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Native and Non-Native Teachers' Changing Beliefs about Teaching English as an International Language

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Abstract

In view of the paucity of evidence on teachers' conceptions of teaching English an International Language (EIL), the present study used panel discussions to investigate the beliefs of 10 native and 10 non-native English-speaking teachers about their roles in teaching English in the EIL contexts and the perceptions of EIL. The findings revealed that some aspects of teachers' beliefs about their roles were reshaped after panel discussions. Non-native teachers showed lower levels of self-confidence in their role in teaching EIL and underlined the superiority of native teachers. However, after panel discussions, they were able to notice their advantages in comparison with native teachers. It was also observed that both non-native and native teachers underwent a slight shift in conceptualizing what EIL is. Non-native teachers' appraisal of native speakerism also decreased after panel discussions. These findings suggest that both native and non-native teachers hold certain beliefs about EIL and native speakerism which are not in line with EIL theorizing.

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1. Introduction

The English language has reached its international status today as a mounting number of people use it as the medium of communication all around the world (Lee, 2018; Oda, 2017). According to Clyne and Sharifian (2008) and Matsuda (2018), about 380 million people speak English as their first language. Clyne and Sharifian (2008) maintained that more than one billion people speak it as a second language to “communicate with other second language users with whom they do not share a cultural and linguistic background” (p. 282). It is estimated that “about 80 percent of verbal exchanges in which English is used as a second or foreign language do not involve any native speakers of English” (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 209). Therefore, people who come from English-speaking countries constitute a small percentage of English users and that is why Graddol (1997) concludes that “native speakers may feel the language ‘belongs’ to them, but it will be those who speak English as a second or foreign language who will determine its world future” (p. 10).

The terms English as an International Language (EIL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), English as a Global Language, and World Englishes (WEs) have emerged to echo new perceptions in applied linguistics, which accept the legitimacy of varieties of English (Matsuda, 2003; 2018; McKay, 2018). However, English language teaching, testing, and materials are still largely based on British and American English (Jenkins, 2012). Kilickaya (2009) rightly questions the current teaching practice and teacher education, maintaining that, “if we have the aim of allowing our students to communicate across cultures, then we should teach English so that they will be able to understand/tolerate many accent and varieties through exposure” (p. 37). McKay (2011) also suggests the development of English as an International Lingua Franca (EILF) curriculum, which include examples of diversity of English varieties and exemplify L2-L2 interactions. In practice, however, there are no widely used courses or curricula to reflect this emerging need, and this field is in dire need of practical ideas and techniques (McKay, 2018).

Iran is a location for the exploration of EIL as millions of Iranians attend English language classes (Clyne & Sharifian, 2008). Falling within the expanding circle, based on Kachru's (1986) concentric circles, it is a norm-dependant country and hence American and/or British English are expected to be the norm providers in English teaching in this context. The fact that 80% of the English users in the world are non-native speakers (Clyne & Sharifian, 2008) seems to have little impact on the way the English language is taught. People's exposure to other varieties of English is very limited, and this has led to a low tolerance of different varieties and accents. This belief is also held by both native and non-native speaking language teachers (Lee, 2018). The purpose of this paper is to investigate native and non-native teachers' beliefs about teaching English as a global language and their roles in this teaching practice.

2. Theoretical Framework

English as an International Language (EIL) is used as an appropriate term to refer to the international use of English, especially considering the interaction between non-native speakers and native speakers and other non-native speakers (Jenkins, 2015; Llorca, 2004). Yano (2001) argues that if English is supposed to be used as an international language, it should be “as simple and regular as possible in its linguistic forms, in its rules of use, and socioculturally as neutral as possible in order to attain high learnability and usability” (p. 129). In other words, it should be dissociated from so-called native speakers' norms (Pennycook, 2017).

Since the early 1960s, sociolinguists and social psychologists have become concerned with investigating the attitudes toward different varieties and speakers of English (Matsuda, 2018). While early research mostly focused on the attitudes held by the native speakers (Stryker, 1968; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1959), the widespread use of English as an international language shifted the focus of researchers to exploring the attitudes held by the people in the Expanding circle (Barkhuizen, 2011; Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Kormos, Kiddle, & Csizér, 2011; Pennycook, 2017; Tajeddin & Eslamdoost, 2019). There are some studies regarding the attitudes of non-native speaker teachers toward the new

status of English. McKay (2003) used a questionnaire to examine the Chilean teachers' attitudes toward EIL and concluded that native speaker pronunciation is considered as 'correct' and that Chilean teachers believed the biggest problem of native speaker teachers in Chile is not being familiar with the local context. Jenkins (2012) conducted an in-depth interview with eight non-native speaking teachers from four different countries to explore their attitudes about native-like accent and pronunciation. The results revealed that native accents were perceived as good, perfect, correct, proficient, competent, fluent, real, and original English while non-native accent was regarded as not good, wrong, incorrect, not real, fake, deficient, and strong. These findings were further substantiated in a more recent study (Jenkins, 2015).

Tajeddin, Alemi, and Pashmforoosh (2018) examined the attitudes of 125 non-native Iranian teachers toward native speaker norms. These teachers preferred the use of standardized accents such as the American or British accents during the course of language education. They also agreed that the use of a small amount of the first language in the learning context is acceptable and may even help language learners understand better. In another study, Masoumpanah and Zarei (2014) used questionnaires and in-depth interviews to investigate the ways the notion of EIL interacts with Iranian language teachers' beliefs and their perception of professional competence. The results of their study revealed that Iranian teachers felt obliged to stick to Standard English and did not generally accept the notion of EIL in their teaching practice. At the same time, the introduction of EIL reshaped their identity and their perception of professional competence and made them feel more secure and confident.

The brief review of the literature shows that despite the current consensus over the new status of English and the implications it may have for EIL, there is little empirical evidence of the extent to which the researchers' assumptions are matched by native and non-native speakers' beliefs. In reality, it has been seen that the beliefs of real 'consumers' of ELT are seldom consulted and represented in research (Kirkpatrick, 2006; Li, 2009; Matsuda, 2018; Oda, 2017). Thus, the following

research question was formulated in this study: What are native and non-native English-speaking teachers' beliefs about EIL and their roles in teaching EIL and how are their beliefs changed due to panel discussions?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants of the study were 10 native and 10 non-native English-speaking teachers, including males ($n = 7$) and females ($n = 13$), who taught English as a foreign language in a language institute in Iran. Based on Clyne and Sharifian' (2008) argument, those participants who had learned English as their first language in childhood and continued to use it fluently as their dominant or main language in adulthood were considered native speakers of English. Those who had learned English as a second or foreign language during either childhood or adulthood were considered as non-native English speakers in the present study. With help from the administrative department at the institute, the teachers' resumes were examined to identify and contact the native speaking teachers.

The participants had different educational backgrounds and held degrees in non-English fields, as well as relevant fields such as teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), English literature, or English translation. However, this background was not a major criterion in teachers' recruitment in the language institute. The non-English fields included Engineering, Medicine, and Science. Four of the Engineering graduates held a BS, and two of them held an MS. One of the Medicine graduates held a BS, and two of them held an MD. Three of the Science graduates held a BS, and one of them held an MS. Four of the English graduates held a BA, two of them held an MA, and one of them held a Ph.D. The equal distribution of gender could not be achieved as male teachers were less in number than female teachers in the institute where the study was conducted. Moreover, they had varying teaching experience ranging from one year to ten years. Based on Tsui's (2009) and Gathbonton's (2008) arguments, the participants were divided into novice and experienced teachers. It should be noted that five of the male teachers were novice, as they had less than two years of teaching experience,

while two of them were experienced and had more than eight years of experience. Six female teachers were novice while seven of them were experienced.

3.2. Panel Discussions

Interactive panel discussions were used as a venue for novice and experienced teachers to exchange their beliefs about teaching English EIL. In this study, the more experienced teachers were included to provide assisted performance and a "source of development" (Elkonin, 1998, p. 299) for the novice teachers. To do so, two groups, one of which included native speaking teachers and the other included non-native speaking teachers, were created. This was done by the third author who obtained a list of the teachers at the institute under study from the administrative department.

The members of each group met in the head office of the institute for three sessions of about 30 to 40 minutes to talk about different aspects of teaching in a globalized context. All of the participants participated actively in the panel discussions and did not remain silent. The questions of the panel discussions were developed drawing upon different themes, including EIL and native speakerism. The relevance and clarity of the questions were checked by two TEFL experts, and the items were revised and refined accordingly. During panel discussions, the third author, who was an experienced teacher in the institute, led the discussion forward by asking relevant questions and clarified the concepts whenever necessary to guarantee the involvement of all participants.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

When the participants were selected, informed consent was obtained from all of them before the study began. The participants were ensured that what they said during the panel discussions would not affect their evaluations as teachers and were ensured that their responses would be highly confidential and serve only the research purpose.

The arrangements for the panel discussions were made by the third author, acting as the coordinator of the sessions. The participants were assigned to two groups of five native and five non-native teachers. As both novice and

experienced teachers were required for the reconstruction of teacher beliefs about EIL pedagogy, each group consisted of a combination of novice and experienced teachers.

The participants in the panel discussions discussed the status of EIL, the definition of Standard English, the ownership of English, and the superiority of native English teachers. Teachers also shared their ideas regarding recruitment policies, the advantages and disadvantages of both native and non-native English speaking teachers as well as their beliefs about the students' preferences and ideals. The third author asked the questions and the participating teachers were free to answer but were controlled so as not to go off the topic.

In order to analyze native and non-native teachers' beliefs regarding teaching in the context of EIL, discussions in the panel sessions were transcribed, and the participants' responses were grouped thematically through content analysis. Afterwards, these beliefs were categorized for further comparisons. The third author checked the extracted themes with the first author to enhance the reliability of the content analysis.

4. Results

The findings from the content analysis of native and non-native teachers' panel discussions on teaching EIL are described below.

4.1. Beliefs about EIL Pedagogy

4.1.1. Non-Native Teachers' Beliefs

All the panelists of the non-native teachers' group believed that English is now used as a lingua franca to enhance communication among people around the world. However, 80% ($n = 8$) of the participants contended that English belongs to native speakers who were born and grew up in Inner circle countries while only 2 participants (20%), both of whom were expert teachers, argued that English is an international language that belongs to everybody.

Neda (all names are pseudonyms), a 22-year-old English literature student who had been teaching English for 18 months, said that "*English is used by all the people of the world*

as a lingua franca, but it is their language ... other people are using their language." Kiarash, who had started teaching only recently, maintained that, *"Although I think of English as a language which is spoken by all the people of the world especially in business, I still believe it belongs to the native speakers"*. Nazanin, an experienced teacher, on the other hand, believed that English belongs to all people who use it internationally.

All non-native participants, including the novice and expert teachers, defined Standard English as how the native speakers use it in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Only one of the expert teachers believed that *"Politicians' English, the formal language used by the native speakers ... especially the English used by educated people is standard because it is clear-cut and complete... not the street talk"*. By the same token, none of the participants considered different varieties of English, such as Indian English as legitimate. According to Mahsa, a novice teacher with two years of teaching experience, *"Varieties of English are not acceptable internationally"*.

Moreover, 70% (n = 7) of the participants believed that learners should be exposed to different accents in the listening comprehension parts of the textbooks. Sahar, an expert teacher, said that *"They should be prepared ... they should be able to understand the non-native English speakers like Indian, African, or Chinese people"*. Therefore, she added, practicing to understand other varieties of English is a must, and *"Good course books are those which create opportunities for learners to hear different accents and pronunciations"*. Nonetheless, three novice teachers did not think it was sound to expose the learners to what they called "wrong" or "unstandardized" versions of English.

Another aspect of textbooks discussed at this point was the accent the learners are exposed to. Excerpt #1 reflects non-native teachers' expectations and attitudes toward the type of language that is taught.

Excerpt #1:

Kiarash: I think it is the demand of the customers to learn like a native speaker.

Mahsa: I agree ... we can't teach learners wrong English ... I mean Indian English ... for example ... is not acceptable worldwide ... so we have to teach native-like pronunciation.

Nazanin: but you know ... new methodologies of teaching ... say that as long as communication isn't blocked, pronunciation is not important.

Ali: to be honest as a teacher I insist on teaching the correct pronunciation and as a student I insist on learning native-like accent.

Kiarash: and I don't the supervisors would go for that ... I mean ... imagine what might be written on the observation sheets if we taught Indian or Chinese English ...

Mana: but to my experience students just want to convey the meaning ... accent and pronunciation are not important to them but I agree with you about the observation sheets!

As the above excerpt shows, there was disagreement among non-native teachers about the acceptable accent. About 60% (n = 6) of the participants, half of whom were experienced teachers, believed that learners expect to learn correct, standard English like a native speaker and that supervisors and administrators would not approve of teaching what might be conceived anything other than the native model. By contrast, 40% (n = 4) of the participants disagreed, maintaining that new methods of language teaching focus on meaning and that native-like pronunciation and accent are not important as long as they do not block communication.

4.1.2. Native Teachers' Beliefs

Native English-speaking teachers' perceptions of EIL were positive. They were all aware that English is used worldwide as a means of communication among non-native speakers as well as native and non-native speakers of English. They also believed that English has become the dominant language both in business and in education, and that has enormously affected its use all around the world. However, all but one contended that English does belong to the native speakers.

Moreover, they all agreed that Standard English is how native speakers use it while they talk or write. They all believed that there are only two standard varieties of English in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and structure, including British and American English. Sam, a novice teacher, said that the English spoken by non-native speakers is “*at times difficult to understand ... I mean they might understand one another but I, for one, can't get what they mean ... so I can't call it standard or even legitimate*”.

Other participants, on the other hand, strongly disagreed with the idea of using different varieties of English in textbooks. Excerpt #2 reflects what some of the teachers thought about the varieties of English in textbooks. It was maintained that teaching materials should be based on ‘standard’, ‘correct’ English, which is the English spoken by the native speakers only.

Excerpt #2:

Sam: I don't see why we should intentionally expose the poor learners to what is considered wrong ... I mean what if they just pick up that accent and ...

Rachel: well we can simply tell them that it is not correct to speak like this ... but they should get used to hearing and understanding different versions of English.

John: but I think it is much better just to expose people to ... to real English ... I mean the English used by native speakers ... even in the listening comprehension parts ...

Rachel: what are the chances of an Iranian having a conversation with an American in English?

Sam: it still doesn't mean that we should expose them to wrong English ... They should practice to understand standard English and they will be able to understand any other kind or version of English later ... on their own ...

Mark: yeah ... I mean English coursebooks are like the Bible ... so there shouldn't be any exposure to incorrect information.

Moreover, 70% (n = 7) said that their students needed to learn American and British culture in order to be able to “*get a better feel of the language*”. Twenty percent (n = 2) of the participants argued that culture should not be exclusively related to the USA or the UK and that texts in the textbooks should represent different countries' cultures. Out of the native teachers, 10% (n = 1), by contrast, considered culture to be peripheral.

The last issue, which was highlighted in relation to the status of EIL in the panel discussions, was the needs and wants of the learners. The majority (n = 8; 80%) of the native teachers maintained that their learners want to learn the accent, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar used by native speakers. The remaining 20% (n = 2) believed that conveying meaning and proper communication seem to be more important to their students. They all agreed that the supervisors expect that all teachers use and teach correct English in their classes. Therefore, teaching other varieties of English is overlooked.

4.2. Status of Native and Non-Native Teachers

The advantages of native and non-native English-speaking teachers and the drawback and/or the concerns of each group, as well as the recruitment policies and learners' preferences, were the topics focused during panel discussions regarding the status of native and non-native teachers in the context of EIL.

4.2.1. Non-Native Teachers' Beliefs

The majority of the non-native teachers (n = 7; 70%) did not necessarily think of native speakers as better or more effective teachers, but they emphasized that they had certain advantages. The greatest strength of native teachers, according to these participants, was their intuitive knowledge of the standard, authentic English, and their perfect accent, pronunciation, and intonation.

Another advantage assigned to native teachers was their natural knowledge and use of collocations, phrasal verbs, and idiomatic expressions as well as their intuitive knowledge of connotations and denotations. Excerpt #3 documents the beliefs of non-native teachers about the assigned advantages of native teachers. It was maintained that native

teachers have a better sense of conversational English in addition to colloquial and informal language. A better understanding of the appropriateness of language and higher self-confidence in using and teaching the language were the other benefits of being a native teacher specified by the panelists in the non-native teachers' group.

Excerpt #3:

Sahar: I think native speakers have perfect pronunciation and accent.

Aida: yeah ... and their intonation and ... as my friend said ... pronunciation and everything is just perfect.

Maryam: in my idea, one of their advantages is that they can naturally use idioms, expressions and slangs ... I mean ... they don't even need to

think ...

Amir: yeah ... because they grew up with this language ... they have a better sense of it ... especially about vocabulary and as you said slangs and informal English ... the English we hear on the streets.

Neda: I believe because they have experienced situational learning ... they know how to use English in different situations appropriately.

An outline of the advantages non-native teachers assigned to native teachers can be seen in Table 1. While all the participants agreed on the advantages of native teachers, when asked to talk about the benefits of being non-native teachers, the novice teachers in the non-native group seemed to be rather hesitant.

Table 1

Non-native Teachers' Beliefs about Native Teachers

Advantage	Frequency	Percentage
Intuitive and natural knowledge of pronunciation and intonation	10	100%
Perfect accent	10	100%
Intuitive and natural knowledge of vocabulary	8	80%
Natural use of idiomatic expressions and colloquial language	8	80%
Better understanding of conversational English	6	60%
Better sense of appropriateness of language	5	50%
Higher self-confidence	4	40%

Mahsa, for instance, claimed that she could not think of any benefits for non-native teachers and that she felt inferior to not only the native speakers coming from the Inner circle countries but also those coming from the Outer circle. Similarly, Kiarash maintained that, "Although I don't think native teachers are better teachers than we are, I do feel inferior to them ... even to those who have learnt English as a second language". Experienced teachers, nevertheless, seemed to be more aware of their capabilities and advantages as English teachers.

The greatest strength of non-native English-speaking teachers, as specified by non-native teachers, was their ability to understand learners' learning challenges and help them with their learning difficulties. Other advantages were knowledge of the learners' L1, familiarity with the L1 context and culture, and a better understanding of instances of L1 interferences. It was also stated that non-native teachers have better teaching skills and can teach and explain grammar well. The advantages non-native teachers allocated to the native teachers can be seen in Table 3.

Table 2
Non-native English Speaking Teachers' Beliefs about Non-Native Teachers

Advantages	Frequency	Percentage
Knowing learners and learning difficulties	8	80%
Better understanding of L1 interference	7	70%
Familiarity with L1 culture and context	7	70%
Better methodology and teaching skills	6	60%
Better grammar explanation	5	50%

The panelists in the non-native group contended that the biggest drawback of native English teachers is their poor ability to transfer what they know. Excerpt #4 reflects some of the beliefs the non-native teachers had about the differences between native and non-native speaking teachers. Most participants ($n = 7$; 70%) stated that as native speakers have acquired the language rather than having learned it, they do not know its grammar and hence they cannot teach it well. Among the non-native participants, 80% ($n = 8$) claimed that native teachers are not equipped with the teaching skills qualifying them as good teachers. Moreover, 50% ($n = 5$) of the participants contended that it is difficult for native teachers to anticipate the areas the learners have problems with.

Excerpt #4:

Mahsa: ... I really can't think of any benefits ... I mean ... in comparison with native teachers ...

Nazanin: but that's not true ... they also have many deficiencies ... it's not like they are perfect.

Researcher: can you give some examples?

Nazanin: sure ... you know native speakers learnt the language through acquisition ... I mean they experienced situational learning ... so they don't know anything about grammar.

Mana: and they can't transfer what they know ... because they lack good teaching techniques. I really think non-natives are better and more popular.

A further belief manifested during the panel discussions was on the recruitment policies, the preferences of administrators, supervisors, and learners, and how these affected or even threatened non-native teachers' status. More than half of the non-native teachers ($n = 6$; 60%) maintained that acquiring a native-like accent, pronunciation, and conversational skills were their biggest concerns as non-native teachers. Moreover, 40% ($n = 4$) claimed that they lack confidence as they are at times uncertain about what is correct and that they feel they might not be able to answer all their learners' questions.

By the same token, 60% ($n = 6$) of the non-native panelists believed that they face discrimination in the workplace, especially regarding recruitment policies. Ali, for instance, felt that native and non-native teachers are not treated equally and that the chances of a native speaker to get a job as an English teacher is far higher than a non-native teacher even though they might not be 'qualified' or 'teacher-like'. Furthermore, 40% ($n = 4$) of the participants claimed that the administrators and supervisors are more lenient with native teachers because "*Having native teachers is good publicity for institutes*", said Neda.

On the other hand, novice and experienced non-native teachers' beliefs about learners' preferences were divergent. While the novice non-native teachers contended that all learners prefer a native-speaker teacher, 80% ($n = 4$) of the experienced believed that non-native teachers are more popular with Iranian learners, especially because "*They can identify the areas learners have problems with and provide them with help and support*", said Amir. Only one experienced teacher thought that learners at the advanced level might prefer

native teachers because of their “*knowledge of collocations, phrasal verbs ... and because they are perfect models for accent*”, according to Mana. Excerpt #5 partly depicts the ideas the non-native English-speaking teachers had about native teachers.

Excerpt #5:

Aida: I think it’s natural ... I mean it’s like a trend ... it’s fashionable.

Neda: yeah ... to be honest ... having native teachers is good publicity for institutes ... so I guess it is normal that they prefer to hire native teachers.

Maryam: I remember in our TTC there was a native speaker ... who was terrible ... I mean he couldn’t teach ... but he was hired just because he was a native speaker.

Sahar: that’s true ... but most of them decide to quit after a short time because they see they can’t do the job well.

Researcher: What about the learners? Do you think they prefer native speakers?

Kiarash: No doubt ... I mean, who can teach a language better than the people who own it?

Mana: I think ... at the advanced level there might be a preference for

native teachers ...cause you know their knowledge of collocations, phrasal verbs ... and because they are perfect models for accent.

Nazanin: but to my experience non-native teachers are much more popular ... native teachers are interesting at first, but after a while, the students feel they don’t learn anything.

4.2.2. Native Teachers’ Beliefs

The panelists in the native teachers’ groups believed that non-native speakers of English could be good teachers due to their particular strengths. The most significant advantage of a non-native English teacher, as specified by the native teachers, is that they have experienced learning another language. Therefore, they can have a greater sense of empathy with their learners and anticipate their problems more easily. Moreover, they have a better understanding of language learning strategies and can teach them to their learners. Being familiar with the learners’ culture and their first language, having better teaching techniques, and knowing the rules and terminologies of grammar are other benefits of non-native teachers accentuated by the native teachers’ group. Table 3 outlines the native teachers’ beliefs about the advantages of non-native teachers.

Table 3

Native English Speaking Teachers’ Beliefs about Non-Native Teachers

Advantage	Frequency	Percentage
Anticipating learners’ problems	8	80%
A greater sense of empathy	7	70%
Better understanding of learning strategies	7	70%
Better insights into grammar	6	60%
Familiarity with learners’ L1 and culture	5	50%
Better teaching techniques	4	40%

On the other hand, the native teachers named intuitive knowledge of correct English, standard pronunciation and natural accent, greater insights into English-speaking countries’ culture, better sense of colloquial English, and the natural use of idiomatic

expressions as the benefits of native teachers. They also believed that they were much more confident compared with non-native teachers. Table 4 summarizes the native participants’ beliefs about the advantages of being native teachers.

Table 4
Native English Speaking Teachers' Beliefs about Native Teachers

Advantages	Frequency	Percentage
Intuitive and natural knowledge of correct English	8	80%
Standard accent and pronunciation	8	80%
English culture	7	70%
Natural use of idiomatic expressions and colloquial language	5	50%
Higher self-confidence	4	40%

In an exceptional case, one of the novice teachers, John, believed non-native teachers do not have any strengths or advantages and that the only people who can teach English are those who have acquired it naturally. He stated that, *"I don't think it is possible to teach a language which is not your first language ... when you don't know something completely, you should not be allowed to teach it"*.

Excerpts #6 partly shows the perceptions of the native teachers regarding both non-native and native teachers.

Excerpt #6:

Ellie: I think non-native teachers' biggest strength is that ... is that they have actually *learnt* English ... so they know how the students need to learn ... and that's a big plus.

Mike: and for the very same reason they can empathize with the students ... they can anticipate what might go wrong in the class much better than native speakers.

Jane: They can also articulate the rules of grammar perfectly ... I mean things we don't even know. Whenever I have to teach grammar, I google ... I study grammar books ... but these guys just know it all!

Sam: native speakers have a better feel of the everyday vernacular English ... they use and understand slangs and street talk quite naturally.

Rachel: this is also true about idiomatic expressions ... we just use them without thinking ... so like that we expose our learners to authentic samples of English.

John: that's true ... we also know the culture better ... I mean it's our culture.

The native participants discussed the drawbacks and concerns of non-native teachers as well. While 60% (n = 6) of the native teachers considered using grammar, vocabulary, and language in general correctly as the biggest concern of non-native teachers, 40% (n = 4) pointed to poor pronunciation and accent as the biggest drawbacks of non-native English-speaking teachers. As to culture, 30% (n = 3) of the participants contended that non-native teachers do not know adequately about English-speaking countries' culture, and 20% (n = 2) felt that non-native teachers are not confident enough in teaching and using English.

Four (40%) native teachers maintained that their non-native colleagues face discrimination in the workplace and that not only the administrators but also the learners prefer native English-speaking teachers. Excerpt #7 demonstrates some problems the native speaking teachers think non-native speaking teachers face in the classroom. They contended that learners seem to be more interested in them as individuals and that their teaching skills and qualifications do not seem to be important to them. They also admitted that recruitment policies in Iran, and elsewhere in the world, are in favor of hiring native speakers even in the European Union where 'native-speaker only' job advertisement is against the rules.

Excerpt #7:

Researcher: what are the challenges of being a non-native English teacher?

Emma: well ... their language proficiency I guess ... I mean they sure don't know all the words, slangs and idioms of English ... it makes it really hard.

Monica: and they have this problem with accent ... I don't wanna judge them or anything, but it seems to be that they don't even try to sound like native speakers.

Mike: well to me ... their biggest challenge is proving themselves to the students and the supervisors ... I mean when we say something ... nobody dares to question us ... but with the non-natives it's a whole different story!

Jane: true that ... the students *love* to have native teachers ... and they keep asking questions about the culture and stuff ...

Ellie: and they talk badly about their former teachers ... those who were non-native speakers ... it makes me feel bad.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore native and non-native English-speaking teachers' beliefs about language teaching in a globalized context. The findings from the teachers' collaborative discussions showed that native teachers believe they have several advantages over non-native teachers, and many non-native teachers admitted these advantages. The results of panel discussions showed that all but one of the native teachers contended that English belongs to native speakers. This goes against Jenkins' (2012) observation that English as a Lingua Franca is an "anything goes, reduced or simplified" (p. 491) version of English which can be used by everybody in any form that allows communication. This belief, as maintained by the non-native teachers in the current study, can be due to their low level of self-confidence as non-native speakers and their approval of native speakerism despite mounting arguments against it in the literature (Benke & Medgyes, 2005; Reves & Medgyes, 1994).

Furthermore, it was observed that both novice and experienced non-native teachers defined Standard English as how native speakers use it in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. This is in line with multiple studies in the context of this study (e.g., Masoumpanah & Zarei, 2014; McKay, 2018; Tajeddin & Eslamdoost, 2019; Zabetipour &

Baghi, 2015), who stated that Iranian teachers felt obliged to stick to standard English and did not generally accept the notion of English as a lingua franca in their teaching practice. They believed that it was not their language to control, so they had to teach what was considered the reliable, standardized form of English.

The non-native teachers also believed that learners should be exposed to different accents in the listening sections of textbooks. They stated that in order to understand future communication with non-native speakers from different countries, students should be exposed to American and British accents as well as other varieties such as Indian English. This is in accordance with the study conducted by Kilickaya (2009), who maintained that, "...we should teach English so that they will be able to understand/tolerate many accents and varieties through exposure" (p. 37). However, it was also found that the majority of the native speaking teachers believed that teaching materials should be based on Standard English spoken by native speakers only. Thus, it could be maintained that non-native teachers believed in the use of non-native varieties more than native teachers did.

In relation to English as an International Language, the native teachers regarded English as a language used worldwide as a means of communication among non-native speakers as well as native and non-native speakers of English. This substantiates the findings of Llorca (2004) and Yano (2001). Llorca (2004) and McKay (2018) stated that English as an International Language is gradually turning into most modern uses of English, with interaction occurring among native and non-native speakers. In this regard, Yano (2001) also argued that English, in its most simplistic and highly learnable form, can easily be named as an international language.

The majority of both native and non-native teachers stated their belief that language students need to learn about native speaking countries' culture, e.g., British or American culture, in order to have a better understanding of the English language. This has been further found in studies such as Choi (2016), Holliday (2018), Lave and Wenger (1991), Flores and Day (2006), Luehmann and Tinelli (2008), and Clarke (2009). These studies show that the

personal beliefs and culture of the people who are considered native speakers of any specific language determine many of the paralinguistic roles of the language. The target language culture has also been stated as having a role in teachers' beliefs as it helps teachers understand what to teach and how to teach it (Ahn, 2013; Holliday, 2018; Zahavi, 2015).

A large percentage of the native teachers argued that language learners want to learn the accent, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar used by native speakers in real life situations. The non-native teachers further emphasized this issue and stated that this is a must in classrooms. This is supported by studies such as Lee (2018), McKay (2003), Kilickaya (2009), and Tajeddin et al. (2018). McKay (2003) and Kilickaya (2009) found that most modern English language teachers have a strong belief in helping their students acquire a native-like accent and proficient language use. Tajeddin et al. (2018) also found that non-native language users prefer the use of native American or British accents in their classrooms and consider these accents as the norm in language classes.

Further examination of the findings revealed that the non-native teachers regarded their greatest strength as the ability to understand learners' challenges and help them with their learning difficulties as they were once language learners themselves. Also, Choi (2016), Moussu and Llorca (2008) and McMillan (2013) reported similar findings. That is, they found that non-native teachers, once language learners, understand the different stages and the difficult procedure behind language learning. As a result, they have a better understanding of what their students are experiencing and can even guide them.

The debate on native versus non-native teachers' beliefs in the language classroom has been a long-lasting one over several decades, resulting in conflicting findings (Clandinin, 2000). Pasternak and Bailey (2004) posited that these conflicting findings can be due to confusion between who is a native speaker and who is a non-native speaker. The current study sought to examine the differences between native and non-native English-speaking teachers' beliefs about EIL and their roles in teaching EIL. From the findings, it can be concluded that both native and non-native

believe that they have their own specific abilities and that it cannot be maintained that one is superior over the other. Also, the findings support the idea that, despite the recognition of EIL in theorizing and research, certain aspects of it, particularly non-native varieties of English, are less favored by both native and non-native teachers.

The native teachers believed that they had better general English skills, with a greater ability in naturally using different phrases and collocations. The non-native teachers reported lower levels of self-confidence and thought that they performed less fluently than native teachers (see Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016, and Lee, 2018 for similar findings), but stated that they were able to understand learners better. Thus, the results imply that non-native teachers in Iran need to be made more aware of their teaching abilities as they were once language learners themselves and could convey their own experiences to their students. With on-the-job teaching sessions and further educational programs, non-native teachers can be aided in reconstructing some of their misconceptions about their abilities as non-native teachers.

This study had a few limitations that can motivate the need for further research. It was limited to teachers teaching English at an institute in a country in the Expanding circle. Further studies can be conducted in countries in the Inner circle and the Outer circle. Furthermore, this study elicited teachers' beliefs. Learners' perceptions of EIL and the status of native and non-native teachers in EIL pedagogy can be examined in future studies to understand their beliefs and to explore matches and mismatches between the beliefs of teachers and learners. Finally, as this study was based on a small-scale qualitative design with 20 participants, larger-scale studies using questionnaires can be conducted to triangulate the findings.

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