

NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE DICHOTOMY: DISTINCTIVE STANCES OF THAI TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

by

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the critical insights of 24 Thai English teachers (TETs) at tertiary level into themselves and their native English teacher (NET) counterparts. Their reflections regarding impartiality between native and non-native English teachers were also investigated. The study reveals that there are perceived differences between NETs and TETs in many principal aspects: earnings, required teaching qualifications, administrators' viewpoints, as well as students' perspectives. The investigation into the ideal teacher of English, self-perceptions and the proportionate balance of hiring native and non-native English teachers (NETs and NNETs) in an organization are also reported. From a questioning position, it is disclosed that if NETs and TETs were treated uniformly as to reduce such disparities, their synergy and personal, professional rapport would ameliorate. Implications from the study suggest a shift from a preoccupation of issues about the native and non-native status to the enhancement of training and expertise in ELT in most cases. This includes seeking and creating opportunities to discuss critical subjects with NET and NNET professionals from diverse, multinational backgrounds.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

A great deal of the ESL literature (e.g., Davies, 1991; Medgyes, 1994, Quirk, 1995) claims that in general a native English teacher (NET) is not 'better' than a non-

native English teacher (NNET), although in some associated citations (Gill and Rebrova, 2001; Medgyes, 1994), the distinction between NETs and NNETs is placed on their linguistic competence, teaching, and cultural understandings. However divergent they are, the researchers are convinced that the realms

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