The Native/Non-Native Dichotomy in the Teaching of Foreign Languages

A Study of EFL Students' Perceptions

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"It is highly likely that the native speaker fallacy has served the interests of the Centre, while blinding both its representatives and their collaborators in the Periphery to its ideological and structural consequences".

(Robert Phillipson, *Linguistic Imperialism*, p. 199)

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Abbreviations

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EFLT	English as a Foreign Language Teaching/ Teacher
EIL	English as an International Language
EL	English Language
ELT	English Language Teaching/ Teacher
ENL	English as a Native Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESLT	English as a Second Language Teaching/ Teacher
FL	Foreign Language
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching/ Teacher
IE	International English
L1	First Language
L2	Foreign or Second Language
N	Native
NEFLT	Native English-as-a-Foreign-Language Teacher
NELT	Native English Language Teacher
NESLT	Native English-as-a-Second-Language Teacher
NEST	Native English-Speaking Teacher
N(L)T	Native (Language) Teacher
NN	Non-Native
NNEFLT	Non-Native English-as-a-Foreign-Language Teacher
NNEST/ Non-NEST	Non-Native English Speaking Teacher
NN(L)T	Non-Native (Language) Teacher
NST	Native Speaker Teacher
S	Student
SE	Standard English
T	Teacher
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
WE	World English

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Introduction

For over a decade now, as a non-native teacher of English as a foreign language, I have been in a position to observe a number of factors pertaining to the issue of native and non-native teachers, and most especially to the question of students' perceptions of this distinction. As we shall see, much has been written within the relatively abstract ambits of academic research on whether or not such a distinction has any validity or justification. In the corridors and classrooms of a typical language school, however, it is my experience that students not only appear to perceive such a difference, but that they also show clear signs of preference for native teachers. In light of this impression, I therefore began to take a closer look at the issues surrounding the topic, with a view to focussing on the opinions and attitudes that our students hold about this question. Very naturally, this gives rise to the subject of beliefs, their construction, their circulation and the manner in which they change. There can be no doubting that this is a concern crucial to any study of perceptions. However, as the initial purpose of this discussion was to assess the content of students' perceptions, rather than to evaluate the ways in which these may have been formed and generated or may eventually be modified, I have opted to postpone a fuller discussion of this vital question to a later study.

We have already commented that, in academic discussion, much has been said with respect to nativeness in language teaching, as well as in other related areas of study such as English as a world language, linguistic imperialism, the validity of non-native

'variants' of English, and so on. However, having closely reviewed the pertinent research, a body of work that covers many essential areas of consideration, it is nevertheless clear that there is still the need for detailed discussion of this issue from the perspective of students' own perceptions, and that, although a limited amount of preliminary work exists in this area, we still have a long road to travel before reaching a more complete understanding of this question.

Stated briefly, this dissertation[1] undertakes a detailed and commented review of the relevant bibliography, and provides details of an exploratory study carried out on students' perceptions of the native/non-native teacher distinction through a questionnaire.

This discussion is organised as follows: Section 2 reviews the spread of English from the time of its origins, along with the manner in which the language has acquired its now global reach. This is followed by a short assessment of ELT teaching in the post-colonial world that in turn gives rise to the need to redefine relevant concepts and terms. One of these concepts, and that which is at the very base of our research project, is that of 'nativeness', especially as it applies to speakers of English. This term has been analysed and questioned from several different perspectives and by a great number of linguists. We will therefore review what has been said about the term in order to provide a theoretical framework to our discussion. We then focus on the field of experimental research and summarise the types of research that have been carried out to date. We conclude section 2 with some thoughts on the 'background' issues dealt with throughout this section. Sections 3 and 4 outline our own research questions and the methodology

Notes to Section 1

[1] This dissertation has been written in broad accordance with the style guidelines established by the APA (*American Psychological Association*) for research papers.

used. The research will be presented, justified and explained in detail. Furthermore, in the final three sections, we will present our results (Section 5), the conclusions that may be drawn from them (Section 6) and the possible implications of the findings, in addition to determining lines of possible further research (Section 7).

In addition to a list of all works cited within this dissertation, we also provide an appendix that contains, amongst other items, the questionnaire form that was given to the students and from which many of our conclusions have been drawn.

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Background

This section presents two aspects that are fundamental to this discussion. These are, on the one hand, a socio-historical review of the English language from its origins until the present times and, on the other, the issue of the role of native and non-native speakers, a relatively recent and controversial topic that is especially -although not exclusively- related to the world of ELT.

2.1. English as an International Language

2.1.1. The Rise of English

> "…we **have** a world language. It is not the language of imperialism; it is the language we have seen that has evolved out of a history of which we need not always be proud, but whose legacy we must use to good effect".
>
> (Sir Sridath Ramphal, Address to the English-Speaking Union, 1996. Emphasis in the original).[1]

Irrespective of our given political position, there can be no disputing the global dominance of the English language as a vehicle of communication. Parallels are traditionally drawn between its current status and the roles historically occupied by Latin in the West and Sanskrit in the East. And yet, widespread and multi-purposed as those now dead languages were, the extent to which English has permeated the globe, geographically, politically, socially, linguistically and culturally, far outweighs the

Notes to Section 2.1.1.
[1] Crystal (1997), p. 20.

consequences of any other language to date. It is not at all the purpose of this dissertation to compare the relative status of these three languages (a comparison that in any case would have little or no value, since the technological factors favouring language spread are so wildly varied in each case), but it is certainly relevant to ask ourselves why English has gone so dramatically beyond the merely *important* position held by any lingua franca (historical or contemporary) to the point that there is now almost total agreement that it is linguistically *pivotal* in international communication, wherever that might be taking place.[2]

This section offers a brief overview of the rise of English. Nevertheless, it is not simply an attempt to provide some form of historical perspective to our discussion, however valid that would be. Rather, the value to us of reviewing the development of English as a world language lies in the manner that this makes manifest the tools and approaches by which its current dominance has been imposed and is now being continued. That is, it throws light not only on the *why?* of English, but also on the *how?*. And this latter concern is clearly germane to any discussion of the issues underlying nativeness and non-nativeness, to the question of world Englishes and to the ambit of language use as a whole.

All languages that eventually grow powerful have once had humble origins. For many of these, however, those origins are a matter of pure speculation. Not so for English. Philological studies have long since revealed the development of English through the arrival of various Germanic peoples to the British Isles (and particularly to the southern part now occupied by England), displacing the earlier Celtic tribes ever

[2] Dissenting voices to this view would include, for example, Marc Deneire (1998, p. 394), who asserts: "I always found this 'universal English language' to be more myth than reality. In many cases, my broken German and Spanish were more useful to me than my knowledge of English in non-English speaking

westward and northward. We know, through a strong body of literary and other textual evidence, of the manner in which the various languages of these tribes eventually led to the distinct dialects of Anglo-Saxon, fusing along the way many elements of Old Norse, (whose development within Britain itself gave rise to a form known as Anglo-Norse). Even in those remote times, a remarkable capacity for rapidly absorbing elements of other languages was evident in the incorporation not only of Norse but also of Latin vocabulary, the Romans having occupied England for centuries before the mass arrival of the Angle, Saxon, Jute, Frisian and Norse peoples. Following the Norman invasion of Hastings in 1066, the language gradually developed towards a new form and, whilst growing ever more consolidated, also underwent a long period of linguistic subjugation to Norman French.[3] It is important, linguistically, to note that the Norman invasion accelerated the process by which, at a morphological level, English ceased to be a fully Germanic language and made important steps in the direction of its contemporary state (see below). As confidence in the language eventually waxed (or as the Norman influence eventually waned) this early form of the language gradually came to be used in all social, cultural and political ambits. Even in those times of Middle English, there was the steady emergence of a southern standard form (based around the court and replacing the less *Normanised* northern variants), through which all literary expression was increasingly made. Whilst the language has, of course, developed substantially since then (so that, in common with most European languages, understanding these earlier forms requires special study), there has been no other watershed break like that

countries. As a result, I would like to propose multi-lingualism as a better way for communicating internationally".

[3] The lack of prestige accorded to English (and, conversely, the importance given to French) is well documented. See, for example, the chronicles of Robert of Gloucester, who, in the twelfth century, wrote: "*Vor bote a man conne frenss me telth of him lute*" [Unless a man knows French, he is of little account] (Potter, 1950, p. 35).

of 1066, and the southern standard within British English, though currently far less marked, still maintains.

The various developments that characterise the growth of the language have led a number of writers to make claims and counter-claims about the 'particular linguistic suitability' of English in playing the role of world language. We will briefly refer to this debate at a later stage in our discussion.

English in Colonial Times

David Crystal has observed that the "present-day world status of English is primarily the result of two factors: the expansion of British colonial power, which peaked towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the emergence of the United States as the leading economic power of the twentieth century" (Crystal, 1997, p. 53).[4] It is often the case that we take both of these factors largely for granted, familiar as they are to us in our reference to the contemporary reach of English. And yet, as even the most cursory review of the events would show, both aspects were extraordinary (for their unprecedented scale and speed of development), and neither of them was in any sense inevitable.

What is perhaps most remarkable in all this, however, is that until historically recent times, English was a small, island-bound language (in fact, not even covering the whole of the British Isles), of little or no interest to the outside world.[5] In about 400

[4] See also the comment from Bismark, who, in 1898, on being asked about what he deemed to be the critical development in contemporary history, replied "the fact that the North Americans speak English". Crystal (1997), pp. 76-77.

[5] In 1582, speaking of the language, Richard Mulcaster, Headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School, observed: "Our English tongue is of small reach - it stretcheth no further than this island of ours – nay, not there over all" Crystal (1997), p. 65.

years, it has grown from being the speech of around 6 million users to its current estimated position of over 337 million L1 speakers and between 350 and 1,350 million L2 users worldwide.[6]

The gradual shift from insular to global began in 1584 with the start of the English colonisation of North America. At around the time of the US Declaration of Independence (1776), British colonial presence, and with it the influx of the English language, was being further or initially established in areas such as Canada (especially from 1750 onwards), the Caribbean (from the 1620s, involving both British and US involvement in the slave trade), Australia and New Zealand (c. 1770). At a slightly later date, and now fully within the heyday of the British Empire,[7] colonisation took place in West Africa (particularly in the mid-to-late nineteenth century), South Africa (starting in 1795), East Africa (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), the Indian subcontinent (from 1600 onwards, though most especially in the *Raj* period of 1765 to 1947), New Guinea (from 1793), South-east Asia (particularly in Malaysia from 1786, Hong Kong from 1842 and Singapore from 1819) and the South Pacific (where British presence had been established from the 1770s by Cook's journeys and where the subsequent influence of English has been largely due to US interests, most notably in Hawaii. It is also of significance that, after 1898, US colonial influence was initiated in the Philippines).[8]

What is of paramount importance to the spread of English as a world language, however, is not so much the extraordinary extent of territory covered but the fact that the colonisers took measures to ensure a lasting use of the language as a means by

[6] Crystal (1997), pp. 60-1.
[7] Pennycook (1998) observes that "where the empire spread, so too did English" (p. 29).
[8] For a more detailed review of the linguistic consequences of British colonisation, see Crystal (1997, pp. 25-53) and Pennycook (1998).

which to further their interests. Throughout the colonised territories, English became the language of administration, law[9] and commerce, and was supported by developments in both education and the social use of the language that gave support to its position.[10] Phillipson (1992) points out that, from the time of Lord Macaulay's dictates on the direction that colonial education should take, that is, from 1834, all serious debate on the content and value of traditional, local education was suspended in favour of the systematic imposition of English at any educational level above the elementary. That is, wherever local languages and forms of teaching were used, after Macaulay's time these were inevitably merely transitional, with all intermediate-to-higher forms of education being carried out in English. With particular reference to India, and citing Misra, Phillipson observes:

> The result of this policy was that throughout the Indian subcontinent 'English became the sole medium of education, administration, trade and commerce, in short of all formal domains of a society's functioning. *Proficiency in English became the gateway to all social and material benefits*' (Phillipson, 1992, p. 111. Emphasis added).

One of the requisites of this systematic imposition was the use of subject syllabi, examining boards and personnel imported from Britain.[11] In other words, not only was the language used to sustain the machinery of colonialism, but this in turn was also

[9] In India in 1837, English replaced Persian "as the official language of the law courts" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 110).
[10] For a fuller discussion of colonialist educational policies in Asia and Africa, and for a comparison of the French and British approaches, see Phillipson (1992), pp.109-135.
[11] Phillipson (1992), p. 117.

supported by an infrastructure guaranteeing that it took further root within the institutions and organisations of the given territory.

British colonial policy therefore aimed at establishing an English-language legacy that would endure in all ambits of society. This included the setting up of English language schools for general education, teachers being sent from Britain, the establishment of universities in which English was the principal language of instruction (for example, those of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1857) and the foundation of media of expression such as "the English-language daily newspaper, *The Straits Times*, which began publication in 1845" (Crystal, 1997, p. 50). Whatever form of territorial government was in place (degrees of autonomy varied greatly within the administrative structure of the Empire), its control was articulated in English. Clearly, the effect - and few commentators doubt that this was intentional[12] - was to ensure the position of English as the language of power, the language of the ruling elite. Given its widespread nature, it also swiftly became the *sine qua non* of international communication, at least whilst the political and territorial status quo of the Empire remained in place.

The Post-Colonial Spread of English

> "In 1950, the case for English as a world language would have been no more than plausible. Fifty years on, and the case is virtually unassailable"
> (Crystal, 1997, p. 63).[13]

[12] However, for an intentionally provocative and dissenting view of this current 'orthodoxy', see Widdowson (1997), especially p. 136.
[13] It is interesting, however, to contrast this caution-in-hindsight with the view put forward by Firth in 1930 that English was, even at that time, "the only real world language" (quoted in Phillipson, 1992, p. 121).

Although the need for a lingua franca aiding communication between communities has a long history,[14] the main factor triggering the world spread of one language is "globalisation"; in a world where apples are grown in Chile and consumed in Europe and Japan, where the economies of different countries are dependant upon each other, where it is important for the same information to be accessed simultaneously in many parts of the globe, the case for one language as a vehicle for this communication is greatly strengthened. Currently at least, this *world* lingua franca is now English.[15]

That said, however, it is also true that English, in the decades immediately prior to our global age, had become very well situated to step into this role. There are a number of factors that played their part in having ensured the global rise of English in the post-colonial period. As we have seen, as foundation blocks, the geographical extent of the former British Empire is not least amongst these. Additionally, the imposition of the language in all ambits of the territory under British rule and, above all, the decision to use English as the vehicle for education contributed to consolidating its position. However, the two major motors that have powered English to its current status, as our earlier quote from Crystal indicated, are the following: first, the fact that - within these territories, in the social, cultural and political landscapes that held sway in the aftermath of the colonial period - access to English was broadly perceived as *the* essential element to obtaining influence, power, education and (in short) success.[16] Phillipson (1992, pp. 128-133) observes that those people who were products of the colonial educational

[14] (See Edwards, 1995 on Greek, French, Latin, Arabic, etc.). For a fuller discussion of the sometimes contradictory definitions of the term *lingua franca*, see Phillipson (1992), pp. 41-42.
[15] There are of course other 'lingua francas' in the world - such as Swahili, French, Spanish, Mandarin - serving communication between certain groups, but none of these can be said to have the status of a 'world' lingua franca in the sense outlined above.
[16] See Phillipson (1992), especially pp. 128-129.

system were not only loyal to it, but also, as a result of the training it provided them, were often the first administrators of the newly independent territories;[17] additionally, in many cases, the fact that the local languages and their use in education, law and commerce had been so fully undervalued in preceding years gave still greater impetus and justification to the continued use of English, if only to help provide an efficient start: "The lack of preparation for the diversified challenge of a post-colonial education system may have given the possession of English an even higher value than it would otherwise have had" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 129). Furthermore, in an ironic development that characterises a great deal of English language use in the post-colonial world,[18] English was seen not only as the tool of the oppressor, but also as the means through which to be liberated from imperialism, as "competence in the English language was […] a step towards contradicting the racialist myth of the Negro's 'retarded mentality'" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 131).[19] But, above all, there was the contemporary widespread acceptance of English as, in Phillipson's terms, a *panacea*. He cites the 1961 report from Uganda's Makerere University (written shortly before that country's independence) in which it was seen as essential "to improve and extend the use of English as a gateway to better communications, better education, and so a higher standard of living and better understanding".[20]

The second area that has provided impetus to the increased use of English (and, as we shall see in the following section, an area that also accounts in very large measure

[17] "'Those who rose to the very top as Africa was emerging from colonial rule owed a good deal of their success to the gift of the gab in the imperial language'" (Mazrui, quoted in Phillipson, 1992, p. 130)
[18] Referred to by Braj Kachru as both a "love hate relationship" and "linguistic schizophrenia" (Kachru, 1994, p. 136 & pp. 146-147).
[19] A comment made about Africa, but evidently applicable to any post-colonial context. Pennycook (1998) refers to this ambivalence by asking: "how does one establish a relationship to the languages and cultures of the colonizers when they represent both colonial oppression and the possibilities for anti-colonial struggle?" (p. 213).
[20] Makerere Report, 1961:47 (in Phillipson, 1992, p. 280).

for its development in territories that have no connection whatever with the colonial past) is the phenomenal economic power of the United States. This obviously lies outwith the scope of our discussion, but it is worth briefly recalling that, most especially after the Second World War, US economic expansion into former colonial territories and other countries around the world (the areas of so-called "strategic interest") has been spectacularly rapid, in historical terms.

That such expansion was additionally motivated by the Cold War and that it has often involved the aggressive imposition of US social and cultural values also lies beyond our immediate concerns. Except, of course, in the sense that a consequence of such expansion has been the need to ensure the continued presence of English. This has helped give rise to the application of education policies (developed and imposed both by the British and the US) aimed at ensuring the effective teaching of the language around the world, as section 2.1.3 considers in more detail.

Additionally, the spread of computer use and, especially, the development of the Internet, has certainly consolidated the status of English in the world of information technology since, as George Steiner observes "computers and data-banks chatter in 'dialects' of an Anglo-American mother tongue" (1998, p. xvii).

As we mentioned above, various authors have attributed to the linguistic or structural characteristics of the English language[21] an important role in its global expansion; nevertheless, such opinions are far from receiving universal support. Umberto Eco, on the one hand, "believes that apart from its historical contingency,

[21] Whilst there is very likely to be global support with the view of Bernárdez (1999) that "todas las lenguas son iguales por lo que se refiere a sus capacidades de uso" [all languages are the same with respect to their capacities for use] (p. 160) it is nevertheless true that there are differences between languages "por ejemplo, en grado de complejidad" [for example, in degree of complexity] (p. 159). See also Edwards: "all known languages are of considerable complexity" (1995, p. 18).

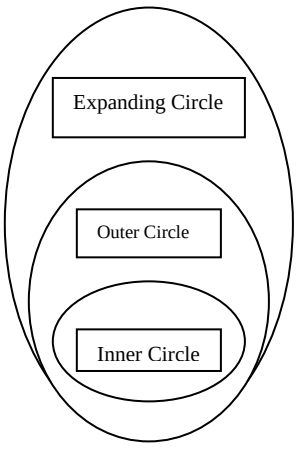
English expanded because it is rich in monosyllables, capable of absorbing foreign words and flexible in forming neologisms" (in Fennel, 2001, p. 260). On the other hand, however, most linguists would now agree that the international status of English today is not due to its linguistic characteristics but to "ethnographic, political, economic, technological, scientific, and cultural forces" (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 11) and that "the fortunes of languages are inexorably bound up with those of their users" (Edwards, 1995, p. 9).

2.1.2. English Today

The preceding section reviewed the historical spread of the English language; we will now consider the role and status of the English language today.

Kachru (1985, 1992, 1994) has extensively studied the internationalisation of English and claimed that it has led to a "stratification of use" (1985, p. 12). He established a division that is still much-cited today and is very generally used as a model for studying the so-called 'Englishes'. In Kachru's division, those states and territories in which English is used are separated into three groups "representing the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages" (1985, p. 12). He sees these three groups as concentric circles: in the 'inner circle', English is spoken as a native language and is therefore the mother tongue of most of the inhabitants in these countries; in the outer circle, it is spoken as a second language; and, in the 'expanding circle', it is spoken as a foreign language. Kachru's three circles can be directly related to the spread of the English language as we have described it above, where we considered the socio-historical and sociolinguistic concerns underpinning the expansion of the English language around the world.

Figure 1



In the 'inner circle' we find countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand. The 'outer circle' contains more than 50 countries related to the inner circle especially -though not exclusively- through colonisation, for example Nigeria, Singapore, India, Zambia, etc. In the 'expanding circle' we find those countries where English is used as the main foreign language (or at least *one* of the main foreign languages), for example the rest of Europe, Japan, China.

The spread of English worldwide has led to a number of what have been called 'World Englishes';[1] in the countries or territories where English has acquired certain status within a given society, and because of its use in multilingual contexts, English has gradually adopted features specific to those places (word order, borrowed words and expressions, etc). Therefore, we can now speak of 'Nigerian English', 'Singapore English' and others as dialects[2] or varieties with their own status and power. Many linguists and sociolinguists, especially from the inner and the outer circles, are concerned with these new Englishes[3] (see, for instance, Kachru, 1985 & 1992; Pennycook, 1994 & 1998; Braine, 1999) and often take a sociological or socio-political perspective on the issue, given its scope and importance.

Notes to section 2.1.2.

[1] See Kachru (1992) and Bamgbose (2001).
[2] Crystal (1997, p. 133) says that "these new Englishes are somewhat like the dialects we all recognise within our own country, except that they are on an international scale, applying to whole countries or regions".
[3] Evidence of the growing linguistic interest in this issue in the issue lies the fact that, since 1986, there has been an International Committee for the Study of World Englishes, an International Association for WE - which holds annual conferences -, a monthly publication called *World Englishes* and courses on WEs in certain university departments of linguistics.

In the countries in the expanding circle, where it is learnt as a foreign language,[4] English has no current administrative status and is used as a means of cross-border communication (we might call this inter-national use), not for internal (or intra-national) purposes; it is used essentially as an international language in business, science, politics, communications, etc.

Nunan (1999) claims that by "becoming the medium for global communication, English has detached itself from its historical roots" (the inner circle countries), also observing that "it is conceivable that the plural form 'Englishes' will soon replace the singular 'English'" (paragraph 4).

Whether used as a native, second or foreign language,[5] English prevails today as the most international of languages, as *a common language* which allows language users from around the world to understand each other in and amongst ENL, ESL and EFL countries; Crystal (1997) claims that an entity he defines as "World English" is in existence "as a political and cultural reality" (p. ix) and that it acts as the 'lingua franca', the language that is now the facilitator of worldwide communication. He also says (1997) that, in the near future, "a new form of English - let us think of it as 'World Standard Spoken English' (WSSE)" will certainly develop (p. 137) and that it will not replace the different Englishes or dialects; rather, he claims, it will be useful in ensuring that international intelligibility can prevail when required.

It would seem that, in this issue, different terms are often used to refer to more or less the same concept. Davies (1991) believes that there is an 'International English'

[4] Crystal (1997, p. 3) affirms that "English is now the language most widely taught as a foreign language - in over 100 countries (…)".
[5] The terms ENL, ESL and EFL have been challenged by a number of authors, precisely because of the many socio-political implications involved in such acronyms: See, for example, Nunan (1999): "I find the [ESL-EFL] distinction increasingly problematic".

and that it is our lingua franca, although he considers it to be a kind of interlanguage[6]. Medgyes (1999) claims "that a separate 'international' variety does not exist" and suggests that we "speak of English as an International Language rather than as International English" (p. 7). Widdowson (1997) also speaks of 'English as an international language', as do Baugh and Cable (2002), who refer quite interchangeably to 'global English', 'English as a world language' and 'English as an international language', which they see "as a variety that is emerging" (p. 404); Baugh and Cable (2002) interestingly point out that this variety "will not be rooted in the culture, geography, and national sense of any country" (p. 404). Pennycook (1994) refers to "the worldliness of English" (p. 31) and to 'English as an international language'; Fennel (2001) uses the term 'English as a global language' (p. 256), the same as Quirk (1985, p. 2); and Kachru (1985) refers to 'English as an international or universal language' (p. 13).[7]

One of the questions that arises in the wake of WE or EIL (as we will term this concept, for the sake of convenience) - and an issue that is also relevant to other Englishes - is that of 'standards' or models.[8]

Quirk (1985) observes that, although the very concept of standard has now become questionable, there is need for a global standard of English and aims at a "single monochrome standard that looks as good on paper as it sounds in speech" (p. 6), advocating that this standard should be the same for all ENL, ESL and EFL situations. His idea here was of a native (inner-circle) model to act a global standard, and Kachru

[6] For more on 'interlanguage' see Selinker (1972).
[7] For further discussion of the implications of the labelling, see Phillipson (1992), pp. 244-245.
[8] The issue of standards within all the international varieties or dialects of English, *especially in the outer circle*, is both highly commented and deeply controversial; we will therefore basically refer here to the issues on standards that are connected to EIL. For fuller information on standards, see authors such as Widdowson (1997), Quirk (1985) , Kachru (1985) and Davies (1999).

immediately took issue with this position.[9] In reference to his three circles, Kachru (1985) distinguishes between 'norm-providing', 'norm-developing' and 'norm-dependent' varieties while taking into consideration sociolinguistic and pragmatic issues; he argues for "an attitudinal change and linguistic pragmatism" (p. 25) in order to understand that, while each English-using speech community should develop its own variety, an "educated variety of English" is also emerging and is "intelligible across these many varieties" (p. 24); nevertheless, he believes that moves should be made away from the authoritarianism of the native speaker in order to reflect all the realities of the English language.

Widdowson (1997) also frees EIL -which he sees as a register of English- from the control of the inner circle's native speakers ("there is no need of native-speaker custodians", p. 144) although he also claims that the written varieties[10] of the language all have a "standardising influence" (p. 143) and that this standardisation is "favoured by endonormative control" (p. 143).[11] Brutt-Griffler (1998) suggests that Widdowson -in his provocative article- is in fact claiming that "there remains no other source for EIL than Inner Circle English" (p. 383).[12] She claims (1998) that when a language becomes of international use, it can be no longer preserved by one nation since "its purely national character disappears in its international use" (p. 387) and she is therefore against any 'custodianship' of English.

[9] Bamgbose (1998) refers to this as a "battle royal on Standard English" (p. 1).
[10] Widdowson (1997) claims that "professional and academic registers are, for the most part, essentially written varieties" (p. 143).
[11] The *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* defines 'endonormative' in the following terms: "when a language has a norm within the area where it is spoken, it is called endonormative. In England and the USA, for example, English is endonormative".
[12] Since Widdowson says that the varieties of English to be found in the outer circles may not be dialects but separate languages and that they are therefore not "exonormative as a dialect" but "endonormative as a separate language" (1997, p. 142).

Bamgbose (1998) claims that, although it is important for the different varieties of the English language to be mutually intelligible and usable when applied to international contexts, "there is no way in which such closeness between varieties can be imposed or ensured" (p. 11).

There are authors who link Standard English (SE) with International English: Medgyes (1999) notices that "nowadays, Standard English is often used interchangeably with the term International English or International Educated English" (p. 7). Davies (1999) sees IE "as one more development in the standardisation process; from this point of view, international English is a further development of the Standard Englishes we now have" (p. 181) and, although he believes that standards need to exist, he finds the term difficult to define. McArthur (2001) thinks that English as a lingua franca is the same as Standard English and claims that:

> the concept of a single supranational standard to which both UK and US norms contribute has existed rather vaguely for some time, and has at least four names: world/World English (WE), World Standard English (WSE), international or International English (IE) and International Standard English (ISE). (p. 1)

McArthur (2001) also reminds us that the print standard is traditionally understood to be the core of any standard language and that therefore the publishers are the ones who, so far, hold the main position with respect to what is or is not acceptable. In our opinion, most of these publishers belong to the inner circle and therefore impose their British or American varieties.[13]

Crystal (1997) takes a less conservative view and prefers to talk about variety instead of standard;[14] he says that the variety that is bound to have greatest influence on WSSE will be US English and claims that, as the number of speakers of English as a foreign or second language increase, certain features of English as an L2 could "become part of WSSE" (p. 138). Crystal adds that:

> This would be specially likely if there were features which were shared by several (or all) L2 varieties – such as the use of syllable-timed rhythm, or the widespread difficulty observed in the use of *th* sounds. (p. 138).[15]

Pennycook (1994) refers to standardisation not only from a linguistic but also from a socio-political and economic perspective and claims that the process of the standardization[16] of a global English needs to be carefully analysed, since it is linked to "the construction of social difference" (p. 110).

Yano, an applied linguist from Japan, wonders whether English as a lingua franca will "be able to maintain intelligibility and standard forms" (2001, p. 124); and this seems to be, in fact, the issue. Nobody seems to question the fact that -when used in global contexts- some kind of standard English exists, and that people from Kinshasa are able to communicate with people from Bombay, and it might be argued that their level of understanding of each others' variety is not much less than, for example,

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[13] An exception to the written standard being ruled by the publishing houses is of course all the information in the World Wide Web.
[14] See Pennycook (1994), p. 11.
[15] The orthographic symbols <th> have the following phonetic distribution in SE: /θ/ and /ð/.
[16] Pennycook (1994) reminds us that, as early as in 1930, there was the first "significant attempt to create a simple and standard form of English" with the development of 'Basic English' by the philosopher C. K. Ogden (p. 129).

English speakers having a strongly marked Texan or London accent. However, the issue seems to centre on who will be "in charge" of maintaining the norms or of allowing -or not- certain changes in its grammar, lexis or pronunciation patterns (to mention only a few of the areas concerned), especially if we bear in mind that there are many more people who have English as an L2 than as an L1. While there are linguists who believe that the inner circle countries should be in control of the language (for instance, Quirk), more 'open-minded' voices (e.g. Crystal) claim that the non-native speakers will also have a say in shaping this WE. The way English has grown to date would seem to indicate that no given official body will be the language arbiter[17] and that the language will develop along with its speakers and, especially, its 'writers'. However, and while for some "the concept of ownership is (…) irrelevant" (Nayar, 1994, p. 2), Widdowson (1996) reminds us that in reality "a strong instinct of ownership still prevails" (p. 70) in English native speakers. And indeed it does, especially when there is money at stake, particularly -though not exclusively- in the ELT empire.[18]

Phillipson (2001)[19] links the issue of standards with those of ownership and 'business' mentioned above in the following ironic observation:

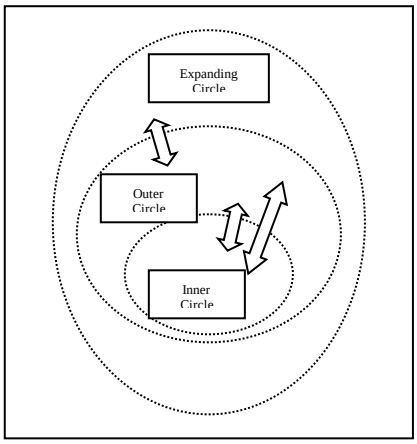
> it is an illusion that the [English] language belongs to 'the world', as though this means it is free of Anglo-American norms (which are those used by transactional corporations and the 'international' bodies that serve them), norm-settlers (CNN,

[17] Unlike the case of Spanish with its "Real Academia de la Lengua" or the equivalent institutions in France and Italy, for example.
[18] See next section.
[19] Plenary session given at the *Conference on NNSTs in FLT* at the *Universitat de Lleida* (Catalonia, Spain), in 2001.

BBC, scientific journals, …) and norm-enforcers (educational institutions). (punctuated as in the original)

Bearing in mind the many and various comments set out above, we would like to suggest that the following is a plausible model for World English:

Figure 2



The discontinued lines indicate that, on the one hand, the ENL, ESL and EFL boundaries are neither clearly stated nor unbreakable and, on the other, that since there is linguistic contact between speakers of English from the inner, outer and expanding circle, the English spoken in each circle will influence and (in turn) be influenced by the other two. For instance, an expression that originates in the European Union may eventually be incorporated into the English spoken in the inner and outer circle countries. WE, as a language *used* in addition to being *formed* by the three circles, will contain component forms from the three circles. There is no doubt that, to date, the current characteristics of English as a global language are very similar to the inner circle (or native speakers') norms; but in a world where communications amongst groups and

individuals is of maximum importance and where there is a growing understanding of and respect for diversity, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that the English language will adapt to new circumstances –as it has done through its history- allowing itself to be shaped to the requirements of all its users (and not the other way round). This language will be characterised, we suggest, by having features from all the Englishes around the world. It would be unrealistic to suggest that British English and, very especially, US English, will not be the varieties having the greatest weight in WE, but other native and non-native varieties will also gradually gain ground and influence English, especially -though not exclusively- when used for international communication.

With respect to the comments of different authors on the features of EIL, many would seem to agree that it will have certain characteristics that make it different from, for example, ENL: to cite one such view, Yano (2001) claims that this WE "should be as simple and regular as possible in linguistic forms (…) and socioculturally as neutral as possible in order to attain high learnability and usability" (p. 129). Additionally, Jennifer Jenkins (2000)[20] is currently collecting empirical data in EIL settings for a 'Lingua Franca Core' and discussing which phonological features of English as an international language are 'core features' -and therefore play an essential role in intelligibility and effective communication- and which ones can be dropped, therefore suggesting that EIL needs to have its own phonological characteristics. Also referring to the question of pronunciation, Brutt-Griffler (1998) points out that tolerance to other pronunciation patterns is necessary and claims that, together with a knowledge of other NN cultures, these should be the two essential assets of English as an international language (p. 390).

[20] Also cited in Walker (2001).

2.1.3. Post-Colonial English Language Teaching

The history of English-Language teaching (ELT) is a well-documented field of activity, whose origins lie in the late Middle Ages[1] and which is well-linked to the colonial policies of the British empire[2]. It cannot be said that its development has ever been free from political considerations of one kind or another. Howatt (1984, pp. 3-71) details the two essential currents of its growth: the first of these, in Europe, developed in keeping with the two periods of Huguenot exile and the influx of political émigrés in the wake of the French Revolution during the 1790s; the second stemmed from its development throughout the Empire. Nevertheless, whilst there had been a gradual build up of ELT prior to the twentieth century, with a strong pedagogical tradition being established particularly in Europe[3] and in all the colonies[4] it is the period following the end of the Second World War that sees its spectacular rise, to the extent that we nowadays freely talk about this ambit of teaching as an 'industry', and are not at all surprised to see its activities listed in breakdowns of economic production:

> ELT has boomed over the past 30 years, and seen a proliferation of university departments, language schools, publications, conferences and all the paraphernalia of an established profession. ELT is also a billion-pound business, described in an *Economist Intelligence Unit* study of English as a 'world

Notes to section 2.1.3.

[1] See Howatt (1984).
[2] Pennycook (1998) observes that " ELT was always a significant part of colonial policy" (p. 20).
[3] Howatt (1984, pp. 61-72).
[4] See Pennycook (1998) for a thorough and critical review of the spread of English through colonialism.

> commodity', in a report written to promote strategies for capitalizing further on this growth industry. (Phillipson, 1992, p. 4)

This section, however, is not so much concerned with detailing the history of this recent growth as with pointing out the manner in which this growth has contributed towards reinforcing the centrality of the native-speaker model in ELT, and has given rise to a series of related concepts that we are obliged to identify, define and assess in the discussion of our general topic. That said, it is nevertheless important to briefly indicate a number of historical events of what might be called an institutional character that have underpinned the development of ELT throughout the world.[5]

It might be argued that the consciously applied network of institutional and administrative control over language teaching began in earnest in 1913 when the Cambridge Proficiency Examination was held for the first time in the UK. When this became available internationally, in 1931, British ELT had effectively provided itself with a tool by which recognition of language performance would be firmly in the hands of native users for decades.[6] In 1940, the British Council, responsible for ELT programmes in their centres throughout the world was incorporated by Royal Charter. In 1966, the TESOL organisation was established in North America. Whilst not organisationally related in any sense, the common thread connecting these events, as we shall consider further below, is the centrality of either the native teacher, the native as final assessor, or both. Along with many of the British Council centres, a vast body of

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[5] Both space and topic preclude a fuller discussion of the academic (and related institutional) developments that have taken place in the period under discussion, that is, essentially post-1945. For a chronological list of key ELT-related events, see Howatt, 1984, pp. 302-305.

[6] Pennycook (1998, p. 131) states that "the Empire became the central testing site for the development of ELT, from where the theories and practices were then imported to Britain".

language schools and academies, essentially teaching either the UK or US variant of English, have grown up, most particularly in Europe (initially mostly in the west, and, since the fall of communism, increasingly in the east), where the dominant variant taught tends to be British, and in south-east Asia (particularly South Korea, Thailand and Japan, and with recent spectacular growth in China) where the dominant variant taught tends to be US. Additionally, as we outlined in Section 2.1.1, the great majority of the formerly-colonial countries incorporated ELT as an integral part of their education systems, from primary through to tertiary levels.

The inner circle (or centre) variants of English have traditionally been taught and seen as models; this has given unquestionable power to the native varieties of the language and, of course, has led to the belief that their native speakers, native teachers and native assessors or examiners are the 'natural source of knowledge'. Naturally, there are vested interests in keeping this power, especially from the UK and the US, given the immense commercial concerns that depend upon it: EFL and ESL institutions around the world, a huge publishing enterprise, courses for ELT trainees run in major British and American universities, etc.[7] To get an idea of the figures dealt with by the British Council, and simply as an example, Crystal (1998) says that:

> In 1995-6, over 400,000 candidates worldwide sat English language examinations administered by the Council (…) there were 120,000 students learning English (…) in Council teaching centres. (p. 103)

[7] Phillipson (1992) observes that "the number of universities or comparable institutions offering courses in ELT rose astronomically, to 28 by the mid-1970's, and nearly twice that number by 1990." (p. 227).

Furthermore, the non-native professional seems to be at a clear disadvantage in the ELT world because, as Canagarajah (1999) observes, "teacher trainers, curriculum developers, and testing experts are predominantly from the centre" (p. 85); in short, it would seem that ELT is "firmly anchored in Centre [British and US] perceptions and structures" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 181).

Oda, a Japanese professor and linguist, carried out a survey (1999) in order to determine the percentage of N and NN professionals in various TESOL institutions around the world. He concluded that "NSTs, including those who are monolinguals, appear to be given a privileged status in the profession" (p. 119) and that "NSs of English are represented approximately twice as often in the highest decision-making bodies of the [TESOL] affiliates as NNSs" (p. 113).[8]

As regards teacher training, courses have traditionally ignored the issues related to NN professionals, although some professionals have recently seen the need for and usefulness of incorporating into teacher training programmes those issues that are of relevance to NN teachers.[9]

The following two sections will consider the native non-native issue in fuller detail.

[8] We will review the consequences of the superior status of the NS in LT in section 2.2.1 (D) below.
[9] Kamhi-Stein, professor in the TESOL MA program at California State University, has incorporated "issues related to NNSs across the curricula of four courses" that she teaches (1999, p. 148) in order to improve teacher preparation; she observes that "N and NNS teacher-trainees are engaging in a more meaningful dialog" (p. 155).

2.2. The Nativeness Issue

2.2.1. Native and Non-Native: The Theoretical Background

The term 'native speaker' was first used, according to Davis (1991) in Bloomfield's *Language* in 1933[1], and has been widely used in both linguistics and applied linguistics, particularly since Noam Chomsky used it in 1965. Its use is probably due to the need that linguists and learners alike have of a model for norms and correctness in language. Chomsky linked the terms 'native speaker' to 'competence' and claimed that competence is related to knowing intuitively what is grammatical or ungrammatical in a segment of linguistic production. For him and, indeed, for generative transformational grammar, authority to decide what is or is not grammatical resides with the intuitions of the native speaker of the language, who is seen as an ideal speaker and listener, and who knows the language perfectly. In this scenario, native speakers are therefore of enormous importance, as it is they who are able to establish or confirm the rules overseeing the grammar of their 'native language' although these may be *decontextualized* grammars.

Chomsky's notion of competence was disputed[2] by the idea of *communicative competence*, a term and concept introduced by Hymes (1970). This was "derived from a heterogeneous collection of sources, including psycholinguistics, anthropology,

Notes to section 2.2.1.

[1] "The child learns to speak like the persons around him. The first language a human being learns to speak is his *native language*; he is a *native speaker* of this language." (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 43, emphasis in the original).

[2] For further information on the questioning of Chomsky's ideas, see for example *Challenging Chomsky*, by Rudolph P. Bothe.

pedagogy and critical sociology" (Brumfit, p. 150) and reflects the change in the way language was seen and studied; linguists realised that speakers of a given language not only know the words and grammar of that language, but also show an awareness of the context,[3] in a global sense. Therefore, speakers have knowledge of what to say in different situations and, most importantly, how to say it. Socially realistic linguistics has led to language being seen in conjunction with social constructs and realities; it has given rise to the view that people are not *ideal* speakers or listeners of a given language but, rather, are *real* users of that language, whose production varies according to factors such as the person they are communicating with, speaker-to-speaker relationship, the moment the interaction takes place, and so on. Clearly, the more that applied linguists know about language production (and language learning), and the greater the information they have on the social role of language, on interaction, the more difficult it has become to find a straightforward definition for the concept of native speaker, since this can now no longer be merely the depositary of 'norms' but of a much more complex set of '*knowledges*'.

The basic definition of the term 'native' includes the idea that one is a native "speaker of a language by virtue of place or country of birth" (Davis, 1991, p. ix). This definition is, nevertheless, not greatly useful to linguists, since it takes into consideration only geographical conditions; it is in fact too restricting. Recent definitions, as we will see below, include non-developmental characteristics such as fluency, awareness of standard forms and situational factors.

[3] Tusón (1999), in a non-specialist publication, observes that "el context, en la conversa o en el món de l'escriptura, és un coixí generós, que serveix d'esmorteïdor i evita les patacades de la significació" [context, in conversation or within the world of writing, is a generous cushion that both softens and avoids the hard knocks of meaning] (p. 70).

Stern (1983, in Cook, 1999) says that native speakers have a subconscious knowledge of rules, an intuitive grasp of meanings, the ability to communicate within social settings, a range of language skills, and creativity of language use. Davies (1991) undertakes a thorough and much commented review of the term in the field of applied linguistics, and studies the knowledge that the native speaker has in relation to linguistic, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic ambits. He concludes that any native speaker of the language has the following characteristics:

1. The native speaker acquires the L1 of which s/he is a native speaker in childhood,
2. The native speaker has intuitions about his/her Grammar 1, [4]
3. The native speaker has intuitions about those features of the Grammar 2[5] that are distinct from his/her Grammar 1,
4. The native speaker has a unique capacity to produce fluent spontaneous discourse,
5. The native speaker has a unique capacity to write creatively,
6. The native speaker has a unique capacity to interpret and translate into the L1.

(Davies, 1991, pp. 148-149)

But most linguists would agree today that all these characteristics are "variable and not a necessary part of the definition of a native speaker; the lack of them would not

[4] An individual's linguistic system, the underlying rules (Davies, 1991, p. 40).
[5] Traditionally called "universal grammar".

disqualify a person from being a native speaker" (Cook, 1999, p. 186). It is difficult to define native speakers of a language without referring to their 'level of literacy' and yet it is not true that all native speakers are able to communicate effectively (or appropriately, successfully, and so on) in both written and spoken forms, for instance, nor in a wide variety of contexts.

What *is* widely agreed, however, is that a person is a native speaker of the language that he or she has learnt in childhood. We might therefore say that being a native speaker of a given language is something that, in fact, cannot be changed:

> "The indisputable element in the definition of *native speaker* is that a person is a native speaker of the language learnt first; the other characteristics are incidental, describing how well an individual uses the language." (Cook, 1999, p. 187)

But not even this fundamental form of definition seems to placate all applied linguists; though few, there are some writers who, in opposition to this, share the view that "it is possible but difficult for an adult second language learner to become a native speaker of the target language" (Davis 1991, p. 3), and who think that "mobility between the two groups [N-NN] is possible but rare" (Árva & Medgyes, 2000). Nevertheless, most linguists would agree with Cook when he claims that "adults could never become native speakers without being reborn" (1999, p. 187) and with Kramsch (1997) when she claims that "whereas students can become competent in a new language, they can never become native speakers of it" (p. 359).

In relation to the English language, and as we have seen in the preceding sections, still further factors come into play when considering that a given speaker is

native. The concept of 'nativeness' (and of 'non-nativeness') becomes even more difficult to define in light of the idiosyncrasies of the state and status of the English language in the world, and a thorough definition of 'native speaker of English' should bear in mind not only linguistic and socio-linguistic considerations, such as the ones referred to above, but also those of a socio-political character - that is, it should take into account the observations made in section 2.1.

Traditional applied-linguistic paradigms establish that native speakers of English are mainly those who inhabit the inner circle, whilst those in the outer and expanding circle have traditionally been considered non-native speakers of the language. Additionally, non-natives living in the outer circle have usually been considered 'speakers of English as a second language' (ESL), those living in the expanding circle being called 'speakers of English as a foreign language' (EFL).

This division of the speakers of English into two distinct groups (native and non-native) is still often made, both in linguistics and in the world of language teaching. However, since the 1980's, the division has been deemed problematic and has been much questioned. In this sense, and with a view to reaching a clearer understanding of the issue, we will now review those authors and researchers in favour of maintaining such a distinction, as well as those who are critical of the resulting dichotomy.

A. Authors Accepting the Native/ Non-Native Distinction

As we have previously mentioned, Chomsky was one of the first linguists to use the term 'native'. In his view, native speakers play a key role as they are the ideal informants on a given language and are therefore crucial in the study of linguistics,

which relies heavily on native intuitions. As Canagarajah says, "[Chomsky's] concepts lie at the heart of the discourse that promote the superiority of the native speaker teacher" (1999, p. 78).

Somewhat later, in 1985, Quirk assessed the concept of the native speaker with respect to language varieties, whilst reviewing the controversy around the concepts of 'standards' and then arguing in favour of Standard English. Quirk claims (p. 6) that the non-native speaker of English uses the language for a "relatively narrow range of purposes" and that the English standard *provided by the native speakers* is basically the sort of language the non-native learner needs to be exposed to and to learn (see section 2.1.2).

Davies, in *The Native Speaker in Applied Linguistics* (1991), aims to establish a thorough definition of the term 'native speaker'. He claims that "the fundamental opposition [between Ns-NNs] is one of power" (p. 151), confidence and identity, and concludes by saying that the native speaker "is a myth but a useful myth" (p. 167); a few years later, however, he admits that "[the distinction] is useless as a measure" (1995, p. 157).

Medgyes, in *The Non-native Teacher* (1999), examines both groups of speakers, especially from the perspective of the ELT profession, and suggests that the terms native and non-native speaker be maintained, "if only for the sake of convenience" (p. 11), although he is aware of the controversy the terms involve and also recognises that they are "fugitive concepts" (p. 11). Whilst analysing and comparing the concepts from the view of the ESL/EFL teaching world, Medgyes does not really take a socio-historical view of the subject.

Kramsch and Lam (1999) refer to the issue in reference to the written text and, while taking for granted that a distinction between native and non-native speakers exists, they make it clear that, for them, non-native users of the language are using a language that belongs to its native speakers.

Gill and Rebrova (2001) also highlight what they believe to be a number of differences between native and non-native teachers in the areas of culture, language and teaching, and although they revise what authors such as Medgyes have said on this question, they do not provide us with any evidence for their beliefs.

B. Authors Questioning the Native/ Non-Native Distinction

Currently, both the term 'native' as well as the 'native/non-native' dichotomy are being vigorously questioned by most linguists and researchers. On the one hand, as we have just outlined, even *some* of those authors who would like to maintain the term 'native' claim that, although the boundary exists, it can nevertheless be overcome (Davis, 1991). On the other hand, however, the very notion of 'nativeness' has been challenged, most criticisms being based on sociolinguistic grounds -with some of the critics taking into consideration the effects of the division in LT- as the following outline [in order of publication] reflects.

As early as 1985, Kachru talks about the "diffusion" and "acculturation" of the English language, claiming that "the dichotomy of its *native* and *non-native* users seems to have become irrelevant" (p. 29) in this context. Kachru defends the use of the term 'Englishes' because "this concept emphasizes 'We-ness', and not the dichotomy

between *us* and *them* [the native and non-native users]" (emphasis in the original) (1992, p. 2).

Robert Phillipson, in *Linguistic Imperialism* (1992), talks - as does Kachru - about the notion of the 'native speaker' from a socio-political point of view, also in relation to the English language. He claims that the term has connotations of both power and status, since it is associated with the powerful and rich countries from which the language expanded and not with those places where it is spoken as a second or foreign language. He dedicates an entire chapter of his book to the ELT profession and, within this chapter, gives over a whole section to breaking down the tenet which maintains that "the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker" (pp. 193-199). Phillipson claims that this "tenet has no scientific validity" since it "dates from a time when language teaching was undistinguishable from culture teaching [and] is ludicrous as soon as one starts identifying the good qualities of a teacher of English" (p. 195). He calls it "the native speaker fallacy" observing that "it is highly likely that [this] fallacy has served the interests of the Centre" (p. 199).

Nayar (1994) states that the contemporary use of English in a global context can be interpreted in either of two ways: first, in terms of the native non-native dichotomy; second, as a continuum. Along with Kachru and Phillipson, he favours the Continuum[6] model that prefers to refer to the English varieties spoken around the world as 'new Englishes', and therefore claims that "the native-nonnative concept becomes irrelevant here, as everyone is a native speaker of his particular variety of English (…)" (p. 2).

[6] The continuum model "cedes historical and lectal primacy to the kinds of English spoken in certain regions of the world, but treats these as the core varieties of the language from which peripheral variants spiral out in a continuum" (p.2).

Rampton (1996) expresses his dissatisfaction with the term 'native speaker' and 'mother tongue'. He claims that people belong to many different groups and that "membership [to one given group] changes over time and so does language" (p. 18). He also points out that the concept 'native speaker' is based on biological factors and that social factors play an equally important role, and must therefore be kept in mind. Rampton suggests using the term 'expertise' rather than 'nativeness', and gives the following reasons for this suggestion:

> 1. Although they often do, experts do not *have* to feel close to what they know a lot about. Expertise is different from identification.
> 2. Expertise is learnt, not fixed or innate.
> 3. Expertise is relative. One person's expert is another person's fool.
> 4. Expertise is partial. People can be expert in several fields, but they are never omniscient.
> 5. To achieve expertise, one goes through processes of certification, in which one is judged by other people. Their standards of assessment can be reviewed and disputed. There is also a healthy tradition of challenging 'experts'.
>
> (Rampton, 1996, p. 19).

Furthermore, he suggests the term 'language loyalty', in order to account for the fact that a language is also "a symbol of social group identification" (p. 19). He deems these terms as useful in accounting for the bond between speaker and language rather than

using terms such as native speaker and mother tongue, which rely too heavily on what he calls "biological factors" (p. 18) at the expense of sociological ones.

Leung, Harris and Rampton (1997) question the pertinence of the notion 'native speaker' in the world of English as a second language[7] and claim that it is necessary to displace the notion of the native speaker and to take into consideration the students' own identities and expertise in order for TESOL pedagogy to develop.

Braine (1999), puts forward the opinions of a number of fellow non-native teachers of English as a Second or Foreign Language[8] who decided against the use of the label "non-native speaker" and suggested the following terms in its place:

- second language speaking professionals
- English teachers speaking other languages
- non-native speakers of English in TESOL
- non-native professionals in TESOL
- non-native teachers of English
- non-native English speaking professional
- second language teaching professional
- non-native English teachers

(Braine, 1999, p. xvii)

Liu (1999) agrees with Kachru and Nelson (1996) in that the term native speaker "must now be called into serious question" (Liu, 1999, p. 86) but, somewhat

[7] Although their article refers to TESOL issues specifically in England, we consider some of the questions they raise to be of relevance to a broader ESL/EFL context.
[8] Brain formed a group of non-native educators within the TESOL organisation in the late 90's and received these replies after asking the future members for an alternative to the term 'non-native' (p. xvii).

confusingly, also observes that differences between native and non-native speakers of English *do* exist and that "NSs and NNSs of English *differ*" (p. 86, emphasis added). He affirms that "identifying an individual as an NS or an NNS of English is a difficult if not impossible task" (p. 91) and studies different areas that seem to influence the labelling: order of language acquisition, competence, cultural affiliation, social identity, contexts in which an individual is exposed to languages, etc. Finally, he observes that the terms native speaker and non-native speaker "are simplistic and reductionist" (p. 101).

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) study the native speaker construct from its theoretical background and propose empowering the non-native speaker and language teacher. These authors argue against the native/non-native dichotomy in the English teaching world and suggest using the phrase 'international English professional'.

Vivian Cook, in "Going Beyond the Native Speaker in Language Teaching" (1999), claims that "the prominence of the native speaker in language teaching has obscured the distinctive nature of the successful L2 user and [has] created an unattainable goal for L2 learners" (p. 185). Cook claims that the ultimate aim when learning a language should not be that of reaching native-speaker ability, since, as a goal, this would be highly unrealistic, if possible at all. He claims that, in the world of language teaching, the term "L2 user" should be preferred.

Canagarajah, a Sri Lankan linguist, in an article entitled "Interrogating the Native Speaker Fallacy" (1999), questions the label "native speaker" and claims that there is the need for new terminology to provide testimony to the intricate linguistic competence of English speakers in post-colonial environments. Following Kachru's division of speakers into the three circles (see above), he suggests using the labels "Centre speakers of English" and "Periphery speakers of English". In relation to the

teaching of English as a second or foreign language, he points out that the concept "native-speaker teacher" may not have any linguistic or pedagogical validity but nevertheless has connotations of a political and economic nature that favour the communities in the inner circle.

C. Native or Non-native: Whose Decision and What Purposes Does this Serve?

As we have observed in the sections above, the distinction between native and non-native speakers of a language, particularly for English, is power-driven and has implications that far exceed the field of sociolinguistics. But who decides on defining a given speaker of a language as native or non-native, and for what purposes? This question has been raised by a number of authors, as we will now review.

Davies (1991) believes that "the native speaker boundary is (…) one as much created by non-native speakers as by native speakers themselves" (p. 8). Additionally, he points to evidence suggesting that, for both groups, it is difficult in the extreme to identify the group pertinence of certain non-native speakers when these latter have attained a high level of proficiency.

Kramsch (1997) believes that membership of the native-speaker group is not only something acquired through birth or education. Instead, she suggests that the group responsible for creating the native/non-native distinction is the entity that decides to accept someone as a native speaker, or not.[9]

[9] The author of this dissertation has sometimes been assumed to be a native speaker of English in the United States (in spite of her considerable accent!), while this has never happened to her in the U.K. Although merely anecdotic evidence, this would seem to indicate that, in certain contexts, the speech community also decides.

Liu (1999) refers to "the labelling controversy" (p. 91) and wonders "who is doing the labelling and for what purposes?". He claims that being labelled a native speaker can sometimes be advantageous, but also that, on other occasions, whatever advantage accorded is applicable to non-natives.

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) carry out a study to prove that "nonnativeness constitutes a non-elective socially constructed identity rather than a linguistic category" (p. 100) and claim that international speakers of English are labelled as native or non-native, depending on factors that cannot be contemplated within a linguistic definition of the terms, such as *a priori* expected physical and phonetic conceptions of native speakers.

In short, and while most researchers agree that labelling is undertaken not only on the basis of linguistic but also of social factors, a wide body of research is not yet available on who is actually carrying out the labelling. We would suggest (in accordance with Davies, 1991) that it is done both by native and non-native speakers of the language, individually and within a speech community.[10] Additionally, as will be seen throughout this dissertation, labelling is not only carried out by experts or linguists but also by students of second and foreign languages and by people in high-profile professional organisations such as publishing companies, the British Council or TESOL.

As regards the purposes that may currently exist for labelling, these are multi-faceted but are probably money and power-driven, and, although we have tried to pinpoint some of the economic and political reasons above and also in section 2.1.2, we believe that this issue deserves an exclusive analysis that would go well beyond the limits of our discussion.

[10] For more information on the concept of 'speech community', see Kachru (1992).

D. Consequences of the Division in the TESOL World: Hiring Policies and Publications

Whether or not linguists and researchers agree with the terms and the dichotomy, the practical reality is that in the field of ELT, the division[11] seems to have survived[12] and it implies a range of different consequences. We will try to analyse two fundamental consequences in this section:

Consequences for Hiring Policies

The most striking and problematic of these are aspects related to hiring policies. In spite of TESOL's statement in 1991 (see Appendix 1),[13] expressing the organisation's concern for and non-acceptance of hiring policies that are discriminatory towards NN professionals, and despite the 'TESOL Anti-Discrimination Policy Statement'[14] (2002), the non-native professional in the world of ELT is usually somewhat of an underdog, as many linguists and researchers have observed and regretted. Canagarajah (1999), for instance, affirms that the educational system is absurd because it "prepares [NNs] for a profession for which it disqualifies [them] at the same time" (p. 77) and claims that "there is a double whammy here: not only do Center

[11] Whether it is called 'native versus non-native' or 'central versus peripheral speakers of English', or by using other terms.
[12] This might be said to be 'present' once a large number of articles and books have been published on the issue.
[13] First published in *TESOL Matters*, 1992.
[14] It reads: "TESOL is opposed to discrimination which affects the 'employment and professional lives of the TESOL membership' (…) on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, language background, disability (…)".

institutions make money on training periphery teachers, they eventually exclude them from these professions in order to monopolize the jobs" (p. 84).

Medgyes (1999) studies the topic under the heading "why do principals reject non-natives?" (p. 68). He claims that he knows many language schools that choose to hire native English speakers probably only because they are more attractive to the customers (students) and are therefore better for business. On the other hand, Medgyes also notices that the hiring practices in the UK and the United States -in both of which countries English is studied as a second language by immigrant communities- are now changing, and teachers who were originally from the outer or expanding circle are also being hired.

Phillipson (1996), in his article "The native speakers' burden", claims that NESTs should not be, *ipso facto*, considered to be better qualified than non-native teachers, and says that the virtues usually attached to NESTs (such as knowledge of idiomatic expressions, fluent spoken language, etc.) can be attained by non-NESTs through training. He also points out, in accordance with Quirk, that "the untrained or unqualified native speaker is in fact potentially a menace because of ignorance of the structure of the mother tongue" (p. 26) but nevertheless admits that the ideal of a native teacher still remains central to the ELT world.

Grutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) claim that the native/non-native dichotomy forces language users to be on one or other side of the divide, and that this influences their professional opportunities.[15] Liu's study (1999) showed that teachers are concerned with the on-going dichotomy affecting hiring policies in the EL job market,

[15] The authors make this claim in reference to any professional field, not only the ELT world.

since, he claims, "being a nonnative-English-speaking TESOL professional seems less desirable than being a native-English-speaking TESOL professional" (p. 98).

Lung (1999), a Cantonese teacher working in Hong Kong, complains that the government there hires hundreds of native speakers to work in secondary schools and that their pay is twice that of the average for their non-native colleagues'.

That is, what we know so far about hiring practices is by means of informal interviews, opinions given by practitioners or through anecdote. However, this would all seem to indicate that the N-NN division actually affects employment policies, although it probably does so in different ways in different parts of the world.[16] It seems to us to depend on whether the language (in our case, English) is being taught in a country of the inner, outer or expanding circle. We would suggest that there is need for *empirical* research in both the following ambits:

a. those countries where English is learnt as a second language[17] either by the immigrant populations (i.e., in the United States or the U.K.) or in the countries of the outer circle (India, etc.).
b. those countries where English is learnt as a foreign language

in order to obtain reliable information on discriminatory behaviour[18] in hiring policies, in the various teaching contexts (primary through to tertiary education, state and private

[16] Braine (1999) claims that "this issue [discrimination in employment] is rarely mentioned in the popular literature in ELT" (p. xvi).
[17] Braine (1999) affirms that "a significant number of native speakers in ELT do not support the employment of NNSs to teach English in *ESL* contexts" (p. xvi, emphasis added).
[18] When we suggested, at the end of a talk given at TESOL, that the N-NN dichotomy may give rise to discriminatory policies, and gave some anecdotal examples, an NT from the public (working within the state sector) claimed that she had also suffered discriminatory policies in Spain, so it is very possible that discrimination is a two-edged sword.

systems, etc.). In an electronic forum devoted to employment issues in ESL (TESL-JB) it can be seen that many of the participants' contributions concern the N-NN dichotomy. The dichotomy is also reflected in advertisements offering teaching jobs to *native* speakers only.[19]

Consequences for Publications

As with hiring practices, non-native speakers of English seem to suffer from discrimination in the publishing world, whether or not this is in the ELT business.

Anecdotally, a colleague who manages a translation service in Barcelona has told me that on a number of occasions, English language scientific publications (usually based in the UK or USA) have returned manuscripts that contain no linguistic errors with the comment "Revise English: Please use a native English translator". This is irritating to the translation service as they have already thoroughly revised the grammar, orthography and syntax of the text, and is irritating to the authors whose text is rejected either on the spurious grounds of their language not attaining a 'native-like' rhetoric, or (still more frustratingly) because the publishers seem actively prejudiced against publishing articles from "non-native" contributors, perhaps the only evidence of which is their surname. Additionally, and as Nayar (1994) correctly says, while if a native speaker makes linguistic mistakes these are viewed by the native reader as "mistakes of performance", non-native writers who err have their errors interpreted as failures of competence.[20]

[19] See Canagarajah (1999, p. 82).

[20] In accordance with the anecdotal evidence from the translation service, Nayar (1994) also reports that "in an experiment that [he] conducted some time ago, [he] found that many instances of stylistic and idiomatic oddities that [he] had deliberately introduced in a piece of writing were noted and corrected by

In the world of English language teaching, although there are at least 4 NNS to every NS,[21] and that non-native ELTs are "the overwhelming majority" (Árva & Medgyes, 2000, p. 356), most of the articles, books and other materials are written by NSs[22] and published in either the U.K. or the U.S. Sandra McKay, former editor of *TESOL Quarterly*, declared in an interview[23] that only between 15 and 20 per cent of the submissions to that journal were from NNSs and she admitted that -at the time the interview took place, in 1999- there were no NNSs on the TESOL editorial board.

Braine (1999) talks about teachers in third-world countries and says that "the research or publications records of these individuals, a crucial factor in the job market, may not be as substantial or impressive as of those born in Center countries" (p. 15) and Brutt-Griffler & Samimy (1999) suggest that "it is high time non-native teachers began getting more involved in linguistic research and publications" (p. 426). It is our view that there is the need to raise NNT consciousness about their role in the profession and to empower them so that they do not feel inferior to their N counterparts, thus enabling them to contribute their proportional share to the ELT world, either through publications, textbooks, talks, conferences or other means.

The ostracism within their profession that many NN teachers have felt, and continue to feel, led a number of non-native professionals in English teaching to form a 'special interest group' within TESOL, in October 1998, known as the 'NN English speakers in TESOL Caucus'. Clearly, if this sector of the teaching community felt that

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unknown referee readers, but exactly similar errors were untouched when [he] used an Anglo-Saxon-sounding pseudonym!"(paragraph 11).

[21] Braine (1999), p. 1.

[22] It would be useful to see some kind of research with respect to this area. John Flowerdew (1999) is involved in a research project concerned with "the writing and publishing processes of NNS Hong Kong academics" (paragraph 2).

[23] Interview held in 1999 by John Flowerdew and published in the *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*.

its needs were adequately addressed by the existing institutions, such an association would probably never have been necessary.[24]

In this section, we have reviewed the theoretical background of the nativeness issue and have also indicated some of the possible consequences of the N-NN dichotomy. In the following sections, we will evaluate the *experimental* research available on the native/non-native question in the field of English language teaching and draw some generic conclusions to section 2. Subsequent to this, we will then present our own research.

[24] See their website at http://www.unh.edu/nnest/. From March 1999, they have published the *NNEST Newsletter: The newsletter of the nonnative English speakers in TESOL caucus.* Available on the Internet at http://unh.edu/nnest/newsletter.html.

2.2.2. Native and Non-Native: Experimental Research in the Area

Research in the field of native non-native issues within ELT is both recent (from the 90's) and scarce.[1] To date, the experimental research published or otherwise available can be summarised as follows:

McNeill (1994) compared the *performances* of native and non-native teachers of English as a second language in Hong Kong and concluded that native teachers identify vocabulary-problem areas within reading texts better than non-native colleagues.

Amin (1997) studied certain *teachers' perceptions* of what their students felt an ideal teacher of English as a second language was. By means of interviews, she shows that the five teachers interviewed believe that their students' stereotype of an ESL teacher include being a white and native speaker of the language. It is important to emphasise, however, that her study was carried out in Canada and was mainly concerned with questions of race and identity.

Tang (1997) conducted a survey on a training course for teachers in Hong Kong. She asked 47 non-native ESL teachers "about *their perceptions* of the proficiency and competency of native and non-native-speaking teachers of English" (p. 577). She believes that "the degree of the threatened confidence and authority of NNESLTs varies from one country to another" (p. 578).

Liu (1999) carried out a qualitative study, by means of e-mails and face-to-face interviews, to ascertain what certain non-native English-speaking teachers thought of

Notes to section 2.2.2.

[1] Braine (1999) reminds us that "interest in non-native academics and teachers is a fairly recent phenomenon" (p. ix).

the terms native and non-native in the ESL context. The seven participants in his study defined the term non-native English language teacher in different ways. The researcher observed that three of the participants found it hard to adhere to the native non-native dichotomy while the other four did not seem to have problems in defining the terms N and NN and also "felt relatively comfortable associating themselves with a chosen category" (p. 91).

Medgyes (1999) carried out three different surveys in order to study the native non-native dichotomy in teachers' perceptions; he assumes that "NESTs and non-NESTs are two different species" (p. 25) and tries to provide an answer to the following four hypotheses:

> Hypothesis 1: (NESTs and non-NESTs) differ in terms of their language proficiency.
>
> Hypothesis 2: they differ in terms of their teaching behaviour.
>
> Hypothesis 3: the discrepancy in language proficiency accounts for most of the differences found in their teaching behaviour.
>
> Hypothesis 4: they can be equally good teachers in their own terms.
>
> (Medgyes, 1999, p. 25)

The three surveys were conducted in the USA, internationally and in Hungary (respectively) and, by means of questionnaires and interviews, analyse native and non-native EL *teachers' views* on the NEST/ non-NEST issue, including their command of the language and their opinions on who makes a better teacher and why.[2]

[2] Some of his findings are compared to ours in Section 5.

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) present a study that "aimed at a reexamination of the question of NNESTs at the theoretical level and provided a practical approach to the empowerment of the NNEST" (p. 429). Their thorough study analyses how non-native EL teachers (in a pilot graduate seminar in the U.S.) *perceive themselves* and fellow native teachers, and is a qualitative analysis based on the seminar itself and on interviews (video recorded), group discussions, field notes, journals written by the participant teachers, etc. They give an account of the participants' individual comments on the issue and conclude that there is the need "to combat this [N-NN] dichotomizing and disempowering discursive practice" (p. 428).

Árva and Medgyes (2000) studied and compared the *teaching behaviour* of native and non-native teachers of English in secondary grammar schools in Hungary.[3] They video-recorded 10 lessons and held follow-up interviews with the teachers involved. The researchers perceived differences in competence, knowledge of grammar, and in other aspects of the teachers' professional behaviour such as 'teaching styles'.

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) examine the *difficulty of classifying* a speaker as a native or a non-native speaker of English through a case study of four international speakers of English, two of them having studied English as a foreign language and the other two as a second language. They conclude that "the factors determining whether the given international speaker of English is a 'native' or 'non-native' speaker are not primarily linguistic but [rather, are] *socially* constructed" (p. 102, emphasis in the original) and claim that the division of speakers into the two groups is inconsistent with the role of English as an international language.

[3] We would tentatively suggest that the validity of these comparisons is diminished when the context in which the teaching took place is borne in mind: NNESTs were assigned conversation classes only while NESTs did 'the rest'.

By means of questionnaires in November 2001,[4] Lasagabaster and Sierra, studied the *perceptions of students* studying at the faculties of Philology and Translation (in the University of the Basque Country) with respect to native and non-native teachers of languages. Amongst other findings, they conclude that most respondents would prefer to have a native speaker teacher at different educational levels.[5]

Shi (2001), through a quantitative study of data, studies possible differences between N and NN FLTs as regards *marking criteria* applicable to writing carried out by Chinese university students of English, and concludes that, when assessing written production, NEFLTs gave more importance than their NN fellow teachers to written content and language while Chinese EFLTs were more critical (than the NTs) with "the organisation and length of the essays" (p. 303).

These, then, are the empirical studies we have been able to find and which research a variety of issues concerning the native non-native paradigm. In summary, we can say that most of this research aims at obtaining information on:

(a) the actual differences between native and non-native English teachers as regards both the knowledge they have of the language they teach and their performance as professionals;
(b) the EL teachers' opinions or perceptions -both in the case of English taught as a second language and in the world of English as a foreign language- of the terms 'native'/'non-native' and of the differences between N and NN ELTs.

[4] Unpublished paper presented at the *Non-native Speaking Teachers in Foreign Language Teaching* conference, held at the *Universitat de Lleida*.
[5] Some of their findings are compared to ours in Section 5.

Little work has been carried out to date on students' perceptions or beliefs.[6] The exceptions to this are Lasagabaster & Sierra (2001), who study students' opinions in the world of English as a foreign language, and Amin (1997), who studies students' perceptions, though only through the opinions of "five visible minority female teachers" (p. 580) in a country where English is taught as a second language.

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[6] Professor Medgyes (private conversations and e-mails) is now carrying out a similar study to the one we will present here. As we have corresponded on this topic, and discussed the issue at EFL conferences, he has been sent the questionnaire in this dissertation along with the results.

2.3. Conclusions to Section Two

We would like to conclude the information that we have presented in section 2 with the following statements, which are interconnected, reflecting our thoughts on the issues dealt with so far. This is not intended to be in any a sense an overall summary, but simply a 'collection-point' for the questions that have now been raised - directly or indirectly.

- The English language has gone from being a more or less local language of communication to a language used by many people for whom it is not their mother tongue and who have no desire that it should be.

- That is, the English language (at least in our context)[1] needs to be gradually disconnected from the factors to which it was initially strongly linked, and we need to understand and study it within the current context of communication between people and cultures of wide diversity.

- In such a context, to talk of natives or non-natives becomes almost irresponsible; the aim of any speaker or learner cannot realistically be that of speaking 'like a native' but should rather be that of comprehending and being comprehended by as large a number of people around the world as possible, whether for academic or professional motives, or whether simply for personal interest.

Notes to section 2.3.

[1] Where English is taught and used as a foreign language.

- Attempts are being made to preserve and foster the cultural characteristics of minorities, in a globalising world of sweeping change; in this sense, the teaching of English language - or of any other 'massive' language - must be undertaken within a framework of respect towards other cultures and ways of understanding the world, most particularly by respecting and taking into consideration the culture of the students.

- In this context, the *exclusive* use of English in ELT - since is not based on pedagogical or psycholinguistic rationalizations[2] - has to be challenged. This exclusivity has been widely accepted for many years, especially when the NELT was perceived as the model.[3] Now, however, the students' first language is increasingly seen as "a useful element in creating authentic L2 users" (Cook, 2001, p. 402).[4]

- Particularly in countries where English is used as a language for global communication, we need to reflect on what kind of communicative competence we want L2 learners to acquire or, in Kachru's terms (1985, p. 28) what type of "competence [is required] within which context or situation". The communicative approach, which has held sway in ELT since the 1980's, needs to take context into account; this context can *no longer be* the limited world of

[2] See Pennycook (1998), pp. 157-8.
[3] Medgyes (1999) believes that "the only people who could possible gain from this dogma [no L1 in class] are those unqualified native speakers of English who regard ELT as a casual career" (p. 63). It is worth pointing out, however, that other groups anxious to preserve their position within this dichotomy are also benefited by the maintenance of the *status quo*.
[4] Cook (2001) affirms that "the systematic use of the first language (L1) in the classroom" has existed "for over 100 years" (p. 403) and adds that "the L1 plays an integral role in L2 learning as well as in L2 use" (p. 408).

the native-speaker, but must be one that, though certainly more complex, has greater global significance. Therefore, concepts such as 'authentic texts' and 'authentic conversations' take on a whole new meaning in the context of EIL, where the NS is not the central figure. Clearly, we need to abandon the idea of the N speaker as the *only* valid source of input, with all the implications this would then have on the ELT world.[5]

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[5] See Seidlhofer (1999, pp.237-8) and also section 7 in this dissertation.

3

Research Questions[1]

> "Students may prefer the fallible nonnative-speaker teacher who presents a more achievable model"
>
> (Cook, 1999, p. 200).

Cook's comment clearly indicates some of the grounds on which a defence of the non-native model might be made. However, it is also the case that students themselves, far from preferring the 'fallible' NNT, may well show active signs of dissatisfaction with such a teacher. This observation, which forms the initial background to my research question, derives from my own experience as a teacher of English for over 10 years (specifically, as a non-native EFL teacher of adults). During these years, I have been witness to a number of circumstances, which are summarised here, and which have led me to take an interest in the N-NN issue:

1. When enrolling on a language course, students asking the administrative office if the teacher is native.[2]

2. Many teaching post advertisements[3] offering work only to *native* teachers and Directors of Studies.[4]

Notes to section 3

[1] Certain aspects of this study (viz., the need to ascertain students' perceptions rather than to take them for granted) were presented at the at the international *Conference on Non-native Speaking Teachers in Foreign Language Teaching* at the *Universitat de Lleida*, in November 2001.

[2] Adult students of English as a foreign language enrolling at a course in a University language centre in Barcelona.

[3] Liu (1999) also says that "many ads request that NSs only apply" (p. 98) and Cook (2000) affirms that "small ads in London papers proclaim 'Qualified native Tutor'" and that the "Alliance Française in London claims 'taught by French nationals'"(p. 331), to cite some examples.

[4] In the author's context, these ads usually come from private language schools (both for young and adult students) located throughout Catalonia. The primary, secondary and university sectors in Spain, *especially*

3. Some students project evident disappointment when seeing me on the first day of class, realising at once (exclusively through physical indications, since their L2 language-competence discrimination powers are often almost non-existent) that their teacher was non-native. In all probability, many of these students would prefer an obviously 'foreign' teacher.[5]

4. In class, students will often question the validity of a non-native teacher's information or their answer to a question. "*Vols dir*?!"[6] is, in my experience, a typical student reaction in such cases. They will note down the information or answer provided, but in an evidently distrusting manner! Other non-native FL teachers have commented similar cases to me, such as the students' asking for a word to be translated from their L1 into English and then giving obvious signals of distrust and disapproval whenever the teacher said something like: "I'll look it up for you and give you the answer tomorrow".[7]

This, then, is the experience-based preoccupation that led me to research the issue of nativeness further. Additionally, and now focussing on the academic ambit of the question, as we have already seen in section 2.2, many studies carried out to date have mainly involved determining the opinions and feelings of EL teachers (or teacher trainees) on the "nativeness" issue, but little has been undertaken so far within the following areas:

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the state ones, do not usually segregate and base their recruitment policies on purely professional grounds.

[5] Zhou (1999) claims that "a native English speaker himself is foreign, new and different and thus interesting in every way to the student" (p. 3) and Árva & Medgyes (2000) observe that "the mere presence of a native acts as a motivating factor" in the FL classroom (p. 361).

[6] "Are you sure?!" in Catalan.

[7] Medgyes (1999b) reports the trick played by two fellow-NNEFLTs at his university: "Year after year, the same well-rehearsed scene is repeated. As Adam is holding a class with a group of freshmen, there is a tentative lock on the door. Putting his head round the door, Frank says: 'I'm so sorry, Adam, but I just can't remember the English for *Kolbászmérgezés*.' 'Botulism,' is the blasé response. 'Wow! This guy knows everything,' the students whisper in awe" (p. 182).

a. Our context, that is, in a European country where English is taught as a foreign language by both native and non-native speaking teachers;
b. Ascertaining EL students' perceptions, opinions and feelings on the issue.

Having reviewed the research related to the question of nativeness in EL teaching, it is apparent that there is still the need to discuss it in detail from the perspective of students' perceptions, and that, whilst some initial work exists in this area,[8] much has yet to be done in order to arrive at a fuller understanding of this aspect of the topic.

On this basis, then, I therefore formulated the following research questions:

1. Do adult students of EFL actually distinguish between native and non-native teachers of foreign languages?[9]
2. If the answer to (1) is affirmative: what are students' perceptions of the professional characteristics of both 'groups' of teachers?
3. If the answer to (1) is affirmative: what are students' preferences?

[8] See the study by Lasagabaster & Sierra, reported on p. 54.
[9] In 1994, for the taught component to the 'Masters in Applied Linguistics and ELT Methodology' (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), I carried out a similar though smaller-scale research for David Block showing that adult students of English *do* in fact make the distinction between NEFLTs and NNEFLTs (unpublished paper).

4

Methodology

4.1. Research Design

As mentioned above, before the research presented in this dissertation, I had carried out some informal exploration of the issue by:

a. reflecting upon facts or events that had taken place around me and which I had been able to observe in my professional ambit;
b. talking with a broad number of colleagues about the issue;
c. carrying out general bibliographical research.[1]

This preliminary and essentially informal research triggered the questions that form the main body of this research, and which we present throughout section 4.3.

Given that the type of research I wanted to carry out involved providing answers to certain preconceived questions and that I was therefore interested on focussing only "on certain aspects of the possible data available" (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989, p. 117), I considered that the best way to collect the main body of data would be by means of a quantitative method.[2] It was not my aim to study individual opinions closely but, rather, to gather a representative amount of data allowing, if possible, to eventually generalise

Notes to section 4

[1] See Sections 2.1. and 2.2. above.
[2] I was of course aware of the "distorting effects of the research setting" of any descriptive method (Tarone, 1982, cited in Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 119).

certain opinions on the issue. On the other hand, and as I did not want other forms of possibly relevant information to escape through limitations in the scope of my analysis, it was decided to also incorporate the means of obtaining certain qualitative data, as we will describe in 4.3.

4.2. Participants

The participants in the study were 105 young adult students of English at a State University language centre,[3] in Barcelona, Spain. They were mainly students reading a variety of degree subjects (biology, maths, political science,…) who were also studying English as a foreign language in the campus language school.

They were all studying the centre's 'level 5' -which means they were at a level of post upper-intermediate or approximately that required for *Cambridge First Certificate* - when the questionnaire was given to them. I chose students who had a relatively high level in a foreign language because I presumed that the higher the level they were studying, the more experience they would probably have had as FL learners, and the more (N and NN) teachers they would have had over their learning careers. The participants were studying in 8 different class-groups (programmed at different days and times) and had taken approximately 20 hours of class by the time the questionnaires were handed out to them, during the first week of November, 2001.

[3] *Servei d'Idiomes Moderns (SIM)*, in the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*.

The participants were studying English with five different teachers, all of them native professionals[4] who, in each case, had been teaching English as a foreign language in Catalonia for at least 10 years.

4.3. Research instruments

(See Appendix 2 for the questionnaire form)

I decided that a questionnaire would be the best means of collecting the data I needed for my study, for the following reasons:

1. It would allow me to ask very specific questions and also to obtain specific answers.
2. It allowed me to have access to a higher number of participants.
3. It was relatively easy to distribute and recollect.
4. It allowed me to limit the scope of the research by means of carefully pre-selecting the questions I wanted to include.
5. It would not take up too much time for the students to answer.[5]
6. It allowed a great number of teachers to be involved.[6]
7. It was a means of collecting data that was not greatly disruptive of the participant teachers' class plans.[7]

[4] Two of the teachers were Australian, two British and one North-American.
[5] It was mainly for this reason that I decided to write it in Catalan (the students' L1); in their own language, it would take less time to be filled out, the items would probably be understood easier and the 'comments' section at the end could also be written in any language they felt comfortable with (Catalan or Spanish). On the other hand, I decided it should not contain more than 25 items, in order to ensure an acceptable length.
[6] As indicated, five teachers were involved; in fact, these were all the teachers giving a level-5 course during the 2001-02 academic year at this language centre.
[7] See point 4.4.

8. It allowed me to include an open-ended item as a means of also obtaining certain qualitative data.

I decided on using a set of closed questions for the questionnaire, their advantage being that "they can be pre-coded and their responses can easily be put on a computer" and also that "they are less time consuming for the respondent to complete" (both citations, Newell, 1993, p. 101). As regards the quality of the questions, I tried to make them as clear and unambiguous as possible and avoided leading and double-barrelled forms.[8] The questions themselves were essentially based on those derived from previous experimental research -especially that carried out by Medgyes[9]- and on my own brainstorming after the 'informal exploration' referred to above. Although I agree with Newell's statement that "one of the most difficult aspects of producing questions" is "hav[ing] the same frame of reference as those under study" (1993, p. 104), in this particular case, this was not a problem since, on the one hand, I have myself been a student of foreign languages since a very early age and, on the other, through my teaching and teaching-administration work I am in daily contact with adult FL students.

With reference to the instructions, I decided to include an initial paragraph that would give all the respondents the same basic information (for example, that it was an anonymous questionnaire and that it was part of a research project). It was also stated in written form that subjects would eventually be provided with the 'results' from their

[8] For example: "Do you agree that native teachers are better for teaching grammar?" (leading) and "Have you ever had a non-native teacher and been satisfied with the result of his/her teaching?" (double-barrelled).
[9] See point 2.2.2 above.

teachers, should they be interested in having them. I included a note of thanks for their collaboration.[10]

We now justify the inclusion of each of the items making up the questionnaire. The questionnaire itself is divided in three parts or blocks, which I will refer to as A, B and C.

Part A. This initial part is made up of six items that research the student's background.

Item 1: *You are male/female*

This is the only item in the questionnaire asking an "attribute question" (Newell, 1999, p. 99). Although this information will not be of great use for this particular study, it was considered adequate to include it with a view to further and wider research.

Item 2: *Did you study English at secondary school?*

The Catalan education system allows students to choose the foreign language they wish to study at secondary level,[11] although many schools offer only English.

Item 3: *How many* ***non-native*** *language teachers have you had?* (emphasis in the original).

With this item, I intended, on the one hand, to focus participants' attention on the term non-native and, on the other, to find out how many non-native teachers (presumably Catalan or Spanish) they had had before. It was decided not to provide a

[10] This information was also given to them in spoken form when handing out the questionnaires (see section 4.4).
[11] Italian, German, French or English.

definition of the term 'native'; since I intended to be present at the moment of handing out the questionnaires, I considered that participants could ask for an explanation, should the terms N/NN not be clear to any of them.[12] The information on how many NNTs participants had previously had would be useful in helping to interpret whether their beliefs (in part B) were based only on general opinions or whether there was also an important part of 'actual experience'; evidently, the more teachers they had had, the more first-hand information they would therefore bring to the issue.

The possible answers ranged from 'none' (I had no guarantee that all the respondents would have had non-native language teachers before) to 'three or more'.

Item 4: *Where did you study with these non-native teachers?*

I believe that the environment in which study takes place may affect teaching itself, as well as the classroom and learning atmosphere. I wanted to find out whether participants had had non-native teachers of languages at secondary school only [13] or also when having private lessons or at a language centre.[14] I included the option 'others' and asked respondents to specify, since I assumed that some of them might, for instance, have studied languages in a different context abroad.

Item 5: *How many **native** teachers have you had?*

As in item 3, this information would be useful for interpreting the degree to which participants' beliefs could be based on their own experience. Since all the

[12] On the other hand, we have the precedent of previous experimental research in the area (outlined in Section 2.2.2, above), which also opted not to give a definition.
[13] In the Catalan state schools, most teachers (including FLTs) are usually from Catalonia, probably due both to the selection process and other requirements.
[14] In Catalonia, there is strong tradition of extra-curricular study of foreign languages in the afternoons or evenings, for a few hours every week (typically 2-4 hours), both for children and adults.

respondents were studying with a native teacher of English at the time of the questionnaire, I did not include 'none' as a possible answer (as I had done for item 3).

Item 6: *Where did you study with these native teachers?*

As stated for item 4, I think that the place where the teaching occurs conditions aspects such as number of students per class, etc.

Part B. The second section of the questionnaire is made up of 16 items -from item 7 to item 22.

In our attempt to study students' *stated* beliefs, the respondents were asked to give their opinions on a variety of issues "bearing in mind [their] personal experience as a language learner" and were asked to choose between three options: 'native', 'non-native' or 'the same'.[15] This third option would probably mean a variety of things, depending -amongst other factors- on what the item was asking, as I will try to ascertain when I show the results. Although I wanted the respondents to try and take a stand on the issue, it was provided because I nevertheless agree with the fact that closed questions should "always include an 'other' category" (Newell, 1993, p. 107).

Closed questions, through being tightly structured, have the disadvantage of "forc[ing] the respondent to choose between the answers provided" (Newell, 1993, p. 102) and it was mainly for this reason that I decided to include a third section in the

[15] We first thought about not including an option indicating 'the same' (or similar), since we wanted students to take a stand or, otherwise, to leave the item blank; we have the precedent of Medgyes's third survey (1999), which made his respondents (216 N and NN teachers from 16 different countries) choose between a N or NN teacher in the item "who do you think is more successful in TEFL?" and he did not include a third option.

survey for comments and suggestions (see below), in an attempt to compensate for this disadvantage, within the natural limitations of a questionnaire.

Item 7: *(Which teacher do you think) uses more Catalan or Spanish in the FL class?*

The issue of the use of the students' first language in the FL class has been the object of controversy for many years, as mentioned in section 2.3. Although the question of whether the L1 is a 'good' or 'bad' tool in the FL class is not discussed in detail in this dissertation, it was nevertheless thought to be of interest to know the participants' views.

Item 8: (*Which teacher do you think) corrects the speaking errors better?*

At higher levels especially, speaking is a skill that has considerable relevance in the centre where the study was carried out -possibly due to its general favouring of the communicative approach. It was thought that this item could provide insight to students' views on the effectiveness of error correction that they receive from their native or non-native teachers.[16]

Item 9: *(Which teacher do you think) corrects the written errors better?*

As with item 8, it was not my interest in this survey to determine the manner in which (or whether at all) students prefer to be corrected - the aim was rather to ascertain their opinion on whether N or NN teachers differ with respect to the effectiveness of correction given.

[16] Although what they understood by 'better' was not within our scope, we could assume that it may mean a variety of things (e.g., that correction takes place at the end of an utterance or at the end of the class; or that it is in written or in oral form, etc.).

Item 10: *(Which teacher do you think) explains the vocabulary better?*

This item attempted to determine whether students perceived differences in the effectiveness of vocabulary explanation, not simply the quantity of vocabulary known or taught. This area of language is also of interest as it is perceived by NNESTs as the most difficult linguistic ingredient that they need to master.[17]

Item 11: *(Which teacher do you think) promotes more interaction in class?*

Probably in relation to the setting where Ss have had N or NN teachers (items 4 and 6), this item is aimed at finding out whether Ss believe that one particular group of teachers is better at promoting interactive classes; although I do not want to take for granted the fact that more interaction is necessarily better for learning to take place,[18] it nevertheless may be true that students would relate greater interaction with active lessons and class participation, and therefore probably understand it as a positive value. I believe that items 11 and 13 are connected, since students probably perceive interaction in the FL class as being in opposition with boredom.

Item 12: *(Which teacher do you think) presents the grammar better?*

Traditionally, it has been thought that NNESTs focus more on grammar[19] in their classes,[20] but my question was aimed at finding out about the students' impression

[17] See Medgyes' second survey in which he asked NNESTs "to label their problem areas" (1999, p. 31).
[18] This would require us to review the input-output hypotheses.
[19] The concept of *grammar* is not in itself easy to define and is usually controversial; nevertheless, and in terms of the way grammar is presented and studied at the SIM and many other FL centres, I assumed that the students would understand something along the lines of the combination of 'structures' or 'rules'.
[20] See, for example, Medgyes (1999, p. 56).

on *the way* grammar is presented (well or not-so-well) rather than on its quantity, since quantity may well be determined by the learners' level.

Item 13: *(Which teacher do you think) makes the class more entertaining or amusing?*

This item, as with item 11, is also probably related to the context in which the lessons take place (items 4 and 6); in my experience, teachers who are confronted with a class of 30 teenagers in a secondary setting tend to place greater trust in more traditional teaching methods (such as in-class use of workbooks, dictations, self-study, etc.) in order to maintain a certain *peace* in the classroom, and to avoid problems of discipline. On the other hand, in smaller classes -for instance, in language centres- there is probably greater scope and more physical room for games and other resources, all of which may make the students feel that the class is both more interactive and amusing.

However, it may also be the case that some students confuse a teacher's entertaining or amusing *character* with that same teacher's ability to give an entertaining or amusing class (see footnote 5 in section 3).

Items 14, 15 and 16: *(Which teacher do you think) is better for low/ intermediate/ advanced levels?*

This is the key issue; it unequivocally asks the students about their preferences. Participants were asked directly to make a choice between a N or a NN teacher for the three 'levels' (or, of course, to choose the option 'the same' or leave the item blank if they felt that they were not able to decide without further information). It was decided to distinguish between three level ranges because I believed that students would make a distinction depending on the general level of the class being taken.

With respect to the differentiation of levels taught according to whether the teacher is a N or a NN speaker, we have anecdotally observed that, on the one hand, there seems to be a tendency in language schools to allocate NNESTs to lower-level classes and NESTs to those of the higher levels and, on the other hand, that NNESTs themselves tend to prefer teaching lower rather than higher-level courses.[21]

Item 17: *(Which teacher do you think) provides more help when there are doubts and difficulties?*

Items 17, 18 and 20 in our survey can be considered to form part of a larger construct that we could call 'level of professional commitment'. The object of these items was to ascertain if students perceived a distinction between the N-NN groups within this ambit, in addition to the distinctions they might perceive in more evidently 'linguistic' areas.

Item 18: *(Which teacher do you think) gives back corrected homework more quickly?*

I assumed that this item would, in all probability, not depend on the N-NN distinction, and that many respondents would answer 'the same' or leave the item blank if they perceived that the level of commitment shown by a given professional depends not on their native language but on other issues; thus this item aimed at confirming this (or not), as well as attempting to ascertain if broader levels of differentiation being maintained.

[21] Probably due to the perception of these professionals' own English-language competence, in comparison to N counterparts (see Árva & Medgyes, 2000).

Item 19: *(Which teacher do you think) uses the textbook more?*

From my experience, use made of a textbook by an FL teacher may depend on various factors: if the number of students is large or if the students are in any sense 'difficult' (for example, adolescent learners), the textbook may be used to give the class and the syllabus a certain structure; on the other hand, some teachers may decide not to use a textbook because their approach is better aided by the use of other materials; some schools oblige their teachers to use a textbook; etc.[22] In any event, I wanted to determine whether students felt there was any difference, in their opinion, in the *amount* of usage N and NN teachers made of textbooks, as this may be related to their previous learning experience (see items 4 and 6 above).

Item 20: *(Which teacher do you think) seems to prepare the class better?*

I thought that it would be interesting to find out what students perceived of the amount of pre-class preparation (inasmuch as this may be appreciable) carried out by N and NN teachers. The item is related to items 17 and 18, above.

Item 21: *(Which teacher do you think) understands the students' difficulties or inadequacies better?*

This item tests the traditional belief that the NNFLT shows more awareness of learners' difficulties and identifies more closely with them -that is, is more 'empathic'[23]- probably due to having gone through the same experience of learning the L2.

[22] At the *SIM*, where the study was conducted, the teachers themselves decide whether they want to have a course book and, if so, can choose the one that best suits their preferences and/or needs.
[23] See, for instance, Medgyes (1999, pp. 60-2).

Item 22: *(Which teacher do you think) is stricter in class?*

This item may be also related to where the students have had native and non-native language teachers (that is, to items 4 and 6 above) because, and as we suggested in item 13 above, discipline may be an important issue in certain teaching contexts (more or less formal, few or many students in the same class, etc.).

Part C. The third and last part of the questionnaire is a space for comments and suggestions, in which participants could express any concern or ideas they wished the researcher to know, under no limitations of space or time.

4.4. Data Collection and Analysis

When the questionnaire had been designed and was ready, the five (native) teachers who were teaching the highest level were contacted with respect to the most convenient day and time for the researcher to hand out the questionnaire to their students (the only way I could have access to a large number of respondents was by taking up some class time).[24]

The students had not previously been informed that, on that day, they would be asked to answer a questionnaire.[25]

On the day arranged, and in all cases at the very beginning of the class (as this was felt to be the best moment by both the teachers involved and by myself), I went to

[24] See Appendix 3: Collaboration Request Note.
[25] Because the language centre is located in -and belongs to- a university, it is not uncommon to have graduate students observing classes or gathering data by some other means.

each of the eight classes. I introduced myself to the students (an average of 13 per class) and told them that, as part of a research paper, I needed to gather some information by means of questionnaires, and then asked for their help. I thanked them and their teacher in advance for their time and then handed out the questionnaires, while assuring them that it would not take them a long time to complete. Three of the teachers decided to leave the class at that moment while the other two decided to stay and do some work at their desk. While the students were answering the questionnaire, I waited quietly in the classroom. After about ten minutes, all the students handed the questionnaires back to me. None of the participants made any spoken comment on handing in their questionnaire form. Thanking then again for their collaboration, I told them that should they be interested -individually or as a group- in consulting either the results or anything other aspects related to the research, they could contact me within a few weeks.[26]

Once all the data had been gathered, the questionnaires were numbered and checked and the answers were entered onto the SPSS programme, where the variables were then set. The hand-written answers to the last item (qualitative data) were typed into a word document and then translated (see Appendix 4).

[26] They were all enrolled in courses that are of 120 hours' duration, held from October to May. At this point, then, they still had several months' study to complete at the *SIM*.

5

Survey Results

In Appendix 4, we have included the charts with the results to the 22 items in the questionnaire, as well as a transcribed copy of the answers to the last item (students' comments or suggestions), both in their original language (Catalan or Spanish) and translated into English.

5.1. Individual Item Results

We now present the results[1] for each item, individually -within each of the three sections- and provide comment on the results obtained. Where possible, we will also compare the results obtained with findings from other relevant research –particularly that of Medgyes, Lasagabaster & Sierra and Árva & Medgyes-[2] by means of footnotes.

Section A (student's background information)

Item 1: 69 out of 105 respondents were women, which represents 66 percent of participants. In the university language centre where the study was carried out, women students are usually the majority, and we were therefore expecting a figure of this magnitude.

Notes to section 5

[1] When we give percentages, we refer to the 'valid percentage', that is, the percentage excluding those answers 'lost from the system', rounding on the following basis: figures from .1 to .5 are rounded down (i.e. 23.5 will be given as 23); figures from .6 to .9 are rounded up (i.e. 23.6 will be given as 24).
[2] See the summary of experimental research in section 2.2.2.

Item 2: a clear majority of respondents (99) had studied English at secondary school; the other six students had presumably studied French, German or Italian (our questionnaire did not attempt to determine this information), since it is compulsory in the Catalan education system to study one foreign language at secondary level.

Item 3: With respect to the item asking how many NN teachers of language the student had had, we found that the majority (69 percent) had had 'three or more', while only four respondents indicated that they had never previously had an NN teacher. On the other hand, 13 students answered that they had previously had only one NNLT. We can therefore claim that the answers given by these individuals to the items in section 2 of the questionnaire will be based on:

- the experience they had had with *one* N teacher only; or
- general beliefs that they hold, regardless of their actual experiences; or
- both[3]

Obviously, the four students who have never studied with an NNLT will necessarily base their answers on general opinions or beliefs only, rather than on 'first hand' experience.

Item 4: 94 students said that they had studied at secondary level with NN teachers. Of these 94 students, 16 had *also* taken private lessons with an NNT and 23 had *also* studied with NNTs at language centres. Only six students said they had *only* studied with NN outside the compulsory system, in language centres.[4] We were

[3] The same could be said of the 16 respondents who, in item 5, indicate that they had had only one NLT.
[4] The chart in the appendices gives an account only of the number of answers each option received.

expecting a high number of answers in 'secondary education' because of current requirements for teaching posts in the state schooling system in this country. There are four 'lost' items, which are in fact blank answers corresponding to those respondents who, in item 3, said that they had never studied with an NNLT.

Item 5: As far as the number of N teachers the respondents had had, the majority (61 percent) chose the option 'three or more', 24 percent indicated 'two' and 15 percent indicated that they had only had one native teacher of languages - therefore evidently referring to the one they were studying with at the moment of the questionnaire.

Item 6: While all respondents answered that they had studied with NLTs in language schools -in fact they were all studying with an NT at a language school at the time of this study- only 11 students out of 105 answered they had *also* studied with NLTs in secondary education, eight said they had had NTs in private lessons and four students also indicated 'others' and then specified (three of them indicated 'course in England', with one of them indicating 'English camp').

Section B (student's stated beliefs)

In this section, as we have previously explained, the respondents can choose between three possible answers: 'native', 'non-native' or 'the same'. What 'the same' might actually mean could possibly be a variety of things: in principle, it means that both groups (NTs and NNTs) are deemed by the respondent to behave equally, but it is also possible that a given answer might depend on the teacher, on the class group or on

the kind of class. As we will see below, in fact, the content of each item lends a clearer definition to the meaning of 'the same'. I opted for not including an option indicating 'it depends', since -as stated in section 4.3- I was more interested in respondents' attempt to take a stand on the issue.[5] I would like to strongly emphasise that the results obtained in sections B and C do not indicate actual differences observed in the professional behaviour or qualities of N and NNFLTs but, rather, reflect students' stated beliefs or perceptions.[6]

Item 7: 76 percent of the participants believe that the non-native teachers use more Spanish or Catalan (L1) in the class while only 19 percent chose the option 'the same'. Only five students believe that the native teacher uses more L1 in the FL class.[7]

Item 8: To the question 'which teacher (do you think) corrects the speaking errors better', a very high number of students opted for the native option (78 percent) while 20 percent of respondents answered 'the same'. Only one student believed that the NNT corrects the speaking errors better.[8]

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[5] In this light, if "the only real difference among teachers of English or ESL lies in their qualifications, not in their nativity" (Astor, 2000), the respondents will have to opt for the third option or leave these items blank.

[6] In the same way, Medgyes' surveys (1999) research into the teachers' perceptions or *stated* behaviour rather than their *actual* behaviour.

[7] In Árva & Medgyes' (2000) study of the teaching *behaviour* of NESTs and NNESTs in secondary schools in Hungary, NNESTs were found to use "English almost exclusively during their lesson" (p. 366). Medgyes (1999) found that teachers *believe* that NNELTs use more L1 in class and Tang (1997) saw that NNESLTs find the "shared mother tongue [to be] a useful instructional tool in teacher-student interaction" (p. 578).

[8] Lasagabaster & Sierra (2001) saw that 64% of their student-respondents believed that an NFLT is better than an NN for speaking in 'general'. On the other hand, with respect to the T's linguistic competence, Árva & Medgyes (2000) found that the NESTs' "capability of using the language spontaneously and in the most diverse communicative situations" was much higher that their NN counterparts' and Tang (1997) found that *all* the NNESLTs in her study thought that NESLTs were superior [to NN ones] in speaking.

Item 9: While 51 percent of respondents believe that the N teachers correct written errors better, almost the same number of respondents (46 percent) answered 'the same'; only three students opted for the NN option.[9]

Item 10: 41 percent of participants thought that the native teacher explains vocabulary better, while 34 percent opted for 'the same', with 25 percent believing that the NN teacher provides better explanations of vocabulary.[10]

Item 11: A clear majority of students (71 percent) answered 'the same' to the question of who promotes more interaction in class, while 25 percent think that it is the native teacher, and only 4 percent believing it to be the NN.[11]

Item 12: 51 percent of respondents answered 'the same', probably meaning that native and non-native teachers present the grammar 'equally well'. The other answers are quite well divided between those who think that it is the native teacher who presents

[9] With respect to errors, Árva & Medgyes (2000) found that NNTs corrected errors *more* than NTs and Medgyes (1999, p. 60) affirms that "native speakers (…) do not make a fuss about errors unless they hinder communication" and that "in contrast, we non-NESTs are notorious for penalizing overt errors (and grammatical errors in particular)". If we contrast these two studies with our findings, we might therefore conclude that our Ss prefer Ts not to be overly preoccupied with errors if these do not impede communication. Additionally, it could indicate our students' perception that NNTs do not correct errors as well as NTs (in their view) because they penalize errors too much and also focus too much on grammatical issues.

[10] Lasagabaster and Sierra (2001) found that 46% of their participants agreed with the statement that a NST is better for teaching vocabulary; this figure is very close to ours, in spite of the slight difference in respondent group composition (see section 2.2.2). With respect to teachers' *competence* in vocabulary (i.e., not their teaching *ability*), Tang (1997) found that 79% of the NNESLTs in her study believe that Ns are 'superior' and Árva & Medgyes (2000) found that NNESTs admitted having problems of competence, particularly with vocabulary.

[11] Medgyes (1999) states that teachers perceive NESTs to "adopt a more flexible approach", "prefer free activities" and "favour groupwork" while NNESTs "adopt a more guided approach", "prefer controlled activities" and "favour frontal work" (pp. 55-6); this is also related to our item 13.

the grammar better (25 percent) and those students who think it is the non-native (23 percent).[12]

Item 13: As stated in section 4, this item may be related to item 11 and, in fact, the results obtained are almost identical: 74 percent of participants answered 'the same', probably indicating that they believe *both* N and NN teachers make the class entertaining or amusing. On the other hand, a high number of students thought it was the native teacher (24 percent) while only two respondents opted for the non-native option.

Item 14: A large number of respondents believe that the non-native teacher "is better for lower levels" (43 percent) while a still important 30 percent believe this to be the native teacher, with 27 percent indicating 'the same'.

Item 15: With respect to who is seen as a better teacher for intermediate levels, the scales are clearly tipped in favour of the native speaker. 69 percent of students believe a native speaker teacher to be better for these levels, while 25 percent answered 'the same' and only 6 percent opted for the non-native.

Item 16: As to which teacher was seen as better for advanced levels, almost all the students (92 percent) answered 'native', while only five respondents opted for 'the

[12] Árva & Medgyes (2000) saw that "non-NESTs were said to have more insight to and better meta-cognitive knowledge of grammar" (p. 364) by both N and NN participants; Medgyes (1999) reports that teachers feel that NNESTs focus on grammar more than their N counterparts. Lasagabaster & Sierra (2001) obtained similar results to ours: 17.1% of students agree with the statement that an "NNS is better" for teaching grammar (cf. our 23%) and 43% said that they "neither agree or disagree" (cf. our 51% of 'the same') while 39% disagreed (cf. our 25%).

same', with three opting for the non-native teacher.[13] It should be emphasised that this is the item in section 2 that respondents felt most strongly about and which shows most homogeneity in the answers obtained.

Item 17[14]: When asked 'which teacher do you think provides more help" 80 percent of respondents answered 'the same', with 15 percent believing it to be the non-native teacher.

Item 18: As for the item which asks about who gives back corrected homework more quickly, we might expect 100 percent of answers opting for the 'the same' (for the reasons outlined in section 4.3). However, whilst 89 percent *did* indicate this option, nine percent opted for the native teacher.

Item 19: With respect to use of the textbook, while 59 percent of respondents answered 'the same', a fairly large number (37 percent) indicated that the non-native teacher uses the textbook more.[15]

[13] The study by Lasagabaster & Sierra (2001) is the only empirical study to distinguish between levels of instruction: their participants would prefer a NFLT at any level (primary, secondary and university), the percentage increasing with the level (44, 60 and 68% respectively). On the other hand, we can relate our findings to Medgyes' (1999) results on the linguistic competence of NESTs and NNESTs: his participants claim that the former "speak English better" and "more confidently" (p. 55).

[14] As mentioned in 4.3, items 17, 18 and 20 form part of a larger construct that we may term 'level of professional commitment'.

[15] Medgyes (1999) found that teachers believe NNESTs tend to use a single book while NESTs prefer to "use a variety of materials" (p. 56); Árva & Medgyes' study (2000) also shows that non-native teachers tend to use the textbook more. Nevertheless, there is a need to be cautious when comparing the latter to our results because the teaching contexts -as we have previously mentioned - are notably different.

Item 20: For class preparation, while 84 percent of participants chose the option 'the same', 11 percent opted for the non-native teacher, with six percent selecting the native option.[16]

Item 21: 57 percent of respondents seem to believe that both non-native and native teachers understand their difficulties or inadequacies in a broadly similar manner, having opted for 'the same', while 33 percent think it is the NNFLT and only 10 percent believe it is the native teacher.[17]

Item 22: With respect to strictness in class, a clear majority (86 percent) think that N and NN teachers are 'the same'; however, 13 percent of participants believe that the native teacher is in fact stricter, with only one student thinking this of the non-native teacher.[18]

5.2. Students' Comments: Qualitative Data

With respect to participants' written comments (qualitative data), 16 students supplied comments or suggestions after completing the multiple-choice questionnaire.

Although it is true that any comment from the participants is always of great value and help both for future approaches to the study of the topic and for interpreting

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[16] As expected, items 17, 18 and 20 obtained very similar results. Although there is no empirical study using the same specific questions as ours, we can relate our findings with Medgyes' (1999), who determined that teachers believe the NNEST to be "more committed" (p. 55).

[17] Tang (1997) studied NN-ESL teachers' perceptions on issues of competency regarding both groups of teachers and concluded that teachers think NNESLTs "know the students' problems in studying English" and "their previous experience offers them a privileged understanding of the problems and weaknesses of their students" (p. 578). Medgyes (1999) also reported that Ts feel NNESTs are "more empathetic" (p. 55) and claims that this is a virtue.

[18] Our findings here contrast with Medgyes' (1999), who found that Ts believe NNESTs to be stricter than NESTs.

the quantitative data with more detailed insight, in our case, the students' written data was especially thoughtful and provided us with information of great use.[19]

The comments have been divided into the following four blocks, depending on what they principally referred to: comments on different learning-teaching contexts; those referring to the fact that an opinion could depend on the person in question; those that pin-pointed details concerning differences between native and non-native teachers and one other comment which was classified miscellaneously.

Block A

In this first group, there are two comments dealing with a point raised in section 4. One of the students observes the following:

> I had non-native teachers during my primary (EGB) and secondary [education]; so I think that a comparison with the native teachers I've had here at the *SIM*, in my case, is not very adequate.

Another participant writes:

> I've noticed a radical change from secondary school to the SIM. They're different methods, but you don't learn a thing at secondary school with all that grammar.

[19] This may be because quite a large number of students, as we found out later through their teachers, were students of social sciences and psychology at the university, and in these studies, often deal with data collection and are very used to handling -and answering- questionnaires.

As we described before -especially in reference to items 4, 6, 11 and 13- we presume that the fact of learning in one or another environment is indeed crucial, since it will certainly affect the classes themselves and the way teachers interact with students, amongst other things. The first comment could refer to the importance of age in teaching-learning, and may also refer to contextual differences: we have already referred to the problems of discipline that may take place in a *compulsory* education environment and which are less likely in other settings (see p. 71); the number of students in the classroom is another of the factors which necessarily affects the way we teach or learn. The fact of a very strict syllabus that has to be followed (as is usually the case in the study of foreign languages in compulsory education) or whether the teacher is freer to choose what to do in class is also of considerable importance. These factors, simply as examples of many others, certainly affect the way languages are taught and learnt and have probably helped shape our students' general beliefs about N & NNTs' characteristics, particularly if we take into consideration the fact that, while 94 respondents had studied with an NN in secondary education, only 11 had had a native teacher in this setting: two participants had at least reflected on these contextual differences.

Block B

The second group of comments contains those referring to the fact that an answer (N or NN) could depend on the person, that is, the option indicating 'the same' in our survey.[20]

[20] In fact, in part B of the survey, most students opted for 'the same' in nine of the 16 items included, as can be seen in 5.1, above, and in the section on 'conclusions', below.

Seven participants gave their opinion here, all of them claiming that it depends "on the teacher's own character" or simply "on the person" or "on the teacher's character for teaching". It goes without saying that we would not have considered our study necessary if we had not believed students to be partial in the question of whether their language teacher was a native or a non-native speaker of the language being studied. Our claim as professionals is of course that no distinction should be made on the grounds of place of origin and that importance should, instead, be given to the professionalism and qualities of the teacher.[21]

With respect to these comments, however, on the one hand we were positively surprised by the fact that at least seven of the student-participants seemed aware that the 'dichotomy' *per se* is not a reasonable distinction; on the other, however, we were disappointed to see that, when we analysed the questionnaire answered by these same 7 students in detail, we observed that they did actually made distinctions between 'native' or 'non-native', depending on the item. That is, not all their answers were 'the same' or left blank, as we might have expected from their comments alone. It is also worth observing that their comments made no mention of concepts such as 'training' or 'professionalism', referring instead to the "character" of the person [teacher] or simply "the person".

Block C

In the third group, we have included the seven comments that refer to the students' preferences or their perceived differences between N and NNTs of foreign languages.

[21] Lee (2000) claims that "what makes us good English teachers has nothing to do with our nationality or our accent" and Brutt-Griffler & Samimy (1999) claim that what is important is not whether the T is N or NN but "how qualified an individual is" (p. 142).

We have five comments that use the term 'better' in reference to the NLT -three of which plainly state that the NFLT is "better"- and this confirms the quantitative findings presented before. One respondent claims that "the native teacher is better at higher levels" although she/he claims, at the same time, that "I don't think there are great differences between N and NN teachers".[22] There is a comment on pronunciation (a field that we did not deal with in this questionnaire) that states that "an NT can be more positive for pronunciation"; another refers to vocabulary, observing that "it's much harder for NTs to explain the meaning of vocabulary, unless their Spanish or Catalan is fluent", and two other comments also claim that it is important for the NFLT to know the student's first language.[23] An interesting comment in this respect observes that it is "ideal is to have a NT with a very good knowledge of our language, or an NN *who's lived abroad* [presumably in a country in which the language is spoken] *for years*" (emphasis added); while this student is also claming here that a high level of linguistic proficiency is necessary for the NNT, she/he seems to imply that the level suitable for teaching should be acquired through "liv[ing] abroad for years".[24]

In general terms, we can say that these seven participants have clearly taken a stand on the N-NN dichotomy. It is also important to notice that, while some students have stated that a comparison is not really fair as this would depend on "the person",

[22] It would seem that this participant believes differences to lie in the area of language proficiency, and assumes that the NST is linguistically more proficient.

[23] Many applied linguists have observed the importance of a knowledge of the students' L1 for the ESL/EFL teacher. Medgyes (1999), for instance, says that "the ideal NEST is the one who has achieved a fair degree of proficiency in the learners' mother tongue" (p. 74) and we believe that, although this would be extremely difficult to achieve in a setting where a language is learnt as a second language -because the students may come from many different L1 contexts-, it is nevertheless desirable in FL settings, as our students assess.

[24] At a deeper level of analysis we could interpret this remark in the context of English as an International language, or within the issue of 'ownership' (see section 2.1.): there seems to be an identification of the English language with inner circle countries. Nevertheless, in order to make such statements, we would of course need to have more qualitative data.

and whilst five openly stated in written form that they prefer an NLT, no-one in the 'comments' section admitted to preferring a non-native teacher.

Block D

In our fourth group, we have included one comment that could not be categorised within any of the other three groups. This states the student's preference for studying less grammar and focussing more on "speaking, reading and writing".

6

Survey Conclusions

At this stage in the discussion, it is worth recalling that our survey was aimed at showing the *opinions* or *perceptions* that students hold with respect to differences between N and NN teachers of languages. It was not concerned with studying actual differences -in linguistic knowledge or performance- between both 'groups' of teachers.[1]

Before attempting to draw conclusions, however, it is only correct to observe that we should be cautious when interpreting the results, especially given the important limitations of the instruments used (the data was obtained by means of a questionnaire alone) and limitations of sample size (only 105 respondents). The use of a questionnaire to explore a highly specific issue obviously implies configuring the instrument in such a way that best suits the researcher, and that such a configuration may *per se* obscure certain ambits of the issue that would otherwise have been brought into view through a broader approach. It can therefore be claimed that such an instrument may not be sufficient for an in-depth exploration of the topic and that other ways of collecting data -such as detailed interviews, for instance- would also be necessary to determine the validity of our questionnaire and its findings. As regards the size of the sample, there is a clear need to assess the study's reliability by means of replication in similar contexts.

On the other hand, it should be emphasised that the tool we used to gather most of the data -that is, the questionnaire- at no point specified that it was referring only to teachers of English as a foreign language but, rather, asked about native and non-native

Notes to section 6

[1] As we will explain in the following section, however, this is clearly an interesting area of research. In this respect, see the discrepancies noted by Medgyes (1999b), between Ts' perceptions of N-NN Ts' differences and his own classroom observations.

teachers of foreign languages in a more general manner. Nevertheless, it is true that the questionnaire was given to the participants during their EFL class time, and this fact may obviously have led some of them to believe they were reflecting upon English teachers only.[2] Bearing this in mind, it is our opinion that although the findings can be presumed to represent adult FL students' opinions on the issue, this study must eventually be replicated for students of other foreign languages in order to contrast the findings and verify this point.

Turning now to the first of our research questions, that is, "do students actually distinguish between native and non-native teachers of foreign languages", if the respondents had not made a distinction between one group of teacher or the others – what Kachru refers to as 'we' versus 'them'[3]- , they should have indicated 'the same' for all items in the second part of the questionnaire. Furthermore, if they had not understood what was meant by 'native' or 'non-native' (in items 3, 4, 5 and 6) they could either have asked the researcher -who was present at all times throughout the administration of the questionnaire- or they could have opted to leave the questionnaire blank: none of the respondents did either of those two things. We can therefore assert that both the native and non-native speaker categories and the N-NN dichotomy certainly appear to exist in our students' minds.

This first finding contrasts with the theoretical literature on the N-NN issue, which we outlined in section 2.2 of this dissertation, and which largely called into question the validity of the distinction between 'native' or 'non-native' speakers of a language (on sociolinguistic and socio-historical grounds) and some of which even casts

[2] When the questionnaire was handed out to the students, neither the researcher nor the teacher gave the participants any information on its 'topic'. However, all the participants were studying EFL at the time of the survey and, additionally, item 2 asks if they had studied *English* at secondary education.
[3] Kachru (1992, p. 2).

doubts upon the existence of the two categories[4]. The reason for this may be twofold. First, most of the theoretical literature is based on the notion of the native or non-native *speaker* (i.e. not necessarily teacher)[5], particularly in the context of 'world Englishes'; many of the sociolinguists contributing to this debate came to the view that it no longer made sense to continue distinguishing between native speakers in this context[6] (and, instead, therefore suggested the use of other terms such as 'L2 user'). Second, as Pennycook points out, "we may often make the error of assuming that practices and theories of ELT are governed by the rational actions of applied linguistics" (1998, p. 22), whereas, outside the abstract environments and notions of academia, real-life perceptions, attitudes and actions taken with respect to these may be (or at least appear to be) far less in keeping with such neatly described rationality.

The other two questions, namely, "what are the students' perceptions of the professional characteristics of both 'groups' of teachers?" and, "what are their preferences?" will be discussed together, bearing in mind both the quantitative and the qualitative data obtained in the study. We divide our findings and subsequent analysis into two parts; in the first (6.1), we present the opinions and preferences indicated by the majority of the students,[7] and in the second part (6.2) we present the students' opinions on those items for which the option 'the same' produced most responses, but in which perceived differences between N and NNFLTs nevertheless seem to be present.

[4] See, for example, Davies (1991) and Canagarajah (1999).
[5] For instance, Kachru (1992), Rampton (1996) and Kramsch (1997).
[6] Brutt-Griffler & Samimy (2001) claim that "national identity should not be the basis of classification of speakers of an international language" (p. 105).
[7] By 'majority' we understand 'the greater number or part' (*Concise Oxford Dictionary of English*).

6.1. **Majority Opinions**

*The **majority of students*** who took part in this study believe that:

a. The native teacher of foreign languages:
    - corrects speaking errors better;
    - corrects written errors better (although a high number of students chose the option 'the same');
    - explains the vocabulary better (although a high number of students opted for the non-native or the 'the same' option);
    - is better for intermediate and advanced levels.[8]

b. The non-native teacher of foreign languages:
    - uses L1 more in class;
    - is better for low levels.

It is interesting to observe that the majority of students indicated differences between native and non-native teachers through choosing those items that seem to be strongly linked to linguistic ability;[9] this appears to indicate that the N-NN dichotomy may be based on assumptions regarding linguistic differences between the two groups of teachers:

[8] Medgyes' participants in his 'survey two'(216 N and NNELTs) "generally agreed that non-NESTs stood a better chance with lower levels and children", although the majority of the respondents "assign[ed] NESTs and non-NESTs an *equal chance* of success" (1999, p. 72) (emphasis added).
[9] Seidlhofer (1999) pointed out that "there has often been the danger of an automatic extrapolation from *competent speaker* to *competent teacher* based on linguistic grounds alone" (p. 237) (emphasis in the original).

Underlying the claim that NFLTs are better for intermediate and advanced levels, and that they are also better both for correcting students' errors and teaching vocabulary, may be the belief that NFLTs have a *better command of the language* –i.e. that they have a higher proficiency in the target language- and that they are therefore better able to teach the language.[10]

Behind the claim that the NNFLTs are, on the other hand, better for low levels and use more L1 in class, there may be the assumption that their linguistic knowledge of the L2 is poorer. [11]

6.2. **Other Relevant Opinions**

In all the other items, the majority of participants selected the option 'the same', probably meaning that the fact of a teacher being native or non-native is perceived as neither crucial nor determining. It is interesting to note that, whilst the majority of students tend towards noticing those differences related to linguistic awareness (6.1), we see in this section that, in the items referring to issues that are more methodological or pedagogical in character, the majority of respondents opt for choosing 'the same'.

Nevertheless, if within those categories in which less than 80 percent of students opted for 'the same',[12] we then look at the percentages given to the 'native' and 'non-native' options (i.e., those expressing the views of students who perceived a distinction), we see the following ideas being reflected:

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[10] See footnote 13 in section 5.

[11] Medgyes (1999, pp. 37-38) claims that "we [NNESLTs] suffer from an inferiority complex caused by glaring defects in our knowledge of English"; with our findings we see that our student participants may think that the NNFLT's knowledge of the language is not good enough for teaching intermediate and, especially, high levels.

[12] There are four items in which 80% or more of respondents opted for the option 'the same' (items 17, 18, 20 and 22) and I therefore consider the data from these items not to discriminate between N and NN in a significant way.

A. The native FLT:

- promotes more interaction; and
- makes the class more entertaining.

B. The non-native FLT:

- uses the textbook more; and
- understands the students' difficulties better.

The four issues above have more to do with teachers' professionalism and the way they prefer to deal with teaching duties than with their command of the language. In analysing this in conjunction with the written comments that the students made, we notice that the teaching contexts may influence students' perceptions. If we bear in mind that 94 respondents had previously had NN teachers in secondary education, compared to only 11 students who had had experience of N teachers in this setting, it is not unreasonable to believe that this may have helped in shaping their opinions on the professional characteristics of both groups of teachers. In light of this, and reflecting on the implications of both kinds of teaching environment, we can perhaps better understand claims that the NFLT promotes more interaction and makes the class more entertaining, since most respondents did not study languages with these teachers in *formal* environments such as compulsory education, but instead studied with them in *less formal* settings such as language centres (see section 5, above). Something similar can be said of the belief that the NNFLT uses the textbook more (see item 19 in section 4.3).

On the other hand, the claim that the *non-native* FLT understands the students' difficulties better may be explained through students taking into consideration the fact that the teacher has also been a learner of this same foreign language and has therefore trodden the same long and weary path as themselves.[13]

With respect to presentation of grammar, although 51 percent of the respondents opted for 'the same', the remaining 48 percent *did* make a distinction between the two groups of teachers. The figures within this 48-percent group are very evenly divided between those who think that the N teachers present grammar better and those who believe that NN teachers are better in this respect.

To summarise, the adult students of foreign language in our study distinguish between native and non-native language teachers and tend towards favouring NTs,[14] who are seen as better at both intermediate and advanced levels, better at correcting errors and explaining vocabulary and, additionally, are perceived as promoting more interaction in class and making the class more entertaining than their NN counterpart. NNFLTs, on the other hand, are seen as better for low levels and at understanding students' difficulties. Additionally, their use of both the L1 and the textbook in class is perceived as being greater than that of their N counterparts.

[13] Our finding coincides with Medgyes (1999) when he claims that "NNESTs are more empathetic", in teachers' opinions (p. 61) and also with Tang (1997), who notices that "their [the NNESLTs'] previous L2 learning experience offers them a privileged understanding of the problems and weaknesses of their students" (p. 578).

[14] If we select the three items that unequivocally ask which teacher is better (i.e. items 14, 15 and 16) in order to form a constraint that we could term 'preferences', the native teacher is, and by a long way, the more chosen of the two options.

7

Possible Implications & Further Research[1]

Having now set out the conclusions to our study, we will close this discussion by outlining our view of the possible implications of our findings,[2] in addition to suggesting some areas of further research related to the topic.

As Brutt-Griffler & Samimy (1999) suggest, "the existence of the NS construct both in the TESOL profession and in popular use becomes particularly prominent when [it] finds its way into shaping the perception of language learners" (p. 417). Our study has enabled us to appreciate that adult FL learners actually *do* believe in what Phillipson (1992) calls the 'native speaker fallacy'[3], that is, they perceive NFLTs to be better than their NN counterparts.[4]

It would now be of considerable interest to determine those factors that have helped in shaping the students' perceptions of the issue[5], and our research would seem to indicate that *different learning contexts* are a possible generator of these ideas. We claim that Ss' perceptions seem to have been shaped -at least in part- by the fact that, in our context, nonnative language teachers mainly teach languages within the compulsory school system, or, if they teach in contexts such as private language schools, do so at levels other than advanced, whereas native teachers are mainly employed in teaching English in language schools and, especially, at higher levels and in professional

Notes to section 7

[1] For further discussion of research, see also Section 6 in this dissertation.
[2] See also section 2.3.
[3] In spite of having, in Phillipson's words, "no scientific validity" (1992, p. 195).
[4] Braine (1999, p. 23) believes that "some ESL students naively subscribe to the native-speaker fallacy – that the ideal English teacher is a NS [sic]" but he only presents anecdotal evidence for this.
[5] With respect to students' attitudes, Cook (2000) claims that we are fighting "against all the influence of the cultural milieu" (p. 331).

contexts.[6] Although further and qualitative research would be needed to confirm this claim, we believe that the issue, as it currently stands, already merits concern and would suggest that, unless there is a change in hiring processes -that is, unless there is a greater presence of NFLTs in contexts of compulsory schooling and of NNFLTs in the private and professional sectors-, the students' perceptions reflected in this dissertation may be perpetuated. This means that there is need to openly bring into question those hiring policies that discriminate on 'place of origin'[7] and that teacher's methodological preparation should be deemed at least as important as language proficiency within the hiring processes.

Evidently, there are other important courses of action that could be taken in order to help avoiding perpetuating students' perception of NFLTs as, in certain respects, *superior* to their NN counterparts.[8] We would therefore make the following suggestions:

- As we mentioned in section 2.2.1, NNTs must make greater efforts to participate more actively within the field of TESOL and must have a far greater presence in the ambit of publications and research.
- There is no empirical proof that supports the idea of N and NN teachers being better suited for different levels; therefore N and NN teachers alike should teach a variety of levels, from elementary through to advanced.

[6] We have only assessed this last point anecdotally and with reference to a small number of organisations offering in-company training in English. Whilst our information would tend to indicate an almost exclusive use of native teachers in this context, this clearly requires further assessment to validate our claims.

[7] See section 2.2.1 (D).

[8] Brutt-Griffler & Samimy (1999) claim that "given such prevalent assumptions [the NNELT's superiority] on the part of both teachers and students of English, the perpetuation of a particular inherited discourse needs to be addressed at various levels" (p. 417) while suggesting that the N-NNT issue be dealt with in teacher preparation programs.

- Teachers -whether N or NN- should always maintain an on-going approach to their professional duties, which means, above all, that there is a constant need for them to update both their linguistic and methodological abilities and awareness.[9]

Additionally, we would claim that materials -and probably teachers as well- should attempt to raise learner consciousness of the following facts:

- The FL student cannot become a native speaker of the language being studied.[10]
- If English is studied as the world's lingua franca, or as an international language, learners will use it for communicating with people from all over the world -not only with native speakers[11] - and therefore what they need to achieve is the ability to be proficient L2 users (and *not* proficient 'native-speaker imitators') in a variety of communicative contexts.[12]
- The student's L1 is a powerful tool in the FL learning process and an important communicative springboard.

[9] Heidegger (1968, in Medgyes, 1999, p. 91) says that "the teacher must be capable of being more teachable than the apprentices".
[10] We realise this is a difficult goal to attain; as Cook (2000, p. 331) observes: "it may well be intellectually correct that the main legitimate goal of language learning is to be a successful L2 user; it is another matter to persuade a generation of students and indeed teachers that there is no need for them to aim to get as close as possible to NSs".
[11] Trim (1975 & 1993) refers to FL learners in Europe as "people who want to prepare themselves, in a general way, to be able to communicate socially on straightforward everyday matters with people from other countries who come their way" (p. vi).
[12] Brumfit (1985) reminds us that for acquisition to take place "there must be opportunities to use the target language for as genuine as possible communication" and we claim that, in our context, genuine communication in English takes place with NN as much as with N speakers of English.

- As L2 users, students actively contribute to the development of English as an international language and are therefore not merely observers of its development.[13]
- Native teachers may have greater linguistic competence in their native language than their NN counterparts, but on no account does that, *ipso facto*, make them better teachers.

Materials and *assessment tools*[14] used in the countries where English is taught and used as a foreign language need to take into consideration the facts outlined above and need to incorporate "local pedagogical initiative[s] which could build on local strengths and linguistic realities" (Phillipson, 1991, p. 199) as this would help to break with the traditional dominance by the Centre (such as exams from Cambridge and materials from the UK and the US). Materials and assessment tools also need to provide the following:

- Examples of effective, successful L2 users.[15]
- Examples of English as an international language produced by the speakers from a variety of countries (not just from the inner circle), both in written or spoken form.
- Materials that make far less use (if any at all) of the personalities and other cultural icons of the 'centre' countries.[16]

[13] As we mentioned in section 2.1.1, Edwards (1995) points out that "linguists (…) *do* recognize that the fortunes of languages are inexorably bound up with those of their users" (pp. 8-9, emphasis added).
[14] Cook (1999, p. 189) claims that there is the tendency to assess student performance by comparing it to native speaker production; in SLA research, this has been called the "comparative fallacy".
[15] Cook (1999, p. 198) believes that students "should encounter L2 use" and also claims that recordings should incorporate "skilled L2 use".
[16] Phillipson (1996) observes that "the native-speaker ideal comes from a time when language teaching was indistinguishable from culture teaching" (p. 25).

Further Research

In light both of the research reviewed throughout this dissertation and of our own small-scale study, we would say that the way is clearly open to many other ambits of further research -some of which we have already suggested in this discussion- and which are now summarised:

1. It would be of considerable use to give this questionnaire to the highest number of students possible, in order to carry out a more complete statistical analysis.[17]

2. There is the need for qualitative work with informants similar to those of our study, to ascertain through (for example) interviews and discussion groups, their views on native and non-native language teachers. As we have already mentioned, there is the need to find out more about such views in order to study in detail how and why these have been formed.

3. As indicated at the beginning of section 6, it would be interesting to replicate this research with adult students of *other* foreign languages to verify whether our findings are valid for adult learners of any foreign language. Additionally, it should be replicated in other teaching contexts, such as in secondary education.

4. It would also be of importance to carry out monitoring studies of N and NN Ts to determine whether the differences perceived by students actually exist in the classroom and/or in the broader teaching context (class preparation, classroom practice, etc.). Furthermore, it would be better to undertake such studies in a variety of settings (primary and secondary school, private lessons, language centres, etc.) to ascertain whether any variations are thereby produced.

[17] Dr López Roldán, of the Faculty of Sociology at the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*, recommended having a minimum number of 500 respondents (private conversation, March 2002).

5. A further area of interest is the study of how L2 users are currently presented in teaching and assessment materials, with the aim of eventually suggesting different ways to present effective speakers from a variety of origins.

6. A very different area of further research, but nevertheless one that we think would be an important contribution to the issue, is that of determining the number and percentage of native and non-native teachers in all language-teaching centres (state as well as private) in Catalonia, as a means of ascertaining, with far greater precision than is currently the case, the distribution of these groups according to language-level taught and the educational sector in which these teachers are employed.

7. Finally, it would be interesting to triangulate the information we have obtained by having, on the one hand, the opinions of both N and NN teachers on the issue and, on the other, by taking into close account what we might term their 'general professional behaviour' (point 4, above).

8

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Appendices

Appendix 1: TESOL Statement

A TESOL Statement on Nonnative Speakers of English and Hiring Practices

Whereas TESOL is an international association concerned with the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and composed of professionals who are both native and nonnative speakers of English, and

Whereas employment decisions in this profession which are based solely upon the criterion that an individual is or is not a native speaker of English discriminate against well qualified individuals, especially when they are made in the absence of any defensible criteria, and

Whereas such decisions, not based on sound criteria, must therefore be in contradiction to sound linguistic research and pedagogical practice

Therefore be it resolved that the Executive Board and the Officers of TESOL shall make every effort to prevent such discrimination in the employment support structures operated by TESOL and its own practices, and

Therefore be it further resolved that the Executive Board of TESOL shall instruct the committee on Professional Standards (and such other TESOL bodies as the Board sees fit to involve) to work towards the creation and publication of minimal language proficiency standards that may be applied to all ESOL teachers without reference to the nativeness of their English.

This resolution is moved by the Sociopolitical Concerns Committee, having been drafted by the Employment Issues Sub-committee and endorsed by the committee of the whole.

The Sociopolitical Concerns Committee urges that, should this resolution be duly passed, the Executive Board establish a deadline by which the action herein mandated are to be implemented.

October 1991

Appendix 2 : Questionnaire Form

Us agrairíem dediquéssiu uns quants minuts a respondre aquest breu qüestionari, que és anònim. L'objectiu de passar-vos aquestes preguntes és elaborar un petit treball de recerca, del qual donarem informació al vostre professor un cop finalitzat, per si fos del vostre interès saber quins han estat els resultats i les conclusions.

Moltes gràcies per la vostra col·laboració.

Posa un 'tick' (√) al costat de la resposta que triïs.

1. Ets: Home ☐ Dona ☐

2. Vas estudiar anglès a secundària? Sí ☐ No ☐

3. Quants professors d'idiomes **no-nadius** has tingut?

Cap ☐ Un ☐ Dos ☐ Tres o més ☐

4. On has tingut professors no-nadius d'idiomes?

Secundària ☐ Classes particulars ☐ Acadèmia o similar ☐ Altres ☐
especificar:

5. Quants professors d'idiomes **nadius** has tingut?

Un ☐ Dos ☐ Tres o més ☐

6. On has tingut professors nadius d'idiomes?

Secundària ☐ Classes particulars ☐ Acadèmia o similar ☐ Altres ☐
especificar:

Si us plau contesta ara les preguntes següents, on se't demana que donis **la teva opinió**, tenint en compte la teva experiència personal com a aprenent de llengües.

Quin professor creus que...

7. Utilitza més català o castellà a classe de llengua estrangera

Nadiu ☐ No-nadiu ☐ Igual ☐

8. Corregeix millor els errors orals

Nadiu ☐ No-nadiu ☐ Igual ☐

9. Corregeix millor els errors escrits (per exemple, redaccions)

Nadiu ☐ No-nadiu ☐ Igual ☐

10. Explica millor el vocabulari

Nadiu ☐ No-nadiu ☐ Igual ☐

11. Promou més interacció a l'aula

Nadiu ☐ No-nadiu ☐ Igual ☐

Quin professor creus que...

12. Presenta millor la gramàtica

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

13. Fa la classe més distreta o amena

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

14. És millor professor per nivells baixos

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

15. És millor professor per nivell mitjà

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

16. És millor professor per nivells avançats

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

17. Ajuda més en cas de dubtes o dificultats durant l'aprenentatge

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

18. Torna més ràpidament els deures o redaccions que s'endú per corregir

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

19. Utilitza amb més regularitat el llibre de text

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

20. Sembla que es prepari millor la classe

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

21. Entén millor les dificultats o mancances de l'estudiant

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

22. És més estricte a l'aula quant a disciplina

Nadiu ڤ No-nadiu ڤ Igual ڤ

Afegeix aquí (o en un full en blanc) qualsevol **comentari o suggeriment**.

Moltes gràcies per la teva col·laboració!

Appendix 3: Collaboration Request Note

Dijous, 25 d'octubre de 2001

Benvolguts professors de nivell 5 d'anglès (Mike, Chuck, Vicki, José and Rose),

Per un treball de recerca que estic elaborant, necessitaria passar uns petits qüestionaris a alumnes de nivell avançat d'anglès.

Aquest treball és un estudi de les actituds (opinions/creences) dels alumnes quant als professors nadius/ no-nadius d'idiomes.

Us demanaria la vostra col·laboració i poder anar a les vostres classes de 5è nivell durant uns minuts algun dia de la setmana vinent per tal de distribuir aquest qüestionari (un full) entre els vostres estudiants. Si us sembla, això podria ser al principi de la classe, per exemple, per no trencar els vostres plans.

Ja em direu què us sembla i quin dia seria el més adient.

Moltes gràcies!

Appendix 4: Results

Written Comments Made by Students/ Participants
(*Exactly* as written in the original, including orthographic idiosyncrasies)

a. Different Learning Contexts

1. 'Els professors no-nadius han sigut de l'escola (EGB) i de l'institut; crec, doncs, que la comparació amb els nadius que he tingut aquí al SIM és, en el meu cas, força poc correcta'. 1
2. 'Jo he notat un canvi radical de la secundària al SIM. Són mètodes diferents, però a la secundària no aprens res amb tanta gramàtica'. 5

b. Depending on the Person

1. 'És una enquesta molt tendenciosa. El criteri és simple: nadiu o no, quan cal tenir en compte caràcters i persones'. 16
2. 'Creo que todo depende del profesor, no del hecho de ser nativo o no'. 26
3. 'Moltes de les respostes han sigut valorades al tercer quadrant pq crec que depen de la manera de ser del professor/a i no tant de la nacionalitat'. 35
4. 'Cuando he puesto igual, ha sido porque pienso que no depende de que el profesor sea nativo o no'. 50
5. 'Depèn molt de la persona. No és una qüestió de ser o no nadiu. La qüestió no és si el professor és o no nadiu. Un pot ser no nadiu i haver viscut anys fora i ser millor didacta que un nadiu!' 71
6. 'No crec que depengui de nadiu o no-nadiu, sino del caràcter del professor per donar les classes'. 83
7. '(Crec que sempre és millor fer classe amb algun professor natiu perquè sempre parlen millor l'idioma, controlen més la pronúncia, etc.) però les classes són millors o pitjors depenent sempre de la persona en sí'. 85

c. Preferences or Perceived Differences between Both 'Groups'

1. 'En términos generales, no creo que hayan grandes diferencias entre profesores nativos y no nativos. La única diferencia es que un profesor nativo es 'mejor' en niveles muy avanzados (ej. Cambridge Proficiency)'. 21
2. 'Per la meva experiència, crec que un professor nadiu pot ser més positiu a l'hora de la pronunciació i és millor per l'alumne escoltar una persona nadiva que una no-nadiva.' 22
3. 'L'ideal és un professor nadiu amb un gran coneixement de l'idioma nostre, o un no-nadiu amb molts anys d'estada a fora'. 52
4. 'Als professors nadius els costa més explicar el significat de les paraules si no tenen un català/espanyol fluït'. 53
5. 'Crec que sempre és millor el professor nadiu'. 55
6. 'Evidentment per aprendre un idioma és millor un professor nadiu. Però també és interessant que aquest domini la nostra llengua per tal de comparar-la i posar exemples'. 80
7. 'Crec que sempre és millor fer classe amb algun professor natiu perquè sempre parlen millor l'idioma, controlen més la pronúncia, etc. (però les classes són millors o pitjors depenent sempre de la persona en sí'). 85

d. Other Comments

1. 'Crec que en general a les llengues estrangeres s'hauria de promoure molt més el parlar, llegir i escriure. Sovint hi ha massa gramàtica'. 38

Written Comments Made by Students/ Participants (Translated into English)

a. Different Learning Contexts

1. 'I had non-native teachers during my primary (EGB) and secondary [education]; so I think that a comparison with the native teachers I've had here at the SIM, in my case, is not very adequate'. 1[1]
2. 'I've noticed a radical change from secondary school to the SIM. They're different methods, but you don't learn a thing at secondary school with all that grammar'. 5

b. Depending on the Person

1. 'This is a very tendentious questionnaire. The criterion is simple: native or not, when characters and people should also be taken into account'. 16
2. 'I think that it all depends on the teacher, not on whether you're native or not'. 26
3. 'Many of the answers have been answered in the third quadrant, because I think it depends on the teacher's own character, and not so much on nationality'. 35
4. 'When I ticked 'the same', it's because I don't think it depends on whether the teacher's native or not'. 50
5. 'A lot depends on the person. It's not a question of being a native or not. The issue isn't whether the teacher's native or non-native. You can be non-native and have spent years abroad, and be a better teacher than a native' 71
6. 'I don't think it depends on being native or non-native, it's more a question of the teacher's character for teaching'. 83
7. '(I think that it's always better to study with a native teacher because they always speak the language better, have a better control of pronunciation, etc.) But classes are always better or worse depending on the people [=teachers] themselves'. 85

c. Preferences or Perceived Differences between both 'Groups'

1. 'On the whole, I don't think that there are great differences between native and non-native teachers. The only difference is that the native teacher is 'better' at higher levels (e.g. Cambridge Proficiency)'. 21
2. 'In my experience, I think that [having] a native teacher can be more positive for pronunciation, and it's better for the student to listen to a native than to a non-native'. 22
3. 'What's ideal is to have a native teacher with a very good knowledge of our language, or a non-native who's lived abroad for years'. 52
4. 'It's much harder for native teachers to explain the meaning of vocabulary, unless their Spanish or Catalan is fluent'. 53
5. 'I think a native teacher is always better'. 55
6. 'Evidently, a native teacher is better for learning a language with. But it's also important that this teacher has a strong grounding in our language, so as to compare [the two languages] and to provide examples'. 80
7. 'I think that it's always better to study with a native teacher because they always speak the language better, have a better control of pronunciation, etc. (But classes are always better or worse depending on the people [=teachers] themselves)'. 85

d. Other Comments

1. 'In general, I think that foreign languages should give more emphasis to speaking, reading and writing. Often, there's too much grammar.' 38

Original texts in Catalan and Spanish, translated into English by the Translation Service of *Servei d'Idiomes Moderns, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*.

[1] Questionnaire reference number given at the end of each comment.