

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

English is an international language; it has been successful as a measuring standard of education, and more importantly is the spoken more as a second language than as a first language (Gordon, 2005). In addition to that, according to Canagarajah (1999, 2) 80% of the world's English language teachers are non-native speakers. In an ideal world, there should be no difference between the motivation of native or non-native English speaking teachers' students. There is no difference in native or non-native English speaking teachers' values, nor is there a difference in value with native or non-native English speaking teachers' immediacy. However, in the real world this may not be the case.

The key to the success within the classroom according to many theorists, is student motivation. It is considered the primary source of educational success (Keller 1983, 394) and provides a propensity to go beyond a student's normal efforts in order to achieve their goals (Johnson 1979, 283). However, there are potentially endless things which can affect the motivation that students have in classes. Using a pilot study, an initial look at contexts was made to try to highlight possible factors affecting student motivation and to better understand concerns before initiating a full study.

This was conducted at a secondary international school X. Six questions were asked to five male native English speaking teachers and three female non-native English speaking teachers (See Appendix A). From the results, it can be

seen that both native and non-native English speaking teachers are fully aware that there are differences in the way they approach English as the subject they teach to foreign language students, but also that they are treated differently based on their own nationality or race. Non-native English speaking teachers reported they are often stricter with their students because they know of the high requirements needed to pass TOEFL and IELTS tests. These high requirements, set by native English-speaking administrators, put additional pressure on the educational standards of non-native English speaking countries. This causes them to form the opinion that their students do not have the privilege to take the subject of English lightly, in order to motivate them to reach their goals. On the other hand, native English-speaking teachers have differing opinions relating to the teaching of English as a Second Language. They believe that students progress better in a natural environment. While grammar and knowing how to use formal words are important, having the courage to use English publicly for communication is more important. The results from the pilot study show that there are problems that need to be explored, and further investigation is needed to find out these factors. Particularly, there was a difference noted in the perceptions that teachers had of themselves, as well as their attitudes and behaviour towards their students.

The first of these factors can be described as the teacher's self-efficacy. In his journal 'Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning' (1993, 128), Bandura wrote that teachers who see themselves as efficacious are willing to give students more time and effort in supporting their learning needs in order to achieve their goals and strengthen motivation naturally. Nevertheless,

these beliefs are not always on a steady level (Adams 1982), and through experience their belief might change (Housego 1991, 3). According to Dembo and Gibson (1985, 178), teachers with a high level of efficacy are more academic and people-orientated, and those with a high sense of efficacy in their own personal achievements additionally want their students to achieve further, feel more accountable towards their students' learning, have strategies for achieving goals, have a positive attitude towards teaching and have a strong belief they are capable of influencing students' learning (Ashton & Webb 1986, 4). This shows a link between the way a teacher behaves, and their students' motivation to learn.

The second factor noted from the pilot study can be described by teacher immediacy behaviours. There was a stark difference noted between the native and non-native teachers in terms of how they communicated and interacted with their students, with native speakers preferring an informal environment, and non-natives preferring a stricter classroom. According to Albert (1971) immediacy is a concept that social psychologists use to clarify elements of communication; verbal and non-verbal behaviours that happen throughout interactions. The immediacy principle as defined by Mehrabian (1971) is as follows:

“People are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer.” (p.1)

Much research has been conducted over many decades to improve learning outcomes. Naturally, delivering knowledge will always be the main concern of many educational studies. Teacher immediacy is a variable that may have a very tight link to learning outcomes, as when students 'like' their teachers,

they are likely to have greater motivation to respond to them in classroom environments.

From this initial look into the contexts and issues, a more complete research project can now be made.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the issues mentioned above, we can identify some of the issues that will be raised as follows: firstly, there are differences in how English teachers perceived themselves. Secondly, is that all the English teachers, whether they are native or non-native, considered student motivation to be highly important. Thirdly, even though they seem to think student motivation is highly important in learning English, they have different opinions in how they perceive themselves and how they interact with them, and how this correlates to their students' motivation, which leads to the fourth point, that they all aware that even though they carry the same responsibility as English teachers, they receive different treatment in how they are judged on their ability, salary and recognition which they get from institutions, parents and students.

1.3. Scope of the Study

In this research, the scope of analysis is limited to comparing native English speaking and non-native English speaking teachers' self-efficacy, immediacy and their students' motivation in 'X' secondary international school.

1.4. Research Questions

The core problem of this research study is ascertaining the efficacy level of teachers of English as a Second Language using Bandura's index of teacher self-efficacy, measuring teachers' immediacy and measuring their students' levels of motivation. Below are the problems that are planned for investigation:

- 1) Is there a difference between NEST and non-NEST self-efficacy?
- 2) Is there a difference between how their students' perspective on NEST and non-NEST immediacy?
- 3) Is there a difference between NEST and non-NEST students' motivation?

1.5. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study is to examine the different levels between non-NEST and NEST self-efficacy beliefs, teachers' immediacy, and their students' motivation to learn English as a Foreign Language.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The primary focus of this research study is to assist all interested and relevant parties in the hope of helping and supporting teachers for delivering the subject. Subsequently, students and teachers will be more fully prepared to face the challenges a globalized world can present to them, and be able to face these with adequate skills to tackle them. The advantage of this study for the school itself is that it is expected to create an environment that is conducive for a school, so as to prevent the occurrence of inhibition of learning and teaching, especially in English subjects. It should also help to prevent high teacher turnover due to

feelings staff are not treated fairly, to prevent teacher burnout, and to improve parent dissatisfaction with the work of the school or teacher. It can also be felt by the community, because a conducive school environment creates an intelligent society that can examine both the shortcomings and the advantages of itself, so as to create a society that is wiser to address future phenomena or problems.

1.7. Definition of Terms

a. NEST and non-NEST

NEST is an acronym for Native English-Speaking Teacher. From this term, comes non-NEST, which is sometimes written NNEST in the literature. According to Medgyes (1992), the terms were first used in the discussion of the dichotomy between both teacher types, particularly in the discriminatory status of non-NESTs by many theorists in this area of research. While both terms may appear self-explanatory, it is worth considering exactly what is meant by the term 'Native Speaker'. Medgyes highlights the problems of this definition, noting that simply being from a traditionally thought of 'native English speaking' country, such as the UK or US, may not be enough. He points out that someone who has a parent from both a native and a non-native country may be said to fall into both categories, or neither. In addition, it is also problematic to say that someone speaks at a native level, as many examples exist of highly proficient users of English from non-native countries, as well as many incompetent users from native English-speaking countries. When the subject being taught is English, simply being born in a native English-speaking country may not be enough to denote capability in the language.

b. Teacher self-efficacy

Generally speaking, self-efficacy is a term developed by Bandura (1977) to talk about a person's belief in their ability to accomplish a particular task or achieve a particular result. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) specify that teacher self-efficacy is the confidence that a teacher has in their capability of attaining preferred levels of student involvement and achievement within their classes. The expectation is that a teacher who has high levels of teacher self-efficacy will find it easier to achieve such results as they desire precisely because they have a greater belief that they can.

c. Teacher immediacy

Christophel defines immediacy as “the degree of perceived physical and/or psychological closeness between people” (1990, 325). Thus, teacher immediacy refers to the closeness between instructors and their students. There are a range of behaviours that are used to indicate immediacy, which can be broken down into verbal and non-verbal. Teacher immediacy theories focus on the impact that this closeness or distance can have on student achievement and engagement.

d. Student motivation

Student motivation refers to the desire that a student has to engage in their classes. It can relate to their desire to learn, to achieve or to participate in any of the tasks that exist within the classroom, specifically those set by their teacher.

1.8. Thesis Overview

This thesis is divided into five outlined chapters. The first chapter is the introduction chapter, which covers background issues that lead into the research.

It also discusses English as a subject in school and how it has become the educational standard around the world. It talks about differences between NESTs and non-NESTs. Background issues are compared to the actual problems for English as a Foreign Language students in the context's school. Research questions are formed and research purposes are discussed as well as a consideration of whom this research benefits. Finally, there is a discussion of how this research was written systematically, in order to guide the connection between chapters.

The second chapter is the theoretical basis chapter. Each variable is explained thoroughly from previous theorists and researchers. There is relevant research that supports the main theoretical description and the theoretical framework composition, which relates previously noted theories to identified important issues through a conceptual model. The chapter ends the determination of research's hypotheses.

Chapter three covers research and methodology. In this chapter, the most appropriate techniques and instruments for data collection are discussed and the validity and reliability of research instruments are proven. Finally, there is a discussion of how the research analyses data and statistical hypothesis explanations are given.

The fourth chapter is the results of data collection and a discussion to clarify data analysis, including their origin, the values of teacher efficacy, immediacy and student motivation, a comparison between NEST and non-NEST, the statistical hypothesis test results and conclusions as to whether to accept or

reject statements. It ends with a discussion of research limitations and areas that need to be addressed.

The last chapter contains the conclusion. It discourses on the results, and combines theories, data and hypotheses. This is followed by implications of the study, and offers suggestions on what can be done to broaden the research area.

