

**The Case of Native and Non-native English
Language Teachers: Students' and Instructors'
Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of
Iraq**

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ABSTRACT

English has evolved into an internationally-used language due to the increase in numbers of its learner. With the growing demand of English learning, over the last 30 years, the topic of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) have become a topic of debate.

Thus, the purpose of the current mixed method study was to find out students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). In the study, student questionnaires and teacher interviews were administered to answer the following research questions: What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs? What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs? What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs? What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs? What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

The participants were 345 university students, and 24 EFL teachers. The quantitative data obtained from the student questionnaire were analyzed through SPSS V. 25 and the qualitative data from the teacher interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis.

The findings revealed that the student participants showed an overall preference for NESTs over NNESTs, however, they also showed positive attitudes towards NNESTs. The study concluded that the teachers believed that NESTs and NNESTs have their own positive and negative qualities and that one is not more successful, rather, they are different from each other. Students and teachers preferred NESTs for being fluent, natural speakers, having cultural knowledge about English,

and being better at colloquial language whereas they preferred NNESTs for having a stronger connection with students due to sharing the same cultural and linguistic experience, being sympathetic, understanding students' needs and difficulties, and being more hard-working.

Keywords: Native English-speaking Teacher (NEST), Non-native English-speaking Teacher (NNEST), English Language Teachers' Perceptions and Attitudes, English Language Learners' Perceptions and Attitudes

ÖZ

İngilizce öğrenenlerin sayısındaki artış, bu dilin uluslararası bir dil olarak gelişmesine neden olmuştur. Son 30 yıl içinde İngilizce öğrenimine yönelik artış, dil öğretimi ile ilgili beraberinde Anadili Konuşuru İngilizce Öğretmeni ve Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce Öğretmeni konusunu da bir tartışma noktası haline getirmiştir.

Bu bağlamda, Kuzey Irak Kürdistan bölgesindeki öğrencilerle ve İngilizce öğretmenleriyle, Anadili Konuşuru Olan ve Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce Öğretmenlerine yönelik algı ve tutumları karma yöntem kullanılarak bu çalışmada araştırılmıştır.

Bu çalışmada öğrencilere sormaca/anket, İngilizce öğretmenleri ile söyleşi/mülakat yapılarak (i) Öğrencilerin Anadili Konuşuru Olan İngilizce öğretmenlerine yönelik algı ve tutumları nedir?, (ii) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Anadili Konuşuru olan İngilizce öğretmenlerine yönelik algı ve tutumları nedir?, (iii) Öğrencilerin Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öğretmenlerine yönelik algı ve tutumları nedir?, (iv) İngilizce öğretmenlerinin Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öğretmenlerine yönelik algı ve tutumları nedir? ve (v) Anadili Konuşuru Olan ve Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin güçlü ve zayıf yanlarının neler olduğunun öğrenciler ve öğretmenler tarafından saptanmasını içeren araştırma sorularına yanıt aranmıştır.

Çalışmaya 354 üniversite öğrencisi ile 25 İngilizce öğretmeni katılmıştır. Öğrenci sormacalarından elde edilen sayısal veriler SPSS V 25. sürüm paket kullanılarak işlemlenirken, İngilizce öğretmenlerinden elde edilen niceliksel veriler ise içerik/konu çözümlemesi yöntemiyle yorumlanmıştır.

Yapılan deęerlendirmeler sonucunda, öęrencilerin Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öęretmenlerini - Anadili Konuşuru olanlara tercih ettiklerini göstermesine karşın, Anadili Konuşuru Olan İngilizce öęretmenlerine yönelik kimi konularda olumlu tutum sergiledikleri de saptanmıştır.

Çalışmaya katılan İngilizce öęretmenleri, Anadili Konuşuru Olan veya Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öęretmenlerinin tümünün de olumlu ve olumsuz yönlerinin olabileceğini, farklılıklardan öte sözkonusu dilin başarılı öęretilmesinin önemli olduğunu vurgulamışlardır.

Araştırmaya katılan öęrenci ve öęretmenler Anadili Konuşuru Olan öęretmenleri akıcılık, doğallık ve İngiliz kültürüne sahip olmaları bağlamında tercih ederken, aynı katılımcılar öęrencilerle sıkı bağ kurmak, aynı kültürel ve dil öğrenim süreçlerini tecrübe etmiş olmak, öęrencilere sempti duymak, ihtiyaç ve karşılaştıkları zorlukların bilincinde olmak ve daha çok çalışma bağlamında Anadli Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce öęretmenlerini tercih ettikleri saptanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anadili Konuşuru Olan İngilizce Öęretmeni, Anadili Konuşuru Olmayan İngilizce Öęretmeni, İngilizce Öęretmenşlerinin Algı ve Tutumları, İngilizce Öęrenen Öęrencilerin Algı ve Tutumları.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELLs	English Language Learners
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELTs	English Language Teachers
ESL	English as a Second Language
IAT	Implicit Association Test
IEP	Intensive English Program
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
L1	First Language
L2	Second/Foreign Language
NESTs	Native English-speaking Teachers
NNS	Non-Native Speaker
NNESTs	Non-Native English-speaking Teachers
NS	Native Speaker
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a background of the study, and gives a brief background about Native Speakerism. Then, the aim of the study is put forward in which the research questions are given. Moreover, the research design is shown followed by limitations and delimitations.

1.1 Background of the Study

English has been and still is one of the most used languages in the world for years, and the current goal of English language proficiency is vastly influenced by globalization and the spread of technology. Since English is also used in countries where English is not the L1, the number of English learners is forever increasing, thus, the number of non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) has increased as well.

Whether native or non-native English speakers are better has been a topic of debate in the field of ELT. Over the last 30 years, there have not been much books about native and non-native speaking teachers (Philipson 1992; Llurda, 2005; Huang, 2018), however, there have been numerous research studies that have focused on the topic (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009; Novianti, 2018; Moussu, 2006; Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019; Clark & Paran, 2007).

Throughout history, NSs have been preferred for teaching language. For example, Harmer (1991, as cited Todd, and Pojanapunya, 2009) believes that a NS can be a model for L2 learners. Likewise, linguistic theories regarded NSs as the main

reliable source of linguistic data (Chomsky, 1986). Therefore, it is not shocking that there are very few studies focusing on NNSs anywhere by the 1990s.

It is vital to mention who is considered a NS of a language. Gupta (2001) defines NSs of a language as someone who has acquired their native language in infancy, before acquiring any other languages. However, it might be difficult to define a NS solely based on one's birth place or L1, and having a language as one's native does not guarantee that one can succeed in teaching it. Phillipson (1992) interrogated the validity of the concept of nativity and entitled this notion as the "native speaker fallacy" by suggesting that it is believed that NSs are more competent in fluent, appropriate, and idiomatic language which, he argues, can be taught to non-native English speaking teachers. In other words, Philipson (1992) believes that teachers can be made fluent, rather than born native.

On the other hand, the ownership of English language has been widely investigated (e.g. Hall, 2012; Holliday, 2005; Holliday, 2015; Pennycook, 2001; Phillipson, 2008, as cited in Leonard, 2019). Their studies argue that since English is now a global language, it cannot belong to a single group, rather, it has become a "property" of everyone. Thus, it is realized that the ownership of English is shared by everyone, regardless of being native or non-native.

However, in recent studies, the idealness of the NS comes under questioning. One of the first times 'non-nativism' was focused on was when Paikeday (1985, as cited in Moussu & Llorca, 2008) stated that the NS is dead, which means that the idea of the NS only exists as a figment of the linguists' imaginations. Instead, he recommended the term 'proficient user', which stands for any expert speaker who uses the language successfully. To illustrate, the NS is no longer regarded as a model for three reasons. Firstly, now that English is an international language, proficient NNSs

are a more relevant target for learners of a language than a NS (Cook, 1999). Secondly, there is a growing realization that NESTs and NNESTs both have their own strengths and weaknesses and that one is not superior to another, rather, they are different from each other (Medgyes, 1994). Thirdly, being an effective teacher is related to some other factors such as being professional, dedicated, and willing to develop rather than being a native or not (Todd, and Pojanapunya, 2009).

Viewing native and non-natives as two distinct objects has influenced learners and teachers equally. Cook (1999) argues that this demand on native teachers has curbed the success of L2 users and has created an unreachable goal for L2 learners since learners constantly feel that they fail to reach a native-like proficiency. In the non-English speaking contexts, it is common to see teachers encouraging their students to act, and sound like NSs i.e. L2 learners view native-like proficiency as their goal. What they do not realize, according to Ballard & Winke (2017), is that their goal is based on a prestigious, and discriminating viewpoint. Applied linguists, however, assert that what is necessary is not sounding like a native, but rather being intelligible, i.e. being easily comprehended by all.

Despite their large numbers, NNESTs are frequently regarded less professionals than NESTs, and this leads to discrimination in employment. Regardless of high qualifications, NESTs often undergo discrimination in being hired (Clark & Paran, 2007), for example, Novianti (2018) mentions that NESTs without teaching qualifications have a higher chance of being recruited than qualified NNESTs in EFL contexts. There is no solid evidence proving that NESTs are better than NNESTs, however, they have a dominant and privileged position in the world of English language, and this, according to Canagarajah (1999) has led learners to believe that NNESTs are less capable. Furthermore, most of the qualified English teachers in the

world, according to Braine (2010), are NNss. However, all around the world, native English speaking teachers tend to be preferred over non-native English speaking teachers. This creates a challenge for educational administrators because even though native teachers are preferred, there are not many qualified NESTs, and the number of NNESTs who need to be employed is increasing. Moussu (2006) similarly thinks that there have not been enough studies focusing on the employability issues of NESTs and NNESTs especially EFL contexts. To conclude, it is evident that NESTs are preferred in majority of job advertisements, and especially in contexts such as China, Korea, and Arabian Gulf (Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019), and the KRI is no exception (Talib, 2020).

It is worth to know the differences between NESTs and NNESTs because it cannot be denied that the two differ in their knowledge and abilities due to their cultural and educational backgrounds (Qadeer, 2019). However, regarding comparing native to non-native teachers, Huang (2018) pointed out that a strong point of one group is not necessarily a weak point of another group. For example, his study revealed that while most students regarded language proficiency as a strength of native teachers, yet, language proficiency was not chosen as a weakness of non-native teachers. According to a study carried out by Huang (2018), both students and teachers think that NESTs' classes usually are more communicative with having many group works, however, their classes were seen to be simplistic due to their lack of familiarity with the local context and culture of the students. Also, according to Ellis (2002) and Widdowson (1994), strengths of a NEST is being an English language user, while being a NNEST is being an English language learner. It is also argued that NESTs are strong in their authenticity while NNESTs are known for their cultural and linguistic connection to their learners, being aware of learners' needs and difficulties in English, and familiarity with the learning context (Medgyes, 1992). Finally, Cook (2005) noted

that nonnative teachers can be competent teachers in their own and other countries for their awareness of the local culture.

Whether or not it is agreed upon among professionals and scholars to avoid labeling a teacher either as a “native” or “non-native”, students are likely to have their own preferences. It is crucial to explore students’ attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs because according to Abriel (2015), students are in charge over the amount of information they absorb. In other words, if students have negative attitude towards a teacher, they are more likely to feel unmotivated, and disconnected. In other words, students are assumed to assign either positive or negative emotions to whether their teacher is native or non-native, and have a different set of features and beliefs towards the two groups. Moreover, it is believed that even teachers themselves have certain attitudes towards the concept of native and non-native teachers which they have held through personal, professional, and/or educational experiences (Richardson, 1996, as cited in Moussu, 2006).

Therefore, this study is a study of attitudes and perceptions. Oppenheim (1996) describes attitude as a “state of readiness, a tendency to respond in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli” (p. 174). Similarly, in their book ‘The Psychology of Attitudes’, Eagly and Chaiken (1993, as cited in Moussu, 2006) define an attitude as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (p. 1). Oppenheim (1996) further analyzes that attitudes are “reinforced by beliefs (the cognitive component) and often attract strong feelings (the emotional component) which may lead to particular behavioral intents (the action tendency component)” (Oppenheim, 1996, p. 175). Likewise, Pickens (2005) portrays attitudes as a complex combination of beliefs, personality, value, and behavior. In other words, someone’s attitude towards

something encompasses his or her belief about the topic (thought or cognition); how he or she acts in relation to the topic (behavior or action); as well as how he or she feels about the topic (emotion). Perception, on the other hand, is seen to be closely related to attitudes. Pickens (2005) defines perception as the process of interpreting, and organizing sensation to create a meaningful experience of the world. For example, when someone is confronted with a stimuli or situation, they interpret the stimuli into something meaningful to them. However, this person's perception may substantially be different from reality, and thus perception differs from someone to someone else (Pickens, 2005).

Similar studies have previously been carried out focusing on students' and teachers' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. To mention some of them, Moussu (2006) attempted to focus on students' attitudes about native and non-native English speaking teachers, and teachers' self-perceptions, and administrators' hiring beliefs and practices. Moreover, Kayalp's (2016) study aimed to identify students' and teachers' attitudes concerning NESTs and NNESTs at the English Preparatory School (EPS) at Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) in North Cyprus. Finally, Pae (2017) studied the differences between NESTs and NNESTs and students' attitudes and motivation for learning English.

Finally, coming to the context of the current study, Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) is an autonomous region located in the north of Iraq in which Kurdish people live who are an Indo-European ethno-linguistic group (Sofi-Karim, 2015). Since KRI gained its autonomy in 1991, the region has taken critical acts towards developing and reforming education such as founding new schools and universities, and designing new curricula (Sofi-Karim, 2015), and opening international schools and universities which have opened the door for NSs to consider teaching English in the region. Even though

English is taught as a foreign language and not second since there is no exposure of English beyond the educational institutions (except for radio, television, and/or the internet) (Avci & Doghonadze, 2017), however, compared to the rest of Iraq, the situation of English teaching and learning in KRI is relatively good (Avci & Doghonadze, 2017). Based on the education system in KRI, upon completing the curriculum at the end of their twelfth grade, high school students are required to take a university entrance exam in which English is given 5% of the total grade (Avci & Doghonadze, 2017). Additionally, Kurdish people in KRI generally hold positive attitudes towards English language as it is seen as a means for professional development, employment, and introducing the Kurdish issue to the world (Sofikarim, 2015). Finally, KRI is striving to improve the education system in the region as 16% of the budget for 2013 was allocated for the education and higher education including English teaching (Avci & Doghonadze, 2017).

1.2 Aim of the Study

It is assumed that most Iraqi Kurdish students prefer NESTs. However, the main problem is that their attitudes and perceptions have not been explored. Therefore, the current exploratory study aims to (i) explore the perceptions and attitudes of students and teachers towards learning English language by NESTs and NNESTs; (ii) assess which one they perceive as the ideal English language teacher; (iii) find out whether or not they think positively or negatively towards one group or another; (iv) and finally, explore what strengths and weaknesses NESTs and NNESTs have from students' and teachers' points of view.

This research slightly differs from previous works as it focuses on students' attitudes in KRI towards native and non-native speaking English teachers, moreover,

it also dwells on teachers' attitudes (both native and non-native teachers) about the same issue.

This study might benefit learners, teachers, stakeholders (parents, and administrators of educational institutions), and recruiters in that before making any judgments based on the idealism of native-speakers, one can consider that each has their own strengths, and that promoting this idealism negatively impacts those who use EFL successfully. This study does not aim to support one group nor stand against them, rather, it attempts to take an impartial stance towards exploring certain privileges that native and non-native teachers have.

This research hypothesizes that university students might prefer native teachers over non-native teachers while the teachers might feel neutral and suggest a co-operation of NESTs and NNESTs together in universities.

For this purpose, the following questions will be addressed in this study:

1. What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
2. What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?
3. What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
4. What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?
5. What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

1.3 Research Design

1.3.1 Methodology

The study is conducted as a mixed-methods research. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are be applied. Students' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs are explored via using a questionnaire. Moreover, interviews are conducted

with teachers in order to explore their attitudes and perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs.

1.3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

This study intended to shed new light on the research of native-ness for English teachers in EFL contexts by employing questionnaires with students, and interviews with instructors. The questionnaire collected demographic and background information about the students (such as their age, gender, whether they have had native English teachers, and so on) and included questions and attitude statements to show students' perceptions and attitudes towards native and non-native English speaking teachers. Moreover, the teacher interview contained both closed and open ended questions. The aim of the closed ended questions was to collect demographic and background information about the instructors (such as their age, gender, teaching experience, whether they consider themselves as native or non-native English speaking teachers, and so on). The aim of the open ended questions, on the other hand, was to gain in-depth insight about instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards native and non-native English speaking teachers.

For ethical purposes, information about the researcher and the purpose of the research was stated on the questionnaire. Moreover, before interviewing the teachers, they were instructed to sign a consent form which informed the teachers about the aim and procedures of the research, and it was stated that their voice are recorded for more effective analysis. All participants were informed about their ethical rights, and were told that they could refuse to take part in the project or leave the project at any time they wish. All participants' names are kept anonymous.

During the analysis of the interviews, perceptions and attitudes of the teachers were analyzed in order to determine whether their attitudes towards NESTs and NESTs

were positive, negative, or neutral. The researcher had recorded the teachers' voices and had noted down extra-linguistic factors such as tone of voice, mood, body language, facial expressions, etc.

In order to analyze the quantitative data collected from students via the questionnaire, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used for the purpose of calculating mean scores and frequencies. Moreover, in order to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interview, thematic analysis was applied to examine the interview transcripts by identifying common themes, and comparing recurring patterns of attitudes.

1.3.3 Participants

The study was conducted in five universities in Sulaymaniyah city of Iraq. Four of them are private universities, while only one is public. The medium of instruction is English in all five universities. The context is thoroughly detailed in chapter three.

Among the five universities, 345 students responded to the questionnaire. Moreover, 24 teachers (both native and non-native teachers of English) were interviewed. In detail, demographic information was obtained from students and instructors. The students were asked to specify their gender, age, how long they have been studying English, whether they have had native English teachers, and whether they have been to any English-speaking countries. The teachers were similarly guided to specify their age group, gender, whether they identify themselves as native or non-native, what teaching certifications they hold, how many years of teaching experience they have, and so on. The participants and data collection instruments are explained in details in chapter three.

1.4 Limitations

This study is based on attitudes, and since attitudes normally involve deep, inner feelings and prejudices that the person having the attitude might not even be aware of, thus, using questionnaire and interview might not elicit their implicit attitudes. The researcher tried to overcome this by establishing rapport with the students taking the questionnaire and the teacher being interviewed. The researcher also took an impartial and unbiased stance towards native and non-native English teachers to elicit the participants' true attitudes and to avoid any forced responses from participants. In the future, this study can better be replicated by using research methods specially designed for eliciting attitudes which are implicit.

Furthermore, even though the number of the student participants was large, they were all studying in Sulaymaniyah city of Iraq. If data was collected from different cities, significant relationships could have been identified.

Another aspect was that certain private universities might have hesitated to collaborate since the topic of hiring and staff is a sensitive issue, therefore, the researcher granted complete confidentiality, and anonymity, and vowed that the results will only be used in this particular study. For these purposes, formal consent forms were obtained and signed.

Another potential issue which limited this study was that a few number of students had not experienced being taught by native English speakers since they had come from public high schools and chances were that they did not receive university classes from native teachers. However, majority of the students who participated in the study have been taught by both native and non-native English speaking teachers. Moreover, the students were all young adults who have been learning English language for a long time, therefore, at some point in their lives, they have grown a perception

towards NESTs and NNESTs. Moreover, as thoroughly justified in section 2.8.1 of this study, NESTs are not commonly found in ‘Outer Circle’ and ‘Expanding Circle’ countries (Braine, 2010), and KRI is no exception.

Another limitation is that the researcher herself is a non-native English speaking teacher, therefore, the teacher participants who were interviewed might have been affected by this factor. To reduce bias, the researcher refrained from interfering, and created an environment to make the teachers feel that they are welcome to say whatever they feel like without feeling verbal and/or non-verbal judgments.

Finally, the study struggled in collecting the data due to the Covid-19 pandemic because most universities were closed, and students and teachers were taking online classes at home. Therefore, the data collection procedure lasted longer than expected (from March to June, 2020) and both face-to-face and online questionnaire were applied with the students, as well as face-to-face and telephone interviews with the teachers.

1.5 Delimitations

Data for this study is collected from learners and instructors in four private universities but only one public university. This is purposely chosen because Borg (2016) collected information about the extent to which courses are taught in English in KRI, and none of the public universities offered courses fully in English (except for the English Departments). Another reason why private universities were mainly chosen was because most of them have hired both native and non-native teachers which is not the case in public universities.

A further delimitation is that questionnaire was used with the students because their number is larger. However, due to their fewer numbers, teachers were interviewed to explore their perceptions and attitudes towards the issue.

The conceptual framework similarly delimited the study. The following topics are dwelt on: the native speaker fallacy, the ownership of English and who should be called a NS, language ideology and power such as privilege, marginalization, and discrimination, intelligibility, comprehensibility, accent, and the complexity theory: the relation between NESTs and NNESTs.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature relating to native and non-native English language teachers in the field of ELT. The review will be in eight sections. In the first section, the NS is defined. In the second section, the value of being a NS is shown. In the third section, the status of English language is shown which has led to its position today. The fourth section posits the NNS movement. Then, the fifth section clarifies the dichotomy of NS and NNS. Next, discriminatory and marginalizing acts will be discussed in section six. Section seven gives a classified review of previous empirical studies conducted in the field. Finally, in the last section, the state of ELT is shown in KRI.

2.1 Who is a Native Speaker?

Davies (1996, as cited in Cook, 1999) reports that the term ‘native speaker’ was first used to refer to a human being who acquires his/her L1. Therefore, Medgyes (2001) defines a NS of English as a person whose L1, native language, or mother tongue, is English. Similarly, Han (2005) describes a NS of a language as someone who acquired a language in infancy, before acquiring any other languages. Medgyes (1994) further describes a NS of English as someone who is born in an English-speaking country, acquired English during childhood, speaks English as his/her L1, is able to produce fluent and spontaneous discourse in English, uses the language creatively, and is able to differentiate between right and wrong forms intuitively. Empirically, Lourie (2001, as cited in Braine, 2010) investigates that certain Israeli

teachers considered themselves as NS of English based on several variables: acquiring English from age of 0 to 6, others' perception of them as NS of English, country of origin, skin color, name, ethnicity, and accent.

Davies (1996, as cited in Cook, 1999) distinguishes between a bio-developmental definition of a NS from a non-developmental definition. The bio-developmental definition is the core characteristic of a NS which is that the language is acquired during childhood. Being a NS, according to Cook (1996), is thus, unchangeable in the sense that one cannot alter their native language just as how they cannot change their family. On the other hand, the core definition is followed by non-developmental characteristics such as a subconscious knowledge of the rules of a language, an intuitive knowledge of meanings, the ability of communicating based on settings, creativity of language use, and being able to distinguish between their own speeches from the standard form of the language (Cook, 1999).

According to the above definitions, someone who did not acquire a language during childhood cannot be considered a NS of a language. For example, a child who learns two languages simultaneously, by definition, may not be seen as a monolingual NS of neither languages. In the same way, L2 learners cannot become NSs unless the core definition of NS is changed.

Thus, the criteria by which NS is defined is seen as fuzzy and inconsistent (Medgyes, 1992; Medgyes, 1994). Medgyes (1994) objects that after birth, many children travel to non-English-speaking countries, therefore, they learn the language of the new community rather than English. Another problem he notes is which countries are regarded as "English-speaking countries"? A Briton is a native English speaker, so is an Australian. A French or Hungarian is not a native English speaker. How about an Indian who had English language as a means of instruction and

communication from the beginning of his/her life? Medgyes (1994) also questions the range of childhood in the definition of NS. A three-year-old is regarded a child, but how about a nine-year-old who moved to an English-speaking country? Medgyes (2006) also mentions the story of offsprings from mixed marriages. One example of that is an eight-year-old child whose mother is Finnish and whose father is Colombian but permanently lives in Australia. Therefore, it is difficult to decide whether or not the child, who is supposedly a trilingual, is a NS of English language.

2.2 The Value of Being a Native Speaker

The issue of being a native or non-native speaker of English has been seen as an exercise of status and power. Phillipson (1992) notes that the concept of NS of English has economic and political benefits. Along with economic and political perks, being a NS of English is highly valued linguistically. According to Stern (1983, as cited in Cook, 1999), an important point of reference in language teaching and L2 proficiency is the NS's 'competence' and 'proficiency'. Similarly, Harmer (1991, as cited in Cook, 1999) has provided different areas of language competence under a chapter named "What a Native Speaker Knows". Another source which has implicitly extended the value of NS in language teaching, according to Cook (1999), is the course book. The course book, which most classes are based on, is indeed native-based. For example, The Collins COBUILD English Course (Willis & Willis, 1988, as cited in Cook, 1999) is heavily based on database of NS speech and usage which involves interactions between and among NSs only except for the first chapters in which students from different nationalities introduce themselves and give personal information.

2.2.1 Is it Important for a Teacher to be a Native Speaker?

Teachers whose native language is English are widely believed to become more successful in teaching the language compared to those who do not speak English as their L1 (Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019). Phillipson (1992) argues that the concept of the ideal teacher being a NS has influenced language education policies and has widely been accepted. As it was mentioned previously, most influential TESOL books (Harmer, 1991 and Stern, 1983, as cited in Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009) assume that the target model for learning a language is its NSs.

However, recent literature suggests that the conception of the ideal teacher being a NS is being questioned (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). The argument can be summarized in four points. First, English has grown to be an international language, therefore, the proficient NNSs are a more relevant and attainable target compared to NSs (Cook, 1999). Second, realizing that both NESTs and NNESTs have their own strengths and weaknesses results in the two being shown as simply distinct rather than one being inferior to the other (Medgyes, 1994). Third, it has been widely suggested that other issues relating to willingness to develop, dedication, and professionalism are more necessary than whether or not a teacher is a NS (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). Lastly, Elyas and Alghofaili (2019) indicate that NNESTs can be more effective teachers because of their experience as a learner of the language themselves.

2.2.2 Accent, Intelligibility, and Comprehensibility

Moussu and Lurda (2008) assert that one of the factors which determines the NS/NNS identity and makes it recognizable is the speaker's accent. It is believed that most L2 learners want to refrain from a foreign accent while speaking English, and that their ultimate goal is to sound like a native, and have 'accent-free' pronunciation because it is viewed as prestigious (Ballard & Winke, 2017). However, applied

linguists have argued that being easily understood is far more important than a native-like accent. In fact, Gluszek and Dovidio (2010, as cited in Ballard & Winke, 2017) state that language learners' attempt to have a native-like accent is closely connected to their desire to be easily understood by all. Scales et al. (2006, as cited in Ballard & Winke, 2017) proof this in their study when they found out that even though majority of the language learners of their study showed a strong desire to sound like a native, they hardly could distinguish a native's speech from a non-native one. In their study, most of the participants preferred having a native-like accent for future employability. In particular, one of the professions that strives for a native-like pronunciation is being a language teacher in which a high level of communication and language use is vital (Ballard & Winke, 2017).

Researchers (Derwing & Munro, 1997, as cited in Ballard & Winke, 2017) have explored the ability of interpreting and processing accents. They found out that 'familiarity', in the sense of how familiar a person has been exposed to an accent, plays a vital role on listener's comprehension. In other words, when learners are familiar with the speaker's speech variety, they will comprehend better regardless of whether the person is native or non-native. Further, whether or not learners understand their teachers' speech depends on the dimensions of comprehensibility and intelligibility (Derwing & Munro, 1997, as cited in Ballard & Winke, 2017). To clarify the terms, a speech is deemed to be comprehensible if it is easily understood (as opposed to 'incomprehensible speech' which is impossible or difficult to understand), and is related to a cognitive and internal effort while processing speech. On the other hand, intelligibility of speech is related to the amount of speech the listener understands which can be objectively measured if the listener is asked to transcribe what he/she just heard.

Finally, pronunciation appears to be a positive pedagogical value attached to NSs of English. In language teaching, ‘pronunciation’ as a language area further extends the argument of to what extent native-like accent is necessary. Generally, both NESTs and NNESTs find pronunciation a challenging area to teach because of the uncertainty of its effectiveness and not having sufficient training to teach it. In particular, NNESTs seem not to feel confident to teach pronunciation because they have been shown as an inappropriate model of pronunciation (Levis, et al., 2016). It has constantly been confirmed that teaching pronunciation indeed improves learners’ pronunciation (Saito, 2012, as cited in Levis, et al., 2016), however, the issue here is whether or not the improvement is due to the nativeness of the teacher. Levis, et al. (2016) conducted a study in which the same pronunciation lesson was taught to two different classes, one having a native teacher, the other having non-native. Their results indicated that the students’ comprehensibility and pronunciation were similar despite the difference in their teachers. This study is an encouraging indication that teaching pronunciation is effective as long as the teacher is trained and knowledgeable and regardless of whether he/she is native or non-native.

2.3 The Status of English

English language has undergone substantial change over the last 1500 years as well as its use (Talib, 2020). English, which is now the language of science, communication, information technology, entertainment, diplomacy, and business, is estimated to be spoken by one in four of the population of the world (Moussu, 2018, as cited in Talib, 2020).

In his book ‘Linguistic Imperialism’, Phillipson (1992) explores the phenomenon of how English has become dominant, how it has spread, and the ideologies which has transmitted through the language. The author defines linguistic imperialism as practices, and ideologies which produce unequal divisions of resources

and power between groups on the basis of language (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47). In other words, in the age of globalization, it is believed that English has imposed on other speakers of other languages. One example is the monolingual ‘international’ schools which have gained popularity worldwide, in which English is often privileged in these educational systems over other and local languages.

2.3.1 Native Speaker Fallacy

Ironically, Phillipson (1992) claims that the process of language planning of education includes several tenets. The first view, the ‘monolingual fallacy’, is that English is best taught monolingually. The second, which is the focus of the current study, is that the ideal English teacher is a NS and is called ‘native speaker fallacy’. The third is that the earlier English is taught, the better will be the results, thus is called ‘early start fallacy’. The fourth one is that if languages other than English is used, standards of English will drop: ‘the subtractive fallacy’. The final one is called ‘the maximum-exposure fallacy’, which believes that the more English is taught, the better will be the results. Phillipson (1992) refers to these views as ‘fallacies’ because he claims that they all involve strong ethnocentrism and the assumptions lack solid evidence.

As a pioneering work, the publication of ‘Linguistic Imperialism’ by Phillipson (1992) is believed to raise the consciousness of NNESTs. The notion of ‘native speaker fallacy’ led people to question the belief that the ideal teacher must be a NS. He speculates that this belief might have been influenced by Chomsky (1965, as cited in Phillipson, 1992) who claims that the NS is the ideal source of grammar. Phillipson (1992) himself challenges the fallacy by saying that abilities of NSs can be grown in NNSs through teacher training. He also adds that since a NNS of a language has

undergone the experience of learning a (second) language, thus can become a more qualified teacher of the language (Phillipson, 1992).

2.3.2 The Ownership of English

The fact that foreign and second language speakers of English has outnumbered the first speakers of English language indicates that the English language is not possessed by its NSs and neither is their privilege (Medgyes, 2001). Widdowson (1994, as cited in Medgyes, 2001) similarly argues that English has become an international language, it is not a possession which NSs grant to others, and the language now belongs to anyone who speaks it whether as ESL or EFL, whether by native or non-native.

This complex situation is summarized by Kachru (1981, as cited in Crystal, 2003), who is the Indian linguist who coined the term 'World English'. He viewed the spread of English around the world in three concentric circles (inner, outer, and expanding) based on how the language has been acquired and how it is currently used. Even though not all countries can be placed in this model, however, it is regarded as a useful approach to illustrate World Englishes. The *inner circle* refers to where English is the primary language such as UK, USA, Canada, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand. The *outer* or *extended circle* refers to the early phases of how English spread in non-native places, where the language plays a vital role as a L2 in multilingual settings, and it consists of India, Malawi, Singapore, and others. The third circle which is called the *expanding* or *extending circle* involves those settings which recognize English and its importance as an international language, however, they have not been colonized by any member of the inner circle, thus, English language does not serve administrative functions, examples are Japan, China, Poland, Greece, and an increasing number of other settings as the name suggests (*expanding*) (Kachru, 1981,

as cited in Crystal, 2003). Now that English is recognized everywhere, the term ‘*expanded*’ is rather preferred.

Finally, Crystal (2003) adds that there are more people speaking ESL, and significantly more speaking it as a foreign language, thus, no group alone has custody over English language. Crystal (2003) further numerates that if the second and foreign speakers of English are combined, the ratio of a NS to a NNS is 1:3.

2.4 The Non-Native Speaker Movement

There seems to be limited number of works focusing on NSSs any time before the 1990s, let alone concerning the issues of NNESTs. To start with, no literature into NNESTs could be reviewed without reference to Peter Medgyes, who appears to be the pioneer of tackling issues concerning NNESTs. His article published in ELT Journal, which is titled “*Native or nonnative: Who’s worth more?*” (1992) led him to author one of the most groundbreaking books concerning NNS Movement which is titled “*The Non-native Teacher*” (1994). According to Medgyes (2006, p. 433), a NNS teacher is a teacher who speaks English as a second or foreign language, who works in an EFL environment, whose students are a monolingual group of learners, and who speaks the same L1 as her or his students.

Over the years, it has been argued that native and NNSs have equal abilities to use the English language. It is suggested that the native/non-native issue is debatable from a sociolinguistic point-of-view (as clarified in section 2.1 above). Moreover, Medgyes (1992) states that it is similarly controversial from a linguistic perspective. Initially, NSs were linguistically considered as the only reliable model of a language (Chomsky, 1965, as cited in Moussu & Llorca, 2008). Other works have supported this belief by claiming that ELLs should be taught by NESTs in order to reach a native-like proficiency (Abriel, 2015). Similarly, Medgyes (1992) argues that attempts to

define native-like proficiency and/or native competence have only led to ambiguous results (see, for example: Stem, 1983; Crystal, 1985; Richards et al., 1985, as cited in Medgyes, 1992).

Therefore, linguists, and researchers alike, have suggested alternative terms to replace NNS. Upon assuming that ‘the native speaker is dead’, Paikeday (1985, p. 12, as cited in Moussu & Llurda, 2008) proposed using the term ‘proficient user’ to call anyone who speaks a language efficiently. After some years, Rampton (1990, as cited in Moussu & Llurda, 2008) similarly suggested the term ‘expert speaker’ referring to all successful users of a language. Also, Edge (1988, as cited in Medgyes, 1992) uses the term ‘more or less accomplished users’ of English. Moreover, Cook (1999) proposes the term ‘L2 user’ which stands for someone who uses a second or other language. The L2 user needs to be differentiated from the L2 learner, who is still in the learning process. However, the exact point in which an L2 learner becomes an L2 user is controversial since it is difficult to indicate the final stage of learning a language, furthermore, any L2 learner can become an L2 user once they step outside of the classroom (Cook, 1999). To justify, Medgyes (1992) refers back to a somewhat older, but helpful, term which is ‘interlanguage’. Originally, interlanguage is the type of linguistic system, or simply a type of language, which is used by second and foreign language learners who are still in the process of learning the L2 (Selinker, 1972, as cited in Medgyes, 1992). Medgyes (1992) relates the issue of native and non-native to interlanguage in the sense that by virtue of speaking more or less proficient degree of the interlanguage, L2 learners can metaphorically be placed on the interlanguage continuum from zero competence to native competence.

2.5 The Dichotomy of NS and NNS

Initially, NSs and NNSs were viewed as two distinct categories. In recent years, however, this assumption has been questioned. Medgyes (1994) remarks that the native and non-native distinction is loaded with social, political, and ideological implications which is far beyond scientific research of applied linguistics. The debate over NS versus NNS has similarly gained popularity in the field of ELT and language pedagogy. The ‘NEST’ and its opposite ‘NNEST’ have been suggested to be politically incorrect terms by Medgyes (2001), and those who still make use of them might be expected to be accused of using discriminatory language. However, these two super-ordinate terms seem to remain in the language of current teachers and researchers alike.

The dichotomy of native and non-native has been deemed to be problematic. Moussu and Lurda (2008) attacks the validity of the dichotomy in three arguments. Firstly, every person is in fact a NS of a given language, therefore, speakers cannot be divided according to whether they have a trait (i.e., native), or they do not have a trait (i.e., non-native), based on whether or not English is their native language. Moussu and Lurda (2008) accuse the division as being Anglo-centric in a sense which English is regarded as the only language which is worth attention and speakers are classified based on whether or not they belong to the group of L1 speakers. Secondly, they argue that there are numerous cases of people who do not exclusively belong to the group of NSs or NNSs due to the environment where they acquired English. Thirdly, they suggest that it is impossible to refer to all NNSs as if they belong to a homogeneous group, given the diverse cultural, linguistic, and geographical background they possess as addition to their non-native status. Similar to the third argument, Braine (2010) contributes that NNSs of English are more communicatively efficient in global and

international settings. Moreover, he ironically states that even though the world of ELT most of the time appreciates and welcomes multiculturalism and diversity, however, NNESTs who have rich multilingual and multicultural experiences are often marginalized. Finally, a concluding reflection on the dichotomy of NS/NNS can be from the perspective of complexity theory. Larsen-Freeman (2013) contemplates that everything is connected to everything else, in other words, in order to overcome these rigid dichotomies, one can focus on the relationship between the two. This holistic approach does not reject one side or another, but rather, it calls for a non-dualistic focus on the connection of the two poles which might lead to emergence of something far more productive.

Medgyes (1992) posits three hypotheses based on the assumptions that NESTs and NNESTs are “two different species” (p. 25). First, NESTs and NNESTs are different in terms of teaching practice and language proficiency. Second, most of their differences in their teaching practice might be caused by the discrepancy in their language proficiency. Third, he emphasizes that both groups of teachers can be equally good teachers. He argues, however, that a non-native should not aspire to acquire a NS’s language competence. He also argues that this does not indicate that NNESTs are by definition less successful nor less efficient.

Frequently, the level of success in learning a target language is measured based on native standards. Medgyes (2001) confirms that native proficiency is needed as a model, a goal, and an inspiration, however, it is useless as a measure. He argues whether learners should attempt to achieve full mastery of a target language. He further induces other questions such as what the criteria for native proficiency is, what stage is the exact clear-cut point in which a learner has reached native proficiency. To

conclude, it is not feasible to design adequate measuring instruments to separate native and NNSs.

In the same vein, Cook (1999) relates the above argument to ethnocentrism (Sumner, 1906, as cited in Cook, 1999) which holds that one group need not to be measured against the norm of another group. People cannot conform to a norm of another group to which they do not belong. Cook (1999) emphasizes that a comparison between natives and non-natives yields differences, not deficits. He laments that L2 users are often judged by the standard of another group. Their grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary that differ from native usage have all been viewed as signs of failure to become NSs, which should have been treated as accomplishments in learning to use target language. In other words, L2 users need to be considered in their own right as successful L2 users, and not as deficient NSs (Cook, 1999, p. 165).

To possibly place above arguments in practice, in a qualitative study conducted in Canada, Faez (2011) explores the native/non-native status of linguistically diverse English teachers. The participants negotiated that their linguistic identities did not belong to the native/non-native dichotomy. To rephrase, the study finds out that linguistic identity of language teachers are multiple, dialogic, and dynamic rather than fixed and unitary. The study suggests that categorizing teachers as native and non-native may result in misinterpretation of their true linguistic identities.

2.6 Discrimination and Marginalization

Kumaravadivelu (2006) explains that the field of ELT is dealing with an ideological barrier which is formed and manipulated with economic, political, and cultural agenda and has filled the English language with imperialist and colonial practices (p. 218). This ideological barrier has influenced ELT around the world and manifests itself in practices of marginalization, and self-marginalization. To put it

simply, the practice of marginalization refers to direct and indirect mechanisms which values everything relating with the *colonial Self*, and marginalize everything relating to the *colonized Other* (my italics) (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). In specific relation to the issue discussed in the current study, this colonial strategy of power, for example, projects the image of NESTs as dominant and diminishes the value of NNESTs. More importantly, Kumaravadivelu (2006) emphasizes that the act of marginalization does not occur without the practice of self-marginalization which refers to how the members of the dominated group, consciously or unconsciously, legitimize the inferiority given to them by the dominating group. Kumaravadivelu (2006) exemplifies how NSs are viewed superior to NNSs despite the latter's experience and qualifications in teaching and learning English language. Another example of self-marginalization that Kumaravadivelu (2006) gives is how many NNEST- teachers and teacher trainers believe that NSs possess innate ready-made solutions to all the problems of the language classroom. In conclusion, by their overt or covert acceptance of the NS dominance, NNESTs legitimize their own marginalization.

Braine (2010) mentions that the title 'native speaker', as compared to non-native, holds numerous positive connotations such as an innate fluency, socio-linguistic competence, and cultural affinity. However, the term 'non-native speaker' holds the burden of stigmatization, minority, inferiority, which all lead to marginalization, and discrimination. Similarly, Novanti (2018) adds that NESTs have privileges in the field of ELT because it is claimed that they are the ideal speaker, a model for the learners, and thus, an ideal teacher.

Ballard and Winke (2017) summarizes that despite several studies starting from the 1990s which have demonstrated that NNESTs can be equally successful language teachers as NESTs, it is reported that NESTs still to this day receive

preferential treatments such as higher salaries, higher rates of employability, and more employment advantages such as accommodation, and so on. Braine (2010) justifies that as a result of the aforementioned discriminations, NNESTs avoid the label of ‘non-native speaker’ and prefer alternative terms such as English teachers speaking other languages, second language speaking professional, and second language teaching professionals/experts. The economic power in the job hunting process in favor of NESTs is further illustrated in the coming section.

2.6.1 Recruitment and Employability

While NNESTs are generally satisfied with their own non-native status, they usually feel discriminated against and disadvantaged in the language teaching profession (Medgyes, 2001). They report to receive unequal opportunities in relation to teaching jobs, therefore, even highly experienced and qualified NNESTs get rejected in favor of a NESTs with no such qualifications. Phillipson (1992), as was explained in section 2.3.1 of this study, refers to the notion of valorizing NESTs only for the sake of being native as ‘native speaker fallacy’ which has shaped the basic criteria of hiring in most schools, institutes, colleges, and universities regardless of their teaching experience and qualifications especially in the Asian countries and the Arabian Gulf (Selvi, 2010, as cited in Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019).

Some other discussion regarding employability of NSs and NNSs are related to a more worrying and sensitive issue which is race. Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) claims that when a job advertisement asks for a NS for a position of an English teacher, it is implied that Asians, for example, are not advised to apply. They further add that what is often meant but not stated is that if someone looks like a Westerner (i.e. someone who is white) is very likely to be accepted even if they are Dutch or German. One justification administrators often provide in ESL contexts is that students had to

come to US, for example, to be taught by a native teacher; if they wanted to be taught by a non-native, they would stay at their own destinations instead of travelling to the US. Braine (2010) confirms the popularity of this argument against NNESTs as he himself received complaints from stakeholders about his accent, and parents who requested to transfer their students to a class taught by a native teacher. Similarly, Talib (2020) shows that in the KRI, stakeholders are constantly opting for classes having NESTs rather than NNESTs, and that private institutes around the region play the 'native speaker card' as a business model to attract more students.

In the UK, Clark and Paran (2007) conducted a questionnaire to show the employability of non-native EFL teachers. They surveyed 90 administrators who were responsible for hiring ELTs at British Council-accredited higher education universities, private language schools and other educational institutions. Their study indicated that 72% of the hiring administrators considered the 'native English speaker' as either moderately or very important while hiring ELTs. Their study is an implication that the native English speaker criterion, therefore, deprive qualified ELTs from getting hired. Braine (2010) similarly believes that qualified local teachers are in a frustrating and bewildering state of being denied what they have been trained to do.

Over the past two decades, researchers have studied the criterion of NS in the recruitment process of ELTs. For example, Han (2005) illustrates how a travel guide book encourages any English NS to move to Korea to teach English even if they do not have undergraduate qualifications. An excerpt which he provides is "It is possible to teach in Korea even without a university degree. I would still recommend even non-grads give it a try." (Wharton, 1992, p. 71, as cited in Han, 2005). Moreover, Braine (2010) surveys TransitionsAbroad.com, which is described as a means of finding paid and volunteer jobs abroad. Several job titles can be seen such as "Indonesia: Foreign

teachers receive ten times local wage”; and “Taiwan: Only requirements are a college degree and a pulse” (Braine, 2010). In a more recent study, Ruecker and Ives (2015) exposes instances of native speakerism in ELTs’ recruitment published in 59 advertising websites in Southeast Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan). Their study was particularly to find out what characteristics are often attributed to the ideal candidate in the job advertisements, whether groups of individuals are excluded explicitly or implicitly, and what benefits are emphasized to the hired teachers. They found out that the ideal candidate is depicted as a young, enthusiastic, White, NS especially coming from one of the inner-circle countries (USA, UK, Australia, Canada, etc). Overall, the native-speaker requirement was present in 81% of the websites either explicitly or implicitly. Furthermore, benefits such as travel, money, adventurous experience, and exotic culture are all being advertised along with the job to attract NSs.

Despite the obvious high demand on NESTs by employers and stakeholders, Ballard and Winke (2017) attempted to show whether the case is the same with students. They state that administrators often claim that they continue employing NSs because students prefer them. However, Ballard and Winke’s (2017) study results suggest that student attitudes and perceptions about NNESTs may be positive even if the students realize that a teacher might have an accented pronunciation. Their study suggests that from students’ perspective, factors other than nativeness is vital in shaping their attitudes towards their teachers. Their study further suggests that a variety of accents might even equip them with better listening skills.

2.7 Previous Empirical Studies on NESTs and NNESTs

In this section, first, empirical studies on students’ attitudes and perception will be shown in relation to NESTs and NNESTs. Second, previous empirical studies will be discussed relating to teacher attitudes towards, and their self-perceptions of the

issue of NESTs and NNESTs. Finally, strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs will be indicated derived from previous studies.

2.7.1 Students' Attitudes and Perceptions

Empirical studies on students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs are as important as the teachers' self-perceptions, however, it has a more recent history. Among the twelve studies which are presented here, only three studies were conducted before 2010 (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Moussu, 2006; Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009), the remaining studies are more recent (Brown, 2013; Tsou, 2013; Karakaş et al., 2016; Kayalp, 2016; Novianti, 2018, Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019; Qadeer, 2019; Todd & Pojanapunya, 2020). The studies are conducted in different contexts (Cyprus, Indonesia, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, and United States). The results of these studies have drawn different conclusions: some studies indicate that students prefer NESTs, others indicate that the students prefer NNESTs, while several studies show that both NESTs and NNESTs are perceived equally among the students.

To start with, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2002) surveyed 76 undergraduate students in Spain to explore their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. The students filled a Likert scale questionnaire seeking their preferences for NESTs and NNESTs at primary, secondary, and university level, in relation to language skills, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, civilization, teaching strategies, and assessment. Generally, NESTs were preferred for all the educational levels (primary, secondary, and university) with an increasing preference for NESTs as the level of education arose. In particular, students preferred NESTs for pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, culture, and civilization, while they preferred NNESTs for grammar and teaching strategies.

Similarly, in a doctoral research conducted in the United States, Moussu (2006) surveyed 1040 ESL students' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs studying at IEPs in the US. Two questionnaires were completed, one at the beginning of the semester, another at the end. Several variables such as students' native language, gender, level, and teachers' native languages were elicited to show their influence on the students' response. Results indicated that students held more positive attitudes towards NESTs than NNESTs. In details, positive attitudes towards both NESTs and NNESTs significantly increased with exposure and time. Among the variables, students' and teachers' native languages strongly affected the students' responses.

Similar to the aforementioned studies, Kayalp (2016) investigates 98 students' opinions about the same issue at the English Preparatory School of Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus. She collected both quantitative and qualitative data via questionnaires and interviews from pre-intermediate and intermediate learners to find out their attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. The student participants were from different nationalities having different native languages such as Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Kurdish, Kazakh, Azeri, Russian, French, and some others. The results of her study indicates that the students have more positive attitudes towards NESTs. Moreover, the students believe that some valuable qualities of NESTs are their accent and pronunciation while their weakness is their abilities of teaching grammar. On the other hand, the students indicated that the strength of NNESTs is their ability of teaching grammar, and their weakness is their accent and pronunciation.

Contrary to above studies (Kayalp, 2016; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Moussu, 2006), in which results show students' preference for NESTs, numerous other studies indicate otherwise. For example, Qadeer (2019) aimed to investigate students' perceptions related to learning English by NESTs or NNESTs in Saudi Arabia. It also

attempted to show whom do Saudi Arabian learners perceive as their ideal teacher at various levels. Data was collected from a sample of 136 students through a questionnaire which elicited students' opinions about NESTs' and NNESTs' teaching performance relating to teaching methodology, content knowledge, personal traits, and interaction with students. The overall results show that majority of the students chose NNESTs as their first choice and they were considered more successful for teaching of writing, reading, and grammar. However, Saudi Arabian learners preferred NESTs for teaching them speaking and listening skills. In the same context, Elyas and Alghofaili (2019) attempted to investigate Saudi EFL learners' performance through pre-test and post-test of two groups, one having a NEST, the other NNEST. The overall performance in the results indicate that NESTs and NNESTs can be equally successful language teachers and that nativeness has no significant influence on Saudi EFL learners' achievement levels in the four skills of English language.

Similar to Qadeer's (2019) study, Karakaş et al (2016) aimed to investigate Turkish EFL learners' attitudes toward NESTs and NNESTs when they first encountered them and within the course of time. Overall, 120 EFL students participated in the study from a private university in south-eastern Turkey. In the first phase of the study, the students completed a Likert-scale questionnaire. Interview sessions were added to the second phase to further explore students' perceptions. The participants' ages ranged from 17 to 25, and were mostly monolingual NSs of Turkish with the exception of 14 of them who also spoke Kurdish. The findings of their study demonstrated that the students preferred NNESTs (local Turkish teachers). The study justifies that cultural proximity may have a positive influence on learners' motivation and attitude.

On the contrary, several studies have indicated that students prefer both NESTs and NNESTs equally. As instance, Novianti (2018) intended to investigate perceptions of college EFL students in Indonesia relating to NESTs and NNESTs. Quantitative data was obtained from 25 undergraduate students of a university's Department of English. Overall, the students showed positive attitudes towards both NESTs and NNESTs. The study concludes that majority of students do not pay attention to the origin of their English teacher as long as the teacher can assist them in learning the language, is professional in teaching, and has a high level of English proficiency. Another similar study conducted in Taiwan by Tsou (2013) attempted to explore university students' preferences towards NESTs and NNESTs in different skill areas of English language. The findings revealed that students acknowledge the strengths of both NESTs and NNESTs in teaching different language skill areas. They particularly believe that the weaknesses and strengths of NESTs and NNESTs complement each other and that opportunities of having both NESTs and NNESTs seemed as a valuable experience from the students' point of view. In the same vain, Brown (2013) investigated upper-secondary school students' attitudes, who are studying EFL in Sweden, towards NESTs and NNESTs. The results in the study indicated that the students indeed see differences between their NESTs and NNESTs, however, the majority stated that it did not make a difference whether their teacher is native or not "as long as they are good teachers".

As it can be noted, most studies have focused on explicit attitudes of learners. However, Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) states that explicitly shown preferences do not provide the entire attitudes of students. In other words, they criticize the popularly used surveys which focus on students' explicit attitudes. An alternative which they suggest is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) which they apply in order to investigate

attitudes of university students towards NESTs and NNESTs in Thailand. Explicit attitudes were elicited through a questionnaire while implicit attitudes through an IAT. Results indicated that Thai university students explicitly prefer NESTs, however, they unconsciously (implicitly) feel warmer towards NNESTs. After 11 years, Todd and Pojanapunya (2020) elaborately replicated their own study to detect any change in students' attitudes due to the change of sociolinguistic context in Thailand, and the current use of English as a lingua franca (ELF). Using the same IAT with 439 Thai university students, Todd and Pojanapunya (2020) show that, contrary to their expectations, students' explicit and implicit attitudes have become more positive towards NESTs in the ten years since their original study. This finding, they claim, puts a question mark on the current notion of ELF movement.

2.7.2 Teacher Attitudes and Self-Perceptions

It is speculated that self-perceptions of NNESTs are first studied by Reves and Medgyes (1994). They surveyed 216 English teachers from ten countries (Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Sweden, Yugoslavia, and Zimbabwe) of which approximately 92% of them were NNESTs having different native languages. The study attempted to find out the teachers' perceptions about their own practice and teaching attitudes. The participants suggested that in terms of classroom practice, the NESTs use natural and real language, while the NNESTs are more concerned with accuracy and more formal features of the language. They also claimed that since NNESTs are uncertain of suitable language use, they often overuse formal registers. However, NNESTs, on the positive side, possess a deeper insight into English language, are more qualified than their NEST counterparts, show a higher level of empathy towards their students, and are able to detect the learning difficulties of their students.

In a doctoral research, Moussu (2006) carried out a more diverse study on the self-perceptions of NNESTs, along with surveying students and administrators in IEPs in the US. One of her research questions aimed to determine to what extent the self-perceptions of the teachers were in congruence with the attitudes of their students related to native-speakerism. She particularly surveyed 18 NNESTs coming from different countries (Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brazil, China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Reunion Island, Russia, Slovakia, and Somalia). Overall, the study showed that the NNESTs feel less confident of their teaching skills compared to their NEST counterparts. Even in the area of grammar, which is often viewed as a strength of the NNESTs, they perceived their own ability of teaching it as low. Regarding the various teaching skills, NNESTs believed that they are less confident in the areas of writing and culture than reading, and listening. They showed more confidence in teaching beginners and intermediate levels. As for their valuable qualities, they thought that their own experience as a language learner enabled them to relate to their students' needs and difficulties.

Moreover, Abriel (2015) carries out a qualitative study focusing on four ELTs and how their self-perceptions about how being a NEST or NNEST affects their pedagogies in South Korea. Through interviews, the study explores how teachers perceive themselves and also how they think their students perceive them based on their status (either native or non-native). The study's results show that self-perceptions of NESTs and NESTs may slightly influence the teachers' pedagogy which is contrary to the claim that suggests self-perceptions have no impact. Another factor which is emphasized in the results is the relationship between students and teachers. The NEST participants in the study felt that they are disconnected with their students due to cultural and language differences while the NNEST participants felt connected to their

students because of sharing the same L1 with the students, and being able to express more complicated feelings and thoughts with the students.

In a similar study conducted in Korea, Song (2018) expands the exploration of NNESTs' self-perceptions by focusing on feelings of anxiety among NNESTs from sociopolitical and socio-economic perspectives. The study underscores that historical, ideological, and cultural understandings are crucial for analyzing the emotional struggles that NNESTs undergo. The study, in particular, shows that Korean NNESTs undergo emotions of anxiety and insecurity such as when they interact with their NEST colleagues or when they encounter a returnee student who had studied English from an English-speaking country. Importantly, the study implies that these feelings are deeply related to ideological, cultural, and institutional factors as opposed to content-, subject-, or language-related problems.

Several studies have explored teacher's perceptions of what target model or variety of English language is appropriate to teach. Young and Walsh (2010) explored beliefs of NNESTs about the appropriacy of current English varieties such as English as an International Language (EIL), and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), as compared to NS varieties such as British and American English. 26 teachers were individually interviewed coming from countries in Europe, Africa, and West, Southeast, and East Asia who were all either MA or PhD candidates at one university in the UK. Despite the fact that 19 out of 26 teachers initially found the notion of EIL/ELF conceptually necessary, a large number of them believed to be teaching a 'standard' form of the language, even though this does not correspond to the current reality of World Englishes used nowadays worldwide.

A similar study, conducted by Uchida and Sugimoto (2019), aimed to investigate NNESTs' attitudes toward teaching pronunciation, and the model of

pronunciation they prefer to teach. Data was collected from 100 high school teachers in Tokyo through questionnaires. The results indicated that native varieties (American and/or British English) were preferred as goals and models among the NNESTs even though current trends shows World Englishes to become increasingly important. Moreover, the study shows that the more confident the teachers are about their own pronunciation, the more positive their attitude is towards instruction of pronunciation. Two major themes were indicated in the data. First, spending time abroad in the English-speaking countries were seen to play a vital role in increasing their confidence about teaching pronunciation. Secondly, the NNESTs seemed to be more comfortable teaching pronunciation of smaller units such as words and phrases, rather than teaching larger units of English such as sentences and texts.

To summarize, Medgyes (1994) carries out a research with 325 NESTs and NNESTs to show their perceptions about differences in basic aspects of teaching behavior. He summarizes his results under four general headings: the teachers' own use of English, general attitude, attitudes towards teaching the language, and attitude towards teaching culture. The comparison is thoroughly shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Perceived differences in teaching behavior between NESTS and NNESTs

NESTs	NNESTs
1. Own Use of English	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak better English • Use real language • Use English more confidently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak poorer English • Use “bookish” language • Use English less confidently
2. General attitude	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a more flexible approach • Are more innovative • Are less empathetic • Attend to perceived needs • Have far-fetched expectations • Are more casual • Are less committed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a more guided approach • Are more cautious • Are more empathetic • Attend to real needs • Have realistic expectations • Are stricter • Are more committed
3. Attitude to teaching the language	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are less insightful • Focus on: Fluency, Meaning, Language in use, Oral skills, Colloquial registers • Teach items in context • Prefer free activities • Favor group work/pair work • Use a variety of materials • Tolerate errors • Set fewer tests • Use no/less L1 • Resort to no/less translation • Assign less homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are more insightful • Focus on: Accuracy, Form, Grammar rules, Printed word, Formal registers • Teach items in isolation • Prefer controlled activities • Favor frontal work • Use single textbooks • Correct/punish for errors • Set more tests • Use more L1 • Resort to more translation • Assign more homework
4. Attitude to teaching culture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply more cultural information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply less cultural information

2.7.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs

Numerous studies (Braine, 2010; Hadla, 2013; Han, 2005; Kayalp, 2016; Kurniawati & Rizki, 2018; Ma, 2012; Medgyes, 2001; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) have either solely focused on the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs or have summarized the advantages and disadvantages of the two groups based on the perception of their subjects (either students, or teachers). One of the pioneering study in this particular area is Reves and Medgyes' (1994) study since its results have ever been validated by other subsequent studies. Even though majority of the studies imply a collaboration of NESTs and NNEST, and strongly emphasize that both groups can be equally successful teacher on their own terms, however, it seems that the advantages of one group appear to be the disadvantages of another. Medgyes (2001) summarizes that NESTs and NNESTs generally differ in their language proficiency and their teaching behavior. First, the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs will be discussed, followed by the strengths and weaknesses of NNESTs.

The primary advantage of NESTs, according to Medgyes (2001), lies in their superiority of their English language competence particularly in their ability of using

the language spontaneously and in communicative situations. Further, Han (2005) suggests that the strength of NESTs lies in their experience as English users (as opposed to English learners). Ma (2012) adds three more advantages: their good English proficiency, their ability to facilitate student learning, and having 'relaxed' and interactive teaching styles. Hadla's (2013) results show that NESTs can be better teachers of the oral skills such as speaking, listening, and pronunciation, and that they make use of various types of materials. Similarly, Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014) indicate that learners see NESTs as the model of correct language use, and natural pronunciation, as well as being knowledgeable about the target culture. Finally, Kurniawati and Rizki (2018) claim that NESTs can bring advantages to the English classrooms owing to their high level of English proficiency.

Despite their inevitable advantages, Ma (2012) mentions four disadvantages of learning from NESTs: students' difficulty in understanding their teaching, difficulty in communication, experiencing anxiety among students, and their non-examination-oriented classrooms. Moreover, Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014) add that NESTs lack the ability to explain grammar, and there may usually be communicative and cultural gap between the teachers and students.

Coming to the strengths of NNESTs, Reves and Medgyes (1994) state that NNESTs have a deeper insight into the English language, are more qualified than their NS counterparts, are more sympathetic towards their students, and due to their shared educational, cultural, and linguistic background, they are more capable of detecting their students' needs and difficulties. Additionally, Medgyes (2001) admits that NNESTs are a better learner model, can teach learning strategies more successfully, can predict and prevent difficulties in learning language better, are more sensitive to their students, and can benefit from using the students' native language. In fact, Llorca

(2005) refers to Cook's (1999) notion of multicompetence as an advantage of NNESTs. Llorca (2005) underscores that despite their (real or alleged) weaknesses, NNESTs benefit greatly from the ability of code-switching as a communicative strategy inside the classroom and that a NNEST, compared to a NEST, can offer students metacognitive learning strategies by helping them to use their bilingual resources and abilities. Metaphorically, Han (2005) represents NNESTs' strength as knowing "where and how to scratch when their learners feel itchy" (p. 200) owing to their similar cultural and linguistic contexts. Moreover, Ma (2012) suggests that NNESTs' strengths lie in their proficiency in students' native language, their understanding towards students' difficulties, and the ease students feel towards them in understanding their teaching and communication. Namely, Hadla (2013) indicates that NNESTs can be better teachers of complex grammar, and are more empathetic towards their students' needs and struggles. Similarly, Walkinshaw and Oanh's (2014) results show that students are more comfortable interacting with NNESTs because of their shared culture, and that even though their pronunciation is often deemed inferior to NESTs' pronunciation, but students still find them more comprehensible. To conclude, Kurniawati and Rizki (2018) echoes that some strengths of NNESTs are that they are more sensitive and empathetic for sharing the same native language and culture with their students, as well as the same language learning experience. Another strength is that they are models of successful learners of English language, thus, this stands as an obvious motivation to their students.

Not having acquired the language, NNESTs are seen to have several weaknesses. Initially, Reves and Medgyes (1994) indicate that NNESTs are more preoccupied with accuracy and formal English. In their study, about a third of their NEST subjects admitted to have some problems with fluency and vocabulary, and

nearly 75% of the respondents believed that these shortcomings hindered their teaching. This phenomenon is called 'The Linguistic Handicap' by Medgyes (2001), who says that in no area of English-language proficiency, can NNESTs catch up NESTs; the participants in his study viewed themselves as poorer speakers, listeners, writers, and readers. However, it is believed that staying in English-speaking countries, hard-working, and dedication can definitely narrow the gap between them. Medgyes (2001) adds that NNESTs are often busy preoccupied with formal structures of English, rules of grammar, formal registers, and printed words and are not familiar with colloquial day-to-day English. Medgyes (2001) assumes that NNESTs tend to teach unfamiliar pieces of language in decontextualized environments. Also, he adds that due to their double role as learners and teachers, they are reluctant to take their classes easily; they often try to avoid unpredictable activities in the classroom, thus they favor lock-step activities, and course books which can provide them security.

As mentioned in 2.2.2 in this study, accent tends to be a factor that causes ambiguity in the identity of NNESTs. Therefore, Jenkins (2005) offers significant and frank insights into the NNESTs' identity. Her teacher participants had high levels of education and high proficiency in English. However, all eight teachers tended to show a preference for NS accents. The results of her study not only reveal an unexpected frankness, but also show a sense of inferiority among the NNEST participants. Unlike many of the other studies cited in the current study, Jenkins (2005) is a NS herself, and she employed in-depth interviews which lasted for an hour in which she used prompts that stimulated implicit attitudes among the NNESTs, and perhaps the teachers felt more comfortable showing their struggles with a NS of English. Similarly, in Tang's (1997, as cited in Braine, 2010) study, the NNESTs implicitly stated their lower English proficiency by saying that NESTs are superior in listening, reading,

pronunciation, and vocabulary. Likewise, Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014) mentions that NNESTs are viewed to have a less fluent speaking ability, and a non-authentic pronunciation. Finally, Ma's (2012) study infers three similar disadvantages of learning from NNESTs which were suggested by the students. First, NNESTs are seen to be inaccurate in grammar and pronunciation; second, they depend on textbook-bound and traditional teaching styles; and third, they leave limited time for practicing English.

2.8 ELT in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Since gaining autonomy in 1991, the KRI has undertaken dramatic acts towards educational reform and development such as opening new school and universities, and developing new curricula. The sector of Higher Education in KRI, in particular, seem to have rapidly developed in the last two decades. In 2018, for example, it was reported that there were 15 private and 14 public universities in KRI (Atrushi & Woodfield, 2018).

In general, Iraqi Kurdish people hold positive attitude towards English language, and English is more highly favored than Arabic language (Sofi-Karim, 2015). In school, students need to pass English lesson in order to be able to transfer to the coming grade levels, and in twelfth grade, which is the final stage of high school (and the most crucial), students need to obtain a high mark in English language in order to be accepted in higher university departments such as medical college, engineering, sciences, English department, and so on. A high command of English has become a vehicle for success, not only in attaining a college degree, but also in academia, the job market, and personal use. Sofi-Karim (2015) adds that English is seen by many Kurdish learners as means of representing Kurdish nationality to the world.

The syllabi used in Iraq can be classified into two periods. The first stage is during 1873-1970s, in which imported syllabi is used from Egypt and was based on Grammar Translation Method. Since 1970s, until present, the English syllabi has been locally produced (Abdulkarim, 2009, as cited in Sofi-Karim, 2015). Sunrise, which is the current English textbook being used in KRI's public schools since 2007 (Saeed, 2020), aims to teach EFL in the public schools of KRI, and in particular, to improve Iraqi Kurdish students' communicative competence (Sofi-Karim, 2015).

However, KRI's system of education, particularly concerning English language, is reported to encounter certain constraints (Sofi-Karim, 2015). Sofi-Karim (2015) finds out that drawbacks are due to shortage of specialized ELTs, dearth of English teacher training, lack of professional English language trainers, lack of instructional time for English class, low infrastructure concerning ELT equipment and school buildings, and large class size (which hinders the application of the Communicative Language Teaching). Similarly, to examine perceptions of public university representatives about the quality of Higher Education in KRI, Atrushi and Woodfield (2018) carries out an exploratory study using online questionnaire survey from 703 participants. The findings reveals that respondents claim the higher education to be of low quality. The study argues that several issues may underpin their negative perceptions, such as: poor quality of the learning and research environment, staff development programs, and deficiency of laboratory equipment. Further, political interference and corruption in the system were viewed as obstacles that impede the improvement of higher education in public sectors.

2.8.1 Studies on NESTs and NNESTs in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

In KRI, most ELTs are NNESTs especially in public primary, secondary, and university education. However, few private schools and universities have employed

NESTs. To exemplify, among five universities (one public, and four private) in Sulaymaniyah city of Iraq, only 11 ELTs are NSs of English among the total of 116 ELTs in the four universities. This fact is in line with Lasagabaster and Sierra's (2002) study which mentions that in the Basque Autonomous Community of Spain, most teachers are NNESTs, and that having NESTs is uncommon in public education. In their study, they mention that the English Department of the University of the Basque Country, only seven teachers are native out of 46. The high number of NNESTs worldwide is reinforced by Canagarajah (1999, as cited in Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002) who shows that 80% of the English language teacher population in the world is NNESTs. Similarly, Braine (2010) justifies that NESTs are scarcely present in 'Outer Circle' and 'Expanding Circle' countries. In countries such as Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, NNESTs are not found due to low amounts of monthly salary (Braine, 2010).

Nevertheless, the increase of the so-called 'international schools', and private universities have opened doors for NESTs to travel to KRI, thus educational institutions in KRI attempt to employ NESTs in order to assist Kurdish learners of English by interacting with NSs of English. However, a very limited amount of studies (Barany & Zebari, 2018) have been conducted in KRI regarding the debate of NESTs and NNESTs.

Barany and Zebari (2018) aimed to explore perceptions of Kurdish ELLs of their NESTs and NNESTs, and to identify which of the two groups of teachers they prefer and for what language skills. One hundred students studying English participated in their study from four private universities in KRI. Data was collected via a 14-item questionnaire. The findings of their study indicate that Iraqi Kurdish students have a more positive attitude towards NESTs rather than NNESTs. The student

participants further claimed that NESTs are better than NNESTs in teaching speaking, listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary. On the other hand, they preferred NNESTs over NESTs in teaching them grammar.

2.9 Summary

This chapter sought to provide a review of literature of both theory and empirical studies which have been conducted in the few last decades on the phenomenon of native and non-native ELTs worldwide. A crucial tenet of the discussion lied in who a NS of a language is, and why the issue of native-speakerism is vague and problematic. Given the literature above, it appears that the dichotomy of native and NNSs of English hold linguistic, economic, and socio-political implications.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and instruments used in the present study. First, it explains the overall research design. Second, it describes the setting where this study is conducted, followed by an overview of the research questions. It then gives information about the participants, and explains the data collection instruments and procedures. Lastly, it illustrates the methods used to analyze the data.

3.1 Research Design

The present study has utilized a mixed method, descriptive, non-experimental design combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect and analyze data. The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions and attitudes of students and teachers towards learning English language by NESTs and NNESTs in KRI. Moreover, the study aims to assess which one the students identify as the ideal teacher, and to find out whether they think positively or negatively towards any of them. Finally, strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs will be investigated from the students' and teachers' point-of-view.

Therefore, the aim of the study required an involvement of different groups of people: students, native teachers, and non-native teachers alike. Quantitative data is collected from English learners to investigate their perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs and qualitative data is obtained via interviews from ELTs teachers to explore their perceptions and attitudes towards the issue. Both quantitative

and qualitative data were attitudinal, eliciting the students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the issue of native and non-native ELTs.

Bazeley (2004) explains that qualitative and quantitative approaches of research are distinguished by “the type used (text or numeric; structured or unstructured), the logic employed (inductive or deductive), the type of investigation (explanation or confirmatory), the method of analysis (interpretive or statistical), and the approach to explanation (variance theory or process theory)” (p. 142).

Shohamy (2004) encourages researchers to combine and blend a variety of modes towards answering their research questions. In this research, a mixed methods approach is used as a means to offset the drawbacks inherent within one approach with the strength of the other (Creswell, 2009). Similarly, Moussu (2006) admits that quantifying beliefs and attitudes has its own shortcomings, therefore, balancing quantitative data with qualitative fortifies the research design. In specific relation to the topic of this research, Moussu and Llorca (2008) noted that more empirical studies are needed in the development of understanding of the issue of NESTs and NNESTs, in particular quantitative approaches with numerical data which could legitimize previous theoretical analyses. Further, quantitative data, especially from larger populations, are seen to be more robust and reliable, and allows for a more normal distribution of the findings (Moussu, 2006). The reliability of the current research is also increased by having collected data from multiple universities (Moussu, 2006).

Even though the current study is descriptive and non-experimental, among the four main types of paradigms which are Positivist/Postpositivist, Interpretivist/Constructivist, Pragmatic, and Transformative (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), the present study belongs to a Transformative paradigm. The Transformative paradigm emerged from the 1980s due to dissatisfaction with previous dominant

paradigms which were produced from, and served only the white, the able-bodied, and male participants. Thus, this paradigm addresses issues of marginalized people to establish social justice such as feminist theory, and queer theory (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

Similarly, Mertens (2007) suggests that the ‘Transformative Paradigm’ provides a framework for addressing injustice and inequality in a society and believes that ultimate reality is shaped by economic, cultural, political, and social ethnic/racial values which all play major roles in a research context. The theoretical paradigm of this study, which addresses a controversial issue in a culturally complex setting, further reveals the potential strength of mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches. In this sense, a qualitative dimension is necessary to obtain perspectives of the community members, while a quantitative dimension is needed to demonstrate results which can be a source of credibility for scholars and community members alike (Mertens, 2007).

3.2 Context

The study was conducted in five universities (one public, four private) in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. The universities are University of Sulaimani, Komar University of Science and Technology, Cihan University of Sulaymaniyah, Qaiwan International University, and American University of Iraq – Sulaimani. These research sites are chosen because the language of instruction is English and most of them have/had employed both native and non-native ELTs. All the students who participated in the current study were either enrolled in preparatory English programs of the university or were students of English Departments. Official permission letters have been collected from the universities (See appendices). The reason why five different universities were chosen was because of certain constraints such as insufficient number of students in

classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The distribution of the students are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of student participants across research sites

University		Program/Department	Number of Student Participants	
			#	%
University of Sulaimani (UoS)	Public	Department of English	104	30.1
Komar University of Science and Technology (KUST)	Private	The Center of Intensive English Program (CIEP)	93	27
Cihan University of Sulaimaniyah	Private	Department of English	81	23.5
American University of Iraq – Sulaimani (AUIS)	Private	Academic Preparatory Program (APP)	49	14.2
Qaiwan International University (QIU)	Private	Pre-Academic Program (PAP)	18	5.2
Total			345	100

The English Department of University of Sulaimani aims to improve students' knowledge and education of English language and literature. It is a four-year bachelor education. Medium of instruction is English, and the classes which are offered are: phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, morphology, general linguistics, novel, drama, poetry, comprehension, translation, criticism, and research methodology. The teachers are all non-native holders of either MA, or PhD in linguistics, literature, and/or translation.

Similarly, the English Department of Cihan University of Sulaymaniyah exposes its students to a four-year study of English subjects (both linguistic and literary studies). The department aims at developing their learners' linguistic and literary

conceptions, their English language skills, and their cultural perceptions and awareness.

Apart from the above two departments of English, the current study is conducted in three different intensive IEPs. First, the Center of Intensive English Programme (CIEP) at Komar University of Science and Technology (KUST) prepares their students for their future academic studies in terms of General English, Academic English, and learning strategies. Their classes specifically focus on reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, studying skills, critical thinking, and time management. The aim of the program is to ensure students' success in their undergraduate program at the university, the medium of instructions is English only, and both native and non-native teachers have taught at this program. The level of the applicants at the program is assigned based on a placement test "The Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT)" which is taken prior to their first module.

Likewise, the Academic Preparatory Program (APP) at the American University of Iraq – Sulaimani (AUIS) prepares students for their academic studies by teaching them academic English, study habits, and thinking skills. All of their teachers are NSs of English. Upon admission, all applicants are required to take an English placement test in which determines their level in the program.

Finally, the Pre-Academic Programme (PAP) at Qaiwan International University (QIU) is a preparatory program which offers intensive English courses and foundation courses to the students who are willing to pursue their academic studies at the university. The program is said to have been designed for those students who do not have the minimum requirements of the skills of English language.

3.3 Research Questions

This research project attempts to (i) explore the perceptions and attitudes of students and teachers towards learning English language by NESTs and NNESTs; (ii) assess which one they perceive as the ideal English language teacher; (iii) find out whether or not they think positively or negatively towards one group or another; (iv) and finally, explore what strengths and weaknesses NESTs and NNESTs have from students' and teachers' points of view.

The study is, thus, organized around five focal questions:

1. What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
2. What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?
3. What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
4. What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?
5. What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

3.4 Participants

3.4.1 Recruitment and Sampling

For recruiting participants, this study adopted a combination of convenience sampling and purposive sampling which are two forms of non-probability sampling. According to Merriam (1998, as cited in Aneja, 2017), convenience sampling is to select a sample based on time, money, location, availability and permission. Purposive sampling, on the other hand, is an intuitive sampling method which involves an intentional selection of participants based on their ability to offer insights on a specific concept, theme, or phenomenon (Robinson, 2014).

The student participants were 345 volunteering students from IEPs and English Departments at five different universities in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. These universities

were chosen because their language of instruction is only English, and some of their students have been taught by native English-speaking teachers.

Similar to the students, the teacher participants whom were interviewed were 24 teachers who volunteered to participate. They were contacted based on the fact they have all taught EFL in KRI. Two of the teacher participants whom the researcher interviewed were administrators along with being an EFL teacher. Such faculty members included a director of one of the IEPs, and a coordinator of one of the English Departments. This would ensure the variety and the quality of the responses.

A sample size of 24 teachers deemed to be sufficient as they were individually interviewed. Vasileiou et al. (2018) suggested that samples in individual and interview-based qualitative research with specific research questions tend to be small in size order to accelerate the quality of case-oriented, richly-textured, and in-depth data which is relevant to the topic under investigation, and thus, enables the researcher to manage the task's complexity.

3.4.2 Students

Five participant groups, totaling 345 learners of English in Sulaymaniyah city of KRI, voluntarily participated in this study by answering a questionnaire. Out of the 345 participants, 293 (84.9%) of them were born in Sulaymaniyah. Other birth places were stated as the following: Baghdad 5.4% (19 participants), Kirkuk 2.6% (9 participants), Erbil 2.6% (9 participants). Further, 3.3% (11 participants) of the students were born in other cities of Iraq (Basra, Diyala, Najaf, Dhi Qar, Mosul, Anbar, and Babylon), and 1.2% (4 participants) of them were born in other countries (Syria, Germany, and Norway).

Table 3: Birthplace of student participants

Place of Birth	Frequency	Percentage
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Sulaymaniyah, Iraq	293	84.9
Basra, Iraq	1	0.3
Diyala, Iraq	2	0.6
Syria	1	0.3
Najaf, Iraq	1	0.3
Dhi Qar, Iraq	1	0.3
Mosul, Iraq	3	0.9
Erbil, Iraq	9	2.6
Kirkuk, Iraq	9	2.6
Baghdad, Iraq	19	5.4
Anbar, Iraq	1	0.3
Norway	1	0.3
Germany	2	0.6
Babylon, Iraq	2	0.6
Total	345	100

Their ages ranged from 18 to 34 with 90% of them being younger than 24 years old; the mean age was 21.

Table 4: Age of student participants

Age of the participants	Frequency	Percentage
18	39	11.3
19	49	14.2
20	55	15.9
21	83	24
22	52	15.1
23	30	8.7
24	12	3.5
25	9	2.6
26	5	1.4

27	4	1.2
29	3	0.9
30	1	0.3
33	2	0.6
34	1	0.3
Total	345	100

When the respondents were asked to give their L1, 317 said Kurdish (91.9%), 15 said Arabic (7.2%), two participants said Persian (0.6%), and one said Turkish (0.3%).

Table 5: First language of student participants

First language	Frequency	Percentage
Kurdish	317	91.9
Arabic	25	7.2
Persian	2	0.6
Turkish	1	0.3
Total	345	100

As for their gender, 217 (62.9%) of the participants were female, and 128 (37.1%) were male. The unequal distribution of gender, as in Brown's (2013) study, was unavoidable because participation was voluntary in the current study. Dickinson, Adelson, and Owen (2012) prove that the studies which heavily rely on undergraduate university samples are highly overrepresented by female participants regardless of whether participation is voluntary or not. Apart from number size, women are claimed to be more eager to participate in studies as compared to men (Curtin et al., 2000).

The participants were also asked whether their parents speak English. Only 9% of them stated that both their mothers and fathers speak English, 7.8% of them said only their fathers, and 4.3% of them stated that only their mothers speak English. 78.9% of the participants claimed that none of their parents can speak English (See Table 6). They were also asked whether they had ever been to any English-speaking countries. Among the 345 participants, only 33 of them had been to an English-speaking country, and 31 out of those 33 participants spent less than 5 months abroad. As for the period of studying English, most of the participants have been studying EFL for an average of 5 to 15 years.

Table 6: English-speaking ability of student participants' parents

Question	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
“Do your parents speak English?”	Both of them	31	9
	None of them	272	78.9
	Only my father	27	7.8
	Only my mother	15	4.3
	Total	345	100

Moreover, out of the 345 participants, only 145 of them (42%) were taught, at some time or other, by native English-speaking teachers. Among those 145 participants, 105 of them have had 1 to 5 native English teachers, 27 of them have had 6 to 10 native English teachers, and only 13 of them have had more than 10 native English teachers. One reason that half of the students were not taught by native teachers is because Iraq, being an ‘Expanding Country’, does not have much NESTs (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Braine, 2010). This reality is reinforced by Canagarajah (1999, as cited in Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002) who illustrates that 80% of the ELTs in the world are non-native. However, not having been exposed to English from native-

speakers does not deprive adult students from growing attitudes towards the issue. Bakanauskas et al. (2020) analyzes the nature of attitudes and states that direct experience is only one of the factors which plays a role in forming attitude, other factors are an individual's characteristics, values, emotions, beliefs, habits, feelings, and external relationships and socialization with other people. In the current study, the participants are said to have studied English for 5 to 15 years, thus, at some point in their lives, they are likely to have grown perceptions towards the NEST/NNEST phenomenon.

3.4.3 Teachers

The teacher participants were 24 EFL language teachers in total, including five NESTs and nineteen NNESTs. There was an equal distribution of gender among the teachers (12 female and 12 male). Their age ranged from the 20s to the 60s. Among the 24 teachers, 60% of them aged from 20 to 30, 30% of them aged from 30 to 40, and only 10% of them were above 40 years old. The NESTs were from the United Kingdom and the United States (inner-circle), while all the NNESTs were Iraqi Kurdish (expanding-circle). All the teacher participants had bachelor's degrees, eight held Master's degrees, all had a high proficiency of English language, and all had teaching experience in KRI. 20 out of the 24 had majored in English related fields. Their teaching experience ranged from 2 years to 17 years, with an average of 6.5 years. 21 out of 24 teachers (88% of them) had a certificate in teaching. Certifications included TEFL, TESOL, CELTA, and TEFLA Intensive Programme. Among the 24 teachers, only ten of them had been to English-speaking countries. Among those ten, two of them spent less than one year abroad, three of them less than ten years, while five of them spent more than 10 years. Apart from those who were born and lived there, other reasons for going abroad included: schooling, education, exchange

programs or seminars, and visit. All 24 of them were interviewed individually. However, 17 of them were interviewed face-to-face, while 7 of them were interviewed on the phone due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 7 provides an overview of the gender, age, L1, years of teaching experience, qualifications, and certification of these teacher participants.

Table 7: Background of teacher participants

Teacher Participants	Gender	Age	N or NN	First Language	Years of Teaching Experience	Qualification	Teaching Certification	Having been to English-speaking Countries
T1	F	40-50	N	English	6	MA	TEFL	40 years, living
T2	M	30-40	NN	Kurdish	13	BA	TEFL	
T3	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	2	BA	TEFL, TESOL	
T4	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	4	BA	TEFL	
T5	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TEFL, TESOL	
T6	M	30-40	NN	Kurdish	15	MA	CELTA	
T7	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TEFL, TESOL	
T8	M	30-40	NN	Kurdish	12	MA	TESOL	3 years, education
T9	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TESOL	
T10	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TESOL	
T11	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	2	BA		
T12	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	7	BA	TEFL, TESOL	

T13	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TEFL	8 years, schooling
T14	F	20-30	N	English/Kurdish	3	BA	TESOL	10 years, living
T15	F	30-40	N	English/Spanish	3	BA		30 years, living
T16	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	3	BA	TESOL	3 months, visit
T17	M	30-40	NN	Kurdish	10	MA	TESOL	
T18	F	20-30	NN	Kurdish	2	BA		
T19	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	6	BA	TESOL	
T20	F	20-30	N	English/Kurdish	2	BA	TESOL	17 years, living
T21	M	50+	N	English Arabic	15	M. Sc.	TEFLA Intensive Programme	38 years, living
T22	M	20-30	NN	Kurdish	4	MA	TESOL	
T23	M	30-40	NN	Kurdish	12	MA	TESOL	3 years, education
T24	F	30-40	NN	Kurdish	17	MA	TESOL	1 month, exchange program

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the demographic data collected through the student questionnaire and the teacher interview were only meant to assist in describing the characteristics of the participant groups and hence was not included in the analysis.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

This study aims to explore students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in KRI. The problem and aim being investigated, it was believed that the best methodology for this project was to use questionnaires with students and interviews with teachers. Moussu and Llorca (2008) similarly observes

that most studies conducted on the topic of nativeness have applied surveys and interviews. Therefore, in this study, 345 students responded to the questionnaire, and 24 teachers were interviewed.

The student questionnaire and teacher interview questions were developed taking the validity and reliability processes into consideration. After a careful review of the scales used in the literature, various items from different sources (Alseweed, 2012; Kayalp, 2016; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Tsou, 2013; Üstünlüoğlu, 2007) were selected and modified according to the context of the research. The teacher interview questions were discussed with experts in the field to ensure face validity and were modified based on their knowledge and suggestions. As for the student questionnaire, after it was developed, it was piloted with 20 university students and modifications were made based on their feedback. The reliability of the student questionnaire was then tested based on Cronbach' alpha formula in SPSS and the coefficient of internal consistency was 0.82 which is considered acceptable and reliable (Brown, 2002). The student questionnaire and teacher interview are thoroughly described in sections below.

3.5.1 Student Questionnaire

The current study gathered data from EFL learners in KRI through survey questionnaire. The reasons for choosing questionnaires to collect data from students were because of the students' alleged limited English proficiency since questionnaires can easily be translated to another language without affecting the content. More specifically, Likert scales were used for the following reasons. Krosnick et al. (2005) suggests that using Likert scales offer a valid and reliable measurement of attitudes if statements are carefully developed, easily understood, and have a logical continuum without any points overlapping. Moreover, Brown (2001) claims that Likert-scale

questions are effective in collecting participants' opinions, views, and attitudes about language-related issues (p.41), and that it enables uniformity across questions, and that participants are less likely to skip questions, thus, a higher rate of response.

An attitude statement, according to Oppenheim (1996), is a single sentence which expresses a judgment, belief, preference, emotional feeling, or a position for or against something. In more details, he describes attitude as a "state of readiness, a tendency to respond in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli" (p. 174). He further analyzes that attitudes are "reinforced by beliefs (the cognitive component) and often attract strong feelings (the emotional component) which may lead to particular behavioral intents (the action tendency component)" (Oppenheim, 1996, p. 175).

The questionnaire was divided into three sections/batteries. The first section/battery asked short-answer and multiple questions about the students' age, gender, L1, nationality, university, whether or not they have had native teachers, whether their parents know English, and if they have been to English-speaking countries. These background information played an essential role in the students' perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs.

Relating to the research questions, the second and third sections/batteries consisted of 40 attitude statements (20 about NESTs, and the same 20 questions about NNESTs). A Bipolar Seven-point Likert scale was used which asked for students' perceptions on NESTs and NNESTs. This type of scale runs along a continuum of -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, numerically. The plus side on the left denotes positivity and agreement in response to a given statement, while the minus side on the right denotes disagreement, and zero, which is in the middle, stands for neutrality. This scale is more expansive compared to other types of scales as it gauges which side the respondents

are on as well as measuring the exact degree to which they are positioned (see figure 1).

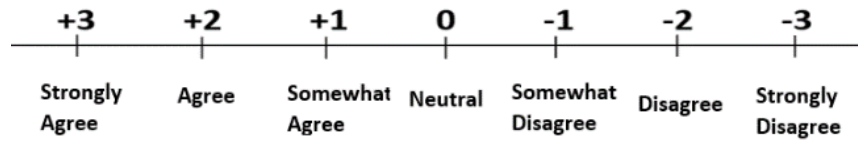


Figure 1: Bipolar seven-point Likert scale

Since some universities were having online classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic, both online and paper questionnaire were used having the same content and layout. Moreover, since the students' L1 was not English, a Kurdish version was provided as well. The full questionnaires (English, Kurdish, and Online) are included the appendices. In order to enhance validity of the questionnaire, it was piloted (See section 2.6 below), and was given to a professional professor at University of Sulaimani, Department of Translation, to validate the Kurdish translation. The questionnaire was modified based on the pilot and the professor's comments.

Oppenheim (1996) mentions that attitudinal questions are more sensitive compared to factual questions, therefore, he emphasizes that one should not depend on single questions when they want to measure attitudes closely related to the research aim, rather, one should have different sets of questions which give more consistent results, thus any bias will cancel out, whereas the underlying attitude will persist among all items. Somehow similar, Gehlbach and Barge (2012) hypothesize that survey respondents employ a strategy of 'anchoring' and 'cross-checking' in a sense that certain items stand as a cognitive anchor from which they cross-check (adjust) the remaining subsequent items accordingly. In their study, it is shown that questionnaires

with anchoring and adjusting result in higher reliability of the scale Gehlbach and Barge (2012).

Therefore, the student questionnaire of the current study implicitly consisted of three major anchor items each having a set of cross-check items validating the anchor items either positively, or negatively. Three of the attitude statements are anchor items in the section about NESTs, and the same three in the section about NNESTs. Thus, in the student questionnaire (See appendix A), among the attitude statements about NESTs, attitude statement 2 “Q2: *My English improves with a native English-speaking teacher*” is an anchor item which is validated by seven other (cross-check) items: 14. *My grammar improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; 15. *My vocabulary improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; 16. *My pronunciation improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; 17. *My listening improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; 18. *My speaking improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; 19. *My reading improves with a native English-speaking teacher*; and 20. *My writing improves with a native English-speaking teacher*. Another anchor item is “Q1: *I prefer a native English-speaking teacher for my English class*” which is supported by the following cross-check items: 5, 6, 7, 9, and 12. Another anchor item is “Q3: *A native English-speaking teacher motivates me to learn English language*” which is supported by items 4, 8, 10, 11, and 13. The same classification applies to the section about NNESTs.

3.5.2 Teacher Interview

In this project, 24 English language teachers (both native and non-native) who have taught EFL in KRI were interviewed for the aim of exploring their perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. All 24 of the teacher participants were interviewed individually for about 20 minutes. 17 of the interviews were face-to-face,

while 7 of them were interviewed on the phone because they were working from their homes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews were all conducted in English language because the teacher participants had a high proficiency of English, however, in certain cases, they code-switched to Kurdish if necessary.

Moussu and Llorca (2008) note that a fruitful method which has been implemented in studies on NESTs and NNESTs has been interviews which is a crucial explanatory method of collecting data by conveying a direct access to the participants' beliefs, experience, and opinions.

The interview questions consisted of 13 closed-ended questions and 8 open-ended questions. The purpose of the closed-ended questions was to acquire basic information about the teachers such as their nationality, place of birth, age group, gender, L1, qualifications, teaching certifications, years of teaching experience, whether they consider themselves as native or non-native, whether they have been to English-speaking countries, and so on (See appendix E). These demographic pieces of information were deemed to be significant factors. For example, their attitude towards NESTs and NNESTs might closely be related to whether they have been to an English-speaking country, or whether they have completed any course on teaching English which might have acted as an eye-opener about such issues.

On the other hand, the interview also consisted of 8 open-ended questions. Some questions directly asked for their opinions on NESTs and NNESTs such as what some valuable qualities and serious weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs were from their point-of-view. However, other questions potentially attempted to target their implicit attitudes such as if it is important for an English language teacher to be native, whether it is important for the teacher to be able to speak the students' L1, whether

their students prefer native or non-native, and whether their own status (either native or non-native) have aided or hindered their experience as a teacher.

3.6 Piloting

Reves and Medgyes (1994) urges that a problem with questionnaire is that it cannot be developed and implemented with a ready-made group of participants, and that even the best-developed questionnaires need to be trialed.

After developing the student questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with 20 Iraqi Kurdish university students who all had a high proficiency of English language and were at Sulaymaniyah city of Iraq. Their ages were between 18 and 25. The pilot participants were given thorough background information about the study, and that they had to inform the researcher whether there were any problems with content, order, coherence, and layout of the questionnaire. The researcher took notes of their feedback. Afterwards, alterations were made based on their feedback. One participant noted that it is unclear what is meant by “*the students’ culture*” in one of the attitude statements, complaining which culture it was meant, therefore the statement was changed to “A native English-speaking teacher knows about the students’ culture (*Kurdish culture*).” Moreover, another participant protested that “*n*” was vague as to which questions were meant; general, in class, or outside of class? Therefore, the researcher reformed the statement as “A native English-speaking teacher understands students’ questions *in class*”.

At the same time, the teacher interview questions were given to expert professors who had experience with teaching, supervising, and researching. They confirmed that the questions were suitable for the aim of the research, and were free of bias. However, they gave several suggestions such as having the teacher participants tick an age group they belong to rather than writing their exact age.

The purpose of the pilot study was to check whether the student questionnaire and the teacher interview questions were well written, coherently ordered, and easily understood. Another aim of the pilot was to equip the researcher with necessary techniques of conducting the study and to foresee potential pitfalls. The piloting took place in the presence of the researcher. None of the pilot subjects participated in the actual study, and all data collected from the pilot were excluded from the data analysis of the study.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Before beginning the data collection procedures, approval from the five sites were collected (See Appendices F, G, H, I, and J). The study received enthusiastic support from the Institutional Review Boards (IRB), teachers, and students.

Student participants were recruited by means of the paper questionnaire distributed in class (for the face-to-face surveys), and by means of online Google forms sent out to them by their head of departments. Even though the aim of the study and its ethical factors are overtly stated on the questionnaire, the purpose and the potential benefit of the survey was explained to the students in the class, and the two terms of NESTs and NNESTs were illustrated by giving examples. Those students who volunteered to participate were asked to sign their consent, and then invited to complete the survey which took 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

On the other hand, 24 EFL teachers were contacted and were informed about the aim of the study, and once they volunteered to participate, they were given the interview questions several days before the actual interview in order for the teachers to reflect on their own experience and thoughts. For those who were telephone-interviewed, the questions were sent to them via email. At a mutually convenient time and place, the interviews were carried out with individual teacher participants which

took about 20 minutes. They were required to sign the consent form and were informed that their voice was being recorded, which they all approved. During the interview, the researcher showed objectivity and refrained from imposing any influence on the subjects' responses, making sure that they are free to express what is on their minds with no conditioning restrictions nor prompts from the side of the researcher. The researcher took field notes while and after the interviews.

3.8 Data Analysis

To analyze the student questionnaires, the SPSS V.25 was used to analyze the 40 attitude scales in the questionnaire. The quantitative data from the questionnaire was examined by using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each item to demonstrate the participants' responses towards the statements. Before performing the analysis, the items of the student questionnaire were coded, and entered into the SPSS database. To ensure reliability of the analysis, a research assistant was hired to help with the data input and analysis.

As for the analysis of the teacher interviews, several steps were taken. First, the audio tracks were manually transcribed including pauses, expressions of emotions such as laughing, and fillers such as 'uhm', and 'uh'. After the transcription process, the transcripts were closely read and reread to identify potential patterns and recurring themes. After a foundational understanding was gained, a coding process took place because any corpus with more than 20 interviews are estimated to establish a coding scheme (Schensul & LeCompte, 2012, as cited in Aneja, 2017). This coding procedure employed both deductive and inductive coding in order to obtain different insights from the raw data. Deductive coding involves approaching the data with overt themes identified a priori (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). Deductive codes included, for instance, strengths of NESTs, weaknesses of NNESTs, strengths of NNESTs, and

weaknesses of NNESTs. In contrast, inductive coding involves approaching the data based on themes emerging from the data itself (Todd & Pojanapunya, 2009). The coding process was then followed by thematic analysis which involves identifying, describing, analyzing, reporting, and writing up patterns and themes drawn from the coded data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Prior to any data collected, approval sheets from the IRB, or the director of the IEPs, or the departments were obtained (See Appendices). Moreover, prior to interviewing the teachers and collecting data from the students, all participants were required to read and sign a consent form. The consent form, which came at the beginning of the survey and the interview questions, informed the participants about several matters: (i) the aim and purpose of the study; (ii) the means of collecting data; (iii) how much time it might take; (iv) the right to withdraw from participation at any point without any reason, and that their participation is voluntary; (v) that their information is confidential, will only be used in this study, and will be kept secured and private; (vi) all names will be kept anonymous; and finally (vii) full name, address, email, and phone number of the researcher were enclosed.

Chapter 4

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Chapter Four analyzes and interprets the results and findings of the study. The fourth chapter is divided into two main sections which are (i) results of the quantitative data, and (ii) findings of the qualitative data.

To summarize, the purpose of this mixed-method study was to find out university students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards native and non-native ELTs in the KRI.

In order to achieve this purpose, the following research questions were asked: (i) what are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?; (ii) what are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?; (iii) what are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?; (iv) what are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?; (v) what strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

A sample of 345 university students in KRI responded to the questionnaire, and 24 EFL teachers were interviewed. The quantitative data obtained from the student questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive statistics using SPSS V. 25 while the qualitative data from the teacher interviews were manually analyzed employing a thematic analysis method.

4.1 Results of the Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was obtained from a student questionnaire which consisted of three sections/batteries. The first battery reflected the demographic information from the student participants (See Section 3.4.2). The second and third batteries consisted of 40 attitude statements (20 about NESTs, and the same 20 questions about NNESTs).

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the questionnaire covertly contained three anchor items that investigated students' perceptions about NESTs and three anchor items about NNESTs. These were the main items which are interpreted here against the research questions along with their sub-items (See section 3.5.1 for details). The sub-items (cross-check items) validate the anchor items either positively, or negatively. Table 8 below shows a summary of how the items are anchored and cross-checked. The same classification applies to both parts of the questionnaire: NESTs and NNESTs.

Table 8: Anchor and cross-check items of the student questionnaire

Anchor Items [Cross-check items]
Item 1 [Items 5, 6, 7, 9, and 12]
Item 2 [Items 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20]
Item 3 [Items 4, 8, 10, 11, and 13]

In this section, the quantitative data are presented and analyzed using a funnel technique which starts with the anchor items, and then drilling down to the cross-check items. To see the complete results of the quantitative data which illustrates the descriptive statistics for the students' perceptions of their NESTs and NNESTs, see Appendix K.

4.1.1 Part One: Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NESTs

This section presents and analyzes the quantitative data obtained from Part One of the questionnaire which is the student participants' perceptions towards NESTs. Ultimately, the results presented in this section sought to respond to the first research question “*what are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?*” which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

In Part One of the questionnaire, the student participants were given 20 attitude statements in which they were asked to express their opinions about NESTs on a 7-point bi-polar/bi-regional Likert-scale having three negative categories on one side: “-3 Strongly Disagree”, “-2 Disagree”, and “-1 Somewhat Disagree”, and three positive categories on another side: “1 Somewhat Agree”, “2 Agree”, and “3 Strongly Agree”, with having “0 Neutral” at the midpoint.

Table 9 below presents the results of the three anchor items about NESTs. The complete results are shown in Appendix K.

Table 9: Results of the Anchor Items about NESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	M	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		
Q1: I prefer a NEST for my English class.	8 (2.3)	0 (0)	21 (6.1)	25 (7.2)	25 (7.2)	89 (25.8)	177 (51.3)	345 (100)	5.99	1.42
Q2: My English improves with a NEST.	5 (1.4)	3 (0.9)	29 (8.4)	15 (4.3)	19 (5.5)	92 (26.7)	182 (52.8)	345 (100)	6.02	1.42

Q3: A NEST motivates me to learn English language.	3 (0.9)	3 (0.9)	29 (8.4)	24 (7)	32 (9.3)	86 (24.9)	168 (48.7)	345 (100)	5.92	1.4
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(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (N) Number (%) Percentage (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

For easier presentation, and fortification of the two poles and the figures, the percentages of “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, and “Somewhat Agree” were added together, as well as “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, and “Somewhat Disagree” added together.

Table 10: Summed results of the anchor items about NESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Anchor 1 Q1: I prefer a NEST for my English class.	8.4	7.2	84.3	5.99	1.42
Anchor 2 Q2: My English improves with a NEST.	10.7	4.3	85	6.02	1.42
Anchor 3 Q3: A NEST motivates me to learn English language.	10.2	7	82.9	5.92	1.4

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

To start with, when the students were asked to express their opinions about having a NEST (Anchor 1), many more than half (84.3%) of the participants indicated that they prefer a NEST for their English classes, while only less than one tenth (8.4%) of the participants disagreed with having a NEST, and 7.2% of them showed a neutral tendency. The overall mean towards this attitude statement was 5.99. Item two

(Anchor 2) asked participants to rate how much they think their English improves if they have a NEST. Among the 345 participants, 293 (85%, mean 6.02) of them agreed that their English improves with a NEST, only around a tenth (10.7%) of them showed disagreement towards the statement, and 4.3% of them were neutral about whether or not their English improves with a NEST. Coming to the third anchor item (item 3) which was “*A NEST motivates me to learn English language*”, a similar tendency (with a mean score of 5.92) was indicated in relation to this item in which 82.9% of the participants expressed their agreement, while 10.2% of them expressed disagreement, and only 7% of them chose to stay neutral about the given statement.

As mentioned in 4.1 above, the quantitative data are presented applying a funnel technique. Therefore, the above anchor items are cross-checked by their sub-items to detect whether they are positively or negatively supported. Below tables present the percentages of the sub-items by adding “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, and “Somewhat Agree” together, and “Strongly Disagree”, and “Disagree”, and “Somewhat Disagree” together. To see the full results, see Appendix K.

Table 11: Subset 1 of attitude statements about NESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q5: I prefer having a NEST because it forces me to speak English in class.	7.5	8.4	84	6.07	1.36
Q6: A NEST understands students’ questions in class.	29.1	16.3	54.6	4.65	1.74
Q7: A NEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).	44.1	18.8	37.1	3.95	1.75
Q9: A NEST is able to control the class.	18.6	20.1	61.2	5.29	4.09

Q12: A NEST only uses the course book.	74.8	12.5	12.7	3.96	1.68
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(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

To begin with, the first anchor item “I prefer a NEST for my English class” (Mean 5.99) was cross-checked by five sub-items which were factors that might have either contributed to their preference or their disfavor (See Table 11 above). For example, 84% of the participants claimed that they prefer having a NEST because it forces them to speak in English (Item 5, Mean 6.07). Moreover, there was a significant tendency towards disagreement about Item 12 which states that “A *NEST only uses the course book*” which is a reverse item. To put it clearly, 74.8% of the participants disagreed that NESTs only use the coursebook. However, in response to Item 7 “A *NEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture)*”, 44.1% (Mean 3.95) of the students disagreed that NESTs know about the students’ culture.

Table 12: Subset 2 of attitude statements about NESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q14: My grammar improves with a NEST.	13	11	75.9	5.58	1.56
Q15: My vocabulary improves with a NEST	8.4	4.6	87	6.05	1.31
Q16: My pronunciation improves with a NEST.	7.5	5.5	87	6.17	1.31
Q17: My listening improves with a NEST.	9.8	5.2	85	6.02	1.39
Q18: My speaking improves with a NEST.	11.7	6.1	82.2	6.11	3.54
Q19: My reading improves with a NEST.	11.6	12.8	75.6	5.64	1.49
Q20: My writing improves with a NEST.	12.4	10.7	76.8	5.68	1.55

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

In addition, the second anchor item “*My English improves with a NEST*” (Mean 6.02) was accompanied by seven sub-items (See Table 12 above) which were related to the improvement of the students’ language skills from their own point-of-view. A substantial tendency towards agreement can be spotted among all the items. As an instance, 87% of the respondents agreed that their *vocabulary improves with a NEST* (Item 15, Mean 6.05). To clarify, the results of the data reveal that majority of the student participants believed that their English skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing), and their language areas (Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation) would improve if they are taught English language by a NEST.

Table 13: Subset 3 of attitude statements about NESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q4: A NEST makes me nervous in learning English language.	41.5	17.7	40.9	4	1.89
Q8: A NEST makes their classes interesting.	17.4	15.1	67.6	5.25	1.59
Q10: A NEST makes sure students are active in class.	15.6	22.3	62	5.14	1.49
Q11: A NEST uses body language.	16.6	20.3	63.2	5.23	1.46
Q13: A NEST asks for the students' opinions.	12.7	12.5	74.8	5.52	1.44

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

Furthermore, the third anchor item “A NEST motivates me to learn English language” (Mean 5.92) was cross-checked by five supporting items (Table 12). To illustrate, around 68% of the respondents agreed that *a NEST makes their classes interesting* (Item 8), while around 17% of them disagreed that *a NEST makes their classes interesting*, and around 15% of the respondents showed neutrality (Mean 5.25).

Similarly, over 60% of the students showed their agreement with the statement that “a NEST makes sure students are active in class” (Item 10) when only 15.6% of them disagreed (Mean 5.14). Another significant tendency towards agreement was that almost three quarters of the student participants (74.8%) agreed that “A NEST asks for the students' opinions” (Item 13). However, when the participants were asked to rate the statement “A NEST makes me nervous in learning English language”, there was an equal tendency towards the two sides of the pole with 40.9% showing agreement, 41.5% showing disagreement, and 17.7% showing neutrality.

In conclusion, among the twenty attitude statements about NESTs, there seems to be a significant tendency towards agreement with an average of mean of 5.57 (excluding item 4 and 12 which are reverse).

4.1.2 Part Two: Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NNESTs

This section presents and analyzes the quantitative data obtained from Part Two of the questionnaire which was the student participants' perceptions towards NNESTs. Similar to Part One, Part Two of the questionnaire consisted of 20 attitude statements in which the student participants had to express their opinions about NNESTs. Ultimately, the results presented in this section sought to respond to the second research question “What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?” which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Table 14: Results of the anchor items about NNESTs

Attitude Statements about NNESTs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	M	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		

Q1: I prefer a NNEST for my English class.	63 (18.3)	17 (4.9)	75 (21.7)	49 (14.2)	37 (10.7)	71 (20.6)	33 (9.6)	345 (100)	3.94	1.96
Q2: My English improves with a NNEST.	49 (14.2)	21 (6.1)	80 (23.2)	46 (13.3)	61 (17.7)	68 (19.7)	20 (5.8)	345 (100)	3.96	1.8
Q3: A NNEST motivates me to learn English language.	31 (9)	12 (3.5)	74 (21.4)	59 (17.1)	52 (15.1)	74 (21.4)	43 (12.5)	345 (100)	4.4	1.77

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (N) Number (%) Percentage
(NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

Table 14 above presents the results of the three anchor items about NNESTs. The complete results are shown in Appendix K. However, for ease of presentation and description, the percentages of “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, and “Somewhat Agree” were added together, as well as the three categories of the disagreement (See Table 15 below).

Table 15: Summed results of the anchor items about NNESTs

Attitude Statements about NNESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Anchor 1 Q1: I prefer a NNEST for my English class.	44.9	14.2	40.9	3.94	1.96
Anchor 2 Q2: My English improves with a NNEST.	43.5	13.3	43.2	3.96	1.8
Anchor 3 Q3: A NNEST motivates me to learn English language.	33.9	17.1	49	4.4	1.77

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

Primarily, Table 15 above illustrates the summed percentages of the three anchor items relating to students' perceptions towards NNESTs. In some ways, there seems to be similar amounts of agreement, disagreement, and neutrality among the participants' responses towards the main three items about NNESTs. For example, almost 41% of the participants agreed that they *prefer a NNEST for their English class* (Item 1, Mean 3.94), while around 45% of them showed disagreement towards the statement, with around 14% of them declaring neutrality. Similarly, coming to the second anchor item "*My English improves with a NNEST*" (Mean 3.96), there was a similar amounts of agreement and disagreement towards the given statement as 43.2% of the participants agreed that their *English improves with a NNEST*, and 43.5% disagreed that their *English improves with a NNEST*. However, when the participants were asked to rate "*A NNEST motivates me to learn English language*" (Item 3, Mean 4.4), almost half of the participants (49%) showed agreement, while just around 34% of them expressed disagreement, and around 17% of them conveyed neutrality. This shows that half of the student participants believed that NNESTs motivate them to learn English language.

Table 16: Subset 1 of attitude statements about NNESTs

Attitude Statements about NNESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q5: I prefer a NNEST because I can speak Kurdish in class.	44.7	14.8	40.6	3.84	2.16
Q6: A NNEST understands students' questions in class.	20.3	13.6	66.1	5.31	1.74
Q7: A NNEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).	10.1	11	78.9	5.89	1.58

Q9: A NNEST is able to control the class.	21.2	27	51.9	4.75	1.58
Q12: A NNEST only uses the course book.	23.4	24.6	51.9	4.7	1.71

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

Similar to the items about NESTs, each of the three anchor items about NNESTs were supported by a set of sub-items. Therefore, Table 16 shows the five cross-check items which support the first anchor item about NNESTs “*I prefer a NNEST for my English class*” (Item 1, Mean 3.94). In the above set, two significant tendencies can be found. Firstly, in response to Item 6 “*A NNEST understands students’ questions in class*” (Mean 5.31), a higher tendency towards agreement can be seen as 66.1% of the respondents agreed but only 20.3% of them disagreed with 13.6% of them staying neutral. Secondly, Item 7, which stated “*A NNEST knows about the students’ culture (Kurdish culture)*” (Mean 5.89), also showed a significant tendency towards agreement as more than three fourths of the participants (78.95%) agreed that *a NNEST knows about the students’ culture*.

Table 17: Subset 2 of attitude statements about NNESTs

Attitude Statements about NNESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q14: My grammar improves with a NNEST.	32.1	20	47.8	4.32	1.69
Q15: My vocabulary improves with a NNEST.	32.8	20.9	46.4	4.31	1.64
Q16: My pronunciation improves with a NNEST.	40.9	17.7	41.4	4.05	1.77
Q17: My listening improves with a NNEST.	38.5	21.6	40	4.14	1.7
Q18: My speaking improves with a NNEST.	35.4	18.8	45.8	4.27	1.74

Q19: My reading improves with a NNEST.	31.5	24.6	43.7	4.33	1.65
Q20: My writing improves with a NNEST.	30.2	23.8	46.1	4.37	1.74

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

As for the second anchor item about NNESTs which was “*My English improves with a NNEST*” (Mean 3.96), it was cross-checked by the seven items shown in Table 17 above. In this subset, student participants were required to express their agreement, disagreement, or neutrality about whether they thought their English language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and areas (Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation) improve if they have a NNEST. As it can be noted, for all the seven items, there appears to be that the percentages of agreement and disagreement are in close proximity. The range of disagreement about whether their skills improve with a NNEST runs from 30% to 40%. However, it is clearly noted that there is a rather higher amount of agreement among the participants about their skills and areas improving with a NNEST which ranges between 40% to about 48%. It is also worth mentioning that there seems to be a consensus of neutrality among the respondents with a range of about 17% to 24%. In conclusion, the results of the above seven items shows that the student participants were in favor of NNESTs as a higher amounts of agreement could be seen throughout the statements.

Table 18: Subset 3 of attitude statements about NNESTs

Attitude Statements about NESTs	“Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree” or “Somewhat Disagree”	Neutral	“Strongly Agree”, “Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”	M	SD
Q4: A NNEST makes me nervous in learning English language.	39.5	24.9	31.6	3.79	1.87

Q8: A NNEST makes their classes interesting.	23.5	26.1	51.6	4.72	1.63
Q10: A NNEST makes sure students are active in class.	23.5	24.9	51.6	4.67	1.62
Q11: A NNEST uses body language.	28.8	27.3	43.9	4.4	1.58
Q13: A NNEST asks for the students' opinions.	25.2	20.9	53.9	4.7	1.64

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

The third anchor item which was related to motivation, “*A NNEST motivates me to learn English language*” (Mean 4.4) was fortified by five items in the questionnaire (See Table 18 above). As it can be seen, there seems to be a resemblance among the percentages on the two sides of the pole as well as on the midpoint throughout the five items. However, it appears that there is a higher amount of agreement in all the items (except Item 4) which means the results are in favor of NNESTs. For example, 51.6% of the students agreed that *a NNEST makes their classes interesting* (Mean 4.72), and more than half (almost 54%) of the student participants believed that *a NNEST asks for the students' opinions* (Mean 4.7).

To summarize, among the twenty attitude statements about NESTs, there seems to be a moderate tendency towards agreement with an average of mean of 4.47 (excluding item 4 and 12 which are reverse).

4.1.3 Strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the students' point-of-view

To answer the a part of the fifth research question of the current research ‘*What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?*’, the data results of the student questionnaire was used to detect what strengths and weaknesses the student participants identify in learning English from NESTs and NNESTs. The results will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

NESTs were deemed to have several strengths from the student participants' point-of-view. Initially, 84% respondents agreed that *prefer having a NEST because it forces them to speak English in class* (Item 5). Secondly, almost three quarters (74.8%) of the participants disagreed that a NEST only uses the course book (Item 12) which can be interpreted that NESTs do not rely solely on course books. Moreover, 61.2% of the participants believed that *a NEST is able to control the class* (Item 9).

Apart from the respondents' overall significance preference for NESTs, they also agreed that their English skills and areas improve if they have a NEST which can be regarded as a strength. In relation to the skills, 85% of the participants agreed that their *listening* improves if they have a NEST (Item 17). The same can be applied for the rest of the skills: *speaking* (82.2% agreed, Item 18), *reading* (75.6% agreed, Item 19), and *writing* (76.8 agreed, Item 20) as well. As for the areas, 75.9 of the participants agreed that their *grammar improves with a NEST* (Item 14), 87% for *vocabulary* (Item 15), and 87% for *pronunciation* (Item 16).

Other strengths of NESTs, according to the student participation, are related to how they are able to motivate the students as almost 83% of the participants agreed that a NEST motivates them to learn English language (Item 3). Other items which were closely related to the students' motivation were that around 68% of the participants thought that *a NEST makes their classes interesting* (Item 8). Moreover, 62% of the student participants claimed that *a NEST makes sure students are active in class* (Item 10). Another strength of NESTs as seen by the students were that a NEST uses body language (Item 11, 63.2%). Finally and most importantly, almost three quarters (74.8%) of the participants agreed that *a NEST asks for the students' opinions* (Item 13).

However, based on the student participants' responses to the student questionnaire, NESTs are thought to have certain weaknesses as well. One weakness of NESTs as perceived by student participants was that 44.1% of them disagreed that *a NEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture)* (Item 7) and almost 19% of them remained neutral which can indicate that majority of the students agreed that a NEST might not know about the students' culture (Kurdish culture). Another weakness of NESTs based on the students' opinion was that from a third to half of the students (40.9%) expressed that *a NEST makes them nervous in learning English language* (Item 4).

Similarly, Part Two of the questionnaire was closely observed to detect certain strengths and weakness of NNESTs from the student participants' perception and experiences. To begin with, the strengths of NNESTs that the students identified were as follows. The most prominent strength of the NNESTs among the participants was that *a NNEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture)* (Item 7) as more than three quarters (78.9%) of the participants showed agreement towards the given statement. Second most significant strength of the NNESTs as perceived by the students was their understanding for students' questions in class (Item 6, 66.1%). Other good qualities of NNESTs based on the students' opinions could be their ability to control the classroom (Item 9, 51.9% agreed), their ability to make their classes interesting (Item 8, 51.6% agreed), their concern to make sure that students are active in class (Item 10, 51.6% agreed), and the fact that they ask for students' opinions (Item 13, 53.9% agreed).

Similarly, based on the student questionnaire, NNESTs are thought to have certain weaknesses as well. A potential weakness of NNEST as indicated by the students was that more than half of the participants agreed that NNESTs only use the

course book (item 12, Mean 4.7). Other than that, although no significant tendency could be detected towards agreement and disagreement in relation to NNESTs' weaknesses, however, there seemed to be a similar amount of neutrality among the participants about how their skills and areas improve with a NNEST. The most obvious one was that almost 41% of the students disagreed that their *pronunciation* improves with a NNEST with 17.7% of them showing neutrality towards the statement (Item 16). Other than pronunciation, when the participants were asked whether their *reading improves with a NNEST* (Item 19), almost a quarter of them (24.6%) expressed neutrality.

4.2 Findings of the Qualitative Data

As mentioned in Chapter Three, 24 ELTs (both native and non-native) who have taught EFL in KRI were interviewed individually. There were two types of interview questions: close-ended and open-ended. Thirteen closed-ended questions sought to obtain demographic information from the teacher participants which were thoroughly presented in Chapter Three. Moreover, eight open-ended questions were designed to collect in-depth data on the teacher participants' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. As mentioned, the interview transcripts were coded, and then manually analyzed using thematic analysis method.

The coding process employed both deductive and inductive coding. Deductive themes included strengths and weaknesses of NESTs, and strengths and weaknesses of NNESTs (See section 4.2.2. below), while the inductive codes which emerged from the raw data are thoroughly presented in 4.2.1 below.

4.2.1 Instructors' Attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs

The findings presented in this section sought to respond to the third research question "*What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?*" and the

fourth research question “*What are instructors’ perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?*” which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

In this section, the inductive themes which emerged from the interview transcripts are presented. See Table 19 below to navigate through the themes and sub-themes.

Table 19: Organization of Inductive Themes Emerged from the Teacher Interviews

Themes	Sub-Themes
Teaching Abilities	Teaching Methodologies and Techniques
	Rule-based
Teachers’ Language Abilities	Pronunciation
	Knowledge about the Language
	L1 ‘First Language’
	Colloquial ‘Day-to-day’ Language
	Natural and Fluent Language
Teachers’ Personality and Character	Literal Translation
	Personality and Character of the Teachers
Teachers’ Perceptions in Relation to Others’ Perceptions	Hard-working VS. Over-confident
	Prestige and Privilege
	Students’ Perceptions
Qualification and Recruitment	A Shift of Perception
	Qualification
	Recruitment
The Relationship between Students and Teachers	
Proficiency Level of the Students	
Teachers’ Understanding towards Student Needs and Difficulties	
Culture and Background	

4.2.1.1 Teaching Abilities

Teaching Methodologies and Techniques

Through the individual interviews, the teacher participants expressed their opinions about certain differences in relation to teaching techniques and methodologies between NESTs and NNESTs. Most participants agreed that NNESTs are more knowledgeable about teaching techniques and methods owing to the fact that

they had learnt the language as compared to NESTs who acquired it. T14 said “*there are teachers who had acquired the language but they (NESTs) don’t know techniques of teaching or the process of learning another language while non-natives (NNESTs) can teach better because they know better techniques since they have learnt the language themselves*”. Similarly, T20 who was a NEST herself reflected that “*they (NNESTs) know the grammar in details. It’s not just the grammar, they know how to teach the language perfectly. We native speakers have to learn it, we don’t know how to explain it.*” Likewise, T13, who was also a NEST, admitted that “*We (NESTs) know when something is incorrect, when something is out of place, but when it comes to explanation, we don’t know why it’s incorrect. When I teach grammar, I have to study it more than my students. This is a weak point of native teachers.*” Finally, T12 clearly scrutinized that:

Non-native teachers have once been alien to the language, so they know the techniques of how to learn the language, the tricks, how to get there within a shortcut. This is a very strong point of non-native teachers, unlike natives, they have not acquired the language from their childhood, so they can share their experience of learning the language with the students and this is useful for the students, but a native teacher would not know the ways of delivering this.

Rule-based

Another distinction which was made between NESTs and NNESTs was related to who of the two groups are more rule-based. Most teacher participants showed an agreement that NNESTs comply with rules more often, and are more accuracy-driven. For example, T6 said that “*we (NNESTs) are not native, what we teach is what we think is right, we teach according to books... there are many things that we non-natives say and write only because that’s how it was in a course book*”. Similarly, T8 lamented that:

They (NNESTs) only depend on marks, even if their students don’t learn English, it’s okay as long as they can get high grades and pass. In other words, some non-native English teachers depend on marks and exams only, they

sometime don't focus on learning, neither on being able to communicate, I think it has to do with how people like 'spoon-feeding', so students always wait to be given things readily. This is not a good trait for teachers. But native speakers (NESTs) don't do that, they give students a lot of tasks and get them to work.

Similar to T8, T16 added that:

They (NNESTs) are teaching English as if they are teaching science or math. What I'm saying is they depend too much on rules. When they teach grammar, most of them write on the board 'subject plus verb plus this plus that'. As if English is a math equation. What we miss in our classes as non-native teachers here (KRI) is that we don't have the lead stage, we don't put grammar in context. We don't tell them how to use what they learn.

4.2.1.2 Teachers' Language Abilities

Pronunciation

Several teacher participants made remarks on pronunciation and believed that it has a prominent link with the controversy of NESTs and NNESTs. Most teacher participants believed that NNESTs' pronunciation is not as accurate nor natural as the one of NESTs. One participant (T4) admitted that "*pronunciation is a thing that non-native speaker teachers are struggling with, not being able to pronounce certain words or how to speak clearly and fluently, and this directly affects all students, and it becomes a habit for them*". Similarly, T2 pointed out that "*We (NNESTs) might pronounce something wrongly, and later you realize your mistakes.. uhm, students usually mimic their teachers, as they say a doctor's mistake, someone dies, but a teacher's mistake will always be walking on earth *chuckles**". Another participants (T13) believed that NNESTs do not even try to teach pronunciation as he said "*they (NNESTs) either teach it incorrectly, or it is not even paid attention to altogether*".

Finally, T16 speculated the importance of a teacher's pronunciation as follows:

When someone has a good pronunciation, you automatically feel like their English is really good, but if their pronunciation is not good, even if they know a lot of information about the language, you instantly feel they're not proficient in the language.

Knowledge about the Language

Even though in Section 4.2.1.1 above, it was shown that NNESTs possess effective techniques of teaching the language compared to NESTs, however, in this section, NNESTs are seen to believe that their knowledge about the language is rather insufficient. For example, T10 noted that “*since English is not my first language, sometime in class you run into a word that you don’t know the meaning of. Sometimes a student asks you a question about a word, they know the Kurdish word, and they’re asking us for its English equivalent, and we get stuck.*” Similarly, T5 echoed:

When you are a native speaker, you only have one task, which is being able to teach, but when you are a non-native English speaker, you have to make sure that you practice all the time and one of the tasks you have is to enhance your knowledge every day. So you have two tasks, being a learner and being a teacher. This is a challenge.. it also made it hard for me, as a teacher, sometimes we (NNESTs) don’t know all the information and knowledge about the language. But we are trying.

Finally, T23 believed that:

A weakness (of NNESTs) is the command of the language. Because not every non-native teacher, even with qualifications, would get to a high level of fluency, and a high command of the language. Especially in terms of general English, I’m not talking about academic English because everyone can get to a really high level of academic English, academic writing, doing research, but when it comes to the general English, that’s a drawback of non-natives.

L1 ‘First Language’

As it is known, what makes NNESTs different from NESTs is that, in most cases, the NNEST and the students share the same L1 especially in EFL contexts. In the interview, when the teacher participants were overtly asked whether it is important for a language teacher to know the native language of the students, some of them expressed their agreement while others believed otherwise.

Both T4 and T15 agreed that knowing the students’ L1 is important especially with students of lower levels (beginners). T4 mentioned that “*for lower level students, it’s a must to know their native language*”, and T15 mentioned that “*not knowing the*

native language, with beginners, is really hard for native teachers to communicate with them. In my situation (being a NEST), I had to compensate this with body language, this was a real challenge.” Another teacher (T18) discussed that the fact that she is a NNEST, and knows the students’ native language, she is thus able to recognize the students’ interlanguage and potential pitfalls as she said:

As a (NNEST) teacher myself, it’s easier for me to teach English because I can help my students avoid literal word-to-word translation while speaking and writing and also to explain the grammatical structures as we know both Kurdish and English, so it’s easier to explain the way to get the message across.

Three other teachers similarly recognized the importance of NNESTs for knowing the L1 of the students by thinking that it would save time for teachers and students alike. As an instance, T2 noted that *“knowing the students’ first language is important because in some situations a word or an expression can’t be defined and explained in English and a lot of time will be wasted.”* For example, T6 mentioned that *“when you teach them the definite article ‘the’, no matter how many examples you give, they won’t get it easily, but once you give the Kurdish equivalent ‘Ke’, they immediately understand”*. Finally, T2 explained that:

A weakness of native teachers is not knowing the native language of the students. Sometimes, it gets to the point that there is a dead-end, neither the students nor the teacher can find a way to facilitate learning and they get stuck. For example, when a native speaker can’t explain a word, it would be difficult and they will be wasting a lot of time.

On the other hand, three teacher participants protested that knowing the L1 of the students might have potential harms as T8 mentioned *“I think we all know that non-native English teachers often speak in the first language of the students which is, I can say, not desirable, because it makes students lazy in learning the language”*. T14 similarly said that *“it’s better for the teacher to not know the native language of the students because in this way students are forced to speak in English, or the target*

language". Finally, T1 added that it is also unsatisfactory for the teachers to speak in the L1 even among themselves:

They (NNESTs) always, by default, end up speaking the local language, which again, it hinders their own progress because you know, if English is only spoken in at work, no matter how advanced they are, how would they improve? They switch to the local language within themselves and with students as well. They lose the opportunity to communicate in the target language in order to be better.

Colloquial 'Day-to-day' Language

Colloquial refers to or used as a characteristic of informal, casual, familiar, unbookish, and conversational expressions and communication (Merriam-Webster, 2005). Most teacher participants agreed that speaking colloquial language is a valuable quality of NESTs. For example, T6 mentioned that "*students learn idioms, connotations, and the everyday language much easier if they have a native teacher*".

He also explained that:

There are words that are archaic, there are words which are not used in everyday situations. We (NNESTs) learn things from this book, from this movie. We might talk in a way that sounds strange. Persian is my second mother tongue, and when some learners speak it, what they say is correct, but I can feel it does not sound natural, we can't explain why. I am sure we as non-native English teachers talk in the same way.

Another teacher participants (T24) similarly determined that if students have a NEST, they "*can get familiar with phrasal verbs, idioms, so, uhm, in a short time, in a few months, their English will sound like English*". She also admitted that being a NNEST has hindered her use of colloquial language as she said "*at the first few years of my teaching, I wasn't sure about the meaning and the use of some idioms, some expressions, and some phrasal verbs*".

Natural and Fluent Language

Similar to the colloquial language, most teacher participants believed that NESTs speak a more fluent and natural language than NNESTs. For example, T22

said that “not being fluent in the language is the most common weaknesses of non-native teachers”, and T23 similarly said that “*not every non-native teacher, even with qualifications, would get to a high level of fluency*”. Likewise, T19 noted that:

Because they (NESTs) are native speakers of the language, it’s their language, everything they say is natural, and the students will get the natural everyday language which is used in the English speaking countries. I think one of the strongest point they have is that they can transfer the firsthand language use and the natural fluency to their students.

Literal Translation

Literal translation, or word-to-word translation was seen as a weakness of NNESTs by some teacher participants. T13 said that “*a weakness (of NNESTs) I would like to add is translating word for word, literal translation. It’s one of the biggest problem I see*”, and T24, who was a NNEST with seventeen years of teaching experience, elaborated that “*sometimes they (NNESTs) are thinking in Kurdish and speaking in English. I mean they are translating Kurdish language into English utterances but this doesn’t mean that it’s fluent English*”. However, a contradicting opinion was noted from T18 who believed that NNESTs are better equipped to teach the language because they can easily detect the potential errors their students might make as she said:

As a (NNEST) teacher myself, it’s easier for me to teach English because I can help my students avoid literal word-to-word translation while speaking and writing and also to explain the grammatical structures as we know both Kurdish and English, so it’s easier for me to understand why they make certain mistakes and how to correct them.

4.2.1.3 Teachers’ Personality and Character

Personality and Character of the Teachers

In the teacher interviews, various teachers referred to characteristics of NESTs’ and NNESTs’ personalities. Even though most of them agreed that personality and character cannot be generalized based on whether one is native or non-native as T23

put it “*it depends on their personality and character, how easy going they are, how open-minded they are, what textbook they use, what techniques they use rather than being native or non-native*”, however, various teachers viewed NNESTs to be more energetic and resilient but insecure. For example, T5 who was a NNEST herself reflected that:

One of the valuable qualities is that most of us are energetic, we have such an energy that we are not even aware of. This applies to all, but for non-native teachers, personally, the fact that I have learned English myself, so I know how hard it is to learn it, and I am very energetic to deliver my knowledge and share my experience with my students.

Similarly, T1 who was a NEST with six years of teaching experience in KRI expressed her opinions about NNESTs:

They (NNESTs) genuinely love what they do, and they want to see a difference in the system, so I guess they have that, uhm, how do you say? Resilience maybe? Yeah. In their job, because of what they’ve been exposed to, let’s say, their own education system, so now they know how and they know what to do in order to make it better. So you see them trying to do that in classes. Meaning that they work hard to give what they didn’t receive when they were students.

However, despite their hard work, NNESTs were seen to lack confidence as T9 said that “*one weakness they (NNESTs) have is that when they first start teaching, they feel insecure about teaching the language*”, and T10 similarly noted that “*they (NNESTs) lack confidence. Since they are compared with native speakers in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation, so most of the non-native teachers lack confidence*”.

Hard-working VS. Over-confident

There seemed to be a strong consensus among most teacher participants that NNESTs are more hard-working whereas NESTs usually over-trust themselves. To start with, T21 who is a NEST with 21 years of teaching experience said that “*in my experience, I noticed that non-native teachers strive much harder, they contribute more and are more involved, generally speaking. Because they want to excel and push forward*”. This idea is echoed by most of the NNESTs themselves who think that they

are more hard-working. For example, T22 mentioned that *“they (NNESTs) are trying to convey the best message to the students, they work so hard, they always make sure that everything is right and that students are satisfied”*, and T23 similarly added *“personally, I have tried a lot, and I have learnt a lot. The point is I have been through the process, and I know how I have learnt the language, and I do my best to take my students to the same track”*. T5 similarly illustrated that:

It does help in one way, when you are a native speaker, you only have one task, which is being able to teach, but when you are a non-native English speaker, you have to make sure that you practice all the time and one of the tasks you have is to enhance your knowledge every day. So you have two tasks, being a learner and being a teacher.

Finally, T16, who was a NNESTs, concluded that:

Unfortunately, the experience we have here in Kurdistan is really regretting, both as a student and as a teacher. So now that I’m a teacher, I participate in course, webinars, and seminars. I want to change history. I go to class and I hope today is a good day.

The argument intensified when the teacher participants (both NESTs and NNESTs) viewed NESTs to be over-confident. When T21 and T1, who were both NESTs, were asked what they think are negative qualities of NESTs, T21 said that *“being a native speaker of a language doesn’t infer automatic superiority or you know, being at the top in their field. Probably this is a pre-conceived prejudice”*, and T1 added:

It is the tendency to overlook, so, just because a native speaker is a native speaker doesn’t mean that they are great at teaching because teaching must come with some techniques and skills so you have to be good at those skills and those techniques.

The NNESTs shared similar opinions about NESTs being over-confident. For example, T22 mentioned that *“I have seen native teachers how have zero teaching qualifications and they think they’re very good teachers”* and T11 echoed by saying *“the native teachers over trust themselves. They think they know everything and end up doing mistakes because of this. It’s quite impossible to know everything about a*

language. We Kurdish people don't know everything about our own native language". Similarly, T10 stressed that *"I have worked with a lot of teachers, natives and non-natives. I have native teacher friends who are not as hard-working as my non-native teacher friends"*.

4.2.1.4 Teachers' Perceptions in Relation to Others' Perceptions

Prestige and Privilege

The teacher participants believed that NESTs possess a prestigious power which may have perpetuated prejudice towards the NNESTs. When the teachers were asked whether being native or non-native have helped or hindered their job as an English language teacher, their responses were as follows. T21, who was a NEST, admitted that *"it (being a NEST) can help because I think that it obviously carries with it some recognition, I think on average, it's easier to get such position as an ESL instructor in some facilities"*, and T11, who is a NNEST, noted that *"in terms of salary, we (NESTs and NNESTs) receive different treatments"*. Moreover, T20, who is a NEST, overtly highlighted that:

People know the importance of being a native speaker, for some reasons, they respect it more. I know if I weren't a native speaker, I wouldn't have gotten the job because I haven't ever studied English. My students respect me more. I even had students from other classes coming to me asking me stuff because I am a native speakers.

In addition, T13, who considered himself as a NNEST with having lived 8 years of his childhood in the UK, expressed that:

I basically got this job based on the fact that I lived in the UK, that was the only reason why I was accepted, or let's say the only reason why I got called into the job, but everything started from there. It definitely helps. If you look around, if someone is native, from one of the English-speaking countries, they would very easily get a job teaching English here. And what I have seen is that people who are from here, the locals, they are at a disadvantage, natives are more privileged in this way.

A similar but slightly new insight was observed from T14 who was a Kurdish/English NEST. She realized and admitted that NESTs receive advantageous treatments, however, she viewed the status to be a 'given luck' rather than a gained achievement as she said:

I think it both helps and makes it difficult. For example, many course that I have taught, one of the requirements was being a native, but later on, they think of it as a privilege, it's just based on luck, I think it's more of a drawback than a privilege. It just seems that you've been lucky, not as something you have earned.

Students' Perceptions

In the interview, the teacher participants were asked '*Who do you think students generally prefer to have as an English language teacher? Why?*'. The aim of this question was to explore how the teacher participants thought they are viewed by their students, and to ultimately explore their implicit attitudes. The results showed that almost all of them believed that students in KRI prefer NESTs over NNESTs. Some of the excerpts are:

- *"they prefer native just because they think they can teach better and they respect natives more"* (T11);
- *"they like natives, because their pride might make them think like 'oh, I can speak with native speakers'"* (T8);
- *"they think the native speakers have had a better education, and that they think they will be able to speak like their native teachers"* (T20);
- *"they always go for native teachers even if they are not experienced in teaching, even if they haven't studied English language as their specialty"* (T12);
- *"they definitely prefer native teachers. They find it exciting for some reason, someone new, coming from a different background, that's exciting for them"* (T13);
- *"I think they prefer the native teachers because they think they can learn faster and better and they can even learn their accent"* (T18);
- *"of course they prefer native speakers. Because they think natives have good subject knowledge, they think just because, this is a very common misconception, they think just because they are native, they are very good teachers"* (T10).

A Shift of Perception

In the interviews, several teacher participants demonstrated that there has been a change of perception among university students in KRI in relation to NESTs and NNESTs. For example, T23, who is a NNEST with 12 years of experience of teaching English in KRI, argued that:

In our region (KRI), in the past, students were looking for native speakers, so when they found a native speaker somewhere anywhere, they would go for them without considering their qualifications. But now, things have changed. Now students have reached the thought that it doesn't really matter, what really matters is the teacher's qualifications, the teaching experience, the activities they are going through, for example, academic conferences, training course, and professional development. Currently, students are more aware.

Similarly but on a shorter term, T2, who is also a NNEST with 13 years of teaching EFL in KRI, explained that:

Based on my experience, at first, students here prefer a native speaker, but after a while they change their minds. It's always like this, I don't know if it is because of how media has installed it in their minds, but there is this idea that a native speaker can teach you the language perfectly. What I'm trying to say here is that they always prefer natives at first but with time, they start to appreciate non-native.

Finally, T5 observed that the shift of perception might have to do with travelling, globalization, and coming from an open-minded background, as she said:

This is really strange. I have felt that the students which are more open-minded, or let's say, those who have come from a more open background, I am not trying to discriminate anyone, but what I mean is, these students don't mind whether their teacher is native or non-native because they already had experience with the outside world, they have travelled, and seen other people, and they know the difference, and they know that not every native teacher can teach you very well, so they know that the teacher's talents and skills are more important than being native or non-native. I think just now students are starting to realize this.

In conclusion, the findings in this study reveal that there has been a change of perceptions among ELLs in KRI. From the teacher participants' points-of-view, students used to prefer only NESTs, while now they have realized that being a NEST alone is not sufficient but rather qualification and experience are more significant.

4.2.1.5 Qualification and Recruitment

Qualification

When teacher participants were asked to think of potential negative qualities of NESTs, almost all of them referred to those NESTs who are recruited only because they are native and who lack qualifications, and some do not even have teaching experience. For example, T14 suspected that:

A weakness is that if only they are hired because of being a native, that would be a weakness, because they don't know techniques of teaching a language. Most teachers lack that. Speaking a language is not enough. And unfortunately, they don't try to learn how to teach, because they think it's enough.

Similarly, T16 speculated that:

Most native teachers here (KRI) are not specialized in teaching, this is one of their weakest points. It's not only about knowing the language, it's also about knowing how to teach. Just like how we can't teach out native language.

Finally, T2 explained that:

When it comes to just being a native, and not a teacher. We have had this experience, native teachers are hired without any teaching qualifications just because they think they can teach the language. These are two different things. We are native Kurdish speakers, but can we teach Kurdish? Probably, most likely, not.

Recruitment

The teacher participants evidently mentioned the state of NESTs and NNESTs in employment in which the former is privileged and the latter discriminated. When T4 was asked if being a NNEST has made his job difficult, he uttered *“that makes everything difficult for me, especially if I work in a place where they only employ native speakers. Even though I might be very qualified, they would still not accept me because I'm not native”*. Not only the NNESTs were aware of it, but the native teacher participants similarly admitted their privilege in terms of recruitment in the region. For example, T13 said *“I basically got this job based on the fact that I lived in the UK, that was the only reason why I was accepted”*, T21 said *“being native can help because I*

think obviously that carries with it some recognition, I think it's easier to get such position as an ESL instructor in some facilities”, and T20 finally added:

It (being a NEST) actually helped me a lot. People know the importance of being a native speaker, for some reasons, they respect it more. I know if I weren't a native speaker, I wouldn't have gotten the job because I haven't ever studied English. Not just here (KRI), even in Dubai, they treat you differently when they know you are from the UK. My students respect me more. I even had students from other classes coming to me asking me stuff because I am a native speakers.

4.2.1.6 The Relationship between Students and Teachers

On one hand, few teacher participants believed that students are more motivated and easily encouraged when they have a NEST, for example, T5 observed:

I have always noticed this, there are some students, who are very passive, the ones who do not say anything in the target language, I have noticed that the moment they see a native speaker, their eyes widen and their faces change, they get to speak, they become happier. The students are motivated when they have a native teacher and they start speaking in English. But when it comes to us (NNESTs), when we tell them (the students) to speak in English, they feel forced, they ask us ‘are you not a Kurd? Are you ashamed of being a Kurd?’

On the other hand, majority of the teacher participants believed that the relationship between NNESTs and their students is actually better because they share a stronger connection, understanding, sympathy, and are able to communicate easily. For example, T24 agreed that “*they (NNESTs) can put themselves into the shoes of the students. They understand the students' feelings while learning the language*”, and T11 similarly added “*you might be a native speaker, and might have experience, but you still might not be able to communicate with the students and give them what they need*”. In addition, T1, who is a NEST, felt that “*some students prefer non-native because they can communicate in their own language or they feel that there is some sort of more empathy*”, and T16 discussed that:

If I am a non-native teacher, I have passed through the same experience as my students. So, I will be the one who can understand them rather than a native teacher. I can understand them. We have the same culture, first language, of course I know what they need and why they need to learn.

Finally, T24 concluded:

They (NNESTs) know how to interact with the students, they have more topics to talk to them about, they know how to engage them, and they trust you. We have an experience and we share it with them. They get inspired by us. While natives haven't been through the process of learning a new language. They might not know a second language so they won't understand and they don't know how students are suffering.

4.2.1.7 Proficiency Level of the Students

The results showed that teachers concluded that NESTs are more appropriate for students of higher proficiency levels whereas NNESTs are suitable for students of lower proficiency levels owing to them knowing the first language of the students. Very similar views were expressed among the teachers such as “*not knowing the native language, with beginners, is really hard for native teachers to communicate with students*” (T15), “*native speakers don't find it so easy to teach English as a foreign language to beginners*” (T23), and “*the beginners usually prefer non-natives because Kurdish teachers can benefit beginners greatly, but I think in advanced levels, even from upper-intermediate, they like natives*” (T8). In addition, more justifications were given such as when T19 mentioned:

The only time that the students prefer native teachers is the higher level because that's when students think they have already overcome some barriers of the language so they want to have firsthand experience with the language which is by interacting with native teachers.

Moreover, T20 explained:

Think it depends on the English level of the students. For the beginner levels, it's important, especially because English language is so broad, so many different words and vocabulary, which is even difficult to describe in English, so it's good to compare it to their native language and they will understand it right away. But if their level is good, no it's not necessary to know the native language of the students.

4.2.1.8 Teachers' Understanding towards Student Needs and Difficulties

Owing to having learnt English language rather than acquiring it, NNESTs are believed to understand students' needs and difficulties from almost all the teacher

participants' points-of-view. For example, T7, who was a NNEST, noted that "*I know the process of learning English, the processes, the difficulties, just because I learnt English as a second language, so I know the grammar better, I know the structures of the language*", T3 echoed "*they (NNESTs) know the students' errors and mistakes, the ones which are based on their mother language*", and T8 who was also a NNEST mentioned that "*I knew what the students wanted, I had a quick analysis in my mind, but my native friends didn't have that ability*". In more details, T17 explained:

They (NNESTs) have passed through all the stages, been through all the situations of learning a language, they can understand students better, their difficulties, their problems, how they think about learning, it helps the teacher to form their classes in a way which is easier for the students.

In addition, T24 elaborated:

We (NNESTs) have all been student before, right? And since my students learn the same language I had to learn, sometimes I know their issues and problems regarding to learning the language, and also, there are some thoughts which they cannot convey in the second language, I mean in English. They don't have ability to express everything in the second language. When you know, when you think according to their mentality, according to their native language, you understand what they are trying to say because you once were in their exact same place, you had their exact problems.

Under the same light, T12 explained:

These non-native teachers have once been alien to the language, so they know the techniques of how to learn the language, the tricks, how to get there within a shortcut. This is a very strong point of non-native teachers, unlike natives, they have not acquired the language from their childhood, so they can share their experience of learning the language with the students and this is useful for the students, but a native teacher would not know the ways of delivering this.

4.2.1.9 Culture and Background

When the teacher participants were asked to think of strong and weak points of NESTs and NNESTs, culture and background were two recurring themes that almost all of them referred to during the interviews. It is worth mentioning that culture, in this sense, might either relate to the *source culture* i.e. the culture of the students (in this study: Kurdish), or to the *target culture* (which is English). The qualitative findings

revealed two contradicting viewpoints from the teacher participants' opinions. A few number of teacher participants suggested that NESTs are better equipped because they are knowledgeable about the cultural aspects of English, while more than half of the teacher participants agreed that culture is actually a strength of NNESTs since they and the students share the same culture and background.

Those who were in favor of NESTs justified that a weakness of NNESTs is not knowing the cultural aspects of English. For example, T9 stated that:

They (NESTs) definitely have a better control of the whole language, and they might be able to interact with students in terms of their cultural background of English in a much better way. They might be more able to engage them in a way that to relate to their English country culture.

Similarly, T21 agreed that:

They (NNESTs) are not immersed in an environment in which the language is used natively, so they don't have the ability to know the finer aspects of the language such as cultural aspects, history, literature, arts, and so on. These kind of issues requires someone to be immersed in the setting.

Finally, T4 added:

They (NESTs) know about the culture better than non-native teachers. For example, I have never been to an English-speaking country so in my case, we may not be able to explain what culture is, what the real tradition is (British and American), and we all know that language and culture is intertwined.

On the other side of the argument, majority of the teacher participants viewed NNESTs to be more effective culture-wise for sharing the same culture with their students. As an instance, T13 said that *"in our society, some topics are not to be touched. I think non-natives are much better understanding that topics are to be avoided. They have a better understanding of the students' situation"*. Similarly, T2 stated that *"knowing the cultural background of the students helps you unlock a lot of things in between you and the students which is a strong point of native teachers"*. In addition, T3 justified that *"because you know share the same culture with your students, they can be friendlier with you, they will feel more comfortable with you, and*

they know how to approach you”, and T8 added “*when teachers come from a different culture, there have been misunderstandings between the teacher and the students especially in Middle Eastern cultures which are usually sensitive*”. Finally, T5 illustrated:

It’s the culture that we (NNESTs) share with them, sometimes we know what type of peer-pressure we have on students, we know how it affects them, we know how problems are in our community, problems relating to family and friends, because we have been through similar experience.

4.2.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the Instructors’

Point-of-View

In this section, strengths of NESTs are presented first then followed by weakness of NESTs from the teacher participants’ points-of-view. Similarly, from the teacher interviews, strengths of NNESTs are presented followed by weaknesses of NNESTs. In Chapter Five, the findings presented in this section will be discussed to respond to a part of the fifth research question “what strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?”

4.2.2.1 Strengths of NESTs

Knowing about the target (English) culture

When the teacher participants were asked to think about potential strengths of NESTs, majority of them believed that NESTs’ strength lies in their knowledge and awareness of the target culture. T4, who was a NNEST, explained that “*they (NESTs) know about the culture better than non-native teachers. I have never been to an English-speaking country so, we may not be able to explain what culture is, what the real tradition is in American and British countries*”, and T9 similarly echoed “*they (NESTs) might be able to interact with students in terms of their cultural background of English in a better way.*”. Moreover, T21, who was a NEST, viewed “*the wider aspects such as culture and literature, and so on*” to be a strong point of NESTs.

Vocabulary

The teacher participants believed that NESTs know more vocabulary than NNESTs and thus they can teach vocabulary better. For example, T16 said that “*when it comes to vocabulary, it’s not all about knowing the words alone, but it’s about knowing them in context. When natives use the word correctly, the students will pick it up correctly as well*”, T14 also believed that “*vocabulary come natural to them (NESTs)*”, and T18 noted that “*their (NESTs) range of vocabulary is much wider than non-native teachers*”.

Pronunciation

A great number of the teacher participants agreed that NESTs can teach pronunciation more effectively due to having acquired the language at birth. Examples of some excerpts are: “*first thing is the accent, it’s a huge part of being a native language teacher, so the accent is very important*” (T20), “*the best way (for students) to improve their accent is to have a native teacher. No one is able to speak like them unless they learnt the language at birth*” (T22), and “*Native pronunciation, you basically expose students to native pronunciation and intonation which students can learn from and mimic*” (T2).

Colloquial (day-to-day) and fluent language

The teacher participants believed that if students are taught English by NESTs, they will have the chance to be exposed to a natural and fluent language the same way it is used day-to-day among native speakers. For example, when T6 was asked to mention valuable qualities of NESTs, he said “*idioms, connotations, so, they (the students) learn the everyday and the colloquial easier*”, and T23 added that “*they (NESTs) can actually help giving their students phrases, phrasal verbs, idiomatic language, and colloquial language*”. Similarly, T19 believed that “*because they are*

native speakers of the language, it's their language, everything they say is natural, and the students will get the natural everyday language which is used in the English speaking countries". Finally, T20, who was a NEST herself, said that *"the way we (NESTs) speak is not textbook. For example, I bring how English is spoken in the UK and I bring it to my students, street language"*. In addition, several teachers expressed that fluency is one of the strengths of NESTs as T7 said *"they (NESTs) speak the language fluently and I think one of the strongest point they have is that they can transfer the firsthand language use and the natural fluency to their students"*, and T5 echoed that *"a good point is their fluency, and level of authenticity"*.

4.2.2.2 Weaknesses of NESTs

Overconfident

Both the native and non-native teacher participants believed that a negative quality of NESTs might be that they do not work as hard as NNESTs and are therefore overconfident about their teaching abilities. T1, who was a NEST herself, noted that *"there is a tendency to overlook (among NESTs), so, just because a native speaker is a native speaker doesn't mean that they are great at teaching because teaching must come with some techniques and skills"*, and T21, who was also a NESTs, expressed that *"unfortunately, being a native speaker of a language doesn't infer automatic superiority or you know, being at the top in their field"*. Similarly, the non-native participants uttered similar remarks such as when T22 said *"I have seen native teachers having zero teaching qualifications and they think they're good teachers"*, and T11 alleged that *"native teachers generally over trust themselves, and they end up doing mistakes because of this. They think they know everything"*.

(Often) unqualified in teaching English

The teacher participants seemed to complain that hiring unqualified teachers just because they are NESTs has degraded the quality of ELT and they viewed this privileged stigma as a negative quality of NESTs. To begin with, T16 said that “*most native teachers here (KRI) are not specialized in teaching, this is one of their weakest points. It’s not only about knowing the language, it’s also about knowing how to teach*”, and T24 added that “*they are native speakers but they are not teachers, they haven’t undergone any teaching training*”. Similarly, T14 protested that:

A weakness is that if only they are hired because of being a native, which would be a weakness, because they don’t know techniques of teaching a language. Most teachers lack that. Speaking a language is not enough. And unfortunately, they don’t try to learn how to teach, because they think it’s enough.

In the same light, T2 mentioned that:

When it comes to just being a native, and not a non-native teacher. We have had this experience, native teachers are hired without any teaching qualifications just because they think they can teach the language. These are two different things. We are native Kurdish speakers, but can we teach Kurdish? Probably, most likely, not.

Not knowing the native language of the students

Some of the teacher participants viewed not knowing the native language of the students as a negative quality of NESTs as it would make it hard for them to communicate in certain situation as well as causing time to be wasted. For example, T15, who was a NEST, admitted that she was not able to communicate with beginner students at some point when she said:

When I was teaching in Kurdistan for one year, I tried to communicate with the students, I was trying my best, it was really hard at the beginning, I didn’t know Kurdish, so I started to learn Kurdish to be able to communicate with the students better. So I’m saying that not knowing their native language is not good for natives.

T6 added:

Sometimes things are too complicated, sometime you can use similarities to make the students learn better, for example, when you teach them ‘the’, no

matter how many examples you give, but once you give the Kurdish equivalent 'Ke', they immediately understand it clearly.

Finally, T2 concluded that:

It is important to know the native language of the students because in some situations a word or an expression can't be defined and explained in English and a lot of time will be wasted. Sometimes, it gets to the point that there is a dead-end, neither the students nor the teacher can find a way to facilitate learning and they get stuck. For example, when a native speaker can't explain a word, it would be difficult and they will be wasting a lot of time.

Not knowing about the culture of the students (Kurdish)

Similar to not knowing the native language of the students, not knowing about the students' culture was seen to be another negative quality of NESTs as the teacher participants believed that NESTs do not have enough knowledge about students' background and students' culture. For instance, T19 noticed that "*perhaps the most difficult is the culture. I've had many American native teachers, and for a long while, they struggled to find the connection between the students and the teachers*", and T8 added that "*when teachers come from a different culture, there have been misunderstanding between the teacher and the students especially in Middle Eastern cultures which are usually closed and sensitive*". Finally, T5 explained:

It's the culture that we (NNESTs) have got, sometimes we know what type of peer-pressure we have on students, we know how it affects them, we know how problems are in our community, problems relating to family and friends, because we have been through similar experience but native teachers face problems because they don't know about their culture, and attitudes.

Not knowing the students' needs and difficulties due to not having 'learnt' English

A major difference from NESTs and NNESTs is that the former unknowingly acquired English whereas the latter knowingly learnt it. Majority of the teacher participants thought that a weakness of NESTs is that they do not know the needs and difficulties of learners of English because they themselves have never gone through the learning process of the language as NNESTs have. As a starter, T18 initiated by thinking that "*a weakness is that they didn't go through the learning process. They*

have no idea about how it feels like to learn a language. Just like how we are with Kurdish”, T9 similarly added that *“they (NESTs) haven’t been through the process of learning a new language. They might not know a second language so they won’t understand”*, and T17 concluded that *“they (NESTs) don’t understand the students’ feelings, and what the difficulties are which they face while learning a language”*. To sum it up, T6 exemplified:

If native teachers have experience of learning another language, that’s alright, but those who don’t have that experience, it is hard.. I had a native friend who only spoke English, he thought that only because he knows something, everyone else knows it about the language. The thing is when you have the experience of learning another language, you know the basics of a language and you might be better at teaching another language. But my friend couldn’t tell why students don’t know some things, because he didn’t have the experience and sympathy of learning another languages. This is a weakness of some native language teachers.

As a result, the teacher participants showed that some NESTs might lack empathy for their students since they have not learnt the language themselves. For example, T22 said *“I’m sorry to say this but sometime they (NESTs) have no empathy for their students”*, and T9 added *“they (NESTs) don’t know how students are suffering”*.

Teaching Grammar

The teacher participants perceived NESTs to be weak at teaching grammar and assumed that they do not have enough information about the grammatical structures of English language. For example, T20, who was a NEST, said that *“if they (NESTs) aren’t English graduates, the grammar is extremely hard. Like, we (NESTs) grow up, and grammar comes naturally to us. But teaching it is really hard”*. Similarly, T4 added *“they (NESTs) only know how to speak the language, but they can’t explain complicated grammatical structures. They don’t really know how to teach, they can only speak casually with the students. Uhm, they sometime make grammatical mistakes*

as well”. Finally, T13, who was an Iraqi Kurdish teacher of English who spent eight years of his childhood in the UK, elaborated:

I’m somewhere in between, I didn’t learn English as academically as the other non-native English teachers around me. Almost all native teachers have problems with grammar. They know when something is incorrect, when something is out of place, but when it comes to explanation, they don’t know why it’s incorrect. When I teach grammar, I have to study it more than my students.

4.2.2.3 Strengths of NNESTs

Knowing about the culture of the students (Kurdish)

Majority of the teacher participants believed that sharing the same culture and background with the students is one of the valuable qualities of NESTs. For example, T3 thought that this leads to having a stronger connection with the students as he said “*because we (NNESTs) know their culture, they (the students) can be friendlier with you, they feel more comfortable with you, and they know how to approach you*”, and T2 similarly said that being a NNEST had helped him because he can be “*familiar with the students’ background and cultural background*”. In more details, T16 elaborated:

I am a non-native teacher, I have passed through the same experience as my students. So, I will be the one who can understand them rather than a native teacher. I can understand them. We have the same culture, background, first language, of course I know what they need, why they need to learn, and how they feel.

Moreover, T2 exemplified:

Knowing the cultural background of the students helps you unlock a lot of things in between you and the students. For example, imagine this, when I go into class, because I know some gestures or some topics might be inappropriate or which might give the students a wrong message, I wouldn’t do them and I wouldn’t talk about them, but native teachers don’t know that. So I think this is a strength of us (NNESTs).

Finally, T13 echoed by stating:

In our society, some topics are not to be touched. I think non-natives are much better understanding this cultural thing where some topics are avoided. They have a better understanding of the students’ situation and this makes them connect better.

Stronger connection with students

As mentioned before, it was widely believed among that teacher participants that NNESTs have a stronger connection with their students along with having sympathy, empathy, compassion, and understanding due to sharing the same native language, same culture, and having been through the same experience of learning the language. To illustrate this, T6 vouched that *“having sympathy for our students is our strength because we (NNESTs) understand them and we have the experience of going through the same process”*, T22 echoed that *“they (NNESTs) are very empathetic, they work so hard, they always make sure that everything is right and that students are satisfied”*, and T24 added that *“they (NNESTs) can put themselves into the shoes of the students. They understand the students’ feelings while learning the language”*. Finally, T9 concluded:

They (NNESTs) know how to interact with the students, they have more topics to talk to them about, they know how to engage them, and students trust them. We have an experience and we share it with them. They get inspire by us.

Knowing the students’ needs and difficulties due to having ‘learnt’ English

A large number of the participants agreed that a positive quality of NNESTs is their experience as a learner of the target language. T17 put it clearly when he said that *“they (NNESTs) have passed all the stages, been through all the situations of learning a language, they can understand students better, their difficulties, their problems, how they think about learning”*. Moreover, the same thought was rephrased by T24 when she explained:

We’ve all been student before, right? And since my students learn the same language I had to learn, sometimes I know their issues and problems regarding to learning the language, and also, there are some thoughts which they cannot convey in the , I mean in English. They don’t have ability to express everything in the second language. When you know, when you think according to their mentality, according to their native language, you understand what they are trying to say because you once were in their exact same place, you had their exact problems.

Finally, T12 elaborated:

These non-native teachers have once been alien to the language, so they know the techniques of how to learn the language, the tricks, how to get there within a shortcut. This is a very strong point of non-native teachers, unlike natives, they have not acquired the language from their childhood, so they can share their experience of learning the language with the students and this is useful for the students, but a native teacher would not know the ways of delivering this.

Hard-working

Around half of the teacher participants implied that a good quality of NNESTs is that they are hard-working in their profession and this might be due to the fact that they are both teachers and learners. For example, T15 stated that “*most non-native Kurdish teachers are really hard-working*”, and T10 said that “*since English is my second language, I never go to class if I am not fully prepared*”. In addition, T21, who was a NEST, observed by saying “*in my experience, I noticed that non-native teachers strive much harder, they contribute more and are more involved, generally speaking. Because they want to excel and push forward*”. Finally, T5 illustrated:

One of the valuable qualities is that most of us (NNESTs) are energetic, we have such an energy that we are not even aware of ourselves. The fact that I have learned English myself, so I know how hard it is to learn it, and I am very energetic to deliver my knowledge and share my experience which I think motivated them.

Knowing the students’ native language and thus the origin of their mistakes/errors

Another strong point of NNESTs, from the teacher participants’ point of view, was their ability to speak the students’ native language. One teacher participant believed that NNESTs can compare between the native language of the students and the target language as she said “*there are so many concepts which are difficult to describe in English, so it’s good to compare it to their native language and they will understand it right away*”. The rest of the teachers viewed this as a valuable quality

since it equips NNESTs to realize why learners might make the mistakes which is transferred from their native language. For example, T18 articulated:

As a non-native teacher myself, it's easier for me to teach English because I can help my students avoid literal word-to-word translation while speaking and writing and also to explain the grammatical structures as we know both Kurdish and English, so it's easier to explain the way to get the message across.

Likewise, T3 added that "*what's important about non-native teachers is that they can know the students' errors and mistakes, the ones which are based on their mother language. In that case, it helps you to know what you are working on*". Finally, T11 similarly added "*they (NNESTs) understand the students, when their English is bad, and when they translate from Kurdish, the teacher will understand, but if you don't know Kurdish language, you won't be able to understand*".

4.2.2.4 Weaknesses of NNESTs

Negative transfer

A negative quality of NNESTs which was notified by the teacher participants was that they transfer words expressions and structures from their own native language while they are speaking in the target language, this is called "negative transfer". For example, T24 stated that "*they (NNESTs) are thinking in Kurdish and speaking in English. I mean they are translating Kurdish language into English utterances but this doesn't mean it's fluent English*". Similarly, T13 added "*translating word for word, literal translation. It's one of the biggest problem I see (about NNESTs). I have noticed this even in advertisements of institutes and schools*". Finally, T1 concluded:

They (NNESTs) lose the opportunity to communicate in the target language in order to be better because there are words commonly that are translated from Kurdish to English, for example, they mean 'last night', but they say 'tonight', due to transfer from their first language.

Pronunciation

When the teacher participants were asked to mention potential weaknesses of NNESTs, most of them overtly admitted that NNESTs have issues with pronunciation which might expose students to an inaccurate input. Some of their statements were “*you are not providing the accurate pronunciations and intonation to the students*” (T2), “*one weakness is their pronunciation*” (T15), “*some also have problems with pronunciation*” (T14), “*issues of pronunciation which students pick up easily*” (T11), “*their weakness is their stress and pronunciation. Sometimes it’s taught incorrectly, and sometimes not enough attention is paid to pronunciation altogether*” (T13). Finally, T4 extended “*Pronunciation is something that non-native speaker teachers are struggling with, not being able to pronounce certain words or how to speak clearly and fluently, and this directly affects all teachers, and it becomes a habit for them*”.

Misinformation

Some of the teacher participants who were NNESTs, admitted that a weakness of NNESTs might be that they could give wrong information to the students, or might lack information in certain circumstances. For example, T10 admitted:

Since it’s not my first language, sometime in class you run into a word that you don’t know the meaning of. Sometimes a student asks you a question about a word, they know the Kurdish word, and they’re asking us for its English equivalent, and we get stuck.

T5 similarly noted that:

Sometimes we (NNESTs) don’t know all the information and knowledge about the language” T5 “a weakness is that if we are not fully prepared in class, and when we have not searched certain expressions, we might face problems, especially relating to idioms, culture, and certain expressions.

Finally, T2 summarized:

There are some things in the language which we are not aware of because we are not native speakers. We might give wrong definitions. We might give wrong explanations, and later you realize you’ve made a mistake.. uhm, the thing is students usually mimic their teachers *smiles*.

Not knowing about the target (English) culture

Several teachers viewed NNESTs to lack knowledge about the target culture. For example, T4 said “*not knowing the cultural aspects of English is something thing that non-native speaker teachers are struggling with*”. Further, T19 admitted that “*one weakness is that since English is not my first language, I will have difficulty with the culture, and sometimes you explain something, and then you realize that from cultural point of view, it’s not polite and appropriate*”, and T7 identically added that “*they (NNESTs) do not know about the culture of the language they are teaching, that could be a serious problem*”. In addition, T17 specified that “*culture is a weakness especially for those (NNEST-) teachers who have not travelled abroad, and those who don’t watch movies and don’t know their cultures and backgrounds*”. Finally, T21, who was a NEST, thought that “*they (NNESTs) are not immersed in an environment in which the language is used natively, so they don’t have the ability to know the finer aspects of the language such as cultural aspects, history, literature, arts, and so on*”.

Not knowing the colloquial (day-to-day) language

Along with not having sufficient knowledge about the target language, the teacher participants also believed that NNESTs are not well equipped with the colloquial language which is the day-to-day English spoken in casual settings. To start, T5 said that “*if we (NNESTs) are not fully prepared in class, and when we have not searched certain expressions, we might face problems, especially relating to idioms, culture, and certain expressions*”. Next, T23 believed that “*not every non-native teacher, even with qualifications, would get to a high level of fluency, and a high command of the language. Especially in terms of general English*”, and T24 admitted that “*at the first few years of my teaching, I wasn’t enough sure about the information,*

using some idioms, some expressions, and some phrasal verbs". Finally, T6 elaborated in length:

There are words that are archaic, there are words which are not used in everyday situations. We (NNESTs) learn things from this book, from this movie. We might talk in a way that sounds strange. Persian is my second mother tongue, and when some learners speak it, what they say is correct, but you can feel it does not sound natural, we can't explain why. I am sure we as non-native English teachers we talk in the same way... there are many things that we non-natives say and write that may have like irrelevant or even negative connotations, or bizarre which we may not be aware of. So, we are aware of denotations and not most of the connotations.

Vocabulary

Finally, the teacher participants viewed vocabulary as another weak point of NNESTs as compared to NESTs. For example, T18 stated that "*compared to the native teachers, non-native teachers have a less range of vocabulary, sometime you need a word but you don't know them*", and T9, who was a NNEST, admitted that "at first, I wasn't feeling quite well, in terms of vocabulary and meaning, there were words I did not know about". Identically, T7 mentioned that "*sometime I don't know the vocabulary, especially if I'm teaching the higher levels, you know, the day to day informal language, it's not much of a big deal, but you can feel that we don't talk like native speakers*". To add, T10 admitted:

Since it's not my first language, sometime in class you run into a word that you don't know the meaning of. Sometimes a student asks you a question about a word, they know the Kurdish word, and they're asking us for its English equivalent, and we get stuck.

Finally, T22 recalled:

I remember one time a students asked me a word, I was in China, he asked me what it is called in English, I just forgot the word, I made up a word, I drew the word on the board, I had to go back to the student after three days to tell him the correct word. So it is difficult. That was my first time of teaching and it was really difficult for me. It's better now.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In Chapter Five, the results and findings of the study are discussed addressing the research questions and by and referring to the relevant literature. After discussing the results, the conclusion of the study is presented along with sharing some practical implications. Finally, recommendations and suggestions for future studies are given.

As a synopsis, the purpose of this mixed method study was to find out students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards *native* and *non-native* ELTs in KRI. A sample of 345 university students in the region responded to a 7-point bipolar Likert scale questionnaire, and 24 EFL teachers in the region were interviewed. The quantitative data obtained from the student questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive statistics by using SPSS V. 25. Furthermore, the qualitative data from the teacher interviews were manually analyzed by employing a thematic analysis method.

5.1 Discussion of Results and Findings

This section provides discussions of the results and findings which were presented in Chapter Four. The discussion is then aligned with the research questions as well as addressing the literature which initially inspired the current undertaking.

In the research, five research questions were put forward:

- (i) What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
- (ii) What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?
- (iii) What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?
- (iv) What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?

- (v) What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

5.1.1 Discussion of the Results and Findings of the Research Questions

In the following sub-sections, the results and findings are discussed and aligned with the research questions.

5.1.1.1 What are Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NESTs?

In order to answer the first research question, the attitude statements about NESTs from the student questionnaire were statistically analyzed and interesting conclusions were drawn. To start with, according to the results of the student questionnaire, a significant tendency of preference towards NESTs was seen among the student participants of the current study. The results revealed that majority of the student participants in KRI preferred having a NEST for their English classes. A great amount of the student participants believed that if they are taught by a NEST, their English improves, they would be motivated to learn the language, and they will be obliged to speak English in class. Moreover, they showed their preference for NESTs based on the belief that NESTs do not rely solely on the coursebook, thus suggesting that NESTs make use of different and various materials in the classroom. In addition, the student participants claimed that all four of their language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and language areas (Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation) will improve immensely if they learn from a NEST. Finally, they perceived NESTs to make the environment of their classes interesting, to make sure that their students are active in class, and that they are interested in the opinions of their students. Even though the student participants expressed a strong preference for NESTs, however, they believed that NESTs are not aware of the students' culture, and that they usually feel nervous in class when they have a NEST.

The results of the current study is consistent with numerous studies in the literature. Firstly, similar to the current research, Barany and Zebari (2018), who aimed to explore perceptions of Kurdish private university students of their NESTs and NNESTs, found out that students have a more positive attitude towards NESTs rather than NNESTs. To be specific, the student participants thought that NESTs are better than NNESTs in teaching speaking, listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Secondly, Lasagabaster and Sierra's (2002) study, which surveyed undergraduate students in Spain to explore their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, revealed that the students preferred NESTs due to their pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, culture, and civilization. Thirdly, Moussu (2006) surveyed ESL students' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs at IEPs in the US and showed that students held more positive attitudes towards NESTs than NNESTs. Finally, Kayalp (2016) investigated students' opinions about the same issue at a preparatory English program in a university in North Cyprus and revealed that the students had more positive attitudes towards NESTs.

5.1.1.2 What are Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NNESTs?

Coming to the second research question which was "*What are students' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?*", the attitude statements about NNESTs from the student questionnaire were thoroughly analyzed. The results revealed that there was a close proximity in the amounts of agreement, disagreement, and neutrality towards NNESTs from the student participants' points-of-view. This could be interpreted that the student participants were rather hesitant in their perception of NNESTs. To summarize, less than half of the students showed their preference for having a NNEST for their English classes, a little less than half of them believed that their English improves if they learn English from a NNEST, and exactly half of them

expressed that they would feel motivated to learn the language if they are taught by a NNEST. Despite that the results showed some hesitance among the student participants, a moderate tendency towards agreement could be seen among most of the items. For instance, the majority of the student participants believed that NNESTs understand when students ask them questions in class. This might be because they share the same native language and the exact same experience of learning the language (English) with the students. Moreover, majority of the student participants claimed that NNESTs are knowledgeable about the culture of the students, thus, they understand each other at a stronger level. Similarly, more than half of the students believed that NNESTs make the atmosphere of their classes interesting, and that they show interest in the opinions of their students. Finally, even though that there were not significant amounts of agreement from the students about how their language skills and areas improve with a NNEST, however, the amount of agreement was higher than the disagreement for all the skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) and areas (Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation). This means that more student participants suggested that their English language skills and areas would improve if they have a NNEST.

The current study is somehow congruent with previous studies such as when Qadeer (2019) found out that Saudi university students preferred NNESTs to be successful in teaching writing, reading, and grammar. Additionally, Karakaş et al (2016) revealed that Turkish EFL learners preferred NNESTs since their cultural proximity lead to a higher amount of motivation among students.

5.1.1.3 What are Instructors' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NESTs?

Further, research question three which was “*What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs?*” sought to explore the teacher participants' perceptions

of NESTs through individual interviews. As it was thoroughly shown in Chapter Four, the findings of the interviews illustrated how the teacher participants perceived NESTs. The findings revealed that the teacher participants believed that NESTs speak more fluently and naturally in general, and more specifically, they thought that NESTs have a more accurate and natural pronunciation. This finding is consistent with two studies (Medgyes, 1992; Reves & Medgyes, 1994) which found out that NESTs use natural and real language and are known for their authenticity. In addition, from the teacher participants' points-of-view, NESTs are better at day-to-day casual language i.e. colloquial language in the sense that they can expose the students with the firsthand way of speaking the language. Majority of the teacher participants believed that NESTs are more preferred among students, can easily make students motivated and encouraged to learn the target language, however, they thought that NESTs are more appropriate to teach the higher proficiency levels. Finally, they claimed that NESTs are better because they are knowledgeable about the cultural aspects of English.

Moreover, the teacher participants referred to the prestigious position that NESTs have which they thought have made them privileged in terms of job offers and recruitment. This finding was consistent with Novianti's (2018) study which showed that NESTs who do not even have qualifications are at a higher chance of being recruited than qualified NNESTs because they are seen as the ideal speaker, a model for the learners, and thus, an ideal teacher.

Despite their positive perceptions of NESTs, the teacher participants held some negative attitudes towards them as well. The findings revealed that the teacher participants believed that NESTs are not as hard-working as NNESTs and that they usually are over-confident and over-trust themselves only because they are native speakers of the language. They also said that they are less experienced, are often

unqualified, and are less knowledgeable about teaching techniques and methods because they acquired the language rather than learnt it. Finally, they considered NESTs not to understand students' needs and difficulties because they had never gone through the process and experience of learning the target language the same way as NNESTs. The final finding is somehow in congruence with Abriel's (2015) study which revealed that NEST participants in the study felt that they were disconnected with their students due to cultural and language differences and could not foresee what their students might struggle with.

5.1.1.4 What are Instructors' Perceptions and Attitudes towards NNESTs?

Alternatively, the fourth research question which stated "*What are instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards NNESTs?*" sought to show teacher participants' stance towards NNESTs. When the interview transcripts were carefully analyzed, the findings of the interviews viewed that the teacher participants held positive attitudes towards NNESTs because they and the students share the same background and culture. This is consistent with Medgyes' (1992) study that views cultural proximity as an advantage of NNESTs. In addition, the teacher participants claimed that NNESTs understand students' needs and difficulties better because they learnt the language themselves which echoed three studies (Ellis, 2002; Medgyes, 1992; Widdowson, 1994) that claimed that NNESTs are aware of students' needs and difficulties in English language owing to being an English language learner. Further, the teacher participants thought that because NNESTs know the native language of the students, they are more suitable for students of lower proficiency levels. The teacher participants also viewed NNESTs to have a better relationship with their students for sharing a stronger connection, understanding, sympathy, and are able to communicate easily which may be because of their cultural and linguistic proximity. The current finding is

similar to that of Reves and Medgyes (1994) and Abriel (2015) who revealed that NNETSs are more empathetic towards their students, are able to express more complicated feelings and thoughts with their students, and feel more connected to their students. Moreover, NNETSs were viewed by the teacher participants as more hard-working, energetic, and resilient. To add, they also agreed that NNETSs are more knowledgeable about teaching techniques because they learnt the language which is consistent with Reves and Medgyes' (1994) study which revealed that NNETSs possess a deeper insight into English language, are more qualified than their NEST counterparts, and also with Elyas and Alghofaili's (2019) study which indicated that NNETSs can be more effective teachers because of their experience as a learner of the language themselves. Finally, the teacher participants believed that NNETSs are able to recognize the students' interlanguage and potential pitfalls because they know their L1 which is congruent with Reves and Medgyes' (1994) study which claimed that NNETSs are able to detect the learning difficulties of their students.

Even though the teacher participants mostly held positive attitudes towards NNETSs, they still believed that they have some weaknesses. Majority of the teacher participants, as it was seen in Chapter Four, believed that NNETSs speak a less fluent and natural language, their pronunciation is not as accurate nor natural as that of NESTs, their knowledge about the language is rather insufficient, and that they are not knowledgeable enough about the cultural aspects of English. They also claimed that NNETSs are not good with colloquial language which is consistent with the findings of Reves and Medgyes (1994) that revealed that NNETSs are more concerned more formal features of the language to the point that they often overuse formal registers. In addition, even though the teacher participants viewed knowing the L1 of the students as a strong point, however, they believed that since the students know that their teacher

is non-native, they would not be motivated enough to speak in English. Finally, the teacher participants viewed NNESTs to be insecure and lack confidence which is congruent with the study of Levis et al. (2016) which claimed that NNESTs seem not to feel confident because they have been shown as an inappropriate model of pronunciation.

Finally, as it was shown, a great number of the teacher participants were aware that NNESTs are discriminated against in the job market. Their realization is identical to Clark and Paran's (2007) study which showed that despite their large number, NNESTs are frequently regarded less professionals than NESTs, and this leads to discrimination in employment. Nevertheless, even though majority of the teacher participants believed that students in KRI prefer NESTs over NNESTs, however, they believed that a shift of perceptions among ELLs in KRI can be seen in the sense that students now have realized that being a NEST alone is not sufficient but rather qualification and experience are more significant as compared to before in which students used to prefer NESTs only. This is inconsistent with the literature as Ballard and Winke (2017) claimed that in the non-English speaking contexts, teachers usually force their students to act like native speakers. In other words, unlike Ballard and Winke's (2017) study, the findings of the current study showed that most teachers are now aware that the goal of native-like proficiency is based on a prestigious, and discriminating viewpoint.

5.1.1.5 What Strengths and Weaknesses do Learners and Teachers Identify about NESTs and NNESTs?

Given the above research questions which sought to explore students' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs, the final research question which was "*What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?*" aimed to elicit strong and weak qualities of NESTs and

NNESTs. As it was seen in Chapter Four, strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the students' points-of-view were thoroughly presented in Section 4.1.3 based on the results of the quantitative data from the student questionnaire. Moreover, the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the instructors' points-of-view were similarly presented in Section 4.2.2 based on the findings of the qualitative data from the teacher interviews.

Therefore, in this section, the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the perceptions of both the student and teacher participants are merged and summarized (See Table 20) in order to respond to the fifth research question *“What strengths and weaknesses do learners and teachers identify about NESTs and NNESTs?”*.

Table 20: Current study's results and findings: Strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the perceptions of student and teacher participants

Strengths of NESTs	Strengths of NNESTs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the target culture (English) • Have a wider range of vocabulary • Have an accurate and natural pronunciation • Better at colloquial (day-to-day) language • Are good at fluency • Force students to speak English • Use different and various materials • Better at teaching the language skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing • Better at teaching the language areas: Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation • Make students motivated • Uses body language • Asks for students' opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the culture of the students (Kurdish) • Have a s stronger connection with students • Have a better communication with the students • Know the students' needs and difficulties due to having 'learnt' English • Know the students' native language and thus the origin of their mistakes/errors • Are hard-working • Have better teaching methods and techniques

Weaknesses of NESTs	Weaknesses of NNESTs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are (Often) unqualified in Teaching English • Do not know the native language of the students • Do not know about the culture of the students (Kurdish) • Do not know the students' needs and difficulties due to not having 'learnt' English • Not being able to explain complex grammatical structures consciously • Are over-confident and less hard-working • Make students nervous in learning the language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not knowing about the target culture (English) • Negative transfer from their L1 while speaking in English • Less accurate and natural pronunciation • Give misinformation about the language • Do not know the colloquial (day-to-day) language • Know a limited range of vocabulary • Only uses the course-book • Are less flexible • Are less confident

Further, to place the findings of the current study into previous literature, a similar table (See Table 21) is created which summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the perceptions of student and teacher participants from previous studies which have been conducted in the field. In other words, the findings of the current study (which was shown in Table 20) were consistent with the findings of the following studies from the literature such as shown in Table 21 below.

Table 21: Previous Studies' Results and Findings: Strengths and Weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs from the Perceptions of Student and Teacher Participants

Strengths of NESTs	Strengths of NNESTs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak better English • Use real language • Use English more confidently • Adopt a more flexible approach • Better as colloquial registers • Use a variety of materials • Resort to no/less translation (Medgyes, 1994) • Competent in English language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are more empathetic • Are more committed (Medgyes, 1994) • Can teach learning strategies more successfully • Can predict and prevent difficulties in learning language better • Are more sensitive to their students

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to use the language spontaneously in communicative situations (Medgyes, 2001) • Good English proficiency • Have a more ‘relaxed’ teaching style (Ma, 2012) • Better teachers of the oral skills such as speaking, listening, and pronunciation (Hadla, 2013) • Correct language use • Natural pronunciation • Knowledgeable about the target culture (Walkinshaw and Oanh, 2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can benefit from using the students’ native language (Medgyes, 2001) • Have a deeper insight into the English language • Are more qualified • Are more sympathetic towards their students (Reves and Medgyes, 1994) • the ease students feel towards them in understanding their teaching and communication (Ma, 2012) • more empathetic towards their students’ needs and struggles (Hadla, 2013) • students are more comfortable interacting with them (Walkinshaw and Oanh, 2014) • more sensitive and empathetic for sharing the same native language and culture with their students, as well as the same language learning experience (Kurniawati and Rizki, 2018)
<p>Weaknesses of NESTs</p>	<p>Weaknesses of NNESTs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ difficulty in understanding their teaching • Difficulty in communication with students • Experiencing anxiety among students (Ma, 2012) • Communicative and cultural gap between the teachers and students (Walkinshaw and Oanh, 2014) • Are less empathetic • Are less committed (Medgyes, 1994) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak poorer English • Use “bookish” language • Use English less confidently • Use single textbooks • Resort to more translation (Medgyes, 1994) • Have a less fluent speaking ability • Non-authentic pronunciation (Walkinshaw and Oanh, 2014) • Inaccurate pronunciation • Are textbook-bound (Ma, 2012) • Are more preoccupied with accuracy and formal English (Reves and Medgyes, 1994) • Are not familiar with colloquial day-to-day English (Medgyes, 2001)

5.2 Conclusion and Implications

The study concludes that majority of the students would strongly prefer NESTs while only half of them would prefer NNESTs even though a moderate preference was also shown towards the NNESTs among the student participants. As for the teacher participants, the findings reveal that most of the teachers believed that NESTs and NNESTs both have their own positive and negative qualities and that one is not more successful than another, rather, they are different from each other. According to the students and teachers, the main valuable qualities associated with NESTs were related to teaching of language skills and areas, motivating and encouraging students, being knowledgeable about the cultural aspects of English, speaking fluently and naturally, having accurate pronunciation, and being better at colloquial language. In addition, the negative aspects associated with NESTs were related to not being aware of the students' culture, making students feel nervous, not being hard-working, being over-confident only because they are native, being less experienced, being unqualified in English language, being less knowledgeable about teaching techniques and methods, and not understanding students' needs and difficulties. On the other hand, students and teachers thought that the main valuable qualities associated with NNESTs were related to having easier communication with students, being knowledgeable about the culture of the students, having a strong connection with students due to sharing similar linguistic, native language, and cultural background, being more sympathetic towards students, understanding students' needs and difficulties, being more hard-working, energetic, and resilient, having more knowledge about teaching methods and techniques, and recognizing the students' potential pitfalls. Finally, the negative aspects associated with NNESTs were related to not knowing the cultural aspects of English language, only depending on the course book, having a weaker pronunciation,

speaking less fluently and naturally, not having sufficient knowledge about the language, not being good with colloquial language, not encouraging students to speak in English, and lacking confidence.

Referring back to the literature, the conclusions drawn above based on the current study are related to the debate of NESTs and NNESTs in the realm of ELT. As it was seen with the characteristics of the teacher participants' group, NNESTs are thought to outnumber their NEST counterparts by 3:1 (Crystal, 2003), English language is shared by whoever speaks it regardless of whether or not they are native (Widdowson, 1994), and that 80% of ELTs are estimated to be NNESTs especially in expanding countries (Canagarajah, 1999). Nevertheless, as the findings of the current study showed, NNESTs are often regarded as having a lower professional status than NESTs, and Kumaravadivelu (2006) believes that this inevitable presence of 'native speakerism' in the field of ELT leads to unprofessional favoritism in educational intuitions, and often leads to unjust recruitment discriminations (Medgyes, 2001).

The results and findings of the current study may offer the following pedagogical implications. Firstly, the current study provides feedback to ELTs), administration, and recruiters of IEPs since it gives them an insight on ELLs and ELTs' perceptions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in KRI. To be more specific, the study implies that professional development programs should be planned and implemented for all ELTs in KRI regardless of their 'nativeness'. The study further enables students, recruiters, and stakeholders to acknowledge that NESTs and NNESTs, provided that they are trained and efficient teachers, can both teach the language successfully. In addition, since the participants of the current study claimed that NESTs are not aware of the culture of the students, it is recommended for NESTs to become aware of the cultural aspects of the students, and one way of achieving this

might be to stay in the country for a period of time before starting to teach. Moreover, NESTs were seen to lack awareness of needs and struggles of the learners specifically because most NESTs were thought to speak only one language. Therefore, NESTs are urged to raise their awareness of student needs such as through learning a language other than English as T6 mentioned “*to have the experience and sympathy of learning another language*”. On the other hand, NNESTs were viewed to be successful role models for students. Thus, it is recommended that NNESTs share their own experience of learning English with the students such as telling them certain learning strategies, and ways of overcoming certain problems that they used to perform as learners of the language. However, NNESTs were thought to lack understanding of the target culture; hence, it is suggested that NNESTs may need to equip themselves with knowledge of western cultural aspects. The final but the most prominent implication of the current study is for ELTs (both NESTs and NNESTs) to understand the differences between teaching English in an English-speaking country as opposed to a non-English-speaking setting such as KRI. To make it clear, ELTs should advocate for a critical pedagogical awareness in order to leverage the role of the classroom as a place of empowering students along with resisting mechanisms that insist the superiority of ‘native speakerism’ ideologies, enable students to meet global and local needs of communication by fostering an intercultural competence suitable for non-native English contexts such as KRI.

5.3 Future Research

If another study in the same domain is designed in the future, a number of changes are recommended. Firstly, as it was noted in the literature, there is a scarcity of studies conducted about NESTs and NNESTs in Iraq, and KRI. Thus, further studies are suggested to be carried out in the same context to fortify the literature. For example,

future studies can explore Iraqi ELLs' and/or teachers' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. In addition, data is recommended to be collected from different cities of KRI to infer more significant findings. Secondly, in addition to finding out attitudes of students and teachers, administrators and recruiters of IEPs and English Departments could also be considered to show their attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in connection with hiring procedures. Thirdly, since the current study was limited in its scope, future studies could consider other variables such as years of study, gender, age range, and proficiency level of English of the learners. Finally, taken together, the current study focused on an investigation of attitudes, therefore, future studies can move towards detailed observations of classroom practice. For example, observations can be conducted to explore how NESTs and NNESTs perform in classes and how their students behave and react in their classes and to identify similarities and differences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Student Questionnaire (Paper-based, English)

Student Questionnaire

Dear Student,

I am a master student of English Language Teaching at Eastern Mediterranean University in North Cyprus. The aim of my study is to explore students' and teachers' opinions about native and non-native English-speaking teachers. Your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. Your participation is voluntary which means that you are free to participate or not and you are allowed to withdraw at any point during the study. This questionnaire takes around 10 minutes to respond to. You can contact the researcher via phone or e-mail if you have any questions about the questionnaire or if you are interested in the findings once the study is completed. Thank you very much for your collaboration.

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If you agree to participate, please ***sign***: _____

Date: _____

Full Name (your name will NOT be shown):

Phone number (optional): _____

Native English-Speaking Teacher: English language teachers whose first language is English (for example, someone from USA, UK, Canada, Australia, etc.)

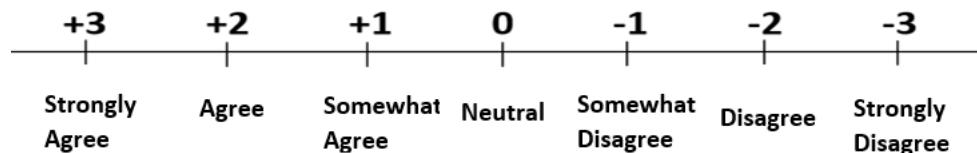
Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher: English language teachers who learned English as a second language (for example, an English language teacher who is Kurdish)

A- Background Information: Please provide the background information below.

1. Country and city of birth: _____
2. Nationality: _____
3. Gender: Female _____ Male _____ Other _____
4. Age: _____
5. First language: _____
6. University: _____
7. Department: _____
8. Year (Grade): 1st year of university _____ 2nd year of university _____
3rd year of university _____ 4th year of university _____
9. Have you ever had a native English-speaking teacher? Yes ____ No ____
10. If yes, how many native English-speaking teachers have you had? _____
11. Do your parents speak English?
a) only my mother _____ b) only my father _____
c) both of them _____ d) none of them _____
12. How many years have you studied English? _____
13. Have you ever been in any English-speaking countries? Yes ____ No ____
14. If yes, for how long? _____

B- Attitude Statements: Please circle a number based on your opinion, and experience.

Example:



Part One: Native English-Speaking Teacher

1. I prefer a native English-speaking teacher for my English class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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2. My English improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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3. A native English-speaking teacher motivates me to learn English language.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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4. A native English-speaking teacher makes me nervous in learning English language.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

5. I prefer having a native English-speaking teacher because it forces me to speak English in class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

6. A native English-speaking teacher understands students' questions in class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

7. A native English-speaking teacher knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

8. A native English-speaking teacher makes their classes interesting.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

9. A native English-speaking teacher is able to control the class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

10. A native English speaking teacher makes sure students are active in class

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

11. A native English-speaking teacher uses body language.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

12. A native English speaking teacher only uses the course book.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

13. A native English-speaking teacher asks for the students' opinions.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

15. My grammar improves with a native English speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

16. My vocabulary improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

17. My pronunciation improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

18. My listening improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

19. My speaking improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

20. My reading improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

21. My writing improves with a native English-speaking teacher.

Agree +3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3 **Disagree**

Part Two: Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher

1. I prefer a non-native English-speaking teacher for my English class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

2. My English improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

3. A non-native English-speaking teacher motivates me to learn English language.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

4. A non-native English-speaking teacher makes me nervous in learning English language.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

5. I prefer a non-native English-speaking teacher because I can speak Kurdish in class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

6. A non-native English-speaking teacher understands students' questions in class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

7. A non-native English-speaking teacher knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

8. A non-native English-speaking teacher makes their classes interesting.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

9. A non-native English-speaking teacher is able to control the class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

10. A non-native English speaking teacher makes sure the students are active in class.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
--------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------------

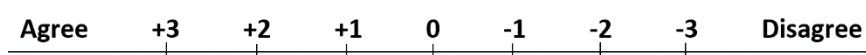
11. A non-native English-speaking teacher uses body language.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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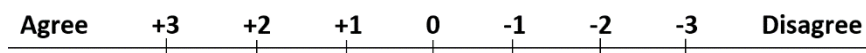
12. A non-native English speaking teacher only uses the course book.

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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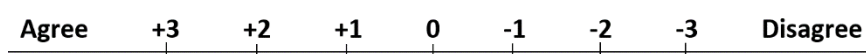
13. A non-native English-speaking teacher asks for the students' opinions.



14. My grammar improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



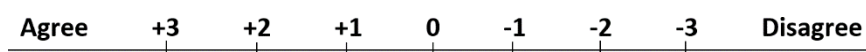
15. My vocabulary improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



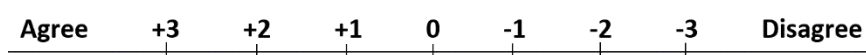
16. My pronunciation improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



17. My listening improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



18. My speaking improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



19. My reading improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



20. My writing improves with a non-native English-speaking teacher.



Appendix B: Student Questionnaire (Paper-based, Kurdish)

خویندکاری نازیز

ئامانجی ئەم توێژینهوهیه دەرخواستنی بیروبووچونی خوینکارانی کوردە لەسەر مامۆستای زمانی ئینگلیزی (نەیتف) و (نەن-نەیتف) لە کوردستانی عێراقدا. ئەم راپرسییە لە ماوهی ۱۰ دەقەدا پر دەکرێتەوه و ههموو زانیاریهکان پاریزراو دەبن و تهنها لەم توێژینهوهدا بهکاردههێنرێن. بهشی یهکهم زانیاریه لهسەر خۆت. بهشی دووهم ۲۰ پرسیاره لهسەر مامۆستای (نەیتف). بهشی سێههم ههمان ۲۰ پرسیاره لهسەر مامۆستای (نەن-نەیتف).

نەیتف: مامۆستایهکی زمانی ئینگلیزی که ئینگلیزی زمانی یهکهمییهتی بۆ نمونه کهسیکی (نهمریکی، ئینگلیز، کهندی، ئوستراالی، هند)

نەن-نەیتف: مامۆستایهکی زمانی ئینگلیزی که ئینگلیزی زمانی دووهمییهتی بۆ نمونه کهسیکی کورد

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ئەگەر رزمه نديت ههيه، تکایه بمردهوام به. بهژداری کردنت جینگه سوپاس و پیزانینی تایبهتییه ئیمزا:

بهشی یهکهم: زانیاری کهسی

شار و ولاتی له دایکیبون: _____

نهموه: _____

رهگهز: نیر _____ می _____

تەمەن: _____

زمانی یهکهم (زمانی دایک): _____

له چ زانکویهک دمخوینیت؟ _____

له چ بهشیک دمخوینیت؟ _____

له چ قوناغیکی زانکویت له ئیستادا؟ _____

نایا تا ئیستا مامۆستای نەیتفت ههبووه؟ بێن _____ نهخیر _____

ئەگەر مامۆستای نەیتفت ههبووه، چهند دانەت ههبووه؟ _____

نایا دایک و باوکت ئینگلیزی دهمانن؟ _____ تنها باوکم _____ تنها دایکم _____ همدوکیان _____ کهمیان _____

چهند ساله زمانی ئینگلیزی دمخوئینیت؟ _____

نایا تاكو ئیستا سردانی هیچ ولاتیکی ئینگلیزیت کردوه؟ بهلی _____ نهخیر _____

نهگه سردانت کردوه، بو چندیک لهوی ماویتهوه؟ _____

بو پرسیارهکانی خوارهوه، تکایه بازنه به ژمارهیهکدا بهینه به پینی بیرورا و نهزمونی خوت

بهشی دووه: ماموستای نهیتف

ماموستای (نهیتف) م پین باشه بو وانهی زمانی ئینگلیزی

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ئینگلیزیهکهم باش دمبیت نهگه ماموستای (نهیتف) م ههبت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) هانم دهات فیری زمانی ئینگلیزی بيم

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ههست به دلهر اوکی دهکهم له وانهی ماموستای (نهیتف) دا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) م پین باشه چونکه ناچارم دهکات به ئینگلیزی قسه بکهم له پولدا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) له پرسیارهکانی خویندکار تیدهگات له پولدا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) شارهزایه له بارهی کلتوری خویندکارهکان

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) کهمی پولهکه خوش دهکات

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) توانای کونترۆلکردنی پولهکهمی ههیه

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) خوی دلنیا دهکاتوه که خویندکارهکان چالاکن له پولدا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) زمانی جهسته بهکار دههینیت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهیتف) تنها کتیبی کورسهکه بهکار دههینیت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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مامۆستای (نهیتف) حەز دەکات پرای خویندکارەکانی وەر بگرێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ریزمانی ئینگلیزیم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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زانباریم لەسەر وشە ئینگلیزی زیاد دەکات ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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گۆکردن (تلفظ) م باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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توانای گۆگررتی ئینگلیزیم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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توانای قسەکردنی ئینگلیزیم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
----------	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	-------

توانای خویندنهوهی ئینگلیزیم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
----------	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	-------

توانای نویسی ئینگلیزیم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستای (نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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بەشی سێهەم: مامۆستای نەن-نهیتف

مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف) م پێ باشە بۆ وانە ئینگلیزی

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ئینگلیزبیکەم باش دەبێت ئەگەر مامۆستایەکی (نەن-نهیتف) م هەبێت

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف) هانم دەدات فیری زمانی ئینگلیزی بێم

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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هەست بە دلەر اوکی دەکەم لە وانە مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف)

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف) م پێ باشە چونکە دەتوانم بە کوردی قسە بکەم لە پۆلدا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف) لە پرسیارەکانی خویندکار تێدەگات لە پۆلدا

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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مامۆستای (نەن-نهیتف) شارەزایە لە بارە کلتوری خویندکارەکان

Disagree	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	Agree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) کهشی پولهکه خوش دهکات

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) توانای کونتر و لکردنی پولهکه می هییه

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) خوی دلیا دهکاتوره که خویندکارهکان چالاکن له پلدا

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) زمانی جهسته بهکار دههینیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) تنها کتیبی کورسهکه بهکار دههینیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) حیز دهکات رای خویندکارهکانی وهر بگریت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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ریزمانی ئینگلیزیم باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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زانپاریم لهسهر وشهی ئینگلیزی زیاد دهکات نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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گوکردن (تلفظ) م باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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توانای گوینگرنتی ئینگلیزیم باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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توانای قسهکردنی ئینگلیزیم باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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توانای خویندنهوهی ئینگلیزیم باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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توانای نویسی ئینگلیزیم باش دهبیت نهگهر ماموستای (نهن-نهیتف) م هیبیت

Agree	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	Disagree
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Appendix C: Student Questionnaire (Online, English)

Native and Non-Native English Language Teachers

Dear Participant,

I am a master student of English Language Teaching, and the aim of my study is to explore Kurdish students' opinions about native and non-native English-speaking teachers. Your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. This questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to respond. Your participation is voluntary, and your collaboration is much appreciated.

Section one: Background Information (2 minutes)

Section two: 20 questions about native English language teachers (4 minutes)

Section three: 20 questions about non-native English language teachers (4 minutes)

-A native teacher is someone whose first language is English (for example, someone from USA, UK, Canada, Australia, etc.)

-A non-native teacher is someone who learned English as a second language (for example, an English language teacher who is Kurdish)

By responding to this survey, you are giving your consent to participate in this study. Thank you.

Researcher Contact information:

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Eastern Mediterranean University

Appendix D: Student Questionnaire (Online, Kurdish)

Native and Non-Native English Language Teachers

خویندکاری نازیز

نامانجی نام توێژینه‌وه‌یه دەر خستنی بیروبوچونی خوینکارانی کوردی له‌سه‌ر مامۆستای زمانی ئینگلیزی (نهن-نهنیتف) و (نهن-نهنیتف) له کوردستانی عێراقدا. نام راپرسییه له ماوه‌ی ۱۰ ده‌قه‌دا پر ده‌کریته‌وه و هه‌موو زانیارییه‌کانت پارێزر او ده‌بن و تهنه‌ها له‌م توێژینه‌وه‌دا به‌کار ده‌هێنرین. به‌شی یه‌که‌م زانیارییه‌ له‌سه‌ر خۆت. به‌شی دووهم ۲۰ پرسیا‌ره له‌سه‌ر مامۆستای (نهنیتف). به‌شی سێهه‌م هه‌مان ۲۰ پرسیا‌ره له‌سه‌ر مامۆستای (نهن-نهنیتف). ئه‌گه‌ر ره‌ز امه‌ندیت هه‌یه، تکایه به‌ر ده‌وام به. به‌ژداری کردنت جێگه‌ی سوپاس و پێزانینی تایبه‌تییه.

-نهنیتف: مامۆستا‌یه‌کی زمانی ئینگلیزی که ئینگلیزی زمانی یه‌که‌سییه‌تی بو نمونه که‌ستیکی (نهریک، ئینگلیز، که‌ندی، ئوستر آلی، هند)

-نهن-نهنیتف: مامۆستا‌یه‌کی زمانی ئینگلیزی که ئینگلیزی زمانی دوو هه‌مییه‌تی بو نمونه که‌ستیکی کورد

شای کامال احمد

66 90 868 0770



shaykamal95@yahoo.com

Appendix E: Teacher Interview Questions

Letter of consent for interview

I am a Master candidate of English Language Teaching at Eastern Mediterranean University and my research study aims to explore perceptions of students and teachers towards native and non-native English-speaking teachers. Your participation is voluntary which means that you are free to participate or not in this study. The interview might take around 20 minutes and will be tape-recorded. Your name will not be shown and you are free to withdraw any time. Your information will only be used in this study. If you have any other questions, please contact the researcher.

Thank you very much.

Researcher: Shay Kamal Ahmed Shaykamal95@yahoo.com +9647708689066 Sulaymaniyah, Iraq 	Supervisor: Necdet Osam Necdet.osam@emu.edu.tr Dept. of Foreign Language Education Eastern Mediterranean University 
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I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me, and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without any problem. I hereby confirm my participation.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Closed Ended Questions

1. Place of birth: _____
2. Nationality: _____
3. Gender: Female _____ Male _____ Other _____
4. Age: 20-30 _____ 30-40 _____ 40-50 _____ 50+ _____
5. Do you consider yourself a:
 - a. Native speaker of English? _____
 - b. Non-native speaker of English _____

6. What is your first language? _____
7. Have you been to any English-speaking country? No _____
If yes, how long and what for? _____
8. How many years have you been teaching English? _____
9. What qualifications do you have? a) BA _____ b) MA _____ c) PhD _____
d) All of above _____
e) other, please specify: _____
10. In what university/universities have you completed your degree(s)?

11. Have you enrolled for any course relating to teaching English?
12. Yes _____ No _____
13. Please specify what teaching certifications you have, if any. (Ex: TEFL / TESOL / TESL / CELTA / DELTA / COTE / DOTE)

14. Have you participated in any seminars abroad? Yes ____ No ____

Open Ended Questions

1. Is it important for an English language teacher to be a native English speaker?
2. Being a native/non-native English-speaking teacher, explain your thoughts and experiences when this status has aided/hindered your teaching.
3. Is being able to speak the students' native language important? If yes, why? If no, why not?
4. Who do you think students generally prefer to have as an English language teacher? Why?
5. What do you think are the most valuable qualities of NESTs, if any?
6. What do you think are the most serious weaknesses of NESTs, if any?
7. What do you think are the most valuable qualities of NNESTs, if any?
8. What do you think are the most serious weaknesses of NNESTs, if any?

Note:

NESTs: Native English-Speaking Teachers

NNESTs: Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers

Appendix F: Approval Form – University 1


University of Sulaimani - Iraq
College of Languages
Department of English



Subject: Permission Letter
From: University of Sulaimani
College of Language - English Department

This consent letter is to confirm that Shay Kamal Ahmed, who is currently a master student in English Language Teaching at Eastern Mediterranean University, is given permission to obtain data at English Department, University of Sulaimani, for her research project which is entitled “The Case of Native and Non-native English Language Teachers: Students’ and Instructors’ Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of Iraq”.

This letter has been issued upon the request of the student.


University of Sulaimani
College of Languages
Department of English
Head of Department: Dr. Rebeen Kareem
کۆلیجی زانکۆی سۆی سۆی
رۆژی 25/4/2021
Date: 25/4/2021

Signature:

University of Sulaimani (UoS)
Kirkuk Road, Sulaimani, Iraq

+964 (0)748 060 6226

Appendix G: Approval Form – University 2



Komar University of Science and Technology

Administration & Human Resources
Department

Ethics—Knowledge—Skills

To: Eastern Mediterranean University
Subject: Confirmation Letter
From: Komar University of Science and Technology
Ref: F20-310-1786
Date: March 28, 2021

The Office of Administration and Human Resources (OAHR) confirms that Ms. Shay Kamal Ahmed, who is currently a student at Eastern Mediterranean University, is allowed to collect data for her research study under the title of "The Case of Native and Non-Native English Language Teachers: Students' and Instructors' Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of Iraq". She is hereby permitted to interview the instructors of the Centre of Intensive English Programme (CIEP) at our university. She is also given the permission to obtain data from the students through questionnaire.

For any additional information, please contact the OAHR, email bryar.esmail@komar.edu.iq and phone number: 00964 770 149 87 77



Bryar Esmail Mohammed
Acting Director of Admin & HR

Copy:

- Employee folder
- Admin & HR folder

Chaq Chaq – Qularaisi area, Sulaymaniyah Tel. 0750 174 9313

www.komar.edu.iq

Appendix H: Approval Form – University 3

Cihan University / Sulaymaniyah
English Language Department



Subject: Letter of Consent

From: Cihan University – Sulaymaniyah

Department: English Language

This consent letter is to confirm that Shay Kamal Ahmed, who is currently a master student in English Language Teaching at Eastern Mediterranean University, is permitted to obtain data at our department for her research project which is entitled “The Case of Native and Non-native English Language Teachers: Students’ and Instructors’ Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of Iraq”.

Aras Abdulkarim Ameen
Head of English Department
Cihan University – Sulaymaniyah

Date: Mon, 26 April 2021

Signature: 



Cihan University – Sulaymaniyah, Iraq

00 964 771 375 08 00

Appendix I: Approval Form – University 4

From: Qaiwan International University – UTM Franchise (QIU)

Department: Pre-Academic Program (PAP)

Subject: Letter of Permission

We, the Pre-Academic Program of Qaiwan International University, authorize **Shay Kamal Ahmed**, who is currently a master student in English Language Teaching at Eastern Mediterranean University, to collect data for her research project which is entitled “**The Case of Native and Non-native English Language Teachers: Students’ and Instructors’ Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of Iraq**”. She is hereby allowed to send her **online questionnaire** to the students who are currently studying at our program.

This letter has been issued upon the request of the researcher.

Alan Farokhzadi



English Program Coordinator
Pre-Academic Program

Date: 25th-April-2021

Qaiwan International University – UTM Franchise
Sulaymaniyah, Iraq
PAP@uniq.edu.iq

Appendix J: Approval Form – University 5

5/6/2021

Mail - SHAY KAMAL AHMED - Outlook

Re: Collection of Data at APP

Umer Javed <umer.javed@auis.edu.krd>

Mon 5/3/2021 8:15 AM

To: SHAY KAMAL AHMED <19500056@doguakdeniz.onmicrosoft.com>

Cc: Khadija El Alaoui <khadija.alaoui@auis.edu.krd>

Dear Shay,

Thank you very much for submitting your research proposal "The Case of Native and Non-native English Language Teachers: Students' and Instructors' Perceptions and Attitudes in Kurdistan Region of Iraq" for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani (AUIS).

This letter is to officially notify you that your proposal is in compliance with our IRB guidelines and has been classified as "Exempt".

Your proposal has been approved, and you are welcome to conduct your research.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines, the IRB related forms you submitted (Forms A and B) and should notify the AUIS IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the present status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

We wish you the best in your research endeavor.

Thank you

Regards,

Umer Javed, PhD

IRB, AUIS

Appendix K: Quantitative Data of the Student Questionnaire

Attitude Statements about NESTs										
Attitude Statements about NESTs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	M	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		
Q1: I prefer a NEST for my English class.	8 (2.3)	0 (0)	21 (6.1)	25 (7.2)	25 (7.2)	89 (25.8)	177 (51.3)	345 (100)	5.99	1.42
Q2: My English improves with a NEST.	5 (1.4)	3 (0.9)	29 (8.4)	15 (4.3)	19 (5.5)	92 (26.7)	182 (52.8)	345 (100)	6.02	1.42
Q3: A NEST motivates me to learn English language.	3 (0.9)	3 (0.9)	29 (8.4)	24 (7)	32 (9.3)	86 (24.9)	168 (48.7)	345 (100)	5.92	1.4
Q4: A NEST makes me nervous in learning English language.	28 (8.1)	72 (20.9)	43 (12.5)	61 (17.7)	69 (20)	14 (4.1)	58 (16.8)	345 (100)	4	1.89
Q5: I prefer having a NEST because it forces me to speak English in class.	5 (1.4)	1 (0.3)	20 (5.8)	29 (8.4)	17 (4.9)	84 (24.3)	189 (54.8)	345 (100)	6.07	1.36
Q6: A NEST understands students' questions in class.	21 (6.1)	15 (4.4)	64 (18.6)	56 (16.3)	49 (14.2)	83 (24.1)	56 (16.3)	344 (100)	4.65	1.74
Q7: A NEST knows	42 (12.2)	20 (5.8)	90 (26.1)	65 (18.8)	43 (12.5)	58 (16.8)	27 (7.8)	345 (100)	3.95	1.75

about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).											
Q8: A NEST makes their classes interesting.	8 (2.3)	8 (2.3)	44 (12.8)	52 (15.1)	42 (12.2)	99 (28.7)	92 (26.7)	345 (100)	5.25	1.59	
Q9: A NEST is able to control the class.	9 (2.6)	6 (1.7)	49 (14.3)	69 (20.1)	42 (12.2)	112 (32.7)	56 (16.3)	343 (100)	5.29	4.09	
Q10: A NEST makes sure students are active in class.	6 (1.7)	2 (0.6)	46 (13.3)	77 (22.3)	41 (11.9)	98 (28.4)	75 (21.7)	345 (100)	5.14	1.49	
Q11: A NEST uses body language.	1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)	54 (15.7)	70 (20.3)	33 (9.6)	100 (29)	85 (24.6)	345 (100)	5.23	1.46	
Q12: A NEST only uses the course book.	97 (28.1)	130 (37.7)	31 (9)	43 (12.5)	35 (10.1)	5 (1.4)	4 (1.2)	345 (100)	3.96	1.68	
Q13: A NEST asks for the students' opinions.	4 (1.2)	5 (1.4)	35 (10.1)	43 (12.5)	31 (9)	130 (37.7)	97 (28.1)	345 (100)	5.52	1.44	
Q14: My grammar improves with a NEST.	9 (2.6)	6 (1.7)	30 (8.7)	38 (11)	32 (9.3)	105 (30.4)	125 (36.2)	345 (100)	5.58	1.56	
Q15: My vocabulary improves with a NEST	8 (2.3)	2 (0.6)	19 (5.5)	16 (4.6)	16 (4.6)	113 (32.8)	171 (49.6)	345 (100)	6.05	1.31	
Q16: My pronunciation improves with a NEST.	5 (1.4)	0 (0)	21 (6.1)	19 (5.5)	14 (4.1)	88 (25.5)	198 (57.4)	345 (100)	6.17	1.31	

Q17: My listening improves with a NEST.	5 (1.4)	1 (0.3)	28 (8.1)	18 (5.2)	21 (6.1)	92 (26.7)	180 (52.2)	345 (100)	6.02	1.39
Q18: My speaking improves with a NEST.	5 (1.5)	5 (1.5)	30 (8.7)	21 (6.1)	11 (3.2)	106 (30.8)	166 (48.2)	344 (100)	6.11	3.54
Q19: My reading improves with a NEST.	6 (1.7)	4 (1.2)	30 (8.7)	44 (12.8)	26 (7.5)	109 (31.6)	126 (36.5)	345 (100)	5.64	1.49
Q20: My writing improves with a NEST.	9 (2.6)	3 (0.8)	31 (9)	37 (10.7)	29 (8.4)	93 (27)	143 (41.4)	345 (100)	5.68	1.55

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (N) Number (%) Percentage (NEST) Native English-Speaking Teacher

Attitude Statements about NNESTs										
Attitude Statements about NNESTs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	M	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		
Q1: I prefer a NNEST for my English class.	63 (18.3)	17 (4.9)	75 (21.7)	49 (14.2)	37 (10.7)	71 (20.6)	33 (9.6)	345 (100)	3.94	1.96
Q2: My English improves with a NNEST.	49 (14.2)	21 (6.1)	80 (23.2)	46 (13.3)	61 (17.7)	68 (19.7)	20 (5.8)	345 (100)	3.96	1.8
Q3: A NNEST motivates me to learn English language.	31 (9)	12 (3.5)	74 (21.4)	59 (17.1)	52 (15.1)	74 (21.4)	43 (12.5)	345 (100)	4.4	1.77
Q4: A NNEST makes me nervous in learning English language.	64 (18.6)	17 (4.9)	69 (20)	86 (24.9)	23 (6.7)	58 (16.8)	28 (8.1)	345 (100)	3.79	1.87

Q5: I prefer having a NNEST because I can speak Kurdish in class.	91 (26.4)	14 (4.1)	49 (14.2)	51 (14.8)	26 (7.5)	72 (20.9)	42 (12.2)	345 (100)	3.84	2.16
Q6: A NNEST understands students' questions in class.	12 (3.5)	6 (1.7)	52 (15.1)	47 (13.6)	30 (8.7)	72 (20.9)	126 (36.5)	345 (100)	5.31	1.74
Q7: A NNEST knows about the students' culture (Kurdish culture).	10 (2.9)	6 (1.7)	19 (5.5)	38 (11)	13 (3.9)	76 (22)	183 (53)	345 (100)	5.89	1.58
Q8: A NNEST makes their classes interesting.	21 (6.1)	1 (0.3)	55 (15.9)	90 (26.1)	38 (11)	88 (25.5)	52 (15.1)	345 (100)	4.72	1.63
Q9: A NNEST is able to control the class.	14 (4.1)	6 (1.7)	53 (15.4)	93 (27)	44 (12.8)	80 (23.2)	55 (15.9)	345 (100)	4.75	1.58
Q10: A NNEST makes sure students are active in class.	21 (6.1)	1 (0.3)	59 (17.1)	86 (24.9)	48 (13.9)	82 (23.8)	48 (13.9)	345 (100)	4.67	1.62
Q11: A NNEST uses body language.	22 (6.4)	5 (1.5)	72 (20.9)	94 (27.3)	46 (13.4)	73 (21.2)	32 (9.3)	345 (100)	4.4	1.58
Q12: A NNEST only uses the course book.	20 (5.8)	15 (4.3)	46 (13.3)	85 (24.6)	38 (11)	82 (23.8)	59 (17.1)	345 (100)	4.7	1.71
Q13: A NNEST asks for the students	17 (4.9)	9 (2.6)	61 (17.7)	72 (20.9)	49 (14.2)	87 (25.2)	50 (14.5)	345 (100)	4.7	1.64

opinions											
Q14: My grammar improves with a NNEST.	31 (9)	15 (4.3)	65 (18.8)	69 (20)	60 (17.4)	76 (22)	29 (8.4)	345 (100)	4.32	1.69	
Q15: My vocabulary improves with a NNEST.	27 (7.8)	13 (3.8)	73 (21.2)	72 (20.9)	61 (17.7)	70 (20.3)	29 (8.4)	345 (100)	4.31	1.64	
Q16: My pronunciation improves with a NNEST.	42 (12.2)	18 (5.2)	81 (23.5)	61 (17.)	51 (14.8)	66 (19.1)	26 (7.5)	345 (100)	4.05	1.77	
Q17: My listening improves with a NNEST.	32 (9.3)	16 (4.6)	85 (24.6)	74 (21.6)	41 (11.9)	68 (19.7)	29 (8.4)	345 (100)	4.14	1.7	
Q18: My speaking improves with a NNEST.	30 (8.7)	21 (6.1)	71 (20.6)	65 (18.8)	50 (14.5)	75 (21.7)	33 (9.6)	345 (100)	4.27	1.74	
Q19: My reading improves with a NNEST.	25 (7.2)	15 (4.3)	69 (20)	85 (24.6)	45 (13)	74 (21.4)	32 (9.3)	345 (100)	4.33	1.65	
Q20: My writing improves with a NNEST.	34 (9.9)	9 (2.6)	61 (17.7)	82 (23.8)	43 (12.5)	79 (22.9)	37 (10.7)	345 (100)	4.37	1.74	

(M) Mean (SD) Standard Deviation (N) Number (%) Percentage (NNEST) Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher