The Employment of Native and Non-Native Speaker EFL Teachers in Saudi Higher Education Institutions: Programme Administrators' Perspective

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Abstract

Recently, issues relating to Non-Native English Speaker Teachers (NNESTs) have been gaining considerable attention in English Language Teaching (ELT), in particular those of their employability and the hiring practices of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programme administrators. The employability of NNESTs and the challenges they face in the US and the UK have been explored in the literature. It has been found that Native English Speaker Teachers (NESTs) are preferred over NNESTs, since they are perceived as model speakers and ideal English teachers. NNESTs are often perceived as having a lower status in the profession, and researchers have found that as a result of this they often face discriminatory attitudes when applying for teaching positions. It has also been found that when more importance is given to 'native speakership' as a hiring criterion, NNESTs have a smaller chance of being employed.

The hiring of EFL/ESL teachers in EFL contexts has not yet received any attention in the applied linguistics literature, however. The aim of this study is therefore to fill this gap by exploring the issue of NNESTs' employability in Saudi Arabia, by (1) evaluating the criteria used in hiring processes, (2) investigating whether the status of applicants as NESTs/NNESTs affects their employment opportunities, and (3) investigating whether less qualified NESTs are preferred over more qualified NNESTs.

The study surveyed 56 Saudi recruiters, using a mixed methods approach which included a listening task, a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. It was reported by the recruiters that, in descending order of importance, the academic qualifications, teaching experience, native English speaker status (NES), nationality and accents of the applicants were adopted as hiring criteria. However, the participants' actual hiring practices revealed that being a native speaker superseded qualifications in importance. As in previous research, it was found in this study that the more importance recruiters assigned to the NES criterion, the smaller the chance of employment for NNESTs. Furthermore, applicants' nationality and accent had similar effects. Finally, the study found that many programme administrators either directly or indirectly expressed a preference to employ NESTs even if they were less qualified than NNESTs. One of the main conclusions drawn from this study is that there is a need to promote the importance of the academic qualifications, teaching experience and training of both native and non-native speaker teachers.

Dedication

To my late father, May Allah bless his soul

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I would like to start by thanking the Creator for the countless blessings bestowed upon me and my family. I would also like to thank my mom who has done everything in her power to make the person I am today. She has been very patient and supportive throughout my studies although she lost my younger brother, grandmother, and grandfather. I pray to Almighty to reward her with the eternal paradise.

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Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
BAAL	British Association of Applied Linguistics
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
NEST	Native English Speaker Teacher
NNEST	Non-Native English Speaker Teacher
RC	Recruitment Committee
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (UK)
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language (USA)

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The intention in this chapter is to provide a brief introduction to the topic under investigation in this research, namely, the recruitment of English teachers in Saudi higher education institutions and the factors affecting their hiring processes. The chapter starts by providing a general background on English as a second or foreign language. The status of English in Saudi Arabia is then reviewed, and the employability of English teachers in Saudi universities and the policies involved in this process are discussed. This is followed by the statement of the problem, and the presentation of the research questions and the organisation of this thesis.

1.2 EFL Background: Teachers of English as a Second or Foreign Language

English is definitely the fastest growing language on the face of the earth. In its recent publication *The English Effect*, the British Council (2013: 5) estimates that English is spoken by around 1.75 billion learners - a quarter of the world's population. According to Ulate (2011), people with English as their first language are now outnumbered by those who are speakers of English as a second or foreign language. It is an accepted fact that relatively few native speakers - who are already outnumbered by the non-native speakers - opt for an English teaching career when they graduate from universities. The existence of such an enormous number of English learners means that a large number of qualified teachers of English as a second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) is required. According to Canagarajah (1999: 91), non-native English speaker teachers represent about eighty per cent of the EFL teachers in the world. To illustrate this significant presence in the field of EFL teaching and learning, in a study conducted by Reves and Medgyes (1994) the sample of 216 EFL teachers was drawn from ten countries, two-thirds of the schools surveyed had no native speaker teachers and a third of the schools had both native English speaker teachers (NESTs) and non- native English speaker teachers (NNESTs).

Recently, issues concerning NNESTs have been gaining considerable attention in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). One of these issues is the employability of NNESTs all over the world and the hiring practices of EFL programme

administrators. An expanding body of literature has been emerging that sheds light on the situation of the employability of NNESTs and the challenges they face in the United States and the United Kingdom (Flynn and Gulikers, 2001; Mahboob, 2003; Pasternak and Bailey, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 2006; Llurda, 2006; Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008; Braine, 2010; Mahboob, 2010). According to these studies, NESTs have a privileged status, since they are perceived as model speakers and ideal teachers. Thus, native speaker teachers have an advantage over their non-native counterparts.

One of the main conclusions drawn from these empirical studies of English teachers' employability is the existence of a negative relationship between the importance accorded to the native speaker hiring criterion and the employment chances of non-native speaker teachers. For example, Mahboob (2003) found that whenever programme administrators in the United States assigned more importance to the NES hiring criterion, they employed fewer non-native speaker teachers. Very similar results were found in the study of Clark and Paran (2007) which considered the context of the United Kingdom.

In addition, NNESTs are often perceived as having a lower status in the profession, and it has been found that as a result they often face discriminatory attitudes when applying for teaching positions (Clark and Paran, 2007). Reservations about, or even opposition to, hiring NNESTs is no longer something programme administrators hide or deny. According to Braine (1999), many English language programme administrators have openly admitted at professional conferences and job interviews that they do not hire NNESTs.

In 1991, the largest professional organisation for English language teachers – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) - issued a statement that clearly opposed discrimination against NNESTs: "employment decisions in this profession which are based solely upon the criterion that an individual is or is not a native speaker of English discriminate against well-qualified individuals, especially when they are made in the absence of any defensible criteria" (TESOL, 1991, 2006). This stance acquired further support in 1998 with the establishment of the Non-Native English Speakers in TESOL Caucus. The aims of this caucus, according to Braine (1999), were:

- to create a non-discriminatory professional environment for all TESOL members regardless of native language and place of birth,
- to encourage the formal and informal gatherings of nonnative speakers at TESOL and affiliate conferences,

- to encourage research and publications on the role of nonnative speaker teachers in ESL and EFL contexts, and
- to promote the role of nonnative speaker members in TESOL and affiliate leadership positions.

Mahboob (2003) alleges that interest in NNEST issues has only increased since the establishment of this caucus. To illustrate this growing interest, he states that at the 2001 and 2002 TESOL Conventions in the United States, 13 different papers discussed issues pertaining to NNESTs, while the number reached 48 at the 2003 Convention. The Caucus, which in 2008 was renamed 'the NNEST Interest Section', helped immensely in the advocation of issues of NNES professionals and contributed significantly towards achieving the four goals mentioned above.

In countries where English is spoken as a second or foreign language, the employability of English teachers – from the programme administrators' perspective – has not been explored yet. Therefore, this study aims to explore the context of Saudi Arabia to shed light on the hiring practices of recruiters in the Kingdom.

Saudi Arabia was chosen as the study site for various reasons. First, the Kingdom is one of largest workplaces of English teachers in the Middle East in terms of teachers recruited from other countries. With a growing number of public and private universities and colleges, the demand for English teachers is also increasing. Second, there is a shift in the attitudes of the Saudis towards English which used to be viewed less positively owing to social and religious reasons as English used to be viewed as the language of the West and the non-believers. However, English now is viewed more positively since many Saudis have realised the need for English in the country's development and how important English is for their own prosperity (Al-Seghayer, 2012). Third, the context of Saudi Arabia is an interesting one since non-Saudi teachers in Saudi Arabian higher education institutions come from various nationalities and therefore some of them do not share their students' mother tongue. Last but not least, the Saudi context was chosen owing to the fact that I am able to collect data more easily in my own country rather than in any other country. For instance, I have worked with and know some recruiters whom I can approach for data collection purposes. This would have been very difficult and time consuming had the study been conducted elsewhere.

Once the Saudi context is studied, further comparative research can be conducted in other areas, especially the neighbouring countries to Saudi Arabia such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Following the above-mentioned rationale for the selection of

Saudi context, it is sensible to provide - in the next section - more details on the status of English in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 English Language Education in Saudi Arabia

The exact dates of the introduction of English language teaching in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are not known. However, Al-Shabbi (1989: 128-29) estimates that the teaching of English was undertaken in a more organised way with the establishment of the General Directorate of Education in 1924. He refers to one of the factors that might have strengthened the Saudi government's desire to introduce English into the educational system as being:

> The involvement of Foreign Companies [capitalisation as in original] in oil production within the Kingdom, and the needs of those companies for qualified manpower initially, and the need of the Saudi Government for qualified Saudis to manage and maintain contact with such companies.

At that time Saudi oil was attracting many international companies, the staff of which spoke English only, and this also necessitated the furthering of diplomatic and business relations with Western countries.

In Saudi Arabia, English is a foreign[1] language that is taught at many levels in basic as well as higher education. In the basic education, English was introduced in primary schools (6th grade) in 2006. Before that, students had started learning English at intermediate level (7th grade). Currently, public grade schools provide four 45-minute English language lessons a week, given by Arabic-speaking teachers, the majority of whom are Saudis. English teachers at Saudi primary schools usually hold a BA in English from teachers colleges or education colleges at Saudi universities.

At the higher education level, English is taught in many academic, commercial, diplomatic and industrial institutions and used as a medium of instruction in some schools, colleges and on particular courses. In many non-English departments and colleges, general English is usually taught once or twice a week as a requirement for university students who are not specialising in English. Students who specialise in English at Saudi universities usually study the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), linguistics modules, translation modules, and also literature at some universities.

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[1] Although it is officially a foreign language in Saudi Arabia, English is considered a second language for some Saudi students who are highly proficient speakers of the language.

A good command of English in Saudi Arabia means better employment prospects. For example, a good level of English is required for many jobs in the private sector. Such jobs can be divided into two categories. The first category includes jobs for people who were unable to complete their higher education and were thus unable to obtain certain kinds of government jobs. The second category includes jobs with reputable private companies and banks: for instance, the petroleum giant Arabian American Company (ARAMCO) and the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Company (SABIC), where communication is usually in English. Even in the government, the ability to speak good English may be a key factor in obtaining promotion to particular posts. Therefore, many Saudis, whether students or employees, enter institutes where they can further improve their English skills. This has increased the demand for private EFL institutes in which there are numerous native speakers of English teaching a variety of EFL courses. According to Al-Omrani (2008), such institutes are often preferred by Saudis because of the native English-speaking teachers who teach there. He also states that prestigious Saudi private schools recruit English teachers from the USA, the UK and Australia.

In Saudi Arabia, the government - represented by the educational authorities – attaches particular importance to English, not only because of its status as an international language but also because it is a factor in the development of the Kingdom (Al-Otaibi, 2004). In addition, Al-Shammary (1989) presents a number of reasons that make English extremely important for the Kingdom in terms of its position in the Arab and Islamic worlds. First, since English is an international language, it is an important factor in spreading the message of Islam to English-speaking nations. Second, the Kingdom needs English to develop its commercial, political and economic relations with the rest of the world. Third, as the world's largest oil exporter, the Kingdom needs people who speak good English to promote its petroleum and petrochemical products globally. Finally, Al-Shammary (ibid.) argues that English is important as it is becoming the medium of instruction in many Saudi colleges and universities, although the only university that uses English as a medium of instruction in all of its departments and colleges is King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals. This is because international staff are employed in all of its departments and therefore students need to interact with the staff in English. Other Saudi universities use it in departments of English and only a few other departments, such as medicine and dentistry (Alshumaimeri, 1999).

Recently, the majority of the Saudi universities have established a Preparatory Year (PY) in order to improve students' skills, including their English language skills. These universities had recognised the fact that the level of English of the high school graduates applying for admission was very low. For example, the dean of the PY at King Saud University (KSU) posted this message on the university's website:

> PY has been established as a solution to the many problems students used to face during their academic lives and to the lack of job opportunities in the distinguished governmental and private sectors after graduation. It is an attempt to minimize college dropouts, and human potentials and finances wasted in our dear country. Hence, the academic plan and the learning environment were prepared carefully. KSU has invested a lot and exerted much effort in this program to elevate students to the desired level on both the academic and personal levels through several direct and indirect elements which we will work together to achieve. (Al-Othman, 2009)

1.4 Policies relating to the employment of EFL teachers in Saudi higher education

The employment of non-Saudi teaching staff in Saudi higher education institutions is subject to the regulations and policies of the Statute of the Council of Higher Education and Universities (2007). These regulations concern only non-Saudis who are employed at Saudi universities on annual contracts. There is no competition from Saudis for these jobs because Saudis are employed under the regulations of the Ministry of Civil Service. According to the regulations, the employment of non-Saudi staff at Saudi higher education institutions must satisfy a number of general conditions. First, applicants must be between the ages of 20 and 60. Second, they must be physically fit. Third, they must be of good conduct and behaviour. This third condition is extremely subjective and in practice mainly refers to not having been convicted of any crime. Fourth, they must meet the qualification requirements set by the employer. Fifth, they must not be legally bound by a contract elsewhere in Saudi Arabia, and finally, they must work full-time.

More importantly, the same policies state that Instructors of Foreign Languages (any language taught in Saudi higher education) must fall within any of the following three bands: the first band includes applicants who hold a Bachelor's Degree in the language they are going to teach, with a 'Good' average (a GPA of 2.75 or more out of 5), in addition to a diploma in teaching the language as a foreign language. Applicants in this band must also have at least one year's language teaching experience, preferably of teaching it to Arab students. The second band includes applicants who hold a Bachelor's Degree in the language they are going to teach, with a 'Good' average, in

addition to at least three years' language teaching experience, preferably of teaching it to Arab students. In this band, a Teaching Diploma can apparently be substituted by more years of teaching experience. The last band is for applicants with MA degrees in the language, and they must also have at least one year's language teaching experience, preferably of teaching it to Arab students.

To the best of my knowledge, these regulations and policies mentioned in the Statute of the Council of Higher Education and Universities (2007) are the only published formal guidelines for the employment of non-Saudi teaching staff in Saudi universities. I have enquired at the Ministry of Higher Education as well as consulted its website (www.mohe.gov.sa), and have also made enquiries of two universities (King Saud University and Al-Qassim University) and of many members of the Recruiting Committees (henceforth RCs), who are the real decision makers when it comes to hiring EFL teachers. No written regulations besides the ones referred to above are available, if they exist. To my surprise, a number of recruitment committee members did not know that these written regulations existed. Rather, according to personal communication with two of them, when they travel abroad to recruit new staff they review applicants' qualifications and teaching experience and then those who satisfy the requirements are hired. When they have more applicants than positions available, which is usually the case, they give first preference to those applicants with the highest academic qualification and then to those with more years of teaching experience.

1.5 Employment of EFL Teachers in the Saudi Context

I will start this section by providing an example on the employment of English teachers in Saudi Arabia. In Riyadh Teachers College, two British-born language instructors were hired in 2001 to teach the English language skills to English-major students. The new teachers come from South Asian backgrounds and their accents and physical appearance are indicative of this fact. They are equipped with MA degrees in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the United Kingdom and have over 3 years' teaching experience. When they started their new careers at the college, several Saudi professors (some of whom had served on Recruitment Committees before) at the college began murmuring to me (as a colleague), questioning the teaching abilities of the 'non-native' newcomers who had these 'accents' and how the college needed to attract native speaker teachers. Their major concerns involved whether or not the new teachers were sufficiently able to teach the English-major students.

This lack of confidence in NNESTs is not a totally new phenomenon in the ELT profession. Canagarajah (1999: 77) refers to a Korean graduate with an MA in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from a reputable US university who asked his advice as she was looking for a job in the USA since, as she claimed, NNESTs are not employed to teach English in reputable Korean institutions:

> I could only imagine her consternation when even in the West, advertisement after advertisement confront her with the fact that only those who are "native English speakers" or those with "native English competence" can apply for the available position. Fresh from graduate school, certified with a Masters or doctorate in applied linguistics, and groomed for a career in language teaching by a reputed university, the non-native ESL teacher often discovers a gloomy professional future. This story confronts us with the absurdity of an educational system that prepares one for a profession for which it disqualifies the person at the same time.

Furthermore, non-native English speaker teachers have usually struggled when seeking employment in the presence of Native English Speaker Teachers (henceforth NESTs). Braine (1999: xiii) contends that NNESTs face many problems in their careers which can include fears of unemployment and the denial of any opportunity to practise what they have been trained to do, i.e., to teach English. He adds that many of them discover, almost from their first days, that their credentials are questioned, their accents are misunderstood, and they are marginalised in the profession.

In the Saudi context, non-Saudi English teachers in the teachers colleges are hired through recruiting committees that usually travel abroad (or sometimes interview the applicants over the phone) to hire teachers and professors for the colleges' various departments. This applies not only to the English department in the college but also to other colleges and universities in the Kingdom. The teaching jobs available for Saudi nationals at these institutions are government jobs, which are restricted to Saudi nationals only. Therefore, there is no competition between Saudis and non-Saudis for employment as English instructors.

Apart from the regulations referred to in section 1.4, the Ministry of Higher Education, the governing body for all higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, does not have a detailed employment policy or guidelines for EFL teacher recruitment in its institutions. The issue is left to each institution to employ the teachers it needs according to the regulations mentioned in section 1.4 above.

The recruiting committees usually include academic and administrative staff. The role of the administrative officer is to deal with the paperwork and formal issues such as contracts and visas. The academic staff, who are the backbone of these committees, usually include between two and four professors, who interview applicants in order to

check and evaluate their qualifications and suitability for the job. The members usually make their hiring decisions by comparing the applicants' qualifications and years of teaching experience; those who are perceived to have the highest qualifications get the job. Sometimes, not all the professors on the RCs specialise in English, but they have usually obtained their PhD degrees from English-speaking countries. Less commonly, academic membership of the committees can include teaching staff holding an MA in English or a related field.

It can sometimes be difficult to convince native speakers to teach in the conservative Kingdom, owing to its strict cultural and religious norms. Krieger (2007: 4) maintains that even raising salaries may not be enough to persuade native speakers to work in Saudi Arabia, a country where "most public entertainment is prohibited (there are no movie theaters, for instance), alcohol is banned, and women must cover themselves almost completely in public and are not allowed to drive." Moreover, some universities like King Saud University have the authority, after routine administrative approval, to raise salaries of those teachers deemed highly qualified to even more than the double in order to attract them (Al-Shehri, 2013). However, this only applies to a limited number of Saudi universities and not all countries can afford to do so. We see that there are certain challenges facing Saudi universities when it comes to recruiting English language instructors. On the one hand, native speakers are reluctant to work in the Kingdom for the previously mentioned reasons. There are also problems with the regulations governing the salaries of employees in most of the government sector institutions, which makes it difficult to offer competitive rates of pay to qualified native speakers, who thus often choose to work in neighbouring countries where these restrictions do not apply. On the other hand, non-native speakers, or even native speakers who are not considered to look exactly as a native speaker should look, as we saw at the beginning of this section, are perceived negatively and are not selected if their native counterparts are available. Even if they are suitably qualified and experienced in the field, they do not seem to satisfy employers, who usually end up employing them solely in order to fill a vacant position before the start of the new academic year (Al-Enezi, 2010).

Non-Saudi EFL instructors in Saudi Arabian higher education institutions come from various parts of the world, although they are usually of Arab, South Asian or South East Asian backgrounds. The current website of my college (Riyadh Teachers College), for example, indicates that six out of the 14 non-Saudi English language instructors come from Egypt, while four come from South Asia (India and Bangladesh).

The staffing of English departments in Saudi Arabia's higher education institutions has received very little attention in the published literature. It is important to encourage research in this area, since proper staffing can play a crucial role in maintaining a stable department. That is, it is vital to ensure that an English teacher, whether a native or a non-native speaker of English, is able to adapt to the culture/environment in which he or she decides to teach, because this will help to minimise the risk of losing teachers in the middle of term or in the middle of the academic year.[2] By the same token, teachers who remain in the Kingdom for long periods are usually more aware of students' needs and of the appropriate way of treating them than new teachers.

It may be useful to note here that owing to the limited amount of published literature on staffing issues at Saudi universities and other higher education institutions, when this topic is discussed (for instance, in the media), personal communication with university staff who are concerned about the employment issue, as well as personal experiences, are generally used as supporting evidence for some arguments.

Al-Jarf (2008) describes the staffing and recruiting situation in Saudi translation departments as inadequate in terms of instructor qualifications, areas of specialisation, and the preparation of prospective translation instructors. She argues that the employment of qualified teachers is a key element in the preparation of competent graduates. She acknowledges the difficulties of retaining experienced native speakers and of hiring qualified substitute instructors. Although she suggests the NNESTs should represent half of the staff at these departments, her discourse indicates a less positive view of NNESTs because they are viewed as replacements for the native speakers. She proposes criteria that should be adopted when employing English language instructors at King Saud University. These are that applicants should have at least an MA degree, half of them should be native speakers of English, the other half should be hired only if they have studied in an English-speaking country, applicants should specialise in courses offered by the department, they should have good linguistic and professional competence, and they should be computer literate.

[2] I have come across a few examples of teachers who found themselves unable to live in the highly conservative Saudi culture, and of some who were rejected by the students because of their perceptions of particular nationalities.

1.6 Statement of the Problem and Significance of the Study

In ELT, many language institutes seek to employ native speakers of English, and their job advertisements are indicative of this fact. The majority of these advertisements clearly state that native speakers are preferred over non-native speakers or even that NESTs only may apply. Interestingly, Saudi Arabia has the second largest share of job advertisements published on the internet that require native/near-native speaker teachers (Selvi, 2010). This preference in the recruitment of EFL instructors and the hiring practices of programme administrators has recently been gaining attention in the field. Few studies, however, have empirically explored these hiring practices. Those studies that have done so have highlighted the importance of the native speaker factor in employment decisions in addition to other criteria, such as teaching experience, the accent of the teacher and the level of qualifications.

The existing body of research has taken into consideration the context of only two English-speaking countries, namely the United States (Flynn and Gulikers, 2001; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2006) and the United Kingdom (Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008). In fact, most research has taken place in the United States and, up until 2007, no studies had considered the context of the United Kingdom.

The hiring practices of programme administrators outside these two countries have not been explored. Moreover, in the studies mentioned above the researchers explored the effect of the teachers' accents on employment decisions simply by asking the respondents about it, without giving them the opportunity to listen to the applicants' actual accents. In the current study, by contrast, the participants were played recordings of the applicants to listen to.

Therefore, the significance of this study is manifold. First, it is the first study to investigate hiring practices outside English-speaking countries, thus filling a major gap in the literature. Second, it attempts to explore the interaction between the five hiring criteria and perceptions of EFL teachers' qualifications. Previous research has only asked participants to rate the importance of hiring criteria without giving them the opportunity to hear the applicants speak, which would have made their judgments more realistic. Also, it endeavours to assess the importance of being a native speaker in the employment decisions in non-English speaking countries, as compared with the findings of previous research carried out in the two English-speaking countries mentioned above. Lastly, this study investigates whether Saudi recruiters would prefer less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs, an investigation which has not previously been conducted empirically, but only informally (by Medgyes, 1992).

1.7 Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this research was to explore the hiring practices and the attitudes of Recruiting Committee (RC) members towards NESTs and NNESTs at Saudi universities. More specifically, it endeavoured to assess the importance of hiring criteria, including the native speaker criterion, as perceived by Saudi employers. The extent to which Saudi RC members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs is also investigated. Therefore, the current study seeks answers to three research questions:

1. For Saudi Recruiting Committee members and programme administrators, how important are the following criteria: the applicants' academic qualification, accent, nationality, native speakership, and teaching experience? And are there any additional criteria that should be met by applicants in order for them to be hired to teach English in Saudi higher education institutions?
2. If the native speaker criterion is to be found important, is there a relationship between the importance of this criterion and the chances of NNESTs being employed?
3. To what extent do Saudi Recruiting Committee members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs?

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

This chapter has provided a general introduction to the topic of NNESTs' employability, in the Saudi context in particular. Chapter two summarises the findings of previous research in the field and helps to situate this study within the field. The methodology employed in conducting this research is described in chapter three. In chapter four the findings of the current research are presented and discussed, followed by an overall discussion of these findings. Finally, in the concluding chapter of this thesis the research findings are summarised, theoretical, practical and methodological implications are outlined, and recommendations for future research are put forward.

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the topic of EFL teachers' employment and shed some light on the Saudi Arabian context in terms of the status of English in the Kingdom and the

teaching of the language to Saudi learners at various levels of education. It also contained the statement of the problem, an outline of the significance of this research, and the research questions. In the next chapter the literature on the topic of EFL teachers' employment is reviewed.

Chapter 2. Issues of Native and Non-Native Speakers: A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the theoretical issues relating to the employability of NNESTs are discussed and a review of studies that have influenced this research is presented. First, some light is shed on the definitions of the terms ‘native speaker’ and ‘non-native speaker’ teacher. The prestigious status held by native speakers in English language teaching and the ways in which this exclusive status is being challenged are then described. The perceptions of programme administrators in the USA and the UK concerning the hiring of NNESTs are also discussed in this chapter and the effect of NNESTs’ accents on the perceptions of others and on their recruitment opportunities are examined.

2.2 Language, Standards, and Power

English has a unique status in the world today since it is the international language of the trade, globalisation, internet, and more. Although other languages are and have been international languages, Dewey (2006) points out that English differs from other languages in terms of international status in three fundamental ways: its spread geographically, the enormous cultural diversity of its users, and the infinite domains of its use.

This spread of English around the world can be viewed, according to Kachru (1985), in terms of three concentric circles that take into consideration the types of spread, patterns of acquisition, and the domains of English use in different countries.

The first of these is the Inner Circle, which refers to countries where English is spoken as the first language or ‘native’ language, even if English is not the official national language of the country: for instance, the United States of America. Additional examples from this circle include the United Kingdom and Australia. Since English has as yet no official or legal status in most - if not all - of the USA, this issue is a major source of controversy in the country. Crystal (2008) explains that there is normally no need for English to be an ‘official’ language in a country where 95 per cent of the population speak it, but with the increasing numbers of immigrants into the US, the

supporters of giving English official status believe that English is being threatened by the other languages spoken by immigrants.

The second circle is the Outer (or Extended) Circle, which refers to countries where English is spoken as a second language or additional language in a multilingual country: for example, Singapore, India and Nigeria. In this circle, English usually spread through colonisation by English-speaking countries to countries in Asia and Africa. Examples from this circle include Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Malaysia and Nigeria. In these countries English is not necessarily the first language, but rather is used as a lingua franca, a variety used for communication between speakers who do not share a mother tongue, between different ethnic and language groups. In these countries English may also be used in higher education, the legislative and judiciary system, national commerce, and the media.

The third circle is the Expanding Circle, which refers to countries where English is studied as a foreign language, such as China, Russia and Saudi Arabia. In this circle, English does not have a historical or governmental role but is nonetheless commonly used as a medium of international communication. In terms of the population, this circle includes the lion's share of the world's population.

Although this Kachruvian model is wide spread and well-established, as it provides a useful frame of reference for describing English in the world, it has not escaped criticism. One of the main shortcomings of this model deals with the sense of inclusion and exclusion implied by the terms 'inner' and 'outer' respectively. Indeed, the term 'inner' circle implies inclusion, where English native speakers are located at the centre of the global use of English, while the term 'outer' circle implies exclusion, where the rest are on the periphery (Dewey, 2006). As Graddol (1997: 10) explains, the model implies that English native speakers are "the source of models of correctness, the best teachers and English-language goods and services consumed by those in the periphery".

Furthermore, the model describes the spread of English only from geographical and historical perspectives. In other words, it fails to pay attention to the ways in which speakers in these circles identify with and use English. According to Modiano (1999), Kachru's (1985) definition of the inner circle re-establishes the notion that the language is owned by specific groups, and that correct usage is determined by experts who speak a prestige variety.

Jenkins (2009: 21) highlights other shortcomings of the three-circle model. Firstly, she states that the model is simplistic in that it implies uniform English situations within a particular circle. She argues that even within the inner circle, the amount of linguistic diversity in varieties of English spoken is different from one country to the other, noting "there is far more diversity in the US than in the UK". Secondly, the boundaries between these circles often seem less obvious. For instance, many people in the outer circle learnt English as their first language and spoke it at home rather than mainly for official purposes. In addition, the distinction between the outer and the expanding circles is increasingly becoming a grey area. That is, English is becoming a second language rather than a foreign language in many countries such as Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, and Argentina. Finally, many speakers of world Englishes grow up as bilinguals or multilinguals who use different languages for different roles in their daily lives. As a result, it becomes extremely difficult to describe any language they speak as their first, second, or third language.

The introduction of English in non-English-speaking countries has not been free of controversy. It was viewed by some scholars like Phillipson (1992) as being part of a 'foreign agenda' - an instrument of the foreign policies of the United Kingdom and the United States of America which is still being promoted in ex-colonies by English teaching agencies such as the British Council. According to Bhatt (2001: 532), this Linguistic Imperialism theory of Phillipson's argues that English is universally imposed by such agencies "which introduce and impose a norm, Standard English, through which is exerted the domination of those groups that have both the means of imposing it as 'legitimate' and the monopoly on the means of appropriating it." The result of this is the emergence of power issues and problematic relationships between producers (native speakers) and consumers (non-native speakers). For example, Rahman (1999) has argued in the case of Pakistan that English "acts by distancing people from most indigenous cultural norms."

Another perspective on the spread of English is referred to by Quirk (1988) as the 'econocultural' model. He proposes that factors such as the industrial revolution, trade practices, and the commercial exploitation of late 18th- and early 19th-century England led to the development of a language that has become the language of the world market; since at that time England and the US were the centre of capitalism, English naturally became *the* global language for commerce, politics, and cultural and social exchanges. The growth of general competence in English was further facilitated by the establishment of the United Nations, UNESCO, the Commonwealth, the EU and other

international organisations. Bhatt (2001) maintains that the departure of the colonisers created a new ecology for English language teaching in the colonies, in terms of non-native linguistic input, local norms - in India and Nigeria for example - multiple identities and teaching methodologies. Such ecologies take into serious consideration the linguistic variations in these regions.

One has to agree that some people and some institutions, including governments, have vested interests in the spread of English around the globe. These interests could be of a political and/or commercial nature. For example, the British Council, which is described by Phillipson (1992) as the instrument of a foreign agenda, has a great interest in spreading the English - especially British English - language so that more people can have access to British culture. Kirkpatrick (2007) maintains that these outposts of the British Council around the globe have established language schools that promote a British or native speaker model using textbooks published in the UK. He also notes that "the British Council sees these schools as operating with an overall purpose of building mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and other countries" (ibid.: 36).

However, Phillipson's (1992) book has not escaped criticism. A number of scholars argue that English is not forced on people from above but rather that it is the people themselves who are making pragmatic and sensible choices when it comes to learning English. For example, Brutt-Griffler (2002: 109) argues that no concerted effort is being made by either Britain or the USA to spread English. She also points out that the British encouraged the teaching of the 'vernacular' languages in the colonies, and that they only wanted a small group to be literate in English so that they could act as "go-betweens and middle managers". She argues that people from colonised countries, Gandhi for example, used the English language as an anti-colonial tool because they realised the power that language ownership confers, and became fluent in English in order to use it against their masters.

The term World Englishes (WE) refers to the emergence of these localised varieties of English in the colonies. The paradigm of World Englishes suggests that there are many varieties of English. It does not suggest that there is a linguistically 'superior' variety but rather emphasises the equality of all Englishes and advocates linguistic diversity, multilingualism and multiple linguistic identities. Indeed, the spread of English around the globe has resulted in the "development of many Englishes and not the transplanting of one model to other countries" (Kirkpatrick, 2007: 28).

In her book *World Englishes*, Jenkins (2009) provides a brief historical perspective on the two English diasporas where English was transported to the 'new world' and to Asia and Africa. In the first diaspora, English was transported in the 17th and 18th centuries by migrants from England, Scotland, and Ireland to North America, Australia, and New Zealand. This led to the emergence of new mother tongue varieties of English. The English dialects of the colonisers gradually developed into the American, Australian, and New Zealand's varieties of English. These current varieties differed slightly from the colonisers' dialects due to

> the changed and changing sociolinguistic contexts in which the migrants found themselves. For example, their vocabulary rapidly expanded through contact with the indigenous Indian, Aboriginal, or Maori populations in the lands which they colonised, to incorporate words such as Amerindian *papoose*, *moccasin*, and *igloo* (p. 5)

Taking place at various points in the 18th and 19th centuries, the second diaspora involved the colonisation of Asia and Africa, which resulted in the development of many second language varieties, i.e., 'new Englishes'. In West Africa, English traders travelled to and from coastal territories such as Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leon, Nigeria, and Cameroon. Although there were no major European settlements in West Africa, English was used as a lingua franca for communication both between the indigenous people who spoke hundreds of local languages and between the local people and the English traders. Gradually, English gained official status in these countries and some of the pidgins and creoles[3] that developed from contact with English are currently widely spoken there, especially as second languages. In East Africa, on the other hand, English colonisers settled in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. English played an important role in major institutions of these colonies such as government, education, and law. Although these colonies became independent countries starting from 1960, English remains official language in some of them and is spoken by a large number of people in other countries (Jenkins 2009).

In Asia, English entered countries such as India in the 18th century. In 1835, an English educational system was introduced in India and the language of the coloniser became the language of education. According to Jenkins (2009: 8), today's India has English as an "associate official language" alongside Hindi which is the official

[3] Pidgins are contact languages used to fulfil communication needs between people who do not share a common language. Therefore, they have no native speakers. Once a pidgin becomes the first language of a new generation of speakers, it becomes a creole (see e.g. Wardaugh, 2006).

language. Moreover, English has gone through a process of Indianization, giving it a unique national character - 'Indian English'.

In South-East and East Asia, the British influence began in the late 18th century in Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. In Singapore, the use of English has recently increased, which led to the emergence of a local variety. Unlike Singapore, the use of English in Malaysia has declined because the country - since its independence in 1957 - adopted the local language of Bahasa Malaysia as a national language and also as the language of education. However, English was still being taught as an obligatory subject in Malaysian schools because it was deemed useful for international communication only. Interestingly, Malaysia changed its policy by reintroducing English as the medium of education in 2003.

Strevens (1992: 29) explains that the English-speaking settlements in the first and second English diasporas share three features. First, they expanded in terms of size and populations and became states with colonising governments. The sense of independence and separate identity was so high that it "soon extended to the flavour of the English they used." Second, as these colonies gained their independence from Britain, the linguistic differences were further reinforced. Third, as these states stabilised and prospered, large populations of non-native speakers had to learn and use English to find jobs with the governing class.

These Englishes have much in common in terms of historical and linguistic backgrounds. However, each of these Englishes - explains Jenkins (2009) - has its own unique characteristics. That is, each has a particular accent, unique idiomatic uses of vocabulary, grammars, and discourse strategies.

As English spread to nonnative contexts and came into contact with languages that were genetically and culturally unrelated, it went through a process of linguistic nativization by the people who adopted it for use in different functional domains, such as education, administration, and high society (Bhatt, 2001). Therefore, those nonnative English speakers created new meanings that were culturally sensitive and socially appropriate by altering and manipulating the structure and functions of English. This resulted in English undergoing …

> a process of acculturation in order to compete in local linguistic markets that were hitherto dominated by indigenous languages. Given the linguistic and cultural pluralism in Africa and South Asia, linguistic innovations, creativity, and emerging literary traditions in English in these countries were immediately accepted (p. 534).

Kachru (1998: 91) advocates the acceptance of these Englishes by means of comparison with the Englishes that spread in the first diaspora. “English has been with us in various parts of Asia for almost 200 years. That compares very well indeed with the introduction of English in the USA, in Australia, and in New Zealand.”

A more detailed account for the development of new Englishes is suggested by Schneider (2003: 233) who argues that ‘postcolonial Englishes follow a fundamentally uniform developmental process’. He suggests five phases to this developmental process. In the first phase - which he calls *foundation* - English begins to be used in a country which previously did not speak English. Typically this is caused by the settlement of English speakers in that country. The second phase, *exonormative stabilisation*, is when the variety spoken by indigenous populations - labelled as *IDG* - is closely modelled on the settlers’ variety - labelled as *STL*. In this phase, the STL variety slowly moves towards the IDG variety which starts to expand. Schneider considers the third phase - *nativisation* - the most important and dynamic phase. In this phase, a new identity is established with the coupling of the STL and IDG varieties. He argues that the nativisation phase has a great impact on the restructuring of English, mostly in terms of grammar and vocabulary. The fourth phase is the ‘*endonormative stabilisation*’. In this phase, the new variety becomes gradually accepted as the local norm or model and is used in various formal situations. The fifth and final phase is called ‘*differentiation*’. By this phase, the new variety has emerged and started to reflect the local identity and culture. Schneider suggests that more local varieties begin to develop in this phase and differences between STL and IDG varieties resurface as markers of ethnic identity.

The paradigm of World Englishes (WE) is philosophically linked, according to some scholars, with two dominant schools of thought, i.e., post-colonialism and postmodernism. Bressler (2007: 236) maintains that post-colonialism, on the one hand, emerged from the 19th century colonisation period when Great Britain was “the largest colonizer and imperial power” in the world. This political, social, economic and ideological domination by England, however, had gradually begun to disappear by the turn of the century through the process of decolonisation, which reached its peak in 1947, when India obtained its independence. It was the birth of post-colonialism as a liberation movement, in which radical social changes occurred during the postmodern era that led to a significant delegitimisation of authority. The post-colonial school of thought aims to destabilise stabilised institutions and questions the notion and legitimacy of institutions, and in second language acquisition studies in particular, aims to decolonise ELT (Bressler, 2007). Some of its common themes include national

identity, resistance, appreciation of differences, and the protection of indigenous languages and cultures. Post-colonialism is similar to postmodernism in its subjects and concerns.

On the other hand, postmodernism has developed from modernism, which will be described first here for the purposes of clarification. Modernism is philosophically linked with the European Enlightenment of the 18th century. It is concerned with the role of observation and scientific method and highlights the significance of objectivity and rationality. The scientific and social advancements of that era led people to believe in the possibility of finding the ultimate truth, and in the ideas of 'the best' and 'absoluteness' (Bressler, ibid.).

Postmodernists, according to Pishghadam and Saboori (2011), believe in a world with no centre, in which relativism (vs. absolutism) and subjectivism (vs. objectivism) as the two dominant viewpoints of the time, cast doubt on all the formerly taken-for-granted beliefs, and in which the deluding ideas of 'the best', the 'ultimate truth', and 'the perfect' no longer make sense. This era, established in the late 20th century, called for trying different approaches and styles and evaluating them based on their appropriateness and applicability to the given context. It also advocated the appreciation of differences and the celebration of local reality, truth and values.

The global status of English is also linked to the economic power of Britain and the United States. Crystal (2012: 157-58) points out that by the 19th century Britain had become the world leader in industry and trade and that "over half of the leading scientists and technologists during the Industrial Revolution worked in English." As a result, many people who wanted to learn about new technologies travelled to Britain and later to America and had to use English for communication. It was also during that period, Crystal adds, that international banking systems grew rapidly in Britain and America, making London and New York the investment capitals of the world. Therefore, this emergence of Britain and the US as the world's leading economic powers in the 20th century "continues to explain the position of the English language today" (Crystal, 2003: 106).

Other scholars, however, have different views about the philosophies behind the paradigm of World Englishes. Alastair Pennycook (2006, 2007) contests, for example, that the framework of World Englishes is linked to postmodernism[4] and argues that it is a fairly traditional sociolinguistic phenomenon with a nationalistic overtone. Also, Bhatt

[4] See Pennycook (2006, 2007) for an overview of theoretical positions regarding postmodernism.

(2001: 527-8) notes that World Englishes represents a paradigm shift in research, teaching, and sociolinguistic realities to the forms and functions of English.

> The pluralization, Englishes, symbolizes the formal and functional variations, the divergent sociolinguistic contexts, the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and literary creativity, and the various identities English has accrued as a result of its acculturation in new sociolinguistic ecologies.

Similarly, Wolf and Polzenhagen (2009) agree that the driving forces behind the WE paradigm are linguistics' recognition of, reaction to, and reflection on drastic social as well as sociolinguistic developments that are brought about by the dynamics of globalisation.

Against the backdrop of the above discussion, speakers of English are still usually thought of simply as native and non-native speakers. While non-natives speak at least two languages, many natives tend to be monolingual, probably because they come from a majority language background and majority language speakers are often less likely to learn other languages than minority L1 speakers. English monolinguals can be thought of as falling into two general categories: those who speak 'Standard' English and those who speak 'non-Standard' English. As noted above, whether or not a language variety has standard status depends on the groups that speak that variety. The language variety used by people who have power (whether socially, politically or in the media) is seen as a 'standard' variety. Interestingly, Anderson (1991) links this to the rise of the nation state, when the nation was formed as an imagined community centuries ago in Europe. In that period, the classic non-national states were the multi-ethnic empires, such as the Russian Empire and the British Empire, and smaller states at what would now be called sub-national level. These multi-ethnic empires were once monarchies ruled by an emperor or a king. Anderson (ibid.) informs us that these empires' populations were formed of many ethnic groups who spoke a host of different languages. However, each empire was dominated by an ethnic group whose language was usually used in the public administration. The ruling family or house in the empire usually, but not always, came from that group. There also existed some smaller states which were not so ethnically diverse, but were also states ruled by a royal house. Because these states were small, however, they did not have a separate language or culture. Instead, the populations of these small states shared the language of the surrounding region.

The Standard Language (SL) ideology as suggested by Milroy and Milroy (1985) deals with a bias toward an abstracted, idealised and homogeneous spoken language

which is imposed from above, and which takes as its model the written language. According to Lippi-Green (1994: 166-167), the goal of SL is to suppress all types of language variation. She claims that this ideology "is part of a greater power construct, a set of social practices on which people depend without close analysis of underlying assumptions." According to her, in America this standardisation of language aims to separate the powered and the disempowered via proponents such as the educational system and the media. The US educational system is full of texts that (a) suggest there is one correct way to speak or write English, (b) establish a direct connection between the use of 'nonstandard' language and a lack of logic and clarity, and (c) are authoritarian: Say vs. Do not say.

In describing the news media, Lippi-Green (1994: 169) notes that the American media have been involved in

> the propagation of a homogeneous nation-state, in which everyone must assimilate or be marginalized. As part of this process, the print and broadcast news media and the entertainment industry take on the job of reinforcing SL ideology on a daily basis.

She argues that the news media in particular promote the notion that there is a right and a wrong way to talk and that it is a perfectly acceptable practice to censor and punish those who deviate from the SL. She lists interesting examples of newsreaders and correspondents making fun of people who speak regional varieties.

Roberts et al. (1992:35) considered the social context of employees' intelligibility in the workplace, demonstrating "how native speakers' assumption that they have the right to dominate and control, and the way that this is reinforced by the worker's lack of ability to negotiate the right to be heard, affect the detailed processes of routine interactions and their outcomes". Indeed, many NNESTs go through this process and choose to remain silent when they encounter or think they are encountering discrimination, as shown by Helal (2008).

Lippi-Green (1994) addresses two issues that need to be taken into consideration which are not included in the employer's model of communication in the workplace. First, she argues that non-standard language (whether a regional variety or interference of a first language) cannot reveal a great deal about that worker's level of communicative competence, and argues that the latter can often be so high that it compensates for strong first language interference.

The second issue is that the burden of communication is shared, on every level, by the speaker as well as by the listener. According to her, even if we accept that a

particular job requires good communication skills, without further definitions of these skills, we should still question the employer's claim that a particular accent impedes communication. More importantly, she asserts that the problem is not necessarily the accent but rather the negative subjective evaluations made by the listener and in some cases "the lack of goodwill can be as much of an obstacle to understanding, if not more" (Lippi-Green, 1994: 185-6).

2.2.1 Accent and Power

Language is a powerful indicator of personal and social identity - a tool by which we distinguish members of different communities. Moreover, the language variety we use - including accents - can reveal a great deal about our ethnicity, region of origin, and social status among others. It can also be used subjectively to assess whether or not speakers are educated, intelligent, friendly etc. (Dobrow and Gidney, 1998). More importantly, the language or variety of language people speak can have a huge impact on their lives. In particular, accents play an interesting role in the communication between members of society as these accents affect people's perceptions of others, recruitment opportunities, the language learning process, and many other dimensions. According to Wardhaugh (2002: 46), there are different evaluations of different language varieties and these evaluations arise from social rather than linguistic factors. This corresponds to the arguments of Matsuda (1991), who attributes the perception of non-standard speech to the issue of power. She argues that people who are in power are often perceived as speaking 'normal' and 'unaccented English', and any speech that is different from theirs is considered to be accented or non-standard. However, many linguists (Lippi-Green, 1998; Trudgill, 2000; Wardhaugh, 2002) assert that it is impossible to speak without an accent and that there is no such thing as 'unaccented English.'

Most accents are usually classified by the degree to which they are considered 'standard' or 'non-standard' within a particular community. A 'standard' variety is one that is most often associated with high status, the media and power, whereas a 'non-standard' variety is one that is often associated with a lower level of socioeconomic success (Fishman, 1971).

As described by Ryan et al. (1984), speakers with standard accents are usually rated positively on traits related to competence, intelligence and social status, while speakers with non-standard accents are commonly evaluated less favourably on these

same traits, even by “listeners who themselves speak with a non-standard accent”. Nonetheless, when these speakers are evaluated on qualities pertaining to kindness, solidarity and overall attractiveness, non-standard accented speakers compare much more favourably, and are sometimes judged as kinder and more attractive, particularly by listeners who have a non-standard accent.

The effect of non-standard accents on the perception of their speakers has been well documented in the literature. For example, speakers with particular accents have been thought to be guilty of crimes that they did not commit. Dixon et al. (2002) examined the effects of speaking with a non-standard accent, race and crime type on the attribution of guilt. The primary goal of the study was to determine whether speaking with a Birmingham, or ‘Brummie’, accent would evoke negative attitudes from listeners. Their hypothesis was that suspects who used this accent would receive higher ratings of guilt than other suspects who spoke with a standard accent.

Dixon et al. (2002) asked two male actors to mimic two conversations between a middle-aged police officer interrogating a young suspect pleading innocent to a crime he had been accused of. Each conversation was based on the transcript of an actual interrogation that took place in a police station in 1995. In the first guise, the suspect spoke with a standard accent, while in the second guise he spoke in a Brummie accent. The authors manipulated the text in such a way that it would inform the listeners about the race of the suspect as well as the type of crime involved.

Whereas the dependent variable was the attribution of guilt, the first independent variable was the accent type, which included ‘Brummie’ and ‘standard.’ The second variable took into consideration the race of the suspect: ‘Black’ vs. ‘White.’ The last independent variable was the type of crime: ‘blue collar crime’ vs. ‘white collar crime.’

Since the conversation included eight conditions (produced from the accent type, race, and crime type), the task of the listeners was to listen to the eight recorded two-minute conversations randomly and then complete a 7-point bipolar rating scale ranging from *guilty* to *innocent.*

The very briefly reported results of the study revealed consistency with the body of research that indicates that the more non-standard the accent the more negative evaluations it receives. More specifically, Dixon et al. (2002) found that the respondents rated the Brummie suspect to be more guilty than the RP suspect. Investigating the race of the suspect, the study found that being black meant that a suspect received more attributions of guilt than being white. In addition, speaking with a Brummie accent was associated more with blue collar crimes, defined as crimes that involve violence such as

armed robberies, than with white collar crimes, which are defined as crimes that involve breach of trust or deception such as fraud. The results also showed a three-way significant interaction between 'Brummie', 'Black' and 'Blue Collar.' In other words, a black suspect speaking with a Birmingham accent who was accused of an actual or threatened violent crime was assigned the highest ratings of guilt.

Moreover, non-standard accents have been shown to have an effect on the employability of their speakers. Seggie et al. (1986) investigated the effect of speaking with a particular accent on the speakers' perceived suitability for employment in certain job types. The study was composed of two experiments designed to measure the attitudes of businessmen and shoppers towards accentedness. In the first experiment, which was carried out in the Hunter region in Australia's New South Wales, forty owners of small businesses from European ethnic origins were asked to listen to four guises of accent (Standard Australian, Broad Australian, Asian Australian, and German Australian); all were produced by the same actor who was pretending to be applying for a job while simultaneously listing qualifications in each guise. In the second experiment, thirty European female shoppers were recruited to evaluate only three of the above four accents, excluding the last one. The task of the subjects was to fill in a questionnaire made up of Likert-scale questions to determine the suitability of the applicant for recruitment as either an accountant or a store clerk. Each participant in the two experiments listened to only one accent.

The results of the two experiments revealed that the majority of the participants rated speakers with a standard Australian accent as suitable for training as an accountant. In addition, speakers with a broad Australian accent were viewed by the majority of the respondents as suitable for training as store clerks. Both experiments showed that participants evaluated Asian Australian speakers as almost equally suitable for both types of training. In the first experiment, however, German Australian speakers were thought of as being eminently suitable for training as store clerks but not as accountants.

2.3 The Native Speaker

As Ellis (2002) suggests, the two terms 'native' and 'non-native' speakers are clearly understood in their *practical* sense in the field of English language teaching. However, it is extremely difficult to achieve a precise definition of these terms. Medgyes (1994: 9) agrees that there are no problems in everyday usage with the two terms nor with the dichotomy they imply, but suggests that "in the professional circles, however, one

would do well to avoid them". Many lay people mistakenly assume that any learner of English as a second language is by default a non-native speaker of English, regardless of how fluent that learner has become or at what age he or she learned the second language. Additional invalid assumptions include the notion that ethnicities that do not originate in an English-speaking country cannot be included in the native speaker spectrum.

In order to provide a definition for the term 'native speaker', I will refer first to four well known dictionaries and then examine scholarly definitions. The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010) defines the native speaker as "someone who has spoken a particular language since they were a baby, rather than having learnt it as a child or adult." Similarly, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005: 826) defines the native speaker as "a person who speaks a language as their first language and has not learned it as a foreign language. *All our teachers are native speakers of English*" [Italics original]. Further, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2010) defines the native speaker as "someone who has learned a particular language as their first language, rather than as a foreign language. *For the spoken language, students are taught by native speakers*" [Italics original]. Finally, the Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003: 950) states that "a native speaker of a language is someone who speaks that language as their first language rather than having learned it as a foreign language. *Our programme ensures daily opportunities to practice your study language with native speakers*."

More importantly, many attempts to define native speakership focus mainly on the biological developmental aspect of the language by linking it to the first language learned. This means that these definitions rely on whether or not a person has spoken English from birth or from a very young age. According to Davies (1991: 156), Leonard Bloomfield was the first researcher to use the term 'native speaker' in 1933, and these bio-developmental definitions of the term follow this definition. Bloomfield (1933: 43) states that, "The first language a human being learns to speak is his native language, he is a native speaker of this language."

However, these bio-developmental definitions of the native speaker have been criticised in the recent literature. Many scholars (Halliday, 1978; Paikeday, 1985; Rampton, 1990; Davies, 1991; Clark and Paran, 2007) have noted the difficulty of defining the term. Thus, they have often tried to supplement the definition of the term with some characteristics of the native speaker. For example, Stern (1983) states that being a native speaker means the individual must have (a) a subconscious knowledge

about the rules of the language, (b) an intuitive grasp of language and its meanings, (c) the capacity to communicate within social settings, (d) a set of language skills, and (e) the ability to use the language creatively. Also, Johnson and Johnson (1998) add (f) the ability to identify with a language community, while Davies (1991) asserts that the term 'native speaker' can refer to people who (g) acquire first languages, of which they are native speakers, in childhood. It also describes speakers who have (h) intuitions about those features of the 'Standard Language' grammar which are distinct from their idiolectal grammar. Native speakers, according to Davies (ibid.), also have (i) a distinctive ability to produce fluent spontaneous discourse, and (j) translate into the language of which they are native speakers.

Additionally, Rampton (1990) provides the following features which, according to him, are used by many researchers in educational contexts: (k) a particular language is inherited, either through genetic endowment or through birth into the social group stereotypically associated with it, (l) inheriting a language means being able to speak it well, (m) people either are or are not native/mother-tongue speakers, and (n) just as people are usually citizens of one country, people are native speakers of one mother tongue.

However, Rampton (1990: 97-98) also maintains that these characteristics do not comprehensively define the intricate notion of native speakership:

> The capacity for language itself may be genetically endowed, but *particular* languages are acquired in social settings. It is sociolinguistically inaccurate to think of people belonging to only one social group, once and for all. People participate in many groups (the family, the peer group, and groups defined by class, region, age, ethnicity, gender, etc.): membership changes over time and so does language. Being born into a group does not mean that you automatically speak its language well—many native speakers of English cannot write or tell stories, while many non-native speakers can.

There is supporting evidence for this argument regarding multigroup membership in many countries that are multilingual where young children are exposed to two or more languages, and therefore one cannot simply describe them as native speakers of only one of those languages.

Halliday (1978) confirms that it is possible (although difficult) for an adult second language learner from any ethnicity to become a native speaker of that language. Shibata (2010) similarly asserts that it is inappropriate to label somebody 'a non-native speaker' when he or she has learned English as a foreign language and successfully achieved bilingual status as a fluent and proficient user.

All these definitions of what constitutes a native speaker do, however, seem to be in general agreement concerning the notion that a native speaker of a language must have acquired it as his or her first language, although one can think of many exceptions. Cook (1999: 187) describes this element in the definition as “indisputable”, asserting that the remainder of the previously mentioned characteristics are incidental as they only describe how well a speaker uses the language. He also maintains that these variable characteristics do not represent a crucial aspect of the definition of the native speaker, which is the bio-developmental part described earlier. More importantly, these features do not necessarily exclude those learners who acquired certain languages in addition to their first language, provided that they can meet most if not all of these criteria.

In a way, some of the features mentioned above are obvious, while others are questionable. For example, in features (a) and (b), native speakers are not necessarily aware of their knowledge in a formal manner. Also, it is highly questionable whether native speakers have a comprehensive grasp of all varieties of the language. Cook (1999: 186) asserts that not all native speakers are aware of how their speech differs from the standard form, citing the example of the growing use of ‘between you and I’ instead of ‘between you and me’. Moreover, not all native speakers are fluent in speech and some of them do not function adequately in social settings.

The unsuccessful attempts of researchers to define the term ‘native speaker’ comprehensively led Rampton (1990) to propose that the exclusive term ‘native speaker’ itself should be dropped and replaced by more inclusive terms. These terms are based on the relationship between the user and the language: Expertise and Language Loyalty (affiliation, and inheritance). First, the author argues that educationalists should think of accomplished users of any language as expert users because expertise has the following advantages over nativeness:

- Experts do not have to feel close to what they intuitively know a lot about. Expertise is different from identification.
- Expertise is learned, not fixed or innate.
- Expertise is a relative concept. One person’s expert is another person’s fool.
- Expertise is also a partial reality. People can be expert in several fields, but they are never omniscient.
- To achieve expertise, one goes through processes of certification, in which one is judged by other people.

The second term, language loyalty, deals with affiliation and inheritance. According to Rampton (1990: 99), "affiliation refers to a connection between people and groups that are considered to be separate or different, whereas inheritance is concerned with the continuity between people and groups who are felt to be closely linked". He argues that inheritance takes place within social boundaries, while affiliation occurs across these boundaries. The adoption of these terms may well facilitate the process of evaluating speakers based on their expertise in a language rather than based on their inheritance of or affiliation with that language. Thus, the emphasis is redirected to what speakers know instead of who they are, which provides a more just process of hiring teachers.

Rampton (1990: 100) further criticises the two terms *mother tongue* and *native speaker* in ELT arguing that these two terms link together a number of ideas that should be unlinked. The two terms, on the one hand, spuriously emphasise biological factors at the expense of social ones. He admits that while biological factors do play a role in language learning, their effect is never direct or absolute. Rather, this influence is always interpreted in social contexts and to a large extent these factors "are only as important as society chooses to make them." On the other hand, Rampton suggests that these two terms mix up language as a communication means with language as a social identification symbol. He maintains that various definitions of language are based on when, where, and how much languages are learnt and used (first, second, home, school) while others reflect group relations (ethnic, minority, national). He argues that these terms are not as generally applicable as language inheritance and affiliation for two main reasons. First, he claims that these terms apply in *particular* settings unlike his two suggested concepts which …

> point to aspects of loyalty that are relevant to *all* group situations, however they are defined (by family, class, gender, race, region, profession, etc.). [emphasis in original] (p. 100).

Second, the concepts of affiliation and inheritance can be used to discuss the position of individuals and groups, which prove to be helpful in the discussion of education which has to consider both of them. Rampton explains that while the two suggested terms (inheritance and affiliation) call for scrutinising each native speaker's credentials, they are more useful than *native speaker* and *mother tongue* in helping us to think more clearly about individual cases and general situations.

The attempts of defining the native speaker so far seem to assume that there is only one first language that can be easily identified. This is by no means the case. Jenkins (2009) notes that because of the international spread of English around the

world today, bilingualism and multilingualism are becoming the norm, and monolingualism is becoming the exception. More importantly, she refers to the fact that increasing numbers of World Englishes speakers are growing up as bilinguals or even multilinguals, using their different languages for different roles in their everyday lives. As discussed in section 2.2, this makes it very difficult to describe any of these languages as speakers' first, second, or third language.

The paradigm of World Englishes further complicates the definition of the native speaker. Well established varieties of World Englishes such as Nigerian, Singaporean, or Indian English are - according to Davies (2006) - acknowledged English varieties that have their own native speakers, albeit perceived less prestigiously than native speakers of British or American English. Singh (1998) points to the difference between American English and British English arguing that it is never suggested that this difference causes American English to be considered full of errors. He thus contests that World Englishes are different from British English in a similar manner in which Indian English or Singaporean English are only different, not deviant or inferior - with their own rightful native speakers.

Thus, it is obvious that there is no consensus on a single definition of the term 'native speaker'. Several scholars (e.g., Davies, 1991; Braine, 1999; Mahboob, 2003) have acknowledged the non-existence of a proper definition for the term. Therefore, although I am aware of the problems and issues that accompany the term, I will be using it in this research because of the absence of a more accurate one. This use will be based on the 'practical' and 'well-known' meaning of the term in ELT as suggested by Ellis (2002: 7): someone who comes from the Inner Circle or the Outer Circle and, more importantly, speaks English as his or her first language.

2.4 Non-Native English Speaker Teachers (NNESTs)

The previous discussion has shown that defining the native speaker is a controversial and problematic issue. The task of defining the non-native speaker is no easier. As the name suggests, NNESTs are defined in contrast to their native counterparts, through the use of 'non'. As with the 'native speaker' definition, the term 'non-native speaker' teacher seems also to be defined by some distinctive features. According to Medgyes (2001: 433), a NNEST may be defined as a teacher who has the following four characteristics:

1. One for whom English is a second or foreign language.

2. One who works in an EFL environment.
3. One whose students are monolingual groups of learners.
4. One who speaks the same native language as his or her students.

This definition seems to refer to those NNESTs who teach English in their non-English speaking countries, not in English-speaking countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia or New Zealand. However, it leaves out a number of important characteristics of NNESTs, who sometimes teach students who come from various backgrounds and speak different first languages. More importantly, Medgyes (2001) ignores the fact that in several parts of the world, including Saudi Arabia, many NNESTs speak a different native language from their students. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the number of Saudi EFL teachers in higher education institutions is still limited, although it has been increasing very recently. Moreover, many EFL teachers in Saudi universities come from non-Arabic speaking countries.

The name NNESTs is itself not immune to controversy. Braine (1999: xvii) reports that when he formed the NNESTs Caucus in 1998, many NNESTs did not like the term non-native speakers for various reasons. For example, one of the NNESTs said that it was similar to "using the slave-owner's language". Therefore, he tried to find a more appropriate term and he asked various NNEST experts to suggest a neutral term. These are the suggested alternatives:

- second language speaking professionals
- English teachers speaking other languages
- non-native speakers of English in TESOL
- non-native professionals in TESOL
- non-native teachers of English
- non-native English speaking professionals
- second language teaching professionals
- non-native English teachers

Clearly, the majority of these suggested terms include the word non-native in them. Mahboob (2003: 14) reports that as a result of the inclusion of the term 'non-native' in the name of the newly founded caucus, the term NNEST was divested of many of its negative connotations and it is being used with pride today. This is similar to the gay movement, which made positive use of the term in 'gay pride'.

2.5 The 'Supreme' Status of the Native Speaker

In ELT, many English learners and programme administrators believe that English native speaker teachers are the ideal teachers. This belief gives NESTs a powerful status so that they are seen as inherently better teachers than NNESTs (Al-Omrani, 2008). This 'superiority', as Phillipson (1992: 194) asserts, originated in 1960 in Uganda as a conclusion drawn by the Commonwealth Conference on the teaching of English as a second language: "the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker".

The previously mentioned dictionary definitions of the native speaker – which build on this idealisation of the native speaker- emphasise the idea that a learner cannot achieve or come near the status of a native speaker in terms of language proficiency. The connotations of these definitions endow the native speaker with a higher status than his non-native fellow. The example provided by the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005) "*All our teachers are native speakers of English*" [italics original] implies a certain level of prestige and pride for the school, as *all* of their teachers are native speaker teachers - not their inferior non-native speaker fellow counterparts. In a similar way, the example provided in the Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003) "*Our programme ensures daily opportunities to practice your study language with native speakers*" [italics original] sends a message to the learners that the programme is a distinguished one since it gives the learners the opportunity to practise their less developed English with the model that should be followed. In other words, they are telling the students that the programme gives them what they *need*.

Similarly, in his Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, Crystal (2008: 321-22) states that:

> In investigating a language, accordingly, one is wise to try to obtain information from native-speaking informants, rather than from those who may have learned it as a second or foreign language (*even if they are highly proficient*). [Italics added]. Many people do, however, develop a 'native-like' command of a foreign language.

The emphasis in this definition clearly suggests that native speakers have a unique status that is unattainable by learners of a second or foreign language.

The definitions provided earlier from common and well established reference dictionaries help legitimise the term 'native speaker' generally and lend authority to the views that promote its high status. At the same time, these dictionary definitions have negative connotations and also negative implications for teachers and learners of English who unsurprisingly have been shown to lack self-confidence (Nemtchinova, 2005; Moussu, 2006).

Ferguson (1992: xiii) asserts that the native speaker model has been created and maintained by linguists, arguing that not only a native variety but also non-native varieties of a language should be part of its linguistic inventory:

> Linguists, perhaps especially American linguists, have long given a special place to the "native speaker" as the only truly valid and reliable source of language data, whether those data are the elicited texts of the descriptivist or the intuitions the theorist works with. Yet much of the world's verbal communication takes place by means of languages that are not the users' "mother tongue," but their second, third, or *n*th language. . . In fact, the whole mystique of native speaker and mother tongue should probably be quietly dropped from the linguists' set of professional myths about language.

(Although Ferguson does not clearly define what qualifies as a non-native speaker, it is reasonably assumed that he is referring to highly proficient speakers as non-proficient speakers cannot, naturally, be used as a reliable source for language data.

Furthermore, Kachru and Nelson (1996: 79) argue that terms such as 'native speaker' and 'second language' are ideologically loaded in a way that adds to the perceived superiority of the native speakers.

> When we say 'English as a second (or even third or fourth) language', we must do so with reference to something, and that standard of measure must, given the nature of the label, be English as someone's first language. This automatically creates attitudinal problems, for it is almost unavoidable that anyone would take 'second' as less worthy, in the sense, for example, that coming in second in a race is not as good as coming in first.

Native speaker idealisation could probably also be attributed to the importance placed on the spoken communicative competence in English language teaching. In the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, the focus is on dialogue and interaction between the speakers and how meanings of words are actively interpreted and negotiated between interlocutors. Kramsch (2006) maintains that in CLT it is not only words and their meanings that are being negotiated, but also the conventions of their use in social contexts. This means that these conventions are to be followed by the non-native learners of English, suggesting that the target for non-native speakers is the native speaker competence, which is an almost unattainable target (Cook, 1999). In addition, Kramsch (ibid) argues that native speakers do not speak an idealised and standardised version of their language but rather their language is influenced by factors such as geography, social class, occupation, age, etc.

Nonetheless, this focus on the spoken competence in CLT seems to have given further privileges to native speakers enabling them to be perceived as models that should be followed and emulated:

> In language pedagogy, the premium put on spoken communicative competence since the 1970s has endowed native speakers with a prestige they did not necessarily have in the 1950s and 1960s, when the grammar-translation and then the audiolingual methods of language teaching prevailed; today foreign language students are expected to emulate the communicative skills of native speakers. Kramsch (1997: 359)

Bhatt (2002) sheds light on some of the practices that maintain, promote and legitimise the native speaker norm in the field of English language teaching. In his critique of the work of Quirk (1990), he draws attention to the controversy surrounding the 'native speaker norm' and points out that this norm has been questioned by other scholars and applied linguists.

Bhatt (2002: 88) starts by illustrating how 'strategic discoveries' are used in the discourse of some language experts to project the native speaker norm in English teaching. He points out that some experts use words with highly positive connotations to describe research arguments that support their arguments. For example, Quirk, when describing the work of Coppieters (1987),[5] refers to his work as 'interesting' and 'sophisticated': "In a range of interesting and sophisticated elicitation tests, the success rate of the non-natives fell not merely *below* but *outside* the range of native success" [emphasis original]. Bhatt (2002) believes that the use of these terms promotes these findings and gives them a high rank which they do not necessarily deserve. He mentions that these findings of Coppieters (1987) were challenged when many scholars, including Birdsong (1992), replicated that study and found that there were no significant differences between the performance of fluent non-native speakers and that of native speakers.

Bhatt (2002) also argues that the term 'deficit discourse', used by the experts, is another strategy to preserve the supreme status of the native speaker in English language teaching. The author again refers to the work of Quirk (1990: 8) who claims that the teaching of English in non-English dominant countries is a problem because the language of the teachers themselves "inevitably bears the stamp of locally acquired deviations from the standard language". Bhatt (ibid.) challenges this notion, citing the work of many scholars, including Kachru (1992), which have found that in different parts of the world English has been indigenised and has developed local norms. More

[5] In this experiment, native speakers of French were compared to highly proficient non-native speakers using acceptability judgments on 107 sentences. The results showed significant differences between the two groups, which led the author to conclude that the two groups belonged to two different populations with no overlap, and to claim therefore the impossibility of achieving native proficiency by non-native speakers.

importantly, in some of these countries: for instance, India, only 2% of the population prefer Standard British English.

Thomas (1999: 6-7) lists another example of the deficit discourse when reporting on a comment made by one of the delegates to the 1995 TESOL Convention during a discussion on intensive English programmes:

> One thing that we do when we recruit is that we tell students that they will only be taught by NSs [native speakers]. After all these students don't come so far to be taught by someone who doesn't speak English.

The implication of this statement is clear: NNESTs speak deficient and incorrect English and therefore they do not qualify as proper EFL teachers.

Bhatt (2002: 90) discusses some of these struggles and refers to the work of Quirk (1990) in which members of the linguistic discourse community who try to democratise the use of English are described as being "ideologically intoxicated". Bhatt (ibid.) strongly rejects this label and argues that:

> The democratization phenomenon has a liberating and legitimizing appeal to "non-native" speaking populations, and thus the dominant ideology must discredit and displace it with ever-more powerful metaphors woven into a rhetoric that excludes rival forms of thought and denigrates them to the benefit of the dominant ideology.

Bhatt (2002: 91) argues that "the discourse of tutelage" is another strategy that experts like Quirk (1990) use in support of the native speaker myth. According to the latter, the findings of Coppieters (1987) have clear implications for foreign language teaching, including the need for NNESTs to be in constant contact with the native language and its speakers. These suggested implications explicitly promote the supreme status of the native speaker and simultaneously indicate the inferiority of NNESTs.

Reves and Medgyes (1994: 364) also appear to subscribe to the discourse of tutelage, as shown in the following comparison between NESTs and NNESTs:

> Because of their relative English language deficiencies, non-NESTs are in a difficult situation: by definition they are not on a par with NESTs in terms of language proficiency. Their deficit is greater if they work in less privileged teaching situations, cut off from NESTs or any native speakers.

Clearly, the authors are suggesting that NNESTs are in trouble if they are not in touch with the model teachers: NESTs.

The lion's share of research on preferring native speakers over non-native speakers deals with the preference for English native speakers in English language teaching. However, the preference for native speakers is still present in the teaching of other languages. For example, Valdes (1998) studied how the preference for native

speakers exists in foreign language departments in the United States. She questioned the notion of native or near-native proficiency required for American graduates applying for teaching positions in various foreign language departments. Similar to the research on the teaching of English, she reports that well-qualified non-native graduates are usually at a disadvantage when it comes to hiring them to teach foreign languages simply because they do not possess native or near-native proficiency; two concepts that she asserts are far from easily defined or clearly understood (see the above discussion).

Similarly, Koike and Liskin-Gasparro (1999) investigated the issues facing American graduates when they apply for teaching jobs in Spanish departments of American universities. They found that the major challenge is the issue of near-native proficiency (NNP). The authors report that NNP was one of the main concerns of employers in the 12 institutions they surveyed, which ultimately gives preference for Spanish native speakers over American graduates who are proficient speakers of Spanish.

In many parts of the world, the preference for NESTs is clearly noticeable in ELT job advertisements, which require 'native speakers of English only', or give them an advantage over their non-native fellow teachers. For example, Selvi (2010: 165) found in his survey that "60.5% of the job advertisements on famous job noticeboards required 'native or native-like/near-native proficiency' as a qualification for applicants."

Also, Kirkpatrick (2006) reports on the following advertisement for language teachers in Korea which was placed by a Korean government agency in a leading newspaper: "Type one teachers require a certificate in Tesol or three years full-time teaching experience with a graduate degree in Tesol or experience and interest in Korean culture and language. Type two teachers only have to be native speakers of English with a bachelor's degree in any field".

In countries where English is not the first language, this preference is usually justified by the argument that these teachers teach a language that is their mother tongue, in which they are highly competent and of which they may be assumed to have a full command. Widdowson (1994) asserts that native speakers of English are assumed to have a patent not only on the proper language but also on the proper ways to teach it. In countries where English is the first language and to which students come to learn English, there is an additional justification for the preference for NESTs over NNESTs, over and above the issues of perceived competence and NESTs' patent on language. Several researchers, such as Cook (2000) and Medgyes (1994), noted that programme administrators favour NESTs over NNESTs because they believe that students who

come to study English in English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States have the expectation that they will be taught by NESTs.

Similarly, according to Holliday (2008), some influential UK employers say they would be prepared abolish the discrimination between NESTs and NNESTs in the ELT profession right away, but they simply cannot do so because the students demand it.

This issue of being obliged to hire only NESTs because of student preferences is truly problematic. On the one hand, language institutes, especially commercial ones, are trying to satisfy their customers (the students) by providing them with what they expect when they come to English-speaking countries: English native speaker teachers. Al-Omrani (2008) states that English learners who come to the United States to study the language not only expect to be taught by Americans whose mother tongue is English, but also they are surprised when they find out that their teacher is not a native speaker. Similarly, Medgyes (1992: 344) suggests that school principals who focus on business considerations hired NESTs only because they were "aware that international students studying in Britain preferred to be taught by native-speaking English teachers. This demand would have to be satisfied by the school principal."

On the other hand, this argument involving student preference seems to be used as a legitimate justification for the discrimination against NNESTs, something which many EFL organisations, including TESOL, clearly oppose and reject. In its 'Position Statement Against Discrimination of Non-native Speakers of English in the Field of TESOL', the organisation...

> strongly opposes discrimination against nonnative English speakers in the field of English language teaching. Rather, English language proficiency, teaching experience, and professionalism should be assessed along … a continuum of professional preparation. All English language educators should be proficient in English regardless of their native languages, but English language proficiency should be viewed as only one criterion in evaluating a teacher's professionalism. Teaching skills, teaching experience, and professional preparation should be given as much weight as language proficiency. (TESOL, 2006)

The argument for preferring NESTs over NNESTs, not because of issues related to competence or qualification but rather on the basis of student demand, does not seem to hold water. Let us imagine the following situation: a certain language institute employs only Australian English teachers - not American, not British - purely because the students demand it. This practice would definitely be considered unacceptable discrimination, even though the hiring criteria were determined by the students. In spite of everything, as Holliday (2008) puts it, we all share the responsibility of educating our

customers to accept the view that qualified NNESTs should not have to compete with less qualified native speakers.

Although it has been shown that many programme administrators hire NESTs only because of student preference, empirical research has shown that students do not necessarily prefer to be taught by NESTs. Cook (2000) used a questionnaire to examine the attitudes of children towards NESTs and NNESTs in different countries and to determine whether students would prefer native speakers to non-native speakers. The study revealed that only 18% of Belgian children, 44% of English children, and 45% of Polish children preferred native speaker teachers. More interestingly, 47% of Belgian, 32% of English, and 25% of Polish children preferred NNESTs. The rest did not have a preference. Although Cook's (2000: 331) study investigated children only, he concludes that "more revealingly, nowhere is there an overwhelming preference for NS teachers. Being an NS is only one among many factors that influence students' views of teaching." Clearly, students' preferences are not simply based on teachers' native speakership but rather the preferences are more complex. Considering the Saudi context, the study of Al-Omrani (2008: V) revealed that the Saudi university students in his sample did not show a clear preference for native speakers and that they perceived both NESTs and NNESTs to have advantages and disadvantages. His findings show that the teacher's qualifications and teaching experience represented the most distinctive features of an excellent English teacher, regardless of what his mother tongue is. Another study that found no preference for native speaker teachers was conducted by Mullock (2010). She investigated the perceptions of Thai university students and teachers of what makes a good language teacher. She found that the participants did not explicitly show a preference for either native or non-native speaker teachers. Rather they stressed that a good English teacher must have strong pedagogical skills, possess sufficient knowledge of the target language and its culture, and teach the subject matter content adequately and in harmony with prevailing cultural norms and beliefs.

2.6 Challenging the Native Speaker Preference

As shown in the previous sections, the image of the native speaker as the ideal teacher has been well established in the world of EFL. However, many scholars have criticised and challenged the idea that the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker of the language. Phillipson (1992: 194), for example, starts by introducing the term "native speaker fallacy", which deals with taking the native speaker norm for granted in English

language teaching. He refers to the 1961 Commonwealth Conference in Uganda on the teaching of English as a second language where it was concluded that the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker. This rather radical conclusion alleges that a native speaker of English has “greater facility in demonstrating fluent, idiomatically appropriate language, in appreciating the cultural connotations of the language, and ... in being the final arbiter of the acceptability of any given samples of the language.”

Also, Medgyes (1996) challenges this notion of native speaker superiority. He argues that the statement that the more proficient in English, the more efficient in the classroom is a false statement from an educational perspective. He starts by saying that if language competence was the only variable in teaching, a native speaker would of course be a better English teacher than his non-native counterpart. By the same token, any native speaker, whether or not he or she had obtained EFL qualifications, would be a more effective teacher than any non-native speaker. However, Medgyes (1996) asserts that this assumption clearly conflicts with everyday experience, and he therefore argues that a number of other factors or variables are equally (or more) important in the teaching and learning process. These variables - which include experience, training, age, aptitude, personality and motivation - are independent variables: they are not specific to language and therefore they can apply equally to native and non-native teachers. If these factors are equal for both teacher categories (NESTs and NNESTs), it would seem that the first category does have the advantage of superior language competence.

Although Medgyes (ibid) was challenging the perceived superiority of NESTs, he was doing the NNESTs, most likely unintentionally, a disservice. Indeed, his argument implies that non-native speaker teachers are all one category, a characteristic of which is their language deficiency and inferiority in comparison with their native speaker counterparts. His argument might have been a swim against the current a decade ago, but the developments in the field - which I have shown throughout this chapter - render this perceived superiority in language competence highly contestable (Davies, 2006; Jenkins, 2009, Seidlhofer, 2009; Braine, 2010).

However, many scholars view the differences between NESTs and NNESTs as being advantageous to the latter. Medgyes (1992: 39) considers the relative weakness of language competence on the part of non-native teachers as “the relative deficit that enables them to compete with native speakers ... What is weakness on one side of the coin is an asset on the other”. He lists six reasons in support of his argument:

1- Only NNESTs can represent imitable models of successful language learners.
2- NNESTs can teach their students learning strategies more effectively.

3- They can provide learners with information about the English language.
4- They are able to anticipate language learning difficulties.
5- They can be more empathetic to the learning needs and problems of their students.
6- They can benefit from a shared mother tongue with the students.

Maum (2002) also believes that the differences between NESTs and NNESTs operate as strengths for the latter and that these strengths should be recognised. Similarly, Phillipson (1992: 194) asserts that NNESTs can acquire many of the perceived advantages that native speakers have by enrolling in teacher training programmes. He also argues that NNESTs can have almost full awareness of the correct forms and appropriate uses of English and that they are able to analyse the language and explain it. He also maintains that the previous language learning experience of the NNESTs may qualify them to become more efficient teachers than those who speak it as a native language. This argument is also supported by Paikeday (1985: 88) who contends that "native speakership should not be used as a criterion for excluding certain categories of people from language teaching".

Canagarajah (1999: 79) emphasises the importance of being aware that the native speaker fallacy is "linguistically anachronistic". He justifies this by showing that this fallacy contradicts some basic linguistic concepts that have been developed through empirical research and accepted by contemporary scholars.

> it [this fallacy] creates a disjunction between research awareness and professional practice in ELT. For instance, we take for granted that all languages and dialects are of equal status, that there are no linguistic reasons for the superiority of one dialect or language over the other ... However, the native speaker fallacy goes against these basic assumptions. It is based on the view that the language of the native speaker is superior and/or normative irrespective of the diverse contexts of communication.

Another issue associated with the dichotomy between NESTs and NNESTs, which is based on their status as native or non-native speakers, is that it - as Maum (2002) puts it - extends the presumed supremacy of the NESTs in the ELT profession and contributes to discrimination against NNESTs in hiring practices.

2.7 Perceptions of NNESTs

Although the research on NNESTs is still in its infancy, this field is continually gaining more attention. A limited number of researchers have empirically explored issues of discrimination against NNESTs in the hiring practices from the perspective of EFL

programme administrators (Flynn and Gulikers, 2001; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2006; Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008). Therefore, this part will be divided into two sections: the first section deals with research conducted in the context of the United States, and the second section covers research that has considered the context of the United Kingdom.

2.7.1 Perceptions of Programme Administrators in the USA

In the US, Flynn and Gulikers (2001: 151) tackled the issues of NNEST hiring criteria from their own perspective and experience as programme administrators. Their article presents a set of guidelines designed to improve NNESTs' employment prospects. It also explores the attitudes of programme administrators, ESL learners and NNES applicants. The six questions presented in the article pertained to the criteria adopted by programme administrators when hiring NNESTs, the mentoring or support that NNESTs need when they are hired, how NNESTs should react when they are perceived not to be 'American' by their students, the role of MA TESOL programmes in the professional development of NNESTs, the recommended interviewing strategies for them, and the factors that should be considered by NNESTs when accepting or declining a job offer.

They assert that of these the question most relevant to the issue of NNESTs' employment is the first, which investigates the criteria recruiters use when they hire English teachers. In their discussion of this question, they note that the main issues associated with the NNESTs are their accent and fluency. Flynn and Gulikers (2001: 153) believe that "if NNES professionals have an accent, it should not interfere with understanding. That is, their speech should be intelligible to both native and nonnative speakers of English". Although they mention the NES/NNES dichotomy, they do not discuss the effect of the applicants' status as natives or non-natives on their employment prospects. Moreover, they imply that some NNESTs, and indeed NESTs, do not have an accent. Everybody speaks with an accent since it is "no more than one's way of speaking, the way one sounds when speaking, the way one uses sound features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation" (Kumaravadivelu, 2004: 1).

The issue of intelligibility is repeatedly mentioned here and therefore merits further discussion. In the broad sense of the term, it refers to the ability to recognise and understand what a speaker is uttering. Kumaravadivelu (2004: 3) defines intelligibility as "being understood by an individual or a group of individuals at a given time in a given communicative context."

However, Smith and Nelson (2006: 429) refer to developments concerning the perceived status of native speakers and highlight the fact that lack of intelligibility could come from native as well as non-native speakers of English.

> those who have traditionally been called "native speakers" are not the sole judges of what is intelligible, nor are they always more intelligible than "non-native" speakers

The issue of intelligibility is perhaps closely linked with familiarity of variety. That is, the more familiar people (whether native or non-native) are with an English variety, the greater the chance for them to understand and be understood by the members of that speech community. Moreover, Smith and Nelson (ibid) assert that the burden of understanding does not lie on the speaker or listener alone but that it is an interaction between them. McArthur (2001: 7) provides an example on how the shared responsibility of intelligibility is called for in a world where English serves as the world's language. He reports on a Japanese executive in the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris who noted:

> We non-natives are desperately learning English... Dear Anglo-Americans, please show us you are also taking pains to make yourselves understood in an international setting.

Smith and Nelson (2006: 430) divide intelligibility into three categories: intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. The first deals with the ability to recognise an utterance, the second concerns the ability to understand the meaning of an utterance, and the third is the ability to understand the meaning behind an utterance, where pragmatics plays an extremely important role. The authors argue that these three categories should be treated as degrees of understanding on a continuum of complexity of variables, from phonological to pragmatic, where intelligibility represents the lowest degree of understanding while interpretability represents the highest.

Mahboob (2003) was the first researcher to study the issue of NNESTs' employment empirically. He explored the hiring practices of 122 college-level intensive English programme administrators in 50 US states and their attitudes towards the importance of the native speakership criterion in their hiring practices. The study sought to answer three research questions: (1) Do administrators of adult English Language Programmes in the USA find being a native English speaker an important factor in making their hiring decisions? (2) Do adult English Language Programmes in the USA have an equal ratio of NESTs and NNESTs? (3) Is there a relation between the importance of the NS factor and the number of NNESTs in these programmes?

The instrument used was a questionnaire that consisted of three parts: administrative questions, instructor questions and student questions. In the first set of questions, the participants were asked to rate 10 hiring criteria on a scale from zero to five (0 meant the least important, 5 meant the most important). These alphabetically-ordered criteria were: accent, American citizenship, American nationality, dialect, educational experience, enrolment in associated academic programmes, ethnicity, native English speaker, recommendation, and teaching experience. In the instructor questions, the respondents were asked if they were affiliated with an educational programme (applied linguistics, TESOL etc.) and if they had had an affiliation, they were further asked about the demographics of students and teachers in their departments. Finally, the student questions were used as distracters as they asked the participants about the total number of students in their programmes and the percentage of those students who were expected to study at a university after graduating from the programme.

Overall, the participants ranked the ten criteria in terms of their importance in the following order: teaching experience, educational experience, recommendation, native English speaker, accent, dialect, citizenship, nationality, enrolment in associated academic programmes, and ethnicity.

The results of this study revealed that 59.8 per cent of the participants considered it important for an English teacher to be a native speaker. Furthermore, the study showed that NESTs and NNESTs did not have an equal presence in the adult intensive English programmes in the United States. More specifically, the programmes surveyed included a total of 1425 teachers out of which 1313 were NESTs (92.1%) and only 112 were NNESTs (7.9%).

This huge discrepancy in the numbers of NESTs and NNESTs could be partially explained by the administrators' answers to the third research question. That is, Mahboob (2003) found that there was a significant negative relationship between the importance given to native speakership and the ratio of NNESTs in every programme. This means that programme administrators who assigned less importance to the 'native speaker' criterion had a higher number of NNESTs in their programmes. This also suggests that the administrators not only perceived nativeness as important but also assigned it considerable weight when making hiring decisions.

Moussu (2006) explored the hiring practices of 21 intensive English programme administrators in the United States as well as their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of NNSTs. She distributed an online questionnaire which used Likert-scale

questions and open-ended questions, one of which asked the administrators directly about the hiring criteria they used when recruiting English teachers.

The answers to this question showed that 95.2% of the administrators' answers included the past teaching experiences of the applicants, 81% included an MA in a related field, 28.5% listed overseas experience, 23.8% included the job interview, 19% included native-like English fluency, and finally the letters of recommendation were listed in 9.5% of the administrators' answers. In contrast to the findings of Mahboob (2003), it is obvious that the NEST/NNEST dichotomy was not used as a hiring criterion. Furthermore, the administrators were asked if they would assign NNESTs to the same classes taught by NESTs and the majority of them (62%) said they would. More importantly, all the administrators surveyed agreed that NNESTs could teach as well as NESTs (55% strongly agreed while 45% agreed). Moussu (2006: 159) asked the administrators: "*If you don't have any NNS ESL instructors working at your school right now, do you think you will hire one in the near future, if the opportunity comes up?* [Italics original]. On a scale from 'definitely yes' to 'definitely no', only five administrators responded, out of whom two chose 'definitely yes', two chose 'cautiously yes' and one selected 'maybe'.

As regards the perceived strengths of NNESTs, the respondents on the one hand acknowledged the pedagogical skills of the NNESTs and commended them for their use of multiple techniques, and their 'strong collegiality', 'dedication', 'creativity in the classroom' and high academic and proficiency standards and expectations of students. The perceived weaknesses of NNESTs, on the other hand, were their foreign accents, over-emphasis on grammar and lack of self-confidence.

2.7.2 Perceptions of Programme Administrators in the UK

Issues pertaining to NNESTs' employment and how they are perceived by programme administrators in the UK have received little attention in the literature. Up until 2007, there had been no empirical studies that took into consideration the issue of NNESTs' employability in the United Kingdom (Clark and Paran, 2007).

Medgyes (1992: 343) reports that he informally gave a "group of highly sophisticated ELT specialists" three options to choose from if they were principals of commercial ELT schools in the UK and were to employ an EFL teacher. These three options were: (a) I would employ only native speakers, even if they were not qualified EFL teachers; (b) I would prefer to employ native-speaking EFL teachers, but if hard pressed I would choose a qualified non-native rather than a native without EFL

qualifications, and (c) The native/non-native issue would not be a selection criterion (provided the non-native-speaking EFL teacher was a highly proficient speaker of English).

The results of this survey revealed that none of the sixty or so respondents chose (a) would employ only NESTs even if they were unqualified teachers. Medgyes (1992: 344) describes this as “a reassuring sign that principals who are led by short-term business interests, or by the delusion that native speakers are superior to non-native speakers under any terms, are not welcome at distinguished professional gatherings”. Also, two-thirds of the respondents opted for (b) would prefer to hire NESTs, but if they had to, they would employ qualified NNESTs over unqualified NESTs. Lastly, the other third of the participants chose (c) the NEST/NNEST dichotomy did not constitute a hiring criterion given that the NNESTs are highly proficient in English. The author suggests a number of factors that may have influenced the decision making of the principals. He argues that those who opted for (b) were taking into account both business and professional considerations. With regard to the business aspect, he mentions that the participants “were presumably aware that international students studying in Britain preferred to be taught by native-speaking English teachers. This demand would have to be satisfied by the school principal - but not at all costs”. Concerning the professional factors, however, the author states that the answers of the respondents implied less homogeneity because “while they all agreed that native-speaking EFL teachers (NESTs) and non-native-speaking EFL teachers (non-NESTs) were better than native speakers without EFL qualifications, they may have had divergent views about who would be better, the NEST or the non-NEST”. Furthermore, Medgyes (1992) describes those who opted for (c) as “idealists” and argues that they might run the risk of losing their clients (students) because they have taken only professional considerations into account.

The first empirical study to investigate the hiring practices of EFL programme administrators in the UK was conducted by Clark and Paran (2007). They distributed a questionnaire via email to the employers of ELT instructors at 325 institutions, out of which only 90 responded. These institutions were of three types: private language schools, universities and other higher education institutions, and further education institutions. The study had three research questions: (1) what criteria are considered by the employers when they hire ELT instructors, (2) how important is being a native speaker in the recruitment decision, and (3) what is the relationship between the importance of being a native speaker and the hiring of NNESTs. Their questionnaire

included Likert-scale questions where the possible answers were: not important at all, relatively unimportant, somewhat important, relatively important, moderately important and very important.

The overall results of the study revealed that the participants accorded a high importance to teaching qualifications, performance in job interviews, teaching experience, educational background, recommendations, visa status, and being a native speaker of English, respectively. The least important criteria were ethnicity, European Union nationality, British nationality, accent, application materials, and teaching demonstration, in that order.

More importantly, the native speakership criterion was evaluated by a large majority of the respondents as either 'very important' or 'moderately important.' It is worth mentioning that 68.9 % of the institutions did not employ NNESTs when the study was being conducted. The results showed that the native speakership criterion was considered important by half of the institutions which employed NNESTs while the same criterion was considered important by 85% of the institutions which did not employ NNESTs. This clearly suggests that NNESTs are less likely to be hired by institutions that view native speakership as an important criterion in the employment of language teachers. According to Clark and Paran (2007: 422), "Not only do employers think being an NES is important, but they also make hiring decisions based on it."

Also, 45% of the employers surveyed mentioned that they use additional criteria when they considered hiring English language teachers. The most commonly used criterion was related to the personality and attitude of the applicants: for example, how lively, enthusiastic, friendly or flexible they were. The second most frequently used criterion pertained to specific qualifications or experiences like teaching abroad and teaching specific areas such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The authors conclude that the employment opportunities of NNESTs in the UK are directly affected by the hiring criteria of the employers. If an employer views native speakership as an important criterion when considering an application, NNESTs who are fluent, well qualified and experienced may well find it extremely difficult to be recruited. The authors note that more research is needed to bring to light the beliefs that lie behind the attitudes of the employers and the actual experiences of NNESTs in the UK. This was probably not possible in their study owing to the quantitative design of their instrument, which did not give the participants much room to comment on their experiences and beliefs.

In her MA dissertation, Helal (2008) investigated the hiring practices of programme administrators of six Further Education Colleges in the Tyneside area in the North East of the United Kingdom. Her main research questions assessed whether there is discrimination in the employment of ESL teachers in these colleges, in addition to examining how NESTs, NNESTs and programme administrators perceive native speakers and non-native speakers as ESL teachers. She administered questionnaires to 45 ESL teachers (12 NNESTs and 33 NESTs) and 7 programme administrators, out of whom 16 were interviewed.

The results revealed that only two of the twelve NNESTs believed that they were indirectly discriminated against by the programme administrators and students at these colleges. Helal (2008: 84) found that neither the students nor the programme administrators subscribed to the claims that students are usually disappointed if they find that their English teachers are NNESTs (Medgyes, 1994; Cook, 2000). More importantly, native speakership was described by the participating programme administrators to be an insignificant factor in their hiring practices. Although the results showed that the teaching qualification was the most important factor in the employment of ESL teachers, it is worth bearing in mind that the respondents were asked direct questions that allowed plenty of room for 'idealist' answers.

When explaining the low number of NNESTs employed by these colleges and whether or not this was a result of discrimination, the administrators noted that not many NNESTs applied for the job and that those who did apply were rejected because of their lack of the required qualifications. Moreover, they stated that the accents of teachers should not deter them from employing NNESTs as long as their speech is intelligible by the students.

In response to the second question of the study, the participants generally found differences between NNESTs and NESTs in terms of their linguistic and pedagogical behaviour. The participants praised NNESTs' abilities to empathise with the learners' needs, anticipation of their language difficulties, their awareness of the language system and grammatical rules, and also praised them for being good role models for successful language learners. According to Helal (2008: 90), the native speakers were lauded by the participants for their "cultural knowledge", their accent - although everybody, NESTs or NNESTs, speaks with an accent - and their instinctive knowledge of the language.

As regards the weaknesses of NNESTs, the participants noted that the foreign accents of the NNESTs as well as their "insufficient knowledge of culture and subtleties

about the English language" were the main weaknesses. The NNESTs themselves believed that their accents were their main disadvantage. The weaknesses of NESTs, on the other hand, were their lack of empathy with the learners and their poor knowledge of grammar. Helal (2008) argues that this tolerant view of NNESTs on the part of the participants was a result of their experiences with other languages, as 93% of them had learned additional languages.

The participants clearly viewed the accents of teachers as representing an advantage for NESTs over NNESTs. Yet programme administrators said that they did not view this as a hiring criterion. They seem to belong to the idealists division of administrators as described by Medgyes (1992), or else they were just saying what they thought should be said in questionnaires and interviews. This means that more indirect research methodologies are needed to elicit information on the hiring practices and perceptions of EFL instructors. One such method is to ask them, for example, if they would hire a person whom they have just heard speaking.

The findings of previous studies that investigated the preference for NESTs were that varieties of English are not perceived equally since non-native speakers are found to be perceived as less competent users of English. Probably one of the main reasons is that perception is based on an inner circle 'superior' variety and the other varieties are less convincing for reasons discussed in the beginning of this chapter. However, for many language programme administrators (for different reasons perhaps), it is difficult to openly say they only hire native speakers who are perceived to have a patent on English as well as the proper ways of teaching it (Widdowson, 1994), or favour them over non-native speaker teachers. This, therefore, may cast doubts on the findings of studies like Moussu (2006) and Helal (2008) that have established the insignificance of native speakership and that it was not an important hiring criterion to recruiters. That is, the methodologies followed in these studies are problematic in that they asked recruiters directly about their hiring practices such as whether they preferred NESTs over NNESTs. This type of questions usually allows for, and may well lead to, idealist responses where problematic issues are left unaddressed or ignored. Another concern about these types of studies is that they ask participants to list their criteria without asking them about certain ones. This makes it easy for recruiters to avoid certain controversial criteria, such as the role of accent or native speakership in teachers' employment and discrimination against qualified NNESTs.

It is imperative then to avoid asking these direct questions in order to maximise the chances of getting more realistic and honest answers. One way of doing so is by

asking them directly to evaluate all the criteria under investigation and then verifying the supplied information indirectly using another method. This thesis will take such an approach in order to obtain verified answers to the research questions concerning the hiring criteria adopted by programme administrators (see chapter three for a detailed account of the research methodology).

2.8 The Role of Non-Standard Accents in the Employment of Teachers

I discussed the role of accents in the perception of others in section 2.2.1. This section highlights the significant effect accents can also have a on the employment of teachers. Munro (2003: 44) provides an example of a teacher with a Polish accent who was discriminated against only because of the employer's concern that he might not be understood in school. He explains that Mirek Gajecki came to Canada from Poland in 1970, obtained a formal teaching certificate in Montreal and taught at a technical institute there. Nine years later, he moved to Vancouver where he worked as a substitute teacher at high school level. Gajecki had a satisfactory teaching record and had been evaluated as a competent teacher. Regardless of the apparent level of this teacher's qualification, he was advised that the school board had concerns about his non-native accent. Subsequently, he was not contacted for substitute teaching work. When the case was presented in a court of law, an inquiry revealed that a clerical worker had placed a note on Gajecki's file saying that he "did not speak English". During the inquiry, the school board did not deny having concerns about Gajecki's accent but they could not provide any evidence that his accent had ever interfered with his work. The board's representative testified that a teacher's accent might have two kinds of adverse consequences. The first is that children might seize on mispronounced words, and the second was whether or not the children would understand the teacher. Interestingly, the author reported that when the School Board became aware of the note on Gajecki's file, he was returned to the list of substitutes and was employed every day of the following school year. Munro (2003) states that the board's ruling for the immediate return of Gajecki after discovering the note on his file suggests that the concern about his accent was hypothetical. This type of concern which lacks supporting evidence could apply - to some extent - to the issue of NNESTs' employability.

Perceptions of accents and judgments based on them in terms of hiring English teachers seem to continue to exist regardless of efforts to overcome such prejudices. In 2010, the Arizona Department of Education in the US introduced

a controversial new policy to reassign teachers who spoke with heavy accents. It was justified by reports of government auditors to the district that some teachers had pronunciation issues such as pronouncing 'think' as 'tink' and dropping word-final sounds. Officials denied discrimination and said they were acting in the students' best interests. TESOL immediately rejected this policy by issuing the following statement:

> For decades the field of English language teaching has suffered from the myth that one only needs to be a native English speaker in order to teach the English language. The myth further implicates that native English speakers make better English as a second language or English as a foreign language teachers than nonnative speakers of English, because native English speakers are perceived to speak 'unaccented' English and understand and use idiomatic expressions fluently. The distinction between native and nonnative speakers of English presents an oversimplified, either/or classification system that is not only misleading, but also ignores the formal education, linguistic expertise, teaching experience, and professional preparation of educators in the field of English language teaching. (TESOL, 2010)

2.9 Conclusion

The above review of literature has examined some factors and practices that have contributed to the idealisation of the native speaker. It has also shown that native English speaker teachers are preferred over non-native English speaker teachers by programme administrators in the USA (Flynn and Gulikers, 2001; Mahboob, 2003; Moussu, 2006) and in the UK (Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008). Also, the reviewed literature indicates that when programme administrators accord high importance to the 'native speaker' hiring criterion, NNESTs have less chance of being employed by those administrators. The review also revealed the effect of accents on making judgments about people, including perceived employment suitability.

More importantly, the review has shown that there is an apparent gap in the literature, since the hiring practices of programme administrators have so far been empirically studied only in the USA and the UK. The hiring practices in countries where English is a foreign language have not yet been studied. This, therefore, gives additional importance to this study. In the following chapter, the methodology used in this research will be described in detail.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 2, research on the issues relating to EFL Non-Native English Teachers' employability is still in its infancy. More importantly, the main focus in previous research has been on the investigation of the hiring practices of programme administrators in English-speaking countries, namely the United States and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, in previous research the investigations have been carried out without giving the participants the opportunity to hear the applicants' voices, which would have made the hiring decisions significantly more realistic. The aim of this study was to explore the hiring practices of the programme administrators in a non-English-speaking country, i.e., Saudi Arabia. In addition, it aimed to investigate this issue in a more realistic manner by playing the participants recordings of five job applicants listing their qualifications, thus giving them additional information on which to base their decision as to whether or not to hire the applicant.

This chapter presents the details of the research methodology used in the current study. It starts by reiterating the research questions of this project. Following this, a description of the research paradigms in applied linguistics is presented. This chapter also contains detailed descriptions of the instruments used in the study: namely, the questionnaire, informal semi-structured interviews, and the listening task. The concepts of research validity and reliability and how they are implemented in this project are examined, and a description of the pilot study is provided. The chapter concludes with a presentation of some of the ethical issues which I considered in this research.

3.2 Research Questions

As discussed in the previous chapter, the literature on NNESTs and employment issues shows that empirical research is needed to provide insights from the context of non-English speaking countries. Therefore, the aim in this study was to shed light on the perceived employability of EFL teachers in Saudi higher education institutions. In order to accomplish this, this research project sought answer to the following research questions from 56 Saudi academics who took part in the process of recruiting EFL teachers:

1. For Saudi Recruiting Committee members and programme administrators, how important are the following criteria: the applicants' academic qualification, accent, nationality, native speakership, and teaching experience? And are there any additional criteria that should be met by applicants in order for them to be hired to teach English in Saudi higher education institutions?
2. If the native speaker criterion is to be found important, is there a relationship between the importance of this criterion and the chances of NNESTs being employed?
3. To what extent do Saudi Recruiting Committee members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs?

The first question was intended to investigate the criteria that the respondents perceive as important when they make their hiring decisions. These criteria were: *academic qualification*, *accent, nationality*, *native speaker* and *teaching experience*. The participants were asked to rate on a Likert-scale the importance of the above-mentioned five criteria, which were adapted from the literature on the topic, namely the studies of Mahboob (2003) and Clark and Paran (2007). These are the only studies that have investigated the topic from a similar perspective, and therefore it seemed appropriate to adopt their criteria with some adaptations to fit the specific requirements of this research project. Although each of these studies included additional criteria to the five mentioned above, these were not incorporated into this study, either because they were not relevant to the context of Saudi Arabia (e.g., *Visa status* and *EU nationality*), or because they were not used in the hiring process (e.g., *Recommendations* or *Enrolment in associated academic programmes*). More importantly, if the participants in the current study wanted to add additional criteria which they used or perceived as important, they were given the opportunity to do so in a space allocated for this purpose in the questionnaire.

The second research question was designed to look for associations between (1) the perceived importance of being a native speaker and (2) how qualified the respondents perceived the five applicants to be. In previous research, a negative relationship has been found between these two points, in that the more importance administrators give to the native speakership factor, the less chance NNESTs have of being hired. Thus, the second question was meant to probe this matter in the context of Saudi Arabia.

The third research question asked the respondents whether they would employ less qualified native English speakers if more qualified non-native English speakers were available. In other words, the question sought to determine whether the status of the applicant as a native speaker of English would outweigh other factors, such as the applicants' academic qualifications and teaching experience.

3.3 Research Design in Linguistics

Applied Linguistics research is said to be linked to two broad philosophical views of the world, either the positivist approach or the constructionist approach. The two approaches represent opposing views of reality. In general, the first view maintains that there exists a single reality that can be measured. In the constructionist approach, on the other hand, multiple realities exist and continually change, making it extremely difficult if not impossible for them to be measured (Coupland and Jaworski, 2009). In social sciences, there are two main research paradigms: the quantitative and the qualitative. Quantitative research methods are described generally as being based on the collection and analysis of numerical data, which are usually obtained from questionnaires, tests, checklists and the like (Gay and Airasian, 2003). This paradigm is linked to the positivist approach - although it can also be undertaken from a constructionist approach - and has a number of distinctive features that make research methods of this kind different from qualitative methods. Firstly, quantitative research tends to use large samples of participants. Secondly, it employs statistical procedures to analyse data. Thirdly, quantitative methods often include little personal interaction between researchers and participants. This is owing to the fact that questionnaires can be distributed online or by post, and researchers can simply introduce the task to the participants and then leave them to complete the questionnaire by themselves. Thus, little or no interaction occurs because, unlike with interviews, researchers do not need to be present when the participants are filling in the questionnaires. Finally, quantitative research tends to adopt a more deductive approach, starting with a generalisation and ending with a specific conclusion.

By contrast, the qualitative research paradigm is more concerned with collecting and analysing non-numerical data obtained through methods such as interviews, tape recordings, classroom observations, open-ended questions and the like. In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research is linked to the constructionist approach and usually deals with smaller samples of participants with whom the researchers engage in

direct interaction. Qualitative research, according to Gay and Airasian (ibid.), is an inductive research method, since it begins with limited observations about a phenomenon and usually ends up forming generalisations from these observations.

Although quantitative and qualitative research methods have traditionally been defined as opposites, many researchers have recently emphasised the need to view them as being complementary rather than incompatible (Duff, 2002; Brown, 2004; Angouri, 2010). Brown (2004) lists several shortcomings associated with the qualitative vs. quantitative dichotomy. Amongst these shortcomings are the facts that such a dichotomy (a) leaves out altogether certain types of secondary research, such as literature reviews, (b) treats as monolithic several distinct qualitative research *techniques* (case study research; introspection research; discourse analysis research; interactional analysis research, and interviews), (c) presents as monolithic a number of very different quantitative research techniques (interviews; questionnaires; descriptive, exploratory, quasi-experimental and experimental techniques), and (d) ignores the fact that the reality of survey research, including interviews and questionnaires, is both qualitative and quantitative.

As a result, researchers have called for a more constructive and accurate approach to this issue. Brown (2004: 488-9) suggests that it would be best to view the difference between qualitative and quantitative research as being a question of degree, rather than drawing a clear-cut distinction between them. He further argues that "all behavioral research is made up of a combination of qualitative and quantitative constructs". Similarly, Angouri (2010) asserts that mixed research designs help to achieve a better understanding of the different investigated phenomena, because quantitative research is useful in the generalisation of research findings while qualitative methods provide in-depth and rich data.

In social science studies, quantitative and qualitative methods are often used together. One questionnaire can include both types, in that some questions are Likert-scale questions while others are open-ended questions.

More importantly, whether qualitative, quantitative or both types of research methodology are used depends on the research questions and the aims of the researcher. I used triangulation of the research methods in this study, and these methods are explained in detail in section 3.6 of this chapter.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The term validity describes the strength of the research conclusions, inferences or propositions. There are two types of validity: internal and external. On the one hand, internal validity pertains to the extent to which the data collected in a research project are a true reflection of the reality. In other words, it is "the degree to which the results of a study can be accurately interpreted as meaning what they appear to mean" (Brown, 2004: 493). On the other hand, external validity refers to the extent to which researchers can generalise their findings to a larger group, to other contexts, or to different times (Dörnyei, 2007).

The reliability of the research instrument describes the degree to which the results of a questionnaire or other instruments are consistent, while the reliability of the results refers to the degree to which the same results would be likely to occur if the study were replicated under the same conditions.

According to Brown (2004), the reliability of research can be maximised by carefully designing, piloting and validating any measures involved and by carefully planning and designing the research from the beginning.

In order to increase the reliability of this research, a pilot study was conducted in which a mixed methodology was employed. That is, a questionnaire was used in addition to semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire, which included Likert-scale questions, went through many revisions and much redrafting before it was handed out to participants. Krosnick et al. (2005) note that the use of Likert-scale questions can lead to a high level of reliability and validity of the measurement of attitudes if careful attention is paid to (a) the theoretical assumptions used to create the items and the scale, and (b) the number of points available on the rating scale; too many points make the question confusing and too few points make the question not precise enough.

In order to ensure that the previous two points (a and b) were taken into account, the questionnaire was adapted from well designed studies found in the literature that had utilised this instrument, which has been tested and validated by experts in this type of research. Also, two types of scale were used for the questions, depending on the nature of the question: one set of questions included seven points while the other included five points (see Appendix A). For example, questions that asked the respondents to evaluate the qualification level of the applicants used the seven-point scale to allow for more variation and differentiation in their answers, while responses to the statements in the questionnaire used a five-point scale to record their agreement or disagreement with these statements.

The following section will discuss the pilot study in more detail.

3.5 The Pilot Study

One aim of the pilot study was to develop and test the design of the questionnaire that I was planning to use in the actual research. Researchers maintain that although conducting a pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study, the use of a pilot study in the social sciences is a crucial element in the design of a good study because it increases the likelihood of the study's success. This is because piloting helps the researcher to identify design flaws which can be corrected in the actual study (Maxwell, 1996; Teijlingen et al., 2001; Peat et al., 2002). Maxwell (1996: 75) also believes that pilot studies test "how people will understand them and how they are likely to respond."

The pilot study was designed and implemented in a similar manner to the actual study in order to achieve the optimal goal of piloting. Therefore, it consisted of a questionnaire in which mixed methods of data collection were employed through the use of both open-ended (qualitative) and closed-ended (quantitative) questions. It also included semi-structured interviews with the respondents as well as a listening task. The same recordings for the listening task were used later in the actual study.

Owing to the nature of the research (the study was only interested in Saudi academics who either served on recruitment committees (RCs) or had some experience in recruiting EFL teachers for Saudi higher education institutions), only a small number of participants was recruited for the pilot study. Therefore, thirteen participants, who had recruiting experience before they came to the UK to study, were selected using the snowball sampling technique. This means that after a participant had completed the questionnaire and interview, he was asked to suggest other participants who met the above-mentioned conditions. Moreover, the sample used in the pilot study was to a large extent representative of the target population. All of the participants in the pilot study were doing their postgraduate or post-doctoral studies in the United Kingdom. All the participants were males since the sample of the potential subjects for the main study would also be males only. The formation of RCs in most - if not all - cases includes males only even if they were recruiting for female teachers. The guidelines for RCs' formation, if they exist, are not publically available. Therefore, one can think of various potential justifications for such practice. It might well be that it is due to a lack of female PhD holders who are willing to participate in RCs, given that Saudi female PhD holders are already significantly outnumbered by their male counterparts (Olayyan,

2014). It might also be, as Al-enezi (2014, personal communication) speculates, an RCs' males-only policy or simply a mere reflection of the male-dominant culture in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The questionnaire of the pilot study included five parts. The first asked the participants for biographical information such as their age, number of years in education, number of times they had participated in RCs, and their highest qualification. The second part was the listening task, in which the participants were played five recordings. In each recording a different speaker was listing his qualifications as part of a teaching job application. The third part asked them to rate the importance of five criteria used in the evaluation of job applications. It also asked for their opinions about eight statements related to native and non-native English teachers. While part four asked the respondents to order the five speakers in terms of their *overall qualification* as teachers, the last part asked the participants to order the five speakers in terms of their *overall employability* as teachers (see Appendix A).

The pilot study gave me the assurance that the design and the wording of the questions were clearly understood by the respondents. After they finished filling out the questionnaire and sat interviews, I informally talked to the pilot study participants and asked them how clear the questions were and whether they had any concerns. This is another advantage of using a pilot study before the actual research - it tests the adequacy of the research instruments (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). In particular, on more than one occasion the pilot study helped to identify problem areas in the design of the five-part questionnaire. For example, in the early stages of the pilot study a problem was encountered with the fourth part of the questionnaire, which meant that in the actual study this part was deleted and compensated for by adding an additional question to the listening task part. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, the fourth part was repeatedly confused with the fifth part, which asked the participants to order the applicants in terms of their *employment potential*, not according to their *qualification level*. This confusion could influence their final order in the fifth part, i.e., ordering them according to their employment potential. It was suspected that if a participant had fixed on a particular order of the applicants based on their qualifications, he would tend to put them in the same order in terms of their overall employability. This was also supported by the fact that two of the first three participants in the pilot study used the same order for both questions. Secondly, it was deemed best to ask the respondents about their perception of each applicant's qualifications, using a scale rather than asking them to rank the applicants, while they were listening to him, instead of leaving it to a

separate question. This, in turn, meant that respondents would have a fresh memory of the applicants' credentials.

Another issue then arose pertaining to the scale and the wording used in the newly added question in the listening task part. After the participants had listened to each applicant, the question was a statement that read: 'This applicant is qualified enough to teach in my department'. The possible answers were: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'not sure', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' Some respondents pointed out that these options did not give them the opportunity to express their assessments of the suitability of the applicants' qualifications in a precise manner. Therefore, this question was later modified to accommodate the variations in the qualification levels of the different applicants as perceived by the participants. The newly modified question asked: 'In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the flowing scale to answer.' At one end of the seven-point scale was 'highly qualified' and at the other end was 'unqualified'. Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) note that researchers need to assess whether each question is given an adequate range of responses and that they need to re-word or re-scale any questions that are not answered as expected.

The pilot study also contributed to increasing the validity of the research instrument as it helped me to decide whether the time allocated for completing the questionnaire and interview was reasonable. Another aspect of the pilot study which helped to increase the internal validity of the research tool was the fact that after they had completed the questionnaire, the participants were asked for their feedback and whether there were any ambiguities or difficult questions.

3.6 Research Design of the Study

The study utilised the mixed method of data collection, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Cohen et al. (2007) maintain that the use of more than one method to collect data is advocated and applied across the social sciences because it attempts to map out and explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by enabling the researcher to study it from more than one standpoint, i.e., by using both qualitative and quantitative data. Also, the use of a relatively small-size sample meant that the use of both methods was essential. The small size of the sample is discussed in section 3.6.5.

Triangulation of data collection methods was deemed necessary in this study in order to increase the validity of the results; a major weakness of relying on a single

method of data collection is that it can result in bias in the results. In fact, it would be very difficult to validate and verify the results of a study if questionnaires alone were used. For example, the common expectation is that decision makers in charge of the employment of EFL teachers will say they hire teachers based entirely on qualifications. Therefore, a researcher needs to use more than one technique to establish that this is what really does happen. Krosnick et al. (2005: 51) note that when attitudes are being studied, respondents might lie, prefer not to talk about a certain issue, or not tell the whole truth, sometimes without even realising it. As they put it, “not only do people want to maintain favourable images of themselves in the eyes of others, but they also want to have such images in their own eyes as well”. One of the questions asked in this study was whether members of RCs would prefer native speakers over their non-native counterparts. The respondents might want to be fair and therefore might say that they base their hiring decisions on the level of qualification of the applicants, regardless of their status as native or non-native speakers of English; however, as shown in the literature on the topic, the reality is different. As shown in the literature review in chapter 2, programme administrators are usually hesitant to employ NNESTs and are more inclined to favour native speakers because of their status. It was thought that utilising an additional method to collect data - interviews in this study - would help to a great extent to measure the sometimes unobservable but existing attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs, and to explore the hiring practices of members of RCs in Saudi higher education institutions.

Therefore, the research tools in this study included a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, which were short and informal, and a listening task. The quantitative aspect of the research was represented by the questionnaire, which included closed questions as well as Likert-scale questions (see Appendix A). Brown (2001) argues that Likert-scale questions are an effective means of gathering participants’ views, opinions and attitudes about various issues pertaining to language. Also, using a questionnaire with specific multiple-choice questions and statements to rate on a Likert-scale gave the respondents in this study a single frame of reference in choosing their answers. According to Brown (2001), the use of this closed-response format has several advantages: it allows for more uniformity across questions, respondents are less likely to skip questions because of their length or complexity, and responses are relatively easy to interpret.

The open-ended questions in the same questionnaire and the semi-structured informal interviews represented the qualitative aspect of the research design. I

conducted the interviews immediately after the questionnaires had been completed. One of the purposes of using interviews as part of the research instrument was to allow the participants to comment on some of their answers and provide justifications and clarifications for them if they had any. More details on the interviews are provided in section 3.6.6.

In the listening task part of the methodology, the participants were played five recordings of job applicants listing their qualifications and seeking employment as English teachers in the institutions in which the participants worked. In the first part of the task the participants were asked to identify whether each applicant was a native or non-native speaker and to evaluate the qualification level of each applicant on a seven-point scale. In the second part of the listening task, the participants were asked to order the five speakers in terms of their overall employment potential. Therefore, the speaker who was perceived as having the highest possibility of being hired to teach in the respondents' institution would be the first. There was also an option for the participants to eliminate a speaker if they thought there was no chance that he would be employed. Further details on the recordings are provided in section 3.6.2.

I administered the questionnaire and conducted the interviews myself. McColl et al. (2001: 22) note that the administration of the questionnaire by the interviewer allows for the collection of larger amounts of information, and of more detailed and complex data. It also facilitates "the use of open-ended questions, or open-ended probes, where the interviewer can record verbatim the answers given by respondents. This may generate richer and more spontaneous information than would be possible by using self-completion questionnaires".

3.6.1 The Questionnaire

Questionnaires are defined as instruments that are used for the collection of data, which are usually in a written form, consisting of open and/or closed questions and statements requiring a reaction from those who are participating in the study (Nunan, 1992).

Questionnaires are one of the most common methods of data collection in language and attitudes research. According to Dörnyei (2003), they have become one of the most popular research instruments employed by researchers across the social sciences. He explains that questionnaires are popular because of their numerous advantages, which include their unparalleled efficiency in terms of a researcher's time, effort and cost. With regard to the time factor, researchers can indeed collect large sets

of information in less than an hour and they can put the questionnaires in the post to be distributed simultaneously to a considerable number of participants.

Also, the use of questionnaires is praised for being efficient in terms of the researcher's effort. Particularly, the closed questions of the questionnaire provide a greater uniformity of answers. As for the efficiency of questionnaires in terms of financial costs, researchers can email them without any costs at all, compared to the costs of using other methods such as interviews, where the researcher usually has to travel short or long distances to meet the participants. More importantly, well constructed questionnaires can facilitate, to a large extent, the statistical processing of the data.

However, the use of questionnaires does not come without disadvantages. Researchers have pointed out that some shortcomings of questionnaires include limitations of data quality, low response rate, misunderstandings, fatigue of respondents if the questionnaire is too long, and the difficulty of ensuring the honesty or seriousness of the answers (Bryman, 2001; Dörnyei, 2003; Cohen et al., 2007).

To overcome some of these limitations, the questionnaire in this study was followed up immediately by semi-structured interviews to validate and enhance data quality. This provided further assurance that the respondents understood what was required of them. With regard to checking the honesty of answers, the design of the research methodology - which included a listening task which preceded the questionnaire - helped to a certain extent to determine whether the answers given by the participants were influenced by the status of the applicants (being NESTs or NNESTs). The effect of fatigue was taken into consideration in the design of the questionnaire. To reduce this effect to the minimum, the questions were presented in a large and clear font with an easy to follow format which included tables and allocated spaces for any comments that the respondents might have. This design also helped reduce the possibility of the participants overlooking some questions.

More importantly, the use of a questionnaire as one of the instruments in this research seemed reasonable because it would allow for comparisons to be made with findings of previous research that was also conducted based on this instrument, which had been tested and validated by experts in this type of research.

The first part of the questionnaire sought to gather biographical information about the participants in the form of seven questions. The first question asked for the name of the participant and the answer to this question was optional. The second question asked for the name of the institution the participant worked for. The third asked about the

participant’s highest level of qualification. The possible answers to this question were: ‘BA’, ‘MA’ or ‘PhD’. The fourth question asked from which country the highest level of qualification of the respondent had been obtained. The possible answers to this question were: ‘United States’, ‘United Kingdom’, ‘Australia’ or ‘elsewhere’. The participants were asked to provide more details if they selected ‘elsewhere’. The following question was about the age group of the participants. The four possible answers to this question were: ‘30-40’, ‘41-50’, ‘51-60’ or ‘over 60’. The sixth question asked the respondents about the number of years they had worked in education. There were four possible answers to this question: ‘1-5’, ‘6-10’, ‘11-15’ or ‘16 and over’. The last question in this part asked them how many times they had been part of a recruitment committee (RC). There were also four possible answers to this question: ‘fewer than 3 times’, ‘3-6’, ‘7-10’ or ‘11 or more’.

The second and third parts of the questionnaire represented the listening task. More specifically, the second part asked the respondents to listen to five recordings of five job applicants who were seeking employment in the respondents’ departments. The task of the participants was to evaluate the overall level of qualification of the applicants and therefore their suitability to be hired as English language teachers. Each speaker was assigned a colour instead of a number to avoid any suggestion that the different speakers were already in rank order. The colours were Red, Blue, White, Green and Yellow. In order for the participants to evaluate each of the five applicants, the questionnaire included a sheet designated for each applicant. Each sheet included three questions. The first question asked the respondents to determine whether the speaker was a NEST or NNEST. There were three possible answers: ‘native speaker of English’, ‘non-native speaker of English’ and ‘not sure’. The second question asked the participants to evaluate on a seven-point Likert scale the perceived level of the speaker’s qualification to teach English in the applicants’ institutions. At one end of this scale (numbered 7) was ‘highly qualified’ while at the other end of the scale (numbered 1) was ‘unqualified’. The third question asked them to guess the nationality of the speaker. The aim was to determine to what extent the respondents were able to determine the part of the world from which each applicant comes by only listening to him speaking. This also helped eliminate the possibility that they were thinking of a different nationality when evaluating a speaker. For example, it was ensured that none of the participants thought that the Red speaker (who came from India) was from Mexico or the Philippines.

In the third part of the questionnaire, which is the other part of the listening task, in the first question the participants were asked to order the five speakers in terms of their employment potential and suitability for the job. This meant that the speaker ranked number 1 was the best applicant for the job, the speaker ranked 2 was the next best applicant, and so on. The participants were told that it was not possible to assign the same number to two speakers. The second question in this part asked the respondents to give reasons and justifications for their selection of the speaker to whom they assigned the first place.

The fourth part of the questionnaire investigated the participants' perceptions of the importance of some of the criteria they use when they recruit EFL teachers. This part included three questions. In the first question the participants were asked to use a five-point Likert scale to rate the importance of five criteria: 'academic qualification', 'accent', 'nationality', 'native speaker' and 'teaching experience'. At one end of the scale (numbered 5) was 'very important', while at the other end of the scale (numbered 1) was 'not important at all'.

The second question in this part asked the participants whether they used other criteria when hiring EFL teachers. This section included enough space for them to list any other criteria they used or perceived as important and at the same time gave the researcher a chance to discuss with the respondents any criteria they suggested.
The third question in this part asked for the participants' reactions to eight statements concerning native and non-native English teachers. The possible answers to this question were: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'not sure', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. The eight statements were:

1. Native and non-native speakers may have the same teaching abilities.
2. Non-native speakers can understand and deal with the learning difficulties of my students better than native speakers.
3. I prefer non-native speakers over native speakers to teach in my department.
4. I prefer native speakers over non-native speakers to teach in my department.
5. If I could, I would employ English native speakers only.
6. I usually employ non-native speakers because native speakers are hard to attract.
7. I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers.
8. The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers.

3.6.2 Recordings

The study included a listening task which involved five recordings, each lasting for less than a minute. Each stimulus provider was told to read a script as if he was leaving a voice mail on the phone of an employer. The script gave information on the applicants' academic qualification, age, number of years spent in teaching, and the countries in which they had taught English (see Appendix B for the full script).

To make the recordings, a high quality recording device that produced mp3 files was used to ensure good sound quality and clarity for the benefit of the participants. The recordings were presented on a webpage which included five coloured boxes corresponding to the colours assigned to the five speakers. Each coloured box had a clickable button that played the recording. They were saved on the researcher's laptop computer and they were also uploaded onto a website created for this purpose to ensure backup and ease of access.

3.6.3 Stimulus Providers

The selection of the stimulus providers was based on their nationalities and included an Indian (Urdu as his first language), a Syrian (Arabic as his first language), 2 Britons (English monolinguals) and an Egyptian (Arabic as his first language). They were all male speakers because this study was only concerned with the employment of male EFL teachers. They fell into two groups: native speaker teachers (NESTs) and non-native speaker teachers (NNESTs). The first group had two speakers while the second group included three speakers. The NEST group included two native speakers of British English because the researcher wanted to include two levels of qualification. Therefore, one was significantly more qualified than the other in terms of academic qualification, teaching experience, and teaching in a country where English is a foreign language.

The second group included three non-native English speakers who came from India, Egypt and Syria. These applicants were selected because they reflect, to a large extent, who teaches English in Saudi Arabia and even neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the topic of this thesis was not the attitudes of the Saudi recruiters towards varieties of English.

The stimulus providers were assigned colours instead of numbers to avoid influencing the respondents' selection of which speaker should be given first refusal of the job. Thus, the Indian applicant was referred to as 'Red Speaker', the Syrian applicant as 'Blue Speaker', one of the British applicants (who was more qualified than the other) as 'White Speaker', the Egyptian applicant as 'Green Speaker', and the less

qualified British applicant as 'Yellow Speaker'. The real age of each stimulus provider was very close to the age he gave in the recording. They are all friends of the researcher.

3.6.4 Participants

The study recruited a sample of fifty-six participants using the snowball sampling technique. The number of RC members (in charge of recruiting EFL teachers for Saudi higher education institutions) is relatively small because the number of Saudi academic staff members who have a PhD degree in English or a related field is also limited (see section 1.5). Some of them held Masters degrees and were involved in the committees as substitutes for PhD holders.

The participants worked at various Saudi universities, colleges and institutes. They were also from various parts of Saudi Arabia, including Riyadh, Dammam and Jeddah. All of them were Saudi nationals, since RC members must be Saudis. All of the participants were males because RC members are usually males.

3.6.5 Sampling

The study used a snowball sampling technique to approach the fifty-six participants. This means that after a participant had completed the questionnaire and interview, he was asked to suggest other participants who had taken part in RCs in Saudi Arabia. According to Atkinson and Flint (2001), snowball sampling techniques provide an established method of identifying and contacting hidden populations as well as a method of studying less stigmatised and even elite groups.

This relatively small number was dictated by the nature of the study, since it was only interested in Saudi academic elites who either served on RCs or had some experience of the process of recruiting EFL teachers in Saudi higher education institutions. Owing to the limited number of the sample population, the same names of potential candidate participants were repeatedly suggested.

3.6.6 Interviews

Short and informal semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the respondents as another method of data collection, in order to contribute to the validity of the results. The validity of findings can be seriously threatened when research relies on only one method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews encourage two-way communication, which gives the researcher and interviewee the opportunity to discuss issues and ask more questions as they arise during the interview. The informal nature of

these interviews is also helpful in the sense that participants tend to be more relaxed and open to talking about sensitive issues.

Before the participants agreed to take part in the study and fill in the questionnaire, they were told that they would also be asked to take part in an informal interview to chat about some of their answers after they had completed the questionnaire. The respondents were notified when they were approached that interviews might last for 10 to 15 minutes.

Although requests were made of all fifty-six participants to be informally interviewed wherever they preferred, only eight participants agreed to be interviewed. Those participants who did not want to be interviewed for whatever reason were still asked to complete the questionnaire. All the interviews were conducted in the offices of the respondents in their institutions in Saudi Arabia for their convenience, as they preferred. According to Richards et al. (2012), this is considered one of the practical arrangements that should be considered by researchers to ensure the relative privacy of an interview, as well as to reduce the possibility of distractions and interruptions.

I prepared a set of points that needed to be discussed during the interviews so that all the interviewees would be asked about the same points (see Appendix E for details). The interview questions dealt mainly with the answers the participants had given to the open-ended questions, and with the main issues, such as why some hiring criteria are important, and their responses to the eight statements presented in section 3.6.1 above: for instance, whether the respondents would hire a less qualified NEST over a more qualified NNEST. They were also encouraged to talk about their experiences with both types of teacher.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the pilot study, ethical approval was obtained from the faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Newcastle University. The British Association of Applied Linguistics provides a number of recommendations for good practice in the field (BAAL, 2000). The first of these recommendations deals with the general responsibility of researchers to their participants. This includes anticipation of any harmful effects or disruptions to the participants' lives and environment as well as avoiding any stress, intrusion or exploitation. The researcher took every step possible to reduce the amount of stress placed on the participants, who were advised before the start about the expected amount of time it would take to complete the questionnaire and

interview. The choice of time and location of data collection was left to the respondents for their convenience.

Another major BAAL recommendation is that informed consent should be obtained. Before handing the questionnaire to the participants, they were asked to sign two copies of a letter of consent: one was for them and the other was for me to keep. They were told at the start that there would be an informal interview after the questionnaire if they agreed to it. The researcher also informed the participants that their participation in the study was absolutely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point without giving any explanation if they wished.

Confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants is another crucial aspect of research ethics. The participants were assured that all their responses and identities would remain confidential and anonymous at all times and that the data would be kept safe in an archive during the research period.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter the methodology used in conducting this research project, including the process of data collection, has been described. The chapter started by presenting the research questions and then examined the research methods used in the field of applied linguistics. It also touched upon the concepts of research validity and reliability and elaborated on the steps that were taken to ensure that validity and reliability were maintained in this research. A description of the pilot study which preceded the actual study was also provided.

This chapter has also presented the details of the research design of this particular study, including the questionnaire, the voice recordings and their stimulus providers, the participants, the sampling technique used in the data collection process, and the interviews. The chapter concluded with an outline of the ethical issues that the researcher took into consideration throughout this research project.

Chapter 4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in previous chapters, the aim of this research was to explore the hiring practices and attitudes of Recruiting Committee (RC) members and programme administrators towards NESTs and NNESTs in Saudi higher education institutions. Another aim was to assess the importance of native speakership as perceived by Saudi employers and the extent to which Saudi RC members would prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs. This chapter presents the findings obtained from the questionnaire, which used a listening task, and from the semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was administered to 56 Saudi recruiters, only eight of whom agreed to be interviewed. The results are first presented and discussed section by section, and then an overall discussion is provided.

4.2 Biographical Information

The questionnaire started by asking the 56 respondents to provide demographic information. These included the highest level of qualification possessed by the participants, the country from which they had obtained their highest qualification, the age group of the participants, how long they had been working in education, and how many times they had served on RCs.

4.2.1 Qualification Level of the Participants

As regards the highest level of qualification, the results of this part showed that 11 respondents (19.6%) had a Master's degree while 45 of them (80.4%) had a PhD. None of the participants held a qualification lower than a Master's degree because the regulations stipulate that PhD holders only can recruit teachers from abroad; however, if no PhD holders are available, Master's degree holders might substitute for them. Figure 4-1 provides a visual presentation of the two participants' groupings in terms of their highest qualification.

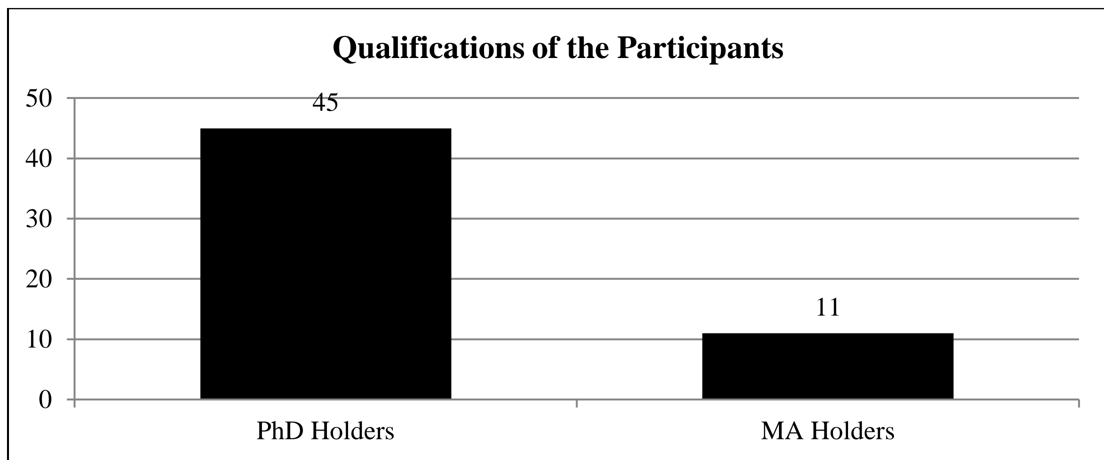

Figure 4-1: Qualification level of the participants

4.2.2 Country of Highest Qualification

In terms of the countries from which the participants had obtained their degree qualifications, there were only two: the United States and the United Kingdom. The majority of the participants had degrees from institutions in the USA. Specifically, 34 respondents (60.7%) had obtained their academic qualifications in the United States while 22 respondents (39.3%) were graduates of UK universities, as illustrated in figure 4-2 below.

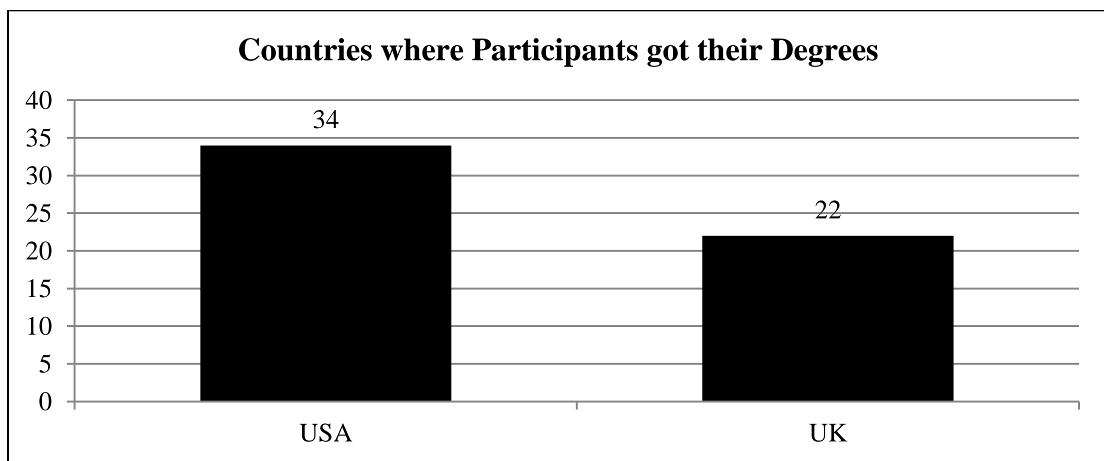

Figure 4-2: Countries from which the participants got their degrees

4.2.3 Age

With regard to the age groups, 37.5% of the participants (N=21) fell into the first age group (30-40 years) while 46.4% of them (N=26) fell into the second group (41-50 years). The remaining 16.1% (N=9) fell into the third group (51 years or older). None of the participants were over 60 years old. Figure 4-3 provides a visual presentation of the age groups of the participants.

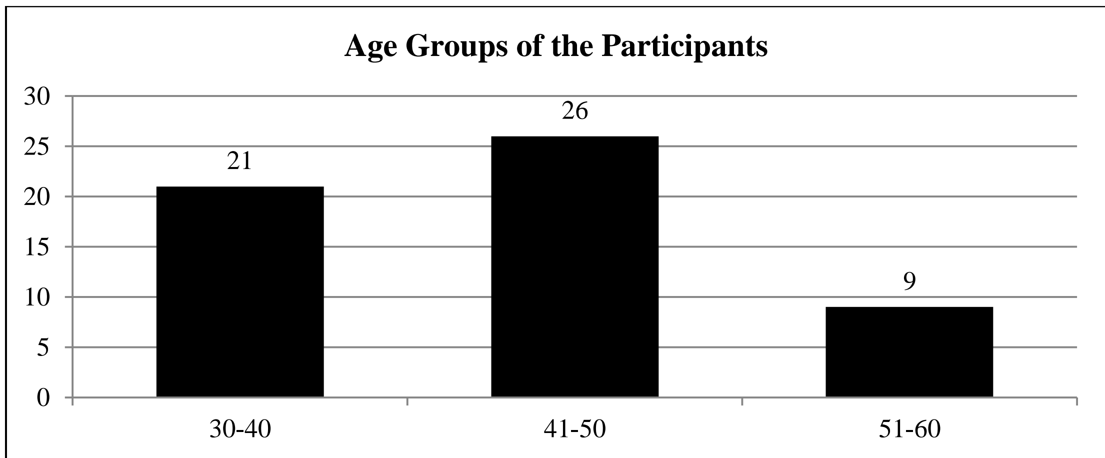

Figure 4-3: Age groups of the participants

4.2.4 Years Worked in the Field of Education

The participants varied in terms of the number of years they had spent in education. Only 8.9% of them (N=5) had spent 1-5 years in education while the majority (53.6% N=30) had been in education for between 6 and 10 years. Eighteen respondents (32.1%) had spent 11-15 years in education. A minority of 5.4% (N= 3) reported that they had worked in education for 16 years or more. This distribution is visually illustrated in figure 4-4 below.

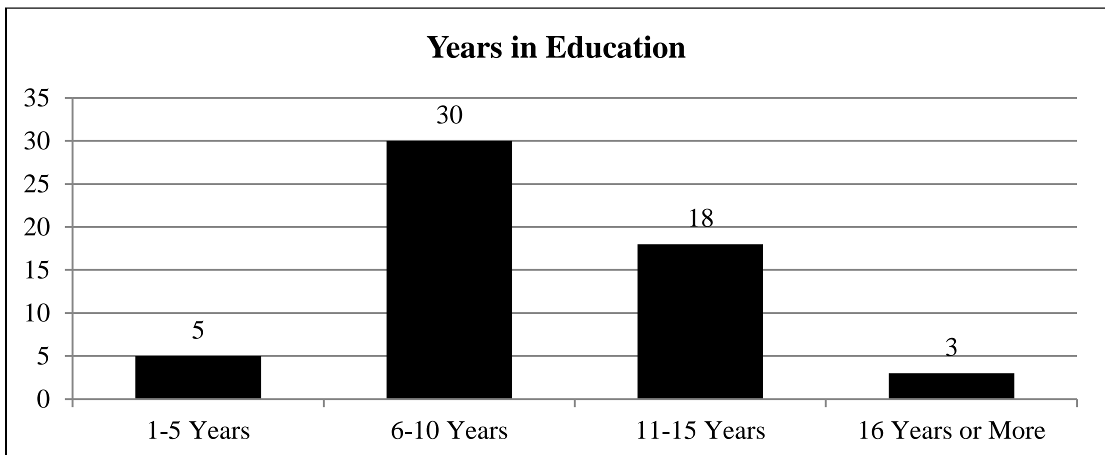

Figure 4-4: Years in education

4.2.5 Participation in Recruiting Committees (RCs)

The last item in the demographic part of the questionnaire asked the participants how many times they had served on RCs. The most participants in a single category (46.4%, N= 26) reported that they had participated in these committees fewer than three times while 42.9% (N=24) had served on RCs between 3 and 6 times. Five respondents (8.9%) had taken part 7-10 times, and only one participant (1.8%) reported that he had taken part in such committees more than 10 times. Figure 4-5 provides a visual

presentation of how the respondents were distributed in terms of their participation in RCs.

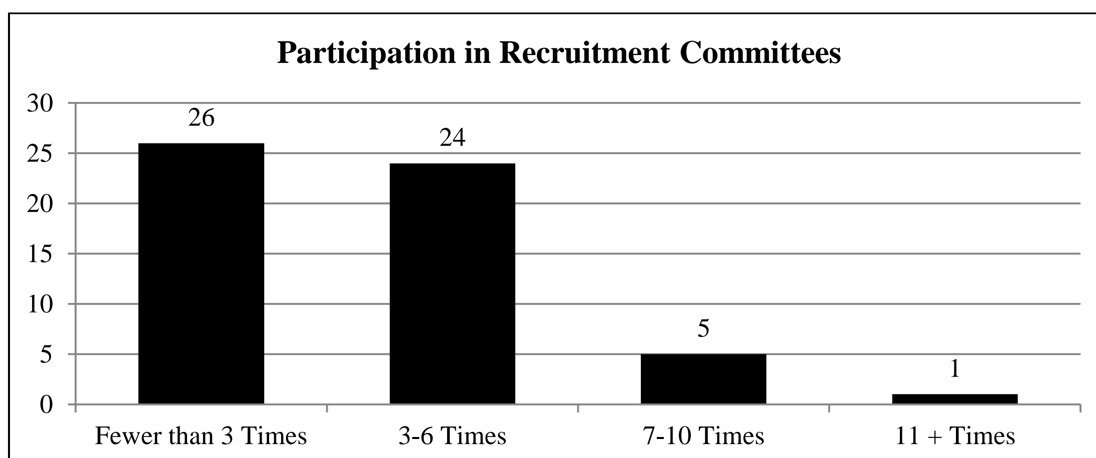

Figure 4-5: Participation in recruiting committees

4.3 The Listening Task

This part asked the respondents to identify the status of each of the five speakers (NEST or NNEST), to rate his perceived level of qualification on a seven-point scale where 7 meant highly qualified and 1 meant unqualified, and to guess the nationality of the speaker. In the questionnaire, each of the five speakers was evaluated on a separate sheet to ensure clarity and avoid confusion (see Appendix A).

Before examining in detail the participants' evaluations of the five speakers, it should be remembered that the application credentials and status of the five speakers were deliberately varied, as summarised in table 4-1. That is, among the five speakers in this study were three non-native speakers (Red, Blue and Green) who were highly qualified to teach English in terms of their academic qualification and teaching experience. The other two speakers (White and Yellow) were native speakers, the first of these being as well qualified as the previous three speakers, while the second speaker (Yellow) was significantly less qualified than the other four applicants in terms of his academic qualification and teaching experience, as shown in table 4-1 below (see Appendix B for a full transcript of the recordings).

Speaker	Nationality and First Language	Age	Academic Qualifications	Teaching Experience
Red	Indian (Urdu)	35	• BA in English • MA in TESOL from Manchester University in 2003	6 years (2 in Kuwait)
Blue	Syrian (Arabic)	34	• BA in Applied Linguistics • MA in TESOL from Sheffield University in 2001	7 years (3 in Dubai)
White	British (English)	38	• BA in English • MA in TESOL from the University College London in 2004	4 years (2 in Egypt)
Green	Egyptian (Arabic)	36	• BA in Linguistics • MA in TESOL from the University of London in 2000	8 years (1 in Qatar)
Yellow	British (English)	33	• BA in English from the University of Leicester in 2004	1 year in the UK

Table 4-1: Summary of the five speakers' credentials.

The listening task also asked the participants to order the five applicants in terms of their perceived qualification level and suitability for the job. The results show that 22 participants (39.3%) chose the White speaker as the first and the Yellow speaker as the second best qualified applicant although he was the least qualified. Furthermore, 19 participants (33.9%) put the Yellow speaker first followed by the White speaker. This brings the total of Saudi recruiters who chose native speakers to be the top two of the five applicants to 41 out of the 56 recruiters (73.2%). This clearly indicates that about three-quarters of Saudi recruiters have a preference for native speakers even if they are not as qualified as non-native speakers. As figure 4-6 shows, the Red speaker was not selected as the first or second most qualified applicant regardless of his sound credentials. Nine respondents (16.1%) produced combinations where the native speakers came first and non-native speakers came second. More specifically, three participants placed the White speaker first and the Blue speaker second, two participants put the Yellow speaker first and the Blue speaker second, three participants placed the White speaker first and the Green speaker second, and one participant put the Yellow speaker first and the Green speaker second. While no respondents produced a combination of two non-native speakers for the first and second places, six respondents (10.7%), interestingly, chose combinations where a non-native speaker was their first choice and a native speaker came second. That is, two respondents (3.6%) gave the Blue speaker first place and the White speaker second place, another two respondents (3.6%) put the Green speaker first and the White speaker second, and two respondents (3.6%) allocated first place to the Green speaker and second place to the Yellow speaker.

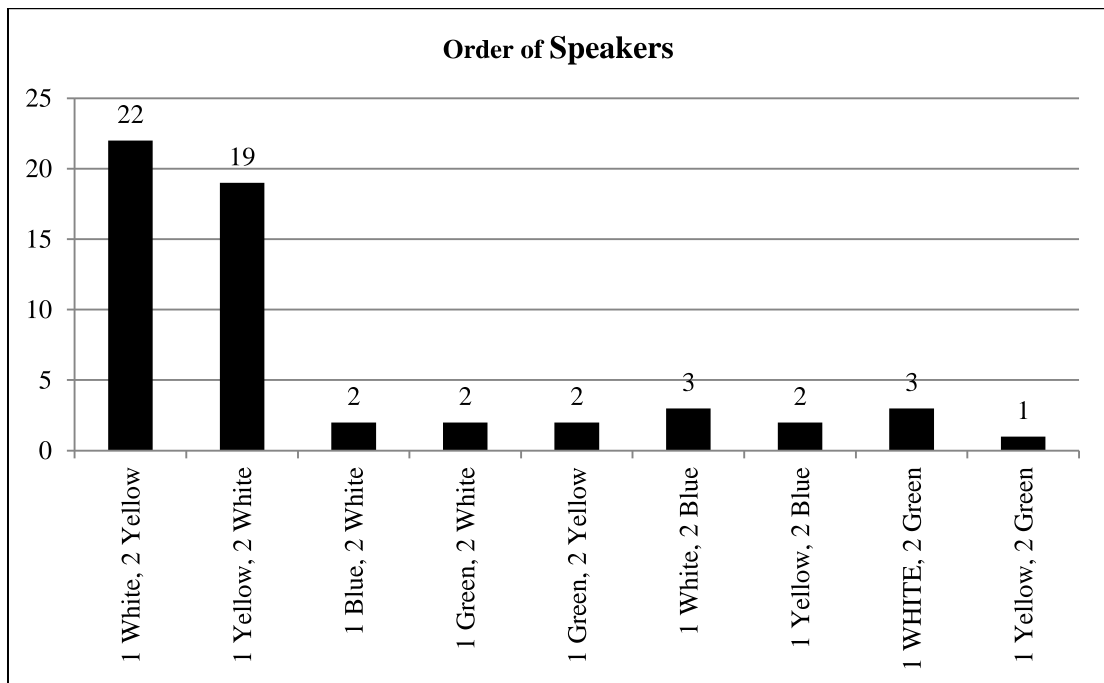

Figure 4-6: Order of the five speakers

The following sections present the RC members' evaluations of each of the five speakers in terms of their minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores. The maximum means the most positive score each speaker received on the seven-point scale of perceived qualification, while the minimum reflects the most negative evaluation each speaker received. In other words, the higher the score the more positively the respondents had perceived the applicant's qualification level and therefore his suitability for the job. The standard deviation scores reflect how homogeneous the participants were in their evaluations: the lower the score, the less diverse the responses were. The order of the five speakers in this section corresponds to their original order in the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

4.3.1 The Red Speaker

The participants were successful in identifying the Red speaker as a non-native English speaker, with the exception of one participant who was not sure about it. However, they varied significantly in their evaluations of his qualification level since the standard deviation score (SD= 1.17) was the second highest score out of all the scores for all five applicants, as shown in table 4-7. This suggests that some respondents found him more qualified than did others; table 4-2 sheds more light on this variation. It should be remembered that this applicant had an MA in TESOL from a reputable university in the United Kingdom and six years of English teaching experience, including two years in a neighbouring country to Saudi Arabia (see table 4-1 above).

Although none of the respondents rated the Red speaker at either of the extreme ends of the scale (his scores ranged between 2 and 6), his mean score was 4.04. The Red speaker received the least positive evaluation amongst the five speakers, even though he held decent qualification credentials, as shown in table 4-1. Thus, it is not surprising to see that none of the participants assigned him first or second place in their ordering of the five applicants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Highly unqualified	0	0.0%
2	5	8.9%
3	15	26.8%
4	16	28.6%
5	13	23.2%
6	7	12.5%
7 Highly qualified	0	0.0%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-2: Perceived qualification level of the Red speaker

4.3.2 The Blue Speaker

The participants unanimously identified the Blue speaker as a non-native English speaker. His level of qualification was perceived more positively compared to that of the Red speaker. That is, more than one respondent perceived the Blue speaker to be highly qualified by giving him the maximum score of 7, while the minimum negative score he received was 2 on the seven-point scale. The mean score of the Blue speaker was 4.59. This means that overall his qualification level was rated more positively than the Red speaker's. It should be kept in mind that the Blue applicant had an MA in TESOL from a reputable university in the United Kingdom and had taught English for seven years, two of these in Dubai, and that the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have similar cultures. Table 4-1 provides more details on the application credentials of the Blue speaker.

The standard deviation score for this speaker was the highest (SD=1.26), which indicates that the participants were significantly less homogenous in their evaluations of how qualified the Blue speaker was. In other words, they differed greatly in their judgments of his qualification level. Table 4-3 below clearly illustrates the perception of the Blue speaker's qualification level by the 56 participants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Highly unqualified	0	0.0%
2	4	7.1%
3	5	8.9%
4	17	30.4%
5	18	32.1%
6	8	14.3%
7 Highly qualified	4	7.1%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-3: Perceived qualification level of the Blue speaker

4.3.3 The White Speaker

The White speaker was successfully identified as a native English speaker by all but one participant. They rated him extremely positively, as his maximum score was 7 and, more importantly, his minimum (most negative) score was 4. This means that even his least favourable judges gave him an average point on the seven-point scale. Indeed, his mean ranking of 6.48 shows that he was perceived significantly more positively than the Red and Blue speakers. The White speaker held decent qualifications since he had an MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. He had also taught English for four years, including two in an Arab country. His application credentials are summarised in table 4-1. The standard deviation score for this speaker was the lowest (SD= 0.69) of all the speakers, indicating that the participants were significantly more homogeneous in their positive judgments of him. Table 4-4 below provides a visual illustration of how his qualification level was perceived by the participants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Highly unqualified	0	0.0%
2	0	0.0%
3	0	0.0%
4	1	1.8%
5	3	5.4%
6	20	35.7%
7 Highly qualified	32	57.1%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-4: Perceived qualification level of the White speaker

4.3.4 The Green Speaker

All of the participants successfully identified the Green speaker as a non-native speaker. His ratings were very similar to those of the Red speaker, in that he received various ratings ranging from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 6. Therefore, the standard deviation score was 1.14, suggesting that in terms of the homogeneity of his ratings, he fell between the Red and the Blue speakers. The mean score for the participants' rating of the Green speaker's qualification level was 4.57, only slightly less positive than their rating of the Blue speaker. It is obvious that the Green speaker was perceived more positively than the Red speaker, however. It should be remembered that this applicant had an MA in TESOL from a reputable university in the United Kingdom and eight years of English teaching experience, including one year in a neighbouring country to Saudi Arabia. The Green speaker's application credentials are summarised in table 4-1, and table 4-5 below provides a visual illustration of how his qualification level was perceived by the 56 participants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Highly unqualified	0	0.0%
2	1	1.8%
3	13	23.2%
4	8	14.3%
5	21	37.5%
6	13	23.2%
7 Highly qualified	0	0.0%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-5: Perceived qualification level of the Green speaker

4.3.5 The Yellow Speaker

The status of the Yellow speaker was successfully identified by all the participants as being that of a native English speaker. Similarly to the White speaker, he was rated positively by the participants, his maximum score being 7 and, more importantly, his minimum score being 4. This means that even his least favourable judges gave him an average point on the seven-point scale. His mean score of 6.45 shows that while the Yellow speaker was perceived significantly more positively than the three NNEST applicants, his ratings were comparable to those of the White speaker. This is very interesting given that the Yellow speaker held the lowest qualification credentials, with just an undergraduate degree in English and one year of teaching English in the United

Kingdom (see table 4-1 for more details on his application credentials). The standard deviation score was 0.71, suggesting more homogeneity among the participants' evaluations of the qualification level of the Yellow speaker. Table 4-6 below gives a visual illustration of how his qualification level was perceived by the 56 participants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Highly unqualified	0	0.0%
2	0	0.0%
3	0	0.0%
4	1	1.8%
5	4	7.1%
6	20	35.7%
7 Highly qualified	31	55.4%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-6: Perceived qualification level of the Yellow speaker

4.3.6 Evaluating the Five Speakers Together

Having presented the results for the five speakers individually, in table 4-7 and figure 4-7 below the five applicants' evaluations are put together in terms of their minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores. Their order in table 4-7 below reflects their original order in the questionnaire. It should be remembered that a maximum score shows the most positive score the speakers achieved on the seven-point scale of qualification while the minimum score reflects the most negative evaluation they received. In other words, the higher the score the more positive the evaluation of the applicant's qualification. While mean scores indicate the average score each speaker received on the seven-point scale, standard deviation scores reflect how homogeneous the participants' ratings were. This means that the lower the standard deviation score the less dispersed or varied the responses were.

Speaker	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Red Speaker	2.00	6.00	4.04	1.17
Blue Speaker	2.00	7.00	4.59	1.26
White Speaker	4.00	7.00	6.48	0.69
Green Speaker	2.00	6.00	4.57	1.14
Yellow Speaker	4.00	7.00	6.45	0.71

Table 4-7: Descriptive statistics of the perceived qualification levels of the applicants

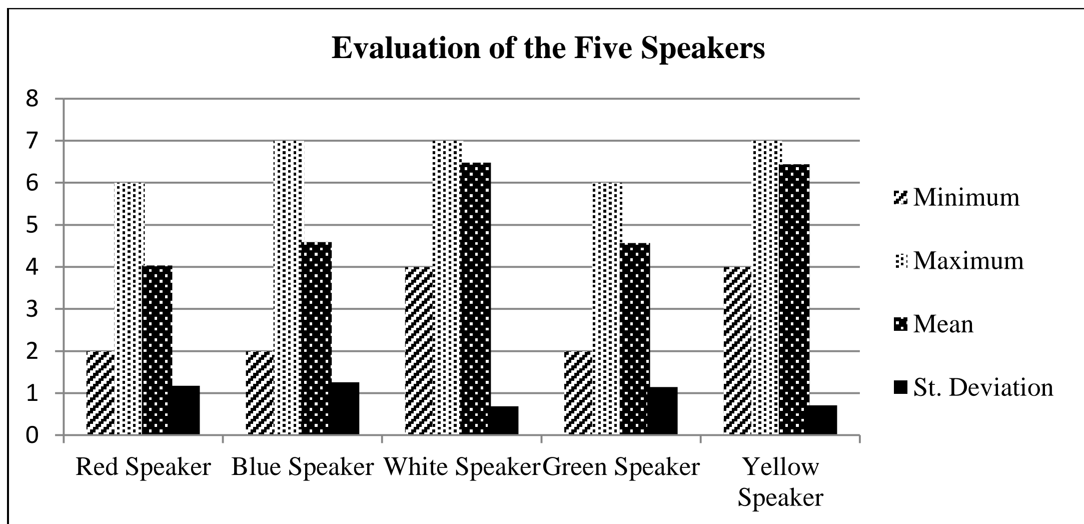

Figure 4-7: Minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores for the five speakers

Following the above presentation of each of the five speakers based on their original order in the questionnaire, they can now be ordered in terms of how qualified they were perceived to be by the 56 Saudi recruiters. This is done by ordering the five speakers in terms of their mean scores, as shown in table 4-8 below. It should be remembered that the higher the mean score, the closer it is to the positive end of the scale. Therefore, the two native speaker applicants came first. More specifically, the White speaker was perceived to be the most qualified applicant, followed by the Yellow speaker, the Blue speaker, the Green speaker and the Red speaker.

Speaker	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
White Speaker	4.00	7.00	6.48	0.69
Yellow Speaker	4.00	7.00	6.45	0.71
Blue Speaker	2.00	7.00	4.59	1.26
Green Speaker	2.00	6.00	4.57	1.14
Red Speaker	2.00	6.00	4.04	1.17

Table 4-8: Descriptive statistics of the perceived qualification levels of the applicants (based on mean scores)

4.4 Evaluating the Hiring Criteria Independently

In this section each of the five hiring criteria: academic qualifications, accent, nationality, native speakership and teaching experience, are evaluated separately. These evaluations are based on the descriptive statistics presented in table 4-9 below, in which the criteria are listed according to their original order in the questionnaire. It includes the achieved minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores. These scores represent the answers provided by the 56 participants on the five-point Likert scale provided in the questionnaire. In this question, it should be remembered that 5 means that the criterion was ‘very important’, 4 means it was ‘moderately important’, 3 means

it was ‘somewhat important’, 2 means it was ‘relatively unimportant’, and 1 means the criterion was considered ‘not important at all’.

Criteria	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Academic Qualification	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00
Accent	1.00	5.00	3.14	1.38
Nationality	1.00	5.00	3.23	1.43
Native Speakership	1.00	5.00	3.84	1.28
Teaching Experience	4.00	5.00	4.88	0.33

Table 4-9: Ordering the five criteria (in alphabetical order)

Figure 4-8 below clearly shows that the most homogeneity was found in the participants’ evaluation of the importance of ‘academic qualification’ followed by ‘teaching experience’. That is, every participant considered ‘academic qualification’ to be a very important criterion in the hiring of EFL teachers by giving it the maximum (most positive) score of 5.

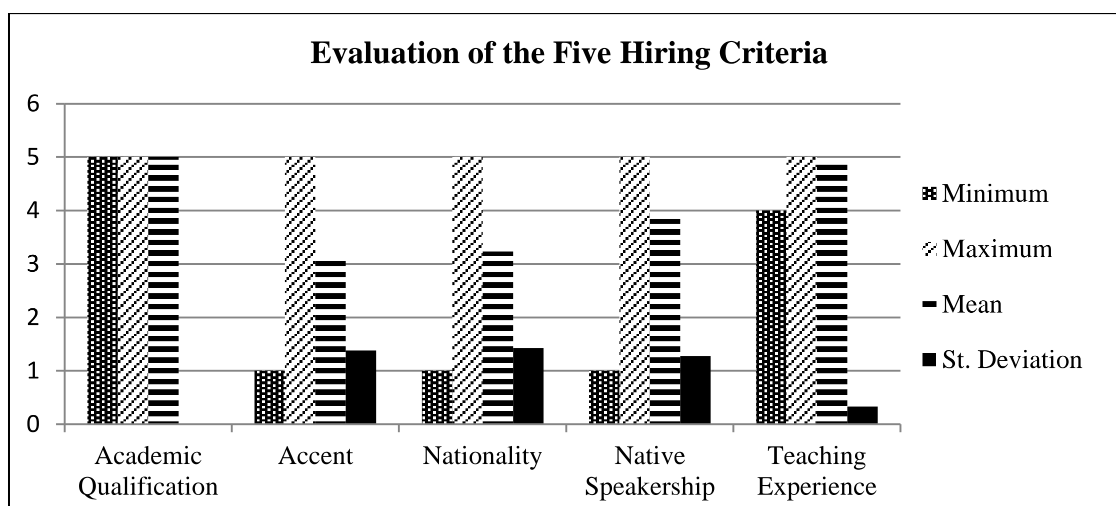

Figure 4-8: Minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores for the five criteria

4.4.1 Academic Qualification

The criterion ‘academic qualification’ was the single criterion that every participant thought had the most importance. This is reflected in the fact that everybody selected ‘very important’ for this criterion, resulting in a mean score of 5.00. There was no variation whatsoever in the responses and thus the standard deviation score was 0.00. Table 4-10 shows the evaluations given for this criterion.

Point on the scale		Frequency	Percentage
1	Not important at all	0	0.0%
2	Relatively unimportant	0	0.0%
3	Somewhat important	0	0.0%
4	Moderately important	0	0.0%
5	Very important	56	100%
Total		**56**	**100%**

Table 4-10: Distribution of the evaluation of the academic qualification criterion

This criterion was so important that the participants who argued that other criteria were not important used it as the cornerstone of their evaluations of all the applications. For example, when asked about native speakership, one of the respondents (C14) argued that the success of teachers does not depend on their NES status but rather on their qualifications and experience. Discussing why he assigned less importance to 'accent', another participant (C48) said: "we should not judge NNESTs based on their accents but on their qualification, training, enthusiasm and student appreciation" (see Appendix C).

Although the ultimate importance given to this criterion indicates the extent to which the Saudi recruiters focus on academic qualifications when they hire teachers, it remains something that they only report doing, and it cannot be, therefore, assumed to be in fact the case until it is verified empirically. It is understandable that this criterion is given importance since it is a form of evidence that applicants have obtained their degrees and that they have been trained, to some extent, in issues pertaining to teaching English. Furthermore, one of the participants (C4) explained that he assigned so much importance to this criterion because it gave him, as a recruiter, a "hint about the competence of the applicant based on the reputation of the institutes from which the applicants graduated".

The academic qualifications of the applicants seem to have mattered more to the Saudi recruiters in this study than to their counterparts found in the literature. That is, the mean score for this criterion in the study of Clark and Paran (2007) was 4.72, and more importantly it was found to be the most important criterion. In Mahboob's (2003) study, the same criterion scored 4.15, and it was the second most important criterion after 'teaching experience'. In their discussion of which criteria programme administrators adopt for hiring NNESTs, Flynn and Gulikers (2001) argue that most programme administrators expect job candidates to have an MA degree in TESOL,

TEFL or Applied Linguistics. This criterion was met by all but one of the speakers, the Yellow speaker, who held an undergraduate degree in English. Yet he was perceived to be more qualified than the NNES applicants who held higher degrees.

4.4.2 Accent

The 'accent' criterion was considered the least important: the mean score for this criterion was 3.14, ranging from a minimum score of 1 ('not important at all') to a maximum score of 5 ('very important'). Table 4-11 below shows that 42.8% of the participants perceived accent to be of at least moderate importance as a hiring criterion, compared to 39.3% who though it was not important. The diverse responses are reflected in the standard deviation score of 1.38, which indicates an average variation within the responses of the 56 participants.

Point on the scale	Frequency	Percentage
1 Not important at all	7	12.5%
2 Relatively unimportant	15	26.8%
3 Somewhat important	10	17.9%
4 Moderately important	11	19.6%
5 Very important	13	23.2%
Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-11: Distribution of the evaluation of the accent criterion

Although 'accent' was the recruiters' least important criterion with a mean score of 3.14, it is still considered somewhat important. In comparison with the findings of relevant research, in this study the accent of the applicant seems to be slightly more important to the Saudi recruiters than it was to American or British recruiters: Mahboob's (2003) results revealed a mean score of 2.86 while the mean score obtained for 'accent' in Clark and Paran's (2007) study was 3.11. As table 4-9 shows, the 'accent' criterion had the second highest variation among the responses of the participants (SD= 1.38) after 'nationality'. The figures presented in table 4-11 above clearly explain this high score by showing that 24 participants perceived the accent of applicants to be of at least moderate importance as a hiring criterion while 22 participants perceived it to be not important. Therefore, in their evaluations of the importance of the accent criterion the participants were divided almost equally into two camps. The interaction between the bio-data of the participants and their perceptions of the importance of the hiring criteria is further investigated in section 4.6.

Within the camp that considered the accent of applicants as being not important in making hiring decisions were two participants who were included in the eight interviews. Their tolerance of the accents of teachers seems to emphasise the importance of the intelligibility of the applicant over that of his accent, and it may also indicate their awareness of the issue.

Researcher	How about the accent of the teacher?
C14	Normally … ah.. we know that standard accents are better and I like the American accent but anyway they should not be a big deal.
Researcher	How about the accents of non-native teachers?
C14	We never had problems with their accents - you know most of our teachers are Arabs so the students are familiar with their accents, especially the Egyptians.

The second participant, who is clearly quite tolerant regarding the issue of accents, links the accents of NNESTs to their identity as speakers of other languages.

Researcher	The accent of the teacher is not important at all to you, why is that?
C48	Well! They cannot do anything about it, can they?
Researcher	What do you mean?
C48	I mean we know that English is not their first language just like us [Saudis]! I bet we sound to them the same way they sound to us! I think if we focus on their training and qualification, enthusiasm, student appreciation… we would have teachers who do the job right! Because they can do training and teaching but they cannot do anything about their accent.

The recognition of the link between accent and identity shown by the participant in the above extract is interesting and worth promoting, since everybody speaks with some sort of accent, as many scholars point out. Lippi-Green (1994) and Flynn and Gulikers (2001) note that the most important thing when it comes to non-natives' accents is intelligibility. However, the views of other participants who were less tolerant of the accents of the NNESTs could probably be partially explained by the findings of Jenkins (2005: 541). She studied the attitudes of eight NNEST speakers towards their own accents by asking them individually how they would feel if someone thought that their accent was a native accent. She found not only that they all preferred having native accents, but also that they wanted "a NS identity as expressed in a native-like accent" because the participants perceived a native-like accent to mean a good command of

language and thought it would bring them greater success in their careers. Taking into account the facts that the recruiters in this study were all non-native speakers and that the majority of them considered the NES criterion to be important, it might then be possible to compare them with the participants in Jenkins' (2005) study in their favouring of native speakers, expressed in their statements that they favoured native accents. This means that because they like native speakers to teach in their departments, they may be less inclined to favour the accents of NNESTs.

During the interviews, the participants from the other camp, who thought 'accent' was very important, varied in their reasons for assigning importance to this criterion. One of the participants (C29) who assigned high importance to accent believed that teachers' accents are vital to the students' learning because they "teach them good pronunciation indirectly". This is similar to the justification given by another participant (C34) who found accents to be good examples of the "correct pronunciation".

Another recruiter (C26) who found accents important argued that native accents (like the American accent) attract students who are used to hearing these accents in films and on TV shows. He did not mention which 'American' accent he was referring to since there is a plethora of accents in the USA. Nonetheless, even native speakers have been shown to have varying attitudes towards these American accents (Labov, 2001).

More importantly, the familiarity of the American accent, as mentioned in the justification given by participant C26, is the result of a process of familiarisation by the media. This shows that if the same was to be done with other varieties of English, there could well be more tolerance, by students in particular, towards other varieties, especially the well established World Englishes.

One possible reason for these justifications of 'good' and 'correct' pronunciation is that the participants might be subscribing to the 'standard language' ideology (Milroy and Milroy, 1985), which promotes an idealised version of the language and suppresses language variation (see chapter 2, section 2.6). Moreover, the participants' link between native speakers and 'correct' and 'good' pronunciation would only be troubled by the variation within the native English speakers themselves in terms of accent. Indeed, there is a plethora of 'native' accents that are anything but 'standard' including Newcastle's 'Geordie', Liverpool's 'Scouse', Glaswegian, and many more. The participants in this study who consciously or unconsciously subscribed to the standard language ideology therefore probably assume that there is one correct pronunciation and that the rest are

incorrect. And of course they want the best for their students, i.e., applicants with ‘correct’ pronunciation.

Another respondent (C11) considered accents important because of a previous experience where the teacher had a heavy accent and was not clearly understood by the students. Discussing their personal experiences as recruiters, Flynn and Gulikers (2001) note that when they hire teachers, the primary concerns regarding NNESTs are with their accents and fluency. They assert that these accents should not interfere with understanding and that they should be intelligible to both native and non-native speakers. They argue that having an intelligible accent is of great help to NNESTs, since they will be expected to teach speaking and pronunciation as well as writing. Thus, recruiters will be looking for a teacher who is willing and able to teach both skills, putting at risk the employment potential of those who have unintelligible accents.

One has to agree that this issue of intelligibility should be taken into consideration as a factor when making hiring decisions. However, it should be remembered that this could apply to native speakers as well as to non-native speakers. As a matter of fact, some native accents are extremely difficult for other native speakers to understand. Braine (2010: 15) gives the example of a conversation he had with an Australian air-traffic controller who had such an unintelligible accent that he was “desperately trying to read his lips in order to respond to him”.

Scholars like Lippi-Green (1994) and Braine (2010) have noted that everybody speaks with an accent and that these accents are part of the identity of speakers, whether native or non-native. In the case of native speakers of English, accent may be determined by the geographical area or social class to which speakers belong. In the case of non-native English speakers, the accent may well be related to their mother tongue. In light of this, Braine (2010: 19) argues that the important point that should be considered is intelligibility rather than accent. This is also evident in the interview extract quoted above (C14), where the participant is clearly emphasising intelligibility. Even in the second extract, the participant (C48) seems to be implying a similar notion of overlooking the way NNESTs sound and of focusing on more important criteria, such as qualifications and training.

4.4.3 Nationality

The participants’ perception of the importance of the ‘nationality’ criterion ranged between a maximum (positive) score of 5 (‘very important’) and a minimum score of 1 (‘not important at all’) as can be seen in table 4-9. The mean score of 3.23 for this

criterion indicates less positive ratings of importance in comparison with the other criteria. Table 4-12 shows that 50% of the participants perceived the nationality of the applicant to be an important hiring criterion, compared to 37.5% who thought it was not important. Of the five criteria, the least homogeneity of response was found for this criterion with a standard deviation score of 1.43. This score indicates that there was a big variation among the responses of the 56 participants concerning this criterion, as can be seen in table 4-12 below.

Point on the scale		Frequency	Percentage
1	Not important at all	8	14.3%
2	Relatively unimportant	13	23.2%
3	Somewhat important	7	12.5%
4	Moderately important	14	25.0%
5	Very important	14	25.0%
Total		**56**	**100%**

Table 4-12: Distribution of the evaluation of the nationality criterion

With a mean score of 3.23, the nationality criterion was more important to the Saudi recruiters than to their counterparts in English-speaking countries. That is, the findings of Mahboob (2003) revealed that the mean score for 'nationality' was 1.13 while the same criterion received a mean score of 1.94 in the study of Clark and Paran (2007).

Commenting on the importance they assigned to the nationality of applicants, the 56 participants varied in their attitudes towards this hiring criterion. One of the participants (C11) argued that nationality is important because students favour some nationalities over others. According to him, American nationals are favoured by the students because they are friendly. It is necessary to be aware that this does not, however, imply that we should assume that all non-American teachers are unfriendly. It is indeed important to look for this attractive personal trait in applicants because it could have a positive impact on the students. However, the positive trait should be attributed to individuals rather than to a whole nation where, as we all know, exceptions exist. Furthermore, the promotion of this link between a trait and a nation might unfairly paint other nations as less friendly and more importantly, exclude friendly applicants from other countries.

When asked why he assigned high importance to the nationality criterion, one of the respondents indicated that the selection of job candidates should take into consideration how particular nationalities are perceived in Saudi Arabia:

Researcher	You have rated the nationality criterion to be extremely important. This is interesting.
C29	I mean, for example, a Bangladeshi teacher would suffer in this current environment especially from the students after the media campaign.
Researcher	Suffer in what way?
C29	They might be rejected.. you know.. and therefore students won't benefit much from them. We have to look at the big picture and put our students first.

He was referring to Bangladeshi nationals, because currently Asians in general and Bangladeshis in particular are perceived less positively in Saudi Arabia. This is partly because a substantial number of them come to work in the Kingdom in blue-collar jobs with low levels of education and professional skills. Moreover, some nationalities such as Bangladeshis have been in the media spotlight for having committed criminal offences including system fraud, robbery, illegal immigration status, counterfeit legal documents, etc (Farha, 2008). Unfortunately, this has led to the stereotyping of all Bangladeshis, including well educated and highly skilled professionals.

In a similar way to the previous participant, another participant (C34) who assigned high importance to the 'nationality' criterion said that students like some nationalities and not others. Although he was not as specific as the previous participant, this still gives us some idea about why teachers of some nationalities are not preferred by recruiters. Thus, it can be inferred that the Red speaker probably came last in terms of his perceived suitability to teach as well as in terms of not achieving first or second place in the ordering part of the questionnaire because he was perceived to be South Asian; therefore some of the participants may have thought that their students would not like the teacher and thus gave the Red speaker less favourable ratings.

However, the practice of employing only certain nationalities based solely on the expectations of the students is problematic to say the least. First, these expectations have consciously or unconsciously driven employers to discriminate against well qualified professionals. Second, such a practice will create or promote a culture of employing teachers based on their nationalities and not on their qualification as teachers. The largest professional organisation for English language teachers (TESOL 1991, 2006) made a statement that clearly opposed the promotion of this culture that discriminates against well qualified NNESTs in the absence of any defensible criteria. Furthermore, such a practice clearly conflicts with one of the noble aims of the Non-

native English Speakers in TESOL Caucus/Interest Section which is, according to Braine (1999), to create a non-discriminatory professional environment for all members of TESOL regardless of where they were born.

Interestingly, one of the participants (C8) used nationality as a synonym for native speakership. During the interview (see Appendix C), he emphasised the high importance of nationality and admitted that it does matter to him as a hiring criterion:

Researcher	I have noticed that you've rated nationality as very important. Why do you think so?
C8	Yeah nationality *does* [italics added] matter to us in the hiring process .. we focus on Americans, Canadians and Australians.
Researcher	Aha!
C8	Yeah of course! We prefer Americans, Canadians, Australians and British teachers … nationality is ***too*** [italics and emphasis added] important.

It appears that to this particular participant, and to those who embrace a similar position, all nationals of countries in the Inner Circle (Kachru, 1985) are what they perceive as 'native speakers'. This is clearly an over-generalisation. In fact, a considerable percentage of those who hold British, American, Australian and Canadian passports are immigrants. This could be troublesome for those who say they want to employ only Americans or British, including this particular participant, because not all such nationals are the native speakers 'imagined' by some of the participants in this study.

Another participant (C14) who evaluated the nationality criterion as 'not important at all' argued that: "we cannot discriminate between different nationalities". As presented in table 4-9, the standard deviation score for this criterion was 1.43, the highest amongst the five criteria. The previous extracts illustrate how varied the evaluations were, ranging from 'very important' to 'not important at all', and even different justifications of the importance assigned to the 'nationality' criterion by the Saudi recruiters. For example, participant C8 used 'nationality' to implicitly describe the Inner Circle countries only. It was discussed - and indeed contested - in sections 2.3 and 2.5 of this thesis that native speakers are traditionally perceived to come from the Inner Circle countries only and that the rest of the world has no 'genuine' native speakers of English. Therefore, using the nationality criterion in this sense means that it is just a synonym for 'native speaker'. Since participant C8 found the criterion extremely important, the consequence is most likely that only native speakers are recruited. Thus, non-native speakers get excluded because they do not come from Inner

Circle countries, given how they are already less positively perceived. In addition, some participants assigned more importance to the 'nationality' criterion because it presumably represents a tool to avoid hiring applicants from certain nationalities because of other reasons, such as the 'student rejection' reason provided by participants C29.

4.4.4 Native Speakership

The 'Native English Speaker' criterion received a maximum score of 5 'very important' and a minimum score of 1 'not important at all'. More importantly, this criterion received an average yet positive mean score of 3.84, which is substantially different from the mean scores of the previous two criteria. This is reflected by the fact that 69.7% of the participants perceived 'native speaker' to be an important hiring criterion, as can be seen in table 4-13 below. However, 21.4% disagreed with the majority by evaluating it as not important. This variation within the answers of the participants is reflected in the standard deviation score of 1.28.

Point on the scale		Frequency	Percentage
1	Not important at all	3	5.4%
2	Relatively unimportant	9	16%
3	Somewhat important	5	8.9%
4	Moderately important	16	28.6%
5	Very important	23	41.1%
	Total	**56**	**100%**

Table 4-13: Distribution of the evaluation of the native speakership criterion

The mean score of 3.84 indicates that the native speaker criterion followed the teaching experience criterion (see table 4-9) in terms of its perceived importance. The mean score obtained for the 'NES' criterion in the current research is closer to the mean score found by Clark and Paran (2007) for the same criterion (4.05) than to the score obtained by Mahboob (2003) which was 2.86. This shows that the importance accorded to the status of applicants as native or non-native speakers of English by the Saudi recruiters fell between the two scores for the importance of this criterion found in English-speaking countries: the US and the UK. This in turn suggests that the NES criterion remains important for recruiters in both non-English speaking countries and English-speaking countries.

The participants were clearly in less disagreement, in comparison with their stances on 'nationality' and 'accent', regarding the importance of native speakership in

making hiring decisions, as indicated by the standard deviation score of 1.28. The study of Mahboob (2003) revealed an SD of 1.83, indicating more diverse responses and evaluations, which is a considerably different finding from this study. In the study of Clark and Paran (2007), however, the responses concerning this criterion were less diverse than in this study: their findings revealed an SD score of 1.19. Their findings are similar to those of this study in that they found that 72.3% of their participants considered being a native speaker was either moderately or very important to the hiring process. Examining the responses in table 4-13 above, it is apparent that 69.7 % of the participants found the NES criterion either moderately or very important. The table clearly illustrates how important the Saudi recruiters perceived the status of applicants as NESTs or NNESTs to be.

The findings of this research are in line with the findings of the previous studies (Clark and Paran, 2007; Mahboob, 2003) in that they all clearly show how important being a native speaker can be perceived to be by programme administrators, which in turn can have a direct effect on the hiring potential of non-native English speaker teachers.

In the questionnaire (see Appendix A), a section was provided to enable the participants to comment on and explain their ratings of the five hiring criteria. The importance assigned to the native speaker criterion was often justified by referring to their command of English. One of the participants (C29) who thought the NES criterion was ‘very important’ stated that native speakers “have no problem in all uses of English”. Another respondent (C26) who perceived the criterion to be ‘somewhat important’ added that “they can teach the language easily because they know all about it”.

One has to agree that native speakers (as discussed in section 2.7.2) are used to being praised for some of their perceived strengths, which include accent, an intuitive knowledge of the language and the idiomatic use of the language. However, this linguistic advantage is not gained by virtue of birth alone but also through education and training. Moreover, not all native speakers are experts on all aspects of the language and more importantly, on language teaching. Being a native speaker is one thing; teaching is something else. Furthermore, it is not always the case that native speakers have these perceived strengths. For example, one can think of a plethora of regional accents -such as Geordie and Glaswegian - that are shown to have been perceived negatively and/or are hard to understand by outsiders although they are accents of native speakers (Ryan, 1984; Matsuda, 1991; Lippi-Green, 1998; Dixon et al., 2002; Braine,

2010). Taking these arguments for granted is a part of Phillipson's (1991) *native speaker fallacy* - the assumption that the native speaker is inherently a better teacher than his non-native counterpart - which has been contested earlier in this thesis (see sections 2.3 and 2.5).

Furthermore, the knowledge of the language is no longer a trademark of native speakers. Oxford and Jain (2010: 240-241) assert that NNESTs have the ability to know what their NEST counterparts know - the proper use of idioms, appreciation of cultural connotations, and judging the correctness of language forms. They, therefore, argue that NNESTs who have acquired the English language in everyday use in multicultural contexts in their native countries sometimes "come to ELT already equipped with much native-speaker-type-knowledge." Similarly, Kirkpatrick (2007) presents two points that he argues render differentiating native and non-native speakers pointless. First, the linguistic ability of highly proficient non-native speakers is hardly distinguishable from that of the native speakers. Second, various native speakers may lack communicative competence in different parts of native-speaking territories (an English native speaker from England may lack communicative competence in Australia and a native speaker of English who has lived in the south of England may lack communicative competence in the North of England).

In addition, as I have shown in section 2.3, the definition and perceived characteristics of the traditional native speaker have all been questioned in the paradigm of World Englishes. Indeed, the established varieties of World Englishes have their own native speakers who share unique linguistic privileges with all native speakers of other varieties. Also, the paradigm of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), a language used for communication between speakers who have different first languages, has taken a similar position in probelmatising the 'native speaker' and his/her perceived strengths. In ELF, the role of native English speakers is secondary - at best - since much of the communication takes place between speakers for whom English is not a first language. Jenkins (2009: 144) provides a very interesting example where a native English speaker joins an interaction between two non-native speakers using the norms of ELF. She argues that the target norms of that interaction should not be the native speaker's norms but rather the opposite: "if ELF is to be seen as a kind of English in its own right, then in such situations, it would be for the native speaker to orient to the ELF norms of the other speakers rather than vice versa." This is especially important given that the largest group of English speakers around the globe use it as a lingua franca (Seidlhofer, 2009). Also, Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey (2011) state that since ELF accepts all English varieties -

native and non-native - as legitimate ones in their own right rather than being evaluated against NS norms, it considers non-native Englishes as being different rather than deficient.

This perspective views native speakers, who are traditionally perceived to have particular strengths over non-natives, as lacking some important ones. For example, Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey (ibid: 284) highlight two crucial points worth mentioning here. Firstly, non-native speakers - from an ELF viewpoint - are not seen as unsuccessful native speakers of English but rather "highly skilled communicators who make use of their multilingual resources in ways not available to monolingual NSEs". Secondly, non-native speakers of English give priority to "successful communication over narrow notions of 'correctness' in ways that NSEs, with their stronger attachment to their native English, may find more challenging". They argue that non-native speakers may use code-switching to express solidarity and/or project their own cultural identity. Also, Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey (2011) note that non-native speakers "may accommodate to their interlocutors from a wide range of first language backgrounds in ways that result in an 'error' in native English."

It is worth emphasising the fact that the ability to teach depends on several factors such as training, qualification and experience. As Medgyes (1996) puts it, if language competence was the only variable in teaching, a native speaker would of course be a better English teacher than his non-native counterpart, and similarly, any NES, whether qualified or not, would then be a more effective teacher than any NNES. However, he also mentions that this assumption clearly contradicts everyday experience and he therefore argues that a number of independent factors or variables are equally (or more) important in the teaching and learning process: for instance, experience, training, age, aptitude, personality and motivation. These variables, still according to Medgyes (ibid.), are not specific to language and therefore they can apply equally to NESTs as to NNESTs. If these variables are equal for both teacher categories (NESTs and NNESTs) it would seem that the first category has the advantage of language competence. The data obtained in this research give a clear indication that these opinions expressed in the literature are not shared and are probably ignored by the Saudi recruiters. That is, most of them still subscribe to the modernist idea that all native English speakers know all about their language and therefore can teach it properly. The examples of the participants mentioned previously in this section (C29 and C26), who rated being a native speaker as an important criterion, suggest that those recruiters are convinced that NESTs are inherently better teachers.

Although command of the language is normally an advantage for native speakers of English, it has little to do with being a good teacher. Widdowson (1994) states that native speakers are perceived not only as having a patent on the English language but also on the proper ways of teaching it. Not all native speakers have the ability to teach their first languages to speakers of other languages. For example, my brother is a police officer who is a native speaker of Arabic and although he can successfully provide judgment on linguistic aspects of the language, he cannot teach it properly, nor can he teach any other subject because he does not have the qualifications or experience needed to do such a job. The same applies to many non-native speakers of English who can speak their first language but cannot teach it properly, yet are able to teach English as a result of their training and experience.

This research project does not in any way favour native speakers or non-native speakers. Rather, it advocates that to employ trained and experienced teachers, who have the ability to engage and motivate their students to increase their learning potential, should be the goal for recruiters. Indeed the argument should be for trained teachers regardless of their NEST/NNEST status. Each of the two categories has its own strengths and shortcomings and the combination of native and non-native speaker teachers could help maximise the chances of benefiting students, a goal shared by the advocates of both categories.

Interestingly, my data show that some of the participants (C14 and C48) had tolerant attitudes towards NNESTs because they acknowledged that their accents are generally understood and that non-native speakers cannot do anything about their accents. This finding conforms to the arguments of Kamhi-Stein (2004: 3) who advocates tolerance, arguing that this distinction of native vs. non-native is no longer supported because it fails to “capture the complexities involved in being a NNES professional”. Further support in the Saudi context comes from the study of Al-Omrani (2008: V) who found that ESL/EFL programmes which combine both NESTs and NNESTs “are considered the most appropriate place for learning English” and that training programmes “can be more aware of areas where both types of instructor may need to develop.” His findings confirmed the importance of the teachers’ qualification and experience, regardless of their NEST/NNEST status, and he found that Saudi students assigned these two criteria high priority when deciding who the best teacher is.

In addition, the data show that the participants clearly distinguished between native and non-native speakers. Unlike Kamhi-Stein (2004) who rejects the dichotomy, the literature tells us that even those who have a tolerant view of NNESTs make this

distinction. For example, Al-Jarf (2008) suggests that the staff of an English department should be equally divided between native speakers (50%) and non-native speakers (50%) and that NNESTs should be hired if they have studied abroad. Although she does not provide justification for this percentage, it could be interpreted as an acknowledgement that NNESTs are equal in one way or another to their NEST counterparts. This is probably what Medgyes (1996: 42) calls a "good balance of NESTs and non-NESTs, who complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses."

One of the interviewees (C4) provided an insightful comment on why he assigned native speaker status high importance when making hiring decisions. In the section designated for comments on why he assigned NES high importance, he explained that native speakers are normally graduates of good Western schools and that they come with different thinking styles that can be helpful to the students. The first part of the two-part justification, i.e., NESTs are graduates of good universities, does not apply to native English speakers alone, and in fact the three non-native applicants included in this research were graduates of reputable universities in the United Kingdom (see table 4-1). The second part is true in the sense that the world is perceived differently by different cultures and by different individuals and this could probably be another advantage of NESTs. Yet it can still apply to NNESTs.

Interestingly, the participants interviewed in this research seemed to confuse or make a link between this hiring criterion (native speaker) and the two previous criteria, accent and nationality. That is, on several occasions the participants were unable, in one way or another, to separate the three criteria. For example, the extract from participant C8's interview in section 4.4.3 tells us a great deal about how 'nationality' was understood by this participant to mean 'native speaker'. Obviously, he was listing only Inner Circle countries where English is spoken as the first or 'native' language. It is clear that he had in mind someone who is a 'native' speaker - in the practical sense of the term as described by Ellis (2002) - and not simply someone who has American, Canadian, British or Australian nationality. It is unsurprising that a non-white applicant who has an American passport would be treated based on his perceived 'first' nationality. Muramatsu (2008) believes that physical appearance is an aspect that makes a person a native speaker or a non-native speaker of English in someone else's eyes. Also, Amin (1997: 580) found in her study that physical appearance and perception of native speakers are linked. She argued that ESL students tend to have the assumption that "only White people can be native speakers of English" which creates great

challenges for people of other ethnicities. This is similar to the findings of Shuck (2006: 262) who found that non-native speakers were perceived to be “international”, “non-White or non-Anglo”, and to “have accents”. The definition of ‘native speakers’ provided by a senior Saudi recruiter as reported by Ismail (2011: 205-6) confirms this view of the characteristics of native speakers:

> Native speaker to my understanding is a native guy. Blue eyes, white skin. That is my definition of the native speaker. When I am recruiting now [for NSTs] that is my first priority, why I say this, because the community, the society, when they come and see someone [teaching] who is a native it means white skin and blue eyes. That’s their definition of natives. To respond to the society I will bring them what they want. I am sorry Muhammad Ismail [the interviewer] I know that some people [i.e. non-Caucasians] are born in the UK and America and they are more American than Americans and more British than British, they mastered the language more than them [i.e. the Caucasians] but I’m in a business [and] I have to respond to my customers.

Although in my study the participants were not asked about their perceptions of what it means to be a native speaker, the data obtained to some extent resonate with the perceptions reported in the studies mentioned above. From the answers of those participants who confused ‘nationality’ and ‘native speakership’ (C8), we can assume that some of the Saudi recruiters who perceive ‘nationality’ as an important factor in making their hiring decisions believe that those American, British or Canadian nationals are the ‘imagined’ American, British or Canadian applicants, i.e., white, Anglo, blue-eyed, and having no accent. In other words, to some of the participating recruiters, it is not enough for applicants to hold American, British, Australian or Canadian passports but rather they need also to possess the characteristics suggested by Amin (ibid.) and Shuck (ibid.).

Moreover, as discussed in the previous section (4.4.3), another participant (C11) explained that students like Americans because they are friendly. Student preference was also cited by another participant who thought that students like teachers of some nationalities and not others, which could be interpreted as a preference for native speakers. This could help explain the participants’ less diverse responses to the last statement in the questionnaire which read: ‘*The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers’*. Twenty-two participants (39.3%) were in agreement with this statement, with 7 participants (12.5%) selecting ‘strongly agree’ and 15 (26.8%) selecting ‘agree’.

The accent criterion was also used with reference to native speakership. When asked why he assigned high importance to the accent of the applicant as a hiring criterion, one of the respondents (C26) explained that American accents are preferred “because students like Hollywood movies”. Another (C14) mentioned that ‘standard’

accents are better and that he preferred American accents. A third respondent (C8) said that NNESTs must have 'native-like' accents.

Clearly, student preference represents a large part of the reasons given by employers for the importance of their hiring criteria. However, students, who are being spoken for rather than speaking for themselves, may not necessarily share these concerns or have these preferences. I would like to use the example of the study of Al-Omrani (2008) who found that students in Saudi Arabia do not have a clear preference for native speaker teachers, while about 40% of the participating recruiters in this study, as I shall demonstrate in section 4.6, think otherwise.

4.4.5 Teaching Experience

The last criterion 'teaching experience' was perceived to be extremely important. It achieved a maximum score of 5 ('very important') and a minimum (negative) score of 4 ('moderately important'). As can be seen in table 4-14 below, the majority of the participants (87.5%) accorded it the maximum score, while it was given the minimum score of 4 ('moderately important') by the remaining 12.5% of the participants. Since none of the participants gave this criterion a score of less than 4, the mean score (average) was 4.88. The standard deviation score for this criterion was 0.33, reflecting, understandably, a highly homogeneous and highly positive evaluation of this criterion.

Point on the scale		Frequency	Percentage
1	Not important at all	0	0.0%
2	Relatively unimportant	0	0.0%
3	Somewhat important	0	0.0%
4	Moderately important	7	12.5%
5	Very important	49	87.5%
Total		**56**	**100%**

Table 4-14: Distribution of the evaluation of the teaching experience criterion

The 'teaching experience' criterion was perceived in this study to be more important than it has been perceived in previous studies. For example, Mahboob's (2003) study revealed a mean score of 4.28, and the same criterion received a score of 4.54 in Clark and Paran's (2007) study. Like the 'academic qualification' criterion, the teaching experience of the applicants seems to matter immensely to Saudi recruiters. Understandably, recruiters want to make sure that applicants do have the necessary experience of teaching English, which will enable them to engage the students, motivate them and deal with their learning difficulties more effectively.

The level of homogeneity in the participants' answers regarding the teaching experience criterion is also comparable to that found in previous research. In other words, in the study of Mahboob (ibid.), teaching experience was the second most homogenous criterion, with a standard deviation score of 1.35. Furthermore, in the study of Clark and Paran (2007), this criterion received a standard deviation score of 0.66, which was also amongst the lower scores. This indicates that recruiters in general tend to be in overall agreement as to the importance of this criterion in making hiring decisions. This homogeneity could be partially explained by saying that Saudi participants are similar to their counterparts in the literature in that they are looking for formal proof of teaching competence to give them the assurance that applicants can teach properly and deal sensibly with related problems because they have done so in the past.

In the interviews, the participants noted the importance of applicants having a specific type of experience: they are preferred to have taught English in Arab countries or at least in non-English speaking countries. This was sometimes clearly stated and sometimes it was described as cultural awareness, which is discussed in more detail in section 4.4.6. In the questionnaire, the respondents were given the opportunity to mention other (unlisted) criteria in a separate section. In this section one of the participants (C3) added: "teaching experience in similar ESL/EFL environments or, if possible, previous teaching experience in Arab countries or teaching Arab students". His justification for this was that it may help to ensure that the teacher stays longer in Saudi Arabia. Another respondent (C6) added: "teaching English in other countries", while "his experience in working with EFL students" was added by another respondent (C2).

The above presentation of the results has shown the evaluation of the five hiring criteria in alphabetical order, which is also how they appeared in the questionnaire (see Appendix A). These criteria can now be ordered based on their mean scores to show their relative importance as perceived by the RC members. It should be remembered that the higher the score, the closer it is to the positive end of the scale, thus indicating more importance. These scores are presented in table 4-15.

Criteria	Mean
Academic Qualification	5.00
Teaching Experience	4.88
Native Speaker	3.84
Nationality	3.23
Accent	3.14

Table 4-15: Ordering the five criteria (based on their mean scores)

4.4.6 Additional Hiring Criteria

As discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.6.1), the questionnaire included a question that asked the recruiters about any other criteria (not listed in that section) they used in the process of hiring EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. This part was answered by only 18 respondents. These unlisted criteria were grouped into general themes for the purpose of analysis.

Common themes emerging from the responses of the participants included the following: teaching in EFL contexts, adaptability, cultural awareness and the applicant's age. Nine respondents emphasised the importance of teaching experience in countries where English is a foreign language. The adaptability of the applicants so that they could fit into a different society was mentioned by 8 respondents, referring to the ban on alcohol, the hot weather, food and the conservative Saudi lifestyle. It is often the case that new teachers who are new to Saudi Arabia are made aware of the alcohol ban and the illegality of male/female relationships, but that many other small yet important aspects of life that can affect their stay and durability in the country are overlooked.

Cultural awareness was another issue raised by 7 participants. They thought that this was an important characteristic for EFL applicants to have in order to teach in Saudi Arabia. This was referred to as respecting the Islamic culture in general and the Saudi culture in particular. Some of the respondents told stories of violations of the norms of these cultures which caused trouble for the teachers, and which in turn affected their performance in their jobs. These two criteria are exemplified in the following statement made by one of the participants (C1): "Being able to live a normal life in the target country. For example, in Saudi Arabia, it is officially not allowed to consume, sell or buy alcohol in public. If the job applicant cannot refrain from drinking alcohol, he might not be an ideal applicant." Flynn and Gulikers (2001: 153) state that NNESTs in the USA should understand the American culture, and this is also true when NESTs

teach in countries where English is taught as a foreign language. “Knowing how to react to student behaviors is an important part of becoming prepared for the job.”

The age of the applicants seemed to be an important criterion to some recruiters. Six of them reported issues relating to older teachers who had health issues or who could not cope with the physical demands of the job. Other participants individually reported other criteria that included the appearance of the applicants, the institutions from which they had graduated, and good pronunciation. For example, one of the participants (C4) added: “sometimes the place where he/she graduated from has an impact and […] the type of personality of the applicant.” Another (C3) mentioned as a hiring criterion a “very good level of English pronunciation.” Finally, respondent C10 added: “the appearance of the teacher, his morals, age.”

In section 4.4.5, it was mentioned that according to the responses of the Saudi recruiters concerning their perceptions of the five hiring criteria, the two most important criteria to them when making hiring decisions were the academic qualification of the applicants and their teaching experience. The remaining three criteria that were provided: accent, nationality and native speakership, would come after these two most important criteria, since the latter three were accorded less importance, as shown in table 4-15.

The ultimate importance attributed to academic qualification and teaching experience as hiring criteria that could determine applicants’ suitability for the job is questionable. It should be borne in mind that the listening task, in which the applicants were ordered and their qualification levels judged, preceded the evaluations of the hiring criteria. In other words, the participants judged the speakers before they were asked to rate the five listed criteria. This was done in order to find out how they actually perceived the speakers without being aware of specific criteria.

However, a different story seems to be unfolding here. It was shown in section 4.3.6 that overall the White speaker was perceived to have the highest qualification level (mean= 6.48) and the highest potential for employment (he was ranked first by 50% of the participants). Also, it was shown that the Yellow speaker, who interestingly held the lowest qualification and had the lowest number of years of teaching experience, followed the White speaker (his mean score was 6.45 and he was ranked first by 39.3% of the participants). More importantly, the Yellow speaker was perceived to be more qualified than the three noticeably better qualified NNESTs.

A possible explanation for this might be that the participants unconsciously allow their preference for NESTs to override their judgments regarding the importance of

these hiring criteria. This would be proven to be the case if a relationship was found between the importance given to the native speaker criterion and the perceived level of qualification of the five speakers, which is discussed in the sections below.

The next stage in the analysis was thus to examine the interaction between the five hiring criteria and the speakers' perceived level of qualification, looking for statistically significant correlations. The results are presented in the following section.

4.5 The Interaction between the Five Hiring Criteria and the Evaluation of the Five Speakers

The presentation so far has explored the evaluation of each criterion individually. It has also shown the individual evaluations each of the five speakers received. In order to see if there was a relationship between the importance given by the participants to the five hiring criteria and the participants' perceptions of the qualification level of the five applicants and therefore their suitability for the job, a correlation analysis using Spearman's Rho was conducted. This is a statistical test used to look for associations or relationships between two variables. This statistical test was selected because the two types of variable, the perceived importance of the hiring criteria and the applicants' perceived qualification levels, were both in the form of ordinal data, since the answers had been selected from Likert scales (see sections 4.4 and 4.3). Table 4-16 presents the results of the correlations found between the two previously mentioned variables, with the significant associations highlighted in grey. The following subsections will present and explain these correlations in more detail.

		Academic Qualification	Accent	Nationality	Native Speaker	Teaching Experience
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	Correlation Coefficient	.	-0.378**	-0.616**	-0.432**	-0.146
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.004	0.001	0.001	0.282
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	Correlation Coefficient	.	-0.495**	-0.680**	-0.585**	-0.174
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.198
White speaker's perceived qualification level	Correlation Coefficient	.	0.089	0.059	0.114	0.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.513	0.667	0.402	0.577
Green speaker's perceived qualification level	Correlation Coefficient	.	-0.316*	-0.686**	-0.532**	-0.186
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.018	0.001	0.001	0.169
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	Correlation Coefficient	.	-0.209	-0.234	-0.144	-0.330*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.123	0.082	0.289	0.013

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4-16: Correlations between the hiring criteria and the perception of the speakers' qualification level

4.5.1 Academic Qualification

This criterion was considered a constant variable in the statistical analysis. This means that correlations with this criterion were impossible to calculate. It was, as shown in section 4.4.1, rated as extremely important (given the maximum score of 5) by all of the 56 participants. Therefore, it was not statistically possible to look for associations between this variable and other variables. Nonetheless, the extreme importance of this criterion reflects the perceived value of official certification as a universal measure of suitability. It also reflects the modern world, where people are employed by others who do not know them personally and therefore need to verify whether or not they possess qualifications.

4.5.2 Accent

The statistical analysis, using SPSS, revealed significant associations between the accent criterion and the perceived level of qualification of only the Red, Blue and Green speakers, who were all Non-Native English Speakers. That is, the p values for the three speakers were 0.004, 0.001 and 0.018, and the Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient scores were -0.378, -0.495 and -0.316 respectively. More importantly, the test showed that all of these significant relationships are negative or 'inverse' relationships. This means the more importance the RC members gave to the accent criterion the less qualified they perceived the three NNEST applicants to be. By the same token, those

who assigned the accent criterion less importance perceived the three NNEST applicants to be more qualified than those who assigned the same criterion more importance.

With the two other applicants who were native speakers, the Spearman's Rho test revealed no significant relationships between the perceived importance assigned by the participants to the 'accent' criterion and the qualification level of the White and Yellow applicants. The *p* values for the White and Yellow speakers were 0.513 and 0.123 respectively. The Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient was 0.089 for the White speaker while for the Yellow speaker it was 0.209.

As mentioned in section 4.4.2, the Saudi recruiters seemed to be divided into two camps in terms of their judgments regarding the importance of 'accent' as a hiring criterion. Fortunately, it was statistically possible to measure the descriptive statistics (total, minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores) for members of each camp separately. In other words, the 24 participants who gave 'accent' a score of 4 or 5 out of 5 could be grouped together (see table 4-17), and the 22 participants who gave it a score of 1 or 2 could also be grouped together (see table 4-18) in order to measure their overall evaluation of the qualification level of the five applicants. It should be remembered that the higher the mean score, the more important the 'accent' criterion was perceived to be. Figure 4-9 illustrates the two groups' evaluations of the five applicants based on the perceived importance (mean score) of 'accent'. The differences between the evaluations of the three non-native speaker applicants (Red, Blue and Green) made by the members of the two camps are clearly more noticeable than the differences between their evaluations of the native speaker applicants (White and Yellow).

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
White speaker's perceived qualification level	24	5	7	6.58	0.65
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	24	4	7	6.37	0.77
Green speaker's perceived suitability for the job	24	3	6	4.42	1.18
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	24	2	7	4.08	1.10
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	24	2	6	3.75	1.26

Table 4-17: Perception of the five speakers by those who found 'accent' important based on Mean scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	22	5	7	6.59	0.67
White speaker's perceived qualification level	22	4	7	6.41	0.80
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	22	4	7	5.45	0.96
Green speaker's perceived qualification level	22	3	6	5.18	0.85
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	22	3	6	4.73	0.83

Table 4-18: Perception of the five speakers by those who found 'accent' not important based on Mean scores

Clearly, those who assigned the 'accent' criterion less importance found the non-native speaker applicants (Red, Blue and Green) to be more qualified than did those who assigned it more importance. This is very interesting, since only the members of this camp were able to see and appreciate the actual credentials of the three non-native applicants. Thus, it can be fairly assumed that reducing the importance given to the accents of applicants may lead to better appreciation of applicants' qualifications. It is extremely unfortunate that the credentials of applicants are unconsciously overlooked because of their accents.

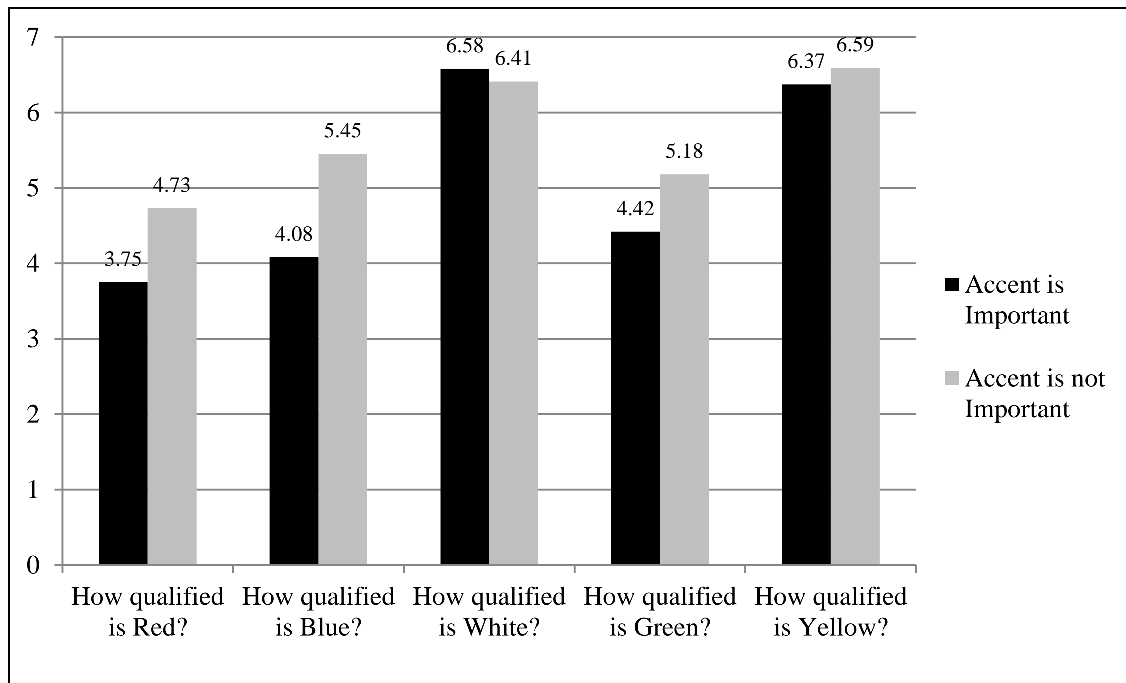

Figure 4-9: The two groups' evaluations of 'accent'

4.5.3 Nationality

As with the ‘accent’ hiring criterion, the Spearman’s Rho correlation analysis revealed a significant negative association between the perceived importance the participants accorded to the ‘nationality’ criterion and the qualification level of only the Red, Blue and Green applicants, who were all non-native speakers (*p*= 0.001, 0.001 and 0.001 respectively). The correlation coefficient scores for the three speakers were -0.616, -0.680 and -0.686 respectively. There was no significant association between the perception of the importance of the ‘nationality’ criterion and the qualification level of the two native speaker applicants, White and Yellow, since the *p* values for them were 0.513 and 0.123 while the correlation coefficients were 0.089 and -0.209 respectively.

The significant negative correlations mean that the participants who thought the nationality of applicants was important in the hiring process perceived these three NNESTs as less qualified in comparison to those who thought the nationality criterion was not as important. Participants in the latter camp (those who found ‘nationality’ not important) ultimately perceived the three applicants to be more qualified.

The participants referred to in section 4.4.3 can also be viewed as belonging to two camps in terms of their perception of the importance of the ‘nationality’ criterion. As shown in table 4-12, a total of 28 participants gave this criterion a score of 4 or 5, which means it was an important criterion, while 21 participants gave it a score of 1 or 2, meaning that it was not important to them. The differences between the two camps can also be closely examined by measuring the descriptive statistics, especially the importance (mean scores) each camp assigned to the perceived qualification level of the five applicants. As in the analysis described in the previous section (4.5.2), this separation of cases was facilitated by the use of the SPSS program. Table 4-19 shows the scores for the first camp that gave the criterion ‘nationality’ more importance, while table 4-20 presents the results of the second camp that attributed less importance to the same criterion.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
White speaker’s perceived qualification level	28	5	7	6.53	0.64
Yellow speaker’s perceived qualification level	28	4	7	6.36	0.73
Blue speaker’s perceived qualification level	28	2	5	3.79	0.88
Green speaker’s perceived qualification level	28	2	5	3.71	0.90
Red speaker’s perceived qualification level	28	2	5	3.29	0.85

Table 4-19: Perceptions of the five speakers by those who found ‘nationality’ important based on Mean scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	21	5	7	6.71	0.56
White speaker's perceived qualification level	21	4	7	6.38	0.80
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	21	4	7	5.67	0.86
Green speaker's perceived qualification level	21	5	6	5.48	0.51
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	21	3	6	4.90	0.89

Table 4-20: Perceptions of the five speakers by those who found 'nationality' not important based on Mean scores

From the figures presented in the tables above, it is clear that the two camps were noticeably different in their evaluations of the applicants, especially the NNESTs. This difference is illustrated visually in figure 4-10 below.

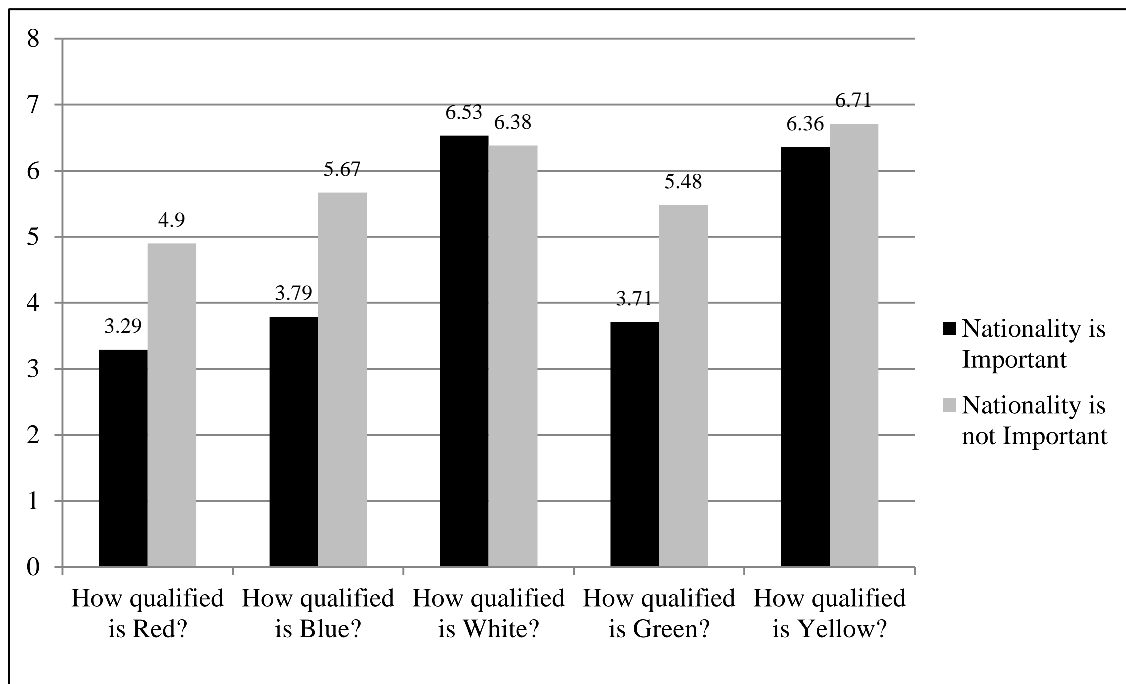

Figure 4-10: The two groups' evaluations of 'nationality'

4.5.4 Native English Speaker

The next interaction to be investigated was between the perceived importance of the 'native speaker' criterion and how qualified the five speakers were perceived to be. The statistical analysis indicated a significant negative association between the perceived importance assigned by the 56 participants to the 'native English speaker' criterion and how qualified they thought the Red, Blue and Green speakers were. As can be seen in table 4-16, the p values for the Red, Blue and Green speakers were 0.001, 0.001 and 0.001 respectively, while their Spearman Rho's correlation coefficients were -0.432, -0.585 and -0.532.

As with the criteria discussed in the previous two sections (4.5.2 and 4.5.3), the associations between the perceived importance of this criterion and the perceived qualification level of the native speaker applicants, the White speaker and the Yellow speaker, were not significant (*p* values were 0.402 and 0.289). The Spearman Rho's correlation coefficients were 0.114 and -0.144.

The results show that the participants were not as divided in their perception of the importance of the NES criterion as they were regarding the previous two criteria (nationality and accent). That is, 39 participants gave the 'native speaker' criterion a score of 4 or 5 out of 5, indicating a high level of importance, while only 12 participants gave it a score of 1 or 2, indicating less importance. It is, however, still possible to view the two less divided groups in terms of the descriptive statistics, especially the mean scores, which reflect the participants' perception of the qualification levels of the applicants. In table 4-21 the figures for the first camp that assigned the NES criterion more importance are presented, while table 4-22 shows the results for the other camp that attributed less importance to the same criterion.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
White speaker's perceived qualification level	39	5	7	6.54	0.60
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	39	5	7	6.41	0.64
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	39	2	7	4.28	1.26
Green speaker's perceived qualification level	39	2	6	4.23	1.09
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	39	2	6	3.75	0.94

Table 4-21: Perception of the five speakers by those who found 'NES' important based on Mean scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level	12	4	7	6.42	1.00
White speaker's perceived qualification level	12	4	7	6.25	0.97
Blue speaker's perceived qualification level	12	4	7	5.33	0.78
Green speaker's perceived qualification level	12	3	6	5.33	0.89
Red speaker's perceived qualification level	12	2	6	4.67	1.50

Table 4-22: Perception of the five speakers by those who found 'NES' not important based on Mean scores

The tables above indicate the visible differences between the two groups in terms of their perceptions of the participants' qualification levels and therefore their suitability for the job. For example, the average (mean) score relating to how the qualification level of the Red speaker was perceived by those participants who found the 'native speaker' criterion important was 3.75. In comparison, the mean score for the same

speaker's qualification level as perceived by those participants who found this criterion to be less important was 4.67. Figure 4-11 provides a visual illustration of the differences that are especially noticeable in the case of the perception of the non-native applicants.

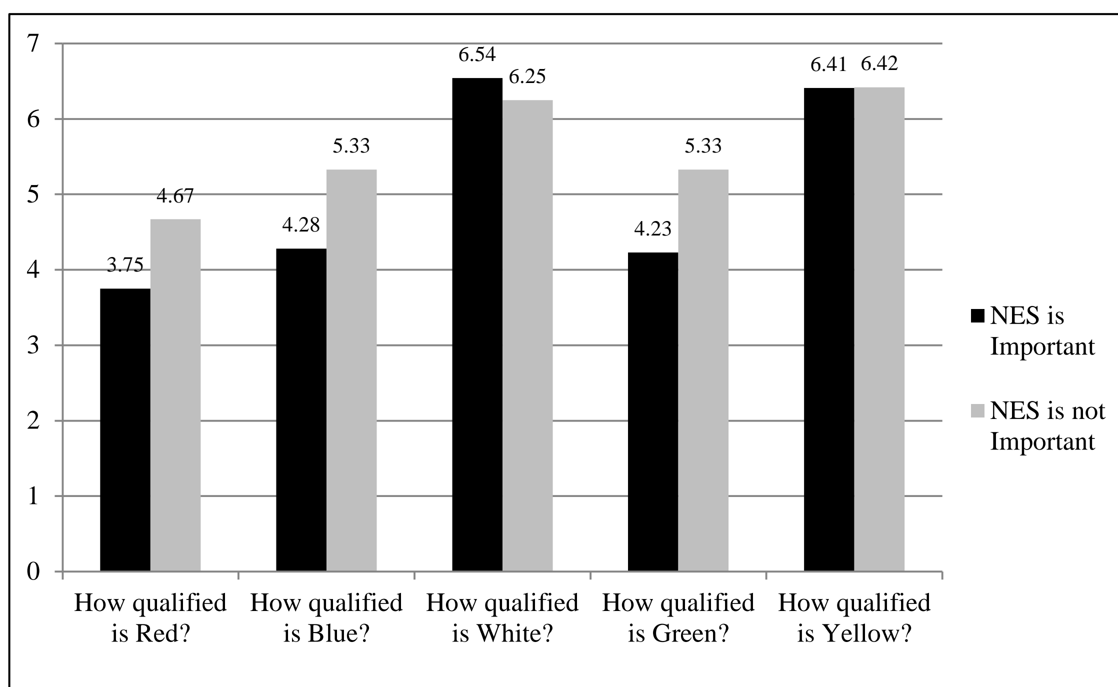

Figure 4-11: The two groups' evaluations of 'native English speaker'

The findings presented in this section, as graphically illustrated in figure 4-11 above, inform the second research question of this research which asked: *If the native speaker criterion is to be found important, is there a relationship between the importance of this criterion and the chances of NNESTs' being employed?* The answer is definitely 'Yes', there is a relationship between the importance accorded to the native speaker criterion and NNESTs' employability, in that those who attributed more importance to this criterion perceived the three non-native speaker applicants (the Red, Blue and Green speakers) to be less qualified and less suitable for teaching English in Saudi higher education institutions. It is clear from figure 4-11 that those three speakers were perceived significantly differently from the two native speaker applicants, the White and Yellow speakers, by those who found the 'native English speaker' criterion important (shaded in black) and those who found the same criterion not important (shaded in grey).

4.5.5 Teaching Experience

No statistically significant association was found for the final criterion 'teaching experience', except with the Yellow speaker (p= 0.013). The Spearman's Rho

coefficient was -0.330, which indicates a negative relationship: the more importance the participants attached to teaching experience in the hiring process the less qualified they thought the Yellow speaker was. The p values for the Red, Blue, White and Green speakers were 0.282, 0.198, 0.577 and 0.169, while the correlation coefficients were -0.146, -0.174, 0.076 and -0.186 respectively.

This negative association could be owing to the limited teaching experience of the Yellow speaker; he had only one year's experience of teaching English in his own country, compared to the rest of the applicants who had at least four years' experience in countries that have similar norms and culture to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

4.6 The Interaction between the Five Hiring Criteria and the Respondents' Bio-Data

The interaction between the bio-data of the participants and their answers could provide useful insights into their perceptions of the importance of the five hiring criteria. It is useful to mention at the start of this section that although all interactions are reported in Appendix F, only the significant interactions or those relevant to the discussion will be reported here. To make this interaction more visible, it was necessary to view the data from a particular angle. In order to do this, the answers on the five-point scale were combined by grouping the participants' responses into new and broader categories: generally important and generally not important. Thus, the two most positive answers - moderately important and very important - were merged together into the first new category – the 'generally important' category, while the two most negative answers - not important at all and relatively unimportant- were merged together into the second new category – the 'generally not important' category'. The combination process was facilitated by the SPSS program. The combination of the answers was helpful for two reasons. First, the number of participants was limited (only 56 participants) and therefore it seemed that having broader categories would make comparisons more meaningful. Second, when the interaction between the bio-data and the perceived importance of a criterion was being investigated, the difference between '1' or '2' on a five-point scale seemed less significant.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) included five items asking the participants for the following biographical information: age, highest qualification, country of qualification, years spent in education, and the number of times they had served on RCs.

Also, the questionnaire included five hiring criteria: academic qualification, accent, nationality, native speaker and teaching experience.

4.6.1 The Interaction between 'Accent' and Participation in RCs

The first significant interaction concerns the 'accent' criterion and the number of times the participants had taken part in Recruiting Committees. It was mentioned in section 4.4.2 that in terms of the perceived importance of 'accent', the participants were divided almost equally into two camps: one found accent generally important and the other found it to be generally not important. Table 4-23 presents a cross-tabulation of the perceived importance of the accent hiring criterion (after the new combination mentioned in section 4.6 above had been carried out) and the number of times participants had served on RCs. One of the obvious results, as seen in the table, is that participants who had taken part in the RCs less frequently perceived the accent of applicants to be generally important as a hiring criterion. That is, 13 of the 24 participants (54.2%) who found accent generally important had participated fewer than three times in RCs, while the majority of the 22 who found accent to be generally not important (N=12, 54.5%) had participated in RCs between 3 and 6 times. This gives an indication that the participants who had participated more often in RCs had a tendency to attribute less importance to the accent criterion.

Accent		Part of Committees				Total
		< 3	3-6	7-10	> 10	
Generally important	Count	13	8	2	1	24
	% within Accent	54.2%	33.3%	8.3%	4.2%	100.0%
Not sure	Count	5	4	1	0	10
	% within Accent	50.0%	40.0%	10.0%	.0%	100.0%
Generally not important	Count	8	12	2	0	22
	% within Accent	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%	.0%	100.0%

Table 4-23: The interaction between 'accent' and the recruiters' participation in RCs

4.6.2 The Interaction between 'Accent' and the Participants' Qualification Level

Although the interaction between accent and qualification level was not statistically significant, it is still evident in table 4-24 below that 63.6% of the MA holders found accent to be generally important while there was no significant variation among the PhD holders. This probably implies that as recruiters advance in their careers and become more experienced, they realise that the accents of applicants are not a major factor that should affect their employment opportunities. This conforms with the tendency described in section 4.6.1 above: the majority of those participants who had participated in RCs fewer than three times found accent to be generally important, while those who had served on RCs between 3-6 times found the same criterion to be generally not

important. This suggests that with experience and more participation in RCs comes more tolerance of the accents of English teachers. Indeed, we all know English teachers who speak with all sorts of accents - and indeed everybody speaks with one as pointed out in section 2.2.1-, and this has nothing to do with them being good teachers. After all, these accents are just what a speaker sounds like (Kumaravadivelu, 2004).

Accent		Qualification		Total
		MA	PhD	
Generally important	Count	7	17	24
	% within Qualification	63.6%	37.8%	42.9%
Not sure	Count	1	9	10
	% within Qualification	9.1%	20.0%	17.9%
Generally not important	Count	3	19	22
	% within Qualification	27.3%	42.2%	39.3%

Table 4-24: The interaction between ‘accent’ and the participants’ qualification level

4.6.3 The Interaction between ‘Nationality’ and the Participants’ Qualification Level

The results for the interaction between the perceived importance of ‘nationality’ and the perceived qualification level of the participants conflicted with the results presented in the previous two sections (4.6.1 and 4.6.2) that indicated a tolerance of the accent of applicants. That is, 54.5% of the 11 MA holders found ‘nationality’ to be generally not important while 57.8% of the 45 PhD holders perceived the same criterion to be generally important, as illustrated in table 4-25 below. We probably should take into consideration the types of justifications provided by the PhD holding participants (C8, C11, C29 and C34) in order to try to understand why ‘nationality’ was important to them (see Appendix C). These justifications included the students’ preference for some nationalities, the perception that people of particular nationalities possess particular traits, and the fear that some nationalities might be rejected by some students. Although most of these justifications are made on behalf of the students, they could also be a result of the experience that these participants have accumulated over the years. As shown in chapter 2 of this thesis, programme administrators often make assumptions about students’ preferences which are not necessarily true (Al-Omrani, 2008; and Cook, 2000).

Nationality		Qualification		Total
		MA	PhD	
Generally important	Count	2	26	28
	% within Qualification	18.2%	57.8%	50.0%
Not sure	Count	3	4	7
	% within Qualification	27.3%	8.9%	12.5%
Generally not important	Count	6	15	21
	% within Qualification	54.5%	33.3%	37.5%

Table 4-25: The interaction between 'nationality' and the participants' qualification level

4.7 The Statements

The questionnaire also included eight statements that were meant to measure the attitudes of the Saudi RC members towards NESTs and NNESTs (see chapter 3, section 3.6.1).

The responses to each of these statements were selected from a five-point Likert scale which included the following options: strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. The participants varied in their responses to these statements. Therefore, each statement will be analysed independently in this section, and this will be followed by a graphic illustration representing the responses of the participants.

The first statement was: *Native and non-native speakers may have the same teaching abilities.* The vast majority of the 56 participants (N= 43, 76.8%) agreed with this statement. More specifically, 25% of them (N= 14) strongly agreed while 51.8% (N= 29) agreed. However, 8.9% of the participants (N= 5) disagreed with this statement while only 5.4% (N=3) strongly disagreed, bringing the total number of those who were in disagreement with the statement to 8 participants (14.3%). The remaining 5 participants (8.9%) selected 'not sure'.

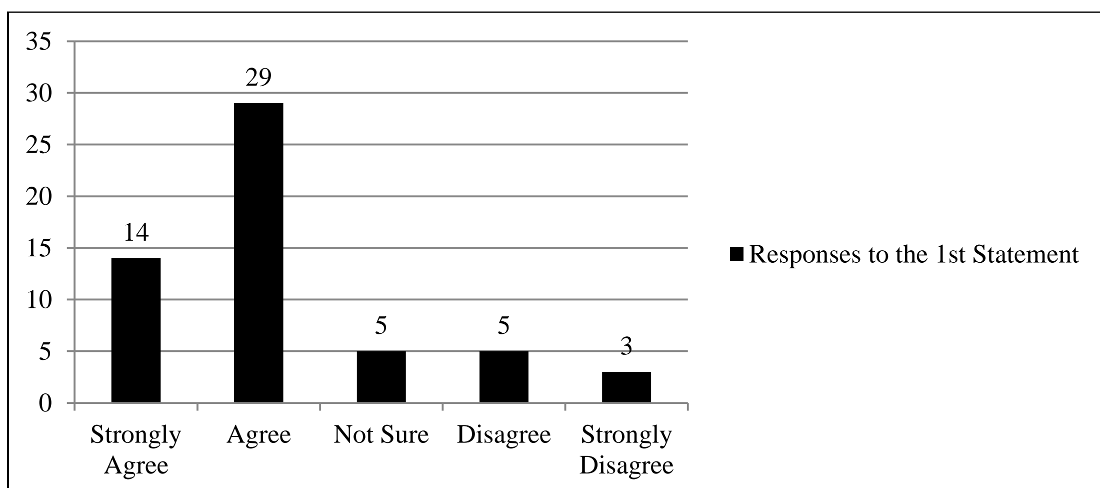

Figure 4-12: NESTs and NNESTs may have similar teaching abilities

The second statement was: *Non-native speakers can understand and deal with the learning difficulties of my students better than native speakers.* The majority of the participants (N= 40, 71.4%) were in agreement with this statement. That is, 10 participants (17.9%) strongly agreed while 30 participants (53.6%) agreed. In contrast, 8 participants (14.3%) were in disagreement with this statement. That is, six participants (10.7%) disagreed while only 2 participants (3.6%) strongly disagreed. The remaining 8 participants (14.3%) selected 'not sure'.

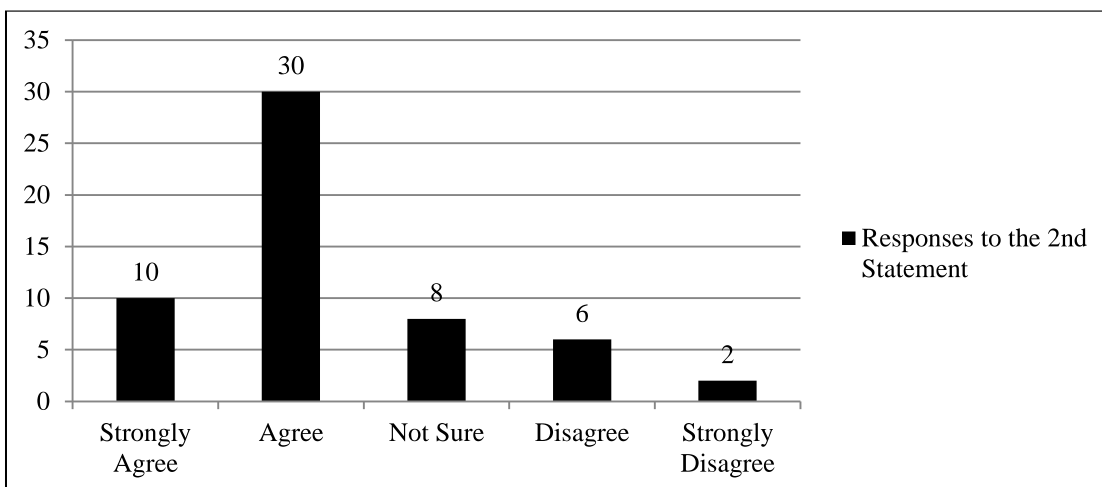

Figure 4-13: NNESTs are better at dealing with students' learning difficulties

The third statement read: *I prefer non-native speakers over native speakers to teach in my department.* Over a third of the participants (N= 19, 33.9%) were in general agreement with this statement. That is, 4 of them (7.1%) strongly agreed with it while 15 of them (26.8%) agreed with it. In contrast, 13 respondents (23.2%) were in general disagreement with this statement. More specifically, 7 participants (12.5%) disagreed with it while 6 of them (10.7%) strongly disagreed. The most participants in a single category (N=24, 42.9%) selected 'not sure'.

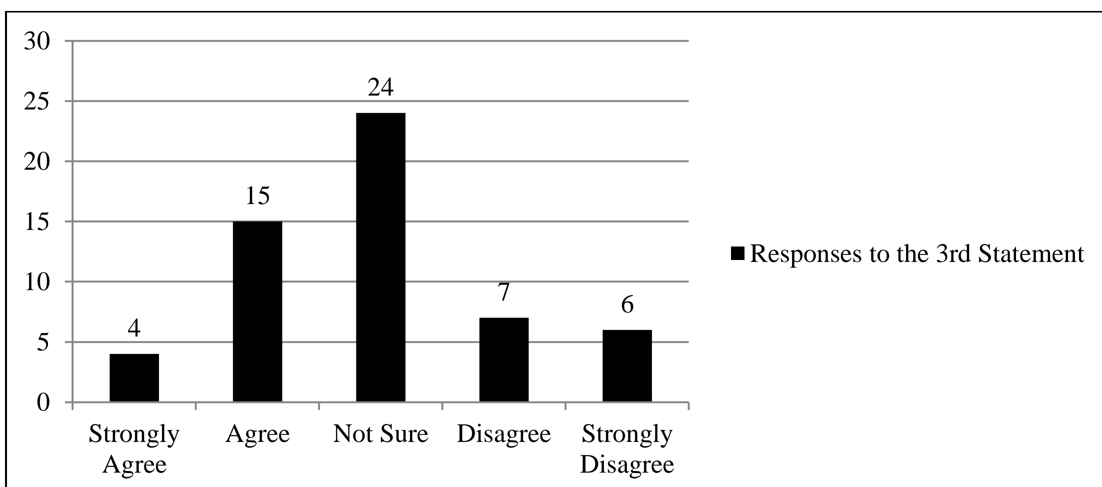

Figure 4-14: Preferring NNESTs over NESTs

The fourth statement read: *I prefer native speakers over non-native speakers to teach in my department*. About a quarter of the participants (N= 13, 23.2%) were in general agreement with this statement. Specifically, 6 of them (10.7%) strongly agreed with it and 7 of them (12.5%) agreed with it. The majority of the participants (N=34, 60.8%) were in general disagreement with it and they were divided between 24 participants (42.9%) who disagreed and 10 participants (17.9%) who strongly disagreed with it. The remaining 9 participants (16.1%) did not agree or disagree with this statement.

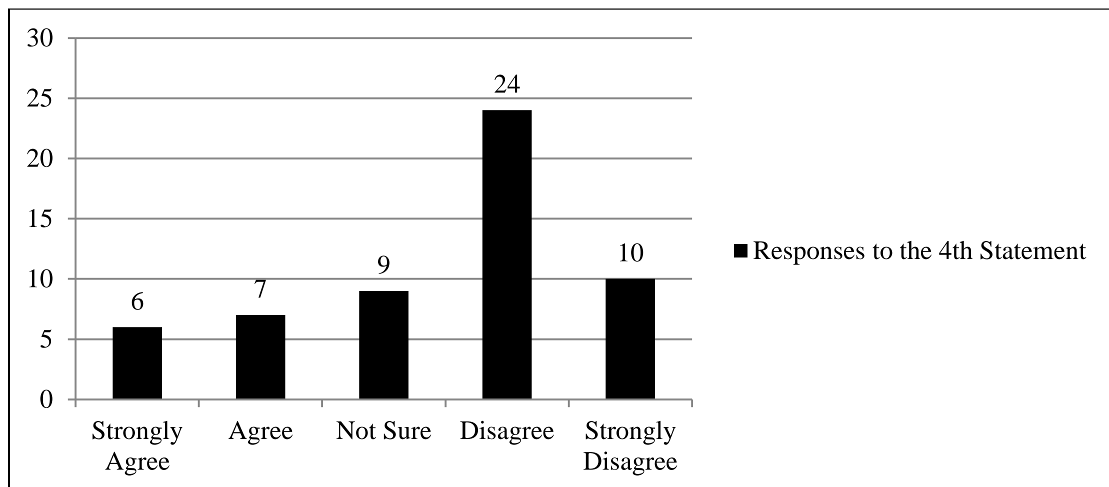

Figure 4-15: Preferring NESTs over NNESTs

The fifth statement was: *If I could, I would employ English native speakers only.* Over a third of the participants (N= 20, 35.8%) were in general agreement with this statement. That is, 10 of them (17.9%) strongly agreed with it while the other 10 (17.9%) agreed with it. In contrast, the majority of the participants (N=29, 51.8%) were in general disagreement with this statement. Specifically, 21 participants (37.5%) disagreed with it while 8 of them (14.3%) strongly disagreed. The remaining 7 participants (12.5%) did not agree or disagree with this statement.

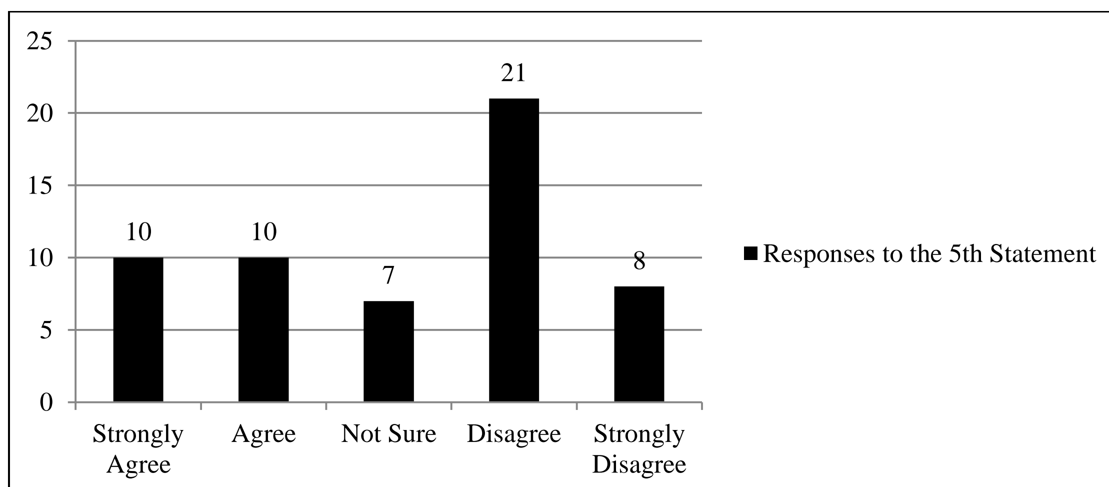

Figure 4-16: Employing only NESTs if possible

The sixth statement was: *I usually employ non-native speakers because native speakers are hard to attract.* A quarter of the participants (N=14, 25%) agreed with this statement and they were divided between one participant (1.8 %) who chose 'strongly agree' and 23.2% of the participants (N= 13) who agreed with this statement. However, the majority of the respondents (N= 30, 53.6%) disagreed with it. Specifically, 21 participants (37.5%) chose 'disagree' while 9 of them (16.1%) chose 'strongly disagree'. Twelve participants (21.4%) selected 'not sure'.

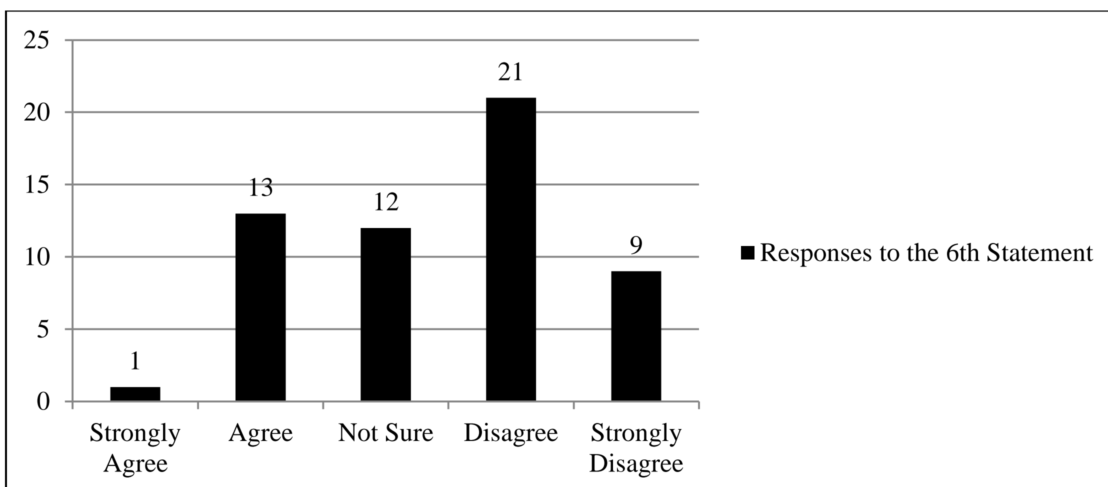

Figure 4-17: Employing NNESTs because NESTs are hard to attract

The seventh statement read: '*I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers'.* Eleven participants (19.6%) agreed with this statement, 2 of them (3.6%) strongly agreeing and 9 (16.1%) agreeing with it. However, 23 participants (41.1%) disagreed with the statement. That is, 13 of them (23.2%) disagreed with it while 10 participants (17.9%) strongly disagreed. Twenty-two participants (39.3%) selected 'not sure'.

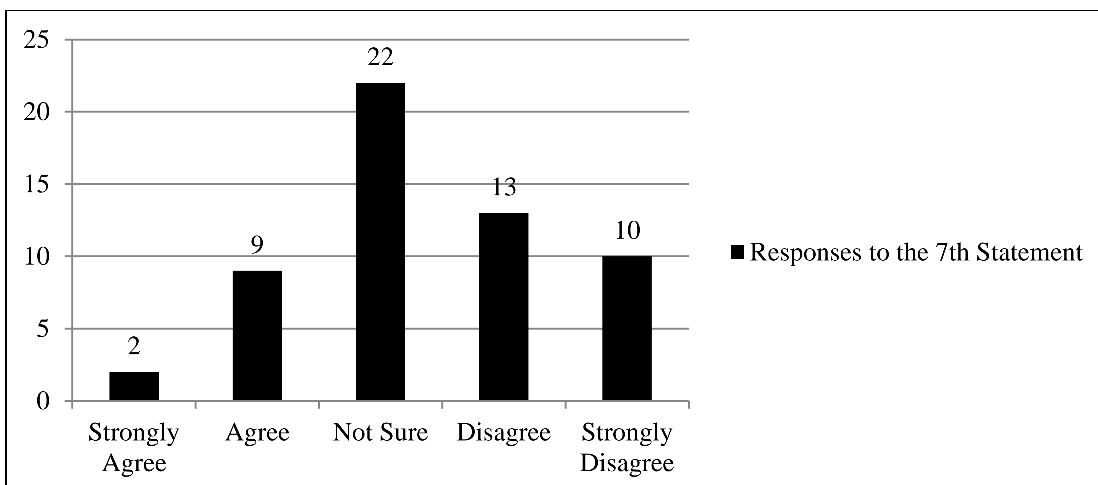

Figure 4-18: Employing NESTs even if they were less qualified than NNESTs

The last statement was ‘*The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers.’* Out of the 56 respondents, 22 (39.3%) were in agreement with this statement. That is, 7 participants (12.5%) strongly agreed with the statement while 15 of them (26.8%) agreed with it. Only 2 participants (3.6%) disagreed with the statement. The majority of the respondents (N= 32, 57.1%) selected ‘not sure’.

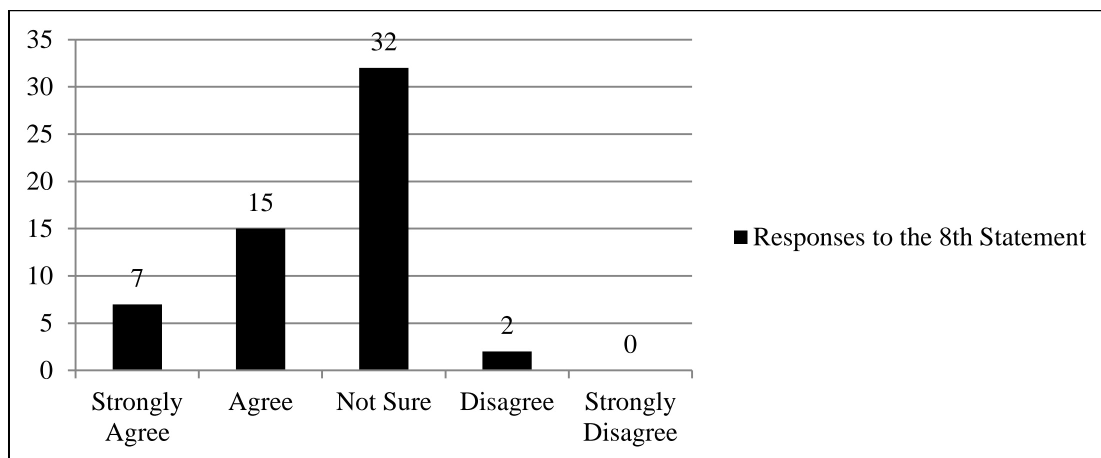

Figure 4-19: My students prefer to be taught by NESTs

The responses to these statements are summarised in table 4-26 below in terms of their mode scores (most frequent answer) and standard deviation scores (diversity in the responses), where the higher the score the less homogeneous the responses to the statements were.

Statement	Mode	SD
1. *Native and non-native speakers may have the same teaching abilities*	2.00 (Agree)	1.08
2. *Non-native speakers can understand and deal with the learning difficulties of my students better than native speakers*	2.00 (Agree)	1.00
3. *I prefer non-native speakers over native speakers to teach in my department*	3.00 (Not Sure)	1.06
4. *I prefer native speakers over non-native speakers to teach in my department*	4.00 (Disagree)	1.23
5. *If I could, I would employ English native speakers only*	4.00 (Disagree)	1.36
6. *I usually employ non-native speakers because native speakers are hard to attract*	4.00 (Disagree)	1.08
7. *I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers*	3.00 (Not Sure)	1.07
8. *The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers.*	3.00 (Not Sure)	0.76

Table 4-26: Mode and standard deviation scores for the statements

Table 4-26 above illustrates the mode and standard deviation scores for the participants' responses to the eight statements. Only the mode and standard deviation scores here give insights into the responses of the participants. On the one hand, the mode scores represent the response selected most frequently by the 56 participants. To explain the mode scores further, the response 'strongly agree' is represented in the above table by mode score 1, the response 'agree' is represented by number 2, the response 'not sure' is represented by the mode score of 3, the response 'disagree' is represented by number 4, and the response 'strongly disagree' is represented in the above table by the mode score of 5.

On the other hand, the standard deviation scores show how homogeneous the responses to the statements were. The higher the standard deviation score the more diverse and varied the responses were and vice-versa, i.e., the lower the score the more homogenous and less varied the responses were.

From the table above, it can be seen that the responses to the last statement, '*The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers*', were the most homogenous responses, while the fifth statement, '*If I could, I would employ English native speakers only'*, received the most dispersed answers. This means that the participants did not vary a great deal in thinking that their students prefer to be taught by native speakers than by non-native speakers, while they varied greatly in their responses to the fifth statement on the issue of employing native speaker teachers only.

The large dispersion of the responses to the previous statement seems to confirm the existence of the two camps discussed in section 4.4.2: the traditional recruiters and the tolerant ones. The first camp believes that native speakers are better applicants, have no accents, and are therefore better teachers, while the second camp believes that teaching experience, academic qualifications and personal characteristics are far more important than being a native or non-native speaker teacher.

The students' preference was repeatedly cited by the participants to justify their selection and it is interesting how this assumption on the part of the participants conflicts with empirical evidence available in the literature. In a study that probed the attitudes of Saudi students towards NESTs and NNESTs, Al-Omrani (2008: V) found that the Saudi students in his sample did not have a clear preference and that they perceived both NESTs and NNESTs to have advantages and disadvantages:

> while native English speaker teachers are believed to be best in teaching the oral skills due to their language fluency and accuracy, nonnative English-speaking instructors offer advantages associated with […] being previous learners of English as a second or foreign language. However, findings show that the teacher's qualifications and teaching experience are seen as the most distinctive features of an excellent ESL/EFL teacher, regardless of his mother tongue.

Similarly, Cook (2000: 331) explored whether students in different countries would prefer native speakers to non-native speakers. His study, in which only children were included, found that only 18% of Belgian children, 44% of English children and 45% of Polish children preferred native speaker teachers. More interestingly, 47% of Belgian, 32% of English and 25% of Polish children preferred NNESTs. The remainder of the students in the study did not have a preference. He concludes that "more revealingly, nowhere is there an overwhelming preference for NS teachers. Being an NS is only one among many factors that influence students' views of teaching." Similar findings were also found by Mullock (2010). She found that Thai university students and teachers had no explicit preference of native speakers. Also, she reported they agreed that a good teacher was all about what the teacher has to offer to his students regardless of his mother tongue.

Returning to the seventh statement, which read: *I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers*, the responses to this statement should really have informed the third research question, which asked whether Saudi RC members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs. From the explicit responses received for this part, the answer to this research question would be that they do not prefer less qualified native speakers of English since the most participants in a single category disagreed with the statement. Although there were 11 participants who said they would hire less qualified NESTs, a large number of participants (N=23) said they would not do so, while the rest (N=22) were not sure.

Disagreement with this statement was a very rational position for the participants to take. However, what those disagreeing participants did in the listening task, which, as previously mentioned, preceded the statements, was not in line with what they said in response to the statement. Clearly, the hiring criteria they said they used when judging applicants' perceived qualification levels had little to do with the applicants' academic qualification or teaching experience. To explain this, the SPSS program was used to measure how the qualification level of the least qualified applicant, the Yellow speaker, was perceived by the only 23 participants who said they did not prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs. It was found that the vast majority of them (N=

14) evaluated the Yellow speaker as being highly qualified by giving him the maximum score, 7 out of 7, as can be seen in table 4-27 below. This gives further support to the previously mentioned argument that the participants are talking about an ideal practice but in reality are doing something different. If academic qualification and teaching experience were as important as the participants explicitly stated they were (as shown in section 4.4.6), the mean score which the 23 opposing participants assigned to the Yellow speaker's perceived qualification level would not be as high as 6.39 out of 7, given that he had the lowest academic qualification and the least teaching experience amongst the applicants.

How qualified is the Yellow Speaker?	Frequency	Percentage
4	1	4.3 %
5	3	13.0 %
6	5	21.7 %
7	14	60.9 %
Total	23	100.0 %

Table 4-27: Perception of the Yellow speaker's qualification level by the 23 opposing participants

Above, the results of this research have been presented and discussed section by section. The following section contains an overall discussion of these findings

4.8 Further Discussion

The aim of this research was to explore the hiring practices of Saudi recruiters. The participants were asked to evaluate the qualification level of five job applicants and their suitability for employment as English language teachers in Saudi higher education institutions. It will be of benefit to the discussion to remind the reader that (as shown in section 4.3.6) the five applicants were ordered - in terms of how qualified they were perceived to be - as follows:

Order of Speakers	Mean Score	Nationality and First Language	Age	Academic Qualifications	Teaching Experience
1. White	6.48	British (English)	38	• BA in English • MA in TESOL from the University College London in 2004	4 years (2 in Egypt)
2. Yellow	6.45	British (English)	33	• BA in English from the University of Leicester in 2004	1 year in UK
3. Blue	4.59	Syrian (Arabic)	34	• BA in Applied Linguistics • MA in TESOL from Sheffield University in 2001	7 years (3 in Dubai)
4. Green	4.57	Egyptian (Arabic)	36	• BA in Linguistics • MA in TESOL from the University of London in 2000	8 years (1 in Qatar)
5. Red	4.04	Indian (Urdu)	35	• BA in English • MA in TESOL from Manchester University in 2003	6 years (2 in Kuwait)

Table 4-28: Order of the five applicants based on their mean scores

Clearly, the study showed that the two native speakers were perceived to be significantly more qualified than the three non-native speakers, even though both categories had very similar application credentials, with the exception of the Yellow speaker who was significantly less qualified than the remainder of the applicants.

Preference for native speakers, as discussed in chapter 2, is not a new phenomenon; in fact, it was to be expected in this study owing to the prevalence of this preference around the globe. The study confirmed that Saudi Arabia is no exception in that the recruiters perceived the highly qualified non-native speaker teachers to be less qualified merely because they are NNESTs. By the same token, the Saudi recruiters perceived the Yellow speaker, who was the least qualified applicant, to be highly qualified (as shown in table 4-28 above). His recording was also the last recording to be played to the participants, so they had heard all the application credentials of the other four before his.

It is indeed unfortunate that the Indian applicant (the Red speaker), who was highly qualified, was perceived to be the least qualified applicant regardless of his sound qualifications. However, if one takes into account the general attitudes of many Saudis towards Asians in general and South Asians in particular, who to a large extent make up the workforce in the Kingdom, especially in manual labour, one can see how these perceptions affect those highly qualified applicants who are applying for very well respected jobs.

The Blue speaker (Syrian) and the Green speaker (Egyptian), who were highly qualified, were placed in the middle: between the charming native speakers and the less convincing Indian speaker. They were Arabs and they represented the two Arab countries from which most non-Saudi teachers come. This could partially explain the participants' acceptance of these two compared to their rejection of the Indian applicant. That is, the participants were probably slightly more tolerant of the Arab speakers because they are familiar and known to them especially in terms of their accents, teaching styles, punctuality etc.

Overall, the allure of native speakers seems to have an enormous effect on the judgments of recruiters, especially those who believe that being a native speaker is an important hiring criterion. To them, it seems, being a native speaker overrides an applicant's shortage or even lack of qualifications. This indicates that the recruiters consider being a native speaker as a qualification by itself. For example, when one of the respondents (C26) was asked why he considers being a native speaker as a very important criterion, his answer was: "of course it is important because they can teach

the language easily because they know all about it." Another (C11) said that he finds being a native speaker "very important because they know more about their language."

However, as stated earlier, being a native speaker of a language does not mean that one knows all about the language and, more importantly, does not guarantee the ability to teach it. One can think of many friends or relatives who are native speakers and yet cannot teach their language to others. Indeed, this ability is not a product of speaking a language from birth but rather a product of training, qualification and experience.

More importantly, it is indeed disappointing and maybe insulting to qualified non-native speaker applicants to find out that they are perceived to be less qualified. To many - if not all - of them, the qualifications they have obtained in many ways represent an investment in their future. Some have paid enormous amounts of money to obtain a degree at a respected university where good training as English teachers is provided. Also, it can be very frustrating and confidence-shattering for NNESTs, who have been very successful in other parts of the world, who have worked hard and accumulated years of teaching experience, to find themselves in a situation where they are perceived to be less than convincing and where their credentials are questioned.

This study also investigated the importance of five hiring criteria that have been well documented and used in the literature: academic qualification, accent, nationality, native speaker and teaching experience. These criteria were placed in order of importance as follows: academic qualification, teaching experience, native speakership, nationality and accent (see section 4.2.1). There is a clear contradiction between what the participants said they viewed as important criteria and what they did in reality. More specifically, they said that academic qualification and teaching experience were the two most important hiring criteria, but when they were judging the five applicants' qualification levels, these two criteria were ignored or overridden by the native speaker criterion, since the Red speaker was in fact much more qualified than the Yellow speaker, who was ultimately perceived to be significantly better qualified than the Red speaker. While the Red speaker was never ranked first or second out of the five applicants (as shown in figure 4-6), the Yellow speaker was ranked first by 39.3% of the participants and second by 42.9% of them.

Prejudice does exist in the hiring practices of Saudi recruiters. Although undeclared, it was certainly evident in this study, especially in the case of the Red speaker, as I have just shown above. Regardless of the TESOL Statement (1991 and 2006) and other published scholarly work, most of the recruiters in this research

consciously or unconsciously discriminated against well qualified EFL teachers simply because they were non-native speakers. One of the less expected declarations made by about a fifth of the participants (19.6%) occurred when they agreed or strongly agreed with the 7th statement that read: "*I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than non-native speakers.*" In addition, there might have been more than this fifth if we consider that 39.3% of the participating recruiters selected 'not sure' as a response to this statement. Out of those, there might have been more recruiters who would have the same preference for native speakers but who chose not to voice their preference for their own reasons.

I would like to draw a quick comparison between practices reported in the literature and those of the Saudi recruiters explored in this research. Medgyes (1992: 343) informally asked some ELT specialists what they would do if they were principals of commercial ELT schools in the UK and were about to employ an EFL teacher. The three possible options were: (a) I would employ only native speakers, even if they were not qualified EFL teachers. (b) I would prefer to employ native-speaking EFL teachers, but if hard pressed I would choose a qualified non-native rather than a native without EFL qualifications. (c) The native/non-native issue would not be a selection criterion (provided the non-native-speaking EFL teacher was a highly proficient speaker of English). What is relevant to my comparison here is the point made by Medgyes (ibid.) when he found that none of the respondents in his survey chose option (a). He describes this as "a reassuring sign that principals who are led by […] the delusion that native speakers are superior to non-native speakers under any terms, are not welcome at distinguished professional gatherings". In comparison, more than two decades later, a fifth of the Saudi recruiters surveyed in this research are still in favour of less qualified NESTs. This shows the extent to which the hiring practices of Saudi recruiters are far from being driven by research-based findings.

The findings, in addition to providing evidence for discrimination against non-native speakers, confirmed that the importance assigned to being a native speaker as a hiring criterion does affect how the participants perceived the qualification levels of applicants. I have shown in this chapter that NNESTs were perceived to be more qualified (more of a realistic judgment) by those who found the native speaker criterion less important, while those who thought the same criterion was important found the NNEST applicants less qualified (see Figure 4-11 for a visual illustration of the difference between the two camps of recruiters).

Therefore, there is an apparent link between how the recruiters perceive the importance of some hiring criteria and the actual hiring practices, which may end up discriminating against well qualified applicants. The NNEST who applies for a teaching job at a Saudi Arabian institution where the recruiters are from the camp that places great importance on the native speaker hiring criterion is an unfortunate applicant. For example, the Red speaker may well be hired to teach English in a department where the recruiters are from the tolerant camp because his application credentials will most likely be realistically acknowledged. Indeed, as shown in figure 4-11, he was given a mean score of 3.75 by the recruiters who found the NES criterion important and a score of 4.67 by those who found the criterion less important.

Moreover, the justifications for placing such importance on being a native speaker were for the most part 'assumed' rather than evidence-based. For example, it was shown in section 4.6 that 39.3% of the recruiters thought that their students would prefer to be taught by NESTs, while 57.1% were not sure and yet many of them favoured native speakers. However, this goes against empirical evidence suggesting that students do not necessarily have a preference for NESTs or NNESTs (Cook, 2000; Al-Omrani, 2008) but rather, many students think that a good teacher means one who is qualified, well trained, experienced and passionate regardless of his mother tongue.

Another form of discrimination in the hiring practices of the Saudi recruiters pertained to the nationalities and accents of applicants. Similar to the perceived importance of the 'native speaker' criterion, importance placed on accent and nationality as hiring criteria was found to have a significant effect on the perception of the applicants' qualification levels. Therefore, well qualified applicants from particular countries or those who have accents (although everybody speaks with an accent of some sort) have limited chances of being employed to teach in Saudi institutions.

Undoubtedly, speaking with an accent is one thing and unintelligibility is something else. The participants did not report any issues associated with the intelligibility of the five applicants, but rather some of them appeared to admire 'native' accents and also wanted the applicants to be of particular nationalities. It appears that these preferences all lead to one thing and one thing only: only native speakers may apply.

Further evidence for discrepancies between what is being reported and the actual hiring practices of the participants comes from interview data (see Appendix C). In particular, a few points warrant a bit more discussion. First, I have shown in section 4.4.1 that academic qualification was the single criterion that achieved a consensus

among all the participants and that it has the most importance in their hiring decisions (its mean score was 5). Indeed, when I asked participant C8 about assigning academic qualification the highest score of 5, he stated that:

> Of course it is very important … it is the first thing we look at.

Although his comment is very sensible and rational, what he actually did was something less rational. That is, when he was asked to order the five applicants in terms of their potential to be employed in his department, this participant assigned the first place to the applicant who held the least qualifications among the five - the Yellow speaker (see appendix B).

Second, as discussed in section 4.4.2, 39.3% of the participants said they consider accent of the applicant an unimportant hiring criterion. This was also confirmed by a seemingly very tolerant recruiter (C14) who stated that he had no issue with any accent and he especially reported that it was his experience that non-native teachers had "clear" accents:

> We do not have any problem with the accents of any applicant … we have always had non-native speakers like Arab teachers whose accents were clearly understood. Our students never complained about them.

Also, he stated that he found the native speaker criterion to be not important and that …

> the success of English teachers does not depend on being native or non-native speakers, but rather on their qualification and teaching experience.

More importantly, he was explicit in rejecting discrimination based on the teacher's nationality, which he said was not important at all.

> We cannot discriminate between different nationalities.

Nonetheless, he still chose the two native speakers as the two most qualified applicants. One expects that a recruiter who shows such open-mindedness towards an issue that is mostly used to discriminate against well-qualified teachers would look carefully at the qualification levels of all the applicants and not be taken in by the allure of native speakers. However, he was among the participants who disagreed with the 7th statement

that said '*I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers'*.

Researcher	I find it interesting that you disagreed with the statement although as you know many recruiters - in different countries - prefer native speakers regardless of their qualifications.
C14	Indeed I disagree … being a native speaker does not guarantee that the teacher will be successful. We only hire good teachers… with good qualifications and experience.

Yet, as mentioned above, during the listening task he ordered the White and Yellow speakers as the first and second most qualified applicants respectively. Furthermore, he repeated the same justification below for selecting the White - as first - and the Yellow - as second - (the latter held the least qualification level and teaching experience of the five applicants):

> His qualification + teaching English experience.

Another example of the discrepancies between reported and actual practices of the participants can be found in the interview with participant C11. When commenting on his disagreement with the 7th statement concerning employing NESTs even if they were less qualified than NNESTs, he argued - just like C14 and C8 - for academic qualification and teaching experience as the most important hiring criteria:

> Only more qualified and experienced English teachers should be recruited.

He further agreed - in response to the 2nd statement - that NNESTs can deal with the learning difficulties of their students better than native speakers:

> I agree because the non-native teachers know the problems of the Arab students learning English.

Despite all of this, he still chose the two native speakers (the White and Yellow speakers) to have the highest potential of employment in his department regardless of the apparent low level of qualification as well as teaching experience of the Yellow speaker.

Participant C26 had a similar contradictory response. He ordered the Yellow speaker, who held the least qualification, to be the applicant with the second highest employment potential although he defended his disagreement with the 7th statement by saying:

> Qualification should come first.

Furthermore, participant C34 provided the following justification for his disagreement with the 7th statement (preferring NESTs even if their qualification level is lower than that of NNESTs):

> Because academic qualification and teaching experience are more important than being a native speaker.

Also, he agreed with the 2nd statement that NNESTs can deal with the learning difficulties of their students better than the native teachers:

> Non-native speaker teachers have been learners of English themselves, so they can appreciate the difficulties their students go through.

However, participant C34 found the Yellow speaker to be the applicant with the highest potential to be employed in his department while the White speaker was assigned the second place. However, when he explained why he selected the first and the second applicants, he argued against his own justification (that academic qualification and teaching experience are more important than NS), by stating that both applicants:

> Were native speakers + had pleasant accents.

After exploring the employment situation in the Saudi context, it is small wonder that one finds an endless series of job advertisements asking for native speakers only. In fact, Selvi (2010) analysed these adverts and found that Saudi Arabia was a major source of them. By and large, these adverts are driven by the perceived importance assigned to the native speaker criterion and the assumption that being a native speaker necessarily means being a better teacher of English. Seidlhofer (1996: 69, cited in Medgyes, 2001) asserts that "there has often been the danger of an automatic

extrapolation from competent speaker to competent teacher based on linguistic grounds alone, without taking into consideration the criteria of cultural, social and pedagogic appropriacy".

In the absence of clear and detailed employment policies from the Saudi government bodies, the situation regarding the employment of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabian higher education institutions is alarming. The very general and broad guidelines published by the Ministry of Higher Education (as shown in section 1.4) regarding the employment of language instructors represent a double-edged sword. That is, they provide great flexibility for those employers who are tolerant regarding the native/non-native speaker issue to select the most appropriate applicants based on their qualifications, teaching experience and other application credentials. At the same time, however, these broad guidelines leave the door open to the less tolerant recruiters' discriminatory practices against well qualified applicants, whether these are based on their native/non-native status, nationalities or accents.

However, educating those in charge of recruiting is the way forward, which will lead towards fair and evidence-based recruiting practices, and this was particularly evident in the findings of this research. Indeed, it was found that those who had participated more frequently in recruiting committees perceived applicants' accents to be of less importance as a hiring criterion than did those who participated less frequently in these committees (see section 4.6.1). Similarly, those recruiters who held MA degrees found applicants' accents to be more important as a hiring criterion than the PhD holders. These two findings suggest that with experience comes more appreciation and the realisation that accents - of native and non-native speakers- should not be a factor that affects the employment of qualified applicants. Indeed accents are, as Kumaravadivelu (2004: 1) puts it, "no more than one's way of speaking, the way one sounds when speaking, the way one uses sound features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation."

As in the case of applicants' accents, there is a need for awareness campaigns that address issues pertaining to native speakership and nationality. Although they claimed to do so already, recruiters need to be made aware that they should place more emphasis on the academic qualifications and teaching experience of applicants. This could, in turn, lead to fair and sensible hiring practices because it may well help them assess more accurately the applicants' real qualification levels and therefore appreciate their potential. This will also make recruiters aware of employment discrimination of which they might be unaware, and help them abandon such practices. After all, it is

unfortunate to see that practices that are based on the notion that native speakers are the ideal teachers of English, a notion introduced in 1960, still remain alive today.

Hopefully, raising this awareness may not be too difficult, given that there was some sort of a consensus found in my data (section 4.7) that both NESTs and NNESTs have similar teaching abilities. In principle, this could be a starting point for such campaigns. In other words, if participants believe that both teacher types are equal in their abilities to teach English, it is then relatively easier to use this point to promote the concept that qualified NNESTs can be very successful teachers in their own right. Therefore, recruiters might have a higher potential for accepting the notion that good teachers are not necessarily native speakers. In turn, this paves the way for judgments that take into account how qualified the applicants are in terms of their credentials, rather than based on who they are.

Finally, it is definitely worth reiterating that language teachers should be hired solely on the basis of their professional virtues, regardless of their language background, their nationalities, or their accents. Indeed, this is what defines fair hiring practices. Furthermore, as shown in the literature, NESTS and NNESTS can be equally good teachers in their own right. Traditionally, it was the dominant view that native speaker teachers make better language models because of their clearer intuitions concerning what is correct or incorrect language usage, while NNESTS can provide better models for learners because they have deeper insights into what is easy or difficult for their students since they were once learners themselves (Medgyes, 2001). However, I have shown in various sections of this thesis (e.g. 4.4.2 and 4.4.4) that metalinguistic awareness is not a trademark of the traditional native speaker and that non-native speakers can also have advantages in terms of linguistic competence. If language teachers must be viewed separately in two divisions, let us divide them into the categories of more qualified vs. less qualified instead of the categories of native vs. non-native teachers.

4.9 Conclusion

The chapter has presented the results obtained from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews; the results were analysed and discussions were also provided after each section. It has shown how important the five hiring criteria were perceived to be by the Saudi recruiters. As in previous research, it was found that being a native speaker is an important hiring criterion that leads to discrimination against well qualified EFL

teachers because they are non-native English speakers. Likewise, the accents and nationalities of the applicants were found to have similar effects on the employment potential of NNESTs. In fact, it was shown that about a fifth of the Saudi recruiters surveyed in this research did not hesitate to say that they would prefer less qualified native speakers over qualified non-native speakers. The chapter also highlighted the responses of the Saudi recruiters to eight statements that elicited their attitudes towards NESTs and NNESTs. Finally, an overall discussion of the findings of this research was provided.

In the following chapter a summary of this thesis is presented by revisiting the three research questions. The implications of the findings of this research, its limitations, and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters an introduction to the current study was first provided, then a review of relevant literature was presented, with the aim of informing the reader about the findings of previous research and also in order to situate this study within the field. Following this, in chapter 3 the research methodology was discussed, providing a rationale for conducting the study, the research questions were presented, and the design of the study and the tools utilised in the research were described. Chapter four contained a presentation and discussion of the results of the data analysis, and concluded with an overall discussion of the findings.

This chapter will present a quick summary of the research findings in addition to providing short answers to the three research questions. After that, the limitations of this study are identified, the practical, methodological and theoretical implications of the research are outlined, and finally some recommendations are made for future research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Interest in issues pertaining to NNESTs in general has been steadily increasing over the past few years. However, research into the employability of NNESTs, in particular, is still in its infancy. The findings of previous research have shown that programme administrators in the United States of America and the United Kingdom have a preference for NESTs over NNESTs and that they consider being a native speaker, to a great extent, to be an important hiring criterion which they use when they are considering applications for employment (Mahboob, 2003; Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008). Issues relating to EFL teachers' employment have been explored only in the context of two Inner Circle countries - the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Therefore, this research project contributes to the existing body of research because it fills an apparent gap in the literature by exploring the hiring practices of employers in the context of an Expanding Circle country, specifically that of Saudi Arabia, where English is a foreign language.

The study explored the important factors that recruiters take into account when they are hiring EFL teachers for Saudi higher education institutions. It also investigated how important they perceive the native speaker criterion to be and whether there is a relationship between the importance accorded to this criterion and the chances of NNESTs being employed. Finally, the study explored the extent to which Saudi Recruiting Committee members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs.

The study utilised a mixed methods research design by including quantitative and qualitative research methods. A total of 56 Saudi RC members responded to a questionnaire, which started with a listening task in which participants were played recordings of five speakers (a qualified NEST, a significantly less qualified NEST, and three qualified NNESTs) who were applying for teaching jobs and listing their credentials. The respondents were asked to evaluate the perceived qualification levels of the five applicants and their suitability for the job on a 7-point scale. After that, the questionnaire asked the participants to evaluate the importance of five hiring criteria (academic qualification, accent, nationality, native English speaker and teaching experience). Only some of the participants agreed to be interviewed. The data were analysed using the SPSS program, version 19.

The first finding of the study pertained to the perceived importance of the hiring criteria used by the Saudi recruiters. The analysis revealed that the participants ordered the five hiring criteria in terms of their perceived importance as follows: (1) academic qualification, (2) teaching experience, (3) native English speaker, (4) nationality and (5) accent (see chapter 4, table 4-15). The participants also reported using additional criteria, including the age of applicants, their EFL teaching experience, and respect for and awareness of the Saudi culture. However, this ‘stated’ order of criteria was not reflected in their actual evaluations of the five applicants. In other words, the participants said that academic qualification and teaching experience were the two most important criteria but they ignored, or did not pay attention to, these criteria when they actually evaluated the applicants. This finding was facilitated by the design of the methodology. That is, the participants were asked to evaluate how qualified they found the five applicants *before* they were asked to evaluate the five hiring criteria. In addition, further evidence for discrepancies between stated beliefs and actual practices was found in the interview data. Some participants said they only hire based on academic qualification and teaching experience of the applicants but ended up contradicting what they stated. For example, participant C26 noted, when he was

commenting on his disagreement with the 7th statement - '*I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers'* - that qualification of the teacher should come first. He, however, perceived the White speaker and Yellow speaker (the applicant who held the least qualifications) to be the two most suitable applicants to teach in his department. It was thus possible to see clearly that what they said they did was quite different from what they actually did.

The second finding of this research was that the perceived importance of the NES criterion had an obvious impact on the non-native EFL teachers' chances of employment. This conforms to the findings of previous research, in which programme administrators who assigned more importance to the NES criterion employed fewer non-native teachers. In this study, the results revealed a significant negative relationship between the importance given to the NES criterion and the perception of the NNEST applicants' qualification levels and therefore of their suitability to teach English in the participants' institutions. In other words, the more importance the administrators assigned to the NES criterion the less qualified and suitable they perceived the NNEST applicants to be. Figure 4-11 clearly illustrates the statistically significant differences between the participants who thought the NES criterion was important and those who thought it was not important in terms of their perception of the five applicants' qualification levels and suitability for the job, especially those of the three NNESTs, i.e., the Red, Blue and Green speakers.

The third finding is comparable in importance to the second finding. It was found that the more importance the respondents attributed to 'nationality' and 'accent' as hiring criteria, the less chance the non-native speaker applicants had of being employed, since they would be perceived to be less qualified. Therefore, those participants who found these two criteria important perceived the NNES applicants as less qualified than did those who found the same two criteria less important, which means that these two hiring criteria affect the chances of non-native speaker applicants being employed as English teachers in Saudi higher education institutions. This difference between the two groups of participants is clearly illustrated in figures 4-9 and 4-10.

The fourth finding was that Saudi recruiters would prefer to employ a less qualified English native speaker teacher than a more qualified NNEST. Indeed, it was found that 19.6% (N=11) of the participants were honest and frank in expressing their preference for the native speakers even if they were not as qualified and experienced as the non-native speakers. The most respondents in a single category said otherwise. That

is, 41.1% (N= 23) said they did not prefer less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs and the remaining 39.3% of the participants (N= 22) chose 'not sure'. As suggested in the previous chapter (section 4.8), it is possible that there was actually a higher percentage than the 19.6% of the participants who preferred less qualified NESTs to more qualified NNESTs. Moreover, the qualitative data gave further support for this finding. That is, even some of those participants who said they do not prefer less qualified native speaker teachers over qualified non-native teachers ended up contradicting what they stated. For example, participant C34 disagreed with preferring less qualified teachers only because they are native speakers by saying that the academic qualification and teaching experience of the teachers are far more important than being a native speaker. Yet, he chose the Yellow speaker - who held the least qualification and teaching experience of the five applicants - as the most suitable applicant for the job.

5.3 Research Questions Revisited

Following the above summary of the findings, in this section the three research questions are revisited in order to provide short and direct answers to them.

5.3.1 First Research Question

The first research question was as follows: *For Saudi Recruiting Committee members and programme administrators, how important are the following criteria: the applicants' academic qualification, accent, nationality, native speakership, and teaching experience? And are there any additional criteria that should be met by applicants in order for them to be hired to teach English in Saudi higher education institutions?* The answer to this question was that the Saudi RC members saw the five hiring criteria presented in the questionnaire as being in the following order of importance: academic qualification, teaching experience, native English speakership, nationality and accent. They added a few other criteria, such as experience in teaching English as a foreign language or in foreign countries, exposure to and respect for other cultures, and the age of applicants.

However, although they said that 'academic qualification' and 'teaching experience' were the most important criteria they used in the hiring of EFL teachers, it was evident (as discussed in chapter 4, section 4.4.6) that these two criteria were overridden by the allure of native speakership. That is, the participants rated the Yellow speaker, a native speaker who held the lowest academic qualification and had the least

teaching experience, significantly more positively than all the three qualified NNESTs. Also, the vast majority of the recruiters (N= 46) ranked him as either the first or the second most qualified applicant of the five.

5.3.2 Second Research Question

The second research question asked: *If the native speaker factor is to be found important, is there a relationship between the importance of this factor and the chances of NNESTs being employed?* The answer to this question is a definite 'yes'. A statistically significant relationship was found between the importance given by the participants to the 'native English speaker' criterion and their perceptions of the five applicants' qualification levels and therefore their suitability for the job.

Indeed, the participants evaluated the second native English speaker, the Yellow speaker, as highly qualified and in particular, more qualified than all of the three non-native speaker applicants (the Red, Blue and Green Speakers). It should be remembered that all of the applicants held noticeably higher qualifications than the Yellow speaker (see chapter 4, table 4-1), yet he was perceived to be more qualified than the three NNESTs. For example, a non-native English speaker teacher with 7 years' teaching experience, three of which were in Dubai, which has a culture similar to that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and a Master's degree in TESOL was perceived to be less qualified than the Yellow speaker (NEST) who held a Bachelor degree in English and had one year's experience of teaching in the United Kingdom.

Not only was the 'NES' criterion found to affect the chances of NNESTs being employed, but also 'nationality' and 'accent' were found to have similar effects. As discussed in the previous chapter (sections 4.5.2 and 4.5.3), those who assigned these two hiring criteria more importance perceived the three highly qualified non-native English speaker applicants (the Red, Blue and Green speakers) to be significantly less qualified in comparison to those who attributed less importance to the same two criteria. Thus, a qualified NNEST who applies for a job to teach English in a Saudi institution where the person responsible for recruiting teachers believes that the nationality and accent of teachers are important hiring criteria will suffer and have less chance of being employed there.

5.3.3 Third Research Question

This section answers the last research question, which asked: *To what extent do Saudi Recruiting Committee members prefer less qualified NESTs over more qualified NNESTs?* To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the responses of the

participants to the 7th statement: '*I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers'*. As discussed in the previous chapter (section 4.7), the results showed that the most participants in a single category (41.1%, N= 23) said they did not prefer less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs, 19.6% (N=11) of them frankly stated that they did, and the remaining 39.3% of the participants (N= 22) chose 'not sure'. However, the hesitation expressed by those who chose 'not sure' gives an indication that some of them were cautious about expressing and/or hiding their preference for less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs. Moreover, the mean score (average of the evaluations) of the Yellow speaker's qualification level, as perceived by the 23 participants who said they did not prefer less qualified NESTs over NNESTs, was 6.39 out of 7 - an extremely high score. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that those 23 participants would be happy to employ the Yellow speaker, since they were not paying any attention to his actual qualifications to teach English as a foreign language. It is reasonable, then, to assume that more than the 11 'frank' participants would employ less qualified NESTs simply because they are native speakers of English, regardless of whether they were the most qualified applicants or not. Therefore, taking into account the 'cautious' 39.3%, it is fairly safe to answer the third research question by saying that many Saudi recruiters would prefer to employ less qualified native speakers of English than more qualified non-native English speakers to teach English in Saudi higher education institutions.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This section of the chapter highlights the limitations of the current study. The main limitation was the number of participants involved in the qualitative aspect of the study. Since the study purposefully selected the participants (via a snowball sampling technique), the total number of recruiters who took part was a respectable number, given that all of them had to have worked as members of recruiting committees or to have been involved in the process of recruiting EFL teachers. However, as described in chapter 3 (section 3.3.6), although all 56 participants were asked to do so, only eight of them agreed to be interviewed.

Since only eight participants agreed to take part in the semi-structured interviews, it was not possible to be sure how clearly the 'nationality' hiring criterion was understood by all the remaining participants who completed the questionnaire but were not interviewed. This is another limitation, since it was found that some participants

confused or did not clearly differentiate between the 'nationality' and 'native speaker' hiring criteria (see chapter 4, section 4.4.4).

Also, many participants did not respond to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, as in providing justifications for certain choices and answers. This minimum amount of cooperation might be partially explained by the fact that some of the recruiting committee members had suspicions that they were being tested, despite my continuous assurances that this research was designed solely with the aim of obtaining a better understanding of the employment situation in Saudi higher education institutions. On one occasion, for example, one of the recruiters asked me after he had finished filling in the questionnaire, 'Do you think I am a good recruiter?' to which I responded that this type of assessment was never and in no way the aim of this project and that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. There is no doubt that more light might have been shed on the employment issue if a larger sample had been obtained for the interviews.

Another limitation of the study was that the target population was limited to the Saudi public higher education institutions. This meant that private universities and colleges were not included in the sample. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalised to those private institutions. A further study should include a representative sample from these private institutions in order to see if there are any differences between these and the public institutions.

The gender of the participants represents another limitation of the current study. It was acknowledged in chapter 3 (section 3.5) of this research that only male participants were to be investigated because female EFL teachers are recruited by (or with the help of) female staff. Furthermore, it was not possible to gather data from female participants during the data collection because a female research assistant would have been needed to avoid any problems pertaining to male/female mixing in the religiously conservative Kingdom. Thus, a further study is required to investigate the context of female EFL teachers' recruitment and to ascertain how similar or different it is from the recruitment of their male counterparts. Therefore, the findings of this research apply only to male members of Saudi Recruitment Committee (RC).

Another limitation of the study is related to the participants' backgrounds in the RCs. The bio-data section of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) only gathered information on the number of times the participants had taken part in these committees. Ideally, this section should also have gathered information on whether the participants had received professional training or acquired qualifications to do such a critically

important job. Alternatively, this information could have been gathered during the interviews. This might have helped explain the variation within the participants' answers and their evaluations of the five applicants.

5.5 Implications

Although, as discussed above, the current study has its shortcomings, several of the findings were significant and therefore have methodological, theoretical and practical implications for recruiters. These are presented below.

5.5.1 Methodological Implications

It was discussed in the second chapter of this thesis that only a few studies (Mahboob, 2003; Clark and Paran, 2007; Helal, 2008) have investigated the employment of NNESTs and the hiring criteria used by programme administrators. All of these studies relied on quantitative data, i.e., questionnaires, to elicit information on the attitudes and practices of programme administrators. Methodologically, this study differs from the previous studies in that it also included a listening task, in which the participants were played five recordings of two native speaker and three non-native speaker teachers applying for teaching jobs. The listening task helped avoid, to a large extent, the receiving of 'idealist' responses from the participants because they were prompted by the recordings to react more naturally to the five speakers. That is, they evaluated the five speakers without external stimuli, i.e., before they were aware that they would also be asked to evaluate the five hiring criteria. Had the responses been collected via the questionnaire only, their evaluations would have been taken at face value; i.e., it would have been mistakenly assumed that the participants viewed academic qualification and teaching experience as the two most important criteria they use when evaluating job applications. As discussed earlier, these two particular criteria were not found to be as important when the applicant was a native speaker of English. Therefore, the listening task helped a great deal in obtaining more realistic results.

Another methodological implication of this study lies in the inclusion of a qualitative instrument in collecting data. The semi-structured interviews indeed provided many useful insights that might not have been obtained by using the questionnaire alone. For example, the overlap between the perception of 'native speaker' and 'nationality' as expressed by some participants could not have been detected by relying on quantitative methods only.

Therefore, the triangulation of research methods in this study not only made possible the cross-examination of the data but also helped in the interpretation of the data. This highlights the need to include more than one method of data collection which will, in turn, contribute greatly towards more valid and more generalisable results.

5.5.2 Practical Implications for Programme Administrators

The findings of this study, which is very practical in nature, have several implications for programme administrators and members of RCs in Saudi Arabian higher education institutions. One of the main findings of this study was that the more importance programme administrators assigned to the 'native English speaker' criterion, the less chance NNESTs had of being employed, because they were perceived to be less qualified and therefore less suitable for teaching jobs. Also, it was shown that on many occasions, when evaluating the applicants, the programme administrators paid little attention to their academic qualifications and teaching experience: criteria which were described by the participants themselves as being the two most important criteria they used when hiring EFL teachers. Thus, such an important matter should be brought to the attention of programme administrators or even the educational bodies responsible for these committees, such as the deans of colleges or rectors of universities, to raise awareness of this vitally important issue. This study has shown that less informed hiring decisions which affect well qualified EFL teachers can easily be made, simply because of the appeal of native speakers of English to Saudi RC members.

Similarly, the importance assigned by programme administrators to the nationality and accent of the applicant was found to have similar effects on the chances of NNESTs being employed in Saudi higher education institutions. Raising the awareness of those in charge of recruitment about such an important issue could help towards the achievement of fairer hiring practices, where decisions are made on the basis of the professional attributes of the applicants.

The findings of this study call for an overarching policy that includes details of the practices and procedures to be followed in the process of recruiting EFL teachers. Such a policy is needed to eliminate or at least reduce the current discrimination against well qualified EFL teachers by reminding, helping and encouraging recruiters to make their hiring decisions on the basis of teachers' qualifications, training and experience, and to avoid making such decisions based on their status as native or non-native speakers. As mentioned in chapter 1 (section 1.4), the existing official policy of the Ministry of Higher Education on the recruitment of EFL teachers is flexible about

recruiting standards. Until a more detailed policy is established, this existing policy will be helpful only if we educate and inform the recruiters to prioritise qualification and experience over native speakership, nationality and accent. This, in turn, will contribute towards the making of wise and informed decisions that may very well lead to fairer recruiting practices.

Moreover, this new policy should rely on and promote the findings of empirical research such the work of Cook (2000) and Al-Omrani (2008), which showed that students do not have a clear preference for native speaker teachers but rather that they find unique attributes in non-native as well as in native speaker teachers. Having both NESTs and NNESTs in a programme has been deemed to be necessary by scholars such as Braine (1999) and Kamhi-Stein (2004), and even to be indispensable in contexts where they could collaborate and use their skills and competencies to the fullest. This balance between NESTs and NNESTs was also recommended by Al-Jarf (2008) as offering the best staffing arrangement for Saudi English departments. It is also suggested by Medgyes (1996: 42) who argues that the ideal language institution is the one which has a "good balance of NESTs and non-NESTs, who complement each other in their strengths and weaknesses."

The findings of this research also show that the accents of the teachers were assigned the least importance as a hiring criterion. The focus of the programme administrators should be on intelligibility rather than on the accents themselves. As discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.4.2), everybody, including native and non-native speaker teachers, speaks with an accent. Setting the target as being to find an intelligible teacher (on the three levels discussed in section 2.7.1 of this thesis) is more logical and attainable than attempting to find a teacher with no accent.

TESOL, BAAL and all the other similar professional organisations should continue to advocate fair policies that do not discriminate against well qualified NNESTs and that promote the professional virtues of English teachers regardless of their native/non-native status. Training courses aimed specifically at recruiters of EFL teachers should be at the heart of these organisations' efforts to overcome discrimination in the field of English language teaching.

Also, it was shown that more financial flexibility is available to at least some of the universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This makes it is relatively easier for these institutions to recruit and attract highly qualified applicants regardless of their status (NESTs or NNESTs). This could give the Kingdom an advantage in the

competition of recruiting excellent teachers from various parts of the world since such financial flexibility is probably not available to many countries.

5.5.3 Theoretical Implications

As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, over three decades ago the paradigm of World Englishes was introduced to promote multiculturalism, diversity and multilingualism in order to empower other 'non-standard' varieties of the English language, which in turn would empower their speakers as legitimate users and teachers. Unfortunately, such attempts have been far from successful in the context of Saudi Arabia, and maybe of other Arab countries, where NNESTs are still perceived to a great extent to be - as Mahboob et al. (2004) put it - children of a lesser English. In the current research the discrimination against NNESTs was shown to be multifaceted, in that it was based on the teacher's status as a native/non-native speaker, his nationality and his accent. The multifaceted nature of discrimination in the hiring practices of recruiters in ELT reinforces an existing asymmetry in the perceived credibility and qualification of NESTs and NNESTs. These perceptions lead to ungrounded beliefs that the teaching of English is a birthright of native speakers of English who are equipped with a genetically endowed capacity to teach the language, whereas non-native speakers are believed only to be deficient imitators of the language.

The current study can be viewed as a test or a scrutinising tool for the presence and impact of the World Englishes paradigm; it has shown that the work of WE is far from being completed and that Phillipson's (1992) 'native speaker fallacy' still exists. Indeed, the results of this study suggest that the WE paradigm, which is viewed as a liberation movement, needs to pay attention to dangers coming from inside, since many non-native speaker recruiters were discriminating against their fellow non-native speaker teachers. The work and developments of World Englishes are paid no or little attention by Saudi employers, and it seems that they do not even care about them. A shocking fact that confronted me is that quite a large number of the respondents openly stated that they would hire a less qualified native speaker because of his status as a native speaker. Clearly, the research into World Englishes needs to be extended into this area in order to explore why non-native employers would discriminate against qualified non-native teachers. Also, education is definitely needed to show employers that English is no longer a unitary language and that the new Englishes have their own identities which are recognised in national, economic and cultural contexts. However, the findings from the Saudi context in this study cast doubt on the notion that English

has no owners, at least from the perspective of the majority of Saudi recruiters, who seem to believe that they know who the owners are: native English speakers.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Research

I acknowledge here that the following recommendations might not suit all contexts at all times. However, they could provide valuable insights for researchers interested in NNEST issues, as well as for people involved in the recruitment of EFL teachers.

Since to the best of my knowledge this study is the first to examine EFL teachers' employment in a non-English speaking country, more studies of this type are definitely needed to explore the subject in different countries, especially those in the Arabian Gulf which have a similar culture, language and traditions to Saudi Arabia. Such studies will allow for more comparisons to be made and will definitely enrich the field of NNEST issues, especially that of employability, where research is still in its infancy. Moreover, it would be very interesting to investigate the attitudes of Saudi recruiters to mock applicants from countries of the Expanding Circle (different European speakers of English), countries of the Outer Circle (e.g. the Philippines, Mauritius), and countries of the Inner Circle (e.g. US, UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand).

In addition, the current study investigated Saudi public higher education institutions only. This calls for further studies that consider the employment of EFL teachers in the private sector. In Saudi Arabia, the number of private universities, colleges and language teaching centres is increasing and therefore it is important to replicate the study in these private institutions to see how they compare with the findings of the current study.

Studies that consider female EFL teachers' employment in Saudi Arabia are also needed. Since the current study only took into account the employment of EFL male teachers, the process of employing female teachers is definitely worth investigating.

All of these suggested studies should avoid relying solely on quantitative methods for data collection. The qualitative data as well as the listening task in this research have provided invaluable information that could not have been obtained by questionnaires only. It can be imagined how much richer the data would have been if there had been more than the eight participants who agreed to be interviewed.

Appendices

Newcastle University

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Dear participant,

My name is Oudah Alenazi. I am a postgraduate student in linguistics at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom. I am currently doing a research project to complete my PhD in linguistics. In this study, I focus on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia.

Your participation is very important to the success of this research project. You will be asked to listen to five job applicants who are seeking EFL employment in your English department. After listening to the applicants, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that asks some demographic questions as well as questions about the recordings you just heard. Finally, you will be asked to sit through a short interview to discuss some of the answers you provide.

I would like to assure you that all your responses will be confidential and anonymous. Your participation in the survey is absolutely voluntary. The people who will have access to the data will be myself, the researcher, and my supervisors: Dr. Peter Sercombe and Professor. Maggie Tallerman. The data will be kept safe in an archive during the research period. All data will be destroyed immediately after the completion of my PhD thesis.

If you agree to take part in this research, please sign the box below. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me, Oudah Alenazi, 25 Ascot Walk, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE3 2UF, United Kingdom or via email: oudah.alenazi@ncl.ac.uk.

Thank you for your precious collaboration and assistance in this research.

Oudah Alenazi

Newcastle University

Part One: Administrative and Demographic Information:

A. **Name:** (optional)

....

B. **Current College/University:**

....

C. **Last Level of Qualification:**

1) Bachelor Degree
2) Master of Arts
3) PhD

D. **Where did you obtain your highest degree from?**

1) United States
2) United Kingdom
3) Australia
4) Elsewhere. Please specify

....

E. **Age Group:**

1) 30-40
2) 41-50
3) 51-60
4) Over 60

F. **How long have you been working in education?**

1) 1-5 years
2) 6-10 years
3) 11-15 years
4) 16 and over

G. **How many times have you been part of Recruiting Committees from abroad?**

1) Fewer than 3 times
2) 3-6 times
3) 7-10 times
4) 11 and more

Newcastle University

Part Two: Evaluating the Applicants Individually:

Please listen to the following five speakers who are applying for a teaching post in your department. Each applicant is briefly listing his qualifications and reasons why they think they should be hired. Please evaluate each of the five speakers by ticking one box for each statement. You may listen to every speaker again if you wish.

Red Speaker:

1. Do you think that this speaker is a:

a) native speaker of English	b) Non-Native speaker of English	c) Not Sure

2. In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the following scale to answer.

Unqualified ← 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 → Highly Qualified

3. Can you guess the nationality of the speaker?

....

Newcastle University

Blue Speaker:

1. Do you think that this speaker is a:

a) native speaker of English	b) Non-Native speaker of English	c) Not Sure

2. In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the following scale to answer.

Unqualified ← 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 → Highly Qualified

3. Can you guess the nationality of the speaker?

....

Newcastle University

White Speaker:

1. Do you think that this speaker is a:

a) native speaker of English	b) Non-Native speaker of English	c) Not Sure

2. In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the following scale to answer.

Unqualified ← 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 → Highly Qualified

3. Can you guess the nationality of the speaker?

....

Newcastle University

Green Speaker:

1. Do you think that this speaker is a:

a) native speaker of English	b) Non-Native speaker of English	c) Not Sure

2. In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the following scale to answer.

Unqualified ← 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 → Highly Qualified

3. Can you guess the nationality of the speaker?

……

Newcastle University

Yellow Speaker:

1. Do you think that this speaker is a:

a) native speaker of English	b) Non-Native speaker of English	c) Not Sure

2. In your opinion, how qualified is this applicant? Please circle a number from 1 to 7 on the following scale to answer.

Unqualified ← 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 → Highly Qualified

3. Can you guess the nationality of the speaker?

....

Newcastle University

<u>Part Three: Ordering the Five Applicants in Terms of their Overall Employability Potential:</u>

Please order the five applicants in terms of their potential employment in your department or college by ranking them from 1-5. For example, the speaker with the highest employability potential will be given number 1 and the speaker with the least employability potential will be given number 5. The speaker who has no chance of being employed (or is not relevant to this post) will get X. You may listen to the five applicants again if you like.

	1	2	3	4	5	X
Red Speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Blue Speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
White Speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Green Speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Yellow Speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any reasons for your selection of the 1st?
....
....

Any reasons for your selection of the 2nd ?
....
....

Newcastle University

Part Four: Administrative and General Questions

1. **How important do you consider the following criteria when hiring English language instructors? Please check one box for each criterion according to the scale below.**

5= Very Important, 4= Moderately Important, 3= Somewhat Important, 2= Relatively Unimportant, 1= Not important at all, X= Not applicable

Criterion	X	1	2	3	4	5
a. Academic qualification	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Accent of the teacher	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Nationality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Native English speaker	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Teaching experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. **What other criteria do you use in your recruitment of English language instructors? Please specify below**
....
....
....

Newcastle University

3. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please respond by ticking only one box for each statement.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Native and non-native speakers may have the same teaching abilities. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Non-native speakers can understand and deal with the learning difficulties of my students better than native speakers. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I prefer non-native speakers over native speakers to teach in my department. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. I prefer native speakers over non-native speakers to teach in my department. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
e. If I could, I would employ English native speakers only *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. I usually employ non-native speakers because native speakers are hard to attract *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. I prefer to employ native speakers to teach in my department even if their qualification level is lower than that of non-native speakers. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. The students in my department prefer to be taught by English native speakers. *Comment:*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your cooperation
Oudah Alenazi

Appendix B: Transcript for Stimulus Providers

Recordings available at: www.oudah.webs.com

Red Speaker

- Hello. I would like to apply for a teaching job in your English Department.
- My undergraduate degree was in English and I have obtained my MA degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the University of Manchester in 2003.
- I am 35 years old and I have been teaching English for about 6 years two of which in Kuwait.

Blue Speaker

- Hi. I am interested in applying for a job to teach English in your department.
- I am 34 years old and I have taught English for 7 years including 3 years in Dubai.
- My undergraduate degree is in Applied Linguistics and I obtained an MA in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the University of Sheffield in 2001.

White Speaker

- Hi. I would like to apply for a job to teach English in your department.
- I am 38 years old and I have taught English for 3 years including 1 year in Egypt.
- My undergraduate degree is in Linguistics and I have a diploma in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from University of Exeter in 2004.

Green Speaker

- Hello, I would like to submit an application for a teaching job in your English Department.
- I finished my MA in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from the University of London in 2000 and my undergraduate degree was also in English.
- I am 36 years old and I have been teaching English for 8 years one of which was in Qatar.

Yellow Speaker

- Hello. I am interested in applying for a job to teach English in your department.
- I am 33 years old and I have an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Leicester in 2004. I have taught English for a year in Newcastle, the United Kingdom.

Appendix C: Summary of Interviews

Question						
Interviewee	**Comments on Hiring Criteria**	**Why ordered the first two applicants**	**Comments on Statement 2: NNESTs can deal with students' learning difficulties better than NESTs**	**Comments on Statement 4: Preferring NESTs over NNESTs**	**Comments on Statement 6: Employing NNESTs because NESTs are hard to attract**	**Comments on Statement 7: Prefer less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs**
C8	• **Accent**: NNESTs must have native-like accents. • **NES**: they know how to deal with students problems • **Nationality**: very important: we prefer American, British, Canadians, and Australians.	**(Chose Yellow, White)** • Native speakers, qualification suitable for the English major	• Disagree because NESTs are better than NNESTs in dealing with students' learning problems	• We prefer NESTs	• Disagree because we can offer them more benefits	• Agree: because teaching English is not difficult anyway and NESTs can be a bonus.
C11	• **Accent**: Accent is important because we once had a teacher who had a very difficult accent. Not all NNESTs are like this but one should be careful when he recruits. • **NES**: very important because they know more about their language. • **Nationality**: important because students like Americans because they	**(Chose White, Yellow)** • Good qualification levels, and good accents	• Agree: they know problems of Arabs learning English	• They are good examples of accents especially for novice students.	• It depends on the country I want to recruit from	• Disagree: more qualified and experienced teachers only should be recruited

	are friendly					
C14	• **Accent:** Standard accents are better. I like the American accent but anyway no problems. NNESTs accents are clear (got Arabs) • **NES:** Success of teachers does not depend on being native or not but on qualification and experience. • **Nationality:** not important at all, we cannot discriminate between different nationalities.	**(Chose White, Yellow)** • According to their qualification and teaching experience	• Disagree because personal experience showed that NESTs are better in doing so and pushing students to work harder	• If they are qualified and respect our culture	• Agree: Financial issues and infrastructure services play a major role in that	• Disagree: Being a native speaker does not guarantee a good teacher and we only hire good teachers
C26	• **Accent**: Accents can attract students especially American accents because the students like Hollywood movies. • **NES**: of course it is important because they can teach the language easily because they know all about it. • **Nationality:** it is important	**(Chose White, Yellow)** • Native speakers • Teaching experience	• This is true if students and teachers share the same culture and have been through the same educational system. They know the flaws of the system and can work accordingly	• Agree: People want to hear native speakers • There is a high potential that they would do their job effectively (maybe due to their work culture)	• Agree: The cost of recruiting NESTs is high and this can cause some institutions to make compromises	• Disagree: qualification should come first
C29	• **Accent**: Accents are very important because they teach students good pronunciation indirectly. • **NES**: they have no problem in all uses of English • **Nationality**: important to	**(Chose Yellow, White)** • Graduates of good schools • Teaching experience	• Not sure	• It is better to hire a speaker of English than a learner	• Agree: Some NESTs don't like to work in Saudi	• Not Sure

	avoid rejection by students who might not like some nationalities such as Bangladeshis					
C34	• **Accent:** Accents are important because they are good examples of the correct pronunciation. • **NES:** they often come from good schools and different thinking styles. • **Nationality:** students like some nationalities and do not prefer certain ones.	**(Chose Yellow, White)** • Native speakers • Pleasant accents	• Agree: they have been learners themselves so they can appreciate the difficulties of students	• Agree: NESTs can be a model students can aspire to	• Agree especially they can get higher salaries in the neighbouring countries	• Disagree: qualification and experience are more important than being a native speaker
C37	• **Accent:** Accents are important because they allow smooth and easy understanding. • **NES:** it is their language. • **Nationality:** it is good to have Americans or British to give a balance.	**(Chose White, Yellow)** • Native speakers • Qualified and experienced teachers	• Disagree: NESTs have dealt with many learners also	• They make a difference in teaching • An example of correct pronunciation • They know all uses of language	• Not Sure	• Not sure
C48	• **Accent:** Nothing can be done about NNESTs' accents: It is not their 1st language and therefore they are expected to have foreign accents. We should not judge NNESTs based on their accents but on their qualification, training, enthusiasm, and student appreciation. • **NES:** Natives are not	**(Chose Blue, White)** • Experienced teachers of English in Arab countries • Well –qualified	• Strongly agree: they can adapt properly to students' abilities and accommodate their expectations	• Disagree with no comment	• Disagree: we do not have problems recruiting them	• Disagree: qualification should always come first

	necessarily good teachers. I’ve seen good and also horrible native English teachers, so it is not important at all. • **Nationality:** Not important really because it’s all about training not nationality.					

Appendix D: Consent Forms

Oudah Alenazi
25 Ascot Walk
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 2UF, United Kingdom
oudah.alenazi@ncl.ac.uk.

Dear participant,

My name is Oudah Alenazi. I am a postgraduate student in linguistics at Newcastle University in the United Kingdom. I am currently doing a research project to complete my PhD in linguistics. In this study, I focus on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in the Saudi Higher Education institutions.

Although it is very important to the success of this research project, your participation in the survey is absolutely voluntary and you can withdraw at any point without giving any explanation. The people who will have access to the data will be myself, the researcher, and my supervisors: Dr. Peter Sercombe and Professor. Maggie Tallerman. I would like to assure you that all your responses and identity will remain confidential and anonymous at all times. The data will be kept safe in an archive during the research period.

You will be asked to listen to five job applicants who are seeking EFL employment in your English department. After listening to the applicants, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that asks some demographic questions as well as questions about the recordings you just heard. Finally, you will be asked to sit a short interview to discuss some of the answers you provide.

If you agree to take part in this research project, please sign the two consent forms on the next page. One of them is for you to keep and the other will go along the questionnaire. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me on my address above.

Thank you for your collaboration and assistance in this research.

Oudah Alenazi

Oudah Alenazi
25 Ascot Walk
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 2UF, United Kingdom
oudah.alenazi@ncl.ac.uk

Consent Form

(Researcher's Copy)

The purpose of this questionnaire and interview is to obtain your opinion and beliefs on the questions asked which pertain to teaching English in the Saudi Higher Education institutions. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and you can withdraw at any point without giving any explanation. Your responses and identity will remain confidential and anonymous at all times. The data will be kept safe in an archive during the research period.

AGREEMENT

I agree to participate in this questionnaire and interview and that the data I provide may be:

1. Held in Newcastle University archives.
2. Made available to bona fide researchers.
3. May be quoted in published work or used in public performance in full or in part.
4. Used for teaching purposes.

Signature of Researcher: ______________________________

Signature of Participant:______________________________

Date: ______________________________

Oudah Alenazi
25 Ascot Walk
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 2UF, United Kingdom
oudah.alenazi@ncl.ac.uk

Consent Form

(Participant's Copy)

The purpose of this questionnaire and interview is to obtain your opinion and beliefs on the questions asked which pertain to teaching English in the Saudi Higher Education institutions. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and you can withdraw at any point without giving any explanation. Your responses and identity will remain confidential and anonymous at all times. The data will be kept safe in an archive during the research period.

AGREEMENT

I agree to participate in this questionnaire and interview and that the data I provide may be:

1. Held in Newcastle University archives.
2. Made available to bona fide researchers.
3. May be quoted in published work or used in public performance in full or in part.
4. Used for teaching purposes.

Signature of Researcher: ______________________________

Signature of Participant:______________________________

Date: ______________________________

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عزيزي المشارك في هذه الاستبانة ... ،

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ...

أحب في البداية أن أقدم لك تعريفا بنفسي. أنا عودة العنزي وأدرس في جامعة نيوكاسل بالمملكة المتحدة في مرحلة الدكتوراة في تخصص اللغويات. أعكف حاليا على إعداد بحث كجزء من الدرجة العلمية التي أدرسها. يتمحور البحث حول تدريس اللغة الأنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعات المملكة العربية السعودية.

لمشاركتك في هذا البحث أهمية بالغة في نجاحه، وسوف يكون دورك هو الاستماع لتسجيل صوتي لعدد من المتقدمين للتوظيف كمعلمي لغة انجليزية في الجامعة. وبعد انتهائك من الاستماع لهم، سيطلب منك أن تقوم بتعبئة استبانة قصيرة حول ما سمعته وحول بعض البيانات الديموغرافية. ثم يتلو ذلك مقابلة قصيرة للتعرف على إجاباتك ومناقشتها بشكل أوسع.

للمعلومية فإن هذه البيانات والمعلومات التي ستقوم بالإدلاء بها ستحظى بالسرية التامة، وأن مشاركتك فيها اختيارية بحتة ويمكنك الانسحاب من المشاركة في أي وقت دون إبداء الأسباب. وسوف لن يصل للمعلومات سوى أنا والمشرفين على بحثي وهم الدكتور بيتر سيركوم والبروفسورة ماجي تالرمان. وسوف يتم حفظ البيانات في مكان آمن خلال فترة البحث.

أرجو منك التكرم بتوقيع نسختك ونسختي من النموذج في الصفحة التالية حال موافقتك المشاركة، وإن كان لديك أي تساؤل أو أردت معلومات أكثر أرجو عدم التردد في مراسلتي على البريد الالكتروني أو على عنواني وهو. oudah,alenazi@ncl.ac.uk

شكرا لتعاونك معي للقيام بهذا البحث

عوده العنزي

Oudah Alenazi
25 Ascot Walk
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 2UF, United Kingdom
oudah.alenazi@ncl.ac.uk

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نموذج الموافقة على المشاركة في البحث

(نسخة الباحث)

الهدف من مشاركتك في هذا البحث هو معرفة رأيك وماتعتقده بخصوص موضوع البحث وهو تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في التعليم العالي في المملكة العربية السعودية. تعد مشاركتك في هذا البحث اختيارية بحتة ولك الحق في الانسحاب في أي وقت دون إبداء الأسباب. سيتم التعامل مع هويتك كمشارك وإجاباتك دائما بسرية تامة، وسوف يتم حفظ البيانات المجمعة في مكان آمن طوال مدة البحث.

إقرار بالموافقة على المشاركة في البحث

أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث وكذلك على النقاط التالية:

1. قد يتم حفظ البيانات في أرشيف جامعة نيوكاسل.
2. قد يتم توفير البيانات للباحثين الأخرين.
3. قد يتم الاقتباس جزئيا أو كليا من البيانات في أعمال منشورة.
4. قد يتم استخدام البيانات لأغراض تعليمية.

توقيع الباحث: ______________________________

توقيع المشارك: ______________________________

التاريخ: ______________________________

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نموذج الموافقة على المشاركة في البحث

(نسخة المشارك)

الهدف من مشاركتك في هذا البحث هو معرفة رأيك وماتعتقده بخصوص موضوع البحث وهو تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في التعليم العالي في المملكة العربية السعودية. تعد مشاركتك في هذا البحث اختيارية بحتة ولك الحق في الانسحاب في أي وقت دون إبداء الأسباب. سيتم التعامل مع هويتك كمشارك وإجاباتك دائما بسرية تامة، وسوف يتم حفظ البيانات المجمعة في مكان آمن طوال مدة البحث.

إقرار بالموافقة على المشاركة في البحث

أوافق على المشاركة في هذا البحث وكذلك على النقاط التالية:

1. قد يتم حفظ البيانات في أرشيف جامعة نيوكاسل.
2. قد يتم توفير البيانات للباحثين الأخرين.
3. قد يتم الاقتباس جزئيا أو كليا من البيانات في أعمال منشورة.
4. قد يتم استخدام البيانات لأغراض تعليمية.

توقيع الباحث: ________________________________

توقيع المشارك: ________________________________

التاريخ: ________________________________

Appendix E: Interviews General Questions

1- Comment on the perception of qualification levels.
2- Why do they find these criteria important?
3- Comments on Statement 2: NNESTs can deal with students' learning difficulties better than NESTs Comments on Statement 4: Preferring NESTs over NNESTs
4- Comments on Statement 6: Employing NNESTs because NESTs are hard to attract
5- Comments on Statement 7: Prefer less qualified NESTs over qualified NNESTs

Appendix F: Cross-tabulations of the Hiring Criteria with the Biodata of the Respondents

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ACCNT * Qualification	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
ACCNT * Degree Country	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
ACCNT * Age	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
ACCNT * In Education	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
ACCNT * Part of Committees	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATI * Qualification	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATI * Degree Country	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATI * Age	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATI * In Education	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATI * Part of Committees	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATIV * Qualification	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATIV * Degree Country	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATIV * Age	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATIV * In Education	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%
NATIV * Part of Committees	56	100.0%	0	.0%	56	100.0%

ACCNT * Qualification

Crosstab

			Qualification		Total
			MA	PhD	
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	7	17	24
		% within ACCNT	29.2%	70.8%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	63.6%	37.8%	42.9%
	Not Sure	Count	1	9	10
		% within ACCNT	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	9.1%	20.0%	17.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	3	19	22
		% within ACCNT	13.6%	86.4%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	27.3%	42.2%	39.3%
Total		Count	11	45	56
		% within ACCNT	19.6%	80.4%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

ACCNT * Degree Country

Crosstab

			Degree Country		Total
			USA	UK	
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	17	7	24
		% within ACCNT	70.8%	29.2%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	50.0%	31.8%	42.9%
	Not Sure	Count	5	5	10
		% within ACCNT	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	14.7%	22.7%	17.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	12	10	22
		% within ACCNT	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	35.3%	45.5%	39.3%
Total		Count	34	22	56
		% within ACCNT	60.7%	39.3%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

ACCNT * Age

Crosstab

			Age			Total
			30-40	41-50	51-60	
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	8	9	7	24
		% within ACCNT	33.3%	37.5%	29.2%	100.0%
		% within Age	38.1%	34.6%	77.8%	42.9%
	Not Sure	Count	2	7	1	10
		% within ACCNT	20.0%	70.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within Age	9.5%	26.9%	11.1%	17.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	11	10	1	22
		% within ACCNT	50.0%	45.5%	4.5%	100.0%
		% within Age	52.4%	38.5%	11.1%	39.3%
Total		Count	21	26	9	56
		% within ACCNT	37.5%	46.4%	16.1%	100.0%
		% within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

ACCNT * In Education

Crosstab

			In Education		
			1-5	6-10	11-15
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	3	8	10
		% within ACCNT	12.5%	33.3%	41.7%
		% within In Education	60.0%	26.7%	55.6%
	Not Sure	Count	1	6	3
		% within ACCNT	10.0%	60.0%	30.0%
		% within In Education	20.0%	20.0%	16.7%
	Generally Not Important	Count	1	16	5
		% within ACCNT	4.5%	72.7%	22.7%
		% within In Education	20.0%	53.3%	27.8%
Total		Count	5	30	18
		% within ACCNT	8.9%	53.6%	32.1%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			In Education	
			Over 15	Total
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	3	24
		% within ACCNT	12.5%	100.0%
		% within In Education	100.0%	42.9%
	Not Sure	Count	0	10
		% within ACCNT	.0%	100.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	17.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	22
		% within ACCNT	.0%	100.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	39.3%
Total		Count	3	56
		% within ACCNT	5.4%	100.0%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%

ACCNT * Part of Committees

Crosstab

			Part of Committees	
			Less than three	3-6 times
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	13	8
		% within ACCNT	54.2%	33.3%
		% within Part of Committees	50.0%	33.3%
	Not Sure	Count	5	4
		% within ACCNT	50.0%	40.0%
		% within Part of Committees	19.2%	16.7%
	Generally Not Important	Count	8	12
		% within ACCNT	36.4%	54.5%
		% within Part of Committees	30.8%	50.0%
Total		Count	26	24
		% within ACCNT	46.4%	42.9%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			Part of Committees		Total
			7-10	more than 10	
ACCNT	Generally Important	Count	2	1	24
		% within ACCNT	8.3%	4.2%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	40.0%	100.0%	42.9%
	Not Sure	Count	1	0	10
		% within ACCNT	10.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	20.0%	.0%	17.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	2	0	22
		% within ACCNT	9.1%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	40.0%	.0%	39.3%
Total		Count	5	1	56
		% within ACCNT	8.9%	1.8%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATI * Qualification

Crosstab

			Qualification		
			MA	PhD	Total
NATI	Generally Important	Count	2	26	28
		% within NATI	7.1%	92.9%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	18.2%	57.8%	50.0%
	Not Sure	Count	3	4	7
		% within NATI	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	27.3%	8.9%	12.5%
	Generally Not Important	Count	6	15	21
		% within NATI	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	54.5%	33.3%	37.5%
Total		Count	11	45	56
		% within NATI	19.6%	80.4%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATI * Degree Country

Crosstab

			Degree Country		
			USA	UK	Total
NATI	Generally Important	Count	17	11	28
		% within NATI	60.7%	39.3%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
	Not Sure	Count	4	3	7
		% within NATI	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	11.8%	13.6%	12.5%
	Generally Not Important	Count	13	8	21
		% within NATI	61.9%	38.1%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	38.2%	36.4%	37.5%
Total		Count	34	22	56
		% within NATI	60.7%	39.3%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATI * Age

Crosstab

			Age			Total
			30-40	41-50	51-60	
NATI	Generally Important	Count	9	13	6	28
		% within NATI	32.1%	46.4%	21.4%	100.0%
		% within Age	42.9%	50.0%	66.7%	50.0%
	Not Sure	Count	1	4	2	7
		% within NATI	14.3%	57.1%	28.6%	100.0%
		% within Age	4.8%	15.4%	22.2%	12.5%
	Generally Not Important	Count	11	9	1	21
		% within NATI	52.4%	42.9%	4.8%	100.0%
		% within Age	52.4%	34.6%	11.1%	37.5%
Total		Count	21	26	9	56
		% within NATI	37.5%	46.4%	16.1%	100.0%
		% within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATI * In Education

Crosstab

			In Education		
			1-5	6-10	11-15
NATI	Generally Important	Count	3	11	12
		% within NATI	10.7%	39.3%	42.9%
		% within In Education	60.0%	36.7%	66.7%
	Not Sure	Count	1	4	1
		% within NATI	14.3%	57.1%	14.3%
		% within In Education	20.0%	13.3%	5.6%
	Generally Not Important	Count	1	15	5
		% within NATI	4.8%	71.4%	23.8%
		% within In Education	20.0%	50.0%	27.8%
Total		Count	5	30	18
		% within NATI	8.9%	53.6%	32.1%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			In Education	
			Over 15	Total
NATI	Generally Important	Count	2	28
		% within NATI	7.1%	100.0%
		% within In Education	66.7%	50.0%
	Not Sure	Count	1	7
		% within NATI	14.3%	100.0%
		% within In Education	33.3%	12.5%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	21
		% within NATI	.0%	100.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	37.5%
Total		Count	3	56
		% within NATI	5.4%	100.0%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%

NATI * Part of Committees

Crosstab

			Part of Committees		
			Less than three	3-6 times	7-10
NATI	Generally Important	Count	10	14	3
		% within NATI	35.7%	50.0%	10.7%
		% within Part of Committees	38.5%	58.3%	60.0%
	Not Sure	Count	5	2	0
		% within NATI	71.4%	28.6%	.0%
		% within Part of Committees	19.2%	8.3%	.0%
	Generally Not Important	Count	11	8	2
		% within NATI	52.4%	38.1%	9.5%
		% within Part of Committees	42.3%	33.3%	40.0%
Total		Count	26	24	5
		% within NATI	46.4%	42.9%	8.9%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			Part of Committees	Total
			more than 10	
NATI	Generally Important	Count	1	28
		% within NATI	3.6%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	50.0%
	Not Sure	Count	0	7
		% within NATI	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	.0%	12.5%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	21
		% within NATI	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	.0%	37.5%
Total		Count	1	56
		% within NATI	1.8%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%

NATIV * Qualification

Crosstab

			Qualification		Total
			MA	PhD	
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	6	33	39
		% within NATIV	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	54.5%	73.3%	69.6%
	Not Sure	Count	2	3	5
		% within NATIV	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	18.2%	6.7%	8.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	3	9	12
		% within NATIV	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	27.3%	20.0%	21.4%
Total		Count	11	45	56
		% within NATIV	19.6%	80.4%	100.0%
		% within Qualification	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATIV * Degree Country

Crosstab

			Degree Country		Total
			USA	UK	
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	24	15	39
		% within NATIV	61.5%	38.5%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	70.6%	68.2%	69.6%
	Not Sure	Count	5	0	5
		% within NATIV	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	14.7%	.0%	8.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	5	7	12
		% within NATIV	41.7%	58.3%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	14.7%	31.8%	21.4%
Total		Count	34	22	56
		% within NATIV	60.7%	39.3%	100.0%
		% within Degree Country	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATIV * Age

Crosstab

			Age			Total
			30-40	41-50	51-60	
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	16	15	8	39
		% within NATIV	41.0%	38.5%	20.5%	100.0%
		% within Age	76.2%	57.7%	88.9%	69.6%
	Not Sure	Count	1	4	0	5
		% within NATIV	20.0%	80.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Age	4.8%	15.4%	.0%	8.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	4	7	1	12
		% within NATIV	33.3%	58.3%	8.3%	100.0%
		% within Age	19.0%	26.9%	11.1%	21.4%
Total		Count	21	26	9	56
		% within NATIV	37.5%	46.4%	16.1%	100.0%
		% within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

NATIV * In Education

Crosstab

			In Education		
			1-5	6-10	11-15
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	5	19	12
		% within NATIV	12.8%	48.7%	30.8%
		% within In Education	100.0%	63.3%	66.7%
	Not Sure	Count	0	4	1
		% within NATIV	.0%	80.0%	20.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	13.3%	5.6%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	7	5
		% within NATIV	.0%	58.3%	41.7%
		% within In Education	.0%	23.3%	27.8%
Total		Count	5	30	18
		% within NATIV	8.9%	53.6%	32.1%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			In Education	
			Over 15	Total
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	3	39
		% within NATIV	7.7%	100.0%
		% within In Education	100.0%	69.6%
	Not Sure	Count	0	5
		% within NATIV	.0%	100.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	8.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	12
		% within NATIV	.0%	100.0%
		% within In Education	.0%	21.4%
Total		Count	3	56
		% within NATIV	5.4%	100.0%
		% within In Education	100.0%	100.0%

NATIV * Part of Committees

Crosstab

			Part of Committees		
			Less than three	3-6 times	7-10
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	19	16	3
		% within NATIV	48.7%	41.0%	7.7%
		% within Part of Committees	73.1%	66.7%	60.0%
	Not Sure	Count	3	2	0
		% within NATIV	60.0%	40.0%	.0%
		% within Part of Committees	11.5%	8.3%	.0%
	Generally Not Important	Count	4	6	2
		% within NATIV	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%
		% within Part of Committees	15.4%	25.0%	40.0%
Total		Count	26	24	5
		% within NATIV	46.4%	42.9%	8.9%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstab

			Part of Committees	
			more than 10	Total
NATIV	Generally Important	Count	1	39
		% within NATIV	2.6%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	69.6%
	Not Sure	Count	0	5
		% within NATIV	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	.0%	8.9%
	Generally Not Important	Count	0	12
		% within NATIV	.0%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	.0%	21.4%
Total		Count	1	56
		% within NATIV	1.8%	100.0%
		% within Part of Committees	100.0%	100.0%

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