Winter 1-31-2024

Native Speakerism in Egypt: The Perceptions of Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) and their Employability

Dina Bebars
dbebars@aucegypt.edu

The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Native Speakerism in Egypt: The Perceptions of Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) and their Employability

A Thesis Submitted to
The Department of Applied Linguistics

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Master of Arts
in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

By
Dina Ashraf Bebars

Under the supervision of **Dr. Mariah Fairley**

December 2023

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all my fellow English language teachers who have ever been subjugated to discrimination or disparity throughout their careers. You are valuable. Do not let anyone make you believe differently.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank a number of extraordinary individuals who, without their constant help and support, this thesis would not have come to fruition.

Dr. Atta Gebril, Dr. Reem Bassiouney and Dr. William Crawford, thank you for taking the time to give me ample constructive criticism. Most importantly, thank you for believing in me.

To Dr. Mariah Fairley, I am especially grateful for your empathetic and scholarly insights, as well as your dedication to this study. Without you, I would not have been able to do this.

To all the interviewees and questionnaire respondents of this study, without your participation, this study would have not been possible - literally. Thank you.

To my friends and family, thank you for being patient with me.

I appreciate you all.

Abstract

Discriminatory hiring practices toward non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) have been researched, debated, and criticized globally. Yet, such recruitment practices are still prevalent in the TESOL field due to perceptions of the linguistic prowess of the native English-speaking teacher (NEST). Given the existence of such practices, this study aims to identify the criteria that employers look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo, to examine how nativeness is ranked within these criteria, and to investigate if there is a connection between the perceptions of administrators, parents, and teachers regarding NNESTs and hiring practices. A mixed-methods research design was employed to gather data regarding the perceptions of Egyptian NNESTs in Cairo. First, a content analysis of six private, international institutions' career webpages was undertaken. Second, a correspondence testing treatment was used by sending CVs to the same six institutions used for the content analysis. Third, a questionnaire was distributed to parents of students enrolled at private, international institutions in Cairo. Lastly, interviews with four administrators, two parents and six Egyptian NNESTs were conducted. Results showed that the explicit perceptions towards NNESTs and NESTs expressed by administrators and parents were mostly neutral, with instances of native speaker biases with regards to accent preferences and cultural competence. NNESTs interviewed also narrated feelings of inferiority and disparate situations before and after employment when compared to their NEST colleagues. It has been illustrated by administrators and parents that there is a lack of understanding of what native speakerism is and how some of their explicit and implicit perceptions may perpetuate the native speaker fallacy. These findings indicate the need for awareness-raising content focusing on native speakerism in teacher training programs, TESOL programs, and other ESL/EFL workshops. Additionally, implementing intercultural learning projects both within Egyptian ELTE programs and within the language learning classroom can help dispel near-native ideals and anxieties while also exposing students to World Englishes, which is necessary to be able to communicate with other non-native English speakers such as most living in Egypt. These implications will ultimately yield an environment where embracing trans-speakerism is possible, emphasizing diversity, equity and inclusion for English language teachers and learners in Egypt.

Keywords: Native Speakerism - NEST - NNEST - English language teachers - perceptions - discrimination - biases - employment - Global Englishes and World Englishes

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

AUC: American University in Cairo

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

NEST: Native English-Speaking Teacher

NNEST: Non-native English-Speaking Teacher

NNS: Non-native Speaker

NS: Native Speaker

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

"Preference will be given at this time to qualified applicants who are U.S. citizens," is the last line in an online job posting on a private Egyptian university's faculty vacancies page. Another quick perusal of the same website presents a second instance of "preference" based on nationality/language identity: "Preference is given to applicants whose first language is English." Although the term "native" was never explicitly used in either of these statements, it is implied that while hiring, nativeness would deem itself beneficial to those whose L1 is English (or those who grew up in Kachru's, 1985, inner-circle countries); i.e. native speakers (as cited in Crystal, 2003).

For decades and most recently (see: Smith, 2022), discriminatory hiring practices toward non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) due to the preference of their native English-speaking teacher (NEST) counterparts has been researched, debated, and criticized globally. Yet, such recruitment practices are still prevalent in the TESOL field due to perceptions regarding the linguistic prowess of the NST (Galloway & Rose, 2015). As an NNEST, I have encountered recruiters favoring the NEST while hiring. Studies by Clark and Paran (2007), Kiczkowiak (2020), Mahboob et al. (2004), and Moussu (2006) investigated recruiters' attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs and found that while teaching experience, qualifications and interview performance were highly regarded when making hiring decisions, recruiters still placed substantial importance on nativeness. In March 2006, the TESOL Board of Directors published a position statement against the discrimination of non-native speakers of English, stating that the board "strongly opposes discrimination against non-native English speakers in the field of English language teaching (ELT). Rather, English language proficiency, teaching experience, and professionalism should be assessed along a continuum of professional preparation" (TESOL, 2006). Unfortunately, since its publication, it seems that not much has changed, as most of the studies to date are in consensus that native speakerism is very much still an issue (Clark & Paran, 2007; Jenks & Lee, 2020; S. Lee & Du, 2021; Ruecker & Ives, 2015; Saba & Frangieh, 2021). Given the existence of such practices, I am interested in investigating the perceptions of NNESTs and their employability in the Egyptian context to evaluate the extent to which native speakerism plays a role (if at all) in the employment of NNESTs in Cairo and to find out where these perceptions stem from. Findings from this study will hopefully aid in the progression of a much needed paradigm shift/epistemic break regarding the tendency to favor nativeness over teaching

qualifications (amongst other vital characteristics) when hiring English language teachers (ELTs), which in turn, will contribute to the recent movement to decolonize the TESOL field (Braine, 2018).

1.2 Theoretical Background

1.2.1 Native Speakerism

The standardization of the English language began in early 1400s England with the intention to unify different varieties with a need for one standard language of governance (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Since then, the English language has spread around the world as a result of the expansion of the British Empire through settler colonization, slavery, trade, and globalization (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This mostly imposed spread caused the emergence of new varieties of English (World Englishes/New Englishes/Global Englishes) due to its contact with other languages (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Many of these varieties continued to be of national importance and eventually became official languages (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The worldwide spread of English, however, has instigated debates surrounding ownership of the language, specifically who a Native English speaker is.

How do we define a *native speaker*? The controversy behind the term "native" has deemed it difficult to define (Calafato, 2019). Some definitions aim to simplify by stating that nativeness signifies which language was learned first, which is a linguistic definition of the term (Chomsky, 1965; Cook, 1999). Others define a native speaker as one who not only learned the language first, but also achieved a fluency level that is difficult to attain post-puberty (Braine, 2012)**.** A slightly more popular definition entails that a native speaker is one who grew up in and represents the Western environment with which English speakers are associated, which is a more social definition of the term (Holliday, 2013; Medgyes, 2001; Selvi, 2019). Additionally, there is an overwhelming misconception that native speakers of English are monolingual and that non-native speakers of English are deficient in their grasp of English, which also disregards their bilingual or multilingual identities (Ellis, 2016; Selvi, 2019). As many linguistic debates began with Chomsky, so did the dichotomy between the native versus non-native speaker. In 1965, Chomsky advocated that the most reliable source in English language learning and grammatical correctness was the native speaker, which catalyzed both the initial favoritism towards NESTs and catapulted the "Non-Native Speaker Movement" in the 1990s, the aim of which was to empower NNS professionals and "create a nondiscriminatory professional environment for all TESOL members regardless of native language and place of birth" (Braine, 2018, p. 3; Javid, 2016). Arguments against Chomsky's

ideology include Paikeday's (1985) *The Native Speaker is Dead!*, Phillipson's (1992) discussion of the "native speaker fallacy," as well as the introduction of the terms World Englishes/New Englishes (Kachru, 1992) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (Jenkins, 2000; Seidlhofer, 2001) that reflect a more postmodernist, post colonialist and social constructivist view of language acquisition as opposed to Chomsky's innatist perspective (1965) (Galloway & Rose, 2015). On the other hand, opposing perspectives adhere to the need for the 'native' label as a model and goal rather than a measurement of language proficiency (Selvi, 2019).

The conceptualization of World Englishes/New Englishes raised awareness of the dominance of those who speak English as a second and/or foreign language as they greatly outnumber native speakers of English (using the multiple definitions above). Since the 1960s, Kachru's (1985) outer-expanding circle of English has grown tremendously as there are now more people speaking English as a second/foreign language than there are L1 speakers of English (a ratio of 3:1) (as cited in Crystal, 2003). Indeed, it is estimated that by 2050, the percentage of the world's population who claim English to be their L1 will decrease to less than 5% (Crystal, 2003). This gave rise to the "native speaker fallacy," which basically rejected the belief that the ideal English teacher is a native speaker of English (as cited in Braine, 2012). Phillipson (1992) was the first to challenge this belief stating that NNSs could acquire the same proficiency as NSs while also gaining the experience of learning English as a second language, which is beneficial for teaching. Unfortunately, the influx of studies that have resulted due to this movement have yet to make the desired impact on these biases as will be further illuminated by the studies on perceptions and employability of the NNEST. More recently, the *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, published in February, 2022, calculated that out of the 1,453 million speakers of English (both NSs and NNSs), only 373 million are L1 speakers of English (Eberhard et al., 2022). These statistics and those summarized by Crystal (2003) provide concrete evidence that the training of both NESTs and NNESTs regarding the integration of multilingualism within the classroom and the awareness and acceptance of international English by policy makers is imperative in order for English speakers (both L1 and L2) to be able to survive in a linguistically diverse world.

Recent trends in research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have advocated for the decolonization of the TESOL field, which is especially relevant to the native speakerism movement. Due to the popularity of English as a global and international language, multiple types of dominance have emerged, such as accent and employment discrimination of non-native English speakers/teachers, exerted by those who are deemed native speakers of

English (Pennycook, 2022; Suraweera, 2022). As summarized by Suraweera (2022), “As a result of these different forms of domination that benefit White settlers and the West, English language imperialism continues to hegemonize numerous [English as an Additional Language] EAL contexts through native speakerism, monolingualism, epistemic hegemony, and language standardization” (p. 188). In other words, a paradigm shift/epistemological break with regards to the native speaker fallacy is required in the name of decolonizing the TESOL field.

This dichotomy of whiteness and the native speaker versus non-whiteness and non-native speaker has been illustrated in the field of TESOL through the tendency to prefer to employ the former rather than the latter (Kubota & Lin, 2006). This has been further exacerbated by the “White Savior” belief that White people can ultimately “save” people of color through various means, including teaching them the English language (Jenks & Lee, 2020). In that respect, it seems the term has been correlated with race and consequently, racism (Kubota & Lin, 2006). These racializations, or the categorizations of people according to both phenotype and cultural identities, are social constructs that form the foundations of stereotypes as well as perceptions and attitudes towards those grouped together as a race (Alptekin, 2002; Byram et al., 2002). In other words, it is a type of sociological colonization with which language is a powerful tool used to categorize “us” and “the Other” (Bassiouney, 2009; Kubota & Lin, 2006). Furthermore, because the prefix "non-" places an inflexible restriction on them, NNESTs are frequently associated with prejudice and the marginalization of their professional identities (Selvi, 2019).

1.2.2 Perceptions and Attitudes Towards NESTs and NNESTs

Language attitudes go so far as to influence behavioral intentions, as well as how people group and view individuals according to the language(s) they speak. When discussing attitude, one should consider cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Garrett, 2010; Pickens, 2005). Perceptions are closely related to attitude, as they are the general awareness of stimuli that influence beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and personality (Pickens, 2005). Linguistic perceptions are an essential cognitive component of language regard, beginning with receiving and sensing language, followed by the conscious and/or unconscious interpretations of the language, and finally processed by discrimination and classification of the speech act (Prikhodkine & Preston, 2015). Social perception, which is the primary concern when discussing native speakerism, is described by Pickens (2005) as the way individuals perceive others and how others perceive an individual. In other words, a person’s perceptions can influence their attitudes and behaviors towards others, such as

employment practices (Pickens, 2005). Furthermore, social perceptions fuel stereotypes as well as racism, two factors that have contributed to the discrimination caused by native speakerism and the subsequent “Non-Native Speaker Movement" against such prejudices (Braine, 2012; Kubota & Lin, 2006; Pickens, 2005). Lastly, most of the literature I have encountered on native speakerism investigates the perceptions of various stakeholders (students, employers, parents, and teachers) regarding their preferences as well as perceived distinguishing features of NESTs and NNESTs. Hence, due to the topic of interest and research questions, I chose to use the term “perceptions" since “attitudes" are embedded under the same umbrella.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

The influx of studies surrounding perceptions of NNESTs, although well intentioned, explicate the differences and similarities between NESTs and NNESTs and may unintentionally fuel the dichotomy between both kinds of teachers (Holliday, 2015; Kumaravadivelu, 2016). Several barriers contribute to attachment of “nativeness” (including lack of materials, standardized testing, teacher education, and the need for a “standard” English, yet the most vital and difficult barrier that requires breaking is teacher recruitment practices to catalyze a paradigm shift (Galloway & Rose, 2015). In general, most of the recent literature has been conducted in the Asian context and has focused on students' preferences, with some studies examining the perceptions of other stakeholders and little work done on the issues of the NNEST's employability. To the best of my knowledge, research on preferences and perceptions of stakeholders (particularly, students) has been less frequent within the Egyptian context and the influence of native speakerism on the employability of Egyptian NNESTs has not been investigated before.

“Linguicism” in Egypt and the domination of English intensified during the British occupation (1882-1919) and has since then played a major role in Egyptian education (Bassiouney, 2009; Phillipson, 1992; Schaub, 2000). Especially after former president Anwar Sadat initiated the open-door economic policy to salvage Egypt’s economy, English became a commodity that was required to land lucrative jobs. Also, since tourism is one of Egypt’s largest sources of income, English is an important tool to have for Egyptians to communicate with foreign visitors. Regarding the instructional setting, English is a mandatory subject in both public and private schools where students receive at least five periods of English study per week. Since 1997, English has become embedded in the local cultural discourse of many Egyptians along with Egyptian colloquial Arabic (ECA) (Bassiouney, 2014; Schaub, 2000).

Although Arabic does take precedence in religious and legal affairs, English has made its way through media and health care. Both American and British English are the models Egyptians look to when acquiring this popular L2; however, British English is more influential since language textbooks are mostly of British origin, especially in public schools (Schaub, 2000). Due to English's evident historical, political, and economic power in Egypt, it is surprising that native speakerism has not been explored extensively.

1.4 Research Gap, Rationale and Research Questions

Following the perusal of the literature, most studies investigating native speakerism have focused on the Asian context with scarce studies conducted in the Arab region (El-Sawah, 2019) and only three studies conducted in Cairo (see Aboulfetouh, 2014; El-Sawah, 2019; Fathelbab, 2010). Most of the literature has explored students' perceptions of NNESTs, disregarding other important stakeholders, such as administrators and parents, and how their perceptions may affect recruitment practices. The data collection instruments used in most studies were questionnaires and interviews, which is problematic as responses could be influenced by social-desirability bias and may not reflect the realities of recruitment practices (Perry, 2011). Also, NNESTs' self-perceptions alone (not grouped with other stakeholders) have only been studied through a small number of case studies and usually focused on pre-service teachers, who have not had sufficient job-hunting experiences.

Based on the above research gaps, the purpose of my study is to identify the criteria that private, international institutions in Egypt look for when hiring English language teachers and to possibly understand if there is a connection between the perceptions of NESTs/NNESTs and hiring practices. Since there is a substantial amount of data regarding students' perceptions and preferences of NESTs versus NNESTs, including a study conducted at AUC (El-Sawah, 2019), I have chosen to focus on the perceptions of administrators, parents of students at international institutions and the Egyptian NNESTs' perceptions of native English biases, the scope of which, as mentioned previously, has not been researched extensively. This study is necessary in determining the extent to which native speakerism plays a role (if at all) in the employment of NNESTs in Cairo and where these perceptions originate. The findings of this study will hopefully aid in the progression of a much needed paradigm shift/epistemic break regarding the tendency to favor nativeness over teaching qualifications (amongst other vital characteristics) when hiring ELTs, contributing to the recent movement to decolonize the TESOL field (Braine, 2018; Suraweera, 2022).

To achieve these goals, I will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?
2. What important criteria do parents believe make the ideal English teacher?
3. What important criteria do Egyptian NNESTs believe make the ideal English teacher? What (if any) native speaker biases have they encountered during the recruitment process at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?
4. What is nativeness according to administrators, parents and NNESTs in Cairo?

1.5 Delimitations

This study aims to identify the criteria administrators look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo. To achieve this, the sample will include two types of institutions: private, international schools and universities, where the development of English proficiency is an essential learning outcome. Therefore, private, international schools and universities that teach English as a third language (such as Deutsche Schule Der Borromäerinnen Kairo - DSB) will not be considered. Additionally, English language centers will not be considered for this study because of the variability among their employers and instructional settings compared to those of schools and universities. It is important to note that there are extraneous variables at play while investigating the extent to which administrators regard nativeness as an important criterion when recruiting English language teachers, such as the institutions' budget (which may or may not allow the hiring of expatriate teachers to begin with) as well as visa regulations that may also present obstacles for administrators, all of which are acknowledged, yet will not be investigated predominantly. However, part of the data gathered through content analysis will focus on tuition fees to shed light on this variable's possible influence on hiring practices. Furthermore, social desirability will likely affect the genuineness of the data gathered, especially with regards to perceptions. Through the triangulation of the data collection methods using interviews, a questionnaire, content analysis and correspondence testing, I will attempt to curb this limitation. Lastly, the experiences shared and gathered through interviews with the small sample of NNESTs about their experiences during recruitment processes do not aim to generalize the experiences of all NNESTs in the region. Finally, information from NESTs will not be gathered based on the focus of the study.

1.6 Definitions of Theoretical Constructs

Native English-Speaking Teachers. Despite the multiple and controversial definitions of "nativeness," for the purposes of this study, NESTs refer to teachers born in English-speaking-inner-circle countries (Kachru, 1985) and whose first language is English. These

countries include, but are not limited to, the USA, UK, and Canada (excluding outer circle countries such as Nigeria and Ghana) (as cited in Medgyes, 2001).

Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers. For the purposes of this study, NNESTs are teachers who were not born in English speaking countries and whose first language is not English (but is most likely their L2) (Medgyes, 2001).

World Englishes/New Englishes/Global Englishes. Since the 1960s, Kachru's (1985) outer-expanding circle of English has grown tremendously as there are now more people speaking English as a second/foreign language than there are L1 speakers of English (a ratio of 3:1). Therefore, there is no longer sole ownership of English; hence, the paradigm shift to the terms World Englishes/New Englishes/Global Englishes where speakers' L1 characterizes their use of English and language identities (Crystal, 2003). From now on, the term World Englishes only will be used throughout this study.

Perceptions. The way individuals regard others and how others regard an individual based on language use (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Pickens, 2005).

Employability. The ability to be hired to work. In this case, it is the quality of "suitability" of the NNEST to be employed as an English teacher (Centeno et al., 2013).

1.7 Definitions of Operational Constructs

Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers. NNESTs are teachers whose second language is English. In this study, NNESTs refer to Egyptian nationals who speak English as a second/additional language (and Arabic as a first language). Their narratives regarding recruitment processes throughout their teaching careers will be gathered through semi-structured interviews.

Perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. Social perception, which is the primary concern of this study in relation to NNESTs and employment practices, is the way individuals view others and how others view an individual, in this case, with regards to language and identity. Since the focus of this study is the employability of the NNESTs, the perceptions of stakeholders (administrators and parents) will be collected through interviews and a questionnaire. Both will be analyzed considering the data collected from the interviews conducted with NNESTs.

Employability Criteria. Employability criteria are the requirements, and the unwritten rubric administrators use to filter prospective English language teachers. To investigate these criteria, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with administrators, and they will be required to rate, via a 5-point Likert scale item, various hiring criteria from "not important" to

"very important." That same sample's recruitment websites/advertisements' content will be analyzed for the same purpose.

Employability. Since one's perceptions can influence their attitudes and behaviors towards others, such as employment practices, and due to social desirability biases, this variable will be further explored through correspondence testing (sending out CVs) as well as a content analysis of the institutions' recruitment websites chosen for this study. The rationale behind these various data collection instruments is to help identify any discrepancies (if occurrent) between perceptions and recruitment realities.

Following this overview of the research problem and summary of the rationale for the methodology, this project begins with a literature review of the various studies conducted surrounding native speakerism in the field of TESOL. This is followed by a detailed description of this study's research design, a presentation of the results obtained through the data gathering procedures and a discussion of these findings. The conclusion offers several practical recommendations for tackling native speakerism inside and outside TESOL programs/classrooms, suggestions for further research, as well as the limitations encountered throughout this project.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

According to Holliday (2018) native speakerism is the assumption that NESTs are the best representation of the target culture of those countries whose official language is English, focusing on inner-circle countries (e.g. American and British). It has resulted in the ideals of ELT and the English language, as well as employment discrimination towards NNESTs. The purpose of this study is to identify the criteria that institutions look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo, to investigate how nativeness is ranked within these criteria, and to discern if there is a connection between the perceptions of NNESTs and hiring practices. The findings of this study will hopefully contribute to the advancement of a much needed paradigm shift/epistemic break regarding the tendency to favor nativeness over teaching qualifications (amongst other vital characteristics) when hiring ELTs; thus, contributing to the recent movement to decolonize the TESOL field (Braine, 2018; Suraweera, 2022). This chapter will provide a detailed overview of some of the significant literature on native speakerism.

While reviewing the literature on the dichotomy between NESTs and NNESTs within the TESOL field, I identified the following themes: perceptions and recruitment practices of both kinds of teachers. Both themes had several sub-themes including the perceptions of the multiple stakeholders towards NNESTs (students, teachers, parents, and administrators), the perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of both NESTs and NNESTs, the emergence and influence of World Englishes on pedagogical practices (as well as the perceptions towards such practices) and the recruitment discourse taking place within the TESOL field and NNESTs.

2.2 Perceptions

2.2.1 Students' Perceptions

It is both interesting and important to note that most of the studies investigating native speakerism are concerned with the students' perceptions specifically. Through predominantly mixed-methods studies based on quantitative questionnaires, student evaluations and pre-/post-tests as well as a few qualitative studies using interviews and focus groups, results were not consistent. For example, in Butler's (2007) match-guised study on students' perceptions and preferences of NESTs and NNESTs in a Korean elementary school, the results showed that the American-accented speaker (regarded as a NEST) was perceived as more competent

and preferred by students. Conversely, Wang and Fang (2020) also conducted questionnaires and interviews with Chinese university instructors and students regarding their attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs as well as the extent of their knowledge of native speakerism and the findings disagreed with Butler's (2007) results, as no significant differences were identified between the NEST and NNEST. To further complicate the issue, Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020) also conducted a study using questionnaires and interviews to identify a link between Spanish students' language proficiency and their increased preferences towards the NEST, with findings pointing towards a positive correlation. These discrepancies in results could be due to differences in data collection instruments, especially in the case of Butler's (2007) and Wang and Fang's (2020) studies where they target similar instructional settings. Butler's (2007) indirect and controlled match-guised data collection tool offers better reflections of underlying attitudes between both kinds of teachers (Galloway & Rose, 2015), while Wang and Fang (2020) and Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020) depended on questionnaire and interview data, which could have been tainted by social-desirability biases amongst other external variables (Perry, 2011).

In another study focusing on English as a Lingua Franca in particular, 18 Japanese university students were interviewed about their perceptions of different English accents and why they have these perceptions (Sung, 2016). Results of these interviews showed 13 of the 18 participants desired a native-like English accent. It is important to note that when asked why they preferred a native accent they had several identity driven and practical reasons. The prevalent identity-related reason was due to the assumption that nativeness equals competence. Also, native-like accents were believed to be prestigious by the participants. As for the pragmatic reason, participants believed that a native accent would make them more intelligible when conversing with others (Sung, 2016). In a similar study by Kaur (2014) where 72 Malaysian trainee teachers of English were surveyed on their perceptions of various English accents, results showed that the respondents favored the NS accents, especially the UK English accent in particular. Much like Sung (2016), respondents in Kaur's (2014) study showed that NS accents were preferred due to prestige. Intelligibility, on the other hand, was not seen as an issue of nativeness by the respondents (Kaur, 2014). By observing the results of these studies on attitudes towards accents, it seems that relying solely on questionnaires or interviews does not amply shed light on the reasons behind these responses or discrepancies due to social-desirability, which could taint the genuineness of the data collected via interviews and questionnaires separately (Perry, 2011). More specifically, research on the

reasons why students have these perceptions/beliefs would be beneficial in understanding the cause of these noticeable perceptions.

Despite the prevalence of studies focusing on university students, in a meta-analysis of 38 studies conducted between 1980 and 2020, Spence et al. (2021) identified several trends regarding the role of linguistic cues and children's development of social preferences. In terms of native versus non-native accents, children between the ages of 2 days to 11 years old preferred native accents, native dialects, and native-language speakers. Interestingly, bilingual children exhibited stronger preferences towards native speakers than monolingual speakers; the authors proposed that this could be due to their own linguistic prowess and fluency in two languages. Nevertheless, both bilingual and monolingual children showed a tendency to favor native accents, dialects, and language (Spence et al., 2021). In a similar study conducted by Tsang (2020), 1300 Chinese secondary-level EFL learners were surveyed on their views regarding native and non-native English accents. Results showed that, although the participants were ready to accept NNESTs to the same degree as NESTs in the classroom, they were very much against having listening material of non-native accents in class. Also similar to Spence et al.'s (2021) findings, participants in Tsang's (2020) study did show slight favoritism towards NESTs despite their acceptance of NNESTs in the classroom. Again, the issue of social-desirability bias could have influenced the secondary students' responses to the questionnaire in Tsang's (2020) study as opposed to the direct genuineness of the younger children that participated in Spence et al.'s (2021) study.

In a study comparable to Tsang's (2020), Lipovsky and Mahboob (2007) conducted an appraisal analysis of essays written by 19 Japanese high school students attending an ESL program taught by one NEST and one NNEST in the United States. This analysis was also compared to the traditional thematic framework used to discern students' attitudes towards language teachers. Much like Tsang's (2020) results, Lipovsky and Mahboob (2007) found that the evaluations of both teachers were mixed, with NESTs and NNESTs appraised for certain skills over others. For example, the NEST's oral skills were positively evaluated by all participants, while the NNEST received mostly negative feedback. Nevertheless, participants believed that the NNEST was more helpful and knowledgeable regarding English grammar than her NEST counterpart. Interestingly, both the NEST and NNEST were viewed positively in enhancing the participants' intercultural competence (Mahboob, 2010). In Brown's (2013) study of 178 Swedish students' survey responses examining their preferences of NESTs versus NNESTs, results illustrated that more students preferred NESTs. Still, the vast majority of respondents felt that their teacher's native status did not matter as long as

they are good at what they do (Brown, 2013). These findings imply two important points: first, appraisal analysis, as opposed to questionnaires, provides more detailed descriptions of students' attitudes and why they have these attitudes. Second, high school students seem to keep other issues in mind when comparing teachers, including teaching methodology and personal factors. These variables seem to not be of concern to the children in Spence et al.'s (2021) study, where native accents, dialects and language were more significant.

Mixed results are also apparent in studies targeting university students. For example, in a study conducted by a former AUC TESOL student (Fathelbab, 2010), 93 university students were surveyed on their opinions about teacher nativeness and the ideal teacher. Focus groups were also used to gather additional data and to clarify questionnaire responses. Results showed that students recognized and appreciated both NESTs' and NNESTs' qualities, only some of which were associated with nativeness. Despite these promising outlooks, the additional data gathered through focus groups shed light on the existence of the native speaker fallacy as participants tended to associate accent, appearance and names with teacher-competence (Fathelbab, 2010). In a study conducted in a comparable context in Saudi Arabia, Javid (2016) found that 132 university students showed strong preferences towards NESTs in almost every item on a 2-point questionnaire on their opinions about teacher nativeness and the ideal teacher. Díaz (2015) also surveyed 78 French university students about their preferences regarding NESTs and NNESTs and, like Javid (2016), findings showed that the majority of the students preferred NESTs. Furthermore, a study where 107 Taiwanese university students were surveyed on their perceptions of their NESTs, most expressed that they felt a certain level of unease when communicating with their foreign teachers (NESTs) as opposed to their willingness to communicate with their NNESTs. Nevertheless, NESTs were more popular due to their appearance, communication style, and flexibility within the classroom (Wu & Ke, 2009). Again, it seems that data triangulation and combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods clarifies results and explores the reasons behind these feelings (like Javid, 2016, and Díaz, 2015), especially when discussing a sensitive topic such as language discrimination (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002). An example of this approach includes Alseweed's (2012) study where 60 Saudi male university students were interviewed after responding to a questionnaire targeting their perceptions of their NNES and NES instructors, with findings showing a stronger preference for NESTs as students move through higher levels of English proficiency. However, the respondents showed positive attitudes towards NNESTs who provide a serious learning environment and a favorable response to their needs. Participants of this study also expressed

warmer feelings toward NNESTs, yet they made it clear that they do not consciously behave differently with NESTs and NNESTs. Of course there is an obvious limitation due to the gender variable of this study that may have influenced these results (as the sample consisted of only male students and teachers) (Alseweed, 2012). In another mixed-methods study investigating students' perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs, 100 Vietnamese university EFL learners responded to short-response questionnaire items that were quantified for analytical purposes (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). Responses showed greater depth as students preferred both teachers for different language/teaching skills. For example, participants believed NESTs to be the model of correct pronunciation and cultural knowledge, while NNESTs were more knowledgeable of grammar and were easier to communicate with, especially if the NNESTs shared their students' same culture and L1. Although NNESTs' accent and pronunciation were deemed inferior to those of the NESTs, students still expressed that NNESTs accents were easier to understand (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). In a comparable Turkish study, Gurkan and Yuksel (2012) conducted questionnaires and interviews investigating 72 Turkish students' evaluations of the contributions of the NESTs and NNESTs within an ELT program. The results revealed that much like Walkinshaw and Oanh's (2014) findings, NNESTs and NESTs were perceived as equals and characterized by different strengths and weaknesses. The above studies seem to collectively imply that university students believe that both NESTs and NNESTs have their own strengths and weaknesses and that their preferences towards one over the other change based on the contextual situation (e.g. Alseweed's (2012) participants' proficiency level and Walkinshaw and Oanh's (2014) and Gurkan and Yuksel's (2012) specific language skills addressed). Gurkan and Yuksel's (2012) study also reiterated Lasagabaster and Sierra's (2014) implications that students prefer a team-teaching approach with both NESTs and NNESTs. It is important to note that these notions of team-teaching were also found in studies investigating teachers' self-perceptions (see "Teachers" subtheme) and seems to be a significant pedagogical implication that could either further ignite the dichotomy between NESTs and NNESTs or tame the flame.

External variables that could influence students' perceptions of their NESTs and NNESTs, include students' gender, age, L1, purposes of learning English, etc. Moussu (2010) investigated the influence of these variables through questionnaires sent out to 22 Intensive English Programs (IEPs) in the United States and found that students' first language and expected grades in their respective IEP courses strongly affected their attitudes towards their teachers, more so than any other variables. Furthermore, students' attitudes changed overtime

as their more positive perceptions of NESTs than NNESTs at the beginning of the semester evened out significantly, suggesting that students recognize certain strengths attributed to NNESTs as they spend more time with them in the classroom (Moussu, 2010). Neuliep & Speten-Hansen (2013) also conducted a study investigating the influence of ethnocentrism on social perceptions of non-native English accents through a matched guise technique. 93 undergraduate students enrolled in courses at a 4-year liberal arts college in a Midwestern community in the US (deemed native speakers of English) were randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Both groups viewed the same video of a male speaker delivering a 12-minute speech; however, this male speaker spoke in an American accent in the video shown to the control group and a non-native English accent for the experimental group. Participants were then asked to rate the speaker based on perceived attractiveness, credibility and homophily. The results revealed that as the participants' ethnocentrism increased, negative perceptions of the non-native speaker's speech increased significantly. These findings support those of Moussu's (2010) study as students' L1 is a distinct feature of cultural identity and a contributing feature to ethnocentrism. This study provides yet another variable (the degree of intercultural sensitivity; Bennett, 2004) and its negative influence on the social perceptions of non-native speakers of English; fueling native speaker norms.

2.2.2 Perceived Characteristics of NESTs & NNESTs

Strengths and weaknesses of NNESTs have been researched in correspondence to student perceptions of the NEST and NNEST (Qadeer, 2019). For example, in Lee's (2020) study of 252 South Korean undergraduate students' perceptions of their teachers' credibility as well as the students' own willingness to communicate (WTC) in class, questionnaire responses showed that there was a positive correlation between students' WTC and their teachers' (NESTs and NNESTs) perceived competence. This finding was especially interesting to note, as I myself hypothesized that the NNEST's competence alone would be under scrutiny, as was highlighted by previous research (Lee, 2020). An attempt to establish a relationship between students' WTC and the NNEST's instances of code-switching using the students' L1 was made; however, results showed a non-significant relationship ($P = 0.07$). The authors did call for further research on this area, which is something I have not come across while perusing the literature (Lee, 2020). Medgyes et al. (2005) found different results than Lee's (2020) study when surveying 422 Hungarian learners of English on their perceptions of their NESTs and NNESTs, specifically regarding both teacher's ability to get their students to speak in the target language. According to Medgyes et al.'s (2005) results,

several respondents noted that the NESTs were better at getting their students to converse in the target language, more so than their NNEST counterparts as sharing the same L1 made it easier for their students to fall back on Hungarian as their crutch. Lower level learners, however, responded negatively in terms of the NESTs communication style and noted that they were more difficult to understand than NNESTs (Medgyes et al., 2005). In a comparable study conducted at AUC, El-Sawah (2019) surveyed 82 Egyptian IEP students about their perceptions of the instructional practices and motivational strategies used by their NNESTs and NESTs. Some students were also interviewed, and classroom observations took place to account for the various motivational techniques used by both kinds of teachers. Findings showed that students had more positive perceptions towards the instructional practices and motivational techniques used by the NNEST because as ESL/EFL learners themselves, NNESTs understood learners' difficulties in acquiring the language and targeted those difficulties in class. This could account for the results obtained by Lee (2020) and Medgyes et al. (2005), as students of lower proficiency might feel more comfortable communicating and making mistakes with NNESTs knowing they could a) use their L1 when they are unable to express themselves in the L2 and still be understood, and b) NNESTs would be able to acknowledge their production of the L2 (El-Sawah, 2019). Also, classroom observations revealed that the motivational techniques used by both types of teachers in the teaching process varied. It would've been interesting to observe Lee's (2020) suggestion to research how sharing the same L1 influences students' WTC and motivation within the Egyptian context as many of the students in the IEP at AUC and their NNESTs are Egyptian.

Another example of a study exploring NNESTs' advantages and disadvantages that did partially respond to Lee's (2020) suggestion was conducted by Ma (2012a). Through the analysis of semi-structured interviews with Chinese high school students across three different schools in Hong Kong, advantages of NNESTs were summarized: they usually share the same L1, recognize student learning difficulties as former L2 learners themselves, and they provide effective communication between themselves and their students. The disadvantages of NNESTs included inaccurate pronunciation and lack of grammatical competence, the predominant by-the-book teaching style, and fewer instances to practice English (due to L1 usage). The implications of this study included the need for NNESTs to improve on said disadvantages in their teaching practice in order to avoid further scrutiny during employment (Ma, 2012a). Medgyes and Arva (2000) conducted an ethno-cognitive study where recordings of language lessons of both NESTs and NNESTs at five Hungarian secondary grammar schools were analyzed in terms of the differences between how both

teachers conduct their lessons. As observed through Ma's (2012a) results, Medgyes and Arva (2000) found that NESTs' biggest advantage stems from their superior competence of the English language, which is something NNESTs are perceived to lack. Unlike Ma's (2012a) study, grammar was the strongest advantage of NNESTs according to Medgyes and Arva (2000). The discrepancy here could be due to the differing qualitative approaches between both studies, where Medgyes and Arva (2000) relied heavily on recorded classroom observations with a limited sample size and Ma (2012a) had a larger sample size with in-depth interviews where elaborations were possible. It could also relate to the level of proficiency in English of the NNESTs in Ma's (2012a) study. Furthermore, Medgyes and Arva's (2000) finding that the NEST's lack of knowledge regarding their students' L1 was a disadvantage mirrored Ma's (2012a) results. This disadvantage also fueled the perception that NESTs are not as effective in identifying and remedying issues students have while learning the target language as they don't have prior experience learning their native language, as opposed to their NNEST counterparts (Medgyes & Arva, 2000).

Another study with similar implications as Ma's (2012a) study was conducted by Levis et al. (2016). This study investigated the effects (if any) of NNESTs' accents on their students' comprehension skills. 32 participants of varying nationalities (Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and Vietnamese) took a pre- and a post-test to elicit examples of read and spontaneous speech, and interviews as well as questionnaires were used to further investigate student evaluations and preferences regarding their instructors. Results showed that despite the learners' preference towards NESTs, their scores on the pre- and post-tests were similar in both classes, suggesting that pronunciation skills are more dependent on teaching strategies and styles rather than on the nativeness of the teacher (Levis et al., 2016). Therefore, the claim that the accentedness of NNESTs negatively affects students' L2 proficiency levels seems like a null hypothesis, although much more research on this specific gap is required.

Other studies have researched the influence of both kinds of teachers on their students' behavior and/or English proficiency levels. Schenck (2020) surveyed 76 high proficiency Korean EFL university students about their perceptions of the possible effects both teachers have on them. The students were split into two groups with one taught by an NNEST and the other by an NEST. Results suggested that NEST instruction promotes more creativity and sophistication in writing, while NNEST instruction encourages more accurate use of the language (Schenck, 2020). Although many of the studies in this section found more preferences towards NESTs than NNESTs, it is purported that both kinds of teachers have

strengths and weaknesses. NESTs were reported to invoke more creativity in the classroom and are viewed as more proficient in the target language, but lack pedagogical strengths that NNESTs have, i.e. grammar knowledge and ESL/EFL learning experiences. This corresponds to the very core of SLA research: that individual differences influence the data collected (variation within the same student groups and teacher groups) as well as the analyses presented. These findings confirm that teaching experience/qualifications should be the overarching criterion when describing (and hiring) the ideal English language teacher and that the belief that teachers' accents influence students' proficiency is a myth.

2.2.3 Parents' Perceptions

It can be argued that one of the important stakeholders within the field of elementary and high school education are parents. Some schools operate as businesses, and like any business they cater to their clients' needs (i.e. those of students and parents). To the best of my knowledge, studies investigating the perceptions of parents have been minimal and are usually accompanied by the perceptions of students and/or administrators, rather than as the sole focus of the research (Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020). In the same study by Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020) discussed earlier, high school students' parents were given questionnaires and participated in focus groups, the main goal of which was to find out the attitudes and opinions of these stakeholders regarding the NNEST in Spain. The results of the study showed that parents seemed to prefer both NESTs and NNESTs for beginner and intermediate stages of language learning and NESTs for advanced levels. NNESTs are categorized as less capable than NESTs, as their English language teaching abilities are limited to beginner levels (Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020). This notion is another example of native speakerism at work.

In a more recent study also conducted by Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2022), questionnaires and focus groups were conducted to investigate L1 Spanish-speaking students', parents', and teachers' (representing both NESTs and NNESTs) general preferences for NESTs and NNESTs as well as the influence of several variables towards participants' perceptions. Like most studies presented, findings showed that students taught by NESTs preferred native speakers over non-native speakers while those taught by both kinds of teachers were neutral. None of the external variables measured (age, gender, L1 and course) influenced their preferences for NESTs or NNESTs in this particular context. More interestingly, unlike the results gathered two years prior, Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2022) found that parents prioritized other characteristics (dedication, teaching skills, etc.) over nativeness and, like the results obtained for students, none of the external variables measured

influenced their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. As for the teachers' perception, gender revealed to have a significant relationship with their perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, with male teachers having no strong opinions and female teachers preferring NNESTs, especially with regards to linguistic knowledge. These results (which are different from findings of other stakeholders) are not surprising given that 80% of the teachers that participated in this study were NNESTs themselves. Nevertheless, the observed change in the perceptions of parents from one study (Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020) to the other (Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2022) indicates the need to obtain a more precise description of the attitudes and preferences of such influential stakeholders in ELT.

2.2.4 Teachers' Perceptions

Studies investigating NNESTs' self-perceptions and their opinion of what makes the ideal English teacher have mostly relied on interviews. For example, Amin (2001) interviewed eight minority immigrant women who taught ESL to adults in Canada. These women recounted mostly negative experiences of being non-white English teachers, including instances when students would drop out of the courses they were teaching. Therefore, these eight women expressed their belief that NNESTs cannot learn English as well as native speakers; therefore, they cannot teach English as well as NESTs. Despite these negative connotations, the participants believed in their strengths as teachers due to their own ESL/EFL experiences. Furthermore, they believe they are able to notice nuanced racist teaching material and to make their classrooms more inclusive (Amin, 2001). Ghasemboland and Hashim (2013) conducted a similar study on NNESTs' self-efficacy beliefs through a survey administered to 187 teachers in the Middle East. Overall, respondents rated their self-efficacy in classroom management much higher than instructional strategies and student engagement techniques, with instructional strategies garnering the least confidence. Also, most respondents rated their English writing proficiency much higher than any of the other language skills (reading, speaking, and listening) (Ghasemboland & Hashim, 2013). This corresponds to the lack of confidence expressed by teachers in Amin's (2001) study and could be due to the overall preferences towards NESTs expressed by the various stakeholders above. In the same study that investigated students' and parents' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs, Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020) also investigated teachers' self-perceptions through questionnaires and focus groups. They found that both NNESTs and NESTs preferred NNESTs with respect to attitudes, motivation, and perceived linguistic abilities, but did not have a preference when discussing nativeness in the assessment, support, and cultural categories. They also found that both NESTs and NNESTs preferred a team-teaching

approach (the collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs within the classroom) for all language levels. This was not the only study I found that mentioned this idea of teacher collaboration within the classroom, despite the fact that, as implied by Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020), not many schools have adopted this teaching approach probably due to lack of resources available. In a similar study conducted in Bahrain, Alwadi (2013) interviewed ten NNESTs about their perceived differences and similarities between them and their NEST counterparts. Findings showed that despite the NNESTs initial confidence regarding their teaching qualifications and experiences, they still expressed a lack of confidence and experience of teaching English compared to their perceived as less-qualified-yet-still-superior native-speaking counterparts. These perceptions could be due to the overwhelming belief that NESTs are more familiar with the target language and culture, further fueling the native speaker fallacy by reiterating the notion that NNSs do not have ownership of the English language, while NSs do simply because they were born and raised in an inner-circle country and English is their L1.

Regarding NNESTs' self-perceptions of their employability, Anderson (2018) conducted 19 interviews with experienced NNESTs from 13 countries (Algeria, Argentina, China, France, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Morocco, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). Results showed that most participants were pessimistic about their job opportunities outside their home countries. Some of the interviewees had tried multiple times and failed to find work internationally and recounted instances of discrimination and prejudice. Despite evidence indicating that many learners in varied contexts do not prefer NS teachers over NNS teachers (refer to studies on students' perceptions above), and none of the interview questions within this study addressed this issue directly, evidence of discrimination towards NNESTs was expressed by 12 of the 19 participants (Anderson, 2018). Celik (2006), in his theoretical commentary narrating his own personal experiences as an NNEST, brought up some important points/findings: private language schools advertise their NESTs in order to attract attention from students and parents and increase their enrollment rates; there are salary discrepancies between NESTs and NNESTs (with the former being paid much more than the latter); and administrators, parents, and students blame NNESTs for student failure, nonattendance, etc. that might arise in the classroom. Turkish teachers of English, like Celik (2006), that have a non-native accent leads to the assumption that they are linguistically less competent than native speakers. These assumptions and perceptions might cause NNESTs to experience discriminatory situations such as, but not limited to, unfair recruitment practices, that will consequently lower their confidence and self-respect. This lack of confidence in the

classroom often leads to NNESTs' reliance on textbooks and grammar lessons, which could account for the perceived deficiency of creativity in lessons taught by NNESTs (Celik, 2006; Schenck, 2020).

Ma (2012b) reports on a mixed-methods study which also examined NNESTs' pedagogical and linguistic advantages and disadvantages through the perceptions of secondary school NNESTs teaching in Hong Kong. The results showed that NNESTs were perceived as having strong pedagogical strengths and linguistic weaknesses. In more detail, NNESTs' pedagogical strengths emerged through their knowledge of students' learning needs, difficulties and abilities coupled with their strong rapport with students. Another main strength of NNESTs identified in this study was their ability to use students' L1 in teaching. Their linguistic weaknesses included their lack of English proficiency, lack of confidence, reduced ability to motivate students to speak English, and the teaching-to-the-test mentality. Nevertheless, the teaching-to-the-test approach largely depends on the instructional setting and the role of assessments in such a context. In low-stakes assessment contexts, for example, this might not be the case since exams do not play a critical role (Gebril, 2016). Teaching-to-the-test is prevalent in high-stakes assessment contexts where there is pressure on teachers to adopt this perspective. One surprising finding is that the use of L1 was perceived as both a strength and a weakness of NNESTs. Overusing it was perceived to reduce opportunities for using English, which was also confirmed by Ma (2012a) and Lipovsky and Mahboob (2007) in their studies focusing on student perceptions mentioned earlier in this chapter. Again, these assumptions regarding NNESTs and their grasp of the English language seems to be a major contributing factor to NNESs lack of confidence as teachers, which could be the reason why participants relied on teaching-to-the-test and focusing on grammar in Ma's (2012b) study. Therefore, these perceptions are negatively impacting NNESTs and their language-teacher identities, aiding in the propagation of preferences towards NESTs. NNESTs will be more confident in teaching English once they have been liberated from native speakerism (Saba & Frangieh, 2021).

Furthermore, Amin's (1997) study added to the literature on NNESTs' self-perceptions by focusing solely on NNESTs' perceptions of their students' ideal English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. During interviews with non-native ESL teachers in Canada, there was a prevalent perception that students view race and language as one unit, which was also confirmed by Lee and Du (2021). These NNESTs felt that due to their non-Whiteness, they were perceived as less able to teach English and provide for their students' needs, which in turn affected their identity formation as teachers. Similarly to Amin's (1997) study, Saba

and Frangieh (2021) conducted a case study of five NNESTs in the UAE exploring their self-perceptions of their professional identities. Each participant mentioned developing anxiety because of issues encountered during recruitment, their overall job security, and the lack of belonging. They also expressed their painful experiences in the development of their professional identity as NNESTs, for example, one participant stated:

> I feel that I have no professional identity. In this institution, non-native English speakers are in lower positions than native speakers. I have been working for this institution for five years and I still teach basic English classes. I only teach advanced writing classes during the summer because that is when our native colleagues travel to their home countries. (Saba & Frangieh, 2021, p. 403)

In another study conducted by Reves and Medgyes (1994), a questionnaire was administered to 216 participants from ten different countries (Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Sweden, Yugoslavia, and Zimbabwe). Findings showed a positive correlation between teachers' high English proficiency levels and their prolonged living experiences in inner-circle countries as well as their positive self-perceptions as efficient English teachers despite their NNEST status. Via unstructured interviews with four Asian ELTs, Leonard (2019) explored the construct of native speakerism and found that all four NNESTs have questioned their identity and legitimacy as English language teachers due to the native speaker ideology.

Like many of the studies addressing native speakerism, Amin (1997), Saba and Frangieh (2021), and Reves and Medgyes (1994) called for the separation of proficiency and race within the field of TESOL as well as the empowerment of the NNEST. The question is, how can this be done when many of the stakeholders still see a difference between the NST and NNST? How can change occur if the term "native" is still used to distinguish between teachers? As Pickens (2005) has explained, changing perceptions and attitudes is not an easy feat, as socialization over many years results in said beliefs. The process of change requires a consistent flow of new information regarding the discrimination towards NNESTs. Also, various external variables may also impact NNESTs identity formation, such as the institutions in question and their resources/budget, which either marginalize or empower the teachers' sense of self (Huang, 2014).

In light of the minimal work done towards investigating teachers' and parents' perceptions of NNESTs and the effect these perceptions have on hiring practices, especially within the Arab world, my study aims to fulfill this need while also taking into account employers' perceptions and external variables, such as institutions' differing resources.

2.2.5 Perceptions of World Englishes

There is no question that English is a global language that no longer belongs to inner-circle countries only (Galloway & Rose, 2015)**.** Despite the many textbooks and articles on the World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca (Crystal, 2003; Galloway & Rose, 2015; MacKenzie, 2014), research on the phenomenon within the classroom context, to the best of my knowledge, has not been studied extensively. This includes the pedagogical methodologies that have emerged because of the Global Englishes ideal, like translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014). The studies that have been conducted focus on perceptions of World Englishes of learners using matched-guise techniques, questionnaires, and interviews; much like the studies regarding perceptions of NNESTs.

He and Zhang (2010) conducted a study targeting the perspectives of teachers and students regarding native speaker norms. Using a questionnaire, matched-guise approach, and interviews, 984 participants attending four Chinese universities were questioned on their perceptions of different kinds of English within the classroom. This questionnaire's responses and matched-guise technique resulted in significantly higher ratings of standard Englishes as opposed to Chinese English on nearly all the positive traits except one (i.e. patience) showing no significant differences. Additionally, results via interviews found that the desirable pedagogic model of English for students in China was Standard Englishes with minor inclusion of Chinese Englishes. It is interesting to note that the majority of the students did not set Standard Englishes as their target for pronunciation and grammar, as long as their English was intelligible. On the other hand, their NNESTs still hoped that their students could acquire native like pronunciation and grammar (He & Zhang, 2010). This hope could be attributed to NNESTs' insecurity with regards to their own language production and wanting to ensure that their students are not at a disadvantage by not being taught by an NEST, which many NNESTs perceive as superior to them (Alwadi, 2013).

In a similar study, excluding the matched-guise technique, a questionnaire with 52 English learners (23 enrolled in a World Englishes course and 29 studying Standard Englishes), and interviews with 4 English learners at a private university in Japan revealed similar results (Galloway, 2013). Although the participants had positive attitudes towards native English due to a multitude of factors like their familiarity with native English, intrinsic motivations, pedagogical beliefs and stereotypical beliefs, the World Englishes class was also found to have had an important impact on students' attitudes towards outer and expanding circle Englishes (Crystal, 2003; Galloway, 2013). Positive outcomes of the class included students' increased awareness of global Englishes and fewer references to NNESs being

coded as incorrectly using the English language. Both studies implicate the need for more research into the different intrinsic motivations, interests, attitudes and goals of English learners' today, and the development of ELT courses that embed World Englishes (Abbas et al., 2022; Galloway, 2013; He & Zhang, 2010). This does beg the question; how do World Englishes relate to native speakerism and the native speaker fallacy? Attitudes towards native English versus non-native English accents and dialects as well as the dichotomy between NNESTS and NESTs may be put to rest through exposure via global Englishes classes/courses (Kiczkowiak, 2020; Moussu & Llurda, 2008). Involving more NNESTs, team-teaching (see: Carless & Walker, 2006; Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020; Fathelbab, 2010; Qadeer, 2019; Wu & Ke, 2009) and/or listening materials featuring World Englishes may very well target the fundamental problem of favoring the native speaker over the non-native speaker based on intelligibility and competence, factors that seem to be used as excuses for many of the participants of the perception-focused studies above.

2.3 Employability of NNESTs

2.3.1 Administrators' Perceptions

It might seem strange that I decided to group administrators' perceptions within the theme of *employability* rather than *perceptions*. The reason for this is that employers' perceptions of NNESTs impact the way they choose to hire (or not hire) individuals based on the ideology of native speakerism. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to address administrators' perceptions in terms of the implications these perceptions have on the employability of the NNEST.

In an influential study conducted by Clark and Paran (2007), questionnaires were distributed to 325 U.K. institutions, including schools and universities, and administrators were asked to rate each qualification listed within the questionnaire according to the level of importance (i.e. a Likert scale) when hiring EFL teachers. Results showed that the most important category averaged was "teaching qualifications," and "native English speaker" was the seventh most important category listed. Another study that targeted the knowledgebase of NNESTs was conducted by Zhang and Zhan (2014). In their study, six administrators in the Canadian English as a second language (ESL) context were interviewed about their perceptions of the most important qualities they sought when hiring English teachers. Results showed that language proficiency and teaching skills were the two most important qualifications they looked for in a potential English teacher. Social desirability plays an important role in these studies, as mentioned by Clark and Paran (2007) in the discussion of

their study results. What administrators indicated within their responses may not actually be the reality of what they do when recruiting teachers. Therefore, a triangulation of data is suggested.

Mahboob (2004) conducted a study using multiple research methods (ethnography, matched-guise approach, interviews, questionnaires, discourse analysis and grounded theory) to investigate administrators' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs within English Language Programs in the US. Results showed that nativeness was deemed an important criterion in making hiring decisions. The administrators' perception of the superiority of the NEST was their primary reasoning behind the ratio of NNESTs versus NESTs in their respective programs (Mahboob, 2004). These results could be associated with students' perceptions that were also gathered by Mahboob (2004). As was previously mentioned by other studies targeting student perceptions, although the majority of students believed NNESTs to have advantageous qualities (such as their superior grammar knowledge and their prior experience of acquiring English as a second language) NESTs were perceived as the perfect model for learning "true and correct" pronunciation (Mahboob, 2004). Therefore, a paradigm shift/epistemic break with regards to the native speaker fallacy is much needed and might be attainable through raising awareness of the existence of World Englishes, especially since many learners have shown concern with wanting to be intelligible (He & Zhang, 2010).

I encountered two studies (Moussu, 2006; Phillips, 2020) that looked into the relationship between both the perceptions regarding NNESTs and how these perceptions influence hiring practices, yielding mixed results. While both Moussu's (2006) and Phillips's (2020) studies resulted in evidence towards a shift away from native speakerism, Phillips (2020) found that there is still a negative impact regarding hiring practices while Moussu (2006) found that administrators viewed NNESTs positively and nativeness did not affect recruitment decisions. Still, Moussu (2006) does call for more studies on NNESTs' self-perceptions as well as expanding the ESL/EFL contexts in which most studies have been conducted (the Far East), both of which I aim to accomplish through my study.

In a more recent study, Kiczkowiak (2020) surveyed and interviewed 150 recruiters from ten different countries (Spain, France, UK, Italy, China, Indonesia, Japan, Brazil, Germany, and Malaysia) working at language schools and universities. The study aimed to investigate recruiters' attitudes towards hiring NESTs and NNESTs. Overall findings were promising, indicating that nationality, ethnicity, and nativeness were the least important hiring criteria, while teaching experience and qualifications, performance in the interview, eligibility for a work visa, and language proficiency were more important. It is significant to

note that despite these positive results, there was disagreement among the respondents according to the standard deviation of the data, as 45% of respondents thought that being a native speaker was either *somewhat important, important,* or a *very important* hiring criterion. Furthermore, 73% of recruiters ranked accent to be either *somewhat important, important,* or *very important*, aligning with Clark and Paran's and Mahboob et al.'s results. Although nationality, ethnicity, and nativeness were perceived as least important, accent is often associated with correct use of the language (i.e. nativeness), meaning those with a non-standard accent (NNESTs) would be at a disadvantage. Probably due to social-desirability bias, interview data contradicted the questionnaire results as recruiters seemed to not consider 'native speaker' status as important. This study also considered the ratios of NESTs and NNESTs at the institutions these recruiters represented. 83 of the 131 institutions had 50% or more NESTs than NNESTs while 61 of the schools had 50% or more NNESTs, which contradicts the interview data. Furthermore, 13% of the schools did not have any NNESTs among their staff. Looking at these ratios paints a clearer picture regarding recruiters' tendency to hire NESTs, despite the lack of importance they claim to give towards nativeness. Maybe recruiters' reported conscious beliefs differ from their actual/unconscious beliefs that influence hiring practices and cause a misalignment between qualitative reported data and quantitative results as illustrated by the studies above.

2.3.2 Recruitment Discourse

Despite the need for more literature on the perceptions of administrators towards NNESTs and their effect on hiring practices, quite a few studies have been conducted regarding recruitment discourse in the form of content analysis. Ruecker and Ives (2015), for example, analyzed English as a Foreign Language (EFL) recruitment sites based in Asia (mainly China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand). Their findings showed that the ideal teaching candidate was a young, white, (inexperienced) native-speaking teacher who seeks adventure. Jenks and Lee (2020) conducted a similar study in South Korea following budget cuts within the language teaching field in 2014. They qualitatively analyzed several responses towards this issue as well as the preferences of administrators towards NESTs. They found that due to the preference and superiority given to the NEST, those native speakers displayed authoritative discourse throughout their own posts. Jenks and Lee (2020), like Ruecker and Ives (2015), suggested the creation of new discourses and ideologies that go against such beliefs and dominant cultural hierarchies within the field of TESOL. The problem I face as a discerning consumer of such research is how we go about changing this discourse. Shouldn't we attempt to change these overarching perceptions first? Nevertheless, significantly more

research is needed to investigate the discriminatory discourse used on recruitment sites outside the Asian context in the pursuit of universal change.

A similar study that suggested more practical solutions to the above was conducted by Mackenzie (2021). In his study, the prevalence of native speakerism as well as other forms of discrimination in South American teacher recruitment advertisements were examined. A content analysis on job advertisements was conducted through two prominent Facebook groups for English language teachers in Colombia. The findings revealed evidence of discrimination in nearly half of the 95 job advertisements analyzed, 23% of which refer to the importance of nativeness. Furthermore, and in reference to racialization, a number of job postings requested American/Canadian applicants, or to at least have an American accent (Mackenzie, 2021). Alshammari (2021) conducted a comparable study thematically analyzing 25 job ads of Saudi Arabian Preparatory Year Programs targeting foreign applicants. Findings revealed that education, teaching experience, and NS status are the most important qualifications in most of the job ads with the NS status never appearing alone. It is important to note that this study also found that NS status was never clearly defined, which could mean that there is a possible consensus amongst both employers and applicants as to what NS status means; a white speaker of English. Therefore, national origin discrimination does occur while hiring despite there not being any correlation between country of origin and teaching competence (Alshammari, 2021). Mahboob and Golden (2013) also conducted the same study on 77 advertisements for job postings in East Asia and the Middle East. Their content analysis showed seven key factors that make up the prevalent requirements for potential hires: age, educational qualifications, gender, nationality, nativeness, race, and teaching experience (Mahboob & Golden, 2013). Moreover, nativeness and nationality were the two most prominent characteristics in East Asian advertisements while the advertisements for the Middle-East-English-teaching positions focused on educational background and teaching experience. Nevertheless, nativeness was still a commonly included requirement in Middle Eastern advertisements (Mahboob & Golden, 2013). This discrepancy could be due to the resources available in Eastern Asia versus the Middle East; the former being capable of hiring foreign teachers more so than the latter. In terms of what these analyses imply, just like Jenks and Lee (2020) and Ruecker and Ives (2015), and Alshammari (2021), Mackenzie (2021) called for a change in the discourse, specifically the replacement of the word *native* with other well-defined terms such as *bilingual*, *multilingual* or *translingual* teachers. Also, another practical suggestion was to provide opportunities to discuss and explore these issues in TESOL programs as well as between teachers and their language learners within the

classroom. With more exposure, there is an increase in the probability of change of perceptions (Mackenzie, 2021).

Following the review of the literature, it can be concluded that most studies investigating native speakerism have focused on the Asian context with minimal studies conducted in the Arab region (El-Sawah, 2019), and, to the best of my knowledge, three studies conducted in Cairo (see Aboulfetouh, 2014; El-Sawah, 2019; Fathelbab, 2010). Most of the literature has explored students' perceptions of NNESTs with only a few focusing solely on administrators or parents, and how their perceptions may affect recruitment practices. Also, most studies used questionnaires and conducted interviews to collect their data, which is problematic as responses could be inaccurate due to social-desirability bias and do not reflect the realities of recruitment practices. Perhaps recruiters' reported conscious beliefs differ from their actual/unconscious beliefs, causing a misalignment between qualitative reported data and quantitative results as illustrated by the hiring practices evaluated in this chapter. Also, NNESTs' self-perceptions alone have been studied through a small number of case studies and usually focused on pre-service teachers, who have not had sufficient job-hunting experiences.

In light of the minimal work done towards investigating employers' and parents' perceptions of NNESTs and the effect these perceptions have on hiring practices, especially within the Arab world, my study aims to fulfill this need. My project will investigate the perceptions of administrators of private, international schools and universities in Cairo as well as parents of students that attend private, international schools and universities regarding Egyptian NNESTs and to what extent native speaker norms play a role in the employability of said teachers. Furthermore, current Egyptian NNESTs (not pre-service teachers) will be interviewed to investigate their perceptions of the ideal English teacher as well as their personal narratives regarding the recruitment process and any employment discrimination they may or may not have encountered throughout their careers. This research is needed to determine the extent to which native speakerism plays a role (if at all) in the employment of NNESTs in Cairo, as well as where these perceptions originate. The findings of this study will hopefully contribute to the advancement of a much-needed paradigm shift/epistemic break regarding the tendency to favor nativeness over teaching qualifications (amongst other vital characteristics) when hiring ELTs; thus, contributing to the recent movement to decolonize the TESOL field (Braine, 2018; Suraweera, 2022). The next chapter goes into more detail regarding the methodology behind the current study.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Research Design

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to identify the criteria that employers look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo, to examine how nativeness is ranked within these criteria, and to investigate if there is a connection between the perceptions of administrators, parents, and teachers regarding NNESTs and hiring practices. This chapter will provide a detailed description of the research design, sample, instruments, and data analysis procedures as well as why these methods were chosen with regards to the research questions.

3.2 Research Questions

1. What are the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?
2. What important criteria do parents believe make the ideal English teacher?
3. What important criteria do Egyptian NNESTs believe make the ideal English teacher? What (if any) native speaker biases have they encountered during the recruitment process at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?
4. What is nativeness according to administrators, parents and NNESTs in Cairo?

3.3 Research Design

A mixed-methods research design was used through qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis to answer the research questions (Perry, 2011). The mixed-methods approach allows for improved validity and reliability and enables the gathering of data about the individual and society at large, which is what my research questions encompass (Dornyie, 2007). As mentioned in Chapter 2, most of the literature surrounding native speakerism has utilized either qualitative or quantitative methods, using either interviews or questionnaires (Galloway & Rose, 2015). By investigating the perceptions of NNESTs through multiple (mixed) methods, this has resulted in richer data that can add more insight and nuance to the discussion on native speakerism. As mentioned by Dornyie (2007), using a mixed methods approach brings out the best of both quantitative and qualitative research; each method's strengths balancing out the weaknesses of the other. This study does not aim to generalize but rather gather rich data and explore the presence (or lack thereof) of the native speakerism phenomenon in Cairo.

3.3.1 Sample

Participants were chosen via convenience sampling and snowball sampling (Dornyie, 2007; Perry, 2011). The contexts targeted were four international schools and two private universities in Cairo, resulting in six institutions representing the population needed to address the research questions and purpose of the study. For the purposes of this study, the criteria used to select these institutions was based on those outlined by the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) (2009) ("What Is an International School?," n.d.). According to the IASL (2009), international institutions have a multinational and multilingual student body, they follow an international curriculum, they are internationally accredited, and English is the main or bilingual language. These six institutions were chosen based on tuition/enrollment fees, with varying degrees of cost, in order to take note of this extraneous variable's possible effect on hiring practices. This small sample size elicited rich data, and the same institutions were targeted for the questionnaire, all interviews, and the content analysis portion of the research design (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

3.4 Instruments

Two instruments were used to gather data and help answer the research questions: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The instruments used were piloted to allow for modifications prior to the final data-gathering process[1]. It is important to note that one Likert scale item was shared during interviews with administrators to gather information regarding what criteria they deem most important when making hiring decisions. Quantitative and qualitative instrumentation was used for data triangulation (Dornyie, 2007; Perry, 2011).

3.4.1 Interviews with administrators

Interviews with four administrators from the sample of institutions helped answer research question 1 (what are the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?). Based on convenience sampling, administrator participants of the current study were former colleagues of mine, making it easier to get in contact with them. These administrators were selected based on years of experience, with all participants having been Heads of Department (HODs) (or equivalent) at international institutions for at least 3 years. This is to ensure that they have had enough

[1] The pilot study collected data on a smaller scale from one private university and one international school in Cairo, using the same sample to analyze each institution's recruitment webpage. Interviews lasted approximately 35 minutes and were conducted via Zoom. The main issue faced was the lack of questionnaire and interview responses, which were addressed in the current study by adding incentives and revising the interview questions (refer to appendices).

recruitment experience to be able to form concrete opinions with regards to the interview questions. These administrators were not limited to HODs of English departments only, as some international schools have HODs based on grade level, and not academic subjects. Administrators did not include Human Resources personnel as they have a relatively different perspective from academic HODs. While HR tends to think more about paperwork and salary issues, an HOD perhaps thinks more about academic issues and the ramifications of hiring a NEST versus NNEST on instructional practices.

Interviews with administrators helped identify the criteria they look for when making hiring decisions as well as the precedence given (if any) to nativeness as a criterion. I chose to create interview questions based on a questionnaire initially developed by (Mahboob et al., 2004) and adapted twice afterward (see Appendix A) (Clark & Paran, 2007; Phillips, 2020). All three studies targeted a similar sample to this project and aimed to find answers to research questions similar to those in the current study (differing in context).

I chose to use the latest adaptation for this study (Phillips, 2020) but changed several items (see Appendix A) as Phillps' (2020) questionnaire targeted the Australian context while I am targeting the Egyptian context. Examples of edits of Phillips' (2020) study include changes to the first section on demographics to target the institutions chosen. Also, I added the following question: *How long have you held this position?* This question was added to describe the administrators further and possibly notice any relationships between perceptions, years of experience, and hiring practices. In the second section, I added the following questions: *How do you define nativeness?* And *What makes the ideal English teacher?* These questions were added to indirectly probe administrators about the criteria they deem most important when describing an English teacher. Like Phillip's (2020) study, the second section of the interview should directly answer my first research question. During the interview, a Likert scale item (adapted from Phillips',2020, study) was shared with administrators via Google Forms to elicit the importance of several hiring criteria. I also added a question to the interview asking respondents to choose the most important criterion when hiring language teachers out of the list mentioned on the Likert scale item and if there are any other criteria not listed that they believe are important.

3.4.2 Content analysis of job postings

In addition to these interviews, content analysis of job postings of the six institutions chosen was investigated. First, the hiring criteria and prerequisites were coded. Then these prerequisites were grouped together to identify the major themes (criteria) that were

identified in the analysis. These results were compared to those found during interviews and answered research question 1.

3.4.3 Questionnaires and interviews with parents

To answer research question 2 (what important criteria do parents believe make the ideal English teacher?), questionnaires were sent out to parents of students enrolled at various private, international schools. Via convenience and snowball sampling, colleagues of mine that are teachers at private, international schools/universities were asked to electronically distribute the questionnaire to their students' parents. Other colleagues that are also parents of students at private, international schools were asked to electronically distribute the questionnaire to other friends and acquaintances with children at private, international schools/universities. Also, both parents interviewed were recruited via convenience sampling as they were acquaintances of mine. The reason parents have been included here is due to their possible influence on hiring practices and their equal importance as stakeholders, which has been largely ignored in most literature on native speakerism (Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020). Unstructured interviews were conducted with volunteer respondents based on their individual questionnaire responses in order to gather deeper insights and possible nuances of the quantitative data gathered. Questionnaires sent to parents helped elicit their perceptions regarding English language teachers and data was compared to the answers of the first research question. The questionnaire was developed by merging two questionnaires (Aboulfetouh, 2014; Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020). The first was created by Aboulfetouh (2014) targeting parents' attitudes towards bilingualism, international schools, and their influence on their children's identity formation. Additionally, Aboulfetouh's (2014) study included interview questions that were used to probe parents' responses. Both the questionnaire and interview questions were merged to create the questionnaire and follow up interview questions used for this study (see Appendix B). However, due to the differing topic and purposes of Aboulfetouh's (2014) study and this project, the questionnaire and interview questions were edited to focus primarily on parents' perceptions of NNESTs rather than the institution itself; therefore, any questions about international schools and bilingualism were omitted. Also, only one new question was added to those provided by Aboulfetouh's (2014) instruments: *What makes an ideal English teacher?* This question was added to indirectly ask parents about the criteria they deem most important when describing an English teacher. The second questionnaire was created by Colmenero and Lasagabaster (2020) which explored students,' parents' and teachers' opinions and attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs in

Spanish institutions. The 28 Likert-scale items on their questionnaire were added to the questionnaire of the current study with minor wording changes. The authors reported that internal consistency reliability tests were measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, revealing values above 0.60, which is considered satisfactory (Dornyie, 2007).

3.4.4 Interviews with NNESTs

To answer research question 3 (what important criteria do Egyptian NNESTs believe make the ideal English teacher? What (if any) native speaker biases have they encountered during the recruitment process at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?), interviews with six (two male and four female) NNESTs took place to analyze their perceptions of the ideal English teacher as well as their own narratives about the recruitment process. NNESTs were recruited via convenience sampling as they were colleagues of mine within the MA TESOL program that we were enrolled in together. Each NNEST was chosen based on the following criterion (homogenous/criterion sampling): they have a maximum of three years of experience teaching English (novice teachers) and have worked/are currently working at the same private/international English language institutions where the rest of the participants came from. This criterion guarantees that each teacher would have recent and relevant anecdotes about their experiences while applying for teaching jobs and were able to answer the interview questions fully. The NNEST participants were born and raised in Egypt; however, they each describe their English speaker identity quite differently (see Table 3.1). Both genders (4 females and 2 males) were interviewed in an attempt to obtain more representative results. I chose to adapt interview questions from Rauf's (2022) study. The interview is split into three parts: personal teaching career/experience, professional identity, and discrimination-related questions. The original guiding questions were edited to gauge richer data from participants (see Appendix C). I added the following questions to the original interview: *How do you define nativeness? What makes the ideal English teacher?* And *How do you think parents and administrators view you?* These questions were added to investigate the overarching perception of nativeness of the participants and specifically ask them to self-reflect on stakeholders' perceptions of them (besides students, which is the focus of many studies on native speakerism).

3.5 Treatments

The correspondence testing method in the form of CVs was distributed to the same six private, international English language institutions where the rest of the participants came from, and responses (emails and phone calls) were documented. Six CVs were used

representing three NESTs and three NNEST with similar qualifications, with only their L1s as a distinguishing factor (native and non-native English speakers). The CVs were obtained from my colleagues within the MA TESOL program at AUC due to convenience, proximity, and familiarity with the study. These colleagues were asked to record the instances of email and phone call responses to their applications, which were then analyzed via descriptive statistics via evaluations of frequency.

This novel qualitative research method is deceptive, yet has been recognized as "the best way to measure discrimination in hiring decisions and that ethical concerns can be minimized" (Zschirnt, 2019, p. 3). For example, a meta-analysis of 738 correspondence tests from 43 separate studies, conducted between 1990 and 2015 in Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, found that ethnic and racial minority groups are still discriminated against in hiring decisions e.g. candidates that are members of minority groups must submit approximately 50% more applications than majority candidates in order to be requested for an interview (Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). This qualitative experiment was used in the current study to further confirm or deny the previous instruments' data regarding actual perceptions towards NNESTs and if said perceptions affect recruitment practices.

Reliability and validity could only be determined after implementation due to the deceptive quality of correspondence testing. There was also the added limitation that the criteria on the CVs might lack validity because external factors influencing the different responses obtained by the six teachers could have been due to minor differences in teaching experience, for example, and not nativeness. Even though this threat to internal validity might have affected the data gathered, responses highlighted answers to the first and third research questions by confirming or denying the data collected via questionnaires and interviews.

Table 3.1

Summary of the sample chosen for data collection.

		Research Question 1		Research Question 2		Research Question 3		Research Question 4
Sample	**Type of institution:** private, international	**Content Analysis**	**Administrators interviewed: 3+ years in leadership role and responsible for hiring English teachers**	**Questionnaires**	**Parents interviewed**	**NNESTs Interviewed:** 3+ years teaching experience	**Correspondence testing:** CVs sent to institutions	Was identified after analyzing data gathered for research questions 1-3.
Institution A	School	Yes	Employed at this institution at the time of the study: 2 (1 male British NES and 1 female Egyptian NNES)	Sent to parents of students enrolled at these six institutions and beyond	1 (female NNES)	Employed at this institution at the time of the study: 1 (female, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNEST)	Yes	
Institution B	School	Yes	-		-	-	Yes	
Institution C	School	Yes	-		1 (female NNES)	-	Yes	
Institution D	School	Yes	-		-	-	Yes	

Institution E	University	Yes	-		-	-	Yes	
Institution F	University	Yes	Employed at this institution at the time of the study: 2 (1 male American NES and 1 female Egyptian NNES)		-	Employed at this institution at the time of the study: 5 (2 males, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNESTs, 1 female, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNEST, and 2 females, Egyptian, and self-identified as bilinguals/NESTs)	Yes	

3.6 Data Analysis

For the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaire distributed to parents, descriptive statistics was used to analyze parents' perceptions of NNESTs. Additionally, for the quantitative data obtained from the single Likert-scale item presented to administrators during their respective interviews, descriptive statistics were also used to present the level of importance given to various hiring criteria.

For the qualitative data obtained through interviews and content analysis, emergent coding, derived from the qualitative research approach of reflexive thematic analysis (RTA), was used to investigate the information gathered. Although originally conceptualized by psychologists Braun and Clarke (2006) for use in the field of psychology, they have attested that RTA can be implemented in many other qualitative research contexts (Byrne, 2022). Following the guidelines set by Braun and Clarke (2019), RTA encourages an inductive approach and constructionist epistemology to analyzing data as well allowing the researcher to not only illustrate the findings but also critically analyze them, utilizing both semantic and latent coding, and resulting in a deeper understanding of the data (as cited in Byrne, 2022). By appreciating researchers' subjectivity and input while analyzing, RTA discourages pursuing "reliable" data via inter-rater coding and seeking consensus between researchers (Byrne, 2022). Because of this, I have chosen to not have a second coder, which has hopefully allowed me to reflect and engage with the data gathered, especially as an NNEST myself. A significant goal of this study was to accurately reflect on participants' own accounts of their perceptions, opinions, and experiences while also accounting for the reflexive influence of my own interpretations as the researcher.

Following the recursive and iterative six-phase analytical process proposed by Braun and Clarke (2012), I first familiarized myself with the data, generated initial codes based on the deep reading and rereading of the data, used said codes to generate themes and sub-themes relevant to the research questions, reviewed these themes as needed, defined and named the themes, and finally, produced the report via the results and discussion sections of this study.

In sum, the current study's research questions focus on hiring criteria and perceptions; therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data provide observations of these variables. Hiring criteria were identified through interviews with administrators and content analysis of each institutions' job postings. This data also revealed the weight given to nativeness as an employment criterion. Interviews with administrators hopefully produced more authentic data

than sending out questionnaires since probing could take place. Nevertheless, social desirability was still an issue especially due to the sensitivity of the topic discussed. Hence, various means of data collection were used, and results compared. Since the research questions focus on perceptions and narratives, quantitative data (through questionnaires) and qualitative data (through interviews) resulted in richer information. Correspondence testing resulted in data that was analyzed qualitatively ensuring a deeper discussion of all findings by confirming or contradicting the reality of hiring practices.

Finally, it is important to note that the fourth research question was developed based on the data collected and analyzed to answer the first three research questions. During the interviews with the three groups of stakeholders, a discussion of what nativeness means to them and nativeness in terms of the English language was also a topic of great interest, which shed light on the reasons for the current study's findings. Therefore, this question was added after the original three questions were answered. The rationale behind adding this research question to the original three was due to the prominence given to the definition of nativeness throughout the data collected and analyzed. For a summarized illustration of the research questions and data used to answer these questions, please refer to Table 3.2. The results of the current study will be provided in the next chapter.

Table 3.2

Research questions and their respective data collection and analysis methods.

Research Question	**Data Collection Method**	**Analysis**
1. What are the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?	Content analysis of sample's job postings Interviews with four administrators from sample	Content analysis Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA)
2. What important criteria do parents believe make the ideal English teacher?	Questionnaire sent out to parents of students enrolled in private, international institutions Interviews with two volunteer parents	Descriptive statistics Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA)
3. What important criteria do Egyptian NNESTs believe make the	Interviews with six NNESTs Correspondence testing	Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA)

ideal English teacher? What (if any) native speaker biases have they encountered during the recruitment process at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?		
4. What is nativeness according to administrators, parents and NNESTs in Cairo?	All the above	

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to identify the criteria that employers look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo, to examine how nativeness is ranked within these criteria, to understand administrators', parents', and teachers' perceptions of NNESTs and hiring practices and to observe the impact (if any) of these perceptions on hiring practices. This chapter will outline the results obtained via the research design illustrated in Chapter 3 according to the four research questions this study aimed to answer. The first research question was answered using the data collected from content analysis of job advertisements/webpages and interviews with administrators. Research question 2 was answered using the data collected via questionnaire responses and interviews with parents. Research question 3 was answered by the data collected from interviews with Egyptian NNESTs. A fourth research question was identified via the reflexive thematic analysis of the entirety of the data collected and has been detailed in this chapter. For a summary of the research questions and data used to answer these questions, please refer to Table 3.2.

4.2 Research Question 1: What are the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?

The first research question aimed to understand the criteria administrators look for when hiring English teachers at four private, international schools and two universities in Cairo. To answer this question, a content analysis of the six institutions' job postings and interviews with four administrators from two of the six institutions were conducted and analyzed. For a description of the sample used to answer research question 1, refer to Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Summary of the sample used for data collection and analysis for research question 1.

Research Question 1			
Sample	**Type of institution:** private, international	**No. of job posts analyzed from each institution**	**No. Administrators interviewed:** with 3+ years in leadership role and responsible for hiring English teachers
Institution A	School	2	2 (1 male British NES and 1 female

			Egyptian NNES)
Institution B	School	1	0
Institution C	School	1	0
Institution D	School	1	0
Institution E	University	1	0
Institution F	University	2	2 (1 male American NES and 1 female Egyptian NNES)

4.2.1 Content analysis of job postings

To begin the content analysis of the job postings, prerequisites and hiring criteria were identified and coded based on what these criteria refer to (i.e. nationality, L1, certifications, etc.). Then these prerequisites were grouped together to identify the major themes (criteria) that were recognized through the analysis. Table 4.2 illustrates the final codes used to collect and classify data from the sample's job advertisements/career webpages. The names of the institutions have been omitted.

Table 4.2

Content analysis data showing discourse used within recruitment sites of the samples' respective institutions.

Codes	Institution A	Institution B	Institution C	Institution D	Institution E	Institution F
Fees	88,000 - 110,000	132,000 - 221,000	169,000 - 211,000	325,000 - 476,000	25,000 - 170,000	544,000 - 600,000
Asks for "Native Speakers"	NA	NA	"[Institution C] boasts the largest community of American and native-English speaking faculty in Egypt; but more importantly, we strive to be a diverse community of world-class educators."	NA	NA	NA
Mention of Birthplace/National Identity Requirements	NA	UK school or international setting		"Professional teaching qualifications, mostly from the UK"	NA	"In view of [Institution F's] protocol agreement with the Egyptian government, which requires specific ratios of Egyptian, U.S. and third-country citizen faculty, preference will be given at this time to qualified applicants who are U.S. citizens."

Proficiency Level	Excellent spoken and written English	Fluent English speaker	NA	NA	The ability to explain and receive ideas in the English Language High level of English proficiency	Applicants should have excellent English skills
Years of Experience	At least 3 years	At least 3-5 years	At least 3 years	MINIMUM of three years teaching experience post-QTS	NA	At least 2 years
Certifications	University graduate, Teaching diploma holder is preferred. Master's in education or PGCE is a plus	Recognized Teaching qualification that meets the requirements of your home-country (e.g. B.Ed., PGCE, GDE etc.)	Teacher Certification from an accredited Higher Education Institution in North America	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	MA or BA with "very good" standing of relevant field	An MA TESOL
Additional Comments	Although nationality was not a requirement, a question regarding nationality	"Institution B is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the	Visa information and reasons to live in Egypt were frequently noted.	Visa information and reasons to live in Egypt were noted. "In addition, all	"Institution E tries to maintain a fair hiring process by making employment openings visible and	"By making job opportunities clear and open to anyone via the internet, Institution F works to ensure a fair

	(“Egyptian” or “Other”) was on the job application. Asks applicants to rate their proficiency from fair to excellent.	workplace. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by law."		overseas contract teachers benefit from a generous housing allowance (circa £1000 per month), private BUPA Gold medical insurance, annual return flights to the UK, and 2 free places for children of school age."	accessible to anybody via the internet."	hiring process that is open to all."

Based on the data presented in Table 4.2, only one (Institution C) out of the six institutions' career webpages mentions "nativeness" as a defining factor of its community of teachers; however, Institution C adds the importance of "diversity" and "world-class educators," which seems to account for qualifications and experience as well as nationality being of importance when making hiring decisions. With regards to language proficiency, fluency and excellent English language skills were requirements, with no mention of nativeness in all six institutions' online pages. All six institutions require teaching qualifications in the form of years of experience and/or certifications; nevertheless, it is important to note that the higher the tuition fees the institution sets, the more advanced certifications are required of the prospective candidates.

Even though only Institution C mentions nativeness explicitly, three other institutions (B, D and F) state birthplace/nationality preferences. Again, these institutions were those charging higher tuition fees. For example, Institution B asks for teachers who come from UK schools or international settings; it is unknown if international schools/schools that offer UK curricula in Cairo are also acceptable. Interestingly, Institution F explains the reasons why they prefer to hire American citizens, based on an agreement with the Egyptian government. This statement also implies that the number of Egyptian instructors is much more than those from the US (something that was also stated by administrators of Institution F during the interviews).

Although nationality was not a requirement, a question regarding nationality (Egyptian or Other) was on the online job application for Institution A. It is unclear if there is a reason for this beyond the collection of demographic information. Institutions B, E and F added statements against discriminatory hiring practices. Institution C and D, on the other hand, frequently posted visa information and reasons to live in Egypt on their career webpages. Benefits of relocating to Egypt were stated explicitly (see Table 4.2).

Based on the data presented in Table 4.2, it seems that although not an explicit requirement, native speakerism is implied in terms of birthplace/national identity and was mentioned in four of the six institutions' career postings. Also, advertising for expatriate teachers to relocate to Egypt was apparent in two of the six job postings analyzed. So far it could be concluded that although qualifications, language proficiency and certifications were significant and the most prominently advertised hiring criteria in all six institutions, there were instances of focus given to advertising and persuading NESTs to make the move to Cairo. This finds parallels with the content analysis conducted by Reucker and Ives (2015)

although not as explicitly geared towards native speakers as was observed in their study of job advertisements in the region of Asia.

4.2.2 Interviews with four administrators

Following the reflexive thematic analysis conducted while reading the transcriptions of interviews with two administrators working at institutions A and two administrators working at institution F (see Table 4.1), three themes were identified. Keeping the first research question in mind, the three main criteria recruiters reported that they look for when hiring English language teachers include language proficiency (theme 1), teaching qualifications (theme 2), and work ethic amongst other personality traits (theme 3).

Language Proficiency

Language proficiency was discussed at length by all four administrators. They expressed the importance of the interview process, where the candidates' use of the English language is evaluated:

> **Administrator A:** The most important factor that you only get from the interview is their language…
>
> **Administrator B:** When we interview them, I mean part of what we're trying to hear is language… (full interview transcripts are presented in Appendix D)

Administrator B also mentioned that the CV/cover letter presented by the candidate was very telling with regards to prospective teachers' writing abilities, even during the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI): "If we're thinking about language, we can see how cover letters are formatted and worded, how resumes or CVs are done. We can get an idea of what is this person's language ability and even in formatting, is a CV formatted in a way that that a big institution would expect?"

The issue of accents and pronunciation came up under this theme as well. Three of the four administrators did not mind the "Egyptianisms" that their NNEST applicants would use. However, Administrator A was strongly opposed to hiring someone with a "thicker" accent: "There are teachers that, you see, have an accent, a strong accent. I don't know what. And I'd say that's very okay in the content course, but not in the language course." Administrators B and D struggled to reflect on the importance of pronunciation versus accents. They did, however, note the importance of candidates having experiences teaching students of different ethnicities and with different accents:

> **Administrator B:** I mean people who generally have the linguistic resources to have gotten a good English education have had a lot of experience with different kinds of accents and the different…what they listen to, the interactions they have where there is an accent, but it's not considered impeding a candidate, or maybe it is impeding a

candidate, because in the end it does lead to a lot of difficulties, and understanding what the language is, what's being said. So, we are listening for that too when hiring.

Administrator D: At the heart of all effective education is effective communication which is around the language…whilst policymakers might say, 'Yes, I want someone who is British, or I want someone who is American, or I want this.' I want something else. It's actually, for me, taking, say, an Egyptian who's got fluent English skills, would be a better way to communicate with the pupils in my school [Institution A].

Administrators B and D seem to acknowledge the importance of teachers being able to engage with different accents; however, Administrator B notes that this strength could also be a weakness if it impedes the prospective teacher's communication skills. Although Administrator B did hesitate when making this claim, could this allude to a generalization that all NNESTs have a noticeable accent? If so, would unnoticeable accents that do not impede communication include inner-circle countries only? On the other hand, Administrator D only focuses on the benefit of hiring NNESTs who have been exposed to multiple accents and are familiar with the various Egyptianisms of their learners. To Administrator D, this positively impacts effective communication.

Based on these extracts from the interviews with administrators, it seems that two of the four administrators believe that non-native accents may impede communication and are not conducive to second language learning. Administrators C and D, however, seem to disagree and find NNESTs' second language learning experience to be an asset. This range of views was also present in two studies conducted by Ma (2012b, 2012a) where student and NNEST participants believed that although they felt more comfortable communicating with NNESTs, they believed sharing an L1 with their instructors was a hindrance in that it enabled them to use their L1 more often in class, limiting their usage and development of the L2. This could be the reason why native speakerism was not as prominent as teaching experience and qualifications in the job postings of both Institutions A and F where the administrators were employed at the time of this study. This could also be the reason why the lines between accent and pronunciation were blurred for Administrators A, B and D and may account for the hesitation perceived in Administrators B and D's responses when discussing effective communication skills.

Qualifications

The second criterion of significance to Administrators A, B, C and D is qualified teacher status, which includes teaching experience, academic background, knowledge, certifications, and tech savviness:

Interviewer: In your opinion, what makes the ideal English teacher?

Administrator A: [Someone with] experience, qualifications, is tech savvy…

Administrator B: Somebody who has the right degrees, you know…experiences, a combination of education and experience is very important.

Administrator C: [Someone with] the knowledge, the qualification for the position, experience…

Administrator D: [Someone who can] engage well with pupils, passionate about education, enthusiastic, empathy, positive relationships with young people, flexible, reflective, passion for literature, as well as for language.

These extracts align with the requirements outlined in the career webpages explored in the content analysis illustrated in Table 4.2, further confirming the importance of experience and qualifications when making hiring decisions.

Work Ethic

The third and final theme of work ethic included several personality traits that these administrators look for in a prospective English teacher. Examples include:

Administrator A: Character, confidence, progressive…

Administrator B: What is the instructor like as a colleague as well as a teacher?

Administrator C: Passion[ate] and the passion towards teaching.

Again, native speakerism and birthplace/national identity did not play a role when administrators listed these personal characteristics that they look for when making hiring decisions. It is interesting to note; however, that several studies have explored the relationship between NNESTs/NESTs and their influence on student engagement and motivation, including a study conducted by El-Sawah (2019) with AUC students and faculty. Students had more positive perceptions of the NNESTs' instructional practices and motivational techniques because, as ESL/EFL learners, NNESTs understood learners' difficulties in acquiring the language and targeted those difficulties in class. It seems that this aligns with Administrator B's and D's views on hiring NNESTs, especially Egyptian NNESTs.

Following the end of each interview, administrators were asked to rank eight common criteria when recruiting English teachers via a Likert scale item. For a summary of the results of this item, refer to Figure 4.1.

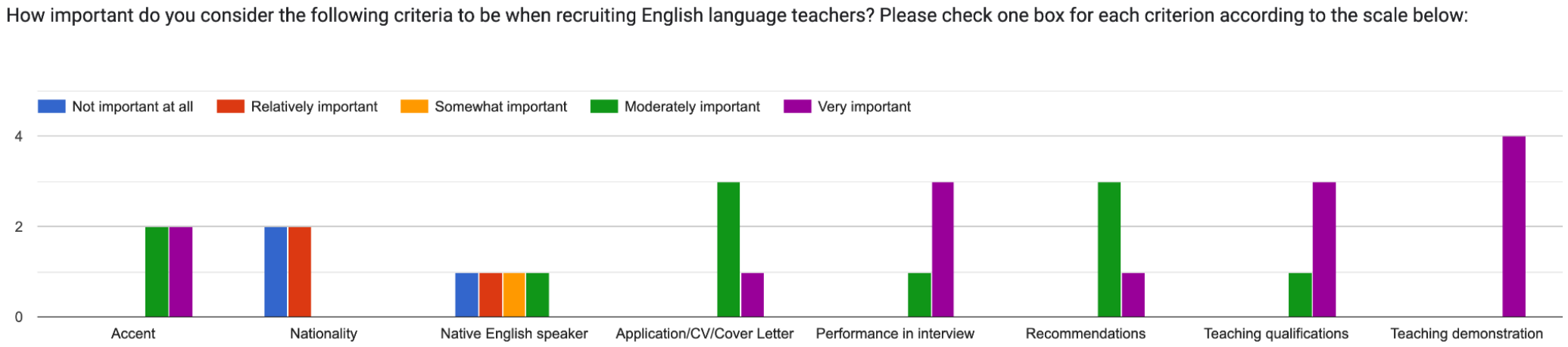

Fig. 4.1. The results of the Likert scale item distributed to administrators after each interview.

As we can see here, although the criterion of "Native English speaker" was rated as not important at all to moderately important, accent was rated as moderately important and very important by the four administrators, indicating a possible mismatch or dissonance similar to those found during interviews. Also corresponding to the interview results, the resume, interview, and teaching qualifications were moderately important to very important when making hiring decisions. Something that was not mentioned during the interview but was the only criterion unanimously rated as very important was the teaching demonstration. Again, this aligns with the administrators' statements about the significance of evaluating the prospective teacher's language skills via the interview.

To sum up the data gathered and to answer the first research question, it can be argued that although not as explicit and intensely driven by native speakerism as some parts of the world (i.e. Clark & Paran, 2007; Ruecker & Ives, 2015), job postings and administrators' perceptions of the ideal

English teacher candidate in Cairo is one who is proficient in English, does not possess an obvious accent (meaning an inner-circle-country-accent might be prioritized), has ample experience (3+ years) and other qualifications/certifications, and is a confident and passionate teacher with a strong work ethic.

4.3 Research Question 2: What important criteria do parents believe make the ideal English teacher?

The second research question aimed to understand the criteria parents believe make the ideal English teacher. To answer this question, a questionnaire was electronically distributed to more than 200 parents of students enrolled/or graduated from private, international institutions including (but not limited to) the six institutions of the current study's sample. A total of 30 responses were gathered. Also, interviews with two volunteer parents were conducted and analyzed. For a description of the sample used to answer research question 2, refer to Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Summary of the sample used for data collection and analysis for research question 2.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Research Question 2</th></tr>
<tr><th>Sample</th><th>Type of institution:
private, international</th><th>Questionnaires</th><th>Parents interviewed</th></tr>
<tr><td>Institution A</td><td>School</td><td rowspan="6">Sent to parents of students enrolled at these six institutions and beyond (approx. 12 in total)

30 responses in total</td><td>1 (female NNES)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institution B</td><td>School</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institution C</td><td>School</td><td>1 (female NNES)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institution D</td><td>School</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institution E</td><td>University</td><td>-</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institution F</td><td>University</td><td>-</td></tr>
</table>

4.3.1 Parent questionnaire

To answer research question 2, questionnaires were sent out to parents of students enrolled at various private, international institutions, beyond the sample of six institutions used to answer research question 1, resulting in responses from approximately 12 institutions. With the online distribution of the questionnaire, it was difficult to keep track of exactly how many institutions each responder was linked to. However, demographic questions asked respondents to state what their first language is (English, Arabic, or other). 23% of parents were L1 speakers of English, 70% were L1 speakers of Arabic and 7% were L1 speakers of other languages besides Arabic and English (Russian and Azerbaijani). The decision to not

limit the questionnaire distribution to the sample of six institutions was made in the attempt to gather as many responses as possible from parents of private, international institutions. The questionnaire was developed by merging two questionnaires (see Appendix B). The first was created by Aboulfetouh (2014) targeting parents' attitudes towards bilingualism, international schools, and their influence on their children's identity formation. Additionally, Aboulfetouh's (2014) study included interview questions that were used to probe parents' responses. Both the questionnaire and interview questions were merged to create the first part of the questionnaire used for this study (see Appendix B). The second part of the questionnaire was adapted from Colmenero and Lasagabaster's (2020) study. Since the questionnaire items included a five-point Likert scale where 1 is strongly agree and 5 is strongly disagree, values between 2.85 and 3.15 were interpreted as responses in which the native factor had no significant influence on the results because they are close to 3, which probably denotes a neutral attitude and represents the "neither agree nor disagree" option. It is important to note that the Standard Deviation (SD) of each item was less than +/-2 meaning that responses were closer to the true value and that respondents were more likely to have the same opinions regarding nativeness and English teachers. Tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 illustrate the results gathered from the questionnaire responses.

Assessment and Support

Table 4.4 showed neutral perceptions towards NESTs' and NNESTs' assessment techniques and how they support their learners.

Table 4.4

Parents' preferences regarding assessment and support.

Assessment and support		Mean	SD
Item 1	A non-native teacher would assess my child's/children's listening comprehension better than a native speaker.	3.13	0.78
Item 2	A non-native teacher would assess my child's/children's writing better than a native speaker.	2.93	0.94
Item 3	A non-native teacher solves students' problems with English learning better than a native teacher.	2.73	0.94
Item 4	Non-native teachers support students with more notes and materials than native speakers.	2.7	1.02
Item 5	A non-native teacher would assess students' knowledge of	2.6	1.04

	grammar better than a native speaker.		
Item 6	A non-native teacher would assess students' speaking better than a native speaker.	3.37	1.03
Item 7	A non-native teacher would assess students' reading comprehension better than a native speaker.	2.8	0.85
Item 8	In general, a non-native speaker would give students more strategies/ideas to learn better.	2.67	0.92
TOTAL		2.87	0.94

Although most of the items surrounding NNESTs' assessment and support yielded a neutral attitude, it seems that items 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 were leaning towards the belief that NNESTs were preferred when targeting learners' weaknesses, supporting students with more notes/materials, and assessing students' knowledge of grammar and reading comprehension skills. As for assessing students' speaking skills, responses were more positive towards NESTs' ability to do so. These results, although mostly neutral, seem to align with studies exploring the NNESTs strengths and weaknesses (see Ma, 2012a, 2012b; Medgyes & Arva, 2000), including NNESTs' ability to support students' L2 acquisition, superior grammar knowledge and their lack of knowledge when assessing speaking skills. This could also account for the notion of accent and how some NNESTs may be regarded as "near-native" but not "native" if they did not live in an inner-circle country (Holliday, 2013; Medgyes, 2001; Selvi, 2019).

Attitudes and Motivation

Table 4.5 also illustrated a mostly neutral response towards NNESTs and NESTs and their respective motivational techniques.

Table 4.5

Parents' preferences regarding attitudes and motivation.

Attitudes and motivation		**Mean**	**SD**
Item 1	I would have more positive attitudes towards English speaking countries and their speakers with a non-native teacher.	3	0.91
Item 2	My child/children would have less language difficulties with	3.03	0.93

	a non- native teacher.		
Item 3	My child/children would feel more motivated towards learning English if they were taught by a non-native teacher.	2.97	0.85
Item 4	My child/children would have more positive attitudes towards the learning of English with a non-native teacher.	3.13	0.9
Item 5	In general, I think I would prefer a non-native teacher.	2.83	0.91
Item 6	Non-native teachers exhibit a higher dedication in their teaching than native teachers.	2.87	0.86
Item 7	Non-native teachers are more motivated to teach English than native teachers.	2.93	0.83
TOTAL		2.97	0.88

In terms of NNESTs attitude and motivation within the classroom, it seems that parents' attitudes were neutral for all the items except item 5, which was just a little below the neutral threshold. In fact, 30% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would prefer a non-native teacher while only 13% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. This seems to imply that parents' generally have either a neutral perspective when it comes to NESTs versus NNESTs and the ideal English language teachers and/or a positive attitude towards having an NNEST as their children's English language teacher. This coincides with El-Sawah's (2019) study where findings showed that students had more positive perceptions towards the instructional practices and motivational techniques used by the NNEST because as ESL/EFL learners themselves, NNESTs understood learners' difficulties in acquiring the language and target those difficulties in class.

Cultural Knowledge

When asked about the transfer of cultural knowledge associated with the English language, parents of the current study seemed to prefer NESTs as illustrated in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Parents' preferences regarding culture.

Culture		**Mean**	**SD**
Item 1	You have to be a non-native teacher to be able to transmit the culture, history and traditions of English-speaking countries.	3.73	1.11

Item 2	My child/children would learn more about English speaking countries' culture with a non-native speaker.	3.47	0.97
Item 3	A non-native teacher is the best option to teach the history, culture and traditions of his/her country of origin.	2.6	1.16
TOTAL		3.27	1.08

This section was interesting as there was more disagreement towards NNESTs knowledge and transfer of cultural aspects of the English language, with 50% of participants disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that you have to be a non-native teacher to be able to transmit the culture, history and traditions of English speaking countries (item 1) and 60% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that their child/children would learn more about English speaking countries' culture with an NNEST (item 2). Item 3 shows that 43% of respondents agree or strongly agree that a non-native teacher is the best option to teach the history, culture, and traditions of his/her country of origin (in this case, Egyptian culture). Therefore, parents of this study seem to agree with previous literature (see Alwadi, 2013) regarding the assumption that NESTs are the best representation of the target culture of those countries whose official language is English, focusing on inner-circle countries (e.g. American and British). This assumption, according to Holliday (2018), further fuels the notion of native speakerism in that parents seem to believe that NESTs and NNESTs have opposing strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, many of the strengths attributed to NESTs are based on their birthplace (i.e. accent, cultural immersion, etc.).

Perceived Linguistic Abilities

As described in Table 4.7, when asked about the perceived linguistic skills of NESTs and NNESTs, parents of the current study seemed to prefer NESTs.

Table 4.7

Parents' preferences regarding perceived linguistic abilities.

Perceived Linguistic Abilities		**Mean**	**SD**
Item 1	In general, my child/children would learn more vocabulary with a non-native teacher.	3.17	1.05
Item 2	Non-native teachers are good examples of how to learn English.	2.53	0.9

Item 3	Non-native English teachers must have a British or an American accent.	3.1	1.24
Item 4	In general, my child's/children's listening skills would be better with a non-native speaker.	3	0.91
Item 5	In general, my child's/children's reading skills would be better with a non-native speaker.	3.1	0.66
Item 6	In general, my child/children would speak more fluently with a non-native teacher.	3.2	0.96
Item 7	In general, a non-native teacher explains grammar better than a native teacher.	2.67	0.96
Item 8	In general, my child's/children's pronunciation would be better with a non-native speaker.	3.5	1.17
Item 9	My child's/children's level would improve faster with a non-native teacher.	3.23	0.86
Item 10	In general, my child's/children's writing skills would be better with a non-native teacher.	3.17	0.99
TOTAL		3.03	0.97

Most items in this section illustrated neutral attitudes, except for item 8 where 53% disagreed or strongly disagreed and only 13% agreed or strongly agreed that their child/children's pronunciation would be better with a non-native speaker. Nevertheless, items 2 and 7, showed that 43% agreed or strongly agreed that non-native teachers are good examples of how to learn English and 47% believed that a non-native teacher explains grammar better than a native teacher. This relates to the belief that as L2 learners, NNESTs are taught more prescriptive grammar, which is not always the case for the NEST (Mahboob, 2010). Also, item 3 garnered 33% agreement or strong agreement and 37% disagreement or strong disagreement that NNESTs must have a British or an American accent. Based on these results, it appears that although participants do not seem to prioritize their children's English language teacher's having an American or British accent, more than half the participants seem to think that an NEST would be better equipped to improve learners' English pronunciation skills. This is consistent with Chomsky's (1965) advocacy for native speakers

as the most credible source in English language acquisition and grammatical accuracy, which fueled initial preferences towards NESTs.

4.3.2 Interviews with two parents

Following the reflexive thematic analysis conducted while reading the transcriptions of interviews with two parents of students at Institutions A and C (see Table 4.3), three themes were identified. Both parents were L1 speakers of Arabic and L2 speakers of English. They both have two children (one boy and one girl each). Keeping the second research question in mind, the three criteria parents believe make the ideal English teacher include accent (theme 1), passion (theme 2), and fluency (theme 3). Both parents interviewed were Egyptian NNESTs themselves and they generally expressed very different views.

Accent

The first criterion regarding the English teacher's accent illustrated these opposing views. For example, while one parent did not care if her children acquired a "native" accent, the other expressed distress if a NNEST had taught her children when they were younger:

> **Parent A:** I wanted them to get the language. The near-native language from a very young age, and you know, in international schools you have native speakers. At this age, I think having native speakers, maybe, is important as teachers. Maybe. When you're young growing up, you know, until you master it…But I as a parent, my child, growing up still in the age when they are acquiring the language and the accent, I would want them to have a native speaker…I think it's a critical age. I mean, it's important to get the language from a native speaker. But then, once you have the language that's it.

Parent B, on the other hand, does not care if her children sound "native" and actually stated that NESTs and their native accents could prove to be a deterrent in class: "Sometimes, actually there can be a language barrier when there is an [native] accent." This parent goes on to explain that in Egypt, it seems to be due to cultural/classist motivations that drive parents to prefer a NEST than a NNEST:

> **Parent B:** They're Egyptian at the end of the day, and I'm not expecting them to have a *good* [emphasis added] accent. That's an extra. It's a good thing but for me having a proper pronunciation for the words, fluency when they are talking, this is what's important...as Egyptians [we] have this tendency, we take pride in having a *good* [emphasis added] accent, like we're mastering an American accent as their English accent, while in other countries they take pride in their language, their own language. Sometimes we make fun of people that don't have a *good* [emphasis added] accent here in Egypt, and we say that it's okay…most believe they need a native speaking teacher to show off that their kids have "Miss Karen" as their teacher. It's a way to establish prestige. They also may believe that having a native-speaker-teacher would

> guarantee that their kids will sound like them, and that is something a lot of parents want.

Although Parent B expresses that she does not care about her children sounding American or British, the use of the adjective "good" in this extract implies that sounding American or British means acquiring a "good" accent while not having either could possibly be described as "bad." Hence, Parents A and B's views seem to oppose one another at first glance yet Parent B's use of the word "good" here when describing native accents may suggest that their views are not entirely different. Parent B seems to present conflicting views within herself through her statement above and it seems like her stated beliefs may not match what she goes on to say about having a "good" accent. This could relate to the lack of awareness of the debates surrounding native speakerism and a misunderstanding of nativeness itself, the definition of which is problematic and inaccurate (Calafato, 2019). It is important to note that Parent A had children enrolled in a school with higher tuition fees (Institution C) than Parent B's children (Institution A). Perhaps their expectations correlate with the amount of money paid.

Passion

Both parents explained that the ideal English teacher should have a passion towards the language and transfer that passion to their students. Additionally, Parent B explains how passion for teaching the English language and building rapport can be easier to accomplish via Egyptian NNESTs because they share the same L1:

> So if she is a good, if it's a non-native, yet she's able to communicate with the kids and teach them proper English language, and is able to make them love the subject and is able to progress their level, then I don't care about having a native speaker…sometimes actually kids like to bond with you, while they're talking in their own language…having this connection when you speak the same language it creates, I don't want to magnify it, but it just creates like a bond between you with the kids, and there are jokes that you say in Arabic because they get it, and there are names that you say in Arabic, because they get it... the person who's teaching my children doesn't have to be native, yet they're able to present them with a quality learning experience. I'm very much okay with that…as a native, you can be fascinated with the language. But the essence is not there.

This notion that NNESTs can establish rapport with their students due to sharing the same L1 aligns with what Administrator D claimed to be the reason why he prefers hiring Egyptian NNESTs who are familiar with students' interlanguage. This also agrees with El-Sawah's (2019) findings with regards to students preferring NNESTs motivational techniques

in the classroom and Ma's (2012b) study where NNESTs claimed that one of their pedagogical strengths was their strong rapport with students.

Fluency

Lastly, both parents also agreed on the final criterion that describes the ideal English teacher and that is developing learners' fluency in the language, which both parents believe guarantees better futures for their children. This aligns with the questionnaire results where 43% of the participants stated they chose international schools for their children based on the belief that these institutions could help improve their children's language proficiency. Both interviewees acknowledged the importance of English as a global language stating that being fluent in English does make their children's brighter futures and career paths somewhat more attainable and that an English teacher that understands that and is able to develop that fluency is the ideal English teacher:

> **Parent B:** It's very important, because the English language is one of the most common languages used, at work generally and if you're not able to read and write properly, you will not be able to. You will have barriers and challenges when you grow up…But for me, I wish for [them] to be able to reach fluency...So English is the core that if you are able to be good at and understand the language and comprehend, especially reading, you'll be able to understand other subjects better.

Again, this aligns with the questionnaire responses where 76.6% of participants believed that international schools (where English is the language of instruction) would provide better opportunities (university and beyond) for their children.

Based on interviews with parents, it seems that they have somewhat opposing views regarding wanting an NEST as their children's English language teacher; however, it is important to note that both parents agree that a native accent (American or British) represents a "good" accent. Both parents also agree that the ideal English language teacher has a passion towards the language and teaching as well as the knowledge and skills needed to help improve their children's fluency.

To sum up the data gathered and to answer the second research question, it can be argued that although parents of the current study have mostly neutral attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs, there is a preference towards NESTs with regards to assessing speaking skills, transferring accurate knowledge about inner-circle countries' cultures and acquiring "good" accents while NNESTs are preferred when establishing rapport with learners, supporting and understanding learners' acquisition difficulties, and motivating learners.

4.4 Research Question 3: What important criteria do Egyptian NNESTs believe make the ideal English teacher? What (if any) native speaker biases have they encountered during the recruitment process at private, international schools and universities in Cairo?

The third research question aimed to understand the criteria Egyptian NNESTs believe make the ideal English teacher as well as give NNESTs an opportunity to share any narratives of recruitment discrimination they have encountered throughout their teaching careers. To answer these questions, interviews with six Egyptian NNESTs employed at Institutions A and F were conducted and analyzed. Additionally, six CVs were circulated to the same six private, international English language institutions, and replies (emails and phone calls) were logged following correspondence testing guidelines. For a description of the sample used to answer research question 3, refer to Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

Summary of the sample used for data collection and analysis for research question 3.

Research Question 3			
Sample	**Type of institution:** private, international	**No. of NNESTs interviewed from each institution:** with 3+ years teaching experience	**No. of CVs sent to each institution**
Institution A	School	1 (female, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNEST)	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)
Institution B	School	0	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)
Institution C	School	0	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)
Institution D	School	0	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)
Institution E	University	0	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)
Institution F	University	5 (2 males, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNESTs, 1 female, Egyptian, and self-identified as NNEST, and 2 females, Egyptian, and self-identified as	6 (3 NESTs and 3 NNESTs)

		bilinguals/NESTs)	

4.4.1 Interviews with six NNESTs

Following the reflexive thematic analysis conducted while reading the transcriptions of interviews with six NNESTs from Institutions A and F, two themes answering the first part of research question 3 (what makes the ideal English teacher) were identified while three themes with regards to these NNESTs narratives about job hunting in Egypt were noted. According to the interviewees, teaching qualifications, language proficiency and character make up the ideal English teacher. As for their experiences while looking for teaching positions, themes of inferiority, awareness of their strengths as NNESTs, and marketability were expressed.

The ideal English teacher is…

Qualified and proficient

When describing the ideal English teacher, five of the six NNESTs interviewed expressed that teaching qualifications and knowledge were important characteristics to have. According to these five teachers, good English teachers need to be knowledgeable of content and work on their professional development:

> **Teacher B:** Also [teachers] need to be constantly working towards, like their professional development just attending different workshops, coming up with different ways of doing things, constantly adapting to change.
>
> **Teacher C:** Knowledge and understanding of how to conduct a lesson, how to be a guide… [how to] adapt.
>
> **Teacher D:** It's a measurement of a good teacher to know how to use the tools at their disposal to their advantage in the betterment of their students' performance and language proficiency.
>
> **Teacher E:** I just don't think that you have to be born in a certain country to be labeled as a good English teacher. I think it's how you work on yourself and how you develop your skills.
>
> **Teacher F:** [Teachers should be] Qualified, knowledgeable about the content…

In terms of language proficiency, all six teachers acknowledged the importance of owning the English language and being proficient in their use of the language; however, they were also quick to elaborate that nativeness does not equal ownership of English: “That

should not be my only qualification, being a native speaker is an asset, and it could also be a hindrance. It's just how good the teacher is" (Teacher D). Following Teacher E's comment on the irrelevance of nativeness when describing a good English teacher, Teacher B commented on the strength of being an NNEST, stating that "being non-native, it can be an advantage. You know. It can be a good thing because you have that awareness [of learning English as an L2]." This notion relates to what some administrators and parents believed to be an advantage of hiring NNESTs and what many of the studies on native speakerism have suggested as well (i.e. El-Sawah, 2019; Ma, 2012a; Medgyes et al., 2005; Schenck, 2020).

Passionate and caring

Much like the administrators, teachers expressed that the ideal English teacher possessed other attitudinal characteristics as well:

> **Teacher B:** I feel like a good teacher has to have many other characteristics like compassion for these students to actually care about their students like different personality traits that make a good teacher that have nothing to do with their command over the language, even though that is essential, and everything…
>
> **Teacher C:** Focus on your students' needs…
>
> **Teacher F:** [Teachers should be] Human, empathetic, bond [with] the students…

It is possible that the reason behind the interviewees chosen criteria that describe the ideal English teacher is based on their own self-identified strengths as NNESTs. This suggestion is based on studies that investigated NNESTs self-perceptions where qualifications, proficiency and an understanding and empathetic personality were mentioned as perceived strengths by participants (see Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020; Ghasemboland & Hashim, 2013; Ma, 2012b).

During the recruitment process, I have realized…

I am inferior to an NEST

When asked about their personal recounts of job hunting as well as their treatment as NNESTs versus their NEST counterparts, all six interviewees expressed instances and feelings of inferiority:

> **Teacher A:** So, I had a student who thought that by writing the most complex structure and as many sophisticated big words as possible in a construction, then this is better. And every time I'd say in a conference, what do you mean? I don't understand, he said: 'But you're the teacher,' as if there's something wrong with me. 'You should know what I said'...He'll just look at me as if there's something wrong with me, I mean I don't understand. He didn't say it out loud, but you know, you get the message. Then we swapped, and he got the native speaker, and she said the same

> exact thing, and she said, ‘Hey, I don't understand,’ and he said, ‘But you're an American,’ and she said, ‘Yeah, but I still don't understand.’ So, he thought. I don't understand, because I'm a non-native speaker…It's like it's too sophisticated for me. I don't get it.
>
> **Teacher D:** But I have to tell you one thing…being a person who speaks English as a second language, and making a living out of that second language your language capabilities and competences are always scrutinized. You're under constant scrutiny, or you're under the spot every single time you open your mouth and try to speak English, and this is the measurement of how good you are as a teacher because if you don't speak English well, then you're not really qualified to teach it...
>
> **Teacher F:** Maybe there is one thing you know from students themselves; you know. If, for example, you, you're teaching them a course or a term immediately after a native speaker, you know they might come just in one of the sessions, or one of the classes, and tell you but Miss so and so said this not what you’re saying...But when they mentioned a native speaker, you feel that there is something, you know, implicit that maybe oh, because she or he is native, so they know it's a bit better than you...We are always in comparison, you know, with native teachers or instructors. So, if a student comes and tells you this definitely, it will touch one part deep inside you. You know that again, I'm being compared to a native speaker. Maybe there is no credibility of what I'm saying, because they heard something different from that native teacher.

Here, Teachers A, D, and F narrate instances when they have been compared to their NEST counterparts and were assumed by their students (and possibly, themselves) to be less competent than NESTs. Based on these statements, it seems that having NESTs and NNESTs teaching at the same institution and/or co-teaching the same group of students may result in fueling the problematic dichotomy associated with nativeness and the English language. This could be a weakness to the team-teaching approach that was suggested by researchers as a way to combat the native speaker ideology (i.e. Colmenero & Lasagabaster, 2020; Gurkan & Yuksel, 2012; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002). Instead of celebrating the collaboration between both kinds of teachers, this could further expand the gap created by the dichotomy of NEST versus NNEST.

Feelings of inferiority experienced by the NNESTs interviewed were also self-ascribed, resulting in an inner conflict of questioning their own proficiency and ownership of the English language:

> **Teacher B:** Sometimes I feel like, oh, I can't express myself well enough in this language compared to someone who is a native English speaker. I'm not as eloquent. I'm not. You know. I can't explain myself well. So, it does. It's an internalized fear that I have. But it hasn't been pointed out to me if that makes sense.

Teacher B illustrates how these feelings of inferiority can be self-ascribed and not just ascribed by others. This aligns with Amin’s (2001) study of NNESTs in Canada who

believed that NNESTs cannot learn English as well as native speakers, and, therefore, cannot teach English as well as NESTs.

Discriminatory practices throughout the recruitment process also resulted in feelings of inferiority experienced by Teachers C and E:

> **Teacher C:** Even though X and Y would be doing the exact same thing literally, exactly the same material, same types of approaches and same everything. And they would prefer that native teacher, even though the students themselves, in one situation that I remember quite clearly, the students themselves did not like the native speaker, and preferred the other one. But the parents, like the native [teacher] because they were native…I would say that if there are two teachers who are applying for the same job: one who is extremely qualified and a very good teacher as in you know they actually teach the students, that students learn. They don't just memorize. And then there's another teacher with absolutely no qualifications whatsoever, but they are a native speaker, in my experience they will hire the native speaker.

> **Teacher E:** So, they [recruiters] haven't actually done anything [discriminatory], but they haven't contacted me either even if I was qualified for the job I was applying for.

Here, Teacher C and Teacher E recount what participants in Anderson's (2018) study expressed: Despite evidence suggesting many learners in numerous contexts do not prefer NS instructors over NNS teachers, and despite the fact that none of the interview questions in Anderson's (2018) study specifically addressed this problem, 12 of the 19 experienced NNESTs narrated instances of discrimination, including them being passed over for interviews with recruiters based on their non-native status.

The six interviewees of this study also stated that they would try to mediate these feelings of inferiority by working on their professional development:

> **Teacher B:** It does feel that way sometimes. If I need to work on my professional development extra hard to be seen as professional and competent at my job. And I catch myself thinking about this a lot, even during presentations. Was I able to express myself sufficiently in this language? Was I succinct enough? Was I, you know, rambling because I couldn't find the right words to say something…

> **Teacher F:** Non-native speakers are more, you know, more anxious, and keener on developing themselves professionally than natives. This is my experience. I mean, this is according to the natives, native teachers, that I worked with. They were not that keen, you know. They just…I don't know if they fall back on their nativeness and knowledge with the language that this is enough… [a native colleague once told me] 'Oh, in Egypt I can work everywhere since I'm white and I'm blonde and have colored eyes. So yeah, this could be possible for me to work in any place.' So, this could also be, you know, a reason trying to prove that we are not less qualified than natives. We can compete, and we can impress students, and we can help them develop. We can help them to have better proficiency and seem like a native speaker, you know.

While Teacher B describes an intrinsic need to work on her professional development due to her being positioned as an NNEST, Teacher F explains that attempting to outdo NESTs is a reason behind his professional development. Teacher F also highlights the idea that appearances, not just birthplace/nationality, can influence hiring practices as he recounts what an NEST colleague had said about being able to work anywhere in Egypt based on the color of their hair (blond) and eyes (blue). As mentioned before, these racializations, or categorizations of people based on physical appearances, are social constructs that serve as the foundations for stereotypes as well as views and attitudes towards those classified as of a particular race (Alptekin, 2002; Byram et al., 2002; Ruecker & Ives, 2015).

It is interesting to note that out of the six NNESTs interviewed, two of them identified as native-English speakers based on their exposure to the language and not the traditional geographical definition of the term (please refer to Table 4.8 for details regarding the sample's self-identification as NES/NNES). Unlike the administrators and parents interviewed, who I described via nativeness, and non-native status based on their nationalities (please refer to Table 4.1), participants of this portion of the study were asked explicitly to state how they would identify themselves as native or non-native speakers of English.

> **Teacher B:** I feel like, even at [current institution of employment], even though we talk about this all the time in class, we consciously point out how problematic these labels are. I feel like, no matter what we do we will still be one step below a native English speaker. We will be the fluent English speakers, the fluent, but not native English users...So no, I don't think the recruiters would see me that way. As long as I'm Egyptian, or from a non-English speaking country, whatever that means.

Again, Teacher B illustrates how these labels and subsequent feelings of inferiority may be due to recruiters, administrators and even parents positioning them in a category below that of a native speaker simply because of birthplace and/or nationality, even when these teachers themselves identify as native speakers.

I have strengths as an NNEST

Despite being positioned and self-positioning themselves as "less than" their NEST counterparts, all six interviewees described their strengths based on their non-native status, including grammatical accuracy:

> **Teacher C:** Even when you actually look at the facts you find that native speakers make more mistakes while they're speaking, than non-native speakers, because non-native speakers know the grammatical accuracy of sentences and language, and all of that etc.

Although not exactly based on evidence, Teacher C's comment opens up the issue of prescriptive versus descriptive grammars. It seems that the strength that NNESTs from the

current study as well as some of the literature (i.e. Lipovsky & Mahboob, 2007; Medgyes & Arva, 2000; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014) targeting NNESTs believe they have is the knowledge of prescriptive (focus on form) grammar, while NESTs seem to be more eloquent in their use of descriptive (focus on meaning) grammar (Hinkel, 2018; Larsen-Freeman et al., 2016). However, as explained by Larsen-Freeman et al. (2016), being labeled a native speaker of English and learning the "standard" variety of English gives speakers/learners advantages that those who learned other varieties of English do not have, such as knowledge of idioms and sayings. This could be the reason for interviewees of this study's insecurities beyond prescriptive grammar.

Being L2 speakers of English, L1 speakers of Arabic and sharing the same culture as their students also were seen to be advantageous traits:

> **Teacher B:** We had one history teacher who was a native speaker, and he was amazing. Everyone loved him, but he did say. Once he said something that Egyptian students felt was a bit problematic, like the 6th of October war. He just presented an alternative perspective that Egypt never won that war, and that, you know this was…we were made to believe that through propaganda, etc. and everyone and the administration was furious with him. I feel like his nativeness is kind of…it didn't benefit him, and put him at a disadvantage...

Teacher B highlights a similar strength that was also expressed by participants in Amin's (2001) study where they believed they were able to notice nuanced racist teaching material and to make their classrooms more inclusive. What Teacher B describes is an instance when the NEST was at a disadvantage by not realizing the ramifications of the statements he was making to an audience of Egyptian students, something that an Egyptian NNEST might have been able to avoid.

Teachers D and F also note the rapport that can be established between NNESTs and their learners:

> **Teacher D:** You can use your non-native speaker status as a point of solidarity with your students since they know and understand that: Okay, here's someone who learned the language as a second language, and you could achieve that high level so we can do it as well so that could be motivation for the students. It helps you, as a person, to understand where your students are coming from.

> **Teacher F:** In the very first center that I taught at again the place where we had Australian and British teachers. Some students were complaining that you know…all her examples are jokes that are totally incomprehensible. I mean, we don't understand what she's saying. You know she doesn't feel what we feel, how we need the class to be sequenced or taught, or whatever. So, I would say that, yeah, having this common background or common culture, and you know definitely helps because you'll I mean because you've been there, you know. You've been in the same education process, and

you know how things should be really simplified for students because you've gone through the experience itself, you know.

Teachers D and F mention the solidarity that NNESTs may have with their students by sharing an L1 and culture, but also Teacher D notes that NNESTs' proficiency of the English language could be implicit motivation for their learners and represent an achievable goal, further encouraging them to continue pursuing the learning of English.

NESTs may attract more clients (parents)

Nevertheless, four of the six participants were either instructed or knew of a colleague who was instructed to hide their NNEST status (nationality) from their students. Interviewees were not really sure why this was happening, but they had stories of these instances taking place throughout their careers:

> **Teacher B:** So, this person, we're acquaintances, and he's half Scottish and half Egyptian...So he works at this school, and he was told not to tell anyone that he speaks Arabic, or that he is half Egyptian...I don't know why the administration would instruct him to do that. Maybe they want to keep up like they're hiring native-English speakers. Yeah, probably that would be the reason, you know.
>
> **Teacher C:** The schools that I worked at tended to advertise that I was a native speaker and half English, etc.…
>
> **Teacher D:** [I was asked to] don an English name and pretend that I wasn't from here...It was just one of those other local centers that prided themselves on the fact that they only hired native English teachers to teach people English and all the people that work there...I was told to change my name to be…I don't know, Mark from Cincinnati or something…and this is why people use native speakers as a marketing strategy, because by default an English teacher, British-English teacher is better qualified to teach English than an Egyptian teacher who speaks English as a second language, especially if you're sending your kid to an IG school to a British system school.
>
> **Teacher E:** When your school hires native speakers, usually the school's fees are higher, so the schools are getting more money. I guess that could be the reason.

To the best of my knowledge, I have not come across similar narratives of hiding one's NNEST identity in the literature targeting native speakerism. Therefore, this is a unique and important finding. Could it be due to the institution marketing an NEST community, to encourage students to speak English and not Arabic, or for other reasons? This would be an interesting focus for future research especially with the political and classist connotations that have been brought up in interviews with Administrator B, Parent A and Parent B. To the best of my knowledge, studies exploring classism in relation to preferences towards native and non-native accents have not been conducted before.

Participants also believed that due to the marketability of the NEST, NNESTs were paid significantly less than native teachers and were afforded less benefits:

Teacher B: [There is] A huge pay gap…

Teacher C: Yes, I see it more in terms of benefits and salary. So, this is actually a situation that happened to me...And you know she was an acquaintance of mine and she's not, if we're talking native, because she's not, she's Swedish and she spoke English with quite an obvious accent, and we did a demo. So, she did her demo first. It was a very teacher centered lesson; shall we say? And then I did my demo, and I don't really do teacher centeredness...we were both offered a position. But the benefits in terms of you know salary, and you know health insurance and all of that were quite drastically different. Even though the language proficiency was not equal, and teaching skills were not equal. It was just because, you know. She was not Egyptian.

Teacher C brings up a new point of focus, where a foreign hire who was also an NNEST (i.e. Sweden falls in the expanding circle of World Englishes, Nordquist, 2019), is given the same benefits as native speakers because she is not Egyptian. This relates to Teacher F's statement regarding their White colleague who claimed to be able to work anywhere due to their blonde hair and blue eyes. This may also relate to why participants that identified (or knew colleagues who identified) as bilinguals, Egyptians or NESTs with multiple nationalities were asked to conceal their non-White status or to pretend to be of White origin/to have grown up in an inner-circle country. It seems that by identifying as White or non-Egyptian, English teachers are more marketable; therefore, entitled to more benefits as opposed to Egyptian NNESTs. This realization was also stated by Teacher D:

> They [NESTs] got paid triple the salary that I used to get. Mind you not my starting salary. They got triple the salary that I used to get after working for two years in that place which was a very low salary also in terms of how teachers want to talk about how underpaid teachers are. But just because they were native speakers of English. I mean again, I'm using native speakers here in the sense that they are from the US... I went to that guy [recruiter] and I asked for a raise, and I brought up the people who get triple the salary I got. I don't want their salary, but at least something that makes me feel a little bit more comfortable working in this place, a little bit more appreciated and his answer was…I mean point blank, 'We are using them as marketing points and the benefit that we get from having them in, you know the financial benefit that we get from having them working in the place. It's something that you cannot give me as an Egyptian teacher.' So that's why they're getting paid that much, even though he acknowledged that they were not good teachers and he just said that you know flat out it's the marketing strategy.

Teacher D's comments about Egyptian English teachers not being marketable enough to be given a higher salary could be attributed to the institutions' tuition fees. Using the current study as an example, Institution A asked for significantly lower fees than Institution D and the same can be said for Institutions E and F (please refer to Table 4.2 for more

detailed information about tuition fees). Additionally, Institution A seems to not actively look for native teachers to hire while Institution F would like to hire native speakers; however, relocation issues present obstacles (according to interviews with administrators). Therefore, it could be claimed that the higher the tuition fees, the more likely the institution will post job advertisements targeting NESTs, hire NESTs, and market their NEST teacher community. It can also be claimed that due to the marketability of the NEST, institutions can raise their tuition fees based on the existence of an NEST community at their institution, which was also proposed by Celik (2006), in his theoretical commentary narrating his own personal experiences as an NNEST.

Lastly, interviewees believed native speakerism was more of an ingrained Egyptian-culture issue:

> **Teacher D:** We [Egyptians] have this sort of…cultural cringe, or inferiority complex that anything that's not Egyptian is by default better…anything that is Western. People from outside Egypt, especially people from the countries that have either physically or, you know, indirectly colonized our country. And I'm speaking particularly about the Western culture as embodied in the English, the UK culture, the British culture, and the American culture and anything that comes from these parts of the world is automatically considered by Egyptian people to be superior to a service that is given by an Egyptian. This is not only in teaching, this is everywhere.

> **Teacher E:** I just think that in Egypt we think that if a native speaker is teaching me, or I'm learning this from the country it comes from we would learn better somehow. Even if that person is not as proficient as others. I don't know, even if they're not as good a teacher as other non-native speakers. I feel like people here care about the fluency and the accent rather than caring about the actual learning that takes place.

Teachers D and E's comments represent the ideology of "White Saviorism," the belief that White people can ultimately improve the lives of people of color through various means, including teaching them the English language (Jenks & Lee, 2020). This can also be attributed to the connotations of classism that have been brought up in interviews with Administrator B, Parent A and Parent B. Teacher E also adds that this issue is not only about how administrators and recruiters view NNESTs but also students and parents:

> I think parents and administrators...and students as well, because they're influenced by their parents, so whatever is usually in class the students always represent their parents. They're like mini representations of their parents. So, if you find a student that believes that 'Oh, you're not a native speaker, you don't, you wouldn't know this,' they usually reflect what their parents say at home...they do like they care about hearing how good your English is. They would want to listen to the teacher's English, and if her English is not as good as they would want it to be, that would cause a problem.

Teacher E's comments are alarming as not only do parents seem to have fallen for the "White Savior" belief, but also their children seem to have followed suit. Again, this perception that everything Western is better, as mentioned by Teachers D and F could have been a result of globalization, Egypt's colonial past (especially the British occupation from 1882 to 1919) and what Zaineldine (2020) describes as "colonial nostalgia." This colonial nostalgia is "The constructed romantic image of the bygone era of colonial rule that exists in many formerly colonized countries, including Egypt, especially amongst some of its older and wealthier citizens…" (Zaineldine, 2020). Zaineldine's (2020) commentary here relates to both the political and classist reasoning that could be behind the sociological colonization that formed the foundations of stereotypes as well as perceptions and attitudes towards NESs and NNESs in Egypt (Alptekin, 2002; Byram et al., 2002).

To sum up the data gathered and to answer the third research question, it can be argued that although NNEST participants of the current study described the ideal English teacher as one who is qualified, proficient, and empathetic, they expressed feelings of inferiority as NNESTs; meaning one characteristic of the ideal English teacher that they may have intentionally left out yet have implicitly described via their recounts of the employment process is native speaker status. Via ascribed and self-ascribed positioning of inferiority, participants expressed an intrinsic need to work on their professional development to prove their worth as teachers, especially when the native and non-native binary is ever present. An extrinsic motivator, and one that seems to be another reason behind NNESTs weaker marketability, is the notion of unequal pay between NESTs and NNESTs, which also relates to tuition fees; the more NESTs, the higher the tuition fees required by the institution. Furthermore, the lines between native speaker and foreign hire have been blurred, where instances of NNESTs that can pass as native due to their "Whiteness" were given privileges usually reserved for NESTs. Despite these discriminatory anecdotes, participants of the current study also described their strengths as NNESTs, such as their grammar knowledge, their qualifications, ease in building rapport with students that share the same L1, being role models for acquiring the L2, and their pedagogical skills. It can be speculated that the internalized (self-ascribed) inferiority of the NNESTs interviewed is a consequence of (ascribed) societal beliefs, which may be at odds with NNESTs' stated perceptions of their own strengths. Furthermore, NNESTs could have highlighted their strengths as non-native speakers as a defensive response to these feelings of inferiority and experiences of discrimination.

It is important to note that throughout the reflexive thematic analysis of the interviews with NNESTs, it seemed that by attributing strengths and weaknesses to themselves, the NNESTs were further fueling the dichotomy that native speakerism stands for. It made me wonder to what extent does empowering NNESTs result in the demoralization of NESTs simply because they grew up in an inner-circle country? For example, while explaining the strengths of NNESTs, Teacher C stated her belief that "native speakers make more mistakes while they're speaking, than non-native speakers, because non-native speakers know the grammatical accuracy of sentences and language." Teacher C may have mentioned this non-factual weakness of NESTs as another defensive response. As Administrator B noted, how much can the fight against native speakerism result in inversed native speakerism, where NESTs are discriminated against and stereotyped (Hiratsuka et al., 2023a, 2023b)? It seems that a better solution with regards to native speakerism is to challenge these ideologies and advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion for all language teachers especially in the TESOL field.

4.4.2 Correspondence Testing

CVs were circulated to the same six private/international English language institutions, and replies (emails and phone calls) were logged. Six CVs were used, three NESTs and three NNESTs with comparable qualifications, and only their L1s (native and non-native English speakers) distinguished them. Because of convenience, proximity, and familiarity with the study, I used the CVs of my colleagues in the MA TESOL program at AUC. These colleagues sent their CVs to the same private, international English language institutions outlined throughout the study (see Table 4.8). They were asked to keep track of the instances of email and phone call responses to their applications.

Out of the six CVs sent out, only one of the volunteer participants got a call back for an interview. The participant was an NNEST, and she was offered the position of teacher's assistant although this NNEST (like the rest of the other 5 volunteers) had at least 3 years' experience in teaching and is an MA TESOL holder. Unfortunately, this treatment did not provide richer qualitative data as I had hoped, and the possible reason for this could be due to the economic climate in Egypt at the time of this study (inflation coupled with devaluation of the Egyptian Pound) making the hiring of NESTs (requiring salaries in American Dollars) a lot more difficult to realize.

4.5 Research Question 4: What is nativeness according to administrators, parents and NNESTs in Cairo?

A fourth research question was posed based on the data obtained and analyzed with the aim to answer the three research questions above. While interviewing the three groups of stakeholders, a discussion of what nativeness means to them and nativeness in terms of the English language was also a topic of discussion of particular interest and could shed light on the reasons behind the results obtained via the current study. Based on the cumulative data, three themes were identified when answering this new research question: geography/politics, ethnicity, and proficiency versus accent.

4.5.1 Geography/politics defines nativeness

When trying to define nativeness, three of the four administrators interviewed were not fully convinced that nativeness had anything to do with geography, while four of the six teachers and both parents interviewed believed that nativeness depended on one's birthplace:

> **Administrator D:** So, what do you determine is native language? You're a Brit, someone from Britain who speaks Queen's English. I don't know. Or is it somebody who is an American who speaks an American version? I don't know. So, it's…I don't buy the geographic thing.
>
> **Teacher E:** I think native means that I was born in a country that speaks English. I was born in Egypt and was raised in Egypt. We speak Arabic as a first language, so that's why I wouldn't say that I'm a native English speaker.
>
> **Parent A:** [Native-English-speaker means] Someone who is not Egyptian, mainly American, or British.

Interestingly, Administrator C first defined nativeness as "being proficient in the language," but when probed to explain what a native speaker of English means, she stated: "I've met Egyptian teachers who are *not native* [emphasis added], but they have a *very strong language* [emphasis added] and their education within a *very strong school* [emphasis added], [but] they're not native speaker[s], but they are *nearly native*...[emphasis added]." Here, it seems that Administrator C initially believed that nativeness is defined by one's proficiency and grasp of the language; however, her elaboration about Egyptian teachers not being described as native but "nearly" native despite their "very strong language" skills implies that nativeness to her is not just about proficiency and that nationality does play a role.

Administrator B stated that the issue was not with the term "native" but with the English language and its political history that presents issues when trying to define an NES:

> So, this issue about native speakers in English does get into, I think, postcolonial issues about English right? If anybody said to that language learner who really was serious, 'Do you want to sound like, for example, an Egyptian speaking Arabic when they're on the phone with you?' Anybody learning Arabic would say, 'Well, of course I do.' But the problem is that when we're talking about English, it is so laden with colonialism and all this.

Once more, World Englishes comes to mind here. Does nativeness even matter now that English has become the language of trade globalization? This relates to the rationale behind the standardization of the English language with the intention to unify different varieties of English with a need for one standard language of governance (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The English language has spread around the world as a result of the expansion of the British Empire through settler colonization, slavery, trade, and globalization (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The consequential worldwide spread of English instigated debates surrounding ownership of the language, specifically who a "Native English" speaker is and the problematic nature of the term "native" when associated with English. I believe that due to the spread of the English language, there can no longer be a sole owner (country/nationality) of English (Crystal, 2003; Galloway & Rose, 2015; MacKenzie, 2014; Selvi, 2019). The Arabic language, for example, has spread and developed into different varieties of classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) including, Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian, Moroccan, etc. (Bassiouney, 2014). However, due to its diglossic nature it could be argued that MSA belongs to Arabic speakers, regardless of geographic location (Shiri, 2015). Furthermore, Arabic being a diglossic language offers a rationale behind the teaching of MSA and not other varieties in the L1 and L2 Arabic classroom (at least in the beginning) and why preferring a native speaker of Arabic may be justified. Although listed as the sixth most spoken language in the world according to the Ethnologue, the spread of Arabic was not due to colonialism; hence, it is not weighted down by the postcolonial issues that are connected to English (Eberhard et al., 2022). Therefore, Administrator B's illustration of the problematization of native speaker fallacy being largely due to the English languages' association with colonialism is valid.

4.5.2 Nativeness is defined by ethnicity

When it comes to nativeness and ethnicity, administrators and teachers interviewed were in agreement that both terms should not be mutually exclusive:

> **Administrator B:** It's not simply about what's coming out of your vocal cords. What do you look like? What race do you seem to look like? Are you white versus not, like you know these kinds of things, so nativeness is not. I mean. I think, the way people think of nativeness is not just about what they're saying...

> **Teacher D:** They could be from Russia, just because he has blue eyes, blond hair doesn't automatically make him a native speaker.

Interestingly, Teacher B elaborated on why she believes she is actually an NES claiming that neither birthplace nor ethnicity were the reason for her native identity, but rather immersion:

> Because I went to a language school that prioritized English language learning over Arabic even if the context is Egypt. So, I feel like in many ways I received an adequate education, I guess to give me that status of nativeness, and I do identify as native English speaker. However, I know that this isn't…It's not recognized in many local communities that automatically label most Egyptian teachers as non-natives...If you're Egyptian, then you can't be native. Then you're fluent. It feels like one step below that. But I don't identify with that. I think I'm both and regardless of all the cultural associations that the word native has.

Here it seems the ascribed and self-ascribed identifications of Teacher D are in conflict, with the former taking precedence over the latter, especially in terms of inferiority and marketability as was explored earlier in this chapter. This same teacher also addressed the notion that NNESTs cannot be labeled as native regardless of their fluency due to a perceived lack of cultural knowledge:

> I feel like I am unfortunately exposed to American culture all the time just through social media or anything, but going to an [international] university, I'm just very much immersed in that kind of, I guess, culture or sphere. So, I can't even say that I don't have a social link with the competence to count as a native English speaker.

Her statements are important to note here, especially with regards to World Englishes and the dispersion of the English language along with the popularization of American culture due to the internet and consequently, social media (Lee, 2020). As discussed by Lee (2020), the once fixed cultural, geographical, and linguistic boundaries are no longer as firm and separating as before, with English as a lingua franca as the dominant form of transnational communication online. Therefore, Teacher D's statement regarding her identification as a native speaker due to her immersion in American culture through social media as well as her academic career is rational. Furthermore, these flexible cultural and linguistic boundaries challenge the perceptions of more than 50% of parent participants' responses to the current study's questionnaire stating that they believe an English teacher must be a native teacher to be able to transmit the culture, history, and traditions of English-speaking countries and that their child/children would learn more about English speaking countries' culture with an NEST.

4.5.3 A native speaker is proficient in the language

All three groups of stakeholders believed that proficiency and nativeness go hand-in-hand; however, there were some inconsistencies amongst administrators' responses. While three administrators believed that measuring proficiency was more important than identifying nativeness, Administrator C believed that non-natives could only be near-native in their English language proficiency level when she claimed that Egyptian teachers cannot be described as native but "nearly" native despite their "very strong language" skills.

> **Administrator B:** So, you know, when it comes to nativeness, you know…What is it? I don't really know. I mean, I know what we want when we recruit our people with what we call native-like proficiency. Maybe what we need to do is get rid of this idea of native-like, and just say high proficiency instead of, say, native-like. Let's just say that you know we want a C1 level user of English, you know something like that, because otherwise I don't really know how to define nativeness unless we're going to a more theoretical linguistics.

Administrator B shares what various other studies have suggested as a solution to the issues of the binary native/non-native terminology, by using other terms describing proficiency levels such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and/or the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages proficiency guidelines (ACTFL) (Jenks & Lee, 2020; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). However, although well intentioned, it is important to question what variety of the English language proficiency exams such as ACTFL, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), etc. are using to measure English language proficiency.

Parent A was also fixated on this idea of standard English, despite her initial reasoning that nativeness cannot be labeled as one variety, when she claimed: "There is no definition, because you'll find a lot of native accents that are very, very different....So there's no one accent, but I mean something that would sound like near-native and fluent and no big errors like the p/b, for instance." Parent A later elaborated that the typical native English accent was the "American one." Here we are met with the issue of perception once again. While the interchangeability of the "p/b" is a common feature of Egyptian English, some (like Parent A) view this as an error although it barely impedes communication and is still intelligible. Therefore, it seems like for this parent, nativeness is about more than just proficiently using the language, it is about sounding White or perhaps upper-class Egyptian based on the classist speculations expressed by Administrator B, Parent A and Parent B.

To sum up the data gathered and to answer the fourth research question, it can be argued that although all three groups of stakeholders initially claimed that nativeness was not based on nationality and was better defined by one's proficiency, elaborations through probing show that despite this belief, it is implied that no matter how proficient an Egyptian speaking English is, they are ascribed the label of near-native and not native. Despite two teacher participants of the current study identifying themselves as NESTs, they still claimed that they were described as NNESTs by others within the Egyptian community (see Appendix F). Also, what signifies a proficient speaker of English seems to be defined by the speaker's accent, with Parents A and B describing a good accent as one that is either American or British. Therefore, it is implied that the variety of definitions attributed to nativeness contribute to the participants' initial perceptions with regards to NNESTs i.e. neutral preferences. In the next chapter, there will be a more in-depth discussion of the results found here followed by practical implications based on those findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The goals of this study were to identify the criteria that employers look for when hiring English language teachers in Cairo, to investigate how nativeness is ranked within these criteria, and to understand administrators', parents', and teachers' perceptions of NNESTs and hiring practices and to observe the impact (if any) of these perceptions on hiring practices. This chapter will outline the major themes that were reflected in the entirety of the data collected, relate these themes to the literature on native speakerism, discuss implications of the study as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

5.1.1 Qualifications Above All Else?

On the surface, participants of this study seemed to prioritize qualifications in terms of experience and certifications above other criterion when making hiring decisions; nevertheless, job posts advertising for the benefits of moving to Egypt, mentioning geographic location requirements of prospective teachers on these job posts, and instances of unequal pay between NESTs and NNESTs noted by the six NNESTs interviewed represent instances of implicit native speakerism.

Administrators' perceptions

Based on the analysis of the interview data and Likert-scale item distributed during interviews with administrators, teaching qualifications and language proficiency were identified as the two most important criterion when making hiring decisions, which is in agreement with comparable studies (see Clark & Paran, 2007; Phillips, 2020; Zhang & Zhan, 2014). The importance of work ethic, which was the third important factor mentioned by the administrators, could possibly be related to the fact that the administrators interviewed were all once teachers themselves and reflecting on their own experiences working with other teachers, students, and parents. Phillips (2020) discovered similar findings regarding the importance given to teaching qualifications in her investigation of NNEST employability in the Australian English language teaching context. According to Phillips' (2020) findings, hiring managers' lived experiences positively influence their own assumptions and beliefs about which criteria are most important when making hiring decisions (disregarding nativeness).

The current study's results also coincide with Alshammari's (2021) findings which revealed that education and teaching experience are the most important qualifications emphasized in most of the job advertisements, with the native speaker status never appearing

alone as a sole requirement. Mahboob and Golden's (2013) results also align with the current study's results in that the advertisements for the Middle-East-English-teaching positions mainly focused on educational background and teaching experience. It also seems like the higher the tuition fees the institutions of the current study's sample requires, the more advanced certifications are expected of prospective candidates. This could mean that the institutions with more resources (via higher tuition fees) are able to recruit more qualified teachers and/or provide relocation services for NESTs. However, this can only be a tentative conclusion as the exact statistical data regarding the number of NESTs versus NNESTs at each institution could not be gathered for this study. Nonetheless, two of the four administrators interviewed who are employed at Institution F (the highest tuition fees) mentioned that relocation was the primary obstacle when trying to hire NESTs, not that they did not want to hire them. Additionally, NNESTs of the current study mentioned that institutions they worked for in the past have marketed their native-speaker community in order to attract more learners, which could have enabled these institutions to ask for higher tuition fees.

Although the term "Native Speaker" was only found once explicitly in the career's webpage of Institution C, four of the six institutions investigated indicated preferences towards inner circle countries without mentioning the term "native" (U.S., U.K., etc.). These institutions were those charging higher tuition fees. These results align with those found by Mackenzie (2021) who found evidence of discrimination in nearly half of the South American job advertisements analyzed noting a number of job postings were looking for American/Canadian candidates. It seems that the explicit "native speakers only" requirement was significantly more pronounced in similar content analysis studies conducted within the Asian context (see Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). Nevertheless, advertising for expatriate teachers to relocate to Egypt was apparent in two of the six job postings analyzed, which is reminiscent of what Ruecker and Ives (2015) found during their content analysis of recruitment sites based in Asia. Therefore, despite not using the phrase "Native speakers only," there seems to be more implicit biases coming through within these job advertisements focusing on geographic location and offering relocation services for expatriate teachers. Not using the "Native speakers only" approach via job postings explored in the current study could have been due to social desirability bias and/or the awareness of the issues of native speakerism and problematic native speaker biases. This may account for half the career posts analyzed having an equal rights statement with regards to their employment processes and why Institution F in particular noted their rationale for prioritizing American

teachers based on an agreement with the Egyptian government (refer to Table 4.2). Again, it seems that on the surface, institutions seem to be neutral and advocate for a diverse community of teachers; however, this could be due to a lack of resources rather than an understanding of the native speaker fallacy.

To sum up, based on content analysis of job postings and interviews with administrators, the ideal English teacher candidate in Cairo is one who is proficient in English, has ample experience (3+ years) and other qualifications/certifications, and is a confident and passionate teacher with a strong work ethic. Furthermore, there seems to be more implicit rather than explicit biases coming through within the job advertisements analyzed (promoting relocation services for expatriate teachers) and the interviews with administrators that could have been affected by social desirability biases.

Teachers' perceptions

Although NNEST interviewees in this study expressed the belief that nativeness does not equal ownership of a language (with regards to both English and Arabic as many of them stated they couldn't teach Arabic despite it being their L1), and that teaching qualifications and professional development are their priorities, they still questioned their identity and legitimacy as ELTs due to the native speaker ideology. These feelings of inferiority have also been expressed by participants in much of the literature focusing on NNESTs' self-perceptions (see Alwadi, 2013; Amin, 1997, 2001; Leonard, 2019; Saba & Frangieh, 2021). This could be due to ascribed and self-ascribed positioning as "less than" when compared to their NEST counterparts. Anderson's (2018) NNEST participants also expressed feelings of inferiority due to instances of discrimination towards NNESTs, including 12 of the 19 participants being passed over for interviews with recruiters based on their non-native status. The overarching rationale behind these recruitment practices could be related to the native speaker fallacy, which disregards the several other important criteria (besides nativeness) that some (but clearly not all) recruiters look for when hiring English language teachers. Therefore, seemingly qualified teachers may not be considered for teaching positions before they have a chance to go through the interview/teaching demonstration process based on a criterion that is not in their control; their birthplace (Anderson, 2018; Galloway & Rose, 2015).

Similar to the interviewees in the current study, unequal pay between NESTs and NNESTs (with the former being paid more than the latter) was also discussed by Celik (2006) where he confirms the importance of NESTs in private language schools to attract students and parents, increase enrollment rates, and address salary discrepancies. Although many of

the NNESTs interviewed in this study did not believe they experienced discriminatory practices once hired at the workplace, they did face preferential situations, such as unequal pay and unfair recruitment practices, and these sentiments were also obtained via Celik's (2006) and Anderson's (2018) studies.

Hence, although not an explicit requirement for the institutions analyzed and administrators interviewed, implied native speakerism via job posts advertising for the benefits of moving to Egypt, mentioning geographic location requirements of prospective teachers, and instances of unequal pay between NESTs and NNESTs noted by the six NNESTs interviewed, indicates ongoing native speaker biases albeit in the form of somewhat more implicit practices.

5.1.2 Accent Matters

Participants of the current study, specifically parents, seemed to not realize the relationship between preferences towards native accents and native speakerism. Hence, when they claimed to not prioritize nativeness when describing the ideal English teacher, many of the participants did discuss the importance of "correct" pronunciation and "good" accents.

Administrators' perceptions

While the current study's findings with regards to administrators' perceptions indicate a promising shift away from explicit native speakerism jargon being used (i.e. Moussu, 2006; Phillips, 2020), the importance given to accent via both the interviews and Likert-scale item confirm Phillips' (2020) evidence that there is still a negative impact regarding native speakerism and hiring practices. Although administrators do not claim to view nationality and/or nativeness as an important factor when hiring English language teachers, some administrators do believe that accent (which is most likely American/British) is a significant criterion they listen for during interviews and teaching demonstrations, giving priority to those teachers with near-native and native accents, which could be an indication of perpetuating discriminatory attitudes vis-à-vis perceptions of NNESTs. These findings align with those found in Clark and Paran's (2007) and Kiczkowiak's (2020) studies, where nationality, ethnicity, and nativeness were perceived as least important, but accent was often associated with correct use of the language (i.e. nativeness), meaning those with a non-standard accent (NNESTs) are at a disadvantage.

This concern with accents was also discussed by both parent participants of this study, which will be discussed in more detail below but could be the driving force behind administrators placing importance on "correct" or "native/native-like" accents. Although not

the focus of the current study, there is literature on students' perceptions as well as their goals in their English language learning journeys, which investigate their views on accents. For example, Sung's (2016) study of Japanese university students' perceptions of different English accents and why they have these perceptions revealed that 13 out of 18 respondents favored a native-like English accent for a variety of reasons, such as the idea that being native equates to competence, prestige, and the ability to communicate more easily with others. In a study conducted in Cairo, Fathelbab (2010) interviewed IEP students about their opinions of both kinds of teachers and participants tended to associate accent, appearance and names with teacher-competence, confirming their belief in the native speaker fallacy. The ideology that native English accents indicate competence and prestige could be a factor behind the three groups of stakeholders of the current study believing in the importance of accents when describing the ideal English teacher. Again, it seems that there is a lack of understanding and awareness that these near-native/native-accent-preferences are a form of native speakerism. Although possibly well intentioned, participants did show instances of implicit native speaker biases when discussing their views of the importance of (native-like) accents. This proves that these stakeholders need to be made aware and understand the ramifications of these biases in order to be well-informed when making hiring decisions.

Nevertheless, based on the current study's interview data, all four administrators claimed there are a lot more NNESTs than NESTs at the targeted institutions, which confirms the data collected from the content analysis, and Likert-scale item. These results contradict Kiczkowiak's (2020) evidence of recruiters' tendency to hire NESTs rather than NNESTs. However, this could be less of a contradiction and rather an issue of available resources and/or relocation as mentioned by two of the four administrators interviewed in the current study. This may mean that if these institutions could hire NESTs, they might prefer them over NNESTs. Based on a recent study by Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2021) investigating the distribution of plenary line-ups of seven European ELT conferences, findings showed that only 25% of the 416 plenary line-ups analyzed were given by NNESs despite an explicitly stated equitable approach followed by the conference organizers. According to Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2021), organizers claimed not to account for nativeness when selecting plenary speakers and one organizer in particular stated that specific procedures were in place to ensure the equal representation of native/non-native plenary speakers at their conferences. However, it seems that even with outlined procedures in place, selection was skewed towards native speakers of English. Therefore, it can be argued that despite the purported equal opportunities presented to both native and non-native speakers and the lack of

resource/relocation issues (especially with regards to a temporary conference), preferences towards native speakers was evident (Kiczkowiak & Lowe, 2021). In terms of the current study, seemingly neutral perceptions towards NESTs and NNESTs might not be what administrators genuinely believe and not the actual rationale behind their hiring practices. As one administrator claimed, they would like to hire more native speakers, but relocation issues present a problem.

In sum, hiring practices and the actual number of NNESTs versus NESTs in the six institutions explored in this study might not reflect the explicitly stated equitable perceptions of the administrators interviewed and the nondiscriminatory guidelines outlined on their respective job advertisements. Additionally, the importance placed on pronunciation and accent is an indication that there is a lack of understanding of what native speakerism means (Calafato, 2019). Administrators of this study may truly believe that they are bias-free; however, these implicit connotations contradict these neutral perceptions, especially with regards to the importance of native accents.

Parents' perceptions

Although parent-questionnaire-respondents believed that having a British or American accent was not required of NNESTs, issues of accents came up in the interviews of the current study where Parent A seemed to lean towards preferring an NEST to guarantee a "native-like" accent for their children in order to achieve intelligibility and better futures, which some studies in the literature review have attested to as well, like Sung's (2016) study mentioned earlier. On the other hand, Parent B explained how native accented-speakers could be a deterrent in class (in agreement with two of the administrators that were interviewed as well) making NESTs more difficult for students to communicate with, which coincides with Walkinshaw & Oanh's (2014) students' perceptions. Although learners believed NNESTs' accent and pronunciation were inferior to those of the NESTs, students still expressed that NNESTs accents were easier to understand (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). Based on the current study's results and those found by Sung (2016) and Walkinshaw & Oanh (2014), it seems that there are contradictory perceptions expressed by the stakeholders; believing and aspiring for a native-like accent because it equates to better intelligibility while ultimately preferring non-native accents due to their comprehensibility.

Another point to keep in mind here is the claim that the accentedness of NNESTs negatively affects students' L2 proficiency levels, which was proven to be a null hypothesis thanks to Ma's (2012a) and Levis et al.'s (2016) studies (refer to Chapter 2). However, it seems that that notion could still be present with both parents interviewed for this study

because of the implications of Parent B claiming a "good" accent was a native one, and she did not care if her children acquired it. Parent B also acknowledged that sharing the same L1 as students helps create a rapport between the teacher and the student, which in turn can help their children associate positive feelings with the English language. This was also discussed and confirmed to be true by El-Sawah (2019) in her study of Egyptian IEP students' positive perceptions towards the instructional practices and motivational techniques used by the NNEST. El-Sawah's (2019) participants elaborated on those perceptions by saying NNESTs understood their difficulties in acquiring the language and targeted those difficulties in class. Unlike the studies surveying students, parents of the current study could be advocates of the belief that although sharing the same L1 as their students does help in building a rapport, it may be a disadvantage of having NNESTs since some learners may feel they can resort to using their L1 and not progress their L2 due to the common language they share with the NNEST (Lipovsky & Mahboob, 2007; Medgyes et al., 2005). Studies that have investigated and found similar perceptions include Lipovsky and Mahboob (2007) and their examination of essays written by Japanese high school students enrolled in an ESL program and discovered that NEST students' speaking skills were evaluated favorably, whereas NNEST students received primarily unfavorable criticism. Also, Medgyes et al. (2005) found similar results in their study of Hungarian ESL learners where NESTs were viewed as more effective in facilitating conversation in the target language than NNESTs due to the common L1. Additionally, Tsang (2020), surveyed 1300 Chinese secondary-level EFL learners on their opinions regarding native and non-native English accents and they were against having listening material with non-native accents in class although the participants were ready to accept NNESTs to the same degree as NESTs in the classroom. Therefore, it seems that despite the fact that research by Levis et al. (2016) has shown that NNESTs cannot negatively impact learners' accents, the native speaker fallacy appears to still be prevalent. For example, despite ESL participants of Levis et al.'s (2016) showing similar pre- and post-test scores of read and spontaneous speech assessments regardless of the nativeness of the teacher, they still had preferences towards their NEST. These preferences seem to align with both parents interviewed in the current study.

To sum up, while at face value, the results of the questionnaires sent out to parents and interviews with administrators and parents seem neutral, their implications show that the native speaker fallacy is still very much alive based on their perceptions of native and non-native accents. Half of the administrators interviewed believed that accent was an important factor when making hiring decisions and when asked to elaborate, a standard American

accent was seen as the one to strive for. Both parents also shared similar feelings, with one parent saying they did not care if their children acquired a “good” (meaning native) accent as long as they were intelligible. This claim was meant to elaborate on her reasoning behind not having preferences towards NESTs and/or NNESTs. Parent B may have wholeheartedly believed that she had neutral perceptions and yet her description of a “good” accent shows that unconscious native speaker biases are still present. I believe this goes back to the inconclusiveness of the term “native” and what it means to be a native speaker of English.

5.1.3 NNESTs have Strengths and Weaknesses

The strengths and weaknesses of NNESTs were acknowledged by participants of the current study; however, many of the weaknesses of NNESTs were attributed to pronunciation/accent and cultural knowledge, which are all characteristics that native teachers are perceived to have inherited innately as native speakers of English.

Parents’ perceptions

Since the current study’s questionnaire and interviews regarding parents’ perceptions of the criteria that describe the ideal English language teacher was adapted from Colmenero and Lasagabaster’s (2020) study, this section will focus primarily on the similarities and differences between the current study, and Colmenero and Lasagabaster’s (2020, 2022) findings and the possible reasoning behind those alignments/misalignments with commentary on the current findings’ significance.

Based on the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview data, it seems that parents are generally neutral when it comes to the native factor and their children’s English language teachers. Interview data also showed that parents prioritized other characteristics (passion, rapport, etc.) over nativeness and this is in agreement with Colmenero and Lasagabaster’s (2022) study. With regards to the questionnaire results, parents showed mostly neutral attitudes towards nativeness across all four categories of the questionnaire in the current study (assessment and support, attitudes and motivation, culture, and perceived linguistic abilities). Examining each category in greater depth, parents of the current study seemed to prefer NNESTs when targeting learners' weaknesses, supporting students with more notes/materials, and assessing students' knowledge of grammar and reading comprehension skills. However, when it came to assessing students' speaking abilities, responses of participants of both the current study and Colmenero and Lasagabaster’s (2020) were more positive towards NESTs. Interview data was also in alignment with Colmenero and Lasagabaster’s (2020) results where parents were either neutral or preferred NESTs when it comes to pronunciation, accent and speaking skills. On the other hand, both studies found

that parents preferred NNESTs when assessing students' listening comprehension and grammar knowledge, citing NNESTs' experience as ESL learners as their reasoning.

Based on the similar results of previous studies on the perceptions and consequent employability of the NNEST, it is not surprising that NESTs were preferred for assessing speaking in both the current study and Colmenero and Lasagabaster's (2020) study. For example, Mahboob's (2004) and Medgyes and Arva's (2000) ethnographic studies investigating perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs found that despite the fact that the majority of participants thought NNESTs had positive attributes, such as superior grammatical knowledge and prior experience learning English as a second language, NESTs were seen as the ideal model for learning proper pronunciation, which is clear evidence of the native speaker fallacy (as cited in Braine, 2012). This belief of the superiority of native versus non-native pronunciation relates to the theme of accent where both parents and administrators believed NNESTs had several strengths; however, only a native speaker of English could help learners develop a "good" accent (even if that is not desired by all participants, like Parent B claimed). Again, this issue of dissociating accent preferences from native speakerism seems to be the reason behind the possible social-desirability bias-driven responses of the participants of the current study on questionnaires and during interviews. This is important as it sheds light on the possible reason why native speakerism continues to plague the TESOL field, especially in terms of the employability of the NNEST (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Smith, 2022). By understanding the possible root causes of the continuation of discriminatory hiring practices, we can understand how to address these biases, move away from the native speaker fallacy, and focus on the more important criteria that describe the ideal English language teacher. Furthermore, this may empower both students and teachers of ESL/EFL by prioritizing intelligibility (a more practical goal) rather than acquiring a near-native accent (a fictitious goal due to the non-existence of a standard native-English accent) when learning and using English.

When asked about the transmission of the culture, history and traditions of English-speaking countries, parents preferred the NEST while in Colmenero and Lasagabaster's (2020) study the opposite was found; parents actually dismissed the idea of nativeness in this section. Parent participants of the current study appear to agree with earlier work on the idea that NESTs are the best depiction of the target culture of those nations whose official language is English, with a concentration on inner-circle countries (e.g., the US and the UK). According to Holliday (2018), this assumption that the native speaker is the best source of cultural knowledge fuels the notion of native speakerism. It may seem logical to some that an

American teacher, for example, would be able to teach American culture better than a non-American teacher; however, with the emergence of World Englishes and the existence of more non-native speakers versus native speakers of English around the globe, why is it necessary to teach and learn inner-circle-country-cultures in the first place? Again, this goal to learn about and understand inner-circle countries' cultures is not only unnecessary, but also quite unattainable with the number of inner circle countries that are associated with the English language; how can an ESL/EFL teacher possibly transfer all inner-circle cultures during their lessons? Although not explicitly discussed during interviews, this expectation could be another reason behind the feelings of inferiority felt by the current study's NNESTs.

In sum, parent participants of the current study were mostly neutral when describing their preferences in terms of nativeness and their children's' NESTs and NNESTs, except when discussing teaching and assessing speaking skills, and transferring cultural knowledge associated with English. These perceptions raise questions regarding the ownership of the English language. Based on that ownership, labels such as "target language" and "target culture" would make sense in the context of the ESL/EFL classroom; however, with the spread of English around the globe, as well as the prominence of World Englishes, it seems that the sole ownership of English does not and cannot exist. Furthermore, it does a disservice to both instructors and learners to work towards acquiring a standardized English as their target (Galloway & Rose, 2015).

Teachers' perceptions

Based on the results obtained through interviews with Egyptian NNESTs, teaching qualifications, language proficiency and character make up the ideal English teacher. As for their experiences while looking for teaching positions, themes of inferiority, awareness of their strengths as NNESTs, and marketability were expressed. These results aligned with much of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. For example, Amin's (2001) NNESTs detailed the negative experiences they faced as non-white English teachers in Canada, including student dropouts. Despite these negative experiences, Amin's (2001) participants believed in their strengths as ESL/EFL teachers, recognizing racist teaching material, and promoting inclusive classrooms. NNESTs of the current study also recognized their strengths as Egyptian-L2-speakers of English, something they have in common with their students. This strength was also expressed by Ma's (2012b) participants as well as NNESTs' understanding of students' learning needs, difficulties, abilities, and their strong rapport with students. Their linguistic weaknesses included a lack of English proficiency, a lack of confidence, a reduced ability to motivate students to speak English, and a test-driven teaching philosophy (Ma,

2012b). Although a test-driven teaching philosophy was not something that the current study's participants discussed during interviews, this could be aligned with their claims of needing to work more on their own professional development and sticking to the status-quo. This could also account for NNESTs famed grammatical prowess. Similar findings in Alwadi's (2013) study of Bahraini NNESTs' perceptions of their own strengths and weaknesses confirmed that despite their initial assurance regarding their teaching qualifications and experiences, the NNESTs still exhibited a lack of confidence and experience in teaching English when compared to their perceived less-qualified-yet-still-superior native-speaking colleagues. These perceptions may be influenced by the widespread belief that NESTs are more familiar with the undefined target language and culture, which contributes to the native speaker fallacy by reinforcing the notion that NNSs do not own the English language, whereas NSs do because they were born and raised in an inner-circle country and English is their L1. Again, this inapplicable ideology of one target language should not be the goal in the modern, student-centered classroom, especially with a globally recognized lingua franca such as English (MacKenzie, 2014).

To conclude, many of the ascribed and self-ascribed strengths and weaknesses of NNESTs and NESTs are related to myths associated with the native speaker fallacy, such as the idea that there is a target language that only the native speaker can speak and teach. This fallacy is a double-edged sword as it attributes strengths and places an unnecessary burden on both kinds of teachers. For example, NNESTs of this study have expressed feelings of inferiority and a need to develop themselves professionally to be able to compete with their NEST colleagues. Although not a topic of investigation of this study, it can be speculated that NESTs are also carrying the burden of being labeled the be-all and end-all of the English language. Therefore, this seemingly equitable theme of strengths and weaknesses of the NNEST illustrates the continued presence of native speakerism in terms of what are deemed strengths and weaknesses by these stakeholders.

5.2 Researcher reflections

Following the guidelines of the reflexive thematic analysis used to analyze the qualitative data collected via interviews within this study, I believe it is important to reflect on my own background and biases that may have influenced the data collection and analysis. As a socially ascribed NNEST and self-ascribed NEST myself (like Teachers C and D), it is possible that my interpretations of the data may have been driven by my own experiences of discrimination during my English-teaching career. In addition, it is important to note that I

myself have been affected by the native speakerism ideology during this study when I assigned native and non-native labels to the administrators, parents and teachers based on birthplace. Although I did ask the teachers interviewed in this study to identify what they describe themselves as; nevertheless, the initial criterion used to determine which teachers I would interview was based on nationality (Egyptian), meaning I fell into the native speakerism trap.

5.3 Implications

Based on the current study's findings, it seems that although the three groups of stakeholders claimed that the ideal English teacher needed to have ample experience and qualifications, that NESTs and NNESTs both have strengths and weaknesses, and that they did not prefer one teacher over the other, instances of accent preferences and the target language's cultural competence were more positive towards NESTs. These preferences were identified in the elaborations of both administrators and parents of the current study who indirectly discussed the importance of native-like accents by labeling them as "good" (Parent B). Also, NNESTs discussed issues of unequal pay and other benefits that were offered to NESTs, citing the marketability of the NEST in Egypt as the possible rationale behind these discrepancies. Despite these disparities, and positive perceptions and preferences for NESTs, it has been claimed that less than 3% of the population of faculty at the sample of institutions investigated in the current study are NESTs. And although this is a promising statistic in terms of the employability of the NNEST in Cairo, there seem to be non-linguistically relevant external variables for this small number of native teachers. Administrators explained that a lack of resources as well as relocation issues were the main reason behind the lack of NESTs, not that they did not want to hire them. This begs the question: if institutions did have the resources and could solve the relocation problems for foreign hires, would they prefer the NEST over the NNEST? Would that 3% escalate? I believe that based on parents' preferences towards NESTs for beginner levels, for the transmission of cultural knowledge, and for the belief that only NESTs could acquire a "good" accent, administrators and their institutions would be more inclined to hire and market the NEST to attract more clientele (parents) and consequently, ask for higher tuition fees (Celik, 2006). The very definition of native speakerism beyond that of nationality and birthplace seems to not be entirely understood by parents and administrators of this study, especially when issues of accent were brought up. It can be argued that the difficulty when defining and understanding nativeness stems from the notion that there is something inherently wrong with the term, as explored in

the literature discussed and the data analyzed in the current study. Nevertheless, a lack of understanding and awareness of native speakerism has contributed to these false perceptions of the ideal English teacher, which requires a necessary paradigm shift/epistemic break in order to address these issues.

According to Kiczkowiak et al. (2016) and Selvi (2019), English language teacher education (targeting pre- and/or in-service teachers) can be a catalyst for necessary awareness raising and change. These ELTE programs should aim to promote reflection on the subjectivity and positionality of teachers' personal and professional identities, offer chances to problematize, confront, analyze, and deconstruct native speakerism, incorporate World Englishes Language Teaching frameworks and approaches into teachers' subject-matter expertise, and motivate teachers to assume leadership positions. By doing so, current and future NESTs and NNESTs will gain a better understanding of their personal and professional identities as well as more deeply understand the extent of native speakerism within the TESOL field generally and in their own professional context specifically (Kiczkowiak et al., 2016). These practices can also aid in the alignment of ELTE program goals and practices with the current sociolinguistic realities of the globalized world (Selvi, 2019).

Schreiber (2019) also suggests adopting an online intercultural learning activity such as the one that was the subject of her study in which MA TESL students in Sri Lanka communicated through digital forums with undergraduates in New York City, discussing language differences and exchanging images of their respective linguistic landscapes. As a result, both groups of students began to question their preconceived notions regarding the superiority of inner-circle speakers as well as raise awareness of the linguistic variation and diversity present in both inner-, outer-, and expanding-circle countries (Schreiber, 2019). Furthermore, "students who felt most anxious, this identification—the unexpected finding of sameness among those expected to be Other—contributed something important to their growth" (Schreiber, 2019, p. 1131). Therefore, both teachers and students were exposed to the linguistic variation of a globalized world. I believe that by engaging language learners in projects such as the one suggested by Schreiber (2019) impacts the teachers and students involved, especially with regards to debunking the near-native ideals and unattainable native-speaker goal that many teachers and learners have with regards to English language acquisition. These feelings of inferiority and anxiety that are felt by teachers, as claimed by NNESTs of the current study and language learners alike can be quelled when the native speakerism ideology is demystified.

There is a need to reconsider how we theorize native speakerism, with the prospect of adopting a new, more inclusive, and relevant theoretical construct. Following this demystification of native speakerism, the necessary paradigm shift to trans-speakerism, a term defined by Hiratsuka et al. (2023b, 2023a), can take place. Trans-speakerism is defined as:

> …an empowering ideological stance committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion for all language speakers irrespective of their first languages/cultures or their speakerhood statuses. It is a personalized and contextualized approach that dynamically champions who language teachers are and what they do currently, as well as who they can be and what they can do in the future, by prioritizing their respective strengths, interests, and uniqueness—academically, professionally, socio-culturally, and emotionally. In the spirit of trans-speakerism, language speakers and teachers are global speakers/teachers of English (GSEs/GTEs) and are addressed by their individual names.

To initiate the movement towards trans-speakerism, Hiratsuka et al. (2023b) proposes the following steps based on the findings of their trio-ethnography of their own lived experiences as NEST and NNESTs respectively: first, measuring proficiency by intelligibility rather than authenticity of one's birthplace and/or L1; second, upholding intercultural awareness, exemplified by Schreiber's (2019) practical digitized intercultural learning activity discussed above; and third, assessing language teachers professionally via their qualifications rather than their speakerhood. By employing these strategies, the TESOL field will be able to challenge classical native speakerism that was the focus of the current study as well as inversed native speakerism (bias and discrimination against the NEST), and nuanced native speakerism (bias and discrimination against both NESTs and NNESTs based on individual differences, linguistic and otherwise) and advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion for all language teachers (Hiratsuka et al., 2023a).

By adopting the above strategies in ELTE programs in Egypt, English language teachers can be exposed to the notions of explicit and implicit native speakerism and understand the consequences that come with the native speaker fallacy on both them and their learners. This awareness will hopefully give way for teachers to reflect on their personal and professional identities and embrace World Englishes in their classrooms, further empowering themselves and their students by fostering a sense of ownership of the English language. Participating in projects like Schreiber's (2019) both within Egyptian ELTE programs and within the language learning classroom can help dispel near-native ideals and anxieties while also exposing students to World Englishes, which is necessary to be able to communicate with other non-native English speakers, such as most living in Egypt. These implementations

will ultimately yield an environment where embracing trans-speakerism is possible, emphasizing diversity, equity and inclusion for English language teachers and learners in Egypt.

I would also like to point out that the number of private, international institutions in Egypt is growing exponentially. According to a Colliers report conducted in 2021, 50% of Cairo's 95 private schools are international, doubling in number over the last 5 years alone. This begs the question, how does this demand for private, international schooling relate to stakeholders' perceptions? I believe that based on the data collected and the statements made by stakeholders about the possible classist motivations behind the perceptions favoring the NEST over the NNEST, as well as the growing number of private, international institutions in Cairo, these changes in attitudes are even more necessary and timely (Lewko, 2022).

5.4 Limitations

The small numbers of parent participants affected the study in terms of the generalizability of the questionnaire data. Finding parents willing to be interviewed was equally challenging. However, despite the smaller-than-originally-desired sample of parents, the aim of the current study was not to generalize but to explore the perceptions and criteria that describe the ideal English teacher candidate for hire in Cairo. Therefore, a smaller sample size still elicited richer data in terms of qualitative analysis through elaboration via interviews and probing during said interviews. With regards to the correspondence testing, which did not provide much data besides the one phone call received by one participant, time constraints may have been the reason. Half of the institutions targeted required more than just sending a CV attachment via email; they needed applications to also be filled out. Therefore, the lack of responses could have been affected by my asking volunteer participants to only send their CVs to the institutions' HR/career vacancies' emails. Given more time, future studies should account for the multiple parts of the recruitment process of each institution targeted and ask participants to complete them in full. Also, future research should allot the correspondence testing portion of the study at least six to eight months to garner responses to give institutions ample time to reach out to candidates during their respective recruitment cycles, which could differ from institution to institution.

Due to the problematic nature of the topic of native speakerism and the fact that many of the participants were either NNESTs themselves and/or MA TESOL graduates, it can be argued that the perceptions all three groups of stakeholders claimed may have been driven by

social-desirability bias and their own experiences as non-native speakers. Based on this limitation, it was important for me as the researcher, to read between the lines of what the participants were claiming to try and understand the full scope of their preferences towards NESTs. Additionally, only two of the six institutions of the sample were used for interview data due to time constraints and convenience sampling; therefore, future research would benefit from having representatives from all the institutions used for the study as well as expanding the categories of institutions to include language centers as well, which may provide more nuanced data. Also, accounting for the exact number of NESTs versus NNESTs at these institutions could help to confirm and/or deny the relationship between administrators/parents' beliefs, tuition fees/resources and the number of NESTs hired at the various institutions investigated.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

Even though a study on students' perceptions of NNESTs/NESTs and their influence on classroom motivation (see El-Sawah, 2019) was conducted here in Egypt, it would be interesting to include student perceptions in future studies with regards to the employability of the NNEST. Including students would produce a more well-rounded study encapsulating most of the groups of stakeholders that may impact hiring practices and can also shed light on what learners' language goals are with regards to English.

Possibly including NESTs' perspectives, especially with regards to defining nativeness and describing the ideal English teacher as well as recounting any instances of stereotyping either of themselves as native speakers or of their non-native-speaking colleagues would provide an additional perspective on the issue of native speakerism and the employability of English teachers.

It would also be interesting to conduct this study on a larger scale, beyond Egypt and include other parts of North Africa and the Middle East and/or using other instruments to gauge stakeholders' perceptions of NNESTs, such as the matched-guise approach. The matched-guise technique is typically synonymous with studies on perceptions and attitudes towards speakers of different varieties (Norton, 2012; Preece, 2016). It can be an indicator of linguistic stereotyping and account for the unconscious biases that could have been consciously hidden due to social-desirability biases of interview data alone (Deutschmann et al., 2022).

5.6 Conclusion

The current study found that the explicit perceptions towards NNESTs and NESTs expressed by administrators and parents were mostly neutral, with instances of native speaker biases with regards to accent preferences and cultural competence. NNESTs interviewed also narrated feelings of inferiority and disparate situations before and after employment when compared to their NEST colleagues. It has been illustrated by administrators and parents that there is a lack of understanding of what native speakerism is and how some of their explicit and implicit perceptions advocate the native speaker fallacy. Thus, understanding native speakerism and its consequences is crucial to addressing the problematic nature of "nativeness."

Based on the current study's findings and discussion, important insights were drawn, including the need for awareness-raising modules focusing on native speakerism in teacher training programs, TESOL programs, and other ESL/EFL workshops. A movement promoting the understanding of the various definitions and effects of the native speakerism ideology seems to be a significant first step towards a necessary paradigm-shift away from native speakerism based on the dissociations claimed by this study's participants of their preferences towards inner-circle accents and the strengths and weaknesses attributed to NESTs and NNESTs. Including parents and students in this conversation on the meaning behind "nativeness" especially with regards to the English language is important in the aim of moving away from the stereotyping that both types of teachers may be subjugated to. It's also necessary to reevaluate how we theorize the concept of native speakerism in light of the potential adoption of trans-speakerism, a new, more pertinent, and inclusive theoretical construct. This could mean that those positive and neutral perspectives towards both kinds of teachers can become the reality and not simply an act of political correctness.

References

Abbas, A., Zahra, T., & Shahzad, W. (2022). Issues and challenges in legitimizing localized English: A critical reappraisal of native speakerism in Pakistan. In N. Ali Raza & C. Coombe (Eds.), *English language teaching in Pakistan* (pp. 117–128). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-7826-4_9

Aboulfetouh, M. (2014). *Parents' attitudes towards their children's bilingualism and cultural identity in international schools in Egypt* [The American University in Cairo]. https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/1167/?utm_source=fount.aucegypt.edu%2Fetds%2F1167&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages

Alptekin, C. (2002). Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT. *ELT Journal, 56*, 57–64. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/56.1.57

Alseweed, M. A. (2012). University students' perceptions of the influence of native and non-native teachers. *English Language Teaching*, *5*(12), 42–53.

Alshammari, A. (2021). Job advertisements for English teachers in the Saudi Arabian context: Discourses of discrimination and inequity. *TESOL Journal*, *12*(2). https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.542

Alwadi, H. (2013). Bahraini teachers' perceptions of teaching differences with native English speaker teachers of English. *Int. J. Bilin. Mult. Teach. Eng*, *1*(1), 9–20.

Amin, N. (1997). Race and the identity of the nonnative ESL teacher. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*(3), 580–583. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587841

Amin, N. (2001). Nativism, the native speaker construct, and minority immigrant women teachers of English as a second language. *The CATESOL Journal, 13*(1), 89–107.

Anderson, J. (2018). The role of initial teacher training courses in the professional development of experienced non-native speaker English language teachers. *ELTED*, *21*, 37–46.

Bassiouney, R. (2009). Language policy and politics. In *Arabic sociolinguistics* (pp. 198–272). Edinburgh University Press.

Bassiouney, R. (2014). *Language and identity in modern Egypt*. Edinburgh University Press.

Bennett, J. M. (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. In J. S. Wurzel (Ed.), *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education*. Intercultural Resource Corporation.

Braine, G. (2012). *Nonnative speaker English teachers: Research, pedagogy, and professional growth*. Routledge. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0871.pub2

Braine, G. (2018). Non-native-speaker English teachers. In *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1–5). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0871.pub2

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *11*(4), 589–597. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brown, E. (2013). *Native and non-native English speaking ESL/EFL teachers in Sweden: A study on students' attitudes and perceptions towards the teaching behavior of native and non-native English speaking teachers* [University of Gävle]. http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hig:diva-14327

Butler, Y. G. (2007). How are nonnative-English-speaking teachers perceived by young learners? *TESOL Quarterly*, *41*(4), 731–755. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00101.x

Byram, M., Gribkova, B., & Starkey, H. (2002). *Developing the intercultural dimension in*

language teaching: A practical introduction for teachers. Council of Europe. https://www.coe.int/en/web/platform-plurilingual-intercultural-language-education/intercultural-aspects#{%2228072155%22:[6]}

Byrne, D. (2022). A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis. *Quality & Quantity*, *56*(3), 1391–1412. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y

Calafato, R. (2019). The non-native speaker teacher as proficient multilingual: A critical review of research from 2009–2018. *Lingua*, *227*, 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2019.06.001

Carless, D., & Walker, E. (2006). Effective team teaching between local and native-speaking English teachers. *Language and Education*, *20*(6), 463–477. https://doi.org/10.2167/le627.0

Celik, S. (2006). A concise examination of the artificial battle between native and non-native speaker teachers of English in Turkey. *Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi*, *14*(2), Article 2.

Centeno, C., Hoyos, M. de, Owen, D., Barnes, S.-A., Stewart, J., Green, A. E., Baldauf, B., & Behle, H. (2013). *Literature review on employability, inclusion and ICT*. Publications Office of the European Union. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2791/7536

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. MIT Press.

Clark, E., & Paran, A. (2007). The employability of non-native-speaker teachers of EFL: A UK survey. *System*, *35*(4), 407–430. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2007.05.002

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 57–71). American Psychological Association.

Colmenero, K., & Lasagabaster, D. (2020). Enclosing native speakerism: Students', parents' and teachers' perceptions of language teachers. *Journal of Multilingual and*

Multicultural Development, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2020.1865384

Colmenero, K., & Lasagabaster, D. (2022). The native/non-native teacher debate: Insights into variables at play. *Language Awareness*, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2022.2110253

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, *33*(2), 185–209. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587717

Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd ed). Cambridge University Press.

Deutschmann, M., Borgström, E., Yassin Falk, D., Steinvall, A., & Svensson, J. (2022). "It ain't what you say. It's the way you say it": Adapting the matched guise technique (MGT) to raise awareness of accentedness stereotyping effects among Swedish pre-service teachers. *Language Awareness*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2022.2067556

Díaz, N. R. (2015). Students' preferences regarding native and non-native Teachers of English at a university in the French Brittany. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *173*, 93–97.

Dornyie, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Eberhard, D. M., Simmons, G. F., & Fennig, C. D. (Eds.). (2022). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world* (25th ed.). SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com

Ellis, E. M. (2016). "I may be a native speaker but I'm not monolingual": Reimagining all teachers' linguistic identities in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*(3), 597–630. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.314

El-Sawah, S. O. (2019). *Students' perceptions of native and non-native English-speaking teachers and their influence on students' motivation* [The American University in Cairo]. https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/844

Fathelbab, H. H. (2010). *Re-imagining the NS/NNS dichotomy: Bicultural teachers* [The

American University in Cairo]. https://fount.aucegypt.edu/etds/1157

Galloway, N. (2013). Global Englishes and English Language Teaching (ELT) – Bridging the gap between theory and practice in a Japanese context. *System*, *41*(3), 786–803. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.07.019

Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2015). *Introducing global Englishes*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765_5

Garrett, P. (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511844713

Gebril, A. (2016). Test preparation in the accountability era: Toward a learning-oriented approach. *TESOL Journal*, *9*(1), 4–16. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.302

Ghasemboland, F., & Hashim, F. B. (2013). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their English language proficiency: A study of nonnative EFL teachers in selected language centers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *103*, 890–899. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.411

Gurkan, S., & Yuksel, D. (2012). Evaluating the contributions of native and non-native teachers to an English language teaching program. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 2951–2958. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.596

He, D., & Zhang, Q. (2010). Native speaker norms and China English: From the perspective of learners and teachers in China. *TESOL Quarterly*, *44*(4), 769–789. https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2010.235995

Hinkel, E. (2018). Descriptive versus prescriptive grammar. In J. I. Liontas (Ed.), *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching* (1st ed., pp. 1–6). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0053

Hiratsuka, T., Nall, M., & Castellano, J. (2023a). Shifting from native-speakerism to trans-speakerism: A trioethnography of language teachers in Japan. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, *27*(1). https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.27105a9

Hiratsuka, T., Nall, M., & Castellano, J. (2023b). Trans-speakerism: A trioethnographic exploration into diversity, equity, and inclusion in language education. *Language and Education*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2023.2223565

Holliday, A. (2013). 1. 'Native speaker' teachers and cultural belief. In S. A. Houghton & D. J. RIvers (Eds.), *Native-Speakerism in Japan: Intergroup Dynamics in Foreign Language Education* (pp. 17–26). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847698704-005

Holliday, A. (2015). Native-speakerism: Taking the Concept Forward and Achieving Cultural Belief. In A. Swan, P. Aboshiha, & A. Holliday (Eds.), *(En)Countering Native-speakerism: Global Perspectives* (pp. 11–25). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137463500_2

Holliday, A. (2018). Native-Speakerism. In J. I. Liontas, T. International Association, & M. DelliCarpini (Eds.), *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching* (pp. 1–7). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0027

Huang, I.-C. (2014). Contextualizing teacher identity of non-native-English speakers in U.S. secondary ESL classrooms: A Bakhtinian perspective. *Linguistics and Education*, *25*, 119–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2013.09.011

Javid, C. Z. (2016). Teaching effectiveness of native and non-Native EFL teachers as perceived by preparatory year students in Saudi context. *Language in India*, *16*(1), 98–121.

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language*. OUP Oxford.

Jenks, C. J., & Lee, J. W. (2020). Native speaker saviorism: A racialized teaching ideology.

Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, *17*(3), 186–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2019.1664904

Kachru, B. B. (1992). World Englishes: Approaches, issues and resources. *Language Teaching*, *25*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800006583

Kaur, P. (2014). Accent attitudes: Reactions to English as a lingua franca. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *134*, 3–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.04.218

Kiczkowiak, M. (2020). Recruiters' attitudes to hiring "native" and "non-native speaker" teachers: An international survey. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, *24*(1).

Kiczkowiak, M., Baines, D., & Krummenacher, K. (2016). Using awareness raising activities on initial teacher training courses tackle 'native speakerism.' *ELTED*, *19*, 45–53.

Kiczkowiak, M., & Lowe, R. J. (2021). Native-speakerism in English language teaching: 'Native speakers' more likely to be invited as conference plenary speakers. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1974464

Kubota, R., & Lin, A. (2006). Race and TESOL: Introduction to concepts and theories. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(3), 471–493. https://doi.org/10.2307/40264540

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2016). The decolonial option in English teaching: Can the subaltern act? *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*(1), 66–85.

Larsen-Freeman, D., Celce-Murcia, M., Frodesen, J., White, B., & Williams, H. A. (2016). *The grammar book: Form, meaning, and use for English language teachers* (Third edition). National Geographic Learning.

Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2002). University students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers of English. *Language Awareness*, *11*(2), 132–142. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658410208667051

Lee, J. H. (2020). Relationships among students' perceptions of native and non-native EFL teachers' immediacy behaviours and credibility and students' willingness to communicate in class. *Oxford Review of Education*, *46*(2), 153–168. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1642187

Lee, S., & Du, Q. (2021). Quantifying native speakerism in second language (L2) writing: A study of student evaluations of teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, *42*(3), 541–568. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amaa033

Leonard, J. (2019). Beyond '(non) native-speakerism': Being or becoming a native-speaker teacher of English. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *10*(4), 677–703. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2017-0033

Levis, J. M., Sonsaat, S., & Barriuso, T. A. (2016). Native and nonnative teachers of L2 pronunciation: Effects on learner performance. *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*(4), 894–931.

Lewko, A. (2022). *English in Egypt*.

Lipovsky, C., & Mahboob, A. (2007). Examining attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs: A comparison of a thematic vs. an appraisal analysis. In C. Gitaski (Ed.), *Language and languages: Global and local tensions*. Cambridge Scholars Press. https://www.academia.edu/21430348/Examining_attitudes_towards_NESTs_and_NNESTs_a_comparison_of_a_thematic_vs_an_appraisal_analysis

Ma, L. P. F. (2012a). Advantages and disadvantages of native- and nonnative-english-speaking teachers: Student perceptions in Hong Kong. *TESOL Quarterly*, *46*(2), 280–305. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.21

Ma, L. P. F. (2012b). Strengths and weaknesses of NESTs and NNESTs: Perceptions of NNESTs in Hong Kong. *Linguistics and Education*, *23*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2011.09.005

MacKenzie, I. (2014). *English as a lingua franca: Theorizing and teaching English*.

Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Mackenzie, L. (2021). Discriminatory job advertisements for English language teachers in Colombia: An analysis of recruitment biases. *TESOL Journal*, *12*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.535

Mahboob, A. (2004). Native or nonnative: What do students enrolled in an intensive English program think. In L. D. Kamhi-Stein (Ed.), *Learning and teaching from experience*. University of Michigan Press. https://www.academia.edu/816216/Native_or_nonnative_What_do_students_enrolled_in_an_intensive_English_program_think

Mahboob, A. (Ed.). (2010). *The NNEST lens: Non native English speakers in TESOL*. Cambridge Scholars.

Mahboob, A., & Golden, R. (2013). Looking for native speakers of English: Discrimination in English language teaching job advertisements. *Voices of Asia*, *1*(1). https://www.academia.edu/4517679/Looking_for_Native_Speakers_of_English_Discrimination_in_English_Language_Teaching_Job_Advertisements

Mahboob, A., Newman, K., Uhrig, K., & Hartford, B. (2004). Children of a lesser English: Status of nonnative English speakers as college-level English as a second language teachers in the United States. In L. D. Kamhi-Stein, *Learning and teaching from experience: Perspectives on nonnative English-speaking professionals* (pp. 100–120). University of Michigan Press. https://www.academia.edu/816217/Children_of_a_lesser_English_Status_of_nonnative_English_speakers_as_college_level_English_as_a_second_language_teachers_in_the_United_States

Medgyes, P. (2001). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language, 3*, 429–442.

Medgyes, P., & Arva, V. (2000). Native and non-native teachers in the classroom. *System, 28*, 355–372.

Medgyes, P., Benke, E., & Llurda, E. (2005). Differences in teaching behaviour between native and non-native speaker teachers: As seen by the learners. In *Non-native teachers: Perceptions, challenges, and contributions to the profession* (pp. 195–215). Springer.

Moussu, L. (2010). Influence of teacher-contact time and other variables on ESL students' attitudes towards native- and nonnative-English-speaking teachers. *TESOL Quarterly, 44*(4), 746–768. https://doi.org/10.5054/tq.2010.235997

Moussu, L., & Llurda, E. (2008). Non-native English-speaking English language teachers: History and research. *Language Teaching*, *41*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444808005028

Moussu, L. M. (2006). Native and nonnative English-speaking English as a second language teachers: Student attitudes, teacher self-perceptions, and intensive English administrator beliefs and practices. In *Online Submission*. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED492599

Neuliep, J. W., & Speten-Hansen, K. M. (2013). The influence of ethnocentrism on social perceptions of nonnative accents. *Language & Communication, 33*(3), 167–176. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2013.05.001

Nordquist, R. (2019). The "expanding circle" of English-speaking countries. *ThoughtCo.* https://www.thoughtco.com/expanding-circle-english-language-1690619#:~:text=The%20expanding%20circle%20is%20made,and%20Sweden%2C%20among%20many%20others.

Norton, B. (2012). Identity and second language acquisition. In C. Chapelle (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 1–8). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0521

Paikeday, M. T. (1985). *The native speaker is dead*. Paikeday Publishing Inc.

Pennycook, A. (2022). Critical applied linguistics in the 2020s. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *19*(1), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2022.2030232

Perry, F. L. Jr. (2011). *Research in applied linguistics: Becoming a discerning consumer* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Phillips, V. (2020). The employability of non-native English speaking teachers: An investigation of hiring practices and beliefs in Australian adult ELT. *English Australia Journal*, *33*(1).

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford University Press.

Pickens, J. (2005). Attitudes and perceptions. In N. Borkowski, *In Organizational Behavior in Health Care* (pp. 43–75). Jones and Bartlett Publishers. https://www.scirp.org/%28S%28lz5mqp453edsnp55rrgjct55%29%29/reference/referencespapers.aspx?referenceid=2309953

Preece, S. (2016). *The routledge handbook of language and identity*. Routledge.

Prikhodkine, A., & Preston, D. R. (2015). *Responses to language varieties: Variability, processes and outcomes: Vol. 39.* John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://aucegypt.summon.serialssolutions.com/2.0.0/link/0/eLvHCXMwfV1NT8MwDLXYdmEnvukGI3DgtqpN15CeEJs6cdiBISSOUULSC6iTaNnvx2nTbgzBsaoqy076HDv2M0BE_WC8gwkyMZRJjsdrrSTCMo0y-aalmTCqsiDU7VAFy_PpyqFsa0x1Y-jKFP0GK9u71GZYlyu39OtWgHtdwfPETrPkcQfjsQD_2N7DdPm03KRfYusKY4zTEgzMKMNtymo-nvY57ENfFu-INYhDZWEpnJ28X7hdOaP5AfSM7VA4hD2TH8HZwmUcC3JLFi1JcnEMV891_Su-KVekSUyStY2OLY3qCVzP05fZ47gRKFwuRyh095ZvJohOoZuvcnMOhBuqdUSzh

GHoE4ZKcZ4wqTIWSTvfVntws6WGWH9URi3ED109GPwtzAPS6Cu2V0Sk05kz8-C_74ewj-eMuM5cXEC3_PwylxtzjqBzl76O3BJ9A1-TpbM

Qadeer, A. (2019). Saudi EFL learners' perceptions about the teaching of English by native and nonnative English teacher. *Arab World English Journal,* 137–153. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/efl1.11

Rauf, M. (2022). Non-native teacher identity in Saudi universities. In N. Ali Raza & C. Coombe (Eds.), *English language teaching in Pakistan* (pp. 69–86). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-7826-4_6

Reves, T., & Medgyes, P. (1994). The non-native english speaking EFL/ESL teacher's self-image: An international survey. *System, 22*(3), 353–367. https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(94)90021-3

Ruecker, T., & Ives, L. (2015). White native English speakers needed: The rhetorical construction of privilege in online teacher recruitment spaces. *TESOL Quarterly, 49*(4), 733–756. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.195

Saba, J., & Frangieh, C. (2021). Native vs. Non-native English speakers: Investigating non-native English educators' perceptions of their professional identity. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (AJHSSR), 5*(5), 399–407.

Schaub, M. (2000). English in the Arab Republic of Egypt. *World Englishes, 19*(2), 225–238. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-971X.00171

Schenck, A. (2020). Examining the influence of native and non-native English-speaking teachers on Korean EFL writing. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second & Foreign Language Education, 5*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-020-00081-3

Schreiber, B. R. (2019). "More like you": Disrupting native speakerism through a multimodal online intercultural exchange. *TESOL Quarterly, 53*(4), 1115–1138. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.534

Seidlhofer, B. (2001). Closing a conceptual gap: The case For a description of English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *11*(2), 133–158. https://doi.org/10.1111/1473-4192.00011

Selvi, A. F. (2019). The "non-native" teacher. In *The Routledge handbook of English language teacher education* (1st Edition, pp. 184–198).

Shiri, S. (2015). Intercultural communicative competence development during and after language study abroad: Insights from Arabic. *Foreign Language Annals*, *48*(4), 541–569. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12162

Smith, G. N. (2022). Teacher sues over native-speakerism. *English Language Gazette*. https://www.elgazette.com/teacher-sues-over-native-speakerism/

Spence, J. L., Hornsey, M. J., & Imuta, K. (2021). Something about the way you speak: A meta-analysis on children's linguistic-based social preferences. *Child Development*, *92*(2), 517–535. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13548

Sung, C. C. M. (2016). Does accent matter? Investigating the relationship between accent and identity in English as a lingua franca communication. *System*, *60*, 55–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.06.002

Suraweera, D. (2022). Plurilingualism in a constructively aligned and decolonized TESOL curriculum. *TESL Canada Journal*, *38*, 186–198. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v38i2.1355

TESOL. (2006). *Position statement against discrimination of nonnative speakers of English in the field of TESOL*. TESOL. http://www.tesol.org/docs/pdf/5889.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Tsang, A. (2020). Are learners ready for Englishes in the EFL classroom? A large-scale survey of learners' views of non-standard accents and teachers' accents. *System*, *94*, 102298. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102298

Walkinshaw, I., & Oanh, D. H. (2014). Native and non-native English language teachers:

Student perceptions in Vietnam and Japan. *SAGE Open*, *4*(2), 1–9.

Wang, L. (Evelyn), & Fang, F. (Gabriel). (2020). Native-speakerism policy in English language teaching revisited: Chinese university teachers' and students' attitudes towards native and non-native English-speaking teachers. *Cogent Education*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1778374

What is an international school? (n.d.). *TheSchoolRun*. https://www.theschoolrun.com/what-international-school

Wu, K., & Ke, C. (2009). Haunting native speakerism? Students' perceptions toward native speaking English teachers in Taiwan. *English Language Teaching*, *2*(3), 44–52.

Zaineldine, A. (2020). Colonial nostalgia: Macron brings stockholm syndrome from Paris to Beirut. *Egyptian Streets*. https://egyptianstreets.com/2020/09/02/colonial-nostalgia-macron-brings-stockholm-syndrome-from-paris-to-beirut/

Zhang, F., & Zhan, J. (2014). The knowledge base of non-native English-speaking teachers: Perspectives of teachers and administrators. *Language and Education*, *28*(6), 568–582. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2014.921193

Zschirnt, E. (2019). Research ethics in correspondence testing: An update. *Research Ethics*, *15*, 174701611882049. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016118820497

Zschirnt, E., & Ruedin, D. (2016). Ethnic discrimination in hiring decisions: A meta-analysis of correspondence tests 1990–2015. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *42*(7), 1115–1134. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1133279

Appendices

Appendix A: Administrator Interview Questions

Demographic questions:

1. What kind of institution do you work for?
2. What position do you hold?
3. How long have you held this position?
4. Are you responsible for making hiring decisions for English teachers at your institution?

Teacher recruitment:

1. Who is a native speaker of English?
2. What is the approximate percentage of NESTs at your institution?
    a. Where are they from?
3. What is the approximate percentage of NNESTs at your institution?
4. How do you measure your English teacher's language proficiency?
5. When recruiting English language teachers, how important do you consider the following criteria (accent, nationality, native English speaker, application/CV/cover letter, performance in interview, recommendations, teaching qualifications, and teaching demonstration) to be? (share Google Form).
6. Are there any other criteria you use when recruiting English language teachers?
7. What is the most important criterion when hiring English language teachers?

Appendix B: Parent Questionnaire (English Version and Arabic Version)

Appendix C: NNEST Interview Questions

EFL Teaching Career/Experience

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. How did you become an English teacher? Any specific reason?

Professional Identity

1. Has being a non-native English-speaking teacher had any effect on your career? Negative or positive?

NEST-NNEST Differences/Discrimination

1. Who is a native speaker of English?
2. Do you think you have to think and work more on professional development?
3. Are the hiring procedures different for NS and for NNS?
4. Do you feel like some teachers are favored more so than others? If so, who, how and why?

5. Could you describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which you thought you were being discriminated against?
6. Wherever you have worked, do you think the administrators supported you if/when there were issues? Could you say something more about that?
7. How do you think parents view you? How about administrators?
8. Have you felt that they (your students) would prefer a native English speaker as their teacher? How?
9. How do you see your future?

Appendix D: Administrators' Interview Transcripts

Appendix E: Parents' Interview Transcripts

Appendix F: Teachers' Interview Transcripts