

CORRELATION BETWEEN FOREIGN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) TEACHERS' REASONS TO TEACH IN THAILAND AND THAI STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ESL TEACHERS

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Abstract: Careful attention should be given to the individual motivations of foreign native and non-native ESL teachers wanting to teach a variety of subjects using the English language as the language of instruction at Thai educational organizations. Schools should, apart from looking at the basic qualifications of a teacher, also look at what are the motivational factors which drives the teacher to teach in Thailand. The motivational factors which are the driving force behind the teacher, will influence the student's approval rates of the teacher, and as such can lead to more meaningful learning experiences for the students. The results of this research revealed that students could vividly recall both the best and worst teachers, and could provide rhyme and reason as to why the students were thinking in that manner. Furthermore, traveling teachers, teachers who would only stay at the school for one or two terms, were not memorable to the students, and as such didn't have any proven positive or negative impact on the students.

Keywords: ESL, Teachers' motivation, Students perception.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many foreigners think that when coming to Thailand, a country is visited where foreigners can do whatever a foreigner desires to do. To understand this perception most foreigners have regarding to Thailand, one must first look at the word "Thailand". The word "Thailand" consists of 2 distinct parts. The second part "land" speaks more or less for itself, as one of the meanings of "land" is "a group of people". The first part of the word "Thai" has two meanings. Thai means "Free", thus Thailand can be explained as "the land of free people". The second meaning of "Thailand" is: the land of the Thai people, as the Tai are an ethnic group in this country. (Hulme, 2018) Many foreigners tend to take the first meaning, land of free people, to their heart and as such think that rules and regulations do not apply while being in this country.

There is a great demand for foreign ESL teachers by the Thai educational institutions, but the influx of properly qualified foreign ESL teachers is not nearly enough to fulfill all vacancies for foreign ESL teachers at schools (both governmental and privately operated) in Thailand. This shortage of qualified teachers opens doors for those foreigners who come to Thailand in search for an occupation which pays those teachers while traveling in Thailand.

It is quite common to see that many foreigners are entering the ESL teaching world in Thailand, without having a clear picture of what is expected from them in the first place. In a blog, published on the internet on October 7, 2015, Chris and Angela wrote the following: "As many times as I've heard that teaching is among the hardest, least appreciated, and most underpaid jobs out there, these truths still apply in Thailand. Yes, it will continue to be a physically and an emotionally demanding job. After all, teaching doesn't become easier just by crossing a few countries' borders." (Chris & Angela, 2015)

When researching video streaming websites like youtube.com one can find that there are many videos in which foreigners are advertising to come to Thailand and start working as an ESL teacher. After listening and looking carefully to these messages it becomes clear that the