# ASIAN PENDIDIKAN

# A Comparative Literature Review of Native and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers' Characteristics in English Language Classroom

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**Abstract:** This literature review focuses on the characteristics of native and non-native English-speaking teachers in English language classrooms. The study seeks to identify the differences between native and non-native English teachers in teaching English language classrooms. A total of 16 articles were reviewed and analysed using the AntConc program to analyse patterns and frequencies of the terms in the articles. Comparisons on native and non-native English-speaking teachers' beliefs, teaching practice and proficiency were made to gain a deeper understanding of their roles and effectiveness in English language classroom.

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching (ELT), Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST), Non-native English Teachers (NNEST), recruitment, experiences, error, bilingual

## 1. Introduction

In the context of English language learning, native and non-native English-speaking teachers have always been a topic of discussion among educators and students. Students also remain widely divided about which is the ideal English teacher, native or non-native teachers. Generally, a native English-language speaker is someone who speaks the English language as their first language. Authors define Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) as those who have spoken the English language since childhood and as their mother tongue (Chomsky, 1965; Wang & Fang, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021; Rasyid, 2023). Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) also refer to those high English language proficiency. Using the word 'proficient user' to refer to NESTs is more suitable as they can process strong grammatical and non-grammatical intuitions and speak the English language accurately, fluently and appropriately (Chomsky, 1965; Fauzi & Hashim, 2020; Wulandari et al., 2021; Rasyid, 2023; Fitria, 2023). Deng et al. (2023) stated that native English speakers are someone who live in "inner-circle countries" such as Australia, England, America or former British colonies like Malaysia or Singapore.

Meanwhile, Judd (2021) mentioned that non-native English speakers are from countries where the English language does not serve as their primary language. Non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) are those speakers who do not use English as their first language, but learn the language as a second or foreign language to communicate, understand, and teach it to others or learners (Chomsky, 1965; Braine, 2010; Wulandari et al., 2021; Deng et al., 2023; Fitria, 2023). NNESTs are often perceived as lacking adequate language skills and cultural knowledge of the English language despite joining myriad training programs (Rasyid et al., 2023). Supported by Fitria (2023) highlighted that Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTS) are better in understanding English dialects and slang because it comes from their daily communication with other native speakers.

This article aims to provide educators and students with insights into the characteristics and pedagogical approaches employed by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) in English language classrooms. Previous studies retrieved from online databases have investigated various aspects of NESTs and NNESTs within ELT (English Language Teaching) contexts. However, existing research still presents certain limitations, indicating the need for further studies to explore this topic more deeply. Therefore, this article seeks to identify the differences between native and non-native English teachers in teaching English language classrooms. Specifically, it aims to answer the following research questions: 1) What are the key differences in teaching methods used by NESTs and NNESTs in English language classrooms?

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## 2. Literature Review

In Malaysia, it was reported that Malaysia had imported 375 native English speakers from overseas into Malaysia through the "Native Speaker Programme" in order to improve student's English language skills (Wan Abdul Halim, 2016). Furthermore, within 2014 and 2015, more native English speakers were brought from Cambridge, England, New Zealand to teach the primary schools in Malaysia (Wan Abdul Halim, 2016). However, there isn't much information regarding the recruitment of native English teachers in schools in Malaysia. Looking at the hiring process of English teachers in Malaysia and other countries, most of the articles revealed that being a "native speaker" as the top criterion in the recruitment process either in government or private institutions. This was in line with international research done with 150 recruiters by Kiczkowiak (2020) which revealed that nearly half (45%) of the recruiters considered "native speaker" to be their hiring criterion. Further looking into his findings, among the schools that hired "native speakers" 61% had staffrooms with around 50% "native English teachers. While only 46% of schools brought in "non-native English teachers". Native and non-native labelling has a significant impact on employability. Ismiyani (2021) highlighted the employment discrimination practices in the education field based on the teacher's "nativeness" in the English language. Supported by Chakma (2020), Judd et al. and Deng et al. (2020) study in Malaysia and China, participants in the studies agreed that NEST have a higher chance of being hired as language teacher than NNESTs. The main reason for having native teachers in the schools is to improve the student's English proficiency (Deng et al., 2023). It is believed that these native teachers are rich and able to use the English language accurately and freely to the students compared to non-native teachers (Deng et al., 2021; Ghane & Razmi, 2023; Fitria, 2023). In addition, expatriate NEST also believe that they provide greater opportunities by teaching the language in depth and exposing students to different English dialects (Judd, et al., 2021). While non-native teachers used to claim that they are not as proficient as the native ones because the English language is not their first language. Hence, thinking that it wouldn't make a significant improvement in their English language.

Further, in Judd et al. (2021) study, an NNEST participant noted that it was unnecessary as he felt that expatriate NESTs do not help improve Malaysian students' English proficiency. The study also mentioned that some teachers lack qualified or adequate teaching qualifications. Next, another issue that arose is the wages between native teachers and non-native teachers. It was said that native teachers (NESTs) are paid much more than local teachers (Ismiyani, 2021). Supported in Judd et al.'s study noted that an expatriate NEST in an international school was paid five times more than his colleague who is a non-native teacher (NNEST). The participants in Judd et al.'s (2021) study emphasised the need for equal salaries and benefits for all teachers regardless of native or non-native teachers in order to reduce divisions. Further explained by another participant mentioning the unfairness of different wages paid causes unhappiness among the other teachers in the work field despite they have the experience, knowledge and working on the same job. On the other hand, another participant suggested that the salaries can be paid based on teachers' qualifications and proficiency. For example, teachers who graduated with a Master's and Ph.D. qualifications will be paid higher than teachers with a degree qualification (Judd et al, 2021). Looking into the Indonesian English language hiring system, native teachers or those who are near-native teachers are hired in international and famous schools thinking of providing better education for the students. The reasons they are not being hired in the local ordinary schools are due to the high pay couldn't afford by the schools (Ismiyani, 2021).

However, if compared to studies previously, it showed an improvement in these prejudices. More and more institutions nowadays emphasise the qualifications of teachers as their top criteria rather than their 'nativeness'. Like in Thailand, a study conducted in Thai universities showed that recruiters are now less favourable towards hiring the native speaker as the top criterion as compared to the past. In the study conducted, the findings revealed that the top criteria recruiters looked into was the English language proficiency of the teachers and all participants agreed with it. The rank is later followed by performance during interview sessions, teaching demonstrations and others. Meanwhile, the native speaker criterion was ranked fifteen out of seventeen criteria, showing that the recruiters do not view the nativeness of teachers as important (Thararuedee & Musigrungsi, 2024).

A study on a university in southeast China also mentioned the recruitment criteria for English language teachers. The selected university employed "half Chinese teachers and half overseas teachers from other countries" and prioritised the teachers' English background. Teachers with an educational background in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (TESOL) were considered first, followed by their teaching experiences. (Wang & Fang, 2020). In conclusion, the reviews pointed out that Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) as one of the employment criteria in educational institutions. However, some of the institutions also prioritise educational background, language proficiency, interview performance, teaching experiences and qualities as well as others as their hiring criteria.

## 3. Methodology

A total of 16 articles were collected from various online databases published in the current 5 years, ranging from 2019 to 2024. The 16 journal articles, with more than 500 participants involved in the studies, utilising either qualitative or quantitative methods to investigate and gain an understanding of the difference between Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs), teachers' and students' perceptions, and challenges and strategies implemented in the English language field. The information of the method and instruments

applied were included in the articles, which are suitable and relevant to the research objective and research questions of the study.

Most of the research methods employed qualitative methods, involving instruments such as semi-structured interviews, essay writing, digital questionnaires, and focus group discussions (FGD) with open-ended questions given to the participants to seek answers related to the research objectives. Meanwhile, the quantitative method, providing questionnaire questions for the participants to answer as well as the literature review method, involving 3 articles were reviewed to understand the trend and gain a deep understanding. Additionally, some researchers also utilise the mixing method, which is a qualitative and quantitative method to conduct the study.

The selected articles were analysed using a corpus analysis tool called *AntConc*. *AntConc* is a software application designed to analyse the frequency and distribution of words or keywords within a collection of texts. In this study, *AntConc* was used to examine the 16 articles collected for patterns in language use related to NESTs and NNESTs. The 16 selected articles contained a total of 148.743 tokens, as identified through analysis using *AntConc*. Additionally, it also revealed that the term "*native*" appeared 2.065 times across the dataset, indicating its prominence in discussions surrounding English language teaching.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The term '*native*' has been mentioned 2,065 times in 16 studies about native and non-native teachers, ranging from 2019 to 2024 showed in Fig. 1. Overall, the 16 studies have provided deep insights into native and non-native English-speaking teachers in terms of learners' perceptions, employment, teaching practices, characteristics as well as their language proficiency in the English education field.
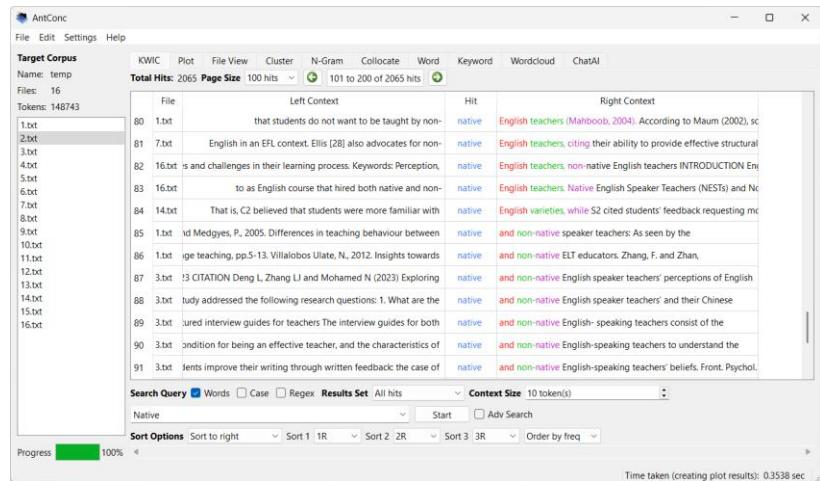


**Fig. 1: Frequencies of the term 'native' in 16 analysed articles**

Researchers mentioned that students think only those teachers who are native speakers are ideal or effective. This is because they provide an ideal linguistic model. Learners prefer to have Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) as their teachers in schools because they feel these teachers have sufficient language ability as they are able to communicate the language with the students fluently with accurate and appropriate grammar (Rasyid et. al., 2023). Native teachers, with their high proficiency in the English language, can help the students by guiding them with precise pronunciation, grammar and language usage to enable the students to develop their language skills (Fauzi & Hashim, 2020; Fitria, 2023). Additionally, overseas native teachers can share valuable knowledge regarding different cultures, history and education systems with the students in the lesson (Salihah, 2020).

Personally, I believe that not only native teachers can be an ideal linguistic model but non-native teachers also can be of it. Learning English language as their second language, non-native teachers have a deep understanding of the elements of the language as compared to native teachers. Sometimes, non-native teachers are able to teach the language better than native teachers because they have gone through learning the language. Therefore, they understand the difficulties, challenges, and perceptions students encounter when learning the language.

Next, one of the advantages of being non-native teachers when teaching the English language is we can use a bilingual approach to explain the lesson content to the students. Although in Malaysia, English teachers are encouraged to apply fully English as the medium of instruction in the English language classroom. But to help the students understand better and grasp the meaning effectively, teachers can use students' first language to explain the concepts for better understanding. An approach such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is employed in the language classroom by translating the grammar rules into teachers' and students' first language or vice versa so that the students are able to learn the grammar effectively. This part will be further explained in the next section.
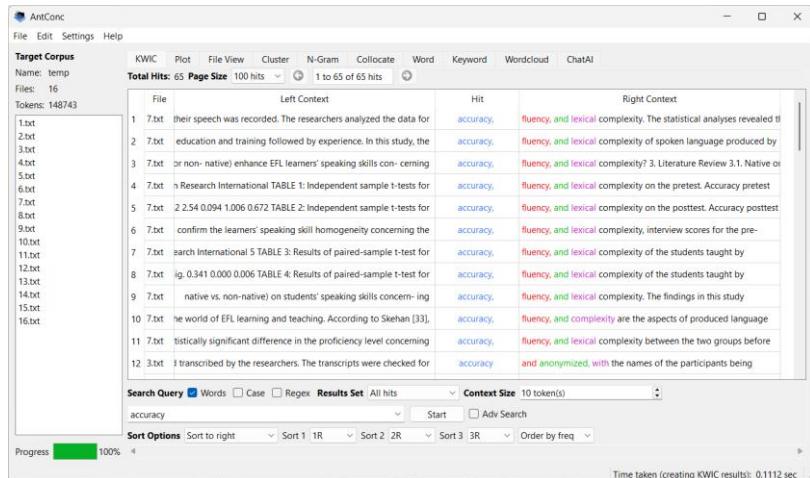
**Fig. 2: Frequencies of the term 'accurate' in 16 analysed articles**
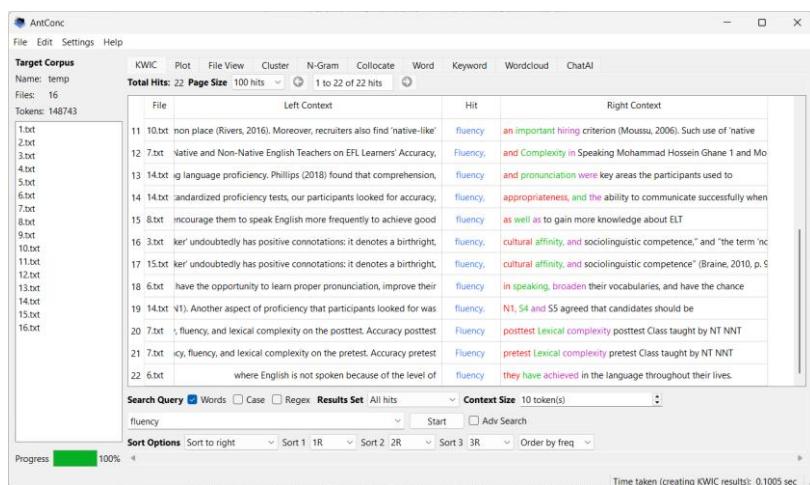


**Fig. 3: Frequencies of the term 'fluency' in 16 analysed articles**

The terms "*accuracy*" and "*fluency*" appeared 65 times and 22 times, respectively, highlighting the importance of these factors in discussions on the influence of native and non-native English-speaking teachers. In speaking skills, research by Ghani et al. (2023) indicates that both native and non-native teachers have improved students' accuracy and fluency. Ghane conducted the research to assess students' speaking proficiency by looking into three different related aspects: accuracy, fluency, and lexical complexity. The research findings noted that students who were taught by both NESTs and NNESTs teachers significantly improved their speaking fluency and accuracy. The results showed most students performed well in terms of speaking accuracy when non-native teachers taught them, with the highest mean value of 90.93 for non-native teachers as compared to the mean of 90.93 achieved by native teachers. This is because their teachers will strictly adhere to the Grammar rules and provide feedback to correct their errors on the spot, ensuring students learn the most accurate language (Ghane et al., 2023). It is also supported in studies conducted by Fitria (2023) and Fauzi & Hashim (2020) as one of the strengths of non-native teachers. Further, according to them, native teachers will try to understand and comprehend students' non-standard language use. Therefore, they listen actively to the students instead of correcting their errors. It doesn't benefit the students' language proficiency in the long run as students are unable to understand their mistakes and learn from their mistakes. Students may miss great opportunities to make immediate corrections and improvements in their language proficiency. In the future, they may struggle to speak the English language accurately and fluently. However, some native teachers correct students' errors to ensure students master the correct English language (Rasyid et al., 2023).

However, I believe that non-native teachers were also able to improve students' fluency in speaking skills by integrating more speaking activities into the lesson. Students often struggle with speaking skills because they rely too much on their mother tongue, which they shared with their teachers. This has led to a situation where teachers will mainly use their first language in teaching and lack of exposure to an English language environment. Also, I believe that students were still able to acquire their language fluency when they had their teachers designing more speaking-focused lessons with them. As they are encouraged to speak the targeted language from time to time, this ended up improving their fluency in the English language. Practising speaking in the classroom helps to improve their confidence and lower their anxiety,

allowing them to communicate without fear of making mistakes. In the long term, this enables them to apply the language more naturally in their daily lives.

Next, looking at the fluency aspects, native teachers have gained a higher mean (M= 86.53) than non-native teachers (M=73.33) (Ghane, 2023). This is because native teachers provide students with clear and comprehensible input through group work and paraphrasing while introducing discussion topics to them. As a result, the students get motivated and immerse themselves, participating actively in the discussion activity. Moreover, bringing themselves into the English language environment also helps to improve their confidence. Students are more confident to engage in the conversations and express their ideas freely using the targeted language.

While for lexical complexity aspects, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups of teachers (Ghane, 2023). In Malaysia, one of the aims highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 is to "upskill English language teachers and expand opportunities for greater exposure to English language". According to research conducted by the British Council Malaysia, it was found that while English teachers in Malaysia have a good proficiency in the English language but they lack confidence when speaking and communicating fluently with others. Therefore, the Ministry of Education has established a project, known as the Pro-ELT program, Professional Upskilling of English Language Teachers.

Pro-ELT is a British Council Project, funded by the MOE Malaysia aims to improve Malaysian primary and secondary school teachers' language skills from B1 to B2 or B1 to C1 in the CEFR proficiency scale. It also seeks to enhance the advancement of teaching methods in the classroom of English teachers. In this project, the teachers are able to improve their confidence in language and particularly in speaking. Besides that, teachers are also getting the chance to gain valuable pedagogy skills relevant to their learners to be used in the classroom to increase the student's engagement in the classroom. Besides project Pro-ELT, the Malaysian Ministry of Malaysia also prepared some programmes and courses like: 1) English Language Skills Improvement Program in Schools (PPKBIS); 2) Integrated Microlearning Programme with Robust Virtual Experience (IMPROVE); 3) Intervention Program Add Options (PITO TESL); 4) Workplace English for Professionals in Education, and others. These programs aim to improve teachers with the necessary skills and confidence to create an effective and engaging learning environment for their students.

## 4.1 Differences Between Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs)

Differences between Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English-speaking teachers can be looked into two (2) different scopes, teaching practice or behaviour and teaching proficiency.

### 4.1.1 Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs)

Native English-speaking Teachers employed a humanistic and affective teaching method while teaching the English language to the students. 2 articles (n=2) highlighted this quality with a total of 17 times mentioned. A study conducted by Deng et al. (2023) reported Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) are more concerned with students' feelings, attitudes and motivation while learning the language. They greatly emphasise emotional and interpersonal aspects like caring, patience, flexibility, participation in the class, and understanding students' learning requirements.

Unlike non-native teachers, whose main concerns are achieving learning outcomes and neglecting the students' needs, native teachers are good at building a good rapport with the students. Non-native teachers are more practical and focus on developing the ability to prepare for their future, providing homework and reinforcing their knowledge and language skills. The presence of good relationships with the students develops a positive learning environment in the classroom. In other words, the learning environment affects the quality of students' self-esteem, motivation and engagement in the language learning process. Having a positive learning environment and teacher-student relationship reduces students' shyness and fosters their motivation and participate actively in the classroom activity as teachers and students can help each other throughout the learning activity.
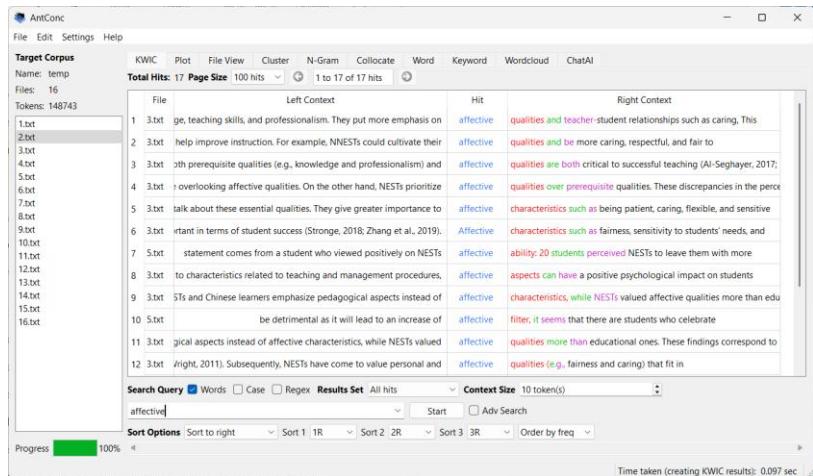
**Fig. 4: Frequencies of the term "affective" in 16 analysed articles**

When teaching in the class, instead of using textbooks as the main teaching materials (traditional method), Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) utilise student-centred learning in the classroom and do not rely much on the textbook. AntConc analysis showed that the term "*student-centred*" was mentioned 11 times, and "*textbook*" was mentioned 6 times across the articles.
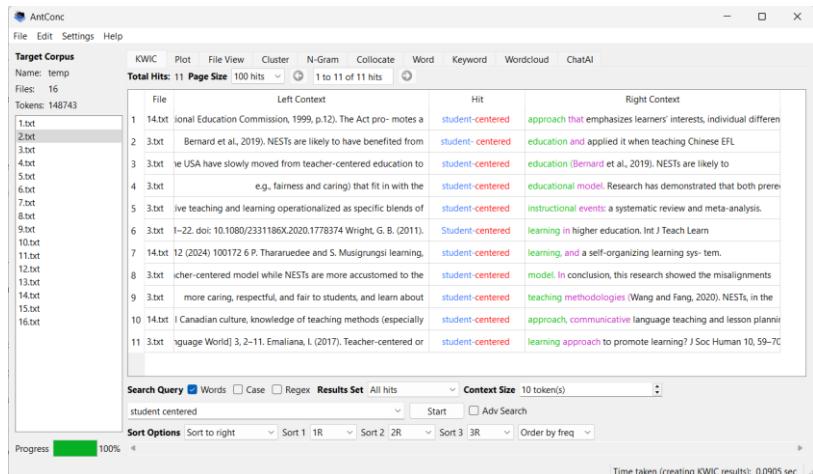


**Fig. 5: Frequencies of the term "student-centred" in 16 analysed articles**

Student-centred learning is a teaching approach where students take charge of their own learning, the teacher assigns them a problem or situation and they have to think of the answers through discussions. This strategy aims to develop students' critical thinking which is crucial to improve their problem-solving and decision-making (Ghafar, 2023). Student-centred teaching strategy has been widely utilised by teachers in recent years due to the influence of 21st Century Learning. It promotes flexibility, creativity, independence and self-direction which will greatly benefit the students as also highlighted by the participants in three studies carried out (Wang & Fang, 2020; Deng et al., 2023; Fatahillah et al., 2024).

Native teachers are creative in implementing various creative speaking activities such as role-play, games, debates, hands-on activities, writing activities (Chakma, 2020; Wang & Fang, 2020; Fauzi & Hashim, 2020; Deng et al., 2023) as well as integrating technology such as audio-lingual activity in the English language classroom (Chakma, 2020; Wulandari, 2021) with the purpose of fostering students' authentic communication skills. The participants in Chakma's (2020) study expressed their opinions that employing various classroom activities helps improve students' listening and speaking skills. Moreover, integrating technology in the lessons such as the use of online videos from YouTube, can help to make the lessons meaningful. Besides that, role-play activity or games involving students working together to complete the tasks assigned by the teachers motivates the students to engage, work together and improve their conversational skills that are useful in their daily lives and for academic purposes, also, it enhances their confidence in using the language.
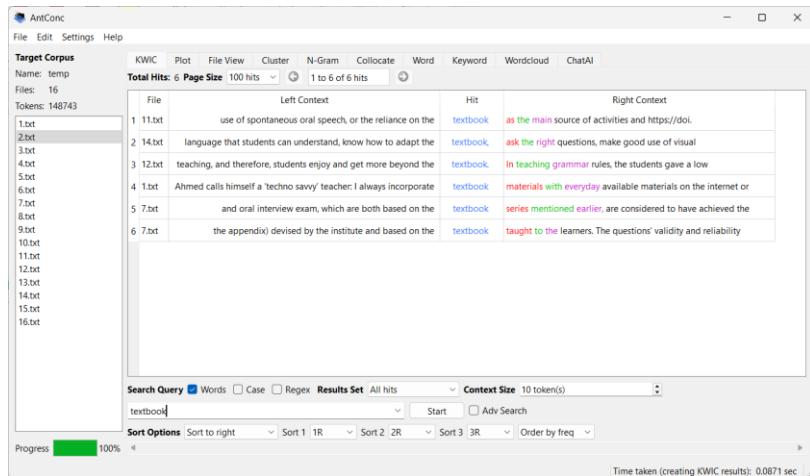
**Fig. 6: Frequencies of the term "textbook" in 16 analysed articles**

Fauzi and Hashim's (2020) research found an interesting finding among the participants in the rural area. Their participants expressed their preference to have native teachers enhance their oral skills. This is because the students have the opportunity to learn *'real pronunciation live'* through various interesting activities, such as singing songs, watching TV, and watching movies designed by the teachers. These activities develop students' interest in engaging in classroom activities and motivate them to acquire the English language. Students taught by native teachers are able to express their ideas and thoughts freely and stress-free. Activities created and implemented by native teachers aim to encourage students to share their ideas on interesting topics that capture their interests. While students are providing their ideas, the teachers focus on vocabulary rather than grammar (Ghane & Razmi, 2023).
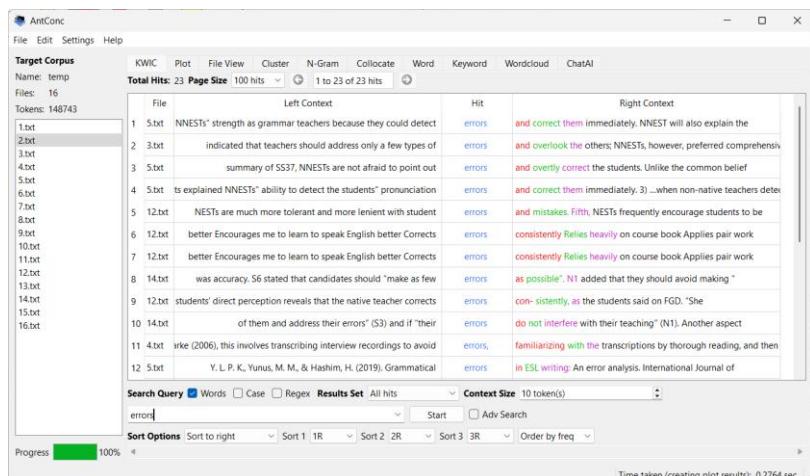


**Fig. 7: Frequencies of the term "errors" in 16 analysed articles**

*'Errors'* has been highlighted 23 times across 9 studies regarding the frequencies of the teachers correcting students' errors. The data showed that this issue is widely discussed among scholars when identifying the differences between native and non-native teachers. As discussed in the earlier section, Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) tolerate and seldom correct students' errors (Wang & Fang, 2020; Deng et al.,2023; Ghane & Razmi, 2023, Rasyid, 2023). However, Rasyid et al.'s (2023) research paper also revealed that native teachers consistently corrected their mistakes, such as pronunciation, and provided them with examples. Supported in Fitria's (2023) paper stated that native teachers can access students' level of proficiency as they can easily check and correct students' mistakes through dialogue and conversations.

It is good to have teachers to correct students' mistakes and errors so that students can remember the mistakes and be alerted to them next time. Correcting students' mistakes, such as grammar mistakes, mispronunciation, vocabulary and etc. are able to improve students' English language. It is crucial to correct their mistakes as it helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem while using the language. The English language is important as it serves as an international language and is important for career requirements. Thus, correcting students' mistakes while they are still learning English enable them to freely and confidently use the language to communicate in the future. One of the benefits of having high proficiency is that entrepreneurs are able to expand their businesses to the international level because they can use the language effectively use the language to collaborate with investors.

However, not all the students like their teachers to correct them. Too frequent and overtly correct students' errors may lead to backfire. An example found in Fauzi & Hashim (2020), the participants expressed their frustrated feelings of being frequently corrected by their teachers. As a result, it made them feel uneasy and embarrassed. This also causes them to lack confidence and self-esteem to speak in the targeted language in the class as they are afraid of being corrected by other people. It is undeniable that Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) have high proficiency in the English language and idiomatic expressions. They can speak fluently and accurately because they have learned to use the language since childhood as their primary language. Their rich vocabulary and good communication skills enable them to teach the students effectively and improve their language skills. As a result, students not only can effectively increase their vocabulary but also enhance their listening, speaking, reading as well as writing skills (Wulandari, et al., 2021).

Native teachers learn the language naturally via daily communication since young. Therefore, when it comes to giving explanations, they are not limited by language. Compared to non-native teachers, the teacher may encounter difficulties in finding a suitable vocabulary to explain the materials to the students (Rasyid et al., 2023). Hence, they can assist the students effectively and comprehend the learning materials together with the students correctly in the lesson.
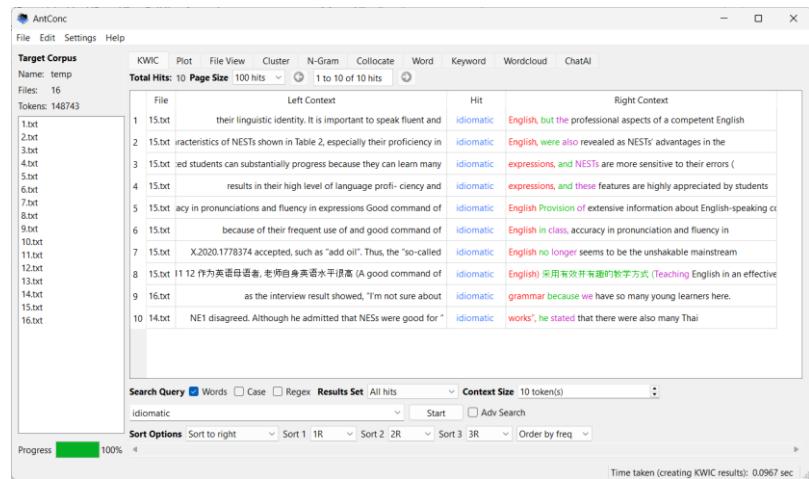


**Fig. 8: Frequencies of the term "idiomatic" in 16 analysed articles**

The analysis found that the term "*idiomatic*" appeared 10 times across the analysed articles, highlighting differences in the use of idiomatic expressions between native and non-native English-speaking teachers. In Wang & Fang (2020), the participants agreed that native teachers succeeded in enhancing their idiomatic expressions. Further agreed by another participant said that students gained the opportunity to learn many idiomatic expressions from their teachers. Not only are students, but also teachers. A non-native participant in Fauzi & Hashim's (2020) research highlighted the importance of having native teachers because cultural differences can be shared and exchanged. The participant further expressed the importance of native teachers as a source of cultural knowledge. Non-native teachers have the opportunity to learn new words and cultures through culture-sharing sessions with native teachers. Especially for idioms, which are unfamiliar to non-native teachers and difficult to understand. Hence, native teachers are crucial as they can explain those idioms' concepts clearly to the teachers.
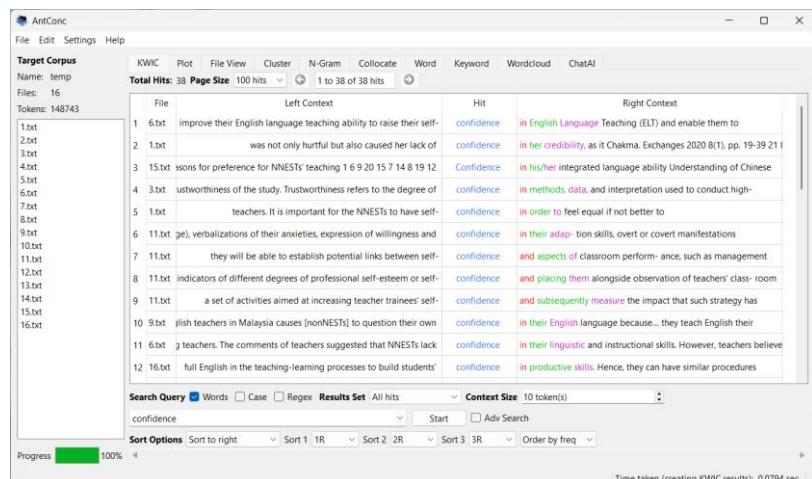


**Fig. 9: Frequencies of the term "confidence" in 16 analysed articles**

Confidence was shown to be a crucial factor affecting both native and non-native teachers in English language teaching. An analysis of the 16 articles revealed that the term "*confidence*" was mentioned 38 times, emphasising its importance in the teaching context. Looking from the morale perspective, native teachers are confident in using the English language to teach, especially those who are challenge-oriented people. They are optimistic and always put lots of effort into improving themselves. Native speakers are believed to face no difficulties or challenges in communicating and teaching the students because it is the language they have been speaking for their entire lives. They can speak freely about the contents with the students, answering questions, providing responses, or even correcting their mistakes without referring to any materials. One of the greatest advantages of native teachers is that they have the ability to understand students' limited language or broken language, which ultimately encourages the students to use and speak the language with the people surroundings in their daily lives. Students feel motivated because they know their language can be understood, and responses are given by their teachers. Hence, native teachers are vital to fostering students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English. It was said that native teachers are the most effective teachers when teaching the English language. However, there are still weaknesses found in native teachers' teaching practices and behaviours.
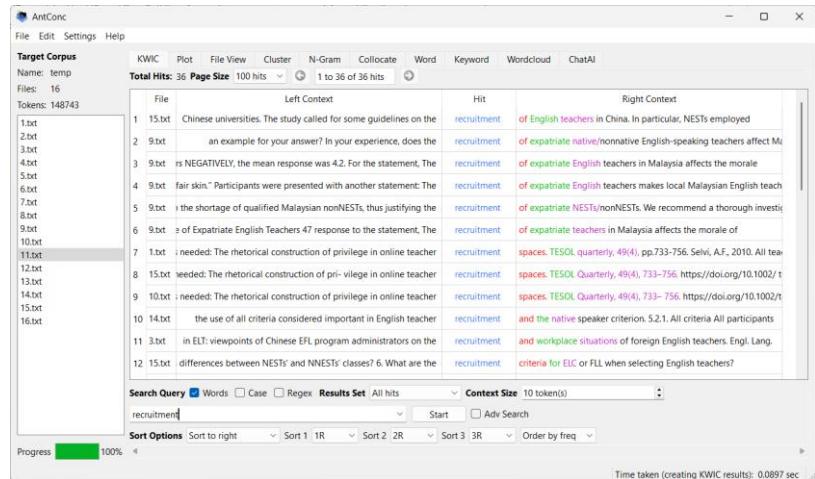


**Fig. 10: Frequencies of the term "recruitment" in 16 analysed articles**

Recruitment between native and non-native teachers in teaching the English language has been widely discussed, especially related to hiring preferences and perceived qualifications. According to *AntConc*, the term "*recruitment*" was highlighted 36 times across the analysed articles. The first weakness found in the articles is the lack of teaching experience among native teachers. (Chakma, 2020; Ghane & Razmi, 2023; Kiczkowiak,2020; Thararuedee & Musigrungsi, 2024). One of the reasons is that too many recruitments primarily consider their native status rather than looking at their educational background and working experiences (Kiczkowiak, 2020; Calvet-Terré & Llurda, 2022).
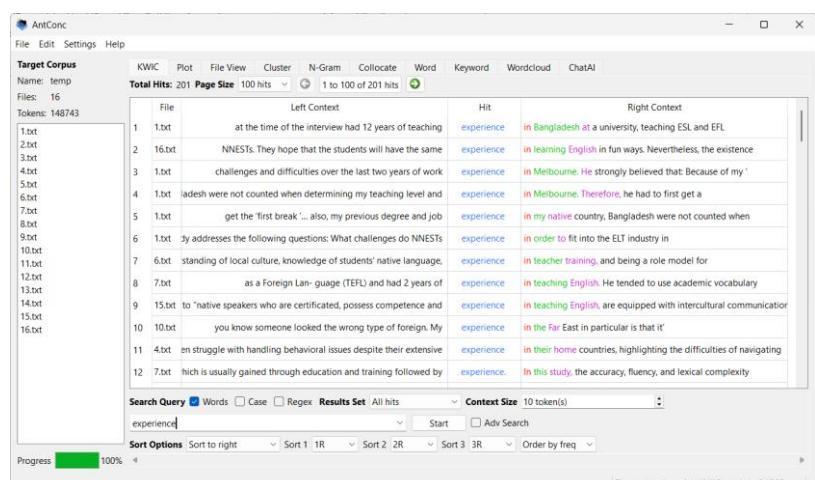


**Fig. 11: Frequencies of the term "experience" in 16 analysed articles**

Teachers' experience plays a crucial role in English language teaching. The term *"experience"* appeared 201 times across the 16 analysed articles. The participants in Thararuedee & Musigrungsi's (2024) study noted the ability to design a good lesson. It is highly important for a teacher to know and be able to design a lesson plan that is suitable and effective for students. In Malaysia, a native or non-native English teacher must take into consideration the six (6) dimensions

included in the Pedagogy Standards for ELT (PSELT), which include proficiency, English language curriculum, learner, methodology, management and assessment (MOE, 2012). Looking at the proficiency dimension, English teachers act as the model for language learners. Therefore, they must have good knowledge of the English language, including sound systems, literature, Grammar rules, vocabulary, etc., for them to be able to explain and answer students' questions. Next, they should know and be familiar with the content to enable them to formulate suitable learning goals that are suitable and meet the student's needs.

Further expressed by the participants, they mentioned the importance of effective lesson delivery. An effective teacher should provide clear explanations and speak clearly so that students are able to understand it better. Furthermore, they should follow a structured teaching approach, presenting the lesson in an organised way, from the introduction to the conclusion. It is vital to remember that every lesson activity and progress meets students' needs and wants. The language we speak must be understandable by the students, ask relevant questions, and manage the classroom effectively to produce a comfortable and positive classroom environment. Moreover, modern technology also plays a crucial role in the education field today. Teachers are suggested to integrate innovative technologies into the English language classroom to make the lesson creative and interesting which is also mentioned by the participants (Thararuedee & Musigrungsi, 2024).

Besides that, I personally agree with what has been highlighted by Judd et al. (2021), where the participants argued that important criteria such as qualifications, training and experiences in teaching should be prioritised when recruiting new teachers. Having a teacher without proper qualifications and teaching experience can negatively affect the lesson progress and students' achievements because the students are struggling to understand their teachers. Worst comes to worst, if this situation is not properly addressed, it may lead to students' dissatisfaction and a lack of motivation to learn the language. Students will resist learning the language from their teachers because they feel that the subject is difficult for them to understand.

As a language teacher, it is vital for us to get prepared with the content knowledge before delivering the lessons to the students. Most of the researchers agreed with the situation where native teachers were unable to answer students' questions because they didn't know how to answer them. It was said that native teachers are better at teaching vocabulary, while non-native teachers are better at teaching grammar. (Fitria, 2023) Research has found that although native teachers have rich vocabulary and can speak better and fluently with the students, they couldn't explain the grammar rules to the students properly. This is because they acquire the language naturally through exposure to their surroundings and daily use rather than learning how to use the language in schools. As their language is learnt naturally via interactions in the related environment since birth, it makes it difficult and challenging to explain the grammar rules and concepts that help students to understand. Lastly, only one article mentioned the personality of the native teachers, with only 1 time highlighted by Fauzi and Hashim (2020). It was said that native teachers tend to be impatient while teaching the students.
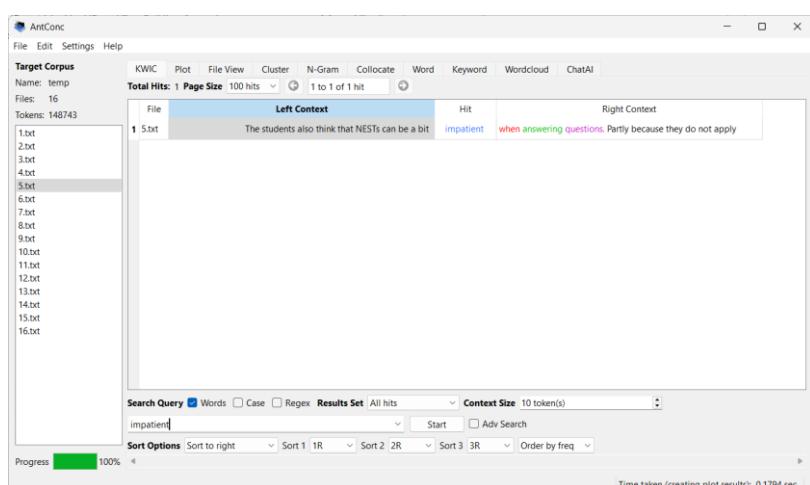


**Fig. 12: Frequencies of the term "impatient" in 16 analysed articles**

The participant further explained that the native teacher did not give sufficient time for the participants to think and speak. Therefore, the question asked by the participant was not answered by the native teacher. They always wanted the participants to ask questions quickly without thinking about structuring them for a long time, leading to a miscommunication issue among teacher-students. The next section will review and discuss the characteristics of Non-Native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs).

### 4.1.2 Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs)

Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) always face doubts about their effectiveness in teaching the language. They are viewed as less proficient in English since it is not their primary language. However, research found that non-

native teachers bring unique strengths to language teaching. Students also preferred and enjoyed to have an English class with them. Analysed across the 16 articles using the AntConc analysis program, the analysis showed that the term "non-native" appeared 727 times, as shown in the Fig. 14.
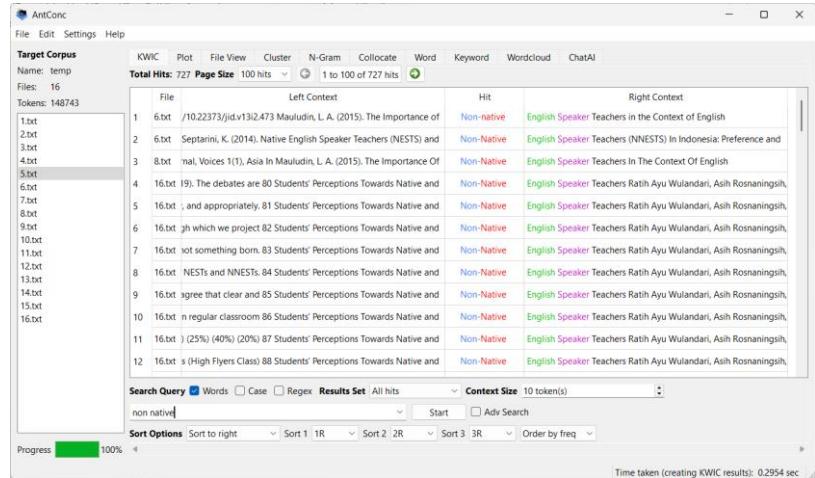


**Fig. 13: Frequencies of the term "non- native" in 16 analysed articles**
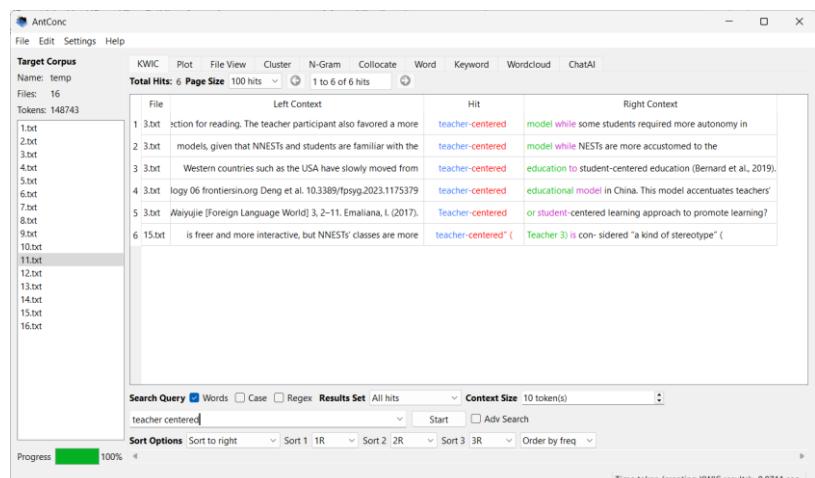


**Fig. 14: Frequencies of the term "teacher centered" in 16 analysed articles**
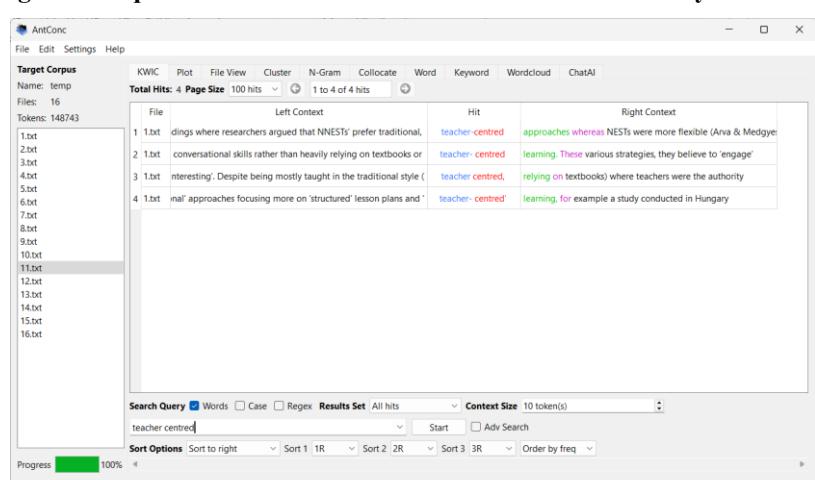


**Fig. 15: Frequencies of the term "teacher centred" in 16 analysed articles**

The terms *"teacher centered"* and *"teacher centred"* were mentioned 6 and 4 times, respectively, across the analysed articles. Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) are more implement a traditional way of teaching the students, also known as the teacher-centred teaching method. They rely more on textbooks as their main reference and

related teaching materials (Chakma, 2020; Fauzi & Hashim, 2020; Wang & Fang, 2020; Rasyid, 2023). Compared to native teachers, non-native teachers will design a lesson plan with learning objectives intended to be achieved by the students throughout the lesson before they conduct the lesson (Chakma, 2020). After that, the teachers will conduct the class according to the structured lesson plans.

Although it's not mentioned in the articles, I believe that teachers still take into account students' needs and wants before planning the most suitable lessons to carry out with the materials. Designing and preparing suitable teaching materials are of the utmost as different students have different learning abilities and learning styles, as mentioned in Fatahillah et al.'s (2024) study in an Australian ESL classroom. Without proper considerations and planning, students may be unable to catch up with the lessons with the teachers and worst comes to worst they burnout. While native teachers, as mentioned earlier, native teachers implemented various kinds of speaking activities, especially such as role play or drama activities to practise to use of the language. From the articles, I also realised that most of the native teachers are emphasising improving students' speaking rather than writing or reading (Fauzi & Hashim, 2020).

As mentioned in the research conducted by Chakma (2020) and Fauzi & Hashim (2020), Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) implement traditional teaching methods in delivering lessons. Traditional teaching methods or teacher-centred learning is where the teacher controls the lessons, presenting and explaining the materials to the students in front of the classroom, while students' roles are listening, taking notes and actively asking questions (Ghafar, 2023). A participant from Fauzi & Hashim's (2020) research expressed his preference for having non-native teachers teach the English language because they can make him understand the content better and more understandable despite using teacher-centred and various learning methods to teach the content.

It does not imply that non-native teachers are always behind native teachers in terms of teaching methods and classroom management. From the native teachers' aspect, the use of effective teaching methods has raised concerns among the recruiters, as mentioned by two participants (Thararuedee & Musigrungsi, 2024). Further provided by one of the participants said that native teachers may have a higher level of proficiency, but this does not guarantee effective teaching. However, non-native teachers are good at managing the classroom and possess a rich knowledge base in English proficiency, local culture, teaching methods and certain teaching attributes.

Deng et al. (2023) noted that Non-native English-speaking teachers are also as effective in language teaching, particularly when it comes to teaching grammar. Students prefer Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) because they have strong grammar knowledge. They can explain the grammar rules better than native teachers (Fitria, 2023). Similarly, Fauzi& Hashim's (2020) participants also shared the same opinion, mentioning that non-native teachers excel in explaining grammar. Teachers will use students' native language, like Bahasa Melayu or Mandarin, to explain grammar concepts and correct errors until they master the grammar. This shows that non-native teachers use their strength in their high language proficiency during the language teaching process.
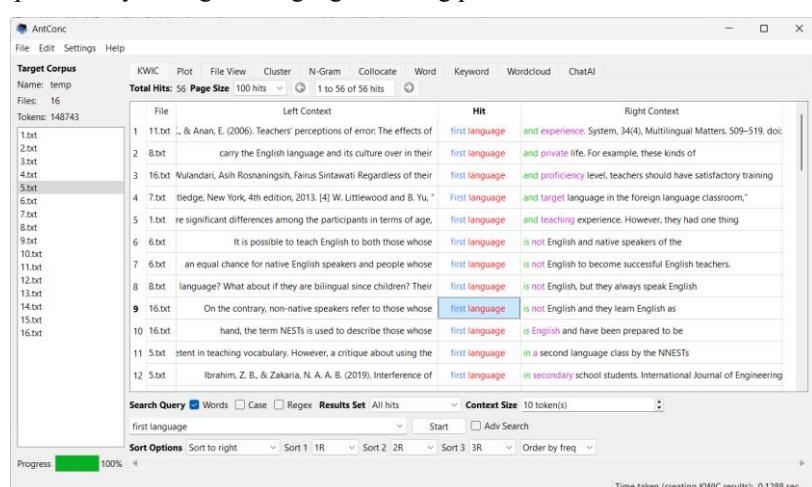


**Fig. 16: Frequencies of the term "first language" in 16 analysed articles**

Students like to have the non-native teacher as their English teacher due to the ability to speak their first language. It was widely discussed among the researchers in the case, which gained 56 times among the 16 research articles. Non-native teachers tend to use the benefit of their first language in explaining the English language to the students. Especially in the grammar section, students preferred to have a non-native teacher to explain to them because the teacher could use their first language to explain like Bahasa Melayu or Mandarin to enhance their understanding. As confirmed by the participants, they gained a better understanding of a particular concept when the teachers explained it to them using their native language.
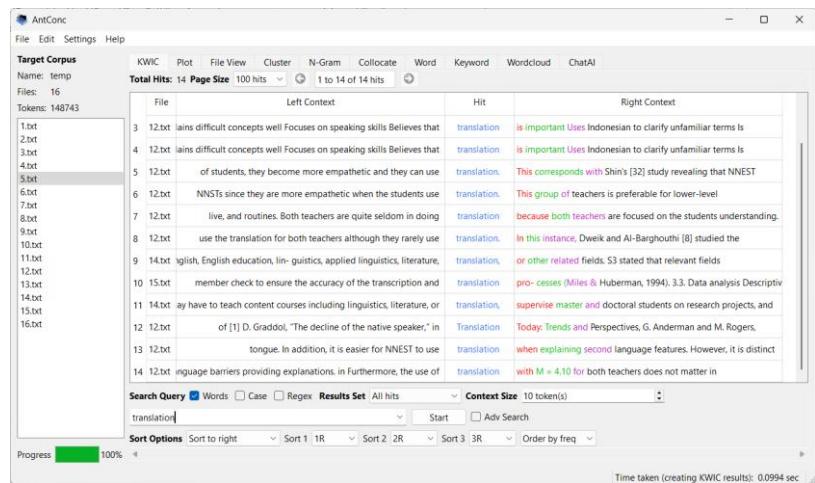
**Fig. 17: Frequencies of the term "translation" in 16 analysed articles**

The term "translation" was mentioned by several researchers when discussing the differences between native and non-native teachers in teaching English in the language classroom. It appeared 14 times across the analysed articles. The Grammar Translation Method is a teaching strategy widely implemented by non-native teachers in the classroom. Studies found that the Grammar Translation Method proved its effectiveness in building foreign language competencies in English among learners (Ishchenko et al., 2021; Rose et al., 2021). This teaching strategy starts with the study and understanding of grammar rules and later translates the sentences and texts between their first and the target language. Through the use of this method promotes students' effectiveness in acquiring the language at the end of the lesson. Comprehension of the text and grammar showed positive improvement through the use of the translation method by teachers in the class. Additionally, the use of translation helps the students to acquire and learn the vocabulary easily and fast from their teachers. Students can memorise the vocabulary and sentence patterns to enable them to use the language in the future. In line with a study carried out by Shliakhtina et al. (2023), the study revealed the high efficiency of using translation method in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) using their mother tongue, German. Therefore, we can't deny that the mother tongue also plays a crucial role in developing students' understanding of the English language.

As outlined in Deng et al. (2023), Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) were more focused on understanding students' psychological growth, and educational procedures and applying theoretical understanding to guide the students in their language learning process. This is because Non-native English-speaking teachers are those who also learnt the English language as a second language, hence, they were familiar with the challenges and difficulties when learning the language, as they experienced before and use their theoretical knowledge to help the students. As a result, teachers can provide assistance and guidance for the students to identify their learning challenges and difficulties. In contrast, native teachers learned the language naturally from their surroundings, and the difficulties they experienced were different from the non-native students, resulting in them being unable to address students' problems on time. They need time to conduct research, learn the different learning cultures and understand students' problems while learning English as their second language.

In Malaysia, children begin their earliest education as early as 4 years old with English language being introduced as one of the subjects in preschool before they enter elementary school at the age of 7. According to The Roadmap designed by the Ministry of Education (2015), the English language is a compulsory subject to be taught in school for 200 minutes a week in secondary schools and a total of 580 hours for the entire secondary school education period. Furthermore, as highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, students are required to pass the English language subject in the national exam, Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) to obtain their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) certificate and pursue their tertiary education. To become an English teacher, they must have the minimum qualification of Band 5 in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) and at least hold a degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), English Language Studies, Linguistics, or related field.

Thus, it explains that teachers possess a high level of proficiency and expertise with pedagogical skills before being appointed to teach in schools. I believe teachers have the same proficiency level as native teachers. Moreover, they can effectively teach students using creative teaching strategies acquired through their academic training. Furthermore, Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) are also a good model of imitation (Ismiyani, 2021). Since non-native students learn from teachers who have also acquired English as a second language, they can benefit from their teachers' knowledge and experiences. In other words, Non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) can pass their learning strategies, knowledge and experiences while acquiring the language to the students. This motivates the students to refer to their teachers as their models to learn the language effectively. However, if students still struggle with the language acquisition method provided by their teachers, it causes them to be discouraged and demotivated in their English language learning journey.

As highlighted in Rasyid et al. (2023), non-native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) were more creative in designing learning activities. According to the participant, teachers will provide other alternative activities such as group or pair work, for the students to learn the language while they are busy with their workload. Having pair or group work activities is crucial as it enables the students to collaborate with their friends in the lesson, rather than working on themselves individually. Identifying each other's strengths and weaknesses and sharing ideas not only promotes students' collaboration skills but also sharpens their communication skills. Communication is required among the members during the language learning process so that they can share their knowledge and create a safe environment when interactions happen in a very comfortable situation. Without communication, collaboration does not happen effectively. Eventually, students become demotivated and unconfident in their language-learning journey.

One advantage of having Non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in the classroom is their active participation in providing feedback to the students (Rasyid et al., 2023; Ghane & Razmi, 2023). Non-native teachers like to correct students' errors frequently because they want to prevent the students from making the same mistakes they once did. Compared to Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs), Non-native English-speaking teachers will be more strictly identifying and correcting errors. However, as mentioned earlier, excessively correcting students' errors has had a negative impact on students' learning experiences. Students felt frustrated and demotivated to learn the language when they felt overly corrected (Fauzi & Hashim, 2020). Frequently corrected students' errors caused the students to stop using the language due to their self-consciousness, frequently correcting errors resulting the students resisted using the targeted language as they felt embarrassed, and ended up avoiding speaking rather than taking risks being corrected by their teachers. One of the primary weaknesses of non-native teachers from the morale aspect is that non-native English-speaking Teachers (NNESTs) always look down on themselves and are unconfident in their teaching and language ability. This is due to the biases they received from the people surrounding such as students, recruitment, parents and the public. Biases happen due to the influence of the social environment including cultural beliefs about language proficiency, and negative perceptions based on past experiences with non-native teachers have shaped how the students and parents view non-native teachers. Additionally, the differences in the salaries between native and non-native teachers further make them low self-esteem and self-confidence (Judd et al., 2021).

## 5.    Conclusion

This review has demonstrated the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English-speaking teachers. Many students prefer Native English-speaking Teachers (NESTs) to help them improve their English language proficiency and pivot them into native or close-native English users as they believe NESTs are able to transmit their rich knowledge of the English language to them. Due to their 'nativeness', they received popularity among recruiters from institutions hoping that the students are able to master the language well and effectively. Students appreciate NESTs for their affirmative and humanistic teaching methods. Students-centred activity that promotes students' independent learning leaves creativity and improvement space for the students to learn with their friends and expose themselves to the language environment besides enjoying the interesting activities designed by the teachers. One of the characteristics possessed by native teachers was their tolerance of errors. Rather than constantly correcting students' errors like NNESTs, NESTs accept students' imperfect language as long as they understand it. It doesn't mean that NESTs are the perfect and ideal teachers for delivering and teaching the English language. Some students prefer NNESTs due to the benefits of first language explanation. While explaining a difficult concept, the use of students' first language greatly benefits the students to understand better. Besides that, non-native teachers also learned the language as their second language. Therefore, all those difficulties and challenges they experience can be passed down to the students to ease their language-learning journey. This is why they kept correcting students' errors as they wanted to prevent those errors that they used to make during their learning process. Some limitations were also found through reviewing the 16 articles. First and foremost, there is a lack of research in Malaysia's ESL classroom context. As I have gone through the available database online, I only managed to attain three prior studies, ranging from the year 2017 to 2020, making it difficult to look into the practices of native and non-native teachers in ESL classrooms as well as the perspectives and challenges of teachers and students. Moreover, there is limited research on the challenges and strategies employed by native and non-native teachers in ESL settings in different regions, making cross-country comparisons difficult to make. Further research is needed to investigate recruiters' perspectives on the hiring process in the Asian English as a Second Language context. Further investigation could also examine how NESTs and NNESTs collaboratively create an effective classroom environment in ESL settings to maximize student learning outcomes.

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