



Non-native English Speaker Teachers: Uncovering Thai EFL Teachers' Instructional Practices in a Thai International Program.

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Presentation Outline

- Definition of terms
- Literature review
- Theoretical framework
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- Research methodology
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- Conclusions and Implications



Definition of terms

Native speaker of a language is one who speaks that language as his/her first language; accordingly, a non-native speaker is one who speaks that language as a second or foreign language.

(Braine, 2010: p.9)



Definition of terms

Medgyes (1994: p. 10) defined a native speaker as:

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



Definition of terms

The Expanding Circle
e.g., China, Indonesia,
Thailand

The Outer Circle
e.g., India,
Philippines, Singapore

The Inner Circle
e.g., The USA,
UK, Australia

Figure 1: Three Concentric Circles of World Englishes
(Kachru, 2006, p. 196)



Literature Review

Medgyes (1994) noted that NESTs and non-NESTs are two different “species” (p. 27). Medgyes proposed four hypotheses about their differences.

1. they differ in terms of their language proficiency.
2. they differ in terms of their teaching behavior.
3. the discrepancy in language proficiency accounts for most of the differences found in their teaching behavior.
4. they can be equally good teachers in their own terms



Literature Review

NESTs are superior in teaching:

- Pronunciation, reading skills, and listening and speaking skills and overall (Grubbs, et al., 2010)
- Culture of English-speaking countries (Ma, 2012)
- Vocabulary (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2002)
- English conversation (Park, 2009)
- Appropriate language use and colloquial expressions (Medgyes, 2001)



Literature Review

Non-NESTs are superior in teaching grammar, writing skills, learning strategy, more accuracy and use formal language, share the same language and cultural background with their students, and empathy and sensitive to students' needs.

(Medgyes, 2001; Braine, 2010; Reves and Medgyes, 1994; Park, 2009; Chen, 2008; and Maum, 2002)



Literature Review

Available literature show that students prefer NESTs because they have;

- More linguistic strengths and better knowledge in their own culture (Alseweed, 2012; Sung 2010)
- More language competence (Árva and Medgyes, 2000)
- More friendly and provided students relaxed learning classroom atmosphere (Wu, 2009; Park, 2009)
- Better English accents and speak English naturally (Braine, 2010)



Research Purpose

1. To investigate Chinese students' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of Thai EFL teachers' instructional practices in an English international program



Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the notion of four hypotheses (Medgyes, 1994: p. 27)

1. NESTs and non-NESTs differ in terms of language proficiency.
2. NESTs and non-NESTs differ in terms of teaching behavior.
3. The discrepancy in language proficiency accounts for most of the differences found in their teaching behavior.
4. Both NESTs and non-NESTs can be equally good teachers in their own terms.



Research Methodology

Research Participants

The participants were 38 Chinese undergraduates from an international program at a Thai university.

- Their ages are in between 18 to 23 years old.
- They are the 3rd year exchange students from a university in Yunnan Province, China.
- They study English with both NESTs and Thai EFL teachers (Most teachers (86.96%) are Thais).



Research Methodology

Data Collection and Analysis

This study utilizes a set of questionnaires for data collection.

- There are 37 closed-response items.
- There are 6 open-response items.

The data from closed-response items were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Data from open-response items were analyzed by Open and axial coding techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).



Research Results

1. Students' preference of teachers

No.	Statements	Frequency				
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
1	I prefer Thai EFL teachers as my teachers.	2.60	5.30	26.30	47.40	18.40 65.80%
2	I prefer native English speaking teachers as my teachers.	0.00	2.60	13.20	47.40	36.80 84.20%
3	If I could choose, I would prefer to have both native English speaking teachers and Thai EFL teachers to teach me.	2.60	5.30	7.90	44.70	39.50 84.20%

*1 = strongly disagreed 2 = disagreed 3 = undecided 4 = agreed 5 = strongly agreed



Research Results

1. Students' preference of teachers

Prefer NESTs

- Have better English accent and pronunciation
- Provide more opportunities for language practice
- Better improve students' listening and speaking skills
- Provide sufficient cultural knowledge of English-speaking countries for students

Prefer Thai EFL Teachers

- Use computer and power point presentations
- Create worksheets for students
- Create interesting cooperative learning activities
- Work in groups
- Give time for students to practice
- Provide details and examples and help answer questions
- Try to provide more explanation when students do not understand
- Can support students' learning and be more aware of their learning difficulties and weaknesses.



2. Thai EFL teachers' knowledge of teaching English language skills

No.	Statements	Frequency				
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
1	Thai EFL teachers are good at explaining grammar .	2.60	18.40	23.70	42.10	13.20 55.30%
2	Thai EFL teachers could teach reading well.	0.00	13.20	23.70	63.20	0.00
3	Thai EFL teachers could teach writing well.	0.00	7.90	31.60	50.00	10.50 60.50%
4	Thai EFL teachers also teach language learning strategies to help students learn better.	0.00	10.50	15.80	63.20	10.50 73.70%

*1 = strongly disagreed 2 = disagreed 3 = undecided 4 = agreed 5 = strongly agreed



2. Thai EFL teachers' knowledge of teaching English language skills

The qualitative findings show that Thai EFL teachers:

- Have adequate grammar knowledge
- Patient to provide explanation about grammar and writing for students
- Have students practice language item in class

Thai EFL teachers also good at teaching language learning strategies for students.

2. Thai EFL teachers' knowledge of teaching listening and speaking skills

NO	Statements	Frequency				
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
1	Thai EFL teachers could teach listening and speaking skills well.	5.30	10.50	21.10	60.50 63.10%	2.60
2	Listening and speaking skills should be taught by Thai EFL teachers	2.60	26.30	31.60	34.20	5.30
3	Thai EFL teachers would give good feedback for me to improve my listening and speaking skills .	2.60	10.50	28.90	50.00 57.90%	7.90
4	Thai EFL teachers could teach pronunciation well.	7.90 42.10%	34.20	28.90	23.70	5.30
5	Pronunciation should be taught by Thai EFL teachers.	7.90 50.00%	42.10	28.90	18.40	2.60
6	Thai EFL teachers could give good feedback for me to improve my pronunciation .	2.60	28.90	26.30	39.50	2.60



3. Thai EFL teachers' linguistics weaknesses

Thai EFL teachers have linguistic weaknesses in terms of:

- English accents and pronunciation
 - incorrect pronunciation and hinders understanding
 - speak and read fast in class and that leads incorrect pronunciation
 - pronounce English word unclear
 - for example, umbrella, culture, and computer



3. Thai EFL teachers' linguistics weaknesses

One of the participants feel disappointed when she found that she has only a native English speaking teacher in the program.

To be honest, I hope we can have many native English speaking teachers I feel disappointed because we just have only one American teacher. ... I think we can practice our pronunciation and the sense of speaking very well if we study with a native English speaking teacher[s]. Practice makes perfect, and we can get a better improvement if we learning the knowledge with a teacher whose native language is English.....

(Student A36)



However, Chinese students view Thai EFL teachers positively. Findings show that they can:

- get more knowledge and learn vocabulary
- have opportunities to experience different accents and pronunciation
- learn how to adapt and accept Thai EFL teachers' accents



4. Thai EFL teachers' knowledge of culture

Western culture

- have lack knowledge of western culture
- supply insufficient cultural information and cultural experience for students

Thai culture

- Have bilingual competence
- Teach Thai language culture effectively
- Teach Thai history
- Teach Buddhist stories
- Teach Thai food and Thai dance



5. Effective teaching characteristics of Thai EFL Teachers

- kind and patient to student
- always smile
- friendly
- have warm-hearted
- have humorous emotions
- always support students' learning

These characteristics make Chinese students feel positive, comfortable motivated, and create friendly learning atmosphere to encourage students to learn and engage in their learning.



6. Conclusion and Implication

◦ This study suggests that:

1. International program should have balance non-NESTs and NESTs because both of them beneficial to students.
2. Well-educated Non-NESTs from native English-speaking countries, understand western culture and their own culture are the best teachers.
3. Bilingual or multilingual teachers beneficial for students more than monolingual teachers.
4. Good language teachers are not only to be qualified and knowledgeable in language teaching, but also understand their students and have good teaching characteristics.



Thank You