly the difference in teaching styles between NESTs and NNESTs in Lebanon. However, this method of teaching does not mean that exam-orientation is a bad way of teaching, and many parents prefer the exam-orientation strategy because it helps their children pass their university stage in the quickest time possible. Lebanese students realize this difference in teaching styles between NESTs and NNESTs. In their opinion, NESTs teach English for everyday life while NNESTs teach English to make students pass the exam which makes it easier for them to move on (Hadid, 2004).

Students and teachers in this study disagreed that NESTs are stricter with their students in the classroom. These results support previous research (see Arva and Medgyes, 2000). However, not all NESTs share the same views with the NNESTs. Whereas NNESTs consider NESTs casual and lenient with their students, NESTs view themselves to be serious and not as lenient as others think they are. In the Lebanese context, it has always been assumed that the Lebanese teachers are stricter than NESTs in terms of discipline, homework requirements, attendance, and classroom behavior. This might be due to the traditional image of the teacher who is still viewed as the person in control and thus NNESTs think that the stricter the teacher is with his or her students, the better education will be. However, based on my personal experience in the Lebanese context, I have encountered many NESTs who have proved to be very strict in following the rules. On the other hand, I have encountered many NNESTs who were very lenient with their students. Therefore, the issue of strictness is relative and is not related to nativeness, but

to the pre-service and post-service training of the teacher. Students seemed to be more aware that the traditional view of the teacher as the ultimate authority and source of power in class is valid no more.

NESTs use a variety of materials much more than NNESTs do and this supports previous literature such as Medgyes (1994). Arva and Medgyes' (1999) look at NESTs as improvisers who refrain from using text books because they limit their work. NESTs have always been accused of coming to class unprepared, but the truth is that they are different in nature.

Based on personal observations, NESTs in the Lebanese context depend on a variety of materials other than the book in their teaching. They distribute handouts on a regular basis. They retrieve extra material from other books and from the internet. They use technology in the classroom and they use the internet to support their lessons. However, this does not mean that NNESTs refrain from using a variety of materials in their teaching, but they are more cautious using them. They depend on the book that is assigned by the coordinator as a base to fulfill the course objectives and deviate from it very few times and use outside material for an extra activity and so on. They do not use outside material to explain something essential; they use it only to complement the original skill in the textbook.

6.11 Teacher-student Personal Interaction

Data collected from the interviews revealed that teachers who share the same culture and first language of the students, who have empathy towards their needs and who motivate them constantly, help in establishing a strong

teacher-student relationship that will have a positive effect on their performance.

Literature emphasized the importance of cultural congruence, indicating that when students are provided with NNESTs who are familiar with the nuances of their culture and who share their same language, they can capitalize on their linguistic and cultural experiences as intellectual resources for new learning in English classrooms (Au & Kawakimi, 1994; Trueba & Wright, 1992; Driver et al., 1994). NNESTs from the same languages and cultures can use culturally familiar examples, analogies, and contexts to relate the target language to their students' backgrounds. Unfortunately, this does not happen when teachers find it difficult to communicate with students whose linguistic and cultural backgrounds are different. Therefore, to provide effective instruction for students, teachers require knowledge of both students' language and culture. However, this does not mean that NESTs are not good teachers. Research indicates that teachers who come from backgrounds different from those of their students can also provide effective instruction when they have an understanding of students' linguistic and cultural experiences (Au, 1980; Ballenger, 1992; Foster, 1993).

In addition to culture, empathy has long been an intrinsic part of the educational system. Students are "inherently involved in emotional development" (Hinton, 2008, p. 90) and their emotions coming into the class affect the amount of learning they receive. Educators must be able to connect to and understand their students in order to best serve their needs. Because NNESTs have passed through the same stages of learning the English language that their students are striving to learn, NNESTs become more

sensitized to the difficulties that their students are facing in learning the language and thus become more empathetic with them. Most empathetic teachers listen to their students' problems whether or not the problems are directly related to the subject matter, and help them handle their problems in the best way possible. They understand the background of their students and respect them for who they are.

To sum up, the present research study was designed to investigate EFL student and teacher perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs and to examine the validity of the assumption which claims that NESTs are the best teachers of English. The findings of this research suggest that in general, it is unfair and inappropriate to give all the credit to the NESTs on the expense of the NNESTs because NNESTs have proved to excel in many areas of teaching where their NEST-counterparts have failed. Based on the perceptions of students and teachers, which were collected from the questionnaires and interviews, it was realized that NNESTs surpassed the NESTs in the areas of teaching grammar and culture. NNESTs were also more capable of predicting students' difficulties, more empathetic to their students' needs, and better motivators who constantly urge their students to develop positive attitudes. NNESTs were also perceived as exam-oriented teachers who worry about their students' passing the exams and as teachers who follow the book and prepare their lessons very carefully.

However, it is to be noted that the goal of this study is not to claim that the NESTs are incompetent EFL teachers or that the NNESTs are better teachers of English. In this research, NESTs were perceived to have many

advantages. They were viewed as better teachers of oral skills, especially listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills and more competent using the English language which is their first language and is thus spoken by them spontaneously without any effort. Moreover, on the basis of their competency in using English, NESTs were viewed by students as more self-confident. However, it is worth mentioning that NESTs' use of a variety of materials in class, their casualty, leniency, and their refraining from the exam-oriented approach of teaching are not necessarily negative aspects in teaching. If used appropriately, these aspects will help students learn English better. Finally, for teachers to build a strong bond with their students, they have to share their culture and first language and they have to be motivating and empathetic with them.

6.12 Limitations

The first and major limitation in this study is the sample size. The findings of this study represent the opinion of only 180 students and 31 teachers who come from the IEPs of only three universities in one of the governorates of Lebanon. Also, the small number of IEPs is not a true representation of all the IEPs of the universities that exist in the other 5 governorates in Lebanon. For the results to be generalizable, IEPs from all the governorates of Lebanon should take part in the study and a larger sample size is required in order to represent all the students and all of the teachers in Lebanon. However, the number of students, teachers, and IEPs is sufficient for the specific Bekaa governorate of Lebanon which is the target of this study. The number of participating universities is 3 out of 6 universities found in

Bekaa. The other three do not have IEP programs and therefore they were excluded from this research study.

Another limitation in this study is the convenience sampling which was used to choose the teacher participants. The most obvious criticism about convenience sampling is sampling bias and that the sample is not representative of the entire population. However, to avoid bias, my aim as a researcher was to include all the teachers from the three participating universities, but I was only able to include 31 out of 36 teachers.

As for the modified random sampling, which was used with student participants, it also has its drawbacks. It is not suitable if there is a periodicity in the population. The process of selection can interact with a hidden periodic trait within the population. If the sampling technique coincides with the periodicity of the trait, the sampling technique will no longer be random and representativeness of the sample is compromised. However, despite this limitation, it was found to be the most convenient sampling procedure to be used because of the simplicity and order it provides.

It was also realized that low English level of the students in the participating IEPs would have been a major obstacle for the students the thing that would hinder them from expressing themselves fluently. For this reason, I provided an Arabic translated version of the questionnaire to the students. It has to be noted though that the translation of the questionnaire from English to Arabic and then the translation of the data from Arabic to English might have affected the accuracy of the students' responses despite having been performed by a certified translator. However, translation was found necessary

in order to gather as much data as possible from the student participants. However, some Armenian and French students did not receive a translation of the questionnaires in their first language. It was unexpected to find Armenian or French students who do not know Arabic in the English IEPs, and Armenian was impracticable to translate. Consequently, it cannot be declared that the results reported are representative of all the IEP students.

Another limitation is that most of the NESTs who participated in the study happened to be of Lebanese roots but were born and raised in a native-speaking country or had left Lebanon at a very young age. These teachers who were quite similar in their English proficiency, academic qualifications, and cultural backgrounds, would have given a wider variety of perceptions and opinions about NESTs and NNESTs had they been white Anglo-Saxons or of different levels of academic qualifications and proficiency. The same thing applies to the NNEST participants, who were mainly Lebanese teachers. Even though their academic qualifications and teaching experiences differed, their common cultural background might have affected their opinions. A bigger number of NNESTs that encompasses teachers from various nationalities is needed.

Furthermore, eight teachers who participated in the pilot study participated also in the actual study. These teachers, having been exposed to the questionnaire before, may have responded differently from those who have not been exposed to it and this may have had a negative effect. However, their participation was allowed by the researcher due to the small number of teacher participants available.

6.13 Implications

Data from this study indicate that to be proficient, both native and non-native English language teachers must possess some inherent qualities and must constantly work on improving themselves. In order to reach their full potential in teaching, NESTs and NNESTs have to collaborate and join their efforts. The implications that will be discussed are related to the qualities of a proficient teacher, what NESTs and NNESTs should do to improve themselves, and the importance of the collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs.

6.13.1 Qualities that teachers must maintain to be proficient

To be proficient, teachers have to be qualified in pedagogy and in language. Effective teachers display a wide range of skills and abilities that lead to creating a learning environment where all students feel comfortable and are sure that they can succeed both academically and personally (McKenzie, 2003).

English-teaching proficiency must be seen as a “plural system” that abandons the notion of native versus nonnative speakers and adopts instead the distinction between, for example, “novice and expert” teachers (Canagarajah, 2005, p. xxvii). That is, a “good teacher” can no longer be a NEST or a NNEST but can *only* be an educated person who masters a combination of linguistic, pedagogical, and methodological skills (Astor, 2000). Undoubtedly, native speakers of any language speak it fluently, have a feel for its nuances, and are more comfortable than non-native speakers in using its idiomatic and colloquial expressions. However, a teacher’s effectiveness does not center on whether he or she is a native, a near-native, or non-native

speaker of English. In fact, there is a host of variables such as teacher's personality, pedagogical skills, and qualifications, that affect teacher efficiency apart from being a native, a near-native, or non-native speaker of English.

Proficient teachers know how to build good rapport with students by being friendly, sympathetic and motivating and by maintaining a well-rounded personality and a passion for teaching. They are tolerant, patient, and confident, and they have cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication skills. They also love the language and show continuous interest in improving their linguistic skills. Proficient teachers understand what their students must do along the way in order to reach their goals. (Azer, 2012).

6.13.2 What NNESTs should do to improve themselves

NESTs in the Lebanese context, just like in other contexts around the world are more capable of communicating effectively and of using language spontaneously. NNESTs are aware of their linguistic deficiency and of the nature of their handicap. They view themselves as poorer listeners, speakers, readers, and writers (Hadid, 2004). NNESTs should spend some time in English-speaking countries in order to narrow this gap in their language competence. There are many free sites available online that may help teachers improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, and reading skills. Also, audio and video clips demonstrating proper English pronunciation are readily available and should be used by EFL teachers to improve their pronunciation. NNESTs may have to get more practice speaking English and this has become much easier with the invention of programs like Skype (see Tsukamoto and Nuspliger, 2009).

As far as culture is concerned, apparently, NESTs are steeped in cultural background knowledge of English and have an advantage over NNESTs of English in this regard (Gill and Rebrova, 2001). NNESTs, who most of the time have no opportunity to go to an English speaking country and experience the culture of the target language community first hand, are less successful in integrating that culture into their courses, and are less confident to teach about it. Therefore, NNESTs should visit the NES culture and live for some time in that culture to get a sense of it and to learn about its norms, values, traditions, and behavior. This will give them a vast knowledge about the way these native speakers use their language and about the appropriate context certain cues of language are used. This will also help them enlarge their repertoire of idiomatic expressions and vocabulary. The internet is also a gold mine of resources for vocabulary building. NNESTs may also use a dictionary to keep a list of new words and expressions to learn (see Lawson and Hogben, 1996).

6.13.3 What NESTs should do to improve themselves

There are some tips that NESTs could consider in order to improve themselves and fill the gaps that they have in TEFL. First, NESTs should work hard to overcome their deficiency in teaching grammar. The results of this study reinforce those of other studies, showing that students appreciate NNESTs' ability to teach grammar and empathizing with their language learning difficulties. Therefore, implications for instructor education and ongoing professional development of instructors might include additional attention to the teaching of grammar for NESTs.

NESTs should learn about their students' culture before they teach them. NNESTs usually have knowledge of the local (L1) culture that might guide them to better teach in accordance with the cultural expectations of the students, parents, and schools. Sharing the same culture enables the NNESTs to connect with their students better. NESTs might not be sensitive to the students' culture and this might make students feel that their identities are threatened which will eventually cause a barrier to their learning.

NESTs should get an idea about the students' native language and how similar or different it is from English in aspects such as pronunciation, grammar rules, spelling and terminology. They may keep reference material on hand so that they can find the answers to difficult questions when they arise and study the basics of the students' first language. They should check with the students on the difficulties they encounter while learning the foreign language and try to investigate those and find minimal solutions or suggestions for the students. They should think of themselves as learners of a foreign language and think of the areas of difficulty that might come across and discuss them with the students. Only the teachers that have studied a foreign language can understand how their students feel and realize the importance and difficulty of the learning process.

NESTs should show the learners that they empathize with them and that they are willing to help getting over the obstacles they face in learning English. They should be a source of information for their students and should be ready to answer any question their students ask whether in grammar or in any other skill.

NESTs should put a limit to the perception of them as “young chaps messing about in sneakers” (Arva and Medgyes, 2000). They should be strict at times and lenient at others. This way they will be respected more in an EFL society that still gives a great deal of respect to the traditional teacher who is the source of power and authority in class.

Adhering to the previous tips could assist the NESTs and NNESTs alike. The strategies and methods that teachers use in their teaching create a huge impact on the students' learning and acceptance to learn the foreign language. Students themselves of course play a significant role in the success of their learning and the attitudes they have about either the native or the non-native speaking teachers do make a difference.

6.13.4 Collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs

It is misleading and belittling to try to demonstrate that one type of teacher is worth more than another. We prefer to think that all teachers, whether NESTs or NNESTs, are worth a lot and that they are worth more when they work together.

Because NESTs and NNESTs of English show a great deal of variation in their knowledge, use, and teaching of the English language, Nunan (1992) calls for an organized collaboration and team teaching. Medgyes (2001) argues that NESTs and NNESTs are potentially equally effective teachers because in his opinion their strengths and weaknesses balance each other out. Both groups of teachers serve equally useful purposes in their own ways. In Lebanon, there should be an atmosphere of peace, respect and collaboration

between NESTs and NNESTs, not a battle, for the present and future of English language teaching. In an ideal IEP program, therefore, there should be a good balance of NESTs and NNESTs, who complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses. Given a favorable mix, various forms of collaboration are possible, and this is very beneficial for learners. It is suggested therefore that NESTs or NNESTs should be hired solely on the basis of their professional virtues, regardless of their language background because each of the two groups can be equally good in their own terms (Medgyes, 1994, p. 76).

A few studies have been conducted to discuss the benefits attained by the collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs. Both NESTs and NNESTs are necessary and even indispensable in contexts where they could collaborate and use their skills and competencies to the fullest. (see Oliveira and Richardson, 2001; Briane, 1999a; Kamhi-Stein, 2004).

It is partly the job of universities to develop innovative curriculums in teacher training programs to raise the awareness that by sharing their strengths and insights from their various educational and cultural backgrounds, teachers will benefit as individuals and grow professionally. By exchanging ideas and experiences, each group can learn the skills in which the other excels. Faculty of instructor education programs and graduate teaching methods courses might incorporate collaborative assignments for NESTs and NNESTs, such as team teaching as part of a practicum course or peer observations (see Mahboob, 2001).

Collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs would reduce the possible tension in the profession. As language education professionals (textbook creators, curriculum specialists, language teachers and administrators) become conscious of, and take into consideration the differences between these two groups of teachers, they will be much more likely to produce improved results that would contribute to the merit of the language education field. NESTs and NNESTs can use each other as language consultants for example or discuss matters they feel are beneficial to their students. This way both groups of teachers can benefit from each other's experiences and this will positively reflect on their students.

Medgyes (1992) claims that both groups of teachers serve equally useful purposes in their own terms. It is thus unfair to give all the credit to the NESTs because otherizing the NNESTs will create a serious problem on their self-esteem and on their achievement as teachers. However, it is essential to highlight the discrepancies of both groups in order to sensitize them to their limitations and potentials so that they can develop ways to progress within their limitations. The focus must not be on what separates NESTs and NNESTs but on what binds them together. For this reason, this debate has to be discussed in terms of trained versus untrained teachers and not in terms of native versus non-native teachers.

Some of the consequences of preferring the native speakers and elevating them to the status of a totem have been profoundly harmful. Among other things, it has bred an extremely enervating inferiority complex among many NNESTs and helped produce unfair and discriminatory hiring practices.

Language educational professionals must have their awareness raised in order to alleviate some of the pain that NNESTs are subjected to. Administrators and faculty in charge of hiring language instructors should take into account the many factors that contribute to the effectiveness of language instructors, and not necessarily give preference to the NESTs on the basis of color, accent, or birth.

6.14 Suggestions for Future Studies

Future studies should be conducted to investigate the variables that influenced students' responses. For example, a similar study with longitudinal design would allow a more detailed analysis of students' perceptions. Thus, students' perceptions of their teachers may be taken at the beginning of the first term of the intensive English courses and then at the end of the last term of these courses. This would allow students to have a vast knowledge about their NESTs and NNESTs and would reveal the effect of time on their perceptions.

Studies concerning the different contexts in Lebanon are also crucial. It is not known yet whether the attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in other contexts in Lebanon are similar to those of the students and teachers in the Bekaa governorate of Lebanon. Another type of studies should be conducted in the future is studies about the perceptions of the administrators of the IEP programs being the ones who are directly involved in the hiring process of teachers.

Finally, studies that would take segments of this study (such as the definition of nativeness or teacher-student personal interaction) and investigate the issues on a larger scale are strongly recommended. Indeed this study touched on several points, but its results cannot be confirmed, supported or refuted, either because no similar studies were conducted in the same context or because of the small number of participants involved in it.

6.15 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the perceptions of EFL students, NESTs and NNESTs, to survey questionnaires and semi-structures interviews used to investigate the participants' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. The chapter also presented implications for future studies and described limitations regarding technical difficulties as well as the overall scope of the study.

The overarching goal of this research was to examine the validity of the assumption which claims that the native English speaking teachers are the best teachers of English. Its aim was to raise the awareness of whoever is involved in the field of teaching such as administrators, recruiters, teachers, students, and students' parents that NNESTs have many advantages that should not be overlooked. It is hoped that these findings will prove useful to all those involved in the English learning and teaching field especially to the NNESTs and to raise their awareness and self-confidence.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Teacher questionnaire:

This research is being conducted by an educational doctorate student at the University of Exeter. Your participation is entirely anonymous and voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty. **Your teacher will NOT see your answers and your answers will NOT affect your grades.** Return of this questionnaire implies your consent to participate in this research. This questionnaire asks about your perceptions towards native English speaking teachers and non-native English speaking teachers.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

I-BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Please answer the following questions about yourself:

1. Gender: (Please circle one): a- Male b- Female

2. Country of origin: (Please fill in the space) _____

3. Age: (Please circle one)

a- 17- 20 b- 21 -23 c- 24-26 d- 27-29 e- 30 or above

4- Which of the following is your mother tongue?

a- Arabic b- English c- French d- Other: Please specify:

5- Have you ever had a course with a native English speaking teacher in the university where you are studying now? (Please choose one)

a- Yes b- No

6- Your English teacher is:

a- A native speaker of English b- a non-native speaker of English c- not sure

NESTs are native English speaking teachers

NNESTs are non-native English speaking teachers

*II-I would like to know your opinion about the issue of **native** versus **non-native** English language teachers. Below are some statements about the issue. Please indicate whether you **agree** or **disagree** with these statements. Please be as honest as possible. Confidentiality will be strictly observed in this survey. Answer with one of the following:*

Strongly Disagree: 1 Disagree: 2 Neither Agree nor Disagree: 3 Agree: 4 Strongly Agree: 5

| Questions | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 1. In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she has a white color of skin . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I can categorize my teacher as a native or non-native English speaker of English based on his or her accent . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was born in an English speaking country . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she grew up in an English speaking country . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she can produce spontaneous discourse in English . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was raised with native speaking parents . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 7. I will develop better grammatical skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I will learn more vocabulary words when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. My pronunciation will improve better when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. My listening skills will improve better when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. I will develop better reading skills when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I will become a more fluent speaker when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I will become a better writer of English when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. I will learn better about different cultures when I am taught by a NEST than when I am taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. In my opinion, native English speakers make the best English language teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I can learn English just as well from a NEST as I can from a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 17. A NEST helps his/her students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. A NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. A NNEST who speaks the students' first language shows more empathy to the needs of his or her students in learning the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. A NNEST provides a better learner model to his/her students than a NEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. The NEST has higher self-confidence using the English language than the NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. The accent of the NEST makes him/her a better English language teacher than the NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. The NNEST who speaks the students' first language (L1) is more knowledgeable of the students' culture than the NEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. The NEST is more competent in using the English language than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. A NNEST can provide students with more information about the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Classroom behavior and responsibility | | | | | |
| 26. A NEST prepares his or her lesson more carefully than a NNEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27. A NEST is a better teacher than a NNEST because he or she does not use the students' first language in class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. A NEST is more strict in class than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. A NEST uses a variety of materials in the classroom more than a NNEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. A NNEST is more exam-oriented than a NEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

31- What in your opinion makes a “good” English language teacher? Please explain in the lines below.

If you are interested in taking part in a more in-depth interview, please leave your name, phone number, and email address.

- a- Name: _____
- b- Telephone number: _____
- c- Email address: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION

Appendix A (1)
Interview with Teachers

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Categories of Enquiry:

- A- Definition of terms
- B- Advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses)
- C- Certain areas of language
- D- Cultural awareness
- E- Teacher's responsibility in the classroom
- F- Personal interaction

The interview further explores some of the categories of enquiry from the questionnaire. Categories E and F are not included in the questionnaire. The other four categories are included in the questionnaire, but in the interview they are included as open-ended questions, with the aim of getting unprompted views and perceptions.

Category of Enquiry A: Definition of terms

Q.1: What in your opinion are the definitions of a native English language teacher and a non-native English language teacher?

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by?*

Probe: *What do you think about a case when?*

Probe: *Can you give an example of?*

Probe: *Can you explain why.....?*

Q2. How will the labels (NEST/NNEST) affect your professional life?

Probe: *Does being a NEST or a NNEST have any effect on you finding a job or on being promoted? Does it affect your contract or your image with different people (students, colleagues, parents, or administrators)?*

(NB: Defining the terms NESTs and NNESTs right from the start will form the cornerstone of the interview and the background upon which the interviewees will build further perceptions about NESTs and NNESTs and will give insight on the effect that these terms have on the career of the teacher.)

Category of Enquiry B: Advantages and disadvantages

Q.1: What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)?

(Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

Probe: Can you explain what you mean by

Probe: Can you give an example of

Probe: Can you explain why (NEST or NNEST) have an advantage/disadvantage in this area (mention the area)?

Q.2: What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NNESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)?

(Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

Probe: Can you explain what you mean by

Probe: Can you give an example of

Probe: Can you explain why (NEST or NNEST) have an advantage/disadvantage in this area (mention the area)?

(NB: Teachers' perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs will give a clearer view on NESTs and NNESTs and how these two cohorts of teachers function in the various domains of teaching.)

Category of Enquiry C: Certain areas of language

Q1. Are there any areas of language teaching where NESTs/NNESTs are considered better than their counterparts?

(Answers might be related to areas of language teaching like reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, listening, fluency, testing, and culture)

Probe: Can you explain why?

Probe: Can you give an example?

Q2. Are there any areas of language (linguistic ability) where NESTs/NNESTs are considered better than their counterparts?

(Answers might be related to areas of language like pronunciation, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, listening, fluency, and writing)

Probe: Can you explain why?

Probe: Can you give an example?

(NB: This question will allow student participants to elaborate on the language skills and other areas of language teaching that are included in the questionnaire and to mention some others that were not included in the questionnaire as it was not possible to include all.)

Category of Enquiry D: Cultural awareness

Q1. Who in your opinion gives his/her students more information about various cultures, a NEST or a NNEST? Why?

Probe: *Who teaches the culture of the native speakers/non-native speakers better?*

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

(NB: This question will elicit the perceptions of the student participants regarding the effect of the teachers' cultural background on their teaching. It will give students the chance to elaborate more on this important point.)

Category of Enquiry E: Teachers' responsibility in the classroom

Q1. What are the teacher's responsibilities in the classroom?

Probe: *What kind of responsibilities do you hold in your own classroom?*

(Answers might be related to: preparation of lessons, preparation of tests, class discipline, using first language, using a variety of materials, teaching approaches, classroom management, interaction with students, finishing the material on time, etc).

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by?*

Probe: *Can you give an example of?*

Q2. What does it mean to say "I am responsible for something?"

Probe: *Can you give an example of something you have been "responsible" for recently in the classroom?*

Probe: *Is considered part of your responsibility as a teacher?*

Appendix B:

Student questionnaire:

This research is being conducted by an educational doctorate student at the University of Exeter. Your participation is entirely anonymous and voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty. **Your administrators or colleagues will NOT see your answers and your answers will NOT affect your job or your relationship with your colleagues.** Return of this questionnaire implies your consent to participate in this research. This questionnaire asks about your perceptions towards native English speaking teachers and non-native English speaking teachers.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

NESTs are native English speaking teachers (Teachers who speak English as their first language)

NNESTs are non-native English speaking teachers (Teachers who do not speak English as their first language)

I-BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

- 1. Gender: (Please choose one)** a- Male b- Female
- 2. Country of origin:** (Please fill in the space) _____
- 3- Which of the following is your mother tongue?**
a- Arabic b- English c- French d- Others: Please specify: _____
- 4- Academic qualification: (Please choose one)**
a- Bachelors b- Masters c- PhD d- Others: Please specify: _____
- 5- Years of EFL/ESL teaching experience: (Please choose one)**
a- 1-5 years b- 6-10 years c- 11-15 years d- 16 years and above
- 6- Do you consider yourself a native or a non-native speaker of English?**
a- native b- non-native

NESTs are native English speaking teachers

NNESTs are non-native English speaking teachers

*II-I would like to know your opinion about the issue of **native** versus **non-native** English language teachers. Below are some statements about the issue. Please indicate whether you **agree** or **disagree** with these statements. Please be as honest as possible. Confidentiality will be strictly observed in this survey. Answer with one of the following:*

Strongly Disagree: 1 Disagree: 2 Neither Agree nor Disagree: 3 Agree: 4 Strongly Agree: 5

| Questions | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Perceptions about the definition of the labels NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 1- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she has a white color of skin . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2- I can categorize a teacher as a native or non-native English speaker of English based on his or her accent . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was born in an English speaking country . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she grew up in an English speaking country . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she can produce spontaneous discourse in English . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6- In my opinion, a teacher is considered a native speaker of English if he or she was raised with native speaking parents . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Overall learning with NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 7- A student will develop better grammatical skills when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8- A student will learn more vocabulary words when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9- A student's pronunciation will improve better when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10- A student's listening skills will improve better when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11- A student will develop better reading skills when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12- A student will become a more fluent speaker when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13- A student will become a better writer of English when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14- A student will learn better about different cultures when he or she is taught by a NEST than when taught by a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15- In my opinion, native English speakers make the best English language teachers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16- In my opinion, a student can learn English just as well from a NEST as he or she can from a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs | | | | | |
| 17- A NEST helps his/her students develop more positive attitudes towards learning English than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language is more capable of predicting students' difficulties in learning the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19- A NNEST who speaks the students' first language shows more empathy to the needs of his or her students in learning the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20- A NNEST provides a better learner model to his/her students than a NEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21- The NEST has higher self-confidence using the English language than the NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22- The accent of the NEST makes him/her a better English language teacher than the NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23- The NNEST who speaks the students' first language (L1) is more knowledgeable of the students' culture than NEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24- The NEST is more competent in using the English language than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25- A NNEST can provide students with more information about the English language. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Classroom behavior and responsibility | | | | | |
| 26- A NEST prepares his or her lesson more carefully than a NNEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27- NEST is a better teacher than a NNEST because he or she does not use the students' first language in class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28- A NEST is more strict in class than a NNEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29- A NEST uses a variety of materials in the classroom more than a NNEST does. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30- A NNEST is more exam-oriented than NEST . | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

31- What in your opinion makes a “good” English language teacher? Please explain in the lines below.

If you are interested in taking part in a more in-depth interview, please leave your name, phone number, and email address.

- b- Name: _____
- c- Telephone number: _____
- d- Email address: _____

☞ THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION ☞

Appendix B (1)

Interview with students:

NESTs are native English speaking teachers

NNESTs are non-native English speaking teachers

Interview with student participants

Please answer the following questions about **NESTs** and **NNESTs** with as many details as possible. If you do not know how to say something in English, feel free to say it in your own language.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Categories of Enquiry:

- A- Definition of terms
- B- Advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses)
- C- Certain areas of language
- D- Cultural awareness
- E- Teacher's responsibility in the classroom
- F- Personal interaction

The interview further explores some of the categories of enquiry from the questionnaire. Categories E and F are not included in the questionnaire. The other four categories are included in the questionnaire, but in the interview they are included as open-ended questions, with the aim of getting unprompted views and perceptions.

Category of Enquiry A: Definition of terms

Q.1: What in your opinion are the definitions of a native English language teacher and a non-native English language teacher?

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by*?

Probe: *What do you think about a case when*?

Probe: *Can you give an example of*?

Probe: *Can you explain why.....?*

(NB: Defining the terms NESTs and NNESTs right from the start will form the cornerstone of the interview and the background on how the interviewees perceive NESTs and NNESTs and will give insight on the effect that these terms have on the career of the teacher.)

Category of Enquiry B: Advantages and disadvantages

Q.1: What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)?

(Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by*?

Probe: *Can you give an example of*?

Probe: *Can you explain why (NEST or NNEST) have an advantage/disadvantage in this area (mention the area)?*

Q.2: What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NNESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)?

(Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by*?

Probe: *Can you give an example of*?

Probe: *Can you explain why (NEST or NNEST) have an advantage/disadvantage in this area (mention the area)?*

(NB: Students' perceived strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs will give a clearer view on NESTs and NNESTs and how these two cohorts of teachers function in the various domains of teaching.)

Category of Enquiry C: Certain areas of language

Q1. Are there any areas of language teaching where NESTs/NNESTs are considered better than their counterparts?

(Answers might be related to areas of language teaching like reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, listening, fluency, testing, and culture)

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

Q2. Are there any areas of language (linguistic ability) where NESTs/NNESTs are considered better than their counterparts?

(Answers might be related to areas of language like pronunciation, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, listening, fluency, and writing)

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

(NB: This question will allow student participants to elaborate on the language skills and other areas of language teaching that are included in the

questionnaire and to mention some others that were not included in the questionnaire as it was not possible to include all.)

Category of Enquiry D: Cultural awareness

Q1. Who in your opinion gives you more information about various cultures, a NEST or a NNEST? Why?

Probe: *Who teaches the culture of the native speakers/non-native speakers better?*

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

(NB: This question will elicit the perceptions of the student participants regarding the effect of the teachers' cultural background on their teaching. It will give students the chance to elaborate more on this important point.)

Category of Enquiry E: Teachers' responsibility in the classroom

Q1. What are the teacher's responsibilities in the classroom?

Probe: *In your opinion, what kind of responsibilities does your teacher hold in the classroom?*

(Answers might be related to: preparation of lessons, preparation of tests, class discipline, using first language, using a variety of materials, teaching approaches, classroom management, interaction with students, finishing the material on time, etc).

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by?*

Probe: *Can you give an example of?*

Q2. What does it mean to say "I am responsible for something?"

Probe: *Is considered part of a teacher's responsibility?*

Category of Enquiry F: Personal interaction

Q1. What is the difference, if any, between the type of relationship you have with your NESTs and the one you have with your NNESTs?

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

Probe: *Do you think that sharing the students' same culture (religion, ethnicity, language, etc.) helps a teacher develop rapport with students?*

Q2. When you have a personal problem that is affecting your academic achievement, do you feel more comfortable discussing it with your NEST or with your NNEST?

Probe: *How do you justify your answer?*

Q3. If you had a say in your choice of teachers, why would you prefer a NEST/NNEST to take an English language course with?

Probe: *Can you describe your feelings when you know that the teacher you are going to take an English course with is a NEST/NNEST? (Answers might be: anxious, excited, suspicious, at ease, happy, content, etc.)*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

Q4. In your opinion, is there any difference in the way a NEST or a NNEST motivates you to study English?

Probe: *Could you give an example?*

Probe: *Can you explain what you mean by?*

Q5. Have you ever felt that you have more respect or admiration for your teacher because he/she is a NEST or a NNEST?

Probe: *Can you explain why?*

Probe: *Can you give an example?*

(NB: It is likely that certain teachers like to interact with students on the personal level while others like to keep a distance. This question will reveal information that is not included in the questionnaire regarding teacher interaction with students.)

Appendix C: The Arabic version of the Student Questionnaire:

هذا البحث يقوم به طالب دكتورا في التعليم في جامعة إكستر (Exeter) مشاركتكم ستكون اختيارية ويتمام السرية. يمكنكم رفض المشاركة أو الإنسحاب في أي وقت بدون أي جزاء. مدرسكم لن يرى أجوبتكم كما أنّ أجوبتكم سوف لن تؤثر على علامتكم. إعادة هذا المسح الإحصائي يعني الموافقة الضمنية للمشاركة فيه. هذا المسح الإحصائي يسأل عن آرائكم تجاه مدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية الأصليين (من أصول أميركية أو إنكليزية إلخ) ومدرّسي اللغة الأجنبية الأجنب (عرب وما شابه).

شكراً لمساعدتكم

* المدرسون أبناء البلد الأصليين: لغتهم الإنكليزية هي اللغة الأم

* المدرسون أبناء البلد الأجنب: لغتهم الإنكليزية ليست اللغة الأم (لغتهم الأم عربية أو فرنسية إلخ)

I. معلومات عن خلفية الطلاب:

الرجاء الإجابة عن هذه الأسئلة عن نفسك:

1. الجنس: (الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة) أ- ذكر ب- أنثى

2. بلد المنشأ: (الرجاء إملأ الفراغ)

3. العمر (الرجاء إختيار جواب واحد)

أ- 20-17 ب- 23-21 ج- 26-24 د- 29-27 هـ - 30 أو أكثر

4. مؤهلاتك العلمية: (الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة)

أ- بكالوريوس ب- ماجستير ج- دكتورا د- أخرى:

5. أي من اللغات التالية لغتك الأم؟

أ- العربية ب - الانجليزية ج - الفرنسية د -أخر: حدد

6. هل سبق لك ودرست مادة مع مدرس أصلي (أمريكي أو بريطاني إلخ) في الجامعة حيث تدرس الآن؟

(الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة): أ - نعم ب - لا

7. مدرّسك للغة الانجليزية: أ- أصلي (أمريكي،بريطاني، إلخ) ب- أجنبي (عربي إلخ) ج - غير متأكد

أودّ المعرفة رأيكم حولّ موضوع مدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية الأصليين أبناء البلد (إنكليز، أميركان) ومدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنب(عرب، فرنسيين إلخ). في الأسفل بعض الآراء حول هذا الموضوع. الرجاء التعبير إذا كنتم

توافقون (Agree) أو لا توافقون (Disagree) مع هذه الآراء. الرجاء الإجابة بصدق. سيتم التقيّد بالسريّة بشكل مطلق في هذا البحث العلمي. أجب على الآراء التالية باختيارك إجابة واحدة من التالي.

- المدرّس ابن البلد الأصلي NEST: المدرّس من أصل أميركي أو إنكليزي أو كندي أو أسترالي أو نيوزيلندي.
 - المدرّس الأجنبي NNEST: المدرّس من أصل عربي أو فرنسي أو أي بلد غير أصلي.
- 1- أرفض بشدة 2- أرفض 3- لا أوافق ولا أرفض 4- أوافق 5- أوافق بشدة

آراء حول تعريف المدرّس الأصلي والمدرّس الأجنبي:

- (1) بحسب رأيي، يعتبر المدرّس أصلياً إذا كان من أصحاب البشرة البيضاء.
- (2) أستطيع أن أصنّف مدرس اللغة الإنكليزية كمدرّس أصلي أو أجنبي على أساس لكتته.
- (3) بحسب رأيي، يعتبر مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية أصلياً إذا ولد في بلد لغته الأم هي الإنكليزية.
- (4) بحسب رأيي، يعتبر مُدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية أصلياً إذا ترعرع في بلد لغته الأم هي الإنكليزية.
- (5) بحسب رأيي، يعتبر مُدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية أصلياً إذا كان باستطاعته تكلم الإنكليزية بشكل عفوي.
- (6) بحسب رأيي، يعتبر مُدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية أصلياً إذا تربّى مع أهل أصليين.

التعلّم مع المدرّس الأصلي والمدرّس الأجنبي:

- (1) سيطوّر التلميذ مهاراته في قواعد اللغة الإنكليزية بشكل أفضل عندما يدرّسه مدرّس أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (2) سيتعلم التلميذ مفردات أكثر في اللغة الإنكليزية عندما يدرّسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (3) سيتحسّن لفظ التلميذ باللغة الإنكليزية بشكل أفضل عندما يدرّسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (4) ستتحسن مهارات التلميذ السمعية باللغة الإنكليزية بشكل أفضل عندما يدرّسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (5) سيصبح التلميذ متكلماً فصيحاً (بطلاقة) باللغة الإنكليزية عندما يدرّسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (6) ستتحسن مهارات التلميذ بالكتابة باللغة الإنكليزية بشكل أفضل عندما يدرّسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرّسه مدرّس أجنبي.

- (7) سيتعلم التلميذ عن الثقافات المختلفة بشكل أفضل عندما يدرسه مدرّس لغة إنكليزية أصلي عما إذا كان يدرسه مدرّس أجنبي.
- (8) بحسب رأيي، مدرّسو اللغة الإنكليزية الأصليين هم أفضل مدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (9) بحسب رأيي، يستطيع التلميذ أن يتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية من المدرّس الأصلي تماماً كما يستطيع أن يتعلمها من المدرّس الأجنبي.

آراء حول نقاط القوة ونقاط الضعف لمدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية الأصليين ومدرّسي اللغة الإنكليزية

الأجانب.

- (1) يساعد المدرّس الأصلي تلاميذه أكثر من المدرّس الأجنبي على تطوير مواقف إيجابية تجاه تعلم اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (2) عند المدرّس الأجنبي الذي يتكلم لغة التلاميذ الأم القدرة بشكل أكبر من المدرّس الأصلي على التنبيه بالمشاكل التي يواجهها التلاميذ في تعلمهم للغة الإنكليزية.
- (3) المدرّس الأجنبي الذي يتكلم لغة التلاميذ الأم عنده القدرة أكثر من المدرّس الأصلي على التعاطف مع احتياجات التلاميذ على تعلم اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (4) يشكّل المدرّس الأجنبي نموذجاً تعليمياً أفضل لتلاميذه من المدرّس الأجنبي بالنفس عند استعمال اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (5) عند المدرّس الأصلي ثقة أكبر من المدرّس الأجنبي بالنفس عند استعمال اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (6) لكنه مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي تجعل منه مدرّساً أفضل للغة الإنكليزية من المدرّس الأجنبي.
- (7) يتمتع المدرّس الأجنبي الذي يتكلم لغة التلاميذ الأم بمعرفة أكبر عن ثقافة التلاميذ من المدرّس الأصلي.
- (8) يتمتع مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي بكفاءة تفوق كفاءة مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي عند استعمال اللغة الإنكليزية.
- (9) يستطيع مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي تزويد تلاميذه بمعلومات أوفر حول اللغة الإنكليزية.

تصرفات ومسؤوليات المدرّس في الصف:

- (1) يحضر المدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي درسه بتأن أكثر من مدرس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي.
- (2) مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي هو أفضل من مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي لأنه لا يستعمل لغته الأم في الصف.
- (3) مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي قاس في الصف أكثر من مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي.
- (4) يتنوع مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي باستعماله لأدوات الصف المختلفة أكثر ممّا يفعل مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي.

5) طريقة تدريس مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأجنبي أكثر توجهاً نحو الإمتحانات مما هي طريقة مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الأصلي.

6) ما هي برأيك الخصائص التي تكوّن مدرّس لغة إنكليزية جيّد؟ الرجاء الشرح على الأسطر التالية:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

إذا كنت ترغب بالمشاركة في مقابلة معمّقة، الرجاء ترك اسمك، رقم هاتفك، وبريدك الإلكتروني:

أ- الإسم:

ب- رقم الهاتف:

ج- البريد الإلكتروني:

نشكر لكم مساعدتكم

Appendix D:

Directions for the Distribution and Collection of the Student Questionnaire

1) *If your students receive and fill out the questionnaires in class:*

- It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that the students receive the questionnaires **IN CLASS** and not outside of class!
- Take enough questionnaires for every student in the class and a **LARGE ENVELOPE**.
- Enter the classroom about 15 minutes before the end of class, **ASK THE TEACHER TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM**, and quickly introduce the research this way:
 - You can find more information about this research study on the first page of the questionnaire.
 - You can participate if you want but you don't have to. You will **NOT** be penalized if you do not want to participate! Your decision will **NOT** affect your grades.
 - The questionnaire is written in English and in Arabic and you are free to choose any of the two languages.
 - Your teachers will **NOT** see your answers!
 - You are asked to answer some questions about your English teacher **IN THIS CLASS**.
 - **PLEASE FILL OUT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION SECTION**.
 - Please fill out the questionnaires **RIGHT NOW**, if you decide to participate, and place them in this large envelope when you are done.
 - When the envelopes are full, **SEAL THEM IN FRONT OF THE STUDENTS** and send them to me.

2) *If your students receive the questionnaires at the end of class and fill them out OUTSIDE OF CLASS:*

- It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that the students receive the questionnaires **IN CLASS** and not outside of class!
- Take enough questionnaires for every student in the class,
- Enter the classroom five minutes before the end of class, **ASK THE TEACHER TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM**, and quickly introduce the research this way:
 - You can find more information about this research study on the first page of the questionnaire.
 - You can participate if you want but you don't have to. You will **NOT** be

penalized if you do not want to participate! Your decision will **NOT** affect your grades.

- The questionnaire is written in English and in Arabic and you are free to choose any of the two languages.
- Your teachers will **NOT** see your answers!
- You are asked to answer some questions about your English teacher **IN THIS CLASS**.
- **PLEASE FILL OUT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION SECTION**
- Please fill out the questionnaires **RIGHT NOW**, if you decide to participate, and place them in this large envelope when you are done.
- When the envelopes are full, **SEAL THEM IN FRONT OF THE STUDENTS** and send them to the secretary or whoever is in charge.
 - Have someone ready to collect the student questionnaires, place them in big envelopes, and send them to me.

THANK YOU!

Appendix E: Consent Form

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.
I understand that: There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation. I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me. Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymized form

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

(Signature of participant)
.....

(Printed name of participant)
.....

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s) Contact phone number of researcher(s):

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

..... ziad_hadla@hotmail.com or zh210@exeter.ac.uk
.....

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix F: Ethical Research Form

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH



Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION / THESIS

You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php> and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

Your name: Ziad Hadla

Your student no: 570027330

Degree/Programme of Study: Doctorate in Educational EdD

Project Supervisor(s): Li Li and Jill Cadorath

Your email address: zh210@ex.ac.uk and ziad_hadla@hotmail.com

Tel: 00961 3 617960

Title of your project:

Student and Teacher Perceptions of native and Non-native English Speaking Teachers
in the Lebanese Context

Brief description of your research project:

The question of whether the native English speaking teacher makes a better English language teacher is controversial. However, English-language program administrators in most contexts still prefer to hire a native English speaker to teach the English language. This is viewed by many researchers as “linguistic imperialism” (Philipson, 1992), where the people of the “center” a term used by Kashru (1982) to refer to what is known as native-speakers of English, practice various means of power to manipulate other peoples from a linguistic perspective and to marginalize their languages or abolish them completely, thus paving the way for English to take over and be the international language. This deliberate act leaves its detrimental effects on languages worldwide and affects people’s cultures and traditions.

Every day, the number of students seeking to learn English grows bigger and simultaneously the number of English language teachers also grows bigger. Despite the need for new teachers every day, and despite the fact that non-native speakers, or what is known by Kashru (1982) as the people of the “periphery,” outnumber the native speakers of English, yet administrators, parents and even students themselves still fall in what is known as the *native speaker fallacy* (Philipson, 1992) thinking that a native English language teacher makes a better teacher.

This controversial issue takes place worldwide and Lebanon is not an exception. After World War I, Lebanon was under the French mandate for around 25 years and French was the dominant language then. However, the teaching of English in Lebanon has witnessed steady expansion since 1946, the year the government of the newly independent Lebanon introduced English as a foreign language (EFL) into the Lebanese public school system on par with French, the language of the former colonizer (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999). This new state of affairs has been motivated by the realization among all sectors of Lebanese society of the importance of proficiency in English for pursuing higher education and for being a gatekeeper for better jobs in the modern world.

By the end of the civil war, in 1990, many newly established universities started to exist with English as the medium of instruction and they all have what is known as the Intensive English Program (IEP) to provide students who come from a weak background with the necessary English language skills they need to cope with a program that is completely offered in English.

The first objective of this study is to verify and extend previous findings regarding self-perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs (Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Lee, 2000; Liu, 1999b; Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Tang, 1997). The second objective of this study is to investigate English as a foreign language (EFL) students’ perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, thus filling in the gaps of previous research in the Lebanese context. In Lebanon, there have been only a few studies that examined the perceptions of teachers and students of NESTs and NNESTs (See: Yusuf, 2004; Hadid, 2004); however, no research study in the Lebanese context has yet covered both teachers and students’ perceptions together in one study. The third objective of this study is to try to examine if there is any compatibility or mismatch between the teachers and students’ perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. The overarching goal of this research is to explore

the validity of the assumption that only native English speaking teachers are competent EFL teachers. It is not the goal of this study, however, to claim that native English speaking teachers are incompetent EFL teachers or that non-native English speaking teachers are the only competent teachers.

These goals will be reached by examining the perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs as well as the perceptions of students regarding NESTs and NNESTs. Using the mixed method approach, I resolved to choose both questionnaires and interviews as methods for data collection. The mixed method approach was chosen to collect data for many reasons. First, I want to address a wider range of questions than quantitative methods alone would allow. Second, I want to draw from the strengths and to minimize the weaknesses of both methods. Third, the mixed method approach has its direct engagement in the complexity encountered by researchers in culturally diverse communities and complex social or educational contexts. Finally, the two methods of data collection are considered more of a continuum rather than a dichotomy. Questionnaires and interviews will be used in order to obtain and triangulate quantitative and qualitative data. The potential outcomes that might come from the data analysis of this research study are that both groups of teachers have areas of strengths and weaknesses. What distinguishes an EFL teacher is not his or her accent or color of skin but his or her training in the field of education. Both groups are complementary and it would be an asset if students had the chance to be taught by both. It would be unfair thus, for those in charge to prefer a native speaker in the hiring process. A NNEST deserves an equal chance because he or she has a lot to offer to TESOL.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

- Three Intensive English Programs from three universities in Lebanon, namely the Lebanese International University (LIU), the American University of Science and Technology (AUST), and the American University of Lebanon (AUL) are expected to be the context of this study.
- Around 400 student participants of different genders, various nationalities, and different age groups (ranging from 17 to 32) from (IEP) programs are expected to participate.
- Around 30 native and non-native teachers of different nationalities, genders, qualifications, and teaching experience are also expected to participate in this research.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the SELL student access on-line documents:

I will be following the research code of ethics and conduct where issues regarding respect, confidentiality, and informed consent will be carefully considered as detailed below.

Respect: The views of students will be essential in this study. I will ensure that these are listened to, respected, represented and acted upon. I will also respect individual,

cultural and role differences, including those involving age, disability, education, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital or family status and socio-economic status.

Confidentiality: Records of the data collected (including transcripts and any audio recordings) will be stored in a secure and safe place. Electronic information will only be accessed by me (researcher) with my username and password. This information will be stored on a secure system with recognized virus protection. Electronic and paper information will be locked in a secure building. Information will also be coded to ensure anonymity. This will remain anonymous in the write up of the research.

Collected written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing when it is no longer required. Any audio recording will also be disposed of digitally.

Informed Consent: It will be essential to obtain informed consent form participating universities who will allow me to take some time of the IEP sessions to collect data. Records of when, how and from whom consent was obtained, will be recorded. I will also invite the students and teachers to participate in the consent process and ensure that they are aware of what that will involve. Participants will be made aware of how the research findings will be used. Essentially, informed consent will be an ongoing process throughout the research. Participants will be reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

Data Collection

Quantitative:

Three hundred Intensive English Lebanese students from 3 universities in Lebanon, twenty-five non-native English speaking teachers and fifteen native English speaking teachers are expected to take part in this research study. Based on extensive revision of related literature and on a modified version of Moussu (2006), Ling, C & Braine, G. (2007), and Medgyes (1992), a quantitative measure using two questionnaires (4 sides A4) will be used to measure students' and teachers' perceptions. Each of the two questionnaires is divided into two sections. The first section consists of demographic information (gender, nationality, mother tongue, age or teaching experience) and the second section is developed on a Likert type of 5- point scale for data collection. There are only slight differences between the two questionnaires. These differences lie mainly in the first section. While teachers are asked about their academic qualifications and years of teaching experience, students are asked about their age and whether or not they were taught by native or non-native teachers.

The items on the scale will ask the participants about their perceptions about EFL teachers. Due to the students' relatively weak command of English, the questionnaire items of the student questionnaire will be translated to Arabic by a certified English-Arabic translator and students will be given the chance to reply in Arabic.

Qualitative:

Thirty students and fifteen teachers are expected to participate in the follow-up interview. The interview questions (1 side A4) will be translated for students into Arabic. The interviews will be recorded after taking the consent of the participants, or the questions intended for the interview might be sent to the participants via email. The data gathered from the interviews will be transcribed, unitized, categorized, and analyzed by the researcher at a later stage.

Data Analysis:

- Quantitative data will be input into the Statistical package of Social Sciences (SPSS) to allow for statistical analysis of the information. This will provide numerical data regarding students' and teachers' perceptions. It will provide an overview of the descriptive statistics, including the mean scores, standard deviation and distribution of scores.
- Qualitative information will be transcribed, unitized and categorized using a qualitative data analysis software named EZ-text. These qualitative data will be used to triangulate the quantitative data from the questionnaires.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

During the data collection, data analysis and write up, data (questionnaires, audio recordings, interview data and email data) will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a secure building. As previously mentioned, electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with his username and password. Electronic information will also be stored on a secure system, within a locked building with recognized virus protection. It will be destroyed when it is no longer required.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

Due to the sensitivity of the controversial issue of native versus non-native English language teachers, an informed consent and right to withdraw must be strictly adhered to. Students will be told that this research will not affect their grades and that their teachers will not see their responses. Teachers will be told that confidentiality is taken care of to avoid embarrassment in front of their colleagues. Students might be scared to fail exams as a result of their negative responses, and teachers might be scared to lose their jobs. It is also the responsibility of all those involved in the research to respond to any concerns raised by the participants during the period of filling out the questionnaires.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:.....date:....25.9.2011.....

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: _____ until: _____

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature):
.....**date:**.....

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

SELL unique approval reference:.....

Signed:.....date:.....
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

Appendix G:

Semi Structured Interview with Student Number 5:

Translated from the Original Arabic Version:

Category of Enquiry A: Definition of terms

Q.1: What in your opinion are the definitions of a native English language teacher and a non-native English language teacher?

A.1: I think that the NEST is the teacher who was born in England or the United States of America or Canada or Australia.

Q. What then do you name a teacher who was born in the USA but had moved to an Arab country when he was a little child? Can we call him NEST?

A. I think we can call him NEST since he carries the American passport.

Q. But what if this teacher doesn't know English? Can we still call him a NEST?

A. I think he should know English also. But how can he be born in the USA and he doesn't know English?

Q. As I told you before, he moved with his parents to an Arab country when he was a child.

A. But of course his parents speak English.

Q. Not necessarily. Aren't there Arabs in the United States of America who don't speak English?

A. Well, maybe.

Q. Do you think there are other characteristics that make a NEST?

A. Like what? Could you please give me a hint?

Q. Skin color, accent, speaking the language fluently, or maybe he must have been raised in England for example.

A. I think that the accent is very important. He also must have been born in a country like England or the United States but skin color is not important. There are many people with black color of skin in the United States.

Category of Enquiry B: Advantages and disadvantages

Q.1 What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)? (Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

A. Personally, I prefer the NNEST for many reasons but I can't deny that the NEST has many advantages and this makes many students prefer him over the NNEST.

Q. What in your opinion are these advantages?

A. I think that the NEST is more fluent in speaking the English language. He speaks it without exerting any effort and this is normal because it is his mother language. This in addition to his American or British accent that represents the real model that we as students should follow in our effort to learn English. I add to this that the American or English or any other NEST uses only the English language in the classroom which forces us as students to speak with him in English and not to use Arabic. This makes us speak more fluently and this is something positive.

Q. Who in your opinion motivates you more to learn English?

A. Honestly speaking, I find my NEST more motivating for students. She takes it easy with us and keeps pushing us to work harder. She is not strict and she does that with a continuous smile on her face.

Q. what about the behavior of the NEST in the classroom?

A. My Canadian teacher is very casual. Most of the times, she comes to class with a CD player and some handouts. She never carries books. My Lebanese teacher is more formal and he covers the book chapter by chapter. He never skips an exercise in the workbook. He is more consistent and we know exactly what is expected of us to study.”

Q.2: What advantages and disadvantages (perceived strengths and weaknesses) do you think NNESTs have when teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)? (Answers might be related to: knowledge, language proficiency, teaching approaches, cultural understanding, classroom management, behavior, interaction, use of materials, language skills, different areas of language, etc.)

A. The NNEST, especially if an Arab has certain advantages that are very difficult for a Canadian or American or Australian etc to have. Personally, I feel more comfortable with him since I feel he shares my culture. He is an individual from my society and he speaks Arabic like I do. Therefore, he can use Arabic to facilitate the understanding of many ideas that are difficult to understand in English alone.

Q. Give me an example.

A. For example, if the American teacher wanted to explain the word “patriotism” or “courage” or any other abstract word, he will find it difficult to make us understand it while the Arab teacher, and since he knows our Arabic language can use Arabic to facilitate the process. I can add that NNEST is considered our role model because he had passed by the same stages that we are passing through in our process of learning the English language. Therefore, he is more capable to understand what we are facing through the process of our learning of the language. As for the NEST, he doesn’t learn Arabic despite being in Lebanon for a long time and this is what distinguishes the NNEST from him. Therefore, how can a NEST teach another language (English) when he himself doesn’t know another language despite being in Lebanon for a long time? What kind of example is he giving for his students?

Q. But do all the NESTs who live in Lebanon lack the knowledge of Arabic?

A. I think the vast majority of them do not speak Arabic unless if they were of Arabic origins. Then they might.

Q. what about teaching grammar? Who in your opinion is better a NEST or a NNEST?

A. For sure the NNEST is better than the NEST in teaching English grammar and this is because he had exerted a lot of effort studying it and he didn't acquire it naturally like the NEST. For this reason the NNEST knows the points of difficulty that students face in their process of learning it and works on facilitating it for students.

Q. Who in your opinion is more self-confident a NEST or a NNEST?

A. I think a NEST has more self-confidence because he speaks his mother tongue. He speaks English fluently and this is what most NNESTs lack. In addition to that, we Lebanese prefer to hear the genuine accent of English. I mean that of the Americans or the British. I mean the accent that is void of any effect of the Arabic language on it and this is what most NESTs know and this is what gives them a high self-confidence. However, this doesn't know that all Lebanese teachers don't have self-confidence. Many of them are qualified and speak English fluently and have high certificates that raise their self confidence. Also, their knowledge of Arabic raises their self confidence.

Q. Who in your opinion is more empathetic with students, a NEST or a NNEST?

A. As I already told you, from my personal perspective, the NNEST is more capable of understanding his students so he is more empathetic with them.

Q. Category of Enquiry C: Certain areas of language

Q1. Are there any areas of language teaching where NESTs/NNESTs are considered better than their counterparts?

(Answers might be related to areas of language teaching like reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, listening, fluency, testing, and culture)

A. I think that the NEST is better than the NNEST in teaching speaking and listening skills. As for the NNEST, he is better in teaching grammar as I said before, and I also think he is better in teaching vocabulary words because he knows their meaning in Arabic. As I previously said, the NEST surpasses the NNESTs by the appropriate pronunciation and speaking fluently.

Category of Enquiry D: Cultural awareness

Q1. Who in your opinion gives you more information about various cultures, a NEST or a NNEST? Why?

A. I need further explanation of the question please.

Q. Who teaches the culture of the native speakers/non-native speakers better?

A. Of course nobody teaches the culture of a people better than the people themselves, since they share the same language with others and share their habits, traditions, norms, and values. Therefore, the English language teacher who comes from American, English, or Canadian origins knows more about the culture of his country and so he is more capable of carrying this culture and teaching it to his students. This culture comes from the origin and this is why it is more authentic and credible.

Q. Can you give me an example?

A. If we take a reading passage that speaks about Thanks Giving for example, some students here don't know the habits and traditions followed in the West for this Day. Here the NEST may speak about personal experiences that he lived with his family and friends and about certain traditions that people do in their country and this makes the student understand it better.

Q. Who in your opinion teaches the students' culture better?

A. Of course, here the situation is completely different. If the teacher was NNEST and he speaks the same language of the students then he is more capable of sharing their culture.

Q. Could you please explain more?

A. We learned in the "Culture" class that language is the most effective element that transforms the culture of people. From here, if the teacher and his students share the same language, this teacher is of course more capable of teaching the culture of his students who actually live this culture.

Category of Enquiry E: Teachers' responsibility in the classroom

Q1. What are the teacher's responsibilities in the classroom?

Probe: *In your opinion, what kind of responsibilities does your teacher hold in the classroom?*

(Answers might be related to: preparation of lessons, preparation of tests, class discipline, using first language, using a variety of materials, teaching approaches, classroom management, interaction with students, finishing the material on time, etc).

A. The teacher has to do most of what you have just mentioned. He has to prepare the lesson, to put exams, and at the same time to take care of the classroom management and classroom behavior. I think teaching is very difficult.

Q. In your opinion, who does this better a NEST or a NNEST?

A. It all depends on the teacher's behavior in the classroom. I personally was taught by an Arab teacher and a non-Arab teacher and I witnessed many differences in their classroom behavior.

Q. Like what? Could you please elaborate?

A. For example, the NEST comes to class in an informal casual way wearing jeans and smiling. He speaks with the students and jokes with them and takes things easy.

Q. What about the NNEST in this regard?

A. The NNEST is considered more formal in the classroom and he usually takes the matter more seriously and does not joke with students.

Category of Enquiry F: Personal interaction

Q1. What is the difference, if any, between the type of relationship you have with your NESTs and the one you have with your NNESTs?

A. I think the relation of the NNEST with his students is better than that of the NEST.

Q. Why? And do you think that sharing the students' same culture (religion, ethnicity, language, etc.) helps a teacher develop rapport with students?

A. Despite being more informal and flexible in class, we students feel that there is always a limit that separates us from him. Perhaps the reason is the culture and language. Despite being nice to us, the NEST's habits differ from ours and from our culture. The NNEST knows what I want from my behaviour and my every move in class because he shares my habits and traditions. The relation with the NNEST is better because he shares my language. He had learned the English language just like I am doing now so he feels the amount of frustration that I am passing through in learning a second language. This is why I find him more empathetic with me than the NEST who had acquired English from his birth in his own country just spontaneously.

Q. When you have a personal problem that is affecting your academic achievement, do you feel more comfortable discussing it with your NEST or with your NNEST?

A. When I have a personal problem, I usually refer to my NNEST. He might be strict in class, yet he is always on my side and follows my personal matters and gives me advice. Rarely is my NEST ready to help me.

Q. How do you justify your answer?

A. Maybe the NEST doesn't want to indulge in the social problems of a society which is not his own or maybe because he assumes that because his habits and traditions are different he is afraid so he prefers to stay away and prefers the avoidance policy. He performs his teaching job in class and goes home to continue his personal life.

Q. If you had a say in your choice of teachers, why would you prefer a NEST/NNEST to take an English language course with?

A. I will choose the NNEST for sure.

Q. Why is that?

A. Because I don't see the teacher as a machine. I don't think his job is only to give the lesson and leave without any kind of interaction with students. He has to be my role model and the one I seek when I have a problem whether this problem is related to studying or whether it is personal. This is why I prefer to be taught by a NNEST who speaks Arabic.

Q. Can you describe your feelings when you know that the teacher you are going to take an English course with is a NEST/NNEST? (Answers might be: anxious, excited, suspicious, at ease, happy, content, etc.)

A. When I realize that my teacher is a NNEST I feel more relaxed because I know that I will be able to communicate with him in the classroom if not in English then in Arabic. However, when I know that he is going to be a NEST I become more worried and this is because the difference in language and culture as I said before and because of the difficulty in interaction and communication. However, this doesn't mean that the NEST is not good. We as teachers learn a lot from him and many other students prefer him on the NNEST.

Q. Why do you think they do?

A. Each of the two groups of teachers has its own advantages and disadvantages as I said at the start and the teacher is respected for his personality and not only for his qualifications or way of teaching. I think many others are taken by the NEST and look at him with complete admiration more than the NNEST, but I, personally, don't agree with this.

Appendix H:

Arabic Version of Semi-Structured Interview with student Number 5:

مقابلة مع تلميذ رقم (5):

أ - تعريف المصطلحات:

س: 1- كيف تعرّف المدرّس الأجنبي NNEST (مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية الغير أميركي أو كندي إلخ وكيف تعرّف المدرّس غير الأجنبي (مدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية من أصول إنكليزية أو أميركية .
ج: أظن أم المدرّس غير الأجنبي NEST هو المدرّس الذي ولد في إنكلترا أو أميركا أو كندا أو أستراليا.
س: ما رأيك إذا بالمدرّس الذي ولد في أميركا ولكنه انتقل إلى بلد عربي عندما كان صغيراً في السن؟ هل ينطبق عليه تعريف NEST؟
ج: أظن أنه ينطبق عليه كونه يحمل الجواز الأميركي.
س: ولكن ماذا لو كان المدرّس لا يتقن الإنكليزية؟ هل يمكننا القول أنه NEST؟
ج: أظن أنه عليه أن يتكلم الإنكليزية أيضاً، ولكن كيف يمكن أن يكون قد ولد في أميركا ولا يتكلم الإنكليزية؟
س: كما قلت لك، إنتقل مع أهله إلى بلد عربي وهو صغير السن.
ج: ولكن على الأکید أهله يتكلمون الإنكليزية.
س: ليس بالضرورة، أليس هناك عرب في أميركا لا يتكلمون الإنكليزية؟
ج: حسناً، ربما.
س: هل تظن أن هناك خصائص أخرى تجعل من المدرّس NEST إذاً؟
ج: مثل ماذا؟ هل يمكن أن تعطيني مثلاً؟
س: لون البشرة، اللكنة، تكلم اللغة بطلاقة أو أنه عليه أن يكون قد ترعرع في بريطانيا مثلاً.
س: أظن أن اللكنة ضرورية جداً كما أن عليه أن يكون قد ترعرع في بلد مثل إنكلترا أو أميركا ولكن لون البشرة برأبي غير مهم. فهناك الكثير من الأشخاص من أصحاب البشرة السوداء في أميركا.

ب - الحسنات والسيئات:

س: 1- ما هي الحسنات والسيئات (نقاط القوة والضعف) التي وبحسب رأيك يتمتع فيها المدرّس NEST (أي المدرس من أصل بريطاني أو أميركي أو استرالي إلخ والذي يتكلم الإنكليزية كلغته الأم) عندما يدرّس اللغة الإنكليزية لغير الناطقين بها؟
(يمكن لإجابتك أن تكون مرتبطة بمعرفة المدرس باللغة وبتقنياتها، وبأساليب تدريسيها، وبفهمه للثقافة، وبإدارته للصف وبتصرفاته، وبتفاعله مع الطلاب، وباستعماله لهواد التدريس، وبمهاراته اللغوية، وبمجاللات أخرى متعلقة باللغة الإنكليزية إلخ...)
س: أنا شخصياً أفضل المدرّس (NNEST) لعدّة أسباب ولكن لا يمكنني أن أنكر أن المدرّس (NEST) لديه الكثير من الإيجابيات وهذا ما يدفع العديد من الطلاب إلى تفضيله على المدرّس NNEST.
س: ما هي برأبيك هذه الإيجابيات؟
ج: أظن أن المدرّس (NEST) يتميّز بطلاقة في اللغة. فهو يتكلمها بدون تكلف أو جهد وهذا أمر طبيعي كونها لغته الأم. هذا بالإضافة إلى لكنته الأميركية أو البريطانية التي تمثّل المثال الصحيح التي يجب علينا كطلاب أن نقلدها في سعيها إلى تعلم اللغة الإنكليزية. أضف إلى ذلك أن المدرّس الأميركي أو الإنكليزي أو أي NEST يستعمل اللغة الإنكليزية فقط في الصف وهذا يجبرنا كطلاب على التكلّم معه باللغة الإنكليزية وأن لا نستعمل العربية. هذا برأبي يدفعنا كطلاب إلى التكلّم بطلاقة أكثر وهذا شيء إيجابي.
س: من برأبيك يشجعك أكثر على تعلّم اللغة الإنكليزية؟
ج: بصراحة أن أجد أن مدرّستي NEST أكثر تشجيعاً لنا كطلاب فهي تأخذ الأمور ببساطة وتحثنا للعمل بجهد أكبر. هي غير صارمة وهي تفعل ذلك بابتسامه دائمة على وجهها.
س: وماذا عن تصرفات المدرّس NEST في الصف؟

ج: مدرستي الكندية Casual كثيراً. أغلب الأوقات هي تأتي إلى الصف حاملة CD player وبعض الأوراق. هي لا تحمل الكتب. مدرسي اللباني Formal كثيراً ويعطي الكتاب بجميع فصوله.
س: ما هي الحسنة والسيئات (نقاط القوة والضعف) التي بحسب رأيك يتمتع بها المدرس NNEST (أي المدرس من أصل عربي أو أي جنسية بريطانية أو أميركية) عندما يدرس اللغة الإنكليزية لغير الناطقين بها؟
(يمكن لإجابتك أن تكون مرتبطة بمعرفة المدرس باللغة وتقنياتها، وبأساليب تدريسيها، وبفهمه للثقافة، وبإدارته للصف وبتصرفاته، وبتفاعله مع الطلاب، وباستعماله لهواد التدريس، وبمهاراته اللغوية، وبمجالات أخرى متعلقة باللغة الإنكليزية إلخ...)

ج: المدرس NNEST وخاصة إذا كان عربياً يتمتع بصفات يصعب على المدرس الكندي أو الأميركي أو الأسترالي إلخ أن يتمتع بها. أنا شخصياً أرتاح له أكثر من حيث أنني أحس أنه يشاركني ثقافتي. فهو فرد من مجتمعي ويتكلم لغتي العربية ولذلك يمكنه أن يستعملها ليُسهل علي فهم العديد من الأفكار التي يصعب فهمها باللغة الإنكليزية وحدها.
س: أعطني مثلاً.

ج: مثلاً إذا أراد المدرس الأميركي شرح كلمة "وطنية" أو "شجاعة" أو أي كلمة غير محسوسة فإنه يواجه صعوبة لإيصالها لنا، أما المدرس العربي ولأنه يعرف لغتنا العربية فيمكنه استخدام اللغة العربية لتسهيل المهمة. أضف إلى ذلك أن المدرس NNEST يعتبر مثلاً لنا لأنه قد مرّ بنفس المراحل التي نمرّ بها في سعينا لتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية. لذلك فهو أكثر قدرة على فهم ما نواجهه من صعوبات خلال مرحلة تعلمنا للغة. أما المدرس الـ NEST، فهو برغم بقائه في لبنان لمدة طويلة، لا يتعلم العربية وهذا برأيي ما يميّز المدرس NNEST عنه. فكيف للمدرس الـ NEST أن يدرس لغة أخرى (إنكليزية) وهو نفسه لا يتعلم لغة أخرى رغم بقائه في لبنان لمدة طويلة. أي مثال يعطيه للطلاب؟

س: ولكن هل جميع الـ NEST العاملين في لبنان لا يتكلمون العربية؟

ج: أظن أن الأغلبية القسوى لا تتكلم العربية إلا إذا كانوا من أصول عربية فعندها ممكن أن يتكلموها.

س: ماذا عن تعليم قواعد اللغة الإنكليزية؟ من رأيك أفضل؟

ج: بالتأكيد المدرس NNEST أفضل من المدرس NEST بتدريس قواعد اللغة الإنكليزية وذلك لأنه درس القواعد وتعب عليها ولم يكتسبها إكتساباً بشكل طبيعي مثل الـ NEST. لهذا السبب فالمدرس NNEST يعرف نقاط الصعوبة فيها ويعمل على تسهيلها للطلاب.

س: من رأيك يتمتع بثقة أكبر بالنفس هل المدرس الـ NEST أم المدرس الـ NNEST؟

ج: أظن أن الـ NEST يتمتع بثقة أكبر بنفسه كونه يتكلم لغته الأم. فهو يتكلم الإنكليزية بطلاقة وهذا ما لا يتمتع به أغلب مدرسي اللغة الإنكليزية العرب. كما أننا نحن اللبنانيون نفضل سماع الـ NNEST الأصلية للغة الإنكليزية. أقصد تلك التي يتكلمها الأمريكيون أو البريطانيون أي الـ NNEST الخالية من تأثير اللغة العربية عليها وهذا ما يعمل عليه المدرسون الـ NESTs ليعطيهم دفعة معنوياً كبيراً. ولكن ذلك لا يعني أن كل المدرسين اللبنانيين لا يتمتعون بثقة بالنفس. فالكثير منهم مؤهلون ويتكلمون الإنكليزية بطلاقة وعندها شهادات تزيد من ثقتهم بأنفسهم. كما أن معرفتهم باللغة العربية تزيد من ثقتهم بأنفسهم.

س: من رأيك أكثر تعاطفاً مع الطلاب المدرس الـ NEST أم المدرس الـ NNEST؟

ج: كما سبق وقلت لك من وجهة نظري فالمدرس الـ NNEST أكثر فهماً لمشاكل الطلاب لذلك فهو أكثر تعاطفاً معهم.

ت - مجالات أخرى متعلقة باللغة:

س: 3- هل هناك مجالات أخرى متعلقة باللغة بحيث يعتبر أحد الفريقين NESTs/NNESTs أفضل من الآخر؟ (الأجوبة ممكن أن تكون متعلقة بمجالات تعليم اللغة مثل القراءة، الكتابة، والتكلم، والمفردات، والنطق، والقواعد، والإستماع، والطلاقة، والإمتحانات والثقافة).

ج: أظن أن الـ NEST أفضل من الـ NNEST من حيث تعليم التكلم ومن حيث مساعدة الطالب على تطوير تقنياته السمعية بشكل أفضل. أما الـ NNEST فهو أفضل من حيث تدريس قواعد اللغة الإنكليزية كما ذكرت لك سابقاً. كما أظن أنه أفضل من حيث أسلوبه بشرح المفردات لأنه يعلم معانيها باللغة العربية. كما سبق وذكرت المدرس NEST يتفوق بنظري بالنطق الصحيح وبالتكلم بطلاقة.

ث - الوعي الثقافي:

س: 1- من برأيك يعطي الطالب معلومات أكثر عن الثقافات المختلفة، هل المدرس الـ NEST أم المدرس الـ NNEST.

ج: هل يمكنك توضيح السؤال أكثر لو سمحت؟

س: من برأيك يدرّس ثقافة متكلمي اللغة الإنكليزية الأصليين بشكل أفضل؟

ج: بالطبع لا أحد يعرف ثقافة الشعب أفضل من الشعب نفسه، كونه يتكلم اللغة نفسها مع الغير ويشاركهم عاداتهم وتقاليدهم وأعرافهم وقيمهم. لذلك مدرّس اللغة الذي يتحدّر من أصول اميريكية أو إنكليزية أو كندية إلخ.. يعلم أكثر عن ثقافة بلاده وبالتالي هو أكثر قدرة على نقل هذه الثقافة وتعليمها للطلاب. هذه الثقافة تأتي من المصدر نفسه ولذلك هي موثوقة.

س: هل يمكنك أن تعطيني مثالاً؟

ج: إذا أخذنا نصاً يتكلم عن عيد الشكر مثلاً، فبعض الطلاب هنا لا يعلمون العادات والتقاليد المتبعة في الغرب عن هذا العيد. هنا يمكن للمدرّس الـ NEST التكلم عن تجارب خاصة عاشها مع عائلته وأصدقائه وعن تقاليد معينة يتبعونها في موطنهم ممّا يزيد فهم الطالب عنها بشكل أفضل.

س: من برأيك يدرّس ثقافة الطلاب بشكل أفضل؟

ج: طبعاً هنا الوضع مختلف كلياً. إذا كان المدرّس الـ NNEST ويتكلم نفس لغة الطلاب فهو بالطبع أكثر قدرة على مشاركتهم ثقافتهم.

س: هل يمكنك أن تعلق؟

ج: لقد تعلمنا في مادة "الثقافة" أن اللغة تكاد تكون أهم عنصر لنقل ثقافة الشعوب. من هنا، إذا كان المدرّس وطلابه يشاركون اللغة نفسها، فهذا المدرّس بالتأكيد أكثر قدرة على تدريب ثقافته للطلاب الذين أساساً يعيشون هذه الثقافة.

ج - مسؤولية المدرسين في الصف:

س: ما هي مسؤوليات المدرّس في الصف؟

(يمكن لإجابتك أن تكون متعلقة بتحضير الدروس، بتحضير الإمتحانات، نظام الصف، استعمال اللغة العربية بالصف، استعمال مواد مختلفة، أساليب التدريس إدارة الصف إلخ...)

ج: على المدرّس أن يقوم بأغلب الأشياء التي ذكرتها. يجب عليه أن يحضّر الدرس ويضع امتحانات وبنفس الوقت أن يهتم بإدارة الصف والسيطرة على كل التصرفات الغير منضبطة. أظن أن عمل المدرّس شاق جداً.

س: من برأيك يقوم بهذه الأشياء بشكل أفضل، هل المدرّس الـ NEST أم الـ NNEST؟

ج: الأمر يعتمد على نوع تصرف المدرس في الصف. أنا شخصياً درّسني مدرّس عربي ومدرّس غير عربي ورأيت فروقات كثيرة بطريقة التصرف بالصف.

س: مثل ماذا؟ هل يمكنك أن تحدثني أكثر لو سمحت؟

ج: مثلاً، المدرس الـ NEST يأتي إلى الصف بشكل Casual أي غير رسمي مرتدياً بنطال jeans ومبتسماً، يتكلم مع الطلاب مازحاً ويأخذ الأمور ببساطة أكثر.

س: ماذا عن المدرس الـ NNEST في هذا الخصوص؟

ج: يعتبر المدرّس الـ NNEST أكثر رسمية في الصف وهو عادة ما يأخذ الأمور بجدية ولا يمزح مع الطلاب.

ح - العلاقات الشخصية:

س: 1- ما هي الفروقات، إن وجدت، بين نوع العلاقة التي يتمتع بها المدرّس الـ NEST مع طلابه وتلك التي يتمتع بها الـ NNEST مع طلابه؟

ج: أظن أن علاقة الـ NNEST مع طلابه أفضل من الـ NEST

س: لماذا؟ هل يمكن أن تشرح بالتفصيل؟ وهل تظن أن مشاركة المدرّس للثقافة واللغة والعادات تساعد المدرّس على بناء علاقة وثيقة مع الطلاب؟

ج: رغم أن الـ NEST أكثر ليونة في الصف وأكثر عفوية، إلا أننا كطلاب نشعر بأن هناك حاجزاً يفصلنا عنه. لعلّ السبب في ذلك هو الثقافة واللغة. فعادات المدرس الـ NNEST، رغم كونه لطيفاً معنا، تختلف عن عاداتنا وثقافتنا.

المدرّس الـ NNEST يعلم ماذا أريد من تصرفاتي ومن حركاتي فهو يشاركني العادات والتقاليد. كما أن العلاقة مع المدرّس الـ NNEST تكون أفضل لأنه يشاركني اللغة وهو قد تعلم اللغة الإنكليزية مثلي فهو يشعر ما أشعر به من

صعوبة في تعلم لغة غير لغتي العربية لذلك فهو يتعاطف معي بشكل أكبر من مدرّسي الـ NEST الذي قد اكتسب اللغة الإنكليزية من صغره في بلده وبشكل تلقائي.

س: 2- إذا كان لديك مشكلة شخصية تؤثر على أدائك الأكاديمي، هل تشعر بارتياح أكبر عندما تناقشها مع مدرّس NEST أم مع مدرّس NNEST؟

ج: عندما يكون عندي مشكلة شخصية عادةً ما أُلجأ إلى مدرّسي الـ NNEST، فهو برغم كونه صارماً في الصف، إلا أنه دائماً إلى جانبي ويتابع شؤوني الخاصة ويسدي إليّ النصيحة. أما المدرّس الـ NEST فهو نادراً ما يكون جاهزاً لمساعدتي.

س: كيف تبرّر إجابتك؟

ج: المدرّس NEST ربما لا يريد الإنخراط في مشاكل لأنّ عاداته وتقاليده مختلفة فيكون عنده نوع من الخوف أو عدم الإكتراث فيفضّل البقاء بعيداً. فهو يؤدي وظيفته التعليمية في الصف ويعود لمتابعة حياته الخاصة.

س: 3- إذا كان لك رأي في اختيار مدرّسك، من تختار لتدرس الإنكليزية معه NEST أو NNEST ولماذا؟
ج: بالطبع أختار الـ NNEST

س: لماذا؟

ج: لأن المدرّس بالنسبة لي ليس فقط آلة ميكانيكية يعطي المادة ويرحل بدون أي نوع من التفاعل مع الطلاب. هو يجب أن يكون مثلي الأعلى وهو الذي أذهب إليه عندما يكون لدي مشكلة سواء أكانت ذات علاقة بالدراسة أم مشكلة شخصية. من هنا أفضل أن يكون مدرّسي NNEST ويتكلم لغتي العربية.

س: هل يمكنك وصف شعورك عندما تعرف أن مدرّسك للغة الإنكليزية سيكون NNEST/NEST؟

ج: إذا كان فأنا أشعر بارتياح أكثر لأنني أعلم أنه سيكون بمقدوري التفاهم معه في الصف. إن لم يكن بالإنكليزية فبالعربية. وعندما أعلم أنه NEST أكون أكثر قلقاً وذلك كما ذكرت بسبب إختلاف اللغة والثقافة وعدم سهولة التفاعل والتواصل. ولكن هذا لا يعني أن المدرّس NEST ليس جيداً فنحن كطلاب نتعلم منه كثيراً وكثيرون غيري يفضلونه على الـ NNEST.

س: لماذا؟

ج: لكلّ حسناته وسيئاته كما ذكرنا في البداية والمدرّس يحترم لشخصيته وليس فقط لمستواه التعليمي أو طريقته في التعليم. أظن أن الكثيرين يؤخذون بكون المدرّس NEST وينظرون إليه بعين الإعجاب أكثر من الـ NNEST، أما أنا شخصياً فلا أوافق على ذلك.

