# An Investigation into The Methods and Approaches That a Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher Can Make Use of to Teach the English Language to Local Students Effectively

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**ABSTRACT:** *Due to the importance of learning the English language and its significance in everyday life as an international language, it's essential to consider the methods and approaches to teaching this language. In some countries native English-speaking teachers are not available; hence, non-native English-speaking teachers are more efficient. In this research, the role of non-native English-speaking teachers in teaching the English language and their practicality have been discussed. Besides, the methods and approaches that a non-native English-speaking teacher can make use of to teach effectively, have been considered. In the following research, these methods have been discussed in detail and their results are examined statistically.*

**KEYWORDS**: non-native English speaking teacher (NNEST), local students, teaching effectively


## INTRODUCTION

In many countries, the mother tongue, which is the primary language, is not English but there is a countless demand for English language teachers all over the world. The demand in this field is trying to be filled largely by non-native English-speaking teachers who have learned English from other NNESTs, in the country or abroad. In some countries, mainly those where English speaking is a sign of status, the students prefer to learn English from a native English speaker. The perception is that a non-native English speaking teacher is a less authentic teacher than a native English speaker and their teaching methods are not pleasing in some ways (Tosuncuoglu, İ., 2017).

Mahboob states that NNESTs are valued for their strict devotion to methodology, their own experience as language learners, and, their labor, but they were observed as having poorer oral skills and inadequate knowledge of "Western" cultures compared to NESTs. Nayar states that non-native speakers are unreliable speakers and their language competence is deprived

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compared to native speakers who have phonological, linguistic, and communicative competence yet a linguistic identity. Alternatively, Medgyes states that non-native speaking teachers have a 'bright' side. He points out that, whether or not non-native-speakers normally use bookish language and speak in an exceedingly less confident way, they're more empathetic, attend to the students' real needs, show more commitment, have realistic expectations of the scholars, and are more perceptive (Bastug & Karakuzu, 2010).

Nowadays we're living in a society where learning English as the International language is undeniably necessary. Due to the situation of some countries and their schools, NESTs are not available. Therefore, there should be teachers who know how to teach the English language to local students effectively. The purpose of this research is to consider the approaches and methods that non-native teachers use in their classrooms to make their teaching strategies more useful and understandable for their students to help them acquire this language more appropriately.

## Non-native English speaking teacher

The impending problems of both NEST and NNEST instructors have sparked a controversial debate over the efficacy of each. While supporters of NNESTs resist that they provide effective language development through an understanding of the L1 culture and language, as well as a shared understanding of the L1, they may overstress literal use of grammar and vocabulary, without sufficient understanding of the social and connotative world knowledge needed to use them. NESTs may have more knowledge about contextual and social concepts needed to use grammar and vocabulary, yet they may also lack educational experience or an understanding of the host culture, which may impede the communication of key concepts (Schenck, 2020). Hence, both NEST and NNEST have their flaws. Considering matters that the local students are in, a more specific definition of NNEST is going to be considered. The NNEST lens may be a lens of multilingualism, multinationalism, and multiculturalism through which NNESTs – as classroom practitioners, researchers, and teacher educators – take diversity as a start line, instead of as a result. The NNEST lens is multilingual because, by definition, NNESTs speak a minimum of one language additionally to English. The NNEST lens is multinational because NNESTs come from dissimilar parts of the globe and signify varied ethnic, national, and racial origins. And, finally, the NNEST lens is multicultural because NNESTs coming from different national and geographic regions represent other ways of construing reality (through language)(Mahboob, 2014). Based on this definition of NNEST, we are going to have a better understanding of what is going to be discussed in the following research.

## Local students

Local students are those who are living in a local community and trying to learn a foreign language. Local communities, like a double-edged sword, enable L2 learners' access to English while impeding learners to claim their social identities and placing themselves in more powerful positions. Current theoretical discussions have shown that good language learning requires attention to the role of social practices in contexts where individuals learn L2.

However, lack of human agency such as cultural agency exerts a negative impact on L2 learners' social identity transformation. In this regard, while researchers and educators concentrate on classroom activities, they also need to pay equal attention to helping learners access social practices at the same time. For instance, teachers could help students become volunteers in local communities in their spare time or recommend pop comics to them so that students could grasp a better understanding of L2 culture. Moreover, they need to involve culture learning in SLA so that learners can gain sufficient human agency to reconstruct their social identities in local communities (Huang & Zhu, 2009).

**Teaching effectively**

Every student has the right to urge the foremost operative education. However, what makes an academic environment/practice effective could be a billion questions because it is predisposed by many factors one among which is that the teacher who is at the very center of education. Likewise, defining teacher effectiveness isn't a straightforward undertaking (Demiroz & Yesilyurt, 2015). Language practitioners and researchers have already accepted that teachers and their agendas do not have complete control over what learners learn from English language courses. The recent emphasis on the holistic approaches to language learning has brought into focus the fact that learners are not just cognitive beings, that is, they do not approach the task of language learning only from the cognitive window. But learners are multidimensional beings; they are a mixture of the bulk of different variables which help them to learn whatever they are learning in the best probable way. To realize this multidimensionality, teachers and researchers have renowned that both students' and teachers' attitudes and beliefs should have room in the process of language learning and teaching. Williams and Burden appealed that "learners' perceptions and interpretations have been found to have the supreme influence on achievement" (Ganjabi, 2011).

**Research questions**

Considering the purpose of the study, the following questions are going to be answered in this research:

1. To what extent an NNEST can teach the English language to local students effectively?
2. Are these methods effective according to the students' performance in the classroom?

**Research hypothesis**

1. There are some methods and approaches that an NNEST can make use of to teach the English language to local students effectively.

2. These methods are effective according to students' performance in the classroom.

**METHODOLOGY**

Due to the aim of this research, a mixed-method has been acquired. Initially, several teachers have been interviewed and asked about the methods and approaches that they acquire to teach

effectively in their classrooms. By considering an experimental and control group, the most useful methods have been specified statistically.

## Participants

Based on the research questions which are mentioned above, the participants of this study are NNESTs and local students. Four high school NNESTs, who are all women, have been interviewed qualitatively and asked about their experiences of teaching the English language. The results of the qualitative interviews have been examined quantitatively in two control and experimental groups, each of which consists of 15 high school girl students in grade 12.

## Data collection

The goal of this study is to figure out the effective methods used by NNESTs. To do that, several teachers are interviewed initially and then the results of the interview which consist of the methods used by teachers in their classes are examined on several students who are divided into control and experimental groups. The control group has involved students who have not received any specific teaching methodology. On the other hand, the experimental group has involved those students who are educated based on the methods which are mentioned by teachers who are interviewed.

## RESULTS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### Results of qualitative interview

As it's mentioned earlier, an interview has been designed to evaluate teachers' opinions about the methods acquired by them to teach local students effectively, as Non-Native English Speaking Teachers.

Questions and their answers are as follows:

**1.** what are the most effective methods and approaches that you acquire in a beginning-level classroom? Do you use these methods in an intermediate to advanced level classroom as well?

### Teacher a:

There is not just one method that I use in my classes, I use a mixture of them but for the beginning level classrooms, I think TPR is the most effective one. I usually draw and show the pictures, and sometimes I use TBLT for more advanced level classrooms. Of course, the methods that I use in intermediate to advanced classes are different considering their various needs.

### Teacher b:

In my idea, a mixture of several methods like GTM, ALM, and CALL can be used for the beginning level to develop students' understanding of what they're going to learn. But the methods which are used for more advanced level students are different due to their needs. Despite the methods which are mentioned above, TBLT, community language learning, and

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cooperative language learning are the methods that I use in intermediate to advanced level classrooms.

**Teacher c:**

I always try to teach materials by relating the English language to real life, telling some examples which they may use in their lives, using their interests to teach vocabulary, and motivating them.
Yes, maybe. I think using interests and real-life in learning is useful no matter what level they are.

**Teacher d:**

the methods and approaches that I use are highly dependent on the condition of my classroom. it can include a mixture of several approaches but to explain the main settings, my classrooms are student-centered with a system of cooperative learning with the help of authentic materials and acquiring TBLT and CLT as well.


It can be concluded that NNESTs mostly make use of a mixture of methods that relate the process of learning to real-life; Methods like TBLT, CLT, etc. now the question is what is TBLT/CLT?

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) is attuned to a learner-centered education; it consists of particular components, such as goal, procedure, and specific outcome; it advocates content-oriented meaningful activities rather than linguistic forms. The main goal of TBLT has been, first of all, to describe, analyze, and predict the language use and the communicative patterns learners are engaged in when undertaking a task; and second of all, to determine the contribution of these communicative patterns to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Izadpanah, 2010). The aim of Communicative pedagogy or communicative language teaching (CLT) emphasizes language learners' "communicative proficiency" instead of "a mere mastery of grammar and structures", which supplies the learner's actual communicative needs and as a result allows more efficient interaction for learners. Learners don't learn the language for the aim of acquiring the grammar and vocabulary per se; rather, they use the language to speak with others or to grasp the knowledge others send to them. Moreover, with a clear instrumental purpose, learners tend to have a stronger motivation for learning a language (Ju, 2013).

In the following chapters, we're going to examine these methods' effectiveness on students.

**2.** what are the challenges that you face while teaching English as a non-native English-speaking teacher?

**Teacher a:**

There are some words and actions that you cannot say in a way that they should be said, you cannot act them, you cannot show them to students and you cannot find the exact meaning of them in your own language. And sometimes you don't know the exact pronunciation of some words, you can improve your pronunciation and fluency by listening to podcasts though.

**Teacher b:**

As a non-native teacher sometimes you may feel hopeless of not knowing everything about the accurate pronunciation of some words in a language that you're teaching, which is totally understandable cause you were not born in that culture and have not grown up with it either.

**Teacher c:**

Sometimes students ask questions about foreign people, their lives, and these type of things that I don't know the exact answers so I try to find an answer and mostly start my sentence with "I think", "probably ",...

**Teacher d:**

challenges such as linguistic difficulties in the area of vocabulary, oral fluency, and pronunciation.

The most important challenge that an NNEST face is "not being accurate and fluent enough while teaching the foreign language." Despite their many challenges, NNESTs are beginning to see themselves and to be viewed by others as equal partners in the ELT profession, both in the institutions where they teach and within the professional administrations that represent them. In 1998, TESOL, an international professional association that represents teachers of English to speakers of other languages, accepted the formation of the NNEST Caucus. This recognition has given non-native teachers more visibility in the profession and has helped create a professional environment for all TESOL members, regardless of native language and place of birth (Digest et al., 2002).

**3**. what is your recommendation to NNESTs?

**Teacher a:**

If it is important to them that their students improve, I recommend them to remove GTM from the methods that they make use of, because translating the exact words and sentences cannot make an active language learning. In my opinion, the best way of conveying the meaning of words is by using pictures, acting, making the sound, and drawing, which can be done by using TBLT.

**Teacher b:**

Never let your interest in teaching a foreign language to be lost because of some wrong expectations. Have a goal in your teaching life and do something about your goal each day.

**Teacher c:**

To gather useful information about English-speaking countries and their culture besides rules of that language, grammar and ...; be ready to answer all kinds of questions which students might ask such as the life in foreign countries, their religions, their history, etc.

**Teacher d:**

To improve their proficiency in the English language and learn more about teaching strategies. The more we gain knowledge and awareness the better we can lead a class and learning process.

**Results of quantitative examination**

In this chapter, as it's mentioned in chapter 3.1.1, the effectiveness of the TBLT method is going to be examined. To do that, the testees are divided into two experimental and control groups (considering that before instruction, students are all at the same level of education). After a month of everyday instruction, acquiring the TBLT method while teaching materials to the experimental group and no specific method while teaching the control group, the following marks have been achieved via a final examination (based on TBLT) after instruction.

The students' grades are rank-ordered as follows:

Table 5.2.1

| Control | | Experimental | |
|---------|-------|--------------|-------|
| Rank | Grade | Rank | Grade |
| 1 | 73 | 1/5 | 98 |
| 2 | 65 | 1/5 | 98 |
| 3 | 57 | 3 | 96 |
| 4 | 52 | 4/5 | 93 |
| 5/5 | 51 | 4/5 | 93 |
| 5/5 | 51 | 6 | 92 |
| 7 | 49 | 7 | 90 |
| 8 | 45 | 8 | 89 |
| 9/5 | 44 | 9 | 88 |
| 9/5 | 44 | 10/5 | 86 |
| 11 | 42 | 10/5 | 86 |
| 12 | 41 | 12 | 85 |
| 13/5 | 39 | 13 | 83 |
| 13/5 | 39 | 14 | 81 |
| 15 | 33 | 15 | 80 |

Hypothesis: The mean scores of the experimental group are significantly higher than the control group.

$H_0$: The mean scores of both the control and experimental group are equal.

$H_1$: The mean scores of the experimental group are higher than the control group.

For the above hypothesis test, we need to use an independent T-test. Since the independent T-test is one of the parametric tests, there should be a presumption of normality of scores in both experimental and control groups.

To consider the normality of both groups' data, the Shapiro-Wilk test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are used.

The result of the normality test of data is as follows:

Table 5.2.2

**Tests of Normality**

| Shapiro-wilk | | | Kolmogorov-smirnov | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sig | df | statistic | Sig | df | statistic | group |
| 0.248 | 15 | 0.927 | 0.200 | 15 | 0.163 | control |
| 0.682 | 15 | 0.959 | 0.200 | 15 | 0.110 | experimental |

grade

According to the table above, due to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test of normality, the significance level of this test for both groups is reported to be 0.200, and since it is larger than 0.05, at the error level of 5%, it can be said that normality of scores for both groups cannot be rejected.

Due to Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality, the significance level for the control and experimental groups is equal, respectively. With 0.248 and 0.682, both reported values are higher than 0.05. So at the error level of 5%, it can be said that normality grades are not rejected for both groups.

Now that the assumption of normality of data in each group is accepted, the independent T-test is used.

Independent T-test results are as follows:

Table 5.2.3

**Group Statistics**

| Std.Deviation | Mean | N | group |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10.493 | 48.33 | 15 | control |
| 5.784 | 89.20 | 15 | experimental |

grade

According to the table above, it can be observed that the mean and standard deviation of scores for the control group is 48.33 and 10.493 and the mean and standard deviation of scores for the experimental group were 89.20 and 5.784.

Table 5.2.4

**Independent Samples Test**

| t-test for Equality of Means | | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sig | df | t | Sig | F | |
| 0.000 | 28 | -13.210 | 0.095 | 2.993 | grade |

According to the table above, the significance level of Levene's test which was used to assess the variance of scores between the two groups is placed equal to 0.095, and since it is larger than 0.05, at the error level of 5%, it can be said that the parity variance hypothesis of the scores of the two groups is not rejected.

Also, the level of two-way significance of the independent T-test is 0.000 and because the one-way significance level is to be achieved, the following formula is used.

$$\frac{Two-way\ significance\ level}{2} = \frac{0.000}{2} = 0.000$$

The one-way significance level is equal to 0.000, and since this value is less than 0.05, the zero hypotheses which is based on the parity of the mean scores of each group is rejected; as result, the mean scores of the experimental group are significantly higher than the control group.

**DISCUSSION**

It might be true that NNESTs can teach better English than native speakers. That is because they have struggled to learn that language. They know exactly where learners mostly lack and where they make mistakes. They are also conscious of many more techniques of learning to speak which is not the case with native speakers. Most non-native speakers have degrees in language teaching and many years of experience, whereas many native speakers either have little language teaching qualifications or little experience (Bastug & Karakuzu, 2010). As it's mentioned earlier in this research, NNESTs are more practical than NESTs, since they were once local students themselves and are more familiar with the emotions of local students and what they need while learning a foreign language. Therefore, the above hypothesis about the practicality of NNESTs can be accepted according to the observations.

As Barnard states, NNESTs' approaches and attitudes towards grammar teaching and their stories appear to be opposing. In other words, there is a certain difference between their understanding of task-based language teaching and their reported classroom practices. They

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wrote that communicative activities play an important role in inspiring students to learn. However, their attitudes and stories expose their strong beliefs in the value of explicit form-focused instruction (Barnard, 2010). Although Barnard's claim can be true in some cases, we cannot rely on it in every case. As it has been mentioned in this article, using the TBLT method while teaching a foreign language has significant results and most of the teachers who make use of it, see its results which cannot be denied.

**CONCLUSION**

Now, it can be concluded that knowing the methods and approaches which are to be used in the classroom is not enough for teaching effectively. Teaching effectively requires trial and error and figuring out which method is the most effective one by considering the situations that local students are in. According to this research, the interview, and the examination which have been done, we can conclude that the TBLT method is one of the most effective methods that an NNEST can acquire in the classroom to teach the English language as best as possible. TBLT method is a learner-centered method that concentrates on students' needs. NNESTs who want to make use of this method should be aware of that there is no one more important than the students in the classroom and he/she should always be aware his/her students' needs. To make an authentic situation in the classroom there should be some specific equipment, but because of some limitations like not having enough time or not having a sufficient budget to prepare equipment needed in the classroom, it may be not possible.

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