



**The Beliefs of Students, Parents, Thai Teachers and Administrators toward
International Native and Non-native English Teachers:
A Study of Three Schools in Southern Thailand**

Luke Jobert Earl Vencer Compendio

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Teaching English as an International Language
Prince of Songkla University
2019**

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Thesis Title The Beliefs of Students, Parents, Thai Teachers and Administrators toward International Native and Non-native English Teachers: A Study of Three Schools in Southern Thailand

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I hereby certify that this work has not been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that nowadays, the majority of English teachers in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context are international non-native English speaking teachers (NNS) with a mix of international native English speaking teachers (NS), there are limited studies about the beliefs of students, parents, also local English teachers and administrators toward international NS and NNS particularly in Asian context, specifically in Thailand. To fill the gap, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 105 participants, including 65 upper secondary students, 18 parents, 16 Thai English teachers and 6 administrators at 3 secondary schools in Southern Thailand. The results indicated that the majority of participants perceived NS as the ideal English teacher because of their superior language competence particularly their accent and pronunciation, Caucasian appearance and their knowledge of Western culture. NNS were perceived to have excellent instructional competence, be understanding and aware of students' needs because of their shared culture as Asians and also they have prior experience in learning English as a second language. This study suggests that although the majority of the participants prefer NS as their ideal English teachers, they believed that there are advantages and disadvantages in learning with both types of teachers.

Keywords: international native and non-native English speaking teachers, beliefs, EFL learners, Thailand

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LIST OF PAPERS

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1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

English has been used as the lingua franca of the world for decades (Crystal, 2012; Jenkins & Leung, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2010; Paradowski, 2013) and there is large number of countries in which English is widely taught in the classroom since the early stage of school, either as a foreign or as a second language. Additionally, nowadays English is not only taught by native speakers but also commonly taught by non-native speakers. According to Canagarajah (1999) and Kachru (1996) the majority of teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) around the world are non-native speakers of English. With this growing trend of English taught by both types of teachers, several studies about the attitudes and opinions of the learners toward native English speaking teachers (NS) and non-native English speaking teachers (NNS) have been conducted (Chun, 2014; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Moussu, 2010; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Wu & Ke, 2009).

For many years, NS were perceived to be better teachers of English. Stereotypically, they were viewed to have rich knowledge of their culture, because English is their mother tongue and they have used it from early childhood, they are seen to have obtained a wide range of vocabulary and to have accurate pronunciation. On the other hand, non-native English-speaking teachers are likely to be perceived as inferior speakers of English language, with inaccurate pragmatic and grammatical knowledge, incorrect pronunciation, and limited knowledge of the Western (target) culture (Chun, 2014; Todd, 2006; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014)

Other studies like Braine (2010) and Kirkpatrick (2010) show why NS are portrayed to be better English teachers. They have analyzed a perception in the English language teaching profession in Southeast Asia that NS are the ideal model for language teaching as their speech is considered as the standard of grammatical precision and represents correct pronunciation. Moreover, they are valued to have extensive Western cultural information. These are some of the reasons that NSs are much preferred to be the ideal English language teacher in general.

Despite the fact that NS are believed to have these innate abilities, Cook (1999) argued that some NS may be devoid of metalinguistic skills. In other words, though they may be able to speak the language fluently, able to recognize grammatical terms and immediately process the meaning, they may not be capable of justifying their judgment and explaining how the language is used. Furthermore, though possessing a high level of English or even native proficiency contributes much in teaching, it is not always concluded to be the essential part to define someone a good teacher of English. Some NS and even NNS have a natural ability and obtain a high level of English proficiency, yet still fail to play a successful part in teaching the language.

Thailand is one of the Asian countries that has no colonial links with English, therefore English is considered as a foreign language rather than a second language for the majority of people. This puts Thailand in the “Expanding Circle” of English users created by Kachru (1985) or among ‘Peripheral English countries’ according to Phillipson (1992). In Thailand, English is learned as one of the compulsory main subjects (Ministry of Education, 2008). As a result, an enormous population of English teachers is employed, and while the majority are local teachers (Thai), a variety of international native and non-native speakers of English work in many different kinds of educational institutions ranging from kindergarten to tertiary level.

Having said that, this trend of hiring international NS and NNS in Thailand makes it a unique context due to the diversity of nationalities of international NS and NNS that are commonly hired compared to other Asian contexts such as Japan, Vietnam (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) and Korea (Chun, 2014), in which mainly only NS international teachers are hired in addition to local teachers. Therefore, a study conducted in Thailand could bring an interesting outcome that may be beneficial and may bring significant contribution to the field regarding to the issue of NS and NNS. This study focuses on attitudes towards these international NS and NNS because of their common characteristics, namely their perceived high value as non-Thais who are seen to primarily use English, not Thai, as the language of instruction.

As stated by Canagarajah (1999) almost three quarters of English teachers in the world are NNS. However, some places in Southeast Asia, Thailand in particular, still have more preference for NS when compared to NNS, though most schools are not able

to employ NS due to lack of finance or other factors. NNS are often seen as inferior compared to NS which sometimes leads to unequal treatment to NNS despite the fact that NNS often have superior qualifications, teaching experience and pedagogical skills. Although there is no vivid evidence to support this existing issue of general preference for NS, there are some indications.

Many times this issue is seen from the field of English language teaching (ELT), where job advertisement often state '*Currently looking for native speakers*', some websites refer to English speaking countries like '*USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand citizens are highly preferred.*', and English learning schools' flyers, posters etc. state clearly '*Courses provided by native speakers*'. Todd (2006) has observed a few quotations from letters and articles in English newspapers in Thailand illustrating: "Native speakers are the best teachers of their own language". Additionally, phrases such as "*speak like a native speaker*", and "*100% taught by native speakers*", are commonly found in language schools' adverts in Thailand (Jindapitak et al., 2018). Some evidence is given by research which analyzed the students' responses in the survey concerning which type of teacher they prefer. Some students have a belief that being a native speaker is one of the factors that defines an effective teacher (Mullock, 2003). A combination of both NS and NNS is often preferred by the students (Chun, 2014), but NEST is still much more preferred if the students had to choose either one (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002).

Another study conducted by Braine (2010) claimed that in countries like Korea, Taiwan and Japan, the main qualification to obtain a job as an English teacher is by being a native speaker of English. Some native speakers who lack teaching experience or thorough training in teaching the language often take advantage of their status as native speakers of English. Therefore, some NS in Korea were not required to have ESL/ EFL teaching training or teaching experience to be an English teacher.

Given that there are many similarities between Thailand and other Asian contexts, it is possible this issue may be a factor in Thailand as well. In such situations, the students are the ones who are affected by this approach to hiring teachers, therefore their perceptions, voices and opinions in regard with the issue is believed to deserve attention. However, hiring practices are not the same all over Thailand as different type

of schools have different criterion on hiring English teachers. Some schools clearly employ only NS whereas some only hire NNS and some may hire both. Nevertheless, the majority of hiring practice of English teachers in Thailand is a mixture of both international NS and NNS.

Although many researchers put a lot of attention in the debate between who makes a better English teacher, some scholars (e.g. Árvá & Medgyes, 2000; Ma & Ping, 2012; Medgyes, 1994; Prodromou, 1992) focus more on showing the advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS and present it as a difference in competence and teaching style rather than focusing on which type of teachers is better than the other. In addition, having willingness to teach, dedication and considering the qualification of both teachers are more essential than portraying and seeing a notion that native speakers are the only effective English teachers (Todd, 2006). The purpose of this study is to explore the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators toward NS and NNS and trying to answer the research questions.

1.2 Significance of the study

This study provides a significant contribution to the field as knowledge about the voices and opinions that are gathered from the students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators would be beneficial to educational administrators who are responsible for the hiring practice of international English teachers in Thailand. This information could provide them guidance with regards to hiring practice and organizing an appropriate learning process which best benefits the students. Additionally, it also provides an essential contribution to the English language teaching profession by suggesting both NNS and NS to understand the needs and meet the expectations of their students, and also to guide educators in developing their perception of their strengths and weaknesses as English teachers in order to enhance not only their pedagogical competence but also to value their status as an English language teachers.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this study are

1. to analyze the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrator toward international NS and NNS English teachers at three schools in Southern Thailand
2. to explore whether there are any differences among each group of the participants
3. to examine whether there are any differences among the three schools in Southern Thailand

1.4 Research questions

1. What are the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators at three Southern Thai schools toward international native and non-native English teachers?
2. What are the differences among students', parents', Thai teachers' and administrators' responses?
3. What are the differences among the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators at three different schools?

1.5 Definitions of terms

1.5.1 Native English speaker (NS)

An international native English speaker in this study refers to someone who speaks English as his or her native language or mother tongue (Medgyes, 1994) or someone who grew up speaking the English language.

1.5.2 Non-native English speaker (NNS)

An international non-native English speaker in this study refers to someone who is not Thai, speaks English as a second or foreign language.

1.5.3 Beliefs

The definition of beliefs suggests to vary. Therefore, this study will focus only on the beliefs in language ideology and language attitude and will refer to the theories and studies where these concepts are used (e.g. Bhatt, 2017; Dent, 2004; Dyers & Abongdia, 2010; Holliday, 2015; Jenks, 2017; Lippi-Green, 1994).

1.5.4 Language ideology

Language ideology is a set of long-term beliefs or assumptions that have existed for a long period of time and are shared mainly by a large group of people (Bhatt, 2017).

1.5.5 Language attitude

Language attitude is a feeling or a personal experience of an individual which affect or influence his/her way of thinking and motivation. Language attitude influences individuals to have a positive or negative perspective towards the language (Dyers & Abongdia, 2010)

2. Literature review

2.1 Native and Non-native English speakers (NS and NNS)

The initial step in examining the native and non-native dichotomy is to understand which category each teacher is assigned to. Kachru (1992) proposed a model of the function of English which consists of three concentric circles. The center refers to the “Inner circle”, the second one “Outer circle”, and the final layer refers to “Expanding circle”. Each circle represents how English language spreads, how it is acquired and shows the roles of English and its various functions from each circle. Klimczak-Pawlak (2014) believed that the three circles of Kachru also indicate where native and non-native speakers of English are found. They are located in ‘inner circle’ countries, where English is considered the primary language and used mainly in communicative

functions in all domains. Berns (1995) claimed that most learners of English language perceived speakers from the inner circle as the provider of standard English. UK, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are countries that are in the inner circle.

Non-native speakers of English on the other hand, as suggested by Klimczak-Pawlak (2014), are those who are in the outer and expanding circle. 'Outer circle' countries use English as a second language (ESL). English was enforced on them mainly through colonial links which leads to the role of English as one of the official languages (Berns, 1995). Members of this circle are countries such as Singapore, India, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, the Philippines and Malaysia. English serves a number of purposes, from educational as English is the medium of instruction to almost every subject at schools. English is widely used for daily communication, to entertainment as English is the main language used in T.V. programs, news, radios and many other sources of entertainment.

Another circle where non-native speakers of English are proposed to be found is the 'expanding circle' (Klimczak-Pawlak, 2014). English is believed to be one of those must-know languages which an individual should be able to know or obtain an appropriate level of proficiency in order to be competent enough to function well in today's world. It could be for entertainment, educational opportunity, travel purposes, business, or even job promotion. English is mainly used as a foreign language (EFL) in the expanding circle and it functions as a lingua franca to communicate with members from the inner and outer circle. Thailand, Denmark, China, Korea, Japan and many more examples of countries are in the expanding circle.

Kachru categorized English native speakers as someone who has grown up in the "Inner Circle" of countries such as England, America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. This definition may not seem applicable and may be unacceptable in other aspects. According to Kramsch (1997, p. 363), whoever positions him or herself as a native speaker is one that believes to be accepted "by the group that created the distinction between native and non-native speakers". Such examples could be seen from some countries in the outer circle such as Singapore, Nigeria, Philippines and other countries where English is also considered a national language. Speakers from these countries have high proficiency in English as they have learned it since birth, grew up

speaking the language, and the majority of schools in these countries use English as the medium of instruction at school. Having said that, they may not consider themselves a native speaker of English once they encounter someone from the inner circle countries nor would they likely be accepted as such by speakers from the inner circle.

Another common definition of a native speaker is given by Davies (2008). “The first language a human being learns to speak is his native language; he is a native speaker of this language.” (p. 435). In other words, one is considered a native speaker of a language that he or she acquired first since the childhood according to this view, also called the “bio-developmental definition”, in the case of English referring to someone who was born in the ‘inner circle’ country (Medgyes, 1994). However, this definition may cause problems and has been suggested not to be completely reliable, as birthplace does not solely determine whether an individual is assumed to be a native speaker of the language of his or her birthplace. Suppose someone was born in America but moved to Korea at the age of one. Since both of his or her parents speak Korean and their child never learned English until the age of four, it might be problematic to define him or her as a native speaker of English. Another example of an individual, born in UK, who went back to live with his or her family in Denmark at the age of five, and consequently attended school in which Danish is the medium of instruction at school. It may not be assumable that he is still a native speaker of English despite his birthplace.

Another definition is proposed by Stern (1983), who states that native speakers obtain an ability to communicate within social settings, a range of language skills and creativity of language use, a subconscious knowledge of rules and an intuitive grasp of meanings. According to Krashen (1982), this subconscious ability also called ‘comprehensive output’ is acquired by understanding the message that one hears, what is said, instead of assessing how it is said. Native speakers of a language acquire the language by focusing on the meaning and not learning by rules, a way of acquiring language that differentiates them from some non-native speakers, especially in the expanding circle where they learn a language by learning the rules first before trying to use them. However, as described below, this definition has also been criticized by sociolinguistics for being based on the ideology of native-speakerism.

Some of these factors make it difficult to present a clear-cut definition of a native speaker of English. As a result, it may be suggested that the more we try to operationalize the concept of native speaker, it may eventually come to a point that the concept itself can be hardly narrowed down. Additionally, to propose a clear-cut set of definitional criteria could be meaningless as its concept is likely to be rich in ambiguity (Davies, 2008). One of the reasons why proposing a clear-cut definition of native-speakerism seems difficult as it involves beliefs. Beliefs shape peoples' attitudes, perceptions and opinions toward something. Therefore, it is relevant to look deeply into how beliefs influence one's perspective toward something, in this case would be about one's beliefs toward the language.

2.2 Language beliefs and language teaching

The concept of beliefs is assumed to vary; therefore, this section will focus on the beliefs toward English language and will be referring to language ideology and language attitude as these are the main factors that are suggested to influence one's perspective about English language learning and teaching.

2.2.1 Language ideology

Bhatt (2017) described the idea of language ideology as 'the primary means of managing social contradictions and reproducing relations of class by providing and preserving an understanding among members of a community that the prevailing system of social relation is, on the whole, fundamentally fair' (p. 292). The main significance of this concept is that something which has been believed for a long period of time to be natural and normal by society can be shown to be a product of human action. One example is that people often view or place native speakers as superior to non-native speakers because it's their native language and it seems unnatural or odd to accept the fact that NNS can also be as good English teachers.

This conventional belief about native speakers to be the ideal English language teachers has become so natural that it is subconscious and difficult for people to accept

that in reality NNS are also proven to be qualified and capable of being a good English language teacher as well. However, several studies have argued that being a native speaker does not automatically make a native better than non-native English speakers, especially in English language teaching. On the contrary, several studies indicated that NNS who are well trained are suggested to be acceptable or even better English teachers (Chun, 2014; Cook, 1999; Ma & Ping, 2012; Medgyes, 1994).

Additionally, Bhatt (2017) suggests that language ideology is the source of beliefs, perceptions and conceptions about language structure which is used to serve political and economic interest of those in power. Language ideology influence language learning and teaching as seen from the study of Jenks (2017). According to Jenks, communication with native speakers may not be the only reason for learning English, but also as an idea of aspiring for success. Learners see English learning as an instrument of success, enhancement of their social status and a door for much better opportunities. An example is seen in South Korea where English is valued as a key to economic success, cosmopolitan living and upward mobility (Jenks, 2017).

Language institutions frequently show advertisements in which they create market values by associating English with not only “White individuals”, but also attractive, successful, properly-dressed, or competitive people (Jenks, 2017). This demonstrates a belief that learning English from native speakers or “White individuals” can assume the learners a higher and better learning of the language. This belief is suggested to bring benefits not only to native speakers but also those who are ‘White individuals’. While not being traditionally considered native speakers of English (e.g. Germans, Italians, Spanish and Russians), any ‘White individuals’ from any nationality tend to be able to sell the idea of success in learning the language as the advertisement uses them as a symbol which determines that English is the language of, and the key for success.

2.2.2 Standard language ideology

Standard language ideology is understood as ‘idealized, bias toward an abstracted, non-varying spoken language that is maintained and imposed by institutions who have power’, according to Lippi-Green (1994 p. 289). Standard language is perceived to be the chosen variety that is derived from different varieties of a language, and suggest to be based on political and social, rather than linguistic choices. Quirk (1990) proposed that the reasonable and acceptable model of English language teaching worldwide are British and American English. In other words, other varieties of English are assumed to be illegitimate.

It is suggested that most people appear to have the desire to be able to use standard language as it’s often considered to be the appropriate language variety in general, as we experienced from T.V. programs, national language, job markets, educational institutions and many more. Furthermore, people who speak the standard language are perceived as educated and respectful of society’s standards. On the contrary, speakers of non-standard language tend to be stigmatized and negative stereotype is often associated. Those who speak non-standard language are most likely to be seen to not able to communicate effectively and perceived to be not as intelligent as the ones who do (Lippi-Green, 1994).

Stereotypically, non-standard language is referred to as wrong, containing errors and bad grammar. In spite of this language ideology debate, standard language is not assumed as ‘better’ or ‘more accurate’ than other varieties of a language by linguists. Take Thailand for instance, where there are four main dialects that are commonly used separately in each region. Those who speak Southern Thai and barely speak the standard Thai language are not necessarily viewed as using illegitimate language and misguided as non-educated. By the same token, speakers who use other varieties of English besides inner circle’s variety of English may be considered inferior and believed as not using the proper variety of the language.

One of the reasons that other English varieties beside English and American English are likely to be particularly stigmatized is because these varieties are compared to or measured to the English variety that is assumed or tend to be viewed as the superior

or people claimed to be as the standard English (Dent, 2004). Furthermore, stigmatized accents, dialects or language varieties are often criticized or even discriminated because they do not sound like what most of the people perceived to be the standard English (Lippi-Green, 1994).

2.2.3 Native-speakerism

According to Holliday (2015), native-speakerism is a prevalent ideology that commonly occurs in English language teaching and learning as a belief that native speaking teachers best represent “Western culture” both in English language and English teaching. Additionally, native speakers are often viewed to be the ideal English language teacher, as it is commonly perceived that English language is best taught by the native speaker of the language (Todd, 2006). This concept is suggested to have created issues about political inequalities within English language teaching (Holliday, 2015).

Native-speakerism brings an impact as seen in numerous aspects of professional life from hiring practice or employment policy to how English should be presented. It causes inequalities for NNS of English as it creates a comparison and a belief that NNS could not be good English language teachers compared to native speakers of English. No matter how well-trained they are, if they have extensive experience in teaching English, and regardless of whether they even have native-like English proficiency, many may not be considered good enough as long as they are labelled as NNS of English (Phillipson, 1992; Todd, 2006).

Another definition of native-speakerism is proposed by Bhatt (2017). He suggested that the concept of a native speaker and its distinction from second language speaker is based on two central constructs of Selinker’s (1972) theory of second language acquisition, interlanguage and fossilization. Interlanguage as proposed by Davies (2008) is the ‘partial knowledge’ and is reserved for learners of second language or non-native speakers. Fossilization refers to a stage where learners encounter cessation in learning a language (Gass & Selinker, 1994).

According to Selinker's (1972) theory, non-native speakers encounter cessation in language learning because they can never acquire native-like competence as native speakers do. The inequality is suggested to be related to the issue of what the goal of language learning is and how close a learner can achieve that goal: native-like proficiency is seen to be the target, but the learner is considered to not have the possibility to achieve the target (Bhatt, 2017). Additionally, Bhatt (2017) suggested that true native-like proficiency is unavailable to adult second language learners because learning the language after puberty may cause them to not be able to acquire the rules of a language subconsciously like native speakers do. This leads to an unsuccessful acquisition of the second language in reference to the goal of acquiring native-like proficiency.

These theoretical constructs proposed by Selinker are suggested to be the factors on the distinction of native and non-native speaker of a language. Native speakers are believed to not speak interlanguage nor experience fossilization in acquiring the language and most importantly, native speakers have access to the rules of a given language (Bhatt, 2017)

2.2.4 Language attitude

While language ideology is recognized as a belief that serves political and economic interest of those in power, a long-term belief of a group or community that influences their perspectives toward something, language attitude on the other hand, is considered an opinion and feeling on the individual level that brings positivity and negativity on how people think about something (Dyers & Abongdia, 2010). Language attitude is also assumed to be subjective and personal by nature (Dyers & Abongdia, 2010). For instance, students may have a positive attitude to NS as they perceived them to be fluent, speak better English, tolerate errors and use a variety of materials (Árva & Medgyes, 2000). On the other hand, some students may prefer NNS because they tend to understand the difficulties that the students face, they are good role models of a successful language learner and good at preparing them for English tests (Chun, 2014).

Language attitude tends to cause positivity or negativity toward something. For example, a person that has a negative attitude towards English might change his/her attitude in a positive way towards learning English as a result of a positive contact with language, such as having a good experience of learning the language in a fun and interesting way, or perhaps had experienced learning with a teacher who cares and has extensive pedagogical skills. The voices and opinions from students' language attitude also allow teachers to explore and find ways to deal with potentially biased attitudes, negative stereotypes and prejudices (Sakui & Gaies, 1999).

2.2.5 Beliefs about native and non-native English teachers

There has been a major preference on native speakers as the language instructors for many years. Harmer (1991) and Stern (1983) showed that NS are assumed to provide the ideal model for English language learning. Also, Chomsky (1986) once portrayed a native speaker as the ideal hearer and speaker and as the only source of linguistic data that is considered reliable. Moreover, results from several studies showed that there are many people who agree and support this notion and suggest that native-like proficiency is the goal of learning English. Therefore, NS are the ideal teachers and English should only be taught by them in order to reach this goal (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005). However, the definition of a native-speaker is subjective (Piller, 2002). As stated by Adamson & Regan (1991), there are many more characteristics of NS shared by NNS except for the concept of being native and even though NS are much preferred by many people and tend to view them as the best, Gurkan and Yuksel (2012) argue that NNS may also have advantages and superiority over NS and believe that the students could also benefit from NNS more than NS in some aspects.

There are several features of NNS claimed by Medyes (1994) to show the advantages of NNS which are considered to be their strength. According to him, NNS can predict and prevent the problems and difficulties that the students are going through in learning the language. They can communicate to the students using their first language. Also, since NNS have gone through the process of acquiring the language,

they tend to teach the language learning strategies much more profitably and they can be more realistic and better learner model of English. Furthermore, they are suggested to be more sensitive and able to understand the circumstances that the students are experiencing. This debate has come to attention of many researchers which leads to the questions of many recent studies in regard to the identity of a native speaker.

Many scholars such as Braine (2010) and Canagarajah (1999) have doubted the belief that being native will automatically make one a better English language teacher simply because English is their mother tongue. Walelign (1986) has also questioned whether being born in a native family could make one automatically be a better English teacher compared to non-native speakers. The belief in which English native speakers are the ideal teacher of English is argued against by Phillipson (1992) who called it a 'native speaker fallacy'. He stated that this concept has 'no scientific validity' and that no matter what language could their mother tongue be, they could be an effective teachers of English. Also, he stated that non-native speakers who have obtained insight and experience a thorough learning of the language may be more qualified and be a better teacher of English than native speakers. On the other hand, native speakers who have not gone through appropriate training in teaching or lack teaching experiences may also cause them to be not qualified as English teachers. According to Adamson & Regan (1991) there are many more characteristics of NS shared by NNS except for the concept of being native.

Even though there were many scholars who put plenty of attention in distinguishing and categorizing these two types of teachers to see who is much better and more qualified to be English teachers, some scholars acknowledge the differences and focus more on the advantages and the disadvantages of both NEST and NNS believing that both teachers can be equally good in their own way (Chun, 2014; Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). While Medgyes portrayed the advantages of NNS, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler argue that NS speak the language more fluently and confidently, also they are more aware of the students' needs and they are viewed to be potentially more successful and accomplished English users. Furthermore, they suggest that NS have a rich knowledge of their culture which makes

them provide accurate information to the students and lastly, they are viewed to use authentic oral language.

There are numbers of existing studies in regard to students' beliefs towards NS and NNS conducted in many countries, starting in the United States of America. Mahboob (2004) has conducted a study in an intensive English program with 32 students at an American college and found similar opinions from the participants that NS were perceived to obtain an extensive knowledge of vocabulary, with good oral skills and possesses a rich knowledge of their culture. However, they were viewed to have a difficulty in teaching grammar and explaining complex sentences. Moreover, as a native speaker they were perceived to have a lack of knowledge in teaching methodology as they obtain little experience in language learning. For NNS, they were perceived to have extensive pedagogical skills, their hard work and they were valued as having an experience as language learners. They were also perceived to be empathetic as they understand the students' difficulties in learning the language as they themselves have gone through it before. However, they were viewed to have less abilities in speaking skills and lack of knowledge of the western culture.

Some studies were done in Europe such as Benke and Medgyes's (2005) which conducted a study with 422 Hungarian students who are learning English in different universities in Hungary. The study revealed that NS were viewed to be a good role model for imitation, friendly and lively. Additionally, they were perceived to encourage the students to speak. Nevertheless, the participants found NS' way of speaking difficult to understand and most of the NS different linguistic and cultural background could sometimes hold back the students' learning. NNS were viewed to give a lot of homework, have their lessons planned accurately, be consistent and active in checking errors and seen as good at preparing the students for exams. Some studies uniformly favored one type of teacher over the other as seen in Spain in Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005). 76 Spanish university students showed a clear preference for NS and viewed them to be competent in teaching listening and speaking with correct pronunciation, whereas in Hong Kong, Cheung and Braine's (2007) 420 students showed a clear preference and a positive attitude toward NNS.

In Asian context, some scholars have investigated the beliefs of Asian learners and there were several studies conducted such as Wu and Ke (2009), who investigated the perception of 107 university students in Taiwan. The results showed that they perceived NS as casual, friendly and playing a big role in encouraging students' learning. Moreover, they were perceived to be a model of pronunciation rather than a teacher. Another study was carried out in Korea by Chun (2014) in which 129 university students were asked to describe both NEST and non-NEST in a single word. Results showed that NS were viewed to be "fluent" and "open-minded" whereas NNS "organized" and "approachable". Additionally, NS were perceived to be competent at teaching speaking and listening and they can provide a better cultural knowledge. On the other hand, NNS were perceived to be understanding and sensitive to the difficulties that the students encounter while learning the language. The study stated that the participants didn't uniformly favor one type of teacher over the other and perceived that both types of teachers have strengths and weaknesses and they both can be 'equally good teachers in their own terms' similarly to what Medyes (1994) has stated. Another study to support the finding of Chun was done in China. Liu and Zhang (2007) explored the perception of 65 Chinese college students and results revealed that they put more preference in learning with Chinese teachers of English and viewed them as thoroughly prepared for their lessons and better-organized than NS and viewed NEST to be friendlier and the classroom atmosphere is less stressful.

Despite the fact that several studies have been conducted widely around the world, there is only little amount of work focusing on the EFL context especially in Southeast Asia, Thailand in specific. Consequently, most of the previous studies only focus on the learners' beliefs. However, this research will be covering also the parents' and the local teachers' (Thai teachers) opinions and attitudes toward NS and NNS.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Context

This study was conducted at three government secondary schools at a peripheral province located in Southern Thailand with a population about 350,000. The three

schools were chosen based on a review of current hiring practices of international English teachers: one where the majority of the teachers are NS, a well-known prestigious secondary school in Southern Thailand where students are highly selected and located in the city center (School A), one where there is a mix between NS and NNS, another secondary school located about 10 kilometers away from the center city in which the students' recruitment is slightly selective (School B), and one where there are only NNS, a secondary school in the rural area located about 20 kilometers away from the city center and where almost no selections of the students or in other words, accept all applicants with all sorts of background (School C).

In each selected school, the study was conducted only with the students who were studying in the 'regular program', while students in special programs (e.g. English Program EP, Intensive English Program IEP) were not included as these programs have different learning exposure in English and mostly all of the subjects are taught in English, which may lead to the formation of different attitudes when compared to students in the regular program.

School	Location	Size	Enrollment criteria	Nationalities of NS and NNS
School A	City center	Around 4,000	Highly selective recruitment	1 each from UK, New Zealand, South Africa, Russia, India
School B	10 km. from the city center	Around 2,500	Slightly selective recruitment	2 from South Africa, 4 from the Philippines
School C	20 km. from the city center (rural area)	Around 1,000	Almost no selections	3 from the Philippines, 1 from Nigeria

Table 1: Review of research sites and international teachers nationalities

It can be seen here that teachers from South Africa (which in this study were all Caucasian South Africans) were categorized as NS, regardless of their ambivalent position and their ambiguous treatment in Thailand where they fall into NNS category according to immigration regulations, yet all three schools considered and labeled them as NS when contacted by the researcher.

3.2 Participants

Four participant groups including students, parents, Thai English teachers and administrators totaling 105 were involved in this study. The 105 participants included 65 upper secondary students, 18 parents, 16 Thai English teachers and 6 administrators containing School Director and Head of English Language Department at three secondary schools in Southern Thailand. The number of participants in each group were calculated based on the notion that the researcher would be able to get as many perspectives from each group as possible but also consider the feasibility of what a single researcher could do in a qualitative study.

Additionally, given that each group has their own perspectives and opinions thus, their differences are seen to be valuable as it was able to give more individual insightful information toward the issue. For example when a same question was asked to each group of the participants, different answers were given depending on their personal experience, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes toward the issue. Such example can be seen from the responses given from the question: "How would you describe NS/NNS in general?" The responses from most of the students mainly based on their experience in learning with the international NS and NNS from positive to negative aspects. The majority of the teachers and administrators also have their own perception mainly influenced by their personal contact in working alongside with NS and NNS teachers, whereas the majority of the parents solely prefer NS because of their nativeness as a result of ideology and also because of the lack of personal contact and experience toward NS and NNS teachers.

School	Students	Parents	Local English teachers	Administrators
School A	24	8	6 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Director)
School B	20	5	5 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Director)
School C	21	5	5 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Vice Director)

Table 2: Overview of the participants

It can be seen that Head of English department are categorized both on the teachers and administrators category as they fulfil two sets of responsibilities at the same time. On one hand they are English teachers at the same time, they are also considered as an administrator due to their role as the head of English department.

3.3 Instruments

Two main data collection instruments including semi-structured interview and focus group interview were used in the study. Semi-structured interview was used as the interviewee would feel more open to answer further questions aside from the question being asked and would be able to develop more ideas and speak widely on the issues raised by the interviewer. Also, it would allow the interviewees to freely express their points of view regarding the topic. Focus group interview was used with the students as it placed a particular value on the interaction within the groups for eliciting information rather than just collecting each individual's opinion and perception.

Interview was used to examine beliefs, attitudes, experiences and opinions. Therefore, interview was deemed more suitable than a questionnaire in which a word or two served as answers (Denscombe, 2014). Questions such as "What is your definition of NS and NNS" and "What are the advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS" (see Appendix C) were asked to all the participants. However, some questions were asked only to a particular group of participant and some weren't due to the

relevance of each question to that particular group. Additionally, the researcher who is fluent in Thai conducted the interview in Thai (participants' L1) in order to gather much more in-depth information and for the participants to freely express their opinions, and later translated in English with the help of two research assistants. Considering the fact that the researcher is non-Thai but capable of speaking both English and Thai fluently is suggested to be one of the advantages as an outsider conducting a study in Thai school.

3.4 Procedures

Before the actual study was conducted at three different schools, an approval of human research ethics was examined and later approved by the Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences Institution Review Board, Prince of Songkla University to conduct the research (see Appendix B). The interview was then piloted at a fourth school in order to verify the questions and test the interview strategies.

A letter of permission to conduct the study was sent to each school as the initial step. However, after two weeks of waiting, there was no response from the three schools. Therefore, the researcher approached each school through personal connections, by asking one of his colleagues who knows someone working in each school and inquire whether it's possible to conduct the study at their school. Fortunately, there was one participant in each school who was an English teacher and well-acquainted with the researcher's colleague. The researcher then made use of this access and asked for permission to conduct the study. Once each school gave its consent, the teachers were the first group to be interviewed. The approach in each school were similar starting from the researcher's colleagues' friend, who was an English teacher, to the teacher, administrators, then to students and finally to the parents. Also, since the majority of the participants were aware that the researcher is non-Thai, some participants were interviewed in Thai while some prefer to be interview in English.

The first group was the teachers. A convenient sampling method was used in conducting the interview with them. The researcher found time interviewing them

according to their vacancy as each teacher has different time schedule. One-on-one interview was used to most of the participants in this group with some prefer to be interviewed in pairs. (see Table 3-5). The interview lasted around 20-40 minutes and it was conducted mainly in the teachers' room.

School A	Number of participants	Duration of interview (min.)
Administrators		
- Director	1	15
- Head of the Department	1	22
Thai Teachers		
- Group 1	1	23
- Group 2	1	25
- Group 3	1	26
- Group 4	1	29
- Group 5	1	19
Parents		
- Group 1	3	45
- Group 2	1	25
- Group 3	1	32
- Group 4	1	28
- Group 5	1	24
- Group 6	1	22
Students		
- Group 1	7	42
- Group 2	5	33
- Group 3	7	45
- Group 4	5	35
Total	39	

Table 3: Participants breakdown and interview duration in School A

School B	Number of participants	Duration of interview (min.)
Administrators		
- Director	1	14
- Head of the Department	1	23
Thai Teachers		
- Group 1	1	22
- Group 2	1	27

School B	Number of participants	Duration of interview (min.)
- Group 3	1	25
- Group 4	1	23
- Group 5	1	26
- Group 6	1	22
Parents		
- Group 1	1	18
- Group 2	1	24
- Group 3	1	22
- Group 4	1	19
- Group 5	1	20
Students		
- Group 1	7	45
- Group 2	5	32
- Group 3	5	35
- Group 4	3	28
Total	33	

Table 4: Participants breakdown and interview duration in School B

School C	Number of participants	Duration of interview (min.)
Administrators		
- Vice Director	1	28
- Head of the Department	1	25
Thai Teachers		
- Group 1	2	47
- Group 2	2	42
- Group 3	1	28
Parents		
- Group 1	2	43
- Group 2	3	36
Students		
- Group 1	7	37
- Group 2	9	48
- Group 3	5	32
Total	33	

Table 5: Participants breakdown and interview duration in School C

For the administrators, an appointment was essential before having the access to gather the information from them. One-on-one interview was used which lasted 20-40 minutes and was conducted at the Director's room. After gathering information from them, the researcher asked for assistance to approach the students, then to some of the parents.

The researcher asked for assistance from the teachers to gather 5-10 students and conduct the study in a vacant classroom. The students from each school were divided into groups of at least 5 to 10 students. Ice-breaking questions were given to create a friendly environment in order for the students to feel comfortable before broaching the issue of NS vs. NNS. Focus group interview was used to gather the information from the students which lasted around 30-60 minutes (see Table 3-5).

For the parents, once again, the researcher asked for an assistance from the teachers and also from some of the students to conduct a study based on the cooperation of the parents. Few parents were asked to do the study yet some were unavailable or inconvenient. Therefore, the selected parents were those who were willing to be interviewed. One-on-one interview was used with the parents with some prefer to be interviewed in pairs which lasted around 20-40 minutes. To assure that ethical norms in research were followed, in every interview conducted with each group, the participants were asked to sign and give their consent (see Appendix A). Audio tape recorder was also used in order to assure that all information was recorded and safely kept for further use in data analysis.

3.5 Analysis

This study adopted two approaches of data analysis which are directed content analysis and conventional content analysis (Hsieh, & Shannon, 2005). Directed content analysis approach was used to validate a theory or theoretical framework which was proposed from existing studies. The previous themes or keywords that appeared from the responses of the participants may have already existed from the previous studies. A coding scheme was used (see Appendix E) with the help of the second coder (Thesis advisor) to indicate the frequent themes mentioned by the participants which were later

group into categories according to themes identified in previous key studies (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Chun, 2014; Moussu, 2010; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). These previous studies and existing theories helped answer the research questions as they provided information about the key concepts or themes which are related to the study.

Another approach was conventional content analysis. Conventional content analysis was used to explore or describe an issue and phenomenon which may not appear from the existing studies. No information was assumed as the main issue and using preconceived categories was avoided (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002) to allow the themes or categories to be exposed from the data. Other key words aside from the existing key themes from the previous studies became a theme and these themes have been categorized and later definitions for each category was developed. New themes that were not mentioned in the previous studies but appear on the current study were categorized separately and given another definition.

After coding all the data, re-coding or peer checking was done with the thesis advisor in order to assure that the validity and reliability in analyzing the data was taken into account.

4. Results

All four groups of participants' beliefs from three schools 1) A where the majority of international English teachers are NS 2) B where there is a mix of NS and NNS and 3) C where the majority of international English teachers are NNS were shown in five aspects: accent and pronunciation, nationality and appearance, teaching abilities, general professionalism and culture. The letters in each code refer to the school where the example comes from and the type of participant (S for student, T for teacher, HT for head of English department, P for parent, VD for vice director and D for director), while the number identifies the interview (or focus group when marked with a G) where the statement was made.

4.1 Accent and pronunciation

The majority of the participants in each school saw the importance of accent and pronunciation and viewed it as one of the main features in defining their ideal English teacher and the main reason of their preference in learning with NS. Accent and pronunciation are believed to be the most advantageous aspects of NS as seen from the opinions mentioned by the participants. This aspect of NS having the advantage of their accent and pronunciation are similarly seen by parents from different schools and not only did this come from the parents but also teachers especially the students. Accent and pronunciation may be the most advantageous feature of NS and the reason why the majority of the participants prefer learning English with NS.

“The advantage of NS is they have good accent and correct pronunciation because some students, they may hear a word and they are not sure how it is pronounced, but when they hear the pronunciation of that word from a native speaker, they will learn how to pronounce the correct pronunciation of the word and they believe it is correct because it’s coming from NS.” A-P2

“I believe that most of the schools especially in Thailand would prefer to have NS teach their students because of the accent and pronunciation of NS are better than those who are NNS. Also, because NNS, they come from different countries and they have different accent whereas for NS, it’s quite standard, it’s what the students are familiar hearing from the TV. So I think if the students learn English with NS, they may also pick up the standard English accent like NS.” A-T2

“I agree that the accent of NS is their advantage because as a student, we don’t need to worry that what we are hearing from the teacher is right or wrong, or we don’t need to think if what the teacher is saying is right or wrong especially the accent and pronunciation because it’s coming from a native speaker. So, it is definitely right, but if we learn with NNS we may have to question the way they pronounce words because I can tell if it’s right or wrong based on what I have heard from the TV or from the NS.” A-SG2

“NS are fluent in speaking English and they also have good accent and pronunciation so I think it’s very important for the students to learn with NS because they will also learn the correct pronunciation and copy their accent and also their culture which Thai teachers may not be able to teach that well.” B-P2

“It’s a good opportunity for the students to be able to learn with the foreign teachers especially the NS, because the students can learn the correct pronunciation and good accent from them when compared to learning with Asian English teachers such as teachers from Philippines and India and Thailand and I think most of the teachers and

parents prefer NS because they are native speakers so we assume that they can be better teachers. The students will be able to copy their accent and learn the standard pronunciation such as from UK and USA because most of the students in southern Thailand don't get that much of opportunity to learn with NS so I think if we have a choice, we would like to have NS to teach our students." B-T1

"NS have very good accent like their accent is like what I hear from the movies and TV. Some of my teachers from the Philippines are not native speakers because of their accent, it's not the same as what I normally hear from movies and TV, sometimes it's difficult to understand." B-SG1

"I'd like my child to learn English with NS more because I want my child to have the accent and the same pronunciation like NS." C-P1

"One of the advantages that we get from NS is we get to learn the real accent and pronunciation so the students can copy their accent and learn how to pronounce it correctly like NS, but with this real accent and pronunciation, I sometimes find it difficult to understand." C-T1

"For NNS, since they are not native speakers, their accent may not be correct. So when they teach us to pronounce a word but they teach it in the wrong way, we might remember it in the wrong way too, but for NS, it's good and definitely correct" C-SG2

The responses given by the majority of the participants often supported their preference for NS by referring to the accent and pronunciation of the NS. For instance, NS accent and pronunciation were described as good, correct, perfect, the standard variety and a good example of how a good accent and pronunciation should sound. This preference was expressed mainly by three groups of the participants (students, parents and teachers) with less opinions from the administrators. First is from the perception of the teachers. It can be seen many times in the extracts above that learning English with NS is the desire of the teachers who participated in the study and believed that it may provide the students good accent and pronunciation as like what NS have, which is perceived to be the standard variety or even the best variety of English. Second is how the parents believed that they will gain confidence and assurance that their child will acquire good quality of English especially when it comes to accent and pronunciation when NS is the teacher. Lastly, for the students as they feel assured and confident that NS's accent and pronunciation are definitely correct as it is what they are familiar hearing from T.V. programs, movie and the media, so if they learn it with NS, they will perceived that they are learning the correct accent and pronunciation. Moreover, it can

be seen that plenty of the students from three schools were not only idealizing NS but also trying to achieve native-like proficiency.

While accent and pronunciation are considered to be the major strength of NS, it is also seen to be the most disadvantageous aspect of NNS. Moreover, there were plenty comments claiming that NNS are less effective as an English teacher because of their accent and pronunciation as summed up from the participants suggesting that the accent and pronunciation of NNS were not clear and they sounded strange which made it difficult to understand. Some teachers pointed out the drawbacks of NNS' accent and pronunciation. Additionally, some parents found this unacceptable for their child to learn English with NNS with the non-native accent, therefore, they tend to prefer for their child to learn with NS.

“NS' accent and pronunciation are good. It makes me feel that what my child will get from learning with NS will all be correct. Especially speaking and listening skills because most of NNS their accent is not good and many times they pronounce words incorrectly.” A-P5

“For NS, I think their advantage is their accent and pronunciation because most of the NNS especially the Filipinos, their pronunciation is not correct and not good. Like for example their B and P sound but for NS, we don't need to worry about that because they are native so their pronunciation is good and correct.” A-T3

“The advantage of NS that we clearly see is their accent and pronunciation, because they are clear and correct. It's like the same as what we hear from the movies and TV. The disadvantage of NNS is their accent. It sounds strange and incorrect because I like watching movies and it's not the same as what I hear from movies. So I am more used to hearing NS accent and pronunciation.” A-SG1

“I believe that NS have good accent and clear pronunciation, they use English more correctly than NNS who just learned English as their second language. For NNS their accent has some sound from their own language which sometimes makes it difficult to understand.” B-P3

“The disadvantage of NNS is their accent because if the students want to be a news reporter, flight attendant or any career that requires good command of English, it is best to learn it from NS, because if the students will learn with NNS and they will pick up the accent of NNS until they get a job, most of the people will look at them as just ordinary English speakers, but if they will have the accent of native speakers, people will see them as someone who is very good at English.” B-T1

“NNS' accent and pronunciation sound strange and sometimes difficult to understand.” B-SG2

“NS have good accent and pronunciation they are clear and easy to understand, NS are very fluent when they speak I think because it is their mother tongue, but for NNS, their accent is not as good as native speakers. Their pronunciation or accent is not clear and sometimes it’s quite difficult to understand.” C-HT

From the excerpts above, it is seen that comments such as ‘NNS’ accent sounds ‘strange’ and ‘difficult to understand’ or ‘it sounds incorrect because it’s not the same as what we hear from the T.V.’ may be derived from the stereotype of how English should sound or what kind of accent is assumed to be the standard or correct that is perceived by the participants. Given that the majority of the participants refer to NS varieties of English as the standard ones, other varieties of English particularly those of which accent does not sound the way the participants are familiar with, it is considered to be incorrect, strange and difficult to understand. Some participants even view this variety of English to sound less interesting and ordinary whereas NS’ variety of English will sound much better. B-T1

From the responses given by different groups of participants from each school, it can be concluded that the most salient advantage of NS is their accent and pronunciation. Conversely, accent and pronunciation are seen by far the most prominent disadvantage of NNS. The results also indicate that the majority of the participants have similar beliefs regarding to the accent and pronunciation of NS and NNS.

4.2 Nationality and appearance

It is interesting to discover the definitions of NS and NNS from the participants’ points of view, since these can be associated with their beliefs about NS and NNS, and in turn with underlying ideologies. Thus, two questions pertaining to this issue were asked in the interviews and focus groups: “What is your definition of NS and NNS” and “Can you distinguish between the two types of teacher?” In response to these questions, many participants referred to particular nationalities which they believed corresponded to NS and NNS.

“NS are mostly from European countries, some are from USA, UK and Australia.” A-D

“I will put it in a simple way, I think Asians are NNS and those who are from Europe and America are NS.” A-T1

“I think NS are those who are from European countries with blonde hair and white skin.” A-P1

“NS are usually from UK and USA or those who are from Europe with white skin and blonde hair and for NNS, they are not from Europe and they don’t have white skin and blonde hair.” B-T1

“NS are all those who are white skin teachers and those who speak English since birth like teachers from UK, USA and from Europe and for NNS, they can speak English but not their first language like Thai and teachers from the Philippines.” B-P3

“I think most of the teachers who come from Europe are NS because they are white and for the NNS, most of them are Asians.” C-T1

“I watch football a lot and I think NS are those who are from European countries like UK, USA, France, Germany and Spain because they look the same.” C-SG1

As can be seen, participants made reference to a number of different nationalities. Among those seen as corresponding to NS were those associated with the two most widely recognized varieties of standard English, the UK and USA, as well as other ‘inner circle’ countries (Canada, Australia, New Zealand). However, participants also associated NS with nationalities not traditionally seen to correspond to that category, with one mentioning “France, Germany and Spain” and several making a broad reference to “Europe”. References to NNS nationalities were often similarly either associated with particular countries (e.g. Philippines) or entire regions (e.g. Asia). It is seen here that the way the majority of the participants categorize speakers of English may not fully correspond to conventional definitions of NS and NNS (i.e. Davies, 2008; Kachru, 1992; Klimczak-Pawlak, 2014; Medgyes, 1994), though as with established definitions, their understanding of these categories is connected to particular countries. However, rather than distinguishing between ‘inner’ and ‘outer/expanding’ circle countries, the participants appear to view Western countries as NS and non-Western countries as NNS.

This conclusion is further supported by consistent references to appearance as a criterion for distinguishing between NS and NNS. References to appearance, as seen with the examples above, were often made at the same time as mentions of particular nationalities, though at other times they were also brought up on their own:

“I’m not sure if it’s right, but I think I know the difference between NS and NNS based on how they look. I think most of the teachers who have white skin with blonde hair are NS and those who look like us, Asians are not. For example, teachers from the Philippines.” A-P2

“I can easily distinguish them into 2 categories, those who are white with blonde hair are NS and Asian are not.” A-SG3

“I can’t distinguish which one is from UK, USA and which teacher is from Europe, but I’m sure that all white teachers with blonde hair are NS, and teachers from Philippines are not because they look like Thai.” B-P4

“I know the difference based on their skin color. Normally, NS have white skin and blonde hair and for NNS, they look like Thai such as teachers from Philippines and other NNS they are black like from Africa.” B-SG2

“I think most of the teachers who come from Europe are NS because they are white and for the NNS, most of them are Asians.” C-T1

“I know the difference between teachers from the Philippines and NS because the teachers from the Philippines look like Thai teachers. For NS, if they have eyes with different colors, blonde hair and white skin, I think they are NS.” C-SG3

These examples illustrate how common references to appearance were when participants were asked to define NS and NNS. In nearly all of the examples above, NS are associated with “white skin”, “blonde hair” and “colorful eyes”. This closely matches the references to particular nationalities above, since the countries and regions associated by the participants with NS (e.g. US, UK, France, Europe, America) are predominantly populated by Caucasians (whites). In contrast, NNS are seen to be defined both by their physical features (e.g. “dark skin” and “dark hair”) as well as by their perceived similarity to the participants’ nationality (e.g. looking “like us”).

The sameness of NNS and difference of NS in terms of appearance were also often referenced when the participants were asked about the advantages and

disadvantages of each type of teacher. In particular, the “different” appearance of NS was suggested to play a big role as an advantage of NS.

“NS are interesting in the students’ eyes, they can get the students attention just by their appearance but for NNS, they may not be as interesting as NS because they are Asians, these teachers look like us. Some Thai students are not used to this look of a foreign teacher, they are more used to NS who are like the characters from the TV or movies, not like the same look as them. So for them, NNS may not be interesting.” A-P6

“One of the advantages of NS is their appearance, because not all the students know which type of teacher is NS and which is not but when they see that the teacher is white with blonde hair they want to learn with these teachers more as they find them interesting.” A-T4

“For NS, they are interesting in the eyes of the students because they are from the other side of the world and from how they look like. The students can make conversations like “what is your country like?” “How is the weather” and even their appearance, the hair color, nose or anything else that can lead to the conversation but for NNS, they look like Thai especially the teachers from the Philippines, so they may not be interesting to the students. Even though they are very good at teaching, there is nothing much for the students to ask.” B-T4

“The appearance of NS is also their advantage because not all parents know how good each teacher can be or how each teacher perform in a class, all they know is if their child is learning English with NS they would assume that their child will have a proper way of English learning without thinking if they are actual teachers before or not and for some NS, they don’t care if the students are saying the words correctly or not.” C-VD

As these excerpts show, several of the teachers and one of the administrators who participated in the study saw the different appearance of NS teachers to be a major advantage compared to NNS. Specifically, they argued that this would act as a motivational device for students and that contact with a “different” NS would help improve their English. The director of School B even expressed the idea that the different appearance of NS would help attract parents. This was contrasted by their view that NNS, particularly Asians (or specifically Filipinos), would not be able to motivate the students due to their similarity to Thai teachers.

The extracts also show how ideologies play a major impact on how the participants respond by referring to the stereotype of how Westerners are perceived in general. However, the participants' definition based on their perception toward NS and NNS may not seem to fit with the established definitions.

4.3 Teaching abilities

The responses under the previous two themes often suggest that not only attitudes formed through first-hand experience are relevant but also ideologies independent of experience (e.g. in the case of how parents judge accent and pronunciation). However, in the case of some themes, ideology appeared to be less important, with experiences playing a key role in the participants' responses. These responses particularly came to the questions: "How would you describe the teaching abilities of NS and NNS", "Which type of teacher do you think is better at teaching these skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading)?" and "What are the advantages and disadvantages from learning with both teachers"? Here, the theme most often found referred to the perceived teaching abilities of NS and NNS teachers:

"If it's about listening and speaking skills, like what I have said, the students can copy the accent and pronunciation of NS, so learning speaking and listening skills with NS is better but when it comes to reading and writing I think NNS can teach better because they have techniques in explaining as they have learned it before so they know how to teach these skills. For the disadvantage of NS, they may lack teaching skills like classroom management, lesson planning and that kind of things." A-T1

"For me I think it's undebatable that NS are better at teaching all the skills because simply they are native speakers so how can NNS be better than the natives. It's like learning from the original one versus the imitation one." A-SG2

"I think for speaking and listening, NS are better because they know the sound well and their accent and pronunciation are clear and I think it's the correct one." B-HT

"Some NS, I think because they are native speakers and they know the language quite well so some of them are lazy like they don't prepare for the class. They just come to the classroom and think first, then decide at that time what to teach but for NNS, they are very well-prepared and very well-trained." B-T4

“For listening and speaking NS are better because the students can copy the pronunciation and accent but in contrast, like grammar they can learn with NNS because they can explain what is wrong and how is it wrong much better than NS.” C-T1

“I can easily understand the teachers who are NNS because they have experienced how to learn English before, they know what are the steps in learning English so the way they teach us is like the way they learned it. They will teach us from very easy and slowly increasing the difficulty but learning with NS, sometimes I can't really catch up because they are very good and they tend to teach much more difficult lessons.” C-SG3

As seen from the excerpts, there are several similar opinions regarding the teaching abilities of NS and NNS. The majority of the participants from each school and each group prefer learning with NS and view NS' advantages such as they were fluent in using English so they were perceived to be good example of English users. The participants also perceived NS to have excellent command of English, they sound natural and perceived to be a good example of correct accent and pronunciation. Another reason NS were seen to be better is simply because they are native speakers of English. NS were also perceived to be excellent at teaching speaking and listening skills as their accent and pronunciation play an essential element into it.

With all the positive aspects in teaching abilities of NS, a few drawbacks were seen in NS and several aspects were perceived to be advantages of NNS as summed up from the participants' responses.

“Some NS are not good at teaching even though they can speak well, just because they are native speakers so they are hired. Same goes to NNS not all of them are not good. Some of them who have a degree in teaching can be very good at teaching because they have learned all the techniques and the useful aspects that are essential in teaching.” A-T2

“If I could mix their abilities and put it into one teacher would be great! Like I like the accent and pronunciation of NS and I like the way NNS teach because they tend to understand the students more.” A-SG3

“Some NNS can also use English well because most of them are actual teachers who graduated from education so they are really good. Their teaching methodology is better than NS at some point but their accent may not be as good as NS. So I think both teachers can teach.” B-T2

“NNS have this teaching technique where they slowly teach each lesson, they go from the easiest to the hardest and they will explain anything until the students understand

the lesson, which is really good. For me, they understand our abilities how good or how bad our English proficiency is, so that's why we understand the lesson even better." B-SG3

"Most of NS are not really good at teaching like managing the class and control the students and especially doing lesson plans. I think I understand why they are not good at doing lesson plans because some of them are actually not teachers. Sometimes their lesson plans don't match with what they actually teach in the class. Some NS don't even do a lesson plan or prepare anything before the class because they think that they can speak English well so there is no need to prepare." C-VD

"Since most of the NNS learn English as their second language, they tend to understand us by teaching slowly and not too difficult. It's like they have to learn English from step 1 2 3 4 so the way they teach the students is also like this from easy to hard that's why it's easier for the students especially in our school to understand. Whereas for NS they may have not learned some of the aspects in English such as grammar so they may not be able to explain some things and they will just teach whatever they like." C-SG1

Although NS' accent, pronunciation, fluency and appearance were their selling points as seen from previous themes, with addition to their rich knowledge of the Western culture, surprisingly, NS' teaching abilities seem to be their drawbacks as they were perceived to have less positive feedbacks regarding their teaching abilities. NS were perceived to have less instructional competence such as lack of classroom management skills, not good at doing lesson plans and come to class unprepared as one particular participant mentioned that because they are native speakers of the language so they don't need preparation. They were also perceived to be not good at explaining complex items especially grammar. NNS on the other hand, were perceived to have the advantage in this area where the majority of the participants similarly stated that the most common advantageous feature of NNS is that they were understanding, empathetic and approachable. They were seen to be good at classroom management, able to construct a lesson plan and always come to class prepared. They were also praised for their sensitivity and being able to understand the feelings, needs and expectations of the students in learning the language.

Additionally, NNS' teaching experience and qualification allow them to handle the class well, able to deliver the lesson properly as they had been trained, and also being able to understand the students' problem in learning the language as the majority

of NNS had prior experience and have gone through the process of learning English as their second language. Therefore, the majority of the participants believed that NNS were better at teaching reading and writing skills and they were perceived to be competent at explaining complex items such as grammar as they have prior extensive experience in learning the language. These aspects were something the participants, especially the students and the teachers, saw to be the advantageous aspects of NNS. The reason behind why NS were perceived to be less competent regarding with the teaching abilities could be their nativeness as they acquired the language naturally without having teaching training some even teach without proper qualification as an English teachers because of being a native speaker, unlike NNS where they have gone through extensive training in order to be an English teacher, therefore, their pedagogical skills were perceived to be better than NS.

The findings in this section suggest that students, parents and administrators have similar opinions regarding to the teaching abilities of both NS and NNS given that they had personal contact and experience with them. They agreed that NNS' teaching abilities were better as they have experienced learning the language and they have been well-trained. On the contrary, parents had a different or less opinion about this aspect, possibly as they had limited access into teacher's performance. As a result, they were less aware of the positive sides about NNS' teaching abilities. Additionally, some parents still had a belief, assuming that a good quality of English teaching will be given to their child when the teacher is NS.

4.4 General professionalism

This section will address the perceived general professionalism of NS and NNS with an emphasis on the advantages and disadvantages in learning with both types of teacher. The answers primarily came in response to 3 questions: "How would you describe the teaching abilities of NS and NNS", "If you could describe both NS and NNS in 2 to 3 words, what word would that be and why?" and "What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS?" With all the positive features seen in NS from the previous themes, surprisingly a number of negative aspects were pointed out by the participants

“I sometimes wonder whether the foreign teachers who come and teach in this school are actual teachers. Especially the NS, not because they are native speakers and they can speak English well so they can be teachers here.” A-P1

“From what I have experienced, most NS are not actual teachers or they don’t have a degree in teaching or in English. So their lesson is not that good or well-organized. Whereas most of the NNS that I have worked with are actual teachers and they have many years of teaching experience so their teaching skills are somehow better than NS and they are hard-working and committed to the job. But I think for Thais, they still prefer NS because it’s like learning English from the original source not from someone whose English is just their second language.” A-T1

“The advantage of NNS is they understand the students more because they have also gone through the process of learning English. So they are more patient in explaining each lesson that the students don’t understand. I personally believe that NNS are more kind and understanding than NS.” A-SG3

“For NNS such as Filipinos and those from Cameroon, they may not have interesting features that can attract the students such as their color and accent but they have many good activities and their teaching ability is good. For example we have Filipino teachers who have been here for many years, they are very patient to the students and they understand our students well. They always try their best to do everything they can to let the school accept the fact that they are NNS, so they are hard-working. Some of them have been working for so many years that they are assigned to be the head of foreign teachers.” B-HT

“Sometimes I wonder whether the teachers who come and teach here are actual teachers, or do they have a degree in teaching, or because they are NS or they can just speak English so that’s why they are hired, but I believe that the school has already examined that they are teachers.” B-P3

“The advantage of NNS is since they have learned English before, they have gone through the process of learning so they tend to understand the students well. They are patient and they try to explain until the students will be able to understand the lesson which NS don’t really do.” B-SG2

“Though the accent of NS is their advantage, but for teaching, it is contrast, because NS some of them come to Thailand just only like for visiting or traveling or tourism so they are not really teachers, a lot of them who have taught here don’t really know how to teach or they have very little knowledge about teaching so that is sometimes a problem if we have a NS come to teach in our school. But for Filipinos or the country, uhmm, the black people like from Cameroon and Nigeria, their teaching is very good and more responsible for the work more than NS. They are very hard-working and very cooperative too.” C-HT

“I’m not sure if the teachers who come to teach here are really teachers especially NS because I believe that real NS who are actually real teachers will not work as an English teacher here. The NS that I see may not be real teachers, they can be someone who sells vegetable in their country and become an English teacher here. That is also what I’m worried about.” C-P1

“Even though I don’t like the accent of NNS, I still like them because they are kind and approachable which makes us dare to talk with them and they understand us.” C-SG1

Similarly to teaching abilities, it can be seen that a number of drawbacks particularly towards NS general professionalism were indicated. Frequently mentioned drawback seen in each school was their lack of qualification as an English teacher despite their nativeness. Such aspects were perceived by the teachers and the students, most probably as they have experienced working and learning with them. In their perspectives, this led to other major problems that each school faced as most of NS who came to be an English teacher were not actual teachers, they were perceived to lack or even have no teaching experience with inadequate instructional competence and lack of passion or not fully committed in teaching as they have different goals.

They were also perceived to be not cooperative, especially in doing extra activities in the school. In addition, as mentioned above, there was a common perception that the majority of NS didn’t have proper qualification to be a teacher, with some without any teaching experience, which participants believed may have impact in their teaching performance such as classroom management, how to handle the students in different situations and deliver the lesson appropriately.

Additionally, students were aware of this aspect based on their experience learning with NS from noticing their teaching performance such as being unable to manage the classroom, having difficulty explaining particular lessons with grammar in specific, and delivering the lessons appropriately and accurately. Not only parents and the students, some parents were even aware of this aspect or wonder whether the international teachers especially NS were actual teachers based on how they dress, as one particular participant said that some NS were not properly dressed as how an actual teacher should.

Moreover, while NS were perceived to not being cooperative and having less passion in teaching as they have different goal, NNS in contrast, were perceived to be the exact opposite. As seen from the excerpts, the most common features that the majority of the participants especially teachers from each school mentioned were that NNS were hard-working, cooperative and having clear goal to be a teacher which brings more passion in teaching.

The findings in this section suggest similar opinion that was from teaching abilities which suggest that students, teachers and administrators tend to have more positive feedbacks in terms of general professionalism toward NNS than NS. NNS were viewed to be more understanding which was one of the most common features that the students, teachers and administrators see in NNS that can be very beneficial in students learning of English. However, the majority of parents again, may not have similar opinions and seem to have strong beliefs that NS may still overall be better English teachers simply because they are native speakers.

4.5 Culture

A further theme that was indicated and play a major role on participants' responses was culture. It can be seen from the previous themes how some responses put more weight on NS yet some responses seem to be on the NNS side. This particular theme emphasizes that the same issue could be seen as an advantage and as a disadvantage with regard to both groups. The responses below were obtained from the following questions: "How would you describe the teaching abilities of NS and NNS", "If you could describe both NS and NNS in 2 to 3 words, what word would that be and why?" and "What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS?" As can be seen, many participants made reference to culture when responding to these questions, often in ambivalent ways:

"Since most of the NNS are also Asians and we almost share the same culture so they tend to understand our culture, they understand us and the students well. Whereas the white teachers, they are not bothered to adapt or adjust to fit well with the culture especially with the school which is sometimes our problem with them." A-HT

“Since they are NS, it is assumable that their English is perfect and they have full knowledge of the language and also the culture so they can be good teachers.” A-P3

“The advantage of NNS is that they understand Thai students more because we almost have the same culture, but for NS, they know their culture more than NNS so they can give us more information about their culture.” A-SG2

“The advantage of NS is that they can give many things that Thai teachers or NNS may not be able to give, such as accent, pronunciation and their knowledge of their culture and. They can explain more about their culture because they have personal experience” B-HT

“Learning English with NS, aside from being able to learn the correct way of English and the correct pronunciation, we can also learn their culture because they are native speakers so they have deep knowledge of their culture and they can deliver it to us much more interesting than NNS.” B-SG2

“The disadvantage for NS is that they might not understand the Thai culture that well which mislead them into dealing with the students. Some students who don’t understand them and won’t participate well in the class and some will not answer or raise their hand to answer at all. The NS will take this as a bad behavior or they think the students are rebelling. They will treat these students as those who are not listening or paying attention in the class and think of them as bad students but sometimes the students just don’t really understand what the teacher is teaching so they are not motivated to learn and they don’t know what to answer so they tend to keep silent.” C-VD

“The students are braver to talk with the Filipino teachers. I think because the students think that they are like Thai teachers, same culture so they can approach them but if the teacher is like foreigner with white skin blonde hair, they don’t dare to approach them. The students are afraid of making mistakes when talking with NS but when they talk with Filipino teachers they see them like Thai teachers so they are comfortable talking with Filipino teachers.” C-P1

“I think NNS are friendlier and I think NS, they are not friendly, but some are, because they have different tradition and culture. For Thai, you know we are friendly we smile and we meet everyone but for NS that I have ever worked, they are not much friendly. For NNS like Asians we are not much different they understand us and understand our culture. They are also very responsible, cooperative and they are always willing to help or join extra activities aside from teaching so that’s why they are friendlier.” C-T3

“NNs since they are also Asians, they tend to understand our culture and they are friendlier and approachable.” C-SG2

The participants perceived how NS' knowledge of the Western culture benefits them as they were perceived to have deep knowledgeable of the Western culture, viewed to obtain much more accurate facts about it and able to share this knowledge to the students in a much interesting way as they had authentic experiences about the culture. This feature was believed to be another advantageous aspect of NS in terms of their teaching abilities. It can also be seen how the majority of the participants perceived that only westerners have the access to this particular knowledge. Thus, the majority of the participants prefer learning with NS since they can provide much accurate and interesting facts about western culture when compared to NNS. However, few shortcomings were also believed by the participants to be one of the disadvantages seen in NS as it affects how they behaved and treated the students differently due to cultural difference, how this aspect distant them from the participants and how it somewhat exclude NS from the participants' ideal English teacher. They were perceived to be too strict, not able to meet some of the needs and expectations of the students and unable to understand why or how the students behaved in a particular way.

On the other hand, while NNS were seen to be inferior in many ways and how they were in doubt of being seen to be an effective English teacher, the aspect of culture was the most advantageous feature of NNS. As perceived by the participants that the majority of NNS are Asians, having a shared culture with the participants, allow them to not only perceived to be understanding in terms of their teaching performances but they were also perceived to be understanding of the Thai culture which made them have the empathy and able to understand the students even better. As seen how students appreciate their ability of being empathetic and how they understand the students' feelings and behavior, being able to connect with the participants through understanding them, allow NNS to use this in their teaching more efficiently and able to work well with the teachers. This particular aspect in fact, was one of the main reasons why NNS appeared to be more welcome in English teaching career in this particular context.

5. Discussion

5.1 Accent and pronunciation

With regard to the first theme, the results in this study were similar to the study of Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) as well as Todd (2006) that the majority of the participants prefer learning with NS. NS were much preferred with the reason that they obtain superior language competence and they were perceived to use the language naturally, fluently and correctly which is also similar with several previous studies (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Wu & Ke, 2009). Among all these aspects, accent and pronunciation were the ones which were believed to be the most advantageous aspects of NS. The participants perceived NS' accent and pronunciation to be correct and NNS' to be incorrect. Also, NS' accent and pronunciation were perceived to be good examples for the students to imitate and the parents believe that it's important to have native-like accent and pronunciation.

The reason behind this belief that NS' accent and pronunciation are correct and NNS to be incorrect as indicated by the majority of the participants is derived from standard language ideology (Lippi-green, 1994). The majority of the participants commonly perceived that NS' accent and pronunciation are correct because it's the same as how they hear from the T.V. and other media sources, having the belief that since NS sound similarly as from the media, it is therefore, the correct way of pronouncing words and how correct accent should sound whereas because NNS don't sound similarly like what they hear from the T.V., therefore their accent and the way NNS pronounce words are incorrect. Quirk (1990) proposed that the reasonable and acceptable model of English language teaching worldwide are British and American English. In other words, other varieties of English are assumed to be illegitimate. Similar perceptions were indicated by these participants:

“NS have very good accent like their accent is like what I hear from the movies and TV. Some of my teachers from the Philippines are not native speakers because of their accent, it's not the same as what I normally hear from movies and TV, sometimes it's difficult to understand.” B-SG1

“The good thing in learning with NS is we can listen to the way they speak, their accent and pronunciation are correct so we can learn the correct way from them because most of the NNS, their accent is not as what we are used to from watching movies or how the words and are normally pronounced.” A-SG4

“I believe that most schools in Thailand would prefer to have NS teach their students because of the accent and pronunciation of NS are better than those who are NNS. Also, because NNS come from different countries and they have different accents whereas for NS, it’s quite standard, it’s what the students are familiar hearing from the TV. So I think if the students learn English with NS, they may also pick up the standard English accent like NS.” A-T2

Additionally, the participants believed that NS’ accent and pronunciation were correct because they were perceived to be coming from native speakers of the language, believing that since they are NS, their accent and pronunciation should be correct compared to NNS who were perceived less proficient when it comes to speaking particularly with pronunciation (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Mahboob, 2003; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) similarly from the responses of these participants:

“The only good thing when my children learn with NS is their accent and pronunciation are good so I don’t need to worry about that because I’m sure it’s correct because it’s coming from a native speaker.” A-P6

“I agree that the accent of NS is their advantage because as a student, we don’t need to worry that what we are hearing from the teacher is right or wrong, or we don’t need to think if what the teacher is saying is right or wrong especially the accent and pronunciation because it’s coming from a native speaker. So, it is definitely right, but if we learn with NNS we may have to question the way they pronounce words because I can tell if it’s right or wrong based on what I have heard from the TV or from the NS.” A-SG2

Additionally, it can be seen how standard language ideology plays a major role on how the participants respond having perception that though they may not be aware of how NS or NNS sound, as long the participants believed that it’s coming from NS, it is automatically good. Also, it can be seen that it doesn’t matter whether the participants know or may not know how good or correct accent and pronunciation sound like or what really defines good and correct accent and pronunciation as long as

it's coming from the right person, which in this case are perceived to be NS, thus, it's definitely correct and good.

In addition to that, the participants also perceived that the accent and pronunciation of NS were their advantageous aspects as they can be good example for the students to imitate the way how NS pronounce words and try to achieve NS' accent which is similarly to some studies in which NS were perceived to be a good role model for accent and correct pronunciation (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2010; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Wu & Ke, 2009).

This belief may also again be derived from standard language ideology believing that conforming to NS' way of using English is much more desirable as it considered to be the general variety of English and the NNS variety of English is perceived to be less acceptable as it is now how the standard English supposed to be and even perceived to be less intelligent as the ones who use NS English as stated by Lippi-Green (1994), people who speak the standard language are perceived as educated and respectful of society's standards. On the contrary, speakers of non-standard language tend to be stigmatized and negative stereotype is often associated. Those who speak non-standard language are most likely to be seen to not able to communicate effectively and perceived to be not as intelligent as the ones who do.

“I like the way NS speak because they have the original accent and good pronunciation more than NNS, so they can teach better and the students can copy their accent too.” B-T2

“For listening and speaking, I think it's better if the students learn with NS because their accent and pronunciation are good so we can copy their pronunciation and their accent and the students can copy it too.” A-T5

“The disadvantage of NNS is their accent because if the students want to be a news reporter, flight attendant or any career that requires good command of English, it is best to learn it from NS, because if the students will learn with NNS and they will pick up the accent of NNS until they get a job, most of the people will look at them as just ordinary English speakers, but if they will have the accent of native speakers, people will see them as someone who is very good at English.” B-T1

The reason behind this desire of being able to imitate NS' accent and pronunciation, can be imply from the excerpts that the participants were not only idealizing NS but also trying to conform to native-like proficiency as they were perceived to be the ideal English variety having precise grammar accuracy and correct pronunciation (Chun, 2014; Holliday, 2015; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). The participants did not only prefer NS because of their good accent and correct pronunciation but they also believe that learning with NS may provide them native-like proficiency (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Chun, 2014; Holliday, 2015; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2010; Wu & Ke, 2009). One of the reasons that other English varieties beside English and American English are likely to be particularly stigmatized is because these varieties are compared to or measured to the English variety that is assumed or tend to be viewed as the superior or people claimed to be as the standard English (Dent, 2004). Moreover, stigmatized accents, dialects or language varieties are often criticized or even discriminated because they do not sound like what most of the people perceived to be the standard English (Lippi-Green, 1994). Thus, one of the reasons why the majority of the participants were trying to achieve native-like proficiency may be that they were trying to avoid acquiring stigmatized accents that are not generally considered to be a prestigious variety of English.

5.2 Nationality and appearance

Aside from accent and pronunciation, NS' appearance were also perceived to be their advantageous feature as the majority of the participants generally mentioned it as one of the major reasons behind their preference in learning with NS. Several factors can be interpreted from this belief as they perceived most of the NS to be from UK, USA or even from Europe also anyone with Caucasian looks. NNS on the other hand, though they are from various countries such as India, the Philippines, Nigeria and Kenya, the majority of the participants tend to refer NNS to those who are from Asian countries with particular to the teachers from the Philippines. Since they are Asians, and they don't look Caucasian, the majority of the participants may not consider them as NS as indicated from these responses:

“I think NS are those who are from European countries with blonde hair and white skin.” A-P1

“NS are usually from UK and USA or those who are from Europe with white skin and blonde hair and for NNS, they are not from Europe and they don’t have white skin and blonde hair.” B-T1

“I’m not sure if it’s right but I think I know the difference between NS and NNS based on how they look. I think most of the teachers who have white skin with blonde hair are NS and those who look like us, Asians are not. For example, teachers from the Philippines.” A-P2

“I can’t distinguish which one is from UK, USA and which teacher is from Europe, but I’m sure that all white teachers with blonde hair are NS, and teachers from Philippines are not because they look like us, Thai.” B-P4

It can be seen from the responses of the participants where they indicated those who are white skin and blonde hair teachers are definitely native speakers because they look the same despite their nationality in which some are from UK and some are from European countries. It is then clearly seen that a number of participants associate nativeness with whiteness and no whatsoever consideration that these countries may have complete differences and may have no similarities at all, yet the participants automatically assumed that whoever looks Caucasian are native speakers of English.

This belief may be derived from their ideology around the concept *farang* which in Thai means someone who has a Caucasian look. Therefore, their belief towards *farang* as a representative of Western figure influenced how they define someone as native speaker of English and how they exclude someone as not. NS and *farang* are assumed to be the same, whereas all those who are not *farang* (e.g. Asians like Filipinos) are also not considered NS and are instead considered as being similar to Thais. In addition, a significant contradiction in the participants’ responses can be indicated here as the participants mentioned that they prefer learning with NS because of their accent and pronunciation yet they were unable to distinguish which is NS and which is NNS according to traditional definitions (see above).

Nedpogae (2001) makes this conclusion in his study where he indicates that the Thai concept of *farang* represents White Westerners and identify them as one regardless of their nationality or country of origin such as French, Germans, English

and Americans. Asians on the other hand, given the similarities to Thais from appearance, personalities and shared culture, were perceived to be part of the same community. ‘The fact they are Asians, thus closer to Thais, meant that their representations carried less stark messages and had less impact, compared to the Occidental image imbued in *farang* presenters’ (Nedpogae, 2001). This belief may have also influenced from media consumption such as people they see from the T.V. programs and movies who speak English and has Caucasian look. Therefore, they assume that every person who looks this way is a native speaker of English.

The appearance of NS is also suggested to play a big role as an advantage of NS. Some participants find it to be interesting and one of the main factors that brings attention to the students in learning English. On the contrary, appearance may seem to be another perceived disadvantage of NNS as the majority of NNS in this study are Asians, which means that they don’t have white skin and blonde hair. Therefore, they were perceived to have less interesting features.

“NS are interesting in the students’ eyes, they can get the students attention just by their appearance but for NNS, they may not be as interesting as NS because they are Asians, these teachers look like us. Some Thai students are not used to this look of a foreign teacher, they are more used to NS who are like the characters from the TV or movies, not like the same look as them. So for them, NNS may not be interesting.” A-P6

“One advantage of NS is their appearance because the students are excited to have a foreign teacher so they expect to see someone with blonde hair so they are interested to learn with these types of teachers. They expect to learn with NS who come from countries that speak English but when they see Asian teachers such as Filipino teachers, it’s not what they expected and the students may not find them interesting.” C-T2

The reason behind this perception where the students find NS to be interesting and NNS to be less or not interesting can be influenced by Occidentalism which is a culturally-constructed stereotypical idea of how Westerners are perceived by the Easterners (Carrier, 1992). They are perceived to be interesting mainly because of their differences compared to the East such as their appearance, their culture, belief and behavior. Nedpogae, (2001, p. 104), for example, mentioned some perceptions indicated by former king Chulalongkorn’s son, Vajiravudh suggesting that ‘Europeans

are the owners of vast knowledge, goodness, beauty and development'. Although Vajiravudh's quote is from the previous century, the ideas can still be seen as relevant to Thai culture in the modern days that the majority of Thais perceived NS to be superior in many ways which can be often seen through various sources such as advertisements, posters, language centers, schools in Thai context (Todd, 2006; Nedpogaeo, 2011; Jindapitak et al., 2018).

NNS in contrast, as seen from the study are mostly Asians, the participants perceived these teachers to be like their own, no differences, no interesting features or anything that may be of students' interest when compared to NS. The participants may not see anything new or something they lack because of the similarities of Thai and other Asian countries such as their shared culture, similar appearance and other features that Asians have in common. Therefore, they are often treated to be someone ordinary and less interesting.

5.3 Teaching abilities

The responses from the previous two themes mainly support the fact that the majority of the participants perceived NS to be their ideal English teacher. This particular theme has also continuously emphasize their preference toward NS as they were perceived to obtain superior language competence and use English fluently (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Lasagabaster & Sierra 2005; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Wu & Ke, 2009). However, a few drawbacks were indicated from NS' teaching abilities whereas several positive aspects were seen from NNS and they were perceived to have superior teaching competence.

While NS were praised and preferred to be the ideal English teacher based on the responses from the two previous themes, it can be seen that their teaching abilities are believed to be their drawbacks as how NS were perceived to be less competent in teaching abilities despite their fluency and accuracy in using the language. The reason behind NS having less teaching competence may be because they are NS, therefore, some schools may hire them even without teaching experience (Medgyes, 1994; Chun,

2014). As they tend to have little experience in teaching the language and lack of teaching methodology, it thus, affect their teaching abilities.

NNS on the other hand, similarly from previous studies where they were perceived to have excellent teaching skills (Cheung, & Braine, 2007; Mahboob, 2003; Medgyes, 1994), have their lessons well-planned (Chun, 2014; Benke, & Medgyes, 2005; Liu, & Zhang, 2007) and good at explaining complex items, particularly grammar as they have prior experience in learning English as a second language (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Chun 2014; Moussu, 2010; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014).

5.4 General professionalism

Similarly to teaching abilities, this particular theme repeatedly indicates NS drawbacks and raise several positive aspects of NNS. While NNS were perceived to have excellent instructional competence because of their teaching experiences and qualification as an English teacher which was commonly mentioned from the previous theme, NS on the other were perceived to be have less instructional competence as they may lack of teaching experiences and proper qualification as an English teacher which may lead to the perception of the participants that view NS to be less committed and less passionate in teaching.

“From what I have experienced, most NS are not actual teachers or they don’t have a degree in teaching or in English. So their lesson is not that good or better-organized. Whereas most of the NNS that I have worked with are actual teachers and they have many years of teaching experience so their teaching skills are somehow better than NS and they are hard-working.” A-T1

“The advantage of NNS is since they have learned English before, they have gone through the process of learning so they tend to understand the students well. They are patient and they try to explain until the students will be able to understand the lesson which NS don’t really do.” B-SG2

The majority of the participants perceived NS to have less instructional competence such as unable to control the class, deliver the lesson appropriately and having difficulty in explaining complex items as they lack of qualifications and teaching experience as an English teacher which is in line with some previous studies

(Chun, 2014; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). NNS on the contrary, having the experience in learning the language and obtained teaching training, they were perceived to understand the students better and being sensitive to the needs and expectations of the students which is also similar to the responses from the previous studies in from other context (Árva, & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Mahboob, 2003; Medyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999).

5.5 Culture

This particular aspect shows ambivalence among the participants' responses where positive aspects are indicated along with negativity towards both NS and NNS. Snodin, (2016) indicated that The Ministry of Education have emphasized the importance of learning the cultural knowledge of NS; thus, providing the knowledge of native speaker's culture might be associated by particular culture of English speaking countries such as UK and USA. Owing to this fact, a number of Thai students are extra motivated and great interest is shown in learning the language when learning the culture of Western is involved in the classroom, especially from learners who wish further their studies abroad or able to communicate well with the NS (Snodin, 2016).

Studies by Baker (2011) and Mckay (2002), however, pointed out that due to globalization and the impact of using English as the means of communication, it is therefore, suggested that the 'culture of English speakers' may be irrelevant. Instead, be aware of the multilingual and multicultural settings of English use in order to be able to understand various cultural context and able to communicate successfully among other people with diverse culture. In addition, The responses from the participants were similarly from Nedpogaoe', (2001) studies where the learners find learning the Western culture to be interesting and seen to be one of the reasons why NS were their ideal English teacher.

“Since most of the NNS are also Asians and we almost share the same culture so they tend to understand our culture, they understand us and the students well. Whereas the white teachers, they are not bothered to adapt or adjust to fit well with the culture especially with the school. Which is sometimes our problem with them.” A-HT

“The advantage of NS is also their knowledge of the culture. The students can also learn something else aside from the normal lesson which is their culture and some students find it interesting so they like to learn with NS.” B-T4

“One advantage of learning with NS is the students can also learn their culture. The NS can explain their culture much better than NNS. For the advantage of NNS is they understand us they understand the students too, they know our culture so they understand what we are like and how are the students like.” C-T1

It can be seen how the participants value NS because of their knowledge of the Western culture and perceived NNS to be less competent due to their lack knowledge of the culture, which was similarly from the previous studies (Chun, 2014; Mahboob, 2003; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). However though this advantage gain more positive aspects toward NS, it was also perceived to be one of their major disadvantages. On one hand, learning the culture from NS seems to be relevant and important to the participants as they perceived having Western knowledge is necessary in order to be a successful English speaker. On the other hand, because of cultural disparity between NS and the participants’ culture, NS are most likely to be unaware of the participants’ culture and believed to be the reason why they were perceived to be unapproachable, distant and unable to empathize and understand the students which eventually led to being perceived as their drawbacks especially when dealing with the students.

While this aspect was believed to be NS’ drawback, it was perceived to be one of the advantages of NNS because of the cultural proximity. Although NNS were very much perceived to be inferior in many ways, but because of NNS’ shared culture with the participants, it allows them to be able to empathize and understand not only the students but their fellow colleagues create a space where the participants acknowledge their presence, treated them as their own and able to consider them as an ideal English teacher (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Mahboob, 2003; Medyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999).

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of findings

Research question 1: What are the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators at three Southern Thai schools toward international native and non-native English teachers?

The findings respond to the questions about how participants perceived NS and NNS. Overall, the majority of the participants prefer NS as their ideal English teachers mainly because of their excellent command of English, rich knowledge of the target language culture, their interesting appearance and a good example of English users especially their accent and pronunciation. Despite all these positive feedbacks, NS were perceived to be less competent regarding with their teaching abilities, such as classroom management, unable to deliver the lesson properly due to lack of training, unqualified English teachers and some without teaching experience.

NNS on the other hand, were perceived to be inferior English teacher mainly because of their accent and pronunciation and their similar appearance with the participants. Therefore; they were perceived to be less interesting and seen to be inferior in many ways. However, regarding their teaching abilities, they were considered to be good English teachers because they were more qualified, they have excellent instructional competence, and able to deliver the lessons properly because of their prior experience in learning English as a second language. They were also perceived to be hard-working, committed and able to meet the needs and expectations of the student and also able to understand the students because of their shared culture.

Research question 2: What are the differences among students', parents', Thai teachers' and administrators' responses?

There are some differences regarding the four groups of participants' beliefs toward NS and NNS particularly the students, teachers and administrators compared to parents. Most of the responses from the first three groups were mainly derived from

their personal contact and first-hand experience, whereas the majority of the parents generally give their opinions based on ideology, belief and attitude.

It can be seen from their responses when asked questions like “How would you describe NS and NNS in general?” or “What are the advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS?” The first three groups often provide answers based on what they have experienced first-hand with both NS and NNS. It can be seen that they were some positive feedbacks and some can be negative toward the issue depending on their individual encounter. However, when it comes to the parents’ responses, it can be seen how attitude and ideology play a big role and how these aspects influenced their opinions toward NS and NNS. An example can be seen when the parents were asked about the perceived advantages and disadvantages of NS and NNS. The majority of the parents answered that NS is definitely better in many ways or even in every aspect simply because they are native speakers of the language, even without first-hand experience or personal contact as they have limited access to the international teachers’ performance at school.

Despite the participants’ preference toward NS, the first three groups had several positive feedbacks toward NNS as much as NS as they had personal contact and experience engaging with international teachers whereas most of the parents had limited access to the teachers leaving them with a perception that NS are better simply because they are native speakers. There may not be much difference regarding the opinions from each four group of participants toward NS and NNS. For example, when asked about the definition of NS and NNS, answers like NS are those who have white skin and blonde hair, whereas NNS are those who are Asians’ can be found from all the types of participants. In addition when asked about which type of teacher is better at teaching the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) the majority of the participants tend to have similar answers, which is again a preference toward NS because of their nativeness that leads to being fluent, sound natural, accurate and correct which is believed particularly by the teachers and the parents to be a good example for the students.

Research question 3: What are the differences among the beliefs of students, parents, Thai teachers and administrators at three different schools?

Surprisingly, only a slight difference among the three schools were indicated from what we have hypothesized in the beginning of the study, which is that school A and B will have more positive aspects toward NS and less positive aspects toward NNS as assumed that the hiring practice of the international English teachers in these school often require NS with little or no available vacancy for NNS due to some school regulations or request from the parents of these schools, according to the participants. We have also hypothesized in school C that the majority of the participants in this school will have more positive feedbacks toward NNS as they may have limited access to NS or some may probably have never learned with one, therefore, their responses suggested to lean more preference toward NNS.

The reason why there is not much difference among the three schools could be most likely because these three schools are all government secondary schools, located in the same city in a peripheral province in Southern Thailand, where the participants are exposed to similar environment. Although some disparities were indicated, such as the location (rural, metropolitan), school size, hiring policy of international NS and NNS, English proficiency of the students, it is suggested to not have much impact on how NS and NNS were perceived from the participants particularly in this context.

For example, although given that the majority of the international teachers in School A are NS and for School B and C are NNS, several similarities were indicated from the feedbacks toward NS and NNS. From their definition of NS and NNS, to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of both teachers. The majority of the responses from each school most likely to be similar. Additionally, despite the difference of each international teacher, their teaching abilities, personality, advantages and disadvantages were similarly perceived from the three schools. In addition, the reason why these three schools have very few differences may be derived from the nature of the ideology of how NS and NNS are commonly perceived particularly in Thai context.

As mentioned above that the majority of the parents may have limited access to the NS and NNS teachers, yet they seem to have enough information that allows them

to share their opinion upon this issue. Additionally, students from different schools, given that some may have learned with both NS and NNS, yet some may have only learned with NS and some with only NNS, they still seem to have knowledge and attitude toward NS and NNS that influenced how they respond to the issue. Moreover, given that the teachers from three different schools may have different experience working alongside with international NS and NNS. Some being familiar working with either NS or NNS and some with very little experience working with both types of teachers depending on the school's hiring policy, yet they have enough information to describe NS and NNS in their own possible way. These reasons may conclude why there is not much difference among the three schools as their belief, attitude and ideology toward NS and NNS play a big role in influencing their response toward the issue.

Overall, this study suggests that although some responses from the participants were given based on their first-hand experience and personal contact with the NS and NNS teachers, it can clearly show how ideology, belief and attitude influenced how that participants perceived NS and NNS in general. Additionally, although the preference from each school leans more toward NS, this study suggests that there were both positive and negative aspects in learning with NS and NNS and, the participants from the three schools have started to be aware of the benefits NNS had to offer. Furthermore, an appreciation of their abilities and general professionalism allow the participants to consider NNS to also be acceptable English teachers.

6.2 Limitations

This study was conducted at three secondary schools in Southern Thailand; therefore, the results of this study may not be able to generalize throughout the country as some context may have different hiring practices of the international English teachers, different school systems (i.e. private, public, international, foundation school) students having different level of English proficiency, resources and different socio-economic family backgrounds. Additionally, since the researcher has lived in Thailand since childhood and although the researcher was highly fluent in Thai, given that the

participants were aware that the researcher is a citizen of the Philippines, it may have influenced the participants' responses toward the issue. For example, while the participants were asked the questions in Thai, some participants insisted to be interviewed in English. A few drawbacks can be seen from this approach, such as the participants may not be able to fully express what they really want to say as they had to say it in English (having pauses, asking for translation in Thai and some with incomprehensible sentences), rather than being able to freely express their responses if they speak their native language (Thai). Also, they may not be comfortable telling what they really feel about the issue to avoid answers that they think may affect the researcher as his nationality is being involved in the study.

6.3 Implications and Recommendations

It can be seen from the results of this study that the majority of the participants particularly the parents and the students associated nativeness with whiteness which means that they weren't aware of world Englishes. As can be seen from the responses of the participants when they were asked about their definition of NS and NNS, several participants define NS as those who have a Caucasian look whereas NNS to be anyone who is Asian. Their definition may be not exactly how NS and NNS are defined traditionally.

In addition, the majority of the participants have their mind set that the only way to be successful in learning the language is to acquire native-like proficiency and having other English varieties often perceived to be unacceptable. Here, we can reconfirm from how NS and NNS were perceived in Thai context decades ago to be likely the same as how these teachers are perceived in the modern days. This may be derived from how the nature of Thai context perceived Caucasian look teachers to be automatically NS regardless of their nationalities and linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, despite several studies supporting the notion of English as a means of communication, it can still be seen how appearance plays a major role that brings a massive impact in English teaching particularly in Thai context. Therefore, it is highly recommended particularly to the teachers to teach awareness to the students and show the importance of English as a means of communication rather than aiming to conform to native speakers as their

ultimate goal in learning the language. Although acquiring native-like English proficiency can be desirable by many, allowing the participants, especially the students to realize that having different variety of English, which can be significantly different from the traditional standard English variety, may not be a deficient aspect in learning the language. So it may be recommendable that the teachers may encourage the students to accept their own variety of English even if it may not be the same or may sound totally different from how native speakers speak.

Additionally, as mentioned above that this study was conducted at three secondary schools in southern Thailand which may have different features from other contexts (e.g. rural, metropolitan area; public schools, private schools; secondary, tertiary level) where a number of disparities can be seen such as resources, hiring practice of international NS and NNS, and English proficiency of the students for instance. Thus, it is recommendable to conduct similar research to other context in order to gather much more information regarding the issue.

7. References

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Appendix A: Consent form



แบบฟอร์มใบพิทักษ์สิทธิ์ (Consent form)

เรียน ท่านผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย

ข้าพเจ้า Mr. Luke Jobert Earl VencerComprendio นักศึกษาปริญญาโท คณะศิลปศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ และอาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์ ขอเชิญท่านเป็นผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัยในโครงการวิจัย เรื่อง “The Beliefs of Students, Parents, Thai Teachers and Administrators toward International English Teachers” (ความเชื่อของนักเรียน ผู้ปกครอง ครูชาวไทยและฝ่ายบริหารต่อครูต่างชาติที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษ) โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความเชื่อของนักเรียน ผู้ปกครอง ครูชาวไทยและฝ่ายผู้บริหารต่อครูต่างชาติที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษ ผลการศึกษาครั้งนี้จะช่วยให้ครูต่างชาติที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษทราบถึงความต้องการและความคาดหวังของนักเรียน ผู้ปกครอง ครูชาวไทยและฝ่ายบริหารที่มีต่อครูต่างชาติที่สอนภาษาอังกฤษ ทั้งนี้ในการร่วมการวิจัย ท่านจะต้องตอบคำถามของผู้วิจัย โดยการสัมภาษณ์

การศึกษานี้ไม่มีความเสี่ยงหรืออันตรายใด ๆ ที่จะเกิดจากการเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย อย่างไรก็ตาม ท่านสามารถเลือกที่จะเข้าร่วมการวิจัยหรือไม่ก็ได้ หากท่านยินดีเข้าร่วมการศึกษานี้และยินดีเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้ ผู้วิจัยจะขอให้ท่านลงชื่อในใบยินยอม ท่านสามารถถอนตัวได้ตลอดเวลาโดยไม่มีผลกระทบใด ๆ หรือท่านอาจจะปฏิเสธตอบคำถามบางคำถามที่ท่านไม่อยากจะตอบ และยังอยู่ในการวิจัย ท่านอาจจะยกเลิกการให้ความยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยเมื่อไหร่ก็ได้ และยุติการมีส่วนร่วมในการวิจัย โดยไม่มีบทลงโทษใด ๆ อย่างไรก็ตาม ผู้วิจัยอาจถอนตัวจากท่านจากการวิจัยครั้งนี้ หากมีสถานการณ์ที่จำเป็นต้องปฏิบัติเช่นนั้น

หากท่านมีข้อสงสัยหรือความกังวลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับการวิจัย โปรดติดต่อผู้วิจัยหลัก คือ Mr. Luke Jobert Earl VencerComprendio โทร. 087-3966957e-mail: lukecomprendio1301@gmail.com หรืออาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาโครงการ รศ.ดร. อติศา แซ่เตียว หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 0-7428-9555 หากผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยได้รับการปฏิบัติไม่ตรงตามที่ระบุไว้ในเอกสารชี้แจงนี้ สามารถขอรับคำปรึกษา/แจ้งเรื่อง/ร้องเรียน ได้ที่ นางสาว ชญานิศ ผุดผ่อง ศูนย์จริยธรรมการวิจัยในมนุษย์ สาขาสังคมศาสตร์และพฤติกรรมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสงขลานครินทร์ โทรศัพท์ 0-7428-6475 หรือทางจดหมายอิเล็กทรอนิกส์ chayanit.p@psu.ac.th

ลายเซ็นนักวิจัย.....

(Mr. Luke Jobert Earl VencerComprendio)

วันที่.....เดือน.....พ.ศ.....

ข้าพเจ้าได้รับทราบข้อมูลจากนักวิจัยแล้ว และยินดีเข้าร่วม โครงการวิจัยด้วยความสมัครใจ

ลายเซ็นผู้เข้าร่วมวิจัย..... ลายเซ็นพยาน.....

(.....) (.....)

วันที่.....เดือน.....พ.ศ..... วันที่.....เดือน.....พ.ศ.....

Appendix B: Certificate of ethics approval



Certificate of Approval of Human Research Ethics
Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board,
Prince of Songkla University

Document Number: 2018 PSU - St – Qn 008

Research Title: The Beliefs of Students, Parents and Thai Teachers toward International Native and Non-native English Teachers: A Study of Three Schools in Southern Thailand

Research Code: PSU IRB 2018 – PSU – St 009

Principal Investigator: Mr. Luke Jobert Earl Vencer Comprendio

Workplace: Master of Arts Program in Teaching English as an International Language,
Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University

Approved Document:

1. Human Subjects
2. Instrument
3. Invitation and Informed Consent

Approved Date: 27 November 2018

Expiration Date: 27 November 2020

This is to certify that the Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, Prince of Songkla University approved for Ethics of this research in accordance with Declaration of Belmont.

.....
 (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Waraporn Kongsuwan)

Committee Vice-Chairman of Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences
 Institutional Review Board, Prince of Songkla University

Appendix C: Interview questions

Interview questions (English)

11.1 Questions for students

1. Do you like learning English?
2. On a scale from 1 to 10, what would you rate your English proficiency?
3. Have you learned English with foreign teachers? If yes, can you remember which country they are from?
4. Can you distinguish between NS and NNS?
5. What is your definition of NS and NNS?
6. Which country do you think each teacher comes from?
7. How would you describe NS/NNS in general?
8. How would you describe the teaching styles of NS and NNS?
9. Which type of teacher do you think is better at teaching these skills?
(listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar)
10. Would you rather learn English with NS or NNS?
11. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each teacher?
12. If you could describe NS and NNS in three words what would they be?
13. Is there anything else you would like to add or any more opinions in regard to NS and NNS? It could be problems or advices that you'd like to share.

11.2 Questions for parents

1. Does your child like English?
2. Do you think English is important to you/ your child? If yes, in what way?
3. Have your child learned English with foreign teachers before? If so, do you know where they are from?
4. Can you distinguish between NS and NNS?
5. What is your definition of NS and NNS?
6. How would you describe NS/NNS in general?
7. How would you describe the teaching styles of NS and NNS?

8. How important is the role of foreign English teachers to your child's English learning?
9. Would you rather have your child learn English with NS or NNS?
10. What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of each teacher?
11. As a parent, what characteristics do you think should the foreign teachers have in order for them to teach English more effectively?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add or any more opinions in regard to NS and NNS? It could be problems or advices that you'd like to share.

11.3 Questions for Thai English teachers

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Have you worked with any foreign English teachers?
3. What is your definition of NS and NNS?
4. Which country do you think NS and NNS come from?
5. How would you describe NS/NNS in general?
6. How would you describe the teaching styles of NS and NNS?
7. Which type of teacher do you think is better at teaching these skills?
(listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar)
8. Which type of teacher would you prefer your students to learn with?
9. Do you think English should only be taught by NS? Why or why not?
10. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each teacher?
11. If you could describe NS and NNS in 3 words what would they be?
12. As a Thai English teacher, what characteristics do you think should the foreign teachers have in order for them to teach English more effectively?
13. If you could describe NS and NNS in three words what would they be?
14. Is there anything else you would like to add or any more opinions in regard to NS and NNS? It could be problems or advices that you'd like to share.

11.4 Questions for Administrators

1. How long have you been a director in this school?
2. Have you worked with any foreign English teachers?

3. What is your definition of NS and NNS?
4. Which country do you think NS and NNS come from?
5. How would you describe NS/NNS in general?
6. Which type of teacher would you prefer your students to learn with?
7. Do you think English should only be taught by NS? Why or why not?
8. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each teacher?
9. As a school director of one of the Thai schools, what characteristics do you think should the foreign teachers have in order for them to teach English more effectively?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add or any more opinions in regard to NS and NNS? It could be problems or advices that you'd like to share.

12. Interview questions (Thai)

12.1 คำถามสำหรับนักเรียน

1. คุณชอบเรียนภาษาอังกฤษไหม
2. คุณให้คะแนนระดับความสามารถด้านภาษาอังกฤษของคุณกี่คะแนน (1-10 คะแนน)
3. คุณเคยเรียนภาษาอังกฤษกับครูชาวต่างชาติหรือไม่ หากเคยเรียนจำได้ไหมว่าพวกเขามาจากประเทศอะไรบ้าง
4. คุณแยกออกไหมว่าคนไหนเป็นครูเจ้าของภาษา คนไหนไม่ใช่
5. ในความคิดของคุณ ครูเจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) และครูที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) หมายถึงอะไร
6. คุณคิดว่าครูแต่ละประเภทมาจากประเทศไหนบ้าง
7. โดยรวมคุณจะทำบอกลักษณะครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาอย่างไร

8. ในความคิดของคุณลักษณะการสอนของครูทั้ง 2 ประเภทต่างกันอย่างไร (กิจกรรมบรรยากาศในห้องเรียน)
9. ในความคิดของคุณ ครูประเภทไหนในสองประเภทนี้สอนทักษะเหล่านี้ได้ดีกว่ากัน
(ฟัง พูด อ่าน เขียน)
10. ถ้าเลือกได้ คุณอยากเรียนภาษาอังกฤษกับครูประเภทไหนมากกว่ากัน
11. คุณคิดว่าข้อดีและข้อจำกัดของครูทั้งสองแบบมีอะไรบ้าง
12. ถ้าจะต้องบอกลักษณะครูทั้งสองแบบเป็นคำ 3 คำ คุณจะบอกลักษณะของพวกเขาวาดังไร
13. นอกจากคำถามทั้งหมดที่ได้ถามไปแล้ว คุณมีอย่างอื่นจะเพิ่มเติมอีกไหมเช่นปัญหาที่เจอในการเรียนกับครูต่างชาติ

12.2 คำถามสำหรับผู้ปกครอง

1. คุณคิดว่าลูกของคุณชอบภาษาอังกฤษไหม
2. คุณคิดว่าลูกของคุณให้ความสำคัญกับภาษาอังกฤษมากน้อยแค่ไหน
3. ลูกของคุณเคยเรียนกับครูต่างชาติบ้างไหม หากเคยเรียน พอจะทราบหรือไม่ว่าพวกเขามาจากประเทศอะไรบ้าง
4. คุณแยกออกไหมว่าคนไหนเป็นครูเจ้าของภาษา คนไหนไม่ใช่
5. ในความคิดของคุณครูเจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) และครูที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) หมายถึงอะไร
6. โดยรวม คุณจะบอกลักษณะครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาอย่างไร

7. ในความคิดของคุณ ลักษณะการสอนของครูทั้ง 2 ประเภทต่างกันอย่างไร
8. บทบาทของครูชาวต่างชาติมีความสำคัญในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษของคุณอย่างไร
9. ถ้าต้องเลือกระหว่างครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาคุณอยากให้ลูกของคุณได้เรียนกับครูประเภทไหนมากกว่ากัน
10. คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษควรเรียนกับเจ้าของภาษาเท่านั้นหรือไม่
11. คุณคิดว่าข้อดีและข้อจำกัดของครูทั้งสองแบบมีอะไรบ้าง
12. ในฐานะที่เป็นผู้ปกครอง คุณคิดว่าครูต่างชาติควรมีคุณสมบัติอะไรบ้างที่จะทำให้การสอนภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยของพวกเขามีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น
13. นอกจากคำถามทั้งหมดที่ได้ถามไปแล้ว คุณมีอย่างอื่นจะเพิ่มเติมอีกไหม

12.3 คำถามสำหรับครู

1. คุณสอนภาษาอังกฤษมาแล้วกี่ปี
2. คุณเคยร่วมงานกับครูชาวต่างชาติหรือไม่
3. ในความคิดของคุณ ครูเจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) และครูที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษา (อังกฤษ) หมายถึงอะไร
4. คุณคิดว่าครูแต่ละประเภทมาจากประเทศไหนบ้าง
5. โดยรวม คุณจะบอกลักษณะครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาอย่างไร
6. ในความคิดของคุณ ลักษณะการสอนของครูทั้ง 2 ประเภทต่างกันอย่างไร

7. ในความคิดของคุณ ครูประเภทไหนในสองประเภทนี้สอนทักษะเหล่านี้ได้ดีกว่ากัน
(ฟัง พูด อ่าน เขียน)
8. ถ้าต้องเลือกระหว่างกับครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาคุณอยากให้นักเรียน
ได้เรียนกับครูประเภทไหนมากกว่ากัน
9. ในความคิดของคุณ การสอนของครูทั้งสองแบบมีความแตกต่างกันอย่างไร
10. คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษควรเรียนกับเจ้าของภาษาเท่านั้นหรือไม่
11. คุณคิดว่าข้อดีและข้อจำกัดของครูทั้งสองประเภทมีอะไรบ้าง
12. ในฐานะครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษ คุณคิดว่าครูต่างชาติควรมีคุณสมบัติอะไรบ้างที่จะทำ
ให้การสอนภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยของพวกเขามีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น
13. หากจะต้องบอกลักษณะครูทั้งสองแบบเป็นคำ 3 คำ คุณจะบอกลักษณะของพวกเขา
ว่าอย่างไร
14. นอกจากคำถามทั้งหมดที่ได้ถามไปแล้ว คุณมีอย่างอื่นจะเพิ่มเติมอีกไหม

12.4 คำถามสำหรับผู้บริหารโรงเรียน

1. คุณเป็นผู้อำนวยการโรงเรียนนี้มากี่ปีแล้วครับ
2. คุณเคยร่วมงานกับครูชาวต่างชาติหรือไม่
3. ในความคิดของคุณ ครูเจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ) และครูที่ไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษา(อังกฤษ)
หมายถึงอะไร
4. คุณคิดว่าครูแต่ละประเภทมาจากประเทศไหนบ้าง
5. โดยรวม คุณจะบอกลักษณะครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาอย่างไร

6. ถ้าต้องเลือกระหว่างกับครูเจ้าของภาษาและครูไม่ใช่เจ้าของภาษาคุณอยากให้นักเรียนได้เรียนกับครูประเภทไหนมากกว่ากัน
7. คุณคิดว่าภาษาอังกฤษควรเรียนกับเจ้าของภาษาเท่านั้นหรือไม่
8. คุณคิดว่าข้อดีและข้อจำกัดของครูทั้งสองประเภทมีอะไรบ้าง
9. ในฐานะที่คุณเป็นหนึ่งในผู้อำนวยการโรงเรียนในประเทศไทย คุณคิดว่าครูต่างชาติควรมีคุณสมบัติอะไรบ้างที่จะทำให้การสอนภาษาอังกฤษในประเทศไทยของพวกเขามีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น
10. นอกจากคำถามทั้งหมดที่ได้ถามไปแล้ว คุณมีอย่างอื่นจะเพิ่มเติมอีกไหม

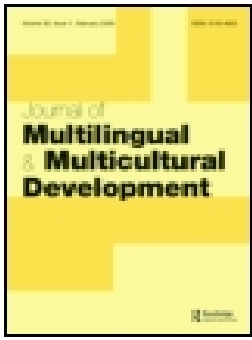
Appendix E: Preliminary coding scheme

	NS	NNS
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Superior language competence.</i> (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Wu & Ke, 2009; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014, Chun, 2014) • <i>Prefer to learn English by native speakers.</i> (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Todd, 2006) • <i>Possess rich knowledge of their culture which makes them provide a better cultural knowledge.</i> (Mahboob, 2003; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Chun, 2014) • <i>Use English confidently, naturally and fluently.</i> (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Chun, 2014; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inferior language competence.</i> (Árva & Medgyes, 2000, Mahboob, 2003; Cheung & Braine, 2007; Chun, 2014) • <i>Sensitive and able to understand the circumstances that the students are experiencing in learning the language.</i> (Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Mahboob, 2003; Chun, 2014) • <i>Good at learning strategies.</i> (Medgyes, 1994; Mahboob, 2003; Cheung & Braine, 2007) • <i>Good at explaining complex items (grammar).</i> (Samimy, & Brutt-Griffler 1999; Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Moussu, 2010; Chun

	NS	NNS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good role model for pronunciation.</i> (Mahboob, 2003; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2005; Wu & Ke, 2009; Moussu, 2010) • <i>Casual and friendly.</i> (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Liu & Zhang, 2007; Wu & Ke, 2009; Chun, 2014) • Tolerate errors (Árva, & Medgyes, 2000) 	<p>2014; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They can communicate to the students using their L1.</i> (Medgyes, 1994; Chun, 2014; Cheung, & Braine, 2007) • <i>Have their lessons well-planned.</i> (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Liu, & Zhang, 2007; Chun, 2014)
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have difficulty in teaching grammar and explaining complex sentences.</i> (Mahboob, 2003; Chun, 2014) • <i>Lack of knowledge in teaching methodology as they obtain little experience in language learning.</i> (Medgyes, 1994; Chun, 2014) • <i>Lack of qualifications/ teaching experience.</i> (Chun, 2014; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Less proficient in speaking skills (pronunciation).</i> (Árva, & Medgyes, 2000; Mahboob, 2003; Chun, 2014; Walkinshaw, & Oanh, 2014) • <i>Active on checking errors.</i> (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Cheung, & Braine, 2007) • <i>Lack of knowledge of the western culture.</i> (Mahboob,

	NS	NNS
		2003; Chun, 2014; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) • <i>Assign more homework.</i> (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Benke & Medgyes, 2005;)

Appendix F: Published paper



'Asians' and 'Westerners': examining the perception of '(non-)native' migrant teachers of English in Thailand

Luke Jobert Earl Vencer Comprendio & Kristof Savski

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'Asians' and 'Westerners': examining the perception of '(non-)native' migrant teachers of English in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

Existing research has highlighted the complexity of the discourse surrounding '(non-)native speaker', particularly with regard to how teachers are perceived by learners. This complexity has been compounded by globalisation, which has increased transnational mobility of teachers. Thailand has been particularly affected by this, as its population of local teachers has been complemented by a growing yet highly diverse contingent of migrant teachers. In this paper, we present the results of a study conducted at three secondary schools in Southern Thailand, which used a combination of interviews and focus groups to examine how various local participants in English teaching and learning (teachers, students, parents, administrators) perceived migrant (i.e. non-Thai) English teachers, focussing particularly on how these perceptions used '(non-)nativeness' as a point of reference. Our analysis focusses on two overarching themes, 'race' and 'inequality', which also invoke links with broader discourses: Firstly, we show that the perceptions of migrant teachers were heavily racialized, with 'nativeness' equated with whiteness and Westernness and 'non-nativeness' associated with Asianness. Secondly, we find that the participants' perceptions involved significant reference to inequality, as access to 'nativeness' represented a symbolic resource accessible only to learners with sufficient economic capital.

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Introduction

Few linguistic concepts have seen such intense debate over the last few decades as 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' (below 'NS' and 'NNS').¹ While the concepts continue to be used in both academic and professional discourse in reference to individual speakers' linguistic repertoires to distinguish between their L1(s) and LX(s) (Dewaele 2018), an examination of the recent trajectory of 'NS' and 'NNS' signals a gradual shift from dichotomous, structural conceptualizations toward approaches centred on examining '(non-)nativeness' as a socially constructed category in which both agency and complexity may be found (Moussou and Llorca 2008). With regard to English, the former type is exemplified particularly by Kachru's (1985) widely cited 'three circles' framework, which uses primarily historical criteria to draw lines between 'NS', found in the Inner Circle (UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), and 'NNS', found in the Outer and Expanding Circles (consisting of former colonies and countries with no historical ties to the UK, respectively). While this framework had a key role in challenging embedded discourses about the ownership of English, it has in recent years seen criticism for issues like racial bias (since it exclusively associated 'nativeness' with white-majority nations, see Motha 2006), particularly as the

conceptualisation of '(non-)nativeness' has increasingly focussed on how the 'NS'-'NNS' dichotomy is used to perpetuate global inequalities (see e.g. Holliday 2015), particularly on racial grounds (Ruecker 2011; Shuck 2006).

A particularly dynamic part of the work on these concepts has focussed on teachers, examining the issue both from their perspectives and from those of others. A series of qualitative and quantitative studies has, for instance, highlighted a relatively systematic set of traits that learners associate with '(non-)nativeness'. Among those associated with 'NS' teachers are, for instance, both positive characteristics, such as linguistic proficiency, authenticity and cultural knowledge, as well as negative traits, such as a perceived inability to empathise with students in their position as L2 learners or to provide detailed metalinguistic feedback (see e.g. Chun 2014; Mahboob 2004; Rao 2010). The ambivalence identified by these studies is generally mirrored by the reported perceptions of 'NNS' teachers, and it is thus unsurprising that their findings do not unequivocally report preference for either type among learners, despite the fact that studies of recruitment practices often find an almost overwhelming fixation on 'NS' teachers by employers (Mahboob and Golden 2013; Ruecker and Ives 2015). A further and more recent body of research has focussed on the points of view of '(N)NS' teachers. Here, the focus has been predominantly on identity, with recent studies for instance examining '(N)NS' teachers' (or teacher trainees') identification with various discourses surrounding their professional lives (Aneja 2016; Gu and Canagarajah 2017; Hayes 2009, 2010).

Such studies have continually highlighted the complexity of the discourse surrounding '(non-)nativeness', a feature which is likely to be compounded by the kinds of transnational mobility associated with globalisation (Appadurai 1990), since these have also increased the movement of teachers across national borders (Appleton, Morgan, and Sives 2006). A number of recent studies has focussed on the growing population of '(N)NS' language teaching professionals working outside their home countries. Among other themes, these studies have explored the occupational cultures that develop in communities of 'expat' (i.e. white 'NS') teachers (Appleby 2013; Stanley 2013), the professional lives of migrant 'NNS' teachers (Gu and Canagarajah 2017; Petrić 2009) and their experiences during the course of their migration (Hickey 2018). There is, however, little work available which focuses on how such teachers are perceived by local actors in the destination teaching contexts. In particular, few studies appear to take into account the challenge that such migration poses for the traditional assumption that 'NS' overlaps with 'foreign' and 'NNS' with 'local' (appropriately for their contexts, such an assumption is made for instance by Chun 2014; Levis et al. 2016; Medgyes 1994; Rao 2010). While presuming such overlaps may be relevant to contexts where all non-local teachers of English are either *de jure* or *de facto* required to be 'NS' (as is the case in most East Asian contexts, see Williams 2017), it is not wholly appropriate for context where this is not the case. Findings presented by Buckingham (2014) for instance show that Omani students rated recordings differently not only according to whether the speakers were identified as 'NS' or 'NNS' teachers but, in the case of 'NNS' teachers, also according to their accent and thus, implicitly, their country of origin.

This study examines focuses on one such context, Thailand, where owing to a number of factors a large population of what we will refer to here as *migrant*² teachers of English has developed. This population is highly complex, including both 'NS' and 'NNS', different nationalities and ethnicities (incl. white and non-white Westerners, Asians, Africans), different age groups and different professional profiles. This creates a fruitful site for investigating how such differences are perceived, and in particular how '(non-)nativeness' is constructed in such a complex environment. In this paper we examine how local (Thai) English teachers, students, parents and school administrators at three schools in the Southern region of the country perceived migrant teachers of different nationalities. We focus particularly on examining the relevance of '(non-)nativeness' to this context, studying how participants used the concept of '(N)NS' in reference to the complex population of migrant teachers.

English language teaching and migrant teachers in Thailand

English language education in Thailand is at the moment in a state of flux. While the nation was not formally part of the British Empire in its history and did not, therefore, place a great deal of attention to English teaching and learning in the past, this has changed in recent decades to the extent that English is now routinely cited as one of the key priorities of the educational system (e.g. Baker and Jarunthawatchai 2017). In particular, this is presented in connection with the rising importance of regional political integration in the form of the ASEAN community, which is gradually leading to the opening up of more opportunities for workforce mobility. As English is the official lingua franca of ASEAN, this has led to various policy initiatives related to it across the region (Kirkpatrick 2010), with Thailand being no exception. In 2016, for instance, the Ministry of Education announced a dramatic upscaling of English instruction at primary level, with weekly hours increasing from 1 to 5, largely in response to the continuous poor results in national examinations as well as Thai English speakers' poor performance in international proficiency rankings (Baker and Jarunthawatchai 2017).

The key actors tasked with implementing this policy are English teachers, and it is in this regard that Thailand presents a challenging context for description. The majority of English teachers is local (i.e. Thai), though within this group a large degree of variation exists, with some schools having a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers with appropriate proficiency in English, while many schools, particularly those outside major urban centres, have difficulty attracting such workforce (Hayes 2008, 2009, 2010). While Thai teachers of English form the majority, a significant number of teaching staff are non-Thai, and it is on how these teachers are perceived that this study focusses. The total number of international teachers has been estimated to lie between 30,000 and 50,000 (Maxwell 2015), though a precise count is nearly impossible to achieve due to the diversity of the educational system (which includes both public and private schools and universities as well as international schools, tutoring schools, online schools, etc.), the *ad hoc* nature of many contracts (summer jobs, internships, volunteering, etc.), the relative lack of oversight by government agencies, and other factors.

What is clear is that the population of international teachers in Thailand is highly diverse in terms of its demographics and that this is also to an extent embedded in socio-economic inequalities. As is the case in other Asian nations (Ruecker and Ives 2015), Thai educational institutions appear to exhibit a great degree of preference for 'NS' when recruiting English teachers (Hickey 2018; Jindapitak *in press*). However, unlike nations like Japan and Korea, Thailand does not require international English teachers to be from 'NS' (Inner Circle) nations, though citizens of all other countries are required to take an English test such as TOEIC, TOEFL or IELTS. Thus, a significant share of international teachers is from nations traditionally considered as 'NNS', including those in Europe (e.g. Germany, Italy), Asia (particularly the Philippines and India) and Africa (e.g. Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya). Vast differences exist, however, between how these groups are treated, with Asians and Africans typically commanding lower salaries and often facing negative attitudes and suspicion in their interactions with local authorities (Hickey 2018).

The Thai job market for international teachers is similarly complex with regard to the level and type of qualification attained and the amount of teaching experience attained before arriving in the country. While some English instructors hold teaching degrees and have teaching experience before arriving in Thailand, these have traditionally been in the minority when compared to other groups. A number of early English teachers, for instance, came to Thailand as Christian missionaries (Darasawang 2007; for a more detailed breakdown of this phenomenon, see Varghese and Johnston 2007). Another traditionally significant source of teaching workforce is the large contingent of retirees, primarily from North America and Europe, who use English teaching as a means of supplementing their pensions (Howard 2008, 2009). More recently, there has also been an influx of much younger instructors who in many cases use teaching jobs to facilitate travel around the region and of established professionals seeking to shift their profiles into a new field. The Thai educational system is

relatively accommodating for such new entrants into the English teaching field, since higher-level teaching qualifications (e.g. PGCE) are not required by most employers, with the government mandating only that teachers must be holders of undergraduate degrees in any field and must have a teaching qualification such as TEFL or CELTA.

Methodology

Selection of research sites

The study was conducted at three government secondary schools located in and around a medium-sized city in Southern Thailand (population approx. 150,000). Given the diversity that characterises the population of international English teachers in the Thai context, a decision made early in this study was to try and select research sites in a way that would take into account this diversity. We thus made our selection based on a survey of secondary schools located in and around the city, focussing in particular on trying to gain insight into their hiring policies with regard to teachers of different nationalities. We found that none of the government schools in the area employed teachers only from traditional 'NS' nations (UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), with either a mixture of 'NS' and 'NNS' teachers or exclusively 'NNS' teachers being employed. It was thus decided to select schools which would represent this situation best and would have different balances of nationalities among their teaching staff. The three schools ultimately selected thus employed teachers from traditional 'NS' nations (UK, New Zealand) as well as from the more ambiguously positioned South Africa³, from a European nation (Russia), from Africa (Nigeria) and Asia (India and the Philippines) (see Table 1).

Participants

The aim of the data collection was to capture the voices of different kinds of stakeholders in English teaching and learning at each school, which is why we decided to approach four groups of participants. Firstly, we were interested in the way that recipients of English instruction and their guardians reflected on the role of migrant teachers and the meaning and significance of '(non-)nativeness' and thus decided that both students and parents would be approached. Second, we aimed to examine the views of those coming into contact with international teachers as co-workers, thus collecting data with both local (i.e. Thai) teachers of English as well as those holding administrative positions, though at each school there was significant overlap between these two categories because the responsibilities of the Head of the English Department included both administration and teaching. In total, this led us to collect data from 105 participants, including 65 students, 18 parents, 16 teachers and 6 administrators (see Table 2 for detailed breakdown).

Table 1. Review of research sites and migrant teacher nationalities.

School	Nationalities of migrant teachers ^a
School A	1 each from India, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom
School B	4 from the Philippines, 2 from South Africa
School C	3 from the Philippines, 1 from Nigeria

^aNote that these were the figures reported at the time of data collection (November-December 2018).

Table 2. Overview of participants.

	Students	Parents	Local English teachers	Administrators
School A	24	8	6 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Director)
School B	20	5	5 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Director)
School C	21	5	5 plus Head of English	2 (Head of English & Vice Director)

Data collection procedures⁴

As the aim of our study was to examine the participants' construction of '(non-)nativeness', we used a combination of interviews and focus groups in order to provide them with as much opportunity as possible to voice their views. Interviews were used with parents, teachers and administrators partly to enable a more in-depth discussion with these actors but also as a matter of convenience to them, as we judged that it would be a significant imposition to try and coordinate their schedules and organise group activities. In most cases, the interviews were conducted one-on-one and in-person and lasted around 20–40 min, but we also allowed for exceptions where convenient for the participants – in some cases, interviews were thus conducted with two participants at the same time. Focus groups were conducted with 5–8 students at a time and lasted around 30–60 min. Our decision to use focus groups with students was motivated primarily by the aim to provide them with a setting in which they would feel able to express their views most freely, and we judged that a one-on-one approach in such a case may end up being counterproductive.

The interviews and focus groups were both semi-structured in nature as lists of questions for discussion were prepared in advance while sufficient freedom was also allowed for the participants to raise relevant points. The questions ranged from ones related more generally to English teaching and learning (these were generally introduced at the beginning) and ones more specifically related to the issue of '(non-)nativeness' (these were usually raised later, once the participants had already had the opportunity to become comfortable with the situation). The questions were also developed separately for each type of participant, though some were asked in all cases – for instance, only students were asked about the teachers they had personally encountered and only parents about whether their children liked English, but all participants were asked to explain how they could tell the difference between a 'NS' and a 'NNS' of English.

The interviews were conducted in most cases in the participants' L1 (Thai) by the first author, who is a citizen of the Philippines but has lived in Thailand since childhood and is highly proficient in Thai. It is at this point, however, that we must acknowledge the co-constructed nature of interviews, as the fact that the interviewer was a non-Thai may well have influenced how the participants reacted to the situation and the questions posed. For instance, while all the participants were approached in Thai, several of the teachers asked to be interviewed in English, which may have been a reaction to their perception of the interviewer as a non-Thai. We thus do not claim to provide an unmediated and unbiased insight into the participants' mind – as indeed we believe interview-based studies cannot (Savski *in press*) – but simply treat the responses as context-bound samples of broader discourses.

Data analysis

Once the data had been collected, it was transcribed and translated into English with the help of a local research assistant. The data was then coded manually in two stages, each conducted by one of the authors. The first stage, which was carried out by the first author, consisted of a directed content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) aided by a coding scheme developed from previous studies about '(N)NS' language teachers. This coding scheme was created by extracting the traits found to be associated with a particular group of teachers (e.g. 'inferior language competence' with regard to 'NNS' and 'possesses relevant cultural knowledge' for 'NS') by previous research (e.g. Chun 2014; Medgyes 1994; Rao 2010). Such a deductive approach was chosen to allow a more focused initial analysis, which proved useful given the amount of data that had been collected. In contrast, the second stage was carried out by the second author and took a more conventional approach to content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005), seeking to identify emergent themes independent of the coding scheme. Such a collaborative approach to coding was particularly valuable, since it allowed both for the identification of

themes already described in existing literature and for the emergence of new themes specific to the local context.

Results and discussion

Theme 1: Race

As explained above, the initial focus of the analysis was on examining the perceptions of ‘NS’ and ‘NNS’ migrant teachers. During this analysis, it immediately became obvious that the participants use of categories like ‘NS’ and ‘NNS’ made reference to a number of different themes. Among these were more traditional linguistic criteria, with many participants particularly making references to their perception that ‘NS’ had superior pronunciation and spoken fluency. However, a number of the themes observed was not related to language but to other factors. Among these themes, ‘race’ was the most clearly articulated, being perhaps most evident when participants were asked how they could tell the difference between a ‘NS’ and ‘NNS’ teacher:

For me, native speakers are those who have white skin and blonde hair, they have a straight long nose and their accent is good. Non-native speakers can be anyone who doesn’t look like what I have just mentioned but they can speak English. (B-T1⁵)

Yes, I can by looking at their skin colour. Native speakers have white skin and blonde hair and for those who are non-native speakers they look like Thais, such as teachers from the Philippines. (B-SG3)

I can’t really see the difference of both teachers. I just look at the colour of their hair. If it’s blonde and they have fair skin they are native speakers and if they look like Thais they are non-native speakers, like teachers from the Philippines. (C-PG1)

These three examples illustrate the kinds of associations made between ‘nativeness’ and ‘whiteness’ and conversely between ‘non-nativeness’ and ‘Asianness’. These connections were made by a significant majority of participants, generally through references to particular idealised physical features of Caucasians, such as ‘white skin’, ‘blonde hair’ and ‘blue eyes’. A particular highlight of the discourse, as exhibited by these extracts, is absence of references to particular countries of origin or nationalities when discussing ‘NS’. Such homogeneous construction of ‘whiteness’ and ‘Westernness’ has been previously found to be a feature of Thai public discourse, being linked in particular to the umbrella term *farang*, often universally applied to all whites ‘without any specification of nationality, culture, ethnicity, language, or whatever’ (Winichakul 1994, 5; see also Kitiarsa 2010). It is here contrasted with a much narrower understanding of ‘NNS’, who while typically being defined simply through their lack of *farang*-like physical features (e.g. by B-T1) were most often identified specifically with Asia, in particular with the Philippines (e.g. in B-SG1 and C-PG1). This rather narrow categorisation of ‘NNS’ migrant teachers may be seen simply as a reflection of the high number of Filipinos in Thailand (estimated to be around 15,000 by Novio 2018, based on data provided by the Embassy of the Philippines in Bangkok) and as well as of the fact that they were the most common migrant teacher nationality in two out of three of our research sites. However, such associations were also made by participants at the school where no Filipino teachers were employed at the time, pointing perhaps to the existence of a broader pattern of identification of ‘NNS’ teachers of English with that particular nationality.

The extracts above also point to the fact that these categories were constructed relationally, by using Thais as a point of reference and drawing differences between migrant teachers on the basis of perceived proximity or distance. While this often involved references to physical features (as above in B-SG1 and C-PG1), it was also commonly referred to with regard to culture, a further source of differentiation between ‘NS’ and ‘NNS’ teachers:

By learning English with native speakers, aside from the fact that we can learn the correct way of speaking English and the correct pronunciation, we can also learn their culture. Because they are native speakers, they have deep knowledge of their culture and they can deliver it to us in a much more interesting way than non-native speakers. (B-SG2)

[The students] are braver to talk to the Filipino teachers. I think this is because the students think that [Filipinos] are like Thai teachers, that they have the same culture so they can approach them, but if the teacher is a *farang* with white skin and blonde hair, they don't dare to approach them. (C-PG2)

Another thing is I think since most of the non-native speakers are also Asians so we almost share the same culture so they tend to understand our culture, they understand us and the students well, whereas the white teachers do not bother adapting or adjusting to fit in well with the culture, especially with the school, which is sometimes our problem with them. (A-T2)

For non-native teachers, they are friendly and they tend to understand us more, the only thing I find strange about is their accent. (A-SG3)

These responses point to a somewhat paradoxical treatment of culture by the participants. On the one hand, culture was viewed as a type of knowledge that students needed to acquire as part of their English classes, and in this regard it was seen as a privileged resource to which only 'NS' teachers had access. One of the participants in B-SG1, for instance, places culture in parallel with grammar and pronunciation, with the learning of all three being seen as an advantage of having classes with 'NS' teachers. On the other hand, however, culture was also seen as a major disadvantage of 'NS' speakers, since they, as Westerners, were seen as distant from Thai culture. This created a situation in which Filipino teachers, while placed lower on an overall hierarchy as a result of their race and perceived inferior language ability, were treated as part of the same overall cultural community – though still treated as an Other. A particular feature of the above examples is how perceived personality traits are associated with culture, with Filipino teachers specifically seen to be more approachable (C-PG2 and A-T2) or even friendlier (A-SG3) on the basis of their perceived cultural proximity, while 'NS'/Western teachers are seen as less approachable (C-PG2) and even as unwilling to adapt to local culture (A-T2).

Such ambivalence suggests that the responses here draw significantly on broader themes present in the discourse about the West in Thailand, with the key ideology characteristic of this discourse and voiced by many of the participants in this research being Occidentalism. This ideology has been derived in recent decades as a counterpart to Orientalism, first described by Said (1978) as a cultural representation of the East (Orient) through the eyes of the West. Its key features are an exaggeration of difference between East and West, with an ambivalent combination of ideas – exoticism and romanticism but also danger and irrationality – being projected on the former, ultimately serving to support Western imperialist policies toward Eastern nations (*ibid.*). While Occidentalism acts in the opposite direction, as it involves the cultural representation of the West through the eyes of the East (Carrier 1992), it has many of the same features. Among these is an ambivalent representation of the Other (the West and Westerners), which is at the same time idealised as economically more developed and culturally more advanced and demonised as a threat to local (Oriental) society and culture (Buruma and Margalit 2004; Carrier 1995). Such Occidentalism is a prominent part of Thai public discourse, where romanticised images of the *farang* are routinely juxtaposed with rhetoric stressing the need to maintain cultural distinctness in the face of Western cultural influence (Kitiarsa 2010; Nedpogaeo 2001), drawing on historical narratives centred on the nation's successful resistance to colonisation (Anderson 1998; Winichakul 1994).

Several of the themes emerging from the data suggest the relevance of Occidentalism to the Asian-Western racial dichotomy. The participants' construction of an image of the white/Western 'NS' and its association with superior language ability (particularly pronunciation) and cultural knowledge can be seen as an example of the type of idealisation typical of such discourse. This connection is further reinforced by the way in which some participants stressed the exoticism of 'NS'/Westerners, positioning it as advantageous to their teaching work:

Native speakers are interesting in the eyes of the students because they are from the other side of the world and because of what they look like. The students can make conversation by using phrases like 'What is your country like?' 'What is the weather like there?' and even about their appearance, their hair colour, the [shape of their] nose or anything else about them can lead to conversation. The students can also learn something else aside

from the normal lesson. They can learn their culture, which some students find interesting, so they like to learn with native teachers. But non-native teachers look like Thais, especially the teachers from the Philippines, so they may not be interesting to the students. Even though they are very good at teaching, there is nothing much for the students to ask. (B-T4)

This extract demonstrates in stark terms the distinction drawn by participants between ‘NS’/Western and ‘NNS’/Asian teachers. As several other participants, this teacher expresses her expectation that both the Westerners’ appearance and their culture would act as motivating factors for students due to their exoticism, which is here contrasted to the ordinariness of Filipino teachers, again positioning them as part of the same overarching cultural community as Thais. However, what must be stressed here is that this contrast is embedded into the ambivalence inherent to Occidentalism – underlined by the fact that the same participant stated only a few responses later that Westerners ‘must also be aware of the Thai culture before coming here, so that they can understand the students’, thus again invoking the rhetoric of East–West cultural difference.

Theme 2: Inequality

A consequence of the kind of idealisation of ‘NS’/white teachers described above is an inherent inequality among migrant teachers, one which is not merely discursive but also has a distinct economic dimension. Methanonphakhun and Deocampo (2016) draw on narratives of ten migrant teachers of English in Thailand, finding that many non-white ‘NNS’ teachers had experienced discrimination on the job market, most often being excluded from high-paying jobs. Indeed, the participants in our own study had made reference to such differences, with the director of School B quoting the monthly salary paid to a ‘NS’ teacher as 38,000 baht, compared to the 18,000 paid to a ‘Filipino’ teacher. Such perceived disparities in economic value between different migrant teachers were closely related to gaps in their symbolic value (i.e. the socio-cultural value afforded to them, Bourdieu 1986), with the racialized idealisation presented above compounded by our participants’ beliefs about language learning:

I prefer native speakers even though I think both [native and non-native speakers] are good teachers. But I chose native speakers because if I learn English with them for a long time, I may pick up their accent and their style of speaking English which is better. (B-SG4)

For me it’s all about the accent and pronunciation. It’s quite hard to understand the accent of some non-native teachers because it’s not clear or correct. If we are taught to pronounce words correctly then we will have good pronunciation and accent like native speakers but if we are taught in the wrong way, then we will also say it in the wrong way. (A-SG1)

From what I have noticed. Most of the English teachers that my daughter has learned with are Filipinos. They are funny and energetic. They are also approachable and they get along with the students quite well. But their accent and pronunciation are not that clear and not correct. My daughter learned with a Filipino teacher when she was in M.1 [Grade 8, the first year of secondary school] and she didn’t win the English story telling competition because her accent was the same as the Filipino teacher who trained her. She lost to a student who was learning English with native speakers. I have met with several Filipino teachers and found that they have the same accent. (C-PG2)

These extracts present the ways that our participants as language learners (or learners’ guardians in the case of parents) related to migrant teachers when constructing their own identity as learners of English. Among the students we interviewed (exemplified here by B-SG4 and A-SG1), there was strong agreement that learning with ‘NS’ teachers was a precondition for them to achieve what they considered to be the goal of learning English, namely to achieve ‘native’-like competence. Some participants (such as C-PG2) also articulated this belief from the opposite perspective, namely that learning with ‘NNS’ teachers would lead to failure to achieve this goal. The assertions made by the parent in C-PG2 also underline how the fear of underachievement fostered by such beliefs, part of the broader ideology of native-speakerism deeply rooted in the English teaching field (Holliday

2015), can lead to the overriding of positive attitudes formed through contact with specific ‘NNS’ migrant teachers.

As discussed above, such unequal perceptions painted the picture of a field where great disparities in economic and symbolic value exist among migrant teachers. Yet, in the case of several of our participants the kind of inequality that also appeared to be relevant to their perception of migrant teachers was one which affected their learning contexts.

When I was in my junior year, we had many native teachers, almost all of them. But now, I think the majority are non-native teachers. I think it has something to do with their salary, because I think native speakers demand a salary which is too high and the school can't afford to hire them so they don't stay for a long time. (A-SG1)

For the past few years we used to employ native speakers but at this time we only employ Filipino teachers and one from Nigeria. [...] But this also depends on the budget because, you know, native speakers demand high salaries, 35,000 for one native teacher. So to reduce costs, we changed to hire Filipinos or others who are non-native speakers. Now we also have a Nigerian teacher. (C-TG3)

In these statements, both participants make reference to inequality, seeing their own schools as disadvantaged due to their lack of economic resources and resultant inability to secure prized forms of symbolic capital (i.e. ‘NS’ teachers). Before beginning the analysis, we hypothesised that such inequality would become relevant to our study, primarily because of the significant differences we observed while collecting data at the three schools we had selected. School A, the only one which employed ‘NS’ teachers, was located in the city centre, was highly selective in terms of student admissions and also boasted one of the highest levels of achievement in the regional comparison of scores in national standardised examinations. School B, where two South African teachers were employed alongside a majority of Filipinos, was located in a recently urbanised area near the city limits, and while it was also selective with regard to its admissions, the achievements of their students were lower than those at School A, though they still slightly exceeded the regional average. School C, with its population of teachers from the Philippines and Nigeria, was located in a rural area around 20 km from the city centre, practiced minimal selection of its students, whose achievements on standardised exams were slightly below the regional average. In many ways, our study thus ended up engaging with the urban-rural divide in Thai education, one which divides distinct learning environments (in terms of resources, teacher qualification; for an account of such contexts, see Hayes 2010) and language ecologies – English is ubiquitous in many urban areas of Thailand (e.g. Huebner 2006) yet has little presence in rural contexts (e.g. Draper 2012). Due to the existence of such disparities between the schools and because of the different mixes of migrant teacher nationalities, we anticipated that the responses of our participants would reflect differing perceptions, in turn indicating contrasts in how these had been formed through their socialisation into differing learning contexts (Shin 2014).

During our analysis, however, it became clear that this hypothesis had been only partly correct, as inequality was indeed relevant to our participants, but rather than being seen as an issue merely by those at the less advantaged schools, in particular the more rural School C, it was raised across all schools, including the elite School A. It must be noted that what this indicates is not necessarily the existence (or absence) of inequality but its presence in the perceptions of our participants. The fact that we chose to only investigate government schools, where salaries and surcharges are regulated, may have influenced this, since it is only private international schools, free of government regulation in the fees they charge parents and the salaries they offer to teachers, that can completely fulfil the aspiration of our participants for white-/‘NS’-only instruction. It is the fact that the costs involved make such learning inaccessible to all but the richest in Thai society that may explain why our participants’ perceptions of migrant teachers featured feelings of disadvantage and exclusion. Indeed, such a feeling of exclusion can be seen as an inherent part of an ideology like native-speakerism, since by idealising ‘NS’ and stressing their importance to learners’ goals it affords them such high economic and cultural value that they become inaccessible to those with low economic capital. Native-speakerism is in this way similar to other ideologies associated with English learning, which

perpetuate inequality by placing great symbolic value on types of learning ultimately inaccessible to the majority (Tupas 2007).

Conclusions

In this paper, we have presented two overarching themes that emerged from a qualitative study of how migrant teachers were perceived by participants at three secondary schools in Southern Thailand. The first of these themes was race, which the participants referred to as a criterion for determining the difference between 'NS' and 'NNS' teachers. We argued that the racialisation of '(non-)nativeness' invokes the discourse of Occidentalism, common in the Thai context, which promotes a generalised image of the white Westerner (*farang*) and largely backgrounds differences of nationality and language. The second theme observed was inequality, which could be observed both in the contextual differences between the three schools and the responses provided by participants. As indicated, '(non-)nativeness' was a key part of how participants articulated their awareness of this inequality, being positioned as a symbolic resource key to the achievement of learning aims but also inaccessible to a large part of our participants.

Conclusions can be drawn from these results from two perspectives, that of the objects of the study (i.e. migrant teachers) and that of the participants themselves. From the perspective of the migrant teachers, the picture that emerges from the data is one of vast discursive and economic disparity. The idealisation of 'NS' competence and cultural knowledge signals a clear preference on the part of our participants for, if the association of 'nativeness' and whiteness is taken into consideration, white/'NS' teachers of English. At the same time, however, we observed that white/'NS' teachers were also consistently treated as an Other due to their perceived distance from Thai culture. We may thus conclude that in such a discourse, whites/'NS', while undoubtedly privileged economically due to the higher salaries afforded to them by their symbolic value, are also instrumentalized by being treated primarily as resources necessary to achieve a higher goal while having little prospect of overcoming the Occidentalist discourse of cultural difference. Similarly ambivalent is the position of 'NNS' teachers, primarily Filipinos, for whom Hickey (2018) argues acceptance in a common cultural community paradoxically leads to lower symbolic and economic valuation on the labour market. Lower still in the hierarchy are non-Asian 'NNS' teachers, whose relative absence from the categorisation constructed by our participants highlights the double exclusion they face by virtue of being neither white (i.e. not privileged as a valuable learning resource) nor Asian (i.e. not accepted in a common cultural community).

With regard to the perspective of our participants, our results highlight the extent to which perceptions of '(N)NS' migrant teachers may be determined by culturally mediated ideology rather than first-hand experience. Our study, like others conducted with Thai participants (e.g. McKenzie, Kiti-kanan, and Boriboon 2016; Ploywattanawong and Trakulkasemsuk 2014), indicates an overall preference for learning with speakers of 'NS' varieties of English and for the acquisition of these varieties, which was articulated as the preferred learning outcome across all three schools, irrespective of the whether the migrant teachers at the school were 'NS' or not. Such a preference greatly contributes to the inequality found among migrant teachers of different nationalities, but as we point out it also impacts the perceptions of local actors, since it appears to foster a sense of exclusion among the many for whom access to 'NS' teachers is limited or non-existent. This highlights the multidimensional ways in which '(non-)nativeness' can foster a sense of exclusion among those on the wrong side of the dichotomy it promotes, not only as an idealised and perpetually unreachable learning goal (Aneja 2016) but also as an idealised, prized and equally unreachable form of symbolic capital for many involved in English teaching and learning. It also points to the fact that while English is a global business dominated by large corporations and embedded in broader geopolitical inequalities, significant localised disparities are also unavoidable. The ways in which such micro-level disparities affect everyday practice in English teaching and learning merit further examination,

since it is they which most often immediately impact the way English is experienced by those involved in it.

Notes

1. While we acknowledge that these terms are problematic in the sense that they promote a deficit view of multilingualism (see Dewaele 2018), we also found it difficult to avoid them given their continued relevance in academic and professional discourse. In consultation with the editor, we have thus elected to signify their problematic nature by placing them between quotation marks throughout.
2. We use this term here in the broadest possible sense to stress the diversity of the types of mobility available in contemporary ELT to refer to all those who came to Thailand from other countries and are presently involved in teaching English there. This thus includes both short-term and long-term migrants, full-time and part-time employees, and is irrespective of race/ethnicity, country of origin, professional background or experience.
3. Here, we refer to both the ambivalent position of South Africa in geographical categorizations of '(N)NS' as well as to its ambiguous treatment in Thailand, where white SA teachers are often treated as *de facto* 'NS' by employers but are also required by immigration authorities to submit test scores irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds.
4. The data collection procedures described were reviewed and approved by the ethics committee responsible for social science research at the institution where the research was conducted.
5. The letters in each code refer to the school where the example comes from (in this case, school B) and the type of participant (S for student, T for teacher, P for parent, VD for Vice Director and D for Director), while the number identifies the interview (or focus group when marked with a G) where the statement was made.

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