

A Gender-Based Analyses of Saudi Freshmen Perceptions Regarding English Language Teaching Effectiveness of Native and Non-Native English Language Teachers

Dr. Eidhah Abdullah Al-Malki,

Assistant Professor, Foreign Languages Department,
Taif University, Al-Hawiyeh, Al-Taif, Saudi Arabia

Doi:10.19044/esj.2020.v16n17p93

[URL:http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n17p93](http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n17p93)

Abstract

The study in hand is a gender-based comparative analyses of Saudi freshmen regarding the effectiveness of native and non-native English language teachers (NELTs & NNELTs hence after). Relevant research studies have been consulted to develop a questionnaire to generate data. Relevant steps have been followed to determine its face validity and reliability. It was a quantitative study and the participants responded to a two-point self-developed questionnaire. Independent-samples T-test has been run to test the hypotheses set for this study and collect descriptive data to answer the research questions. The data have reported that female participants of this survey favored NNELTs more as compared to the male participants but the difference in their perceptions for majority of items in all three categories of the questionnaire was not statistically significant. Null hypotheses have been partially rejected as majority of the questionnaire items do not report statistically significant differences along gender lines. The results also reveal that the participants of this survey have preferred NELTs the most for teaching and assessment skills, professional attitudes and professional skills. The results have also indicated that NNELTs have been favored in teaching and assessing grammar and reading, providing relaxed atmosphere, using innovative strategies, motivating their students to learn, behaving in a more responsible manner, responding to their students questions better, understanding their students' learning difficulties, understanding their students' learning styles and preparing their students for independent learning. The findings of this empirical survey seem to suggest that both groups of English language teachers have their own strengths which bear positive overbearing in effectiveness ELT.

Keywords: ELT, language teaching, gender

Introduction

It has been reported that the number of people who are learning English language is on the rise to an extent that Kachru & Nelson (1996) stated that the ratio of non-native English language speakers is four times higher to native English speakers. Though the ratio clearly favors the non-native speakers, several 'countries such as Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait and The United Arab Emirates still consider that foreign languages should be taught by native speakers and therefore prefer to hire native speakers to teach English language. Phillipson (1992) has defined it as 'native speaker fallacy'. Alseweed (2012) has stated that "the place of nonnative speakers as English teachers has probably been an issue as long as English has been taught internationally" (p. 42). Crystal (1995, p. 106) has stated that English has been increasingly accepted as a second language in the various regions of the world because of the following six major reasons. According to him, historical factor is the first reason because of the legacy of imperialism of Britain and the USA followed by the internal political reasons: as it provides the opportunity to provide a neutral medium to communicate among various ethnic groups. The third reason stated by him is the 'external economic reasons' facilitating business and trade and the next reason is 'practical' one as English is an accepted language for air traffic control, various emergency services as well as tourism. The fifth reason is the availability of knowledge related to fields of science, technology and academics which is available in English and the last reason is entertainment such as popular music, video games, movies and the Internet in English language.

Literature Review

It is stated that "there is worldwide demand for teachers of English" (Cox, 2007, p. 3) and as far the teachers of English as Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are concerned, there has been a discussion about the suitability of NELTs and NNELTs. It is argued that this controversy exists "because of the stereotype that takes for granted that a native speaker is by nature the best person to teach their foreign language" (Garcia, 1997, p. 69). Whereas lot of research has also offered valuable insights into the fact that there does not exist any empirical ground for this assumption (Mora, 2006; Celik, 2006; Davies, 2003; Suarez, 2000; Medgyes, 1999). A host of research studies have been conducted worldwide to investigate the effectiveness of NELTs and NNELTs (Wu & Ke, 2009; Liu, 2008; Ling & Braine, 2007; Braine, 2005; Madrid, 2004; Maum; 2002). The Gulf countries are not an exception in this regard and several studies have also been conducted to investigate this controversy (see for instance, Javid, 2016; Alseweed & Daif-Allah, 2012; Daif-Allah, 2010; Al-Issa, 2005; Zughoul, 2003).

It has been reported that in the realm of ELT, there exists a discrimination between native and non-native English language teachers. Strong pedagogical implications are linked to the belief of “birthright mentality” (Thomas, 1999, p.6) and “the belief that being a native speaker is a qualification for language teaching in itself” (Odhuu, 2014, p.6). A growing mass of research seems to suggest that as ELT professionals, we need to actively resist what Holliday (2005) calls ‘native speakerism.’ This unjustified tilt towards NELTs results in excluding NNELTs from employment. Likewise, it is reported that there does not exist any pedagogical basis for this belief that NELTs have an innate ability to teach more effectively (Odhuu, 2014). Phillipson (1992) has stated that English has been enjoying a world dominance and the stake holders involved in ELT bear ‘native speaker fallacy’ (p. 195) which has been identified as one of the tenets of The Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English in 1961, though a biased approach, which states that ‘The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker’ (p. 195). Considering the scope and breadth of ELT in the modern era, it is suggested that “it is time to take our cues not from monolingual native speakers but from the multilingual NNS that constitute the majority of human beings on the planet’ (Kramsch, 1993, p. 49). Similar recommendations have been forwarded in several research studies to appreciate NNELTs and create the right conditions and norms in this respect (Llurda, 2004; Odhuu, 2014 etc.).

Medgyes (1994, p. 435) has extensively discussed the different characteristics of NELTs and NNELTs related to their teaching practices. A comparison is drawn by Medgyes between different characteristics of teaching effectiveness of both the groups. The comparison includes the analyses of four major heads. It discusses the distinguishing features that exist in the use of English language by both groups, their general attitudes, their attitudes particularly towards the employment of teaching methods and the effect of culture. Focusing on the style of English language that is used by both groups, it is argued by some linguistics that the NELTs have better command of English language. This is visible in their speaking skills which reflects their confidence and native pronunciation. On the contrary, NNELTs have comparatively less perfect speaking skills which sometimes sounds artificial, bookish and less confident. As far the general attitudes of both these groups, it is found out that the NELTs are more creative, more casual and their teaching methods show that they expect to bring the best for their students without usually sticking to strict and conventional rules. They are flexible in selecting their modes of teaching according to their needs. On the other hand, NNELTs tend to follow their ways strictly and move on cautiously and show less flexibility. NNELTs are comparatively less creative and innovative. It is because of their committed attitude that NNELTs usually go for real academic needs rather than depending upon their perceptions as done by NELTs.

Another major characteristic of NNELTs is that they are generally more considerate towards their students.

After collecting data on general attitudes of both groups, Medgyes (1994) has investigated the attitudes of both groups towards the use of teaching methodologies. A very interesting comparison has been drawn out between the two groups. Due to the general, creative and flexible attitudes of NELTs, it has been observed that they focus mainly on fluency in speaking skills. They focus on the quality of the language used and its meaning. Because of this, they tend to provide a variety of information to students by referring to different sources. Group work is encouraged which lets different ideas come forth. Casual and flexible attitude towards assignments, home tasks and errors enable the students to enhance their sensitivity by focusing mainly on the matter of the subject. They usually prefer using colloquial language that results in an environment which promotes learning. As far as the teaching methodologies of NNELTs, the most obvious trait that can be found in contrast to natives is creativity. They focus mainly on form of the subject, strict grammar rules, writing patterns and skills. Their use of formal language, providing less varied teaching material, individual work, strict attitude towards errors and more burden on students limit creativity among the students resulting in bookish, less interesting and less creative work but this kind of attitude does help achieve more disciplined academic atmosphere in classes. Furthermore, NNELTs have an advantage over natives in the case of facilitating their students by using their mother tongue. The inability of native teachers to use L1 keeps them at a disadvantageous position as compared to non-native teachers. Lastly Medgyes brings in a very important ability of NELTs which is to provide more cultural knowledge of the target language to their students as they are more familiar with their culture. NNELTs on the other hand are not well acquainted with first-hand knowledge of English culture. On the other hand, NNELTs have been found more successful in their teaching practices by virtue of their own experiences of learning English as a foreign or second language.

A growing mass of studies has been reported in the various parts of the world to investigate the effectiveness of NELTs and NNELTs. Matsuda & Matsuda (2001) have reported on the preference given to native teachers in nearly all contexts in their study. They have reported that NELTs are less in number due to lack of proper training and their population. NNELTs, on the other hand, are more in number as they come from a population that outnumbered native English people in the world. Bueno (2006) has rejected the claim of Matsuda & Matsuda (2001) and stated that NELTs may be considered better just due to some conventional beliefs, otherwise there is no such theory based on empirical data which suggests their preference over NNELTs.

Liu & Zhang (2007) have conducted research on the differences that exist between native and non-native English language university teachers in a South Chinese university. A total of 65 students were asked to complete the survey and there were only 12 males among the participants. These students were majoring in English language and literature. The main focus of the research was on the differences in general attitudes, means of instruction and teaching results of six NELTs and NNELTs. It was found out through the results of the survey that the participants experienced no major difference in the attitude of both groups towards them. As far as the mode of instruction is concerned, the participants have exhibited the fact that the material provided by NELTs was more varied as compared to NNELTs whereas NNELTs made better use of media by increasing the use of PPT and internet in classrooms. The findings of the study have also revealed that NELTs, on the other hand, used conventional media sources like the CD players and video players which the students did not prefer. In case of evaluation, NELTs were considered to be more flexible by the participants. Lastly, when the survey of the students regarding the teaching results was checked, the participants have shown more preference for the NELTs.

Torres (2004) has attempted to examine the views of immigrant and refugee learners about NELTs and NNELTs. A survey based on a 5-point Likert-scale containing 34 items was administered to 102 participants in Texas. The results suggested that the ESL students had more inclination towards NELTs as compared to NNELTs in areas like pronunciation and writing. Moreover, there were no significant differences found among the preferences given to NELTs and NNELTs as far the other areas of teaching practices were concerned.

In a study conducted by Madrid (2004), influence of both NELTs and NNELTs on the effectiveness of English language teaching practices in their classrooms has been measured. Views of both the students and teachers were collected, manually entered, coded and analyzed to present the results and findings. Results showed that the students did not prefer natives much whereas, the teachers preferred native teachers due to their advantages in teaching and learning processes. Although differences were found between the views of both groups of the participants, the results have not reported and significant differences in their preferences towards NELTs and NNELTs.

Wu & Ke (2009) have investigated the perceptions of Taiwanese students from a state University about the effectiveness of NELTs. Their research focused on the general views of students about their NELTs and also their mutual expectations. Results generated from the data collected through 107 participants showed that the students felt encouraged with their NELTs, aspired for better interaction and expected to be less burdened with tests and

assignments. The native teachers on the other hand complained about the passiveness and lack of participation among the students.

An analysis of the perceptions of Saudi EFL learners about NELTs and NNELTs was drawn by Al-Seweed (2012) at Qasim University. The study included 169 participants who have been interviewed through a semi-structures protocol. The results collected from their interviews have suggested that they prefer NELTs more as compared to their non-native counterparts. The paradigm has suggested preference towards the natives which rather increases with the students reaching higher levels. It was also found that the previous learning experiences of the participants have also affected their perceptions. The results have revealed that it was mainly due to the teaching strategies of the native teachers, their favorable attitude towards non-natives and their considerate response towards the needs of the learners which made them more preferred by the students. The findings have also suggested that the participants bore reasonable preference for NNELTs.

A similar study was conducted by Xiaroru (2008) where the perceptions of Chinese EFL students were investigated regarding NELTs and NNELTs. The participants consisted of 75 male and female Chinese students who were supposed to record their perceptions through a Likert-scale questionnaire. The results have suggested that NELTs have higher language proficiency, use functional language more often and are comparatively well acquainted with the culture of the target language. In their ability to be considerate towards their students, NNELTs have been reported better due to common cultural background. NNESTs focused mainly on grammatical rules and regulations while teaching. The findings seemed to suggest that due to fluent speaking skills and accurate native pronunciation, NELTs gained an overall preference by the participants as compared to the NNELTs.

Null Hypotheses

1. There do not exist any significant differences in the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards NELTs or NNELTs as regard to their professional skills.
2. There do not exist any significant differences in the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards NELTs or NNELTs as regard to their professional attitudes.
3. There do not exist any significant differences in the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards NELTs or NNELTs as regard to their teaching and assessment skills.

Research objectives

The present study aims to:

1. explore the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the professional skills of NELTs and NNELTs.
2. explore the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the professional attitudes of NELTs and NNELTs.
3. explore the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the teaching and assessment skills of NELTs and NNELTs.

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the present study is meant to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the professional skills of NELTs and NNELTs?
2. What are the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the professional attitudes of NELTs and NNELTs?
3. What are the perceptions of male and female Saudi freshmen towards the teaching and assessment skills of NELTs and NNELTs?

Method

Research Design

This empirical study is quantitative in nature and a two-point self-developed questionnaire has been exploited to seek the participants' responses to present the results. Independent-samples-test has been run to determine any statistically significant gender-based differences and to present descriptive analyses of the responses of the participants towards NELTs and NNELTs.

Participants

This survey has investigated 62 male and 70 female Saudi EFL learners studying at the deanship of supportive studies (DSS), Taif university. There are more than 400 English language teachers teaching at DSS. Majority of them are non-native speakers whereas a reasonable number are native speakers. All the students who join Taif university are supposed to spend their first year at DSS and study various language courses. A vast majority of English language teachers hold MA degree with few exceptions, i.e., higher level of education such as PhD and MPhil as well as some with bachelor degree. The students at DSS have a reasonable exposure to both NELTs and NNELTs and have a fair idea of their strengths and weaknesses.

The Instrumentation

The researcher has reviewed the relevant resources and developed a 2-point questionnaire to investigate male and female EFL learners studying at

the deanship of supportive studies (DSS), Taif university about their preferences towards NETs and NNETs. Appropriate steps have been followed to determine the validity and reliability of the initial version of the questionnaire. The final version contains 28 items that was administered to collect data for this survey.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure face validity, technical opinion from three experts in the field has been sought related to the initial version of the self-developed questionnaire. All their recommendations have been incorporated in the final version which was then pilot-tested to determine its reliability. The final version has been administered to 20 learners from the same academic context. Cronbach-Alpha was run and the results revealed that reliability remained 0.83 (See appendix # 2). The final version (see appendix # 1) of the questionnaire was translated into Arabic, generalized and administered to cohort of this survey.

Data Analyses

The final version of the questionnaire has been administered to 70 female and 62 male Saudi EFL learners studying at the DSS, Taif university. The responses of the respondents have been manually coded, entered and the statistical analyses have been run to generate data which have been statistically tabulated to present the final findings and conclusions.

Result and Discussion

The results of the descriptive and comparative analyses as generated by independent-samples T-test have been detailed in the following tables.

Table 1: Analyses for professional skills of NETs and NNETs

An effective teacher		Group	N	M	SD	T	df	p value	
1	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to create linguistically richer environment.	Female	70	1.3286	.47309	1.311	130	.192	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.2258	.42153	1.320	129.994	.189	
2	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to determine the language needs of their students.	Female	70	1.4000	.49344	-.224	130	.823	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.4194	.49748	-.224	127.822	.823	
3	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of	Female	70	1.6143	.49028	.577	130	.565	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.5645	.49987	.576	127.442	.566	

	their ability to understand questions of their students'								
4	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to understand language difficulties of their students.	Female	70	1.6571	.47809	.900	130	.370	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.5806	.49748	.898	126.678	.371	
7	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to understand their students' learning styles.	Female	70	1.5429	.50176	2.188	130	.030	p < 0.05
		Male	62	1.3548	.48237	2.193	129.111	.030	
11	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to prepare their students for independent learning.	Female	70	1.5857	.49615	2.703	130	.008	p < 0.05
		Male	62	1.3548	.48237	2.708	128.856	.008	
28	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to provide their students with more meaningful context to use English.	Female	70	1.4714	.50279	.972	130	.333	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.3871	.49106	.974	128.743	.332	

Table 1 contains the comparative descriptive analyses of the seven questionnaire items which meant to elicit the participants' perceptions towards professional skills of native and non-native teachers. The general trend is in favor of NELTs as 8 entries exhibit higher liking for them whereas 6 entries show preference for NNELTs. Higher mean values by both groups have clearly indicate that NNELTs have been perceived superior to their NELTs counterparts in their ability to understand their students' questions and language learning difficulties. This seems to suggest that NNELTs behave more patiently in dealing with their students during teaching process. Both male and female participants of this empirical survey unanimously believe that NELTs are better than NNELTs in their ability to create linguistically richer environment to determine the language needs of their students in a more professional manner and to provide their students with more meaningful context to use English. These characteristics seem an outcome of their virtue of being native speakers who have acquired English language in a natural context. The comparative results have also reported that female participants believe that NNELTs have greater ability to understand their students' learning styles and to prepare their students for independent learning whereas their male counterparts believe that NELTs are better in these regards. The

results have also revealed that with an exception of item 2, the female participants have assigned higher mean values to all items as compared to male participants indicating their comparative higher liking for NNELTs as compared to Saudi male EFL learners. The results of the independent-samples T-test have revealed that gender-based statistically significant differences exist in only two items, i.e., 7 and 11.

Table 2: Analyses for professional attitudes of NELTs and NNELTs

An effective teacher		Group	N	M	SD	T	df	p value	
5	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave in more responsible manner.	Female	70	1.5143	.50340	2.049	130	.042	p < 0.05
		male	62	1.3387	.47713	2.056	129.388	.042	
6	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave in a friendlier manner to provide a relaxed atmosphere in class.	Female	70	1.6000	.49344	1.150	130	.252	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.5000	.50408	1.149	127.371	.253	
8	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to motivate their students to learn English.	Female	70	1.5714	.49844	1.188	130	.237	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.4677	.50303	1.187	127.790	.237	
9	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to use innovative strategies to teach their students.	Female	70	1.6714	.47309	2.590	130	.011	p < 0.05
		male	62	1.4516	.50172	2.580	125.887	.011	
10	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to explain lessons clearly.	Female	70	1.5429	.50176	1.417	130	.159	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.4194	.49748	1.418	128.337	.159	
24	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave more confidently in using English.	Female	70	1.4429	.50031	1.416	130	.159	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3226	.47128	1.422	129.493	.158	
25	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to focus more on fluency than accuracy in speaking.	Female	70	1.3286	.47309	-1.637	130	.104	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.4677	.50303	-1.631	125.772	.105	
26	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of	Female	70	1.4429	.50031	.834	130	.406	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3710	.48701	.836	128.827	.405	

	their ability to focus more on accuracy than fluency in speaking.								
27	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because they always use the target language in class.	Female	70	1.3571	.48262	-.164	130	.870	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3710	.48701	-.163	127.793	.870	

Table 2 details the comparative analyses of the responses of Saudi male and female freshmen towards the professional attitudes of NELTs' and NNELTs. This category contains 9 items and out of the total 18 responses, only 6 favored NNELTs whereas a majority of 12 responses were in favor of NELTs. There is only 1 item which received high ranking for NNELTs from both groups of the participants, i.e., the one which elicited the respondents' ranking towards English language teachers' ability to behave in a friendlier manner to provide a relaxed atmosphere in class. The participants' liking for friendly EFL teachers confirms the findings of Javid (2014) who has reported that Saudi university undergraduates prefer those English language teachers who are friendly with their students. The data have revealed that for item numbers 8 and 9, the female cohort has ascribed high liking for NNELTs as indicated by a mean of 1.67 and 1.57. The male cohort has assigned medium low mean to these items indicating that Saudi female freshmen believe that NNELTs are better as they have higher ability to motivate their students by using innovative strategies. The data show that the result of items 24, 25, 26 and 27 indicate that NELTs have been favored by both male and female groups of this empirical survey. It is learned that NELTs are preferred by both male and female Saudi students as represented by the participants of this study because of their ability to behave more confidently in using English, to focus more on fluency and accuracy in speaking skills exercises and because they always use the target language in class. The results of the two items which meant to elicit the participants' responses towards the ability of teachers to behave in a more responsible manner and explain lessons clearly indicate that female participants believe that NNELT's are better as compared to NELTs whereas the male students favored NELTs in these regards. Another interesting finding is that in nearly all items of this category except items 25 and 27, the female cohort showed higher liking for NNELTs as compared to their male counterparts. The results of independent-samples T-test have reported that gender-based statistically significant difference is there in only two items of this category which are 5 and 9.

Table 3: Analyses for teaching and assessment skills of NELTs and NNELTs

An effective teacher		Group	N	M	SD	T	df	p value	
12	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach grammar better.	Female	70	1.5571	.50031	2.970	130	.004	p < 0.05
		Male	62	1.3065	.46478	2.984	129.693	.003	
13	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach vocabulary better.	Female	70	1.3571	.48262	1.017	130	.311	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.2742	.44975	1.022	129.652	.309	
14	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach pronunciation better.	Female	70	1.3857	.49028	-.204	130	.839	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.4032	.49455	-.204	127.806	.839	
15	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach listening skills better.	Female	70	1.4714	.50279	1.355	130	.178	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3548	.48237	1.359	129.154	.177	
16	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach speaking skills better.	Female	70	1.2000	.40289	-1.206	130	.230	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.2903	.45762	-1.197	122.475	.234	
17	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach reading skills better.	Female	70	1.5143	.50340	1.465	130	.145	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3871	.49106	1.468	128.774	.145	
18	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess grammar better.	Female	70	1.5000	.50361	2.285	130	.024	p < 0.05
		male	62	1.3065	.46478	2.296	129.770	.023	
19	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess vocabulary better.	Female	70	1.4571	.50176	1.385	130	.168	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3387	.47713	1.389	129.329	.167	
20	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess pronunciation better.	Female	70	1.3429	.47809	.245	130	.807	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3226	.47128	.245	128.500	.807	
21	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of	Female	70	1.3000	.46157	-.278	130	.782	p > 0.05
		male	62	1.3226	.47128	-.277	127.390	.782	

	their ability to assess listening skills better.								
22	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess speaking skills better.	Female	70	1.2286	.42294	- 1.208	130	.229	p > 0.05
		Male	62	1.3226	.47128	- 1.200	123.507	.232	
23	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess reading skills better.	Female	70	1.5286	.50279	2.019	130	.046	p < 0.05
		Male	70	1.5571	.50031	2.024	129.154	.045	

Table 3 presents the data of the comparative analyses of 12 items related to teaching and assessment skills of NELTs and NNELTs. The table contains 24 entries out of which 19 are in favor of NELTs whereas only 5 favor NNELTs. The data have revealed that native teachers have been preferred the most for their ability to teach speaking skills better by both groups of the participants. The second most favored attribute of NELTs remained their ability to assess speaking skills better. High preference for NELTs by Saudi male and female participants of this study manifests that pronunciation and accent of the native speakers facilitate them teach and assess speaking skills better. The next highest-ranking items in favor of NELTs have been their ability to teach vocabulary and assess listening skills better as compared to their non-native counterparts. Among the items where NELTs have been favored by male and female participants both, though not as much as have been for the items 16, 22, 13 and 21 transpired that NELTs teachers have an advantage over their non-native competitors in teaching and assessing pronunciation better. The next aspects where native teachers were given preference have been teaching listening skills and assessing vocabulary. The data generated from the analyses of the above-mentioned 8 items have clearly manifest that NELTs have an edge in teaching and assessing oral skills and vocabulary.

On the other hand, there is only one item where both male and female cohort of this survey have preferred NNELTs as compared to their native competitors. This item stated that non-native teachers are better in their ability to assess reading skills. Three items (12, 17 & 18) have been identified where female participants have favored NNELTs and NELTs have been favored by their male counterparts. These items are related to teaching grammar, teaching reading skills and assessing grammar. It seems quite logical as EFL/ESL learners learn the target language through conscious learning of grammar; therefore, non-native teachers possess better skills in teaching grammar and reading skills by virtue of their learning experiences during their student life. Among these 12 items, there have only been three items (12, 18 & 23) which

show a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the participants along gender lines. It has also been gathered that in most of the items of this category, female participants have favored NNETs more as compared to the male participants.

Discussion

The results of this empirical study have indicated that Saudi EFL learners prefer NELTs for most of the dynamics covered in the questionnaire. The findings correspond to the results of Liu (2008) who has stated that Chinese primary school EFL learners have exhibited noticeable progress and achievement “in the improvement of students’ pronunciation, communicative competence, and cross-cultural awareness” (p. 104) when NELTs have been hired for English language teaching. Vidal (2010) has also revealed that EFL students at the School of Languages of the University of Veracruz preferred NELTs over NNETs. The results show that this preference was highest by advance and elementary level EFL learners and medium high by intermediate EFL learners of the above study. The results have also revealed that the participants of this study preferred NELTs’ role in teaching speaking skills especially pronunciation and native accent. The finding is in accordance with the results of Lurda (2006) who has stated that “with respect to [NETs], learners spoke highly of their ability to teach conversation classes and to serve as perfect models for imitation” (p. 207). Furthermore, Brown (2013) has also declared that Swedish EFL learners strongly agreed that NELTs teach speaking skills more effectively. Similarly, the results have been in line with the findings of Alseweed & Daif-Allah (2011) who have reported that Saudi EFL learners have stated that native English teachers are better in teaching speaking and listening skills whereas non-native teachers are better in reading and writing skills. A somewhat contradicting point of view has been forwarded by Medgyes (2001) who has stated that NELTs and NNETs “can be equally good teachers in their own terms and this is an idea that is important to transmit to other teachers and students” (p. 175). This offers significant insights into the fact that both groups have their own strengths and weaknesses and collectively contribute to the common cause of effective English language teaching.

The participants of this survey have also reported that NELTs are better in incorporating independent learning; therefore, are more successful in making their students life-long learners. The finding corresponds to the findings of Brown (2013) who has posited that Swedish EFL learners also preferred NELTs as compared to their NNETs in helping their students to become life-long learners. Furthermore, it has also been revealed by the findings of this study that NELTs cater for their students’ learning styles in a better manner. The results partially correspond to the study of Javid (2011)

who has reported that EFL learners for a Saudi medical college have shown high liking for those teachers who take into consideration their students' learning styles while teaching them English language. The results of this study also highlight the participants' preference for NELTs because of their use of innovative strategies to teach the target language confirming the findings of Javid (2010) who has reported that EFL students from the same academic context prefer to have innovative classrooms. Concerning the preference of the participants of the study about pronunciation teaching, the findings of Medgyes (1992) are partially in line as he has stated that NNELTs do not pay much attention to pronunciation teaching and usually do not exploit alternative sources to teach this important component by using the required audio-visual aids. The study of Umer, Javid & Farooq (2013) has suggested that Saudi EFL students are quite conscious regarding the assessment procedures corresponding to the finding of this study which has also revealed that NELTs have been preferred for their assessment practices. The findings partially coincide with the results of Merino (1997) who has stated that target vocabulary is better taught by NELTs. The results of this survey also indicate that NNELTs have been perceived better by the participants in teaching and assessing grammar and reading skills. Talking about the comparative analyses of English language teachers, Merino (1997) has also reported that NNELTs are better in teaching grammar and spellings in EFL contexts whereas NELTs are more concerned with oral skills and fluency of their students. Similar findings been reported by Revés & Medgyes (1996) as well who have reported that NELTs are more natural and real with language as they consider communication primary as compared to form and on the other hand, NNELTs concentrate more on accuracy and formal features of the target language.

Conclusion

The results have indicated that female participants of this survey favored NNELTs more as compared to the male participants but the difference in their perceptions for majority of items in all three categories of the questionnaire was not statistically significant. Null hypotheses have been partially rejected as majority of the questionnaire items do not bear statistically significant differences along gender lines. The results also reveal that the participants of this survey have preferred NELTs the most for teaching and assessment skills as presented in table three. The data analyses show that NNELTs are better in teaching and assessing grammar and reading skills whereas NELTs have been considered better for other dynamics of this category. It is also revealed that native teachers have been favored second highest for the items related to professional attitudes and the least preferred category in this regard remains professional skills as indicated in tables two and one respectively. NELTs have been preferred for the majority of the items

of these categories whereas NNETs have been favored in providing relaxed atmosphere, using innovative strategies, motivating their students to learn, behaving in a more responsible manner, responding to their students questions better, understanding their students' learning difficulties, understanding their students' learning styles and preparing their students for independent learning. The findings of this empirical survey seem to suggest that both groups of English language teachers have their own strengths which bear positive overbearing in imparting ELT. Though the results of this study have indicated more preference for NELTs, it does not seem appropriate to believe that one is superior to the other. It transpires that a combination of both types of teachers would help students learn English better and comprehensively. Both NELTs and NNETs bear diverse level of command of English language resulting in certain intrinsic advantages and disadvantages. The findings suggest that a combination of NELTs and NNETs would be helpful in achieving the ultimate goal of effective ELT in EFL contexts since both groups have equal potential to teach various domains of the target language more successfully. A growing mass of research has emphasized this proposition as well (see for example Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Park, 2009; Al-saweed, 2012; Javid, 2016).

References:

1. Al-Issa, A. (2005). An ideological discussion of the impact of the NNETs' English language knowledge on Omani ESL policy implementation. A special reference to the Omani context. *Asian EFL Journal*, 7(3). Available online: [http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/September 05dn.php](http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/September%2005dn.php).
2. Alseweed, M.A., & Daif-Ullah, A.S. (2012). University Students' Perceptions of the Teaching Effectiveness of Native and Nonnative Teachers of English in the Saudi Context. *Language in India*, 12(7), 35-60.
3. Alseweed, M.A. (2012). University Students' Perceptions of Influence of Native and Non-native Teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 5(12), 42-53.
4. Bueno, C. (2006). Native English teacher required. *TESL-EJ*, June, 2006.
5. Braine, G. (2005). *NNS and Invisible Barriers in ELT*. Retrieved 1st April, 2011, from <http://nnet.moussu.net/history.html>.
6. Celik, S. (2006). Artificial battle between native and non-native speaker teachers of English. *Kastamonu Education Journal*, 14(2), Available online: http://www.ksef.gazi.edu.tr/dergi/pdf/Cilt-14-No2.../371-376_servet.pdf

7. Cox Mike, C. M. (2007). Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Edge Hill Careers Centre. Retrieved from http://www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers/DownloadZone/materials_pdfs/C_C_16.pdf
8. CRYSTAL, D. (1995): *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
9. Daif-Allah, A. (2010). Nonnative English-Speaking Teachers in the English Teaching Profession in Saudi Arabia: Contributions, Challenges and Suggestions. *Comparative Education Conference Proceedings*, 130-173, Cairo, Egypt.
10. Davies, A. (2003). *The native speaker: Myth and reality*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
11. García Merino Iván, G. M. I. (1997). Native English-Speaking Teachers versus Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers, *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 10, University of Northern Iowa, 69-79.
12. Holliday, A. (2005). *The Struggle to Teach English as an international Language*. Oxford: OUP.
13. Javid, C. Z. (2010). Addressing the causes that hinder effective English language teaching in Saudi universities: A case study. *Bani-Swaif University Journal*, 80, 479-513. Egypt.
14. Javid, C. Z. (2011). Saudi medical undergraduates' perceptions of their preferred learning styles and evaluation techniques. *Arab World English Journal*, 2(2), 40-70.
15. Javid, C.Z. (2014). Perceptive Determination of Saudi EFL Learners about the Characteristics of an Ideal English Language Teacher. *Research on Humanities and Social sciences*, 4(8), 42-53.
16. Kachru, B.B., & Nelson, C.L. (1996). World Englishes. In S. L. McKay & N.H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language teaching* (pp. 71–102). New York: Cambridge University Press.
17. Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: OUP.
18. Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. (2002). University Students' Perceptions of Native and Non-native Speaker Teachers of English. *Language Awareness*, 11(2), 132-138. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09658410208667051>
19. Luksha, I., & Solovova, E. (2006). Pros and cons for using non-native English-speaking teachers. Tomsk State Pedagogical University, Moscow State University. Retrieved 1st June, 2010, from http://vestnik.tspu.ru/files/PDF/articles/luksha_i._v._97_99_9_60_2006.pdf

20. Ling, C., & Braine, G. (2007). The attitudes of university students towards non-native speakers English teachers in Hong Kong. *RELC Journal*, 38(3), 257-277.
21. Liu, L. (2008). Co-teaching between native and non-native English teachers: An exploration of co-teaching models and strategies in the Chinese primary school context. *Reflection on English Language teaching*, 7 (2), 103-118. Available online: www.nus.edu.sg/celc/publications/RELT72/103to118liu.pdf
22. Liu, M., & Zhang, L. (2007). Student Perceptions of Native & Non-native English Teachers' Attitudes, Teaching Skills Assessment and Performance. *Asian EFL Journal*, 9(4), Conference Proceedings, 157-166.
23. Llurda, E. (2004). Non native speaker teachers and English as an International Language. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(3), 314-323.
24. Madrid, D. (2004). Teacher and Student Preferences of Native and Nonnative Foreign Language Teachers. *Porta linguarum*, 2, 125-138.
25. Merino, I.G. (1997). Native English-speaking Teachers versus Non-native English-Speaking Teachers. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 10, 69-79.
26. Matsuda, P. (1999). Teacher development through NS/NNS collaboration. *TESOL Matters*, 9(6), 1-10.
27. Maum, R. (2002). Nonnative- English-Speaking teachers in the English teaching profession. *ERIC Digest*. Retrieved April 2, 2011, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED470982.pdf>.
28. Medgyes, P. (1994). *The non-native teacher*. London: Macmillan.
29. Medgyes, P. (1999). *The Non-native Teachers*. Revised second edition. Ismaning, Germany: Hueber Verlag.
30. Merino, I. G. (1997). Native English-speaking Teachers versus Non-native English-speaking Teachers. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 10, 69-79.
31. Mora, P.I. (2006). Students and teacher's self-perceptions: the relationship between the foreign language learner and the native/non-native speaking language teacher. Selection of articles from the second international qualitative research conference. Universidad de Guanajuato, departamento de lenguas.
32. Odhuu, K. (2014). *Teaching the NATiv English Speaker How to Teach English*. *English Language Teaching*, 2, 1-11.
33. Park, E. (2009). The Korean university students' preferences toward native English teachers. *Modern English Education*, 10(3), 114-130.

34. Phillipson, R. (1992a). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
35. Phillipson, R. (1992b). ELT: The native speaker's burden. *ELT Journal*, 46(1), 13-18.
36. Revés, T., & Medgyes, P. (1994). The Non-native English Speaking EFL/ESL Teacher's Selfimage: An International Survey. *System*, 22(3). 353-67.
37. Suarez, J. (2000). 'Native' and 'non-Native': not only a question of terminology. *Humanizing Language Teaching*, 2(6). Available online: <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/nov00/mart1.htm>
38. Thomas, J. (1999). Voices from the periphery: nonnative teachers and issues of credibility. In Braine, G. (ed.). *Nonnative Educators in English Language Teaching*. Oxon: Routledge.
39. Todd, R., & Pojanapunya, P. (2009). Implicit attitudes toward native and non-native speaker teachers. *System*, 37(1), 23-33. Available online <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/46.4.340>
40. Torres, J. (2004). Speaking Up! Adult ESL Students' Perceptions of Native and Non-Native English Speaking Teachers. Unpublished MA Thesis, University Of North Texas.
41. Umer, M., & Javid, C.Z., & Farooq, M. U. (2013). Formative assessment: learners' preferred assessment tasks, learning strategies and learning materials. *Kashmir Journal of Language Research*, AJK University, 16(2), 109-133.
42. Wu, K., & Ke, C. (2009). Haunting Native Speakerism? Students' Perceptions toward Native Speaking English Teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 2(3), 44-52.
43. Xiaoru, C. (2008). A SURVEY : Chinese College Students' Perceptions of Non-Native English Teachers. *CELEA Journal*, 31(3), 75-82.
44. Zughoul, M. (2003). Globalization and EFL/ESL pedagogy in the Arab World. *Journal of Language and Learning* 1(2). Available online: <http://www.shakespeare.UK.net/journal/1>

Appendix # 1

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I- PERSONAL

Your personal information will be kept confidential and will only be used only for the purpose of this research study. This section is optional.

Name: _____ University ID: _____

College: _____ email: _____

II- Circle the most appropriate choice.

The researcher wants to find out your preferences regarding native and non-native English language teachers. Read the statements carefully and circle the most appropriate choice (**native or non-native**) in the following statements:

1	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to create linguistically richer environment.
2	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to determine the language needs of their students.
3	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to understand questions of their students'
4	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to understand language difficulties of their students.
5	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave in more responsible manner.
6	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave in a friendlier manner to provide a relaxed atmosphere in class.
7	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to understand their students' learning styles.
8	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to motivate their students to learn English.
9	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to use innovative strategies to teach their students.
10	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to explain lessons clearly.
11	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to prepare their students for independent learning.
12	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach grammar better.
13	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach vocabulary better.
14	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach pronunciation better.
15	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach listening skills better.

16	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach speaking skills better.
17	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to teach reading skills better.
18	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess grammar better.
19	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess vocabulary better.
20	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess pronunciation better.
21	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess listening skills better.
22	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess speaking skills better.
23	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to assess reading skills better.
24	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to behave more confidently in using English.
25	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to focus more on fluency than accuracy in speaking.
26	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to focus more on accuracy than fluency in speaking.
27	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of they always use the target language in class.
28	In my opinion, (Native / Non-native) English language teachers are better because of their ability to provide their students with more meaningful context to use English.

Appendix # 2 – Reliability Table

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	20	100.0
	Excluded(a)	0	.0
	Total	20	100.0

a Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.815	28

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
VAR00001	48.7500	34.618	.238	.812
VAR00002	48.4500	33.418	.356	.808
VAR00003	48.1500	35.292	.055	.818
VAR00004	48.1000	35.463	.030	.818
VAR00005	48.4500	32.155	.581	.799
VAR00006	48.4000	33.200	.392	.807
VAR00007	48.4000	34.463	.175	.815
VAR00008	48.5000	33.211	.400	.807
VAR00009	48.1500	34.871	.135	.816
VAR00010	48.4000	34.253	.210	.814
VAR00011	48.4000	34.253	.210	.814
VAR00012	48.3500	32.766	.471	.804
VAR00013	48.5500	33.629	.337	.809
VAR00014	48.7000	35.379	.047	.818
VAR00015	48.4000	34.989	.087	.818
VAR00016	48.8500	34.555	.446	.809
VAR00017	48.3500	31.503	.701	.795
VAR00018	48.4000	32.463	.522	.802
VAR00019	48.4500	32.787	.467	.804
VAR00020	48.7000	34.747	.178	.814
VAR00021	48.6000	34.147	.257	.812
VAR00022	48.7500	34.408	.288	.811
VAR00023	48.3000	32.537	.521	.802
VAR00024	48.6000	33.305	.415	.806
VAR00025	48.6000	35.305	.045	.819
VAR00026	48.4000	34.042	.246	.812
VAR00027	48.5000	33.316	.381	.807
VAR00028	48.0500	35.524	.028	.818