Who Wants EIL? Attitudes towards English as an International Language: A Comparative Study of College Teachers and Students in the Greater Taipei Area

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ABSTRACT

English as an International language (EIL) has been a major research topic of applied linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) education since the last decade. 80% of the users of the English language in the world are non-native speakers (NNS), making the traditionally defined Native Speakers (NS) the minority group of this language. Speaking English varieties in inner, outer and expanding circle countries (Kachru 1985) were celebrated as an approach expressing personal and national identity. Accordingly, the fact of EIL has the potential to challenge the conventional ownership of English and to be a source changing teachers' and learners' sense of competence and expertise. There have been numerous studies and suggestions concerning how to teach English as an international language. However, little empirical research has been conducted to understand NNS English teachers' and learners' perception of the spread of English as an international language – particularly in those countries where English is a foreign language. EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers' and learners' perspectives are still lacking in the EIL studies that intend to generate possible repositioning for them in the TESOL industry.

This research investigates how Taiwanese college students and teachers perceive the issues related to EIL. Based on 126 responded questionnaires from college English teachers and 529 from college students, this study presented collective data of Taiwanese NNS English teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the notion of EIL. The research analysis focuses on the comparison between teachers' and students' attitudes towards their command of English in different social context, their perception of NNS

and NS English teachers' teaching competence, and their attitudes towards the English educational policy of having NS English teachers in Taiwan. The findings of this study provide empirical insights into understanding how the notion of EIL will be perceived in EFL countries.

Introduction

People use English for international communication more than any other language in the world. English is recognized as the lingua franca for communication across nations and cultures, and is the most desired second or foreign language in most countries in the world. English is used as a second or foreign language in the workplace, international trade, global media, tourism, business, education, technology, and on diplomatic occasions. Linguistic scholars estimated that at the end of the 20th century, 80% of English users were non-native speakers (Crystal, 1997). Meanwhile, the percentage of non-native speakers is growing rapidly. Graddol (1997) predicted that this trend would continue for the next 50 years, and 'The centrality of the native speaker is being challenged' (Graddol, 1999:68). Earlier in 1985, Kachru (1985) suggested that native speakers of English had become a minority. Since the early 1970s, it has been recognized that 'English' does not exist any longer as a singular term, resulting in new terms such as 'new Englishes', and journal titles such as 'World Englishes' (Crystal, 2001).

Taiwan represents a perfect case study for exploring the potential issues of the notion of EIL. As an norm-dependent country (Kachru, 1996), Taiwan is mainly dependent on American English as the norm provider in teaching English. The fact that 80% of the English users in the world are non-native speakers seems to have little impact on people's preference for learning American English. People's exposure to other varieties of English is very limited, and this has led to a low tolerance of varieties other than American English. To most people in Taiwan, the ultimate goal of learning English is to speak like native speakers and communicate with them (C. L. Chen, 2003; C. P. Chen, 2002; Chou, 2004; Chuang, 2002; Liao, 2004; Wei, 2003; Yo, 2003). These facts make it interesting to study the implications of the ideas of teaching English as an international language from the perspectives of English teachers and learners in Taiwan. The purpose of this paper is to offer an empirical investigation of this issue.

The Concentric Model of World English

British colonization in the 19th century and the rise of the United States as the

leading economic and political power thereafter are two major factors leading to the spread of English as the global lingua franca (Crystal, 1997). With regard to the wide spread of English language, Kachru proposed a concentric model of world English, representing 'the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages', (Kachru, 1985:12). This model specifies the following circles in greater detail.

(a) *The inner circle*: In the inner circle countries, English is the primary majority language of the country. Typical countries include the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. There are about 320-380 million English users in these countries, accounting for about 20-28% of the total English users (Crystal, 2003:61).

(b) *The outer circle*: In the outer circle countries, the spread of English is largely a result of colonization by English speaking nations. As a consequence of British colonization, English was institutionalised in the multilingual contexts in the 19th century. The imposition of English nevertheless provides a united second language for intra-national communication in the multilingual countries such as Singapore, India, or the Philippines. It is in these outer circle countries that varieties of English, including standard, pidgin, and creole, emerged and developed as the local language (Crystal, 1997; Kachru, 1985). There are about 300-500 million English users in this circle, constituting about 26% of the total English users (Crystal, 2003:61).

(c) *The expanding circle*: In the expanding circle countries, English serves mainly as the language for international communication. English is widely studied as a foreign language, such as in the European countries, China, Japan, or Taiwan. The spread of English in this circle is largely caused by the recognition of the importance of English as an international language. Crystal (1997) noticed that nowadays many expanding circle countries have more English-speaking bilinguals than the countries in the outer circle. There are no locally generated varieties of English, as the language is not commonly used for local communication. There are about 500-1000 million English users in this circle, which covers almost half of English users (Crystal, 2003:61).

Table 1

The Distribution of English Users in the World

	Number of English speakers	Percentage
Inner circle	320–380 million	About 20%
Outer circle	300–500 million	About 26%
Expanding circle	500–1000 million	About 53%

Source: (from Crystal, 2003).

The numbers in Table 1 display a strong contrast of the distribution of native speakers (mainly in inner circle countries) and non-native speakers in the world. A question to be answered is how countries in different circles respond to the spread of English, particularly from the perspectives of English teachers and learners.

Teaching English as an International Language

New pedagogies have been proposed to catch up with the fast spread of English as an international language (EIL). With the wide spread of English as a global language, attention has been paid to the non-native speaking (NNS) English teachers' contribution and their position in TESOL education. The traditional view of an effective English teacher requires new definition (McKay, 2002).

From non-native teachers to bilingual teachers

The NNS English teachers are teachers in their own right. The NNS teachers' bilingual advantages of teaching English to non-native learners were largely neglected in the TESOL profession (Widdowson, 1992). Jenkins (2000:9) proposed that the terminology of 'non-native speakers' should be replaced by 'bilingual English speakers', while 'native speakers' should be substituted with 'monolingual English speakers'. Cook (Cook, 1999, 2004) valued bilingual speakers more than monolingual speakers, in terms of their broader knowledge of languages and better understanding of other cultures. In the context of English as a global language, 80% of the users are multilingual learners learning English as their second or foreign language (see Figure 1). Bilingual teachers, as successful learners of new languages (Widdowson, 1992) and as 'skilled L2 users' (Cook, 1999:98), are recognized as being in a better position for
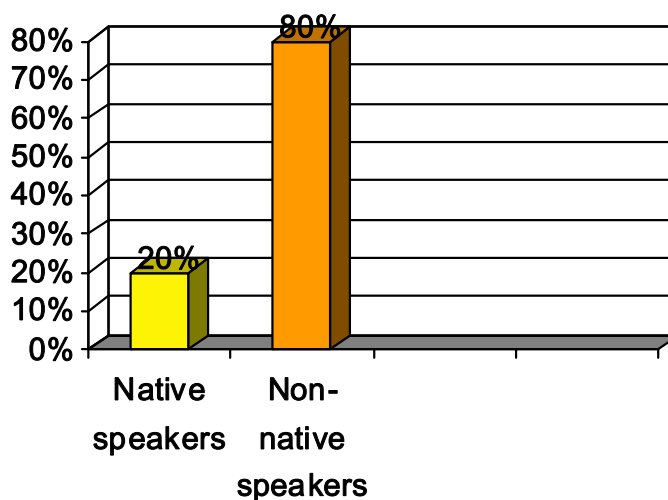
teaching English for international communication.

Figure 1. Global usage of English

New pronunciation teaching

It was commonly believed that the main purpose of learning a new language was to communicate with its native speakers. Cook (1999) found that non-native accents were often seen as a failure of learning the English language, a measurement regarded by Jenkins (2000:9) as 'unrealistic and irrelevant'. The EIL community, as Jenkins (2002:85) claimed, 'is an international community in which all participants have an equal claim to membership'. Under these circumstances, the native speakers' proficiency will not be the goal of students' linguistic production. Local accents in English have a right of their own. Native speakers (NS) can provide a model as 'a point of reference' for 'preventing non-native varieties far removed from mutual intelligibility' (Jenkins, 1998:124). If the bilingual speakers can achieve successful communication with their imperfect command of English, they don't need the native speakers to tell them what is right and what is wrong (Widdowson, 1994).

New teaching content and support

In reference to the teaching content, the agenda for teaching and learning the English language should match the scope of English as an international language (Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2002, 2003; Modiano, 1999). When teaching English as a

global language, it is essential to have learners exposed to different forms of English usages in the outer circle and expanding circle countries. Even though the teachers choose to teach a dominant English variety (e.g. American English), 'an awareness of different varieties would help students develop a more comprehensive view of the English language' (Matsuda, 2003:721). Modiano (1999) predicted that teaching materials for teaching English as an international language would be available soon. Other educational aids, dictionaries, and grammar textbooks will become commonplace in classroom settings where English is taught for international communication.

New cultural materials

McKay (2002) argued that some of the cultural contents in teaching English (teaching target culture) may be irrelevant to students' concerns; sometimes they may even present cultural conflicts. She proposed that teaching a target culture is only suitable when the teacher is a native speaker and the student is a second/foreign language learner. When English is taught as a global language, since the language is de-nationalized, the classroom should emphasize the source culture and the international target cultures. Using the source culture is a way of empowering the students and making them practice using English to express their own culture and identity. McKay suggested that presenting international cultural materials could demonstrate cross-cultural pragmatics by which the bilingual users of English can demonstrate their own rules of social appropriateness, while they are also learning to understand the appropriateness of other cultures. In the domain of teaching international culture in the classroom, NNS and NS English teachers are on a level field, and both should focus on enhancing international awareness.

EIL in Taiwan

In recent years, Taiwanese TESOL scholars have begun to pay attention to the notion of English as a lingua franca. A notable example is the invitation of David Graddol to deliver a speech "English Next" in a seminar hosted by the British Council and the Chengchi University Foreign Language Centre in November 2008. The EIL and ESP conference, held in March 2009, was organized by the English Teaching Resource

Centre of the Ministry of Education and the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, with a hope to link the notion of EIL with the idea of ESP (English for Special Purposes) and bring them to Taiwanese English teachers' awareness. The ultimate goal of these endeavours was to precipitate changes in the teaching content and methods and in the assessment of students' learning achievements in the technology universities in Taiwan. According to the proponents, English teaching should be practical to students' needs in their future workplaces.

Despite the body of literature on EIL that makes suggestions about English language teaching, most EIL suggestions are based on theoretical assumptions or personal opinions rather than on empirical studies. There are not many empirical studies informing us how English teachers and learners in the expanding circle perceive the spread of English as a lingua franca and whether they find the EIL suggestions suitable. An important research question remains to be answered: What are Taiwanese teachers' and learners' attitudes toward the notion of English as an international language?

Research Methods

A questionnaire survey for answering this research question was a suitable research method, as it helps generate a systematic overview of participants' beliefs and practices. The questionnaire comprised of a series of statements to collect information of participants' attitudes by using Likert-scales. The following sections present details of the survey.

Research population

The research population was limited to the greater Taipei area, because the capital city of a nation usually exposes its citizens to more international contacts than regional cities and towns.

A questionnaire survey was distributed to 337 Taiwanese NNS English teachers of 21 tertiary technology institutes in the area of greater Taipei. The education goal in tertiary technology institutes in Taiwan is to develop students' practical working skills. Likewise, the goal of English teaching is to develop students' practical English communication skills for their future participation in an international working context.

Given these goals, there should be more possibilities for teachers to consider EIL in their teaching. English teachers in tertiary institutes also enjoy greater autonomy in selecting the teaching content, as they are exempt from the responsibility of helping students pass national examinations for higher education.

Another survey was ministered to 529 student participants of three tertiary institutes in Taipei. The reason for choosing this group of student was that tertiary students are free from the heavy pressure of learning English to pass the national examinations for entering into higher educational institutions. Students have more autonomy in deciding their investment in learning English. Compared with the students in traditional universities in Taiwan, technology university students' use of English tends to focus on practical purposes rather than academic ones. If the idea of EIL is acceptable to Taiwanese students in general, technology university students should have no problem accepting it.

Result and Discussion

Demographic analysis of respondents

On the teachers' side, the total number of anonymous respondents was 126, or 37% of the research population, and of these 73% were female. The respondents' ages ranged from 25 to 63 years old. Teaching experience ranged from 1 to 42 years. The majority of the respondents held a master degree (50.8%), and nearly one third held a PhD degree (27.8%). Most of them majored in English literature or applied linguistics in English.

On the students' side (see Table 2), 44% of the respondents were 4-year technology college/university students, 23% belonged to a 5-year junior college, 14% belonged to an Open College, 11% belonged to a 2-year junior college, and 8% belonged to a 2-year senior college; and 79% of the respondents were female. Concerning the distribution of respondents' major subject, 44% were English majors and 55% were non-English majors.

Table 2

Distribution of Participant's Schooling Type

	Frequency	Percent
4-year Technology College (四技)	231	44%
5-year Junior College (五專)	123	23%
Open College (空專)	72	14%
2-year Junior College (二專)	58	11%
2-year Senior College (二技)	44	8%

N=529.

Participants' attitudes towards English language proficiency and knowledge

The questions were designed to understand participants' attitudes and beliefs in English teaching and learning practice aligned with the suggestions of teaching EIL on pronunciation, grammar, teaching materials, cultural contents, and the new positions of NS and NNS teachers. IT should be noted that American English remains the dominant variety of English taught in Taiwan. The respondents are comparatively less exposed to the English varieties of outer circles countries. The validity of their answers concerning English varieties would be problematic if respondents do not have sufficient exposure to the samples of EIL before they reveal their attitudes. For this reason, the design of this questionnaire focused on the participants' teaching and learning experiences and excluded the issues of English varieties.

Participants' attitudes towards grammar and pronunciation

Grammar and pronunciation, particularly pronunciation, have been the prime concerns of NNS English teachers' professional competence (Jenkins, 2000; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005). In the questionnaire, the first group of questions was designed to understand participants' attitude towards language proficiency of different users and in different contexts, particularly with regard to grammar and pronunciation. It consisted of four pairs of questions (Table 3). The first pair of questions, Q1 and Q2, aimed at understanding participants' attitudes towards teachers' language productive competence

in English *within* classroom context. The second pair of questions, Q3 and Q4, sought to uncover teachers' attitude on the same subjects *outside* classroom context. The third pair of questions, Q5 and Q6, attempted to reveal participants' expectation of students' language productive performances in English. The last pair of questions hoped to explore participants' attitudes toward the general public's command of English.

Table 3

Participants' Attitude towards English Users' Proficiency in English

No.	Statement	Participants	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q1	ELT teachers should teach good pronunciation to students.	Teachers	47%	51%	2%	-
		Students	40%	51%	8%	0.4%
Q2	ELT teachers should teach good grammar to the students.	Teachers	44%	52%	3 %	1%
		Students	35%	59%	6%	-
Q3	ELT teachers must try to obtain accent-free language proficiency at all times.	Teachers	50%	46%	5%	-
		Students	27%	52%	19 %	0.2%
Q4	ELT teachers must try to speak English without grammatical errors at all times.	Teachers	32%	48%	20%	1%
		Students	21%	44%	34%	1%
Q5	Students' pronunciation should sound like standard English.	Teachers	28%	50%	22 %	-
		Students	37%	54%	8%	0.4%
Q6	Student should use correct grammar.	Teachers	29%	55%	17%	-
		Students	38%	53%	8%	0.4 %
Q7	People using English should try to speak accent-free English.	Teachers	22%	44%	31%	3 %
		Students	16%	51%	31 %	1%
Q8	People using English should try to avoid grammatical errors.	Teachers	18%	47%	33%	2 %
		Students	14%	47%	36%	2 %

The survey results show that teacher participants, when playing the role of teaching professional English in a classroom context, exhibited uncompromising attitudes towards accented English, both in pronunciation and grammar. The majority of the teachers (98%) believed that teaching standard pronunciation to students is essential in their teaching practice (Q1). Equally important is to teach correct grammar in the classroom with 96% of the teachers agreeing that English teachers should be able to teach correct grammar in the classroom (Q2). When the context moved away from classroom, the results indicated a notable change in teachers' attitude towards their use

of the English language. A lower percentage of the respondents, 80%, agreed that teachers should mind their grammar when they are using English outside the classroom (Q4). However, on the issue of pronunciation, 96% of the respondents (nearly the same as within the classroom context) agree that they should keep their pronunciation standardized at all times (Q3). Teachers' expectations of their students' performances were not, however, as strict as towards themselves. A lower percentage of the teachers, 78%, agreed that they preferred their students speak in Standard English (Q5). In spite of this more liberal attitude towards the students' productive performances in pronunciation, teachers had a higher expectation of their students' performance in grammar, with 84% of the teachers expecting students to use English with correct grammar (Q6). This was higher than teachers' expectations of their own use of grammar outside classroom (Q4). As for Taiwanese people's use of English in general, teachers displayed an even more relaxed attitude. A comparatively lower percentage of the teachers (66%) agreed that general English users should speak in Standard English (Q7). About the same percentage of teachers (65%) agreed that people should mind their grammatical mistakes when they use English (Q8).

The results showed evident differences in teachers' attitudes towards EIL in different contexts (Figure 2). Teachers displayed a strong anti-EIL attitude when they played the role of professional English teachers. Their attitudes towards EIL became more moderate when English was used outside classroom context, especially when the English users were their students or the general public. Locally accented English and imperfect command of English grammar were acceptable.
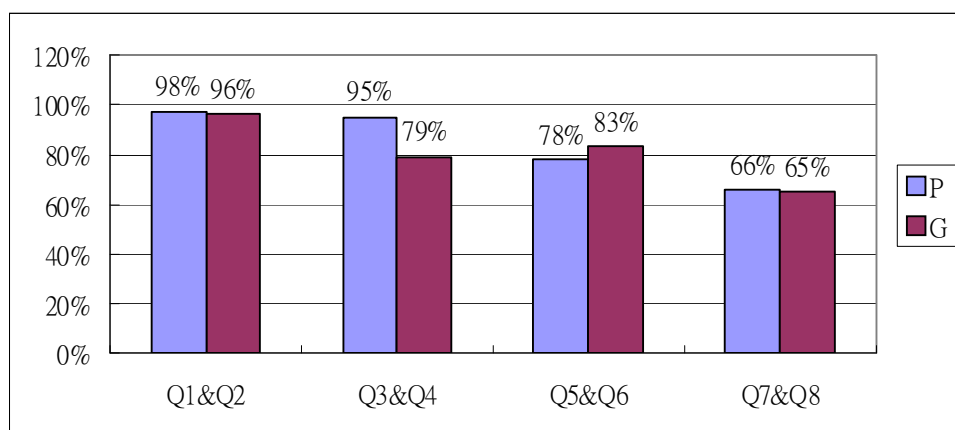

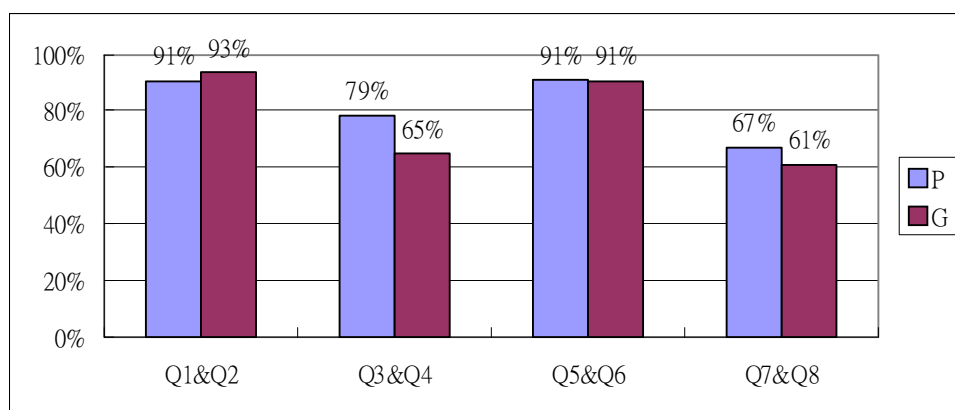*Figure 2.* Teachers' attitude towards English use in different contexts.

Figure 3. Students' attitude towards English use in different contexts.

On the students' side, the survey results showed that students exhibited strong rejection to locally accented English in classroom contexts (Figure 3). It was found that 91% of the learners believed that teaching standard pronunciation to students is essential in teachers' teaching practice (Q1). Equally important is teaching correct grammar in the classroom, with 93% of the respondents insisting on this (Q2). When the context moved away from the classroom, the results showed a notable change in learners' attitudes towards grammar. A lower percentage of the respondents, 65%, agreed that teachers should mind their grammar when they are using English outside the classroom (Q4). However, on the issue of pronunciation, a higher percentage of respondents (79%) believed that teachers should keep their pronunciation standardized at all time (Q3).

When playing the role of English learners, student participants also revealed uncompromising attitudes towards EIL. Their expectations of their command of English were almost as high as their expectations for teachers, with 91% of respondents hoping that they could speak like native English speakers (Q5), and an equal percentage of respondents wishing they could use English with correct grammar (Q6). Both of these expectations were much higher than what they expected of teachers' command of English outside the classroom context. As for Taiwanese people's use of English in general, the participants displayed a very tolerant attitude. A comparatively lower percentage of the learners (67%) agreed that general English users should speak in Standard English (Q7). A even lower percentage of the respondents (61%) agreed that people should mind their grammatical mistakes when they use English (Q8).

Summing up, the results showed that participants' attitudes towards EIL are heavily dependent on the context where English is used. Participants showed strong resistance to the notion of EIL when teaching and learning English. The notion of EIL was, however, acceptable when English was used for communication.

Participants' attitudes towards choosing textbooks

Some EIL scholars believe that English teachers should be free to choose from a broader range of textbooks. Tomlinson (2005) criticised the fact that the textbooks published by the inner circle countries have been used to impose the native speakers' value system and ideology on NNS English learners. McKay (2002) enthusiastically proposed that teachers should use locally produced English textbooks in their classroom, since these textbooks would reflect needs and English usage in the local context and enable learners to use English to express their identity in an international society. To investigate if our respondents accepted these proposals, Question Q9 was designed to understand their preferences of textbook selection.

Table 4

Participants' Attitudes towards Choosing Textbooks

No.	Statement	Participants	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q9	I prefer textbooks published in English speaking countries.	Teachers	46%	36%	16%	1%
		Students	15%	52%	31%	2%

The results display a negative attitude towards suggestions concerning choosing textbooks in teaching English as an international language, with 82% of the teacher respondents still preferring having textbooks published in English speaking countries. Student participants showed less interest in those textbooks. Only 67% of student participants shared teachers' enthusiasm. However, there were still more than half of the student-respondents showing a positive attitude towards textbooks published in English speaking countries. This finding reveals a gap between EIL idealism in promoting EIL teaching materials and the actual needs of the teachers and learners in learning English in expanding circle countries.

Participants' attitude in integrating cultures in English teaching

EIL scholars suggested that English has become an international language and should thus be denationalised (Llurda, 2004; McKay, 2002; Modiano, 1999, 2005). A denationalised language should be separated from its original cultural context. The English language is used for international communication and it should carry the users' cultural and national identity. Question Q10 was designed to understand participants' attitudes towards integrating Anglo-American culture with the English language teaching content. Participants showed a higher degree of agreement to EIL scholars' suggestions concerning teaching non-Anglo cultures in ELT classrooms. In contrast with teachers' strong beliefs in teaching the language in accordance with native speakers' norms (Q1 and Q2), teachers' attitude towards including Anglo-American culture in teaching the English language appeared to be less enthusiastic. Yet still half of the respondents (68%) agreed that their teaching should integrate English native speakers' cultures. Student respondents displayed the same degree of agreement with teachers (69%).

Table 5

Participants' Attitude towards Integrating Target Culture in Teaching

No.	Statement	Participants	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q10	If cultural materials are to be integrated in English language classes, they should focus on the English speaking countries' cultures.	Teachers	25%	43%	31%	1%
		Students	20%	49%	28%	3%

Participants' attitude towards professional competency: NS versus NNS

Language proficiency is often regarded as the most important qualification of language teachers. NNS teachers, with their non-nativeness in language proficiency, are frequently portrayed as second-class teachers with low self-esteem in the literature, and

are often treated unfairly in terms of job opportunities and respect (Ellis, 2002). NNS teachers' contributions in teaching English as an international language are highly valued in the EIL literature, especially their pedagogical advantages. Questions Q11 to Q14 were designed to look into participants' attitudes towards English proficiency and pedagogy competence in teaching English, and their attitudes towards NS teachers' professional competences.

Table 6 shows a group of NNS teachers who reveal high self-esteem in their professional role, which is in line with EIL scholars' re-positioning of NNS English teachers in the field of TESOL. Local teachers are born with local advantages, and this cannot be replaced by NS teachers who are foreign to local teaching cultures and contexts (Widdowson, 1994). Q11 was designed to explore participants' evaluation of the professional competence of an English teacher. More than half of the teacher respondents (60%) did not agree that language proficiency is more important than pedagogical knowledge, while 72% of the teacher respondents disagreed (16% of them strongly) that government should hire NS teachers into the state schooling system (Q13). An important clue to this result can be found in the result of question Q12, which was designed to understand Taiwanese teachers' evaluation of NS teachers' teaching effectiveness to Taiwanese students. The result shows that 76% of teacher respondents did not agree that NS teachers are more effective language teachers. This attitude can be further confirmed by the result of question Q14, where 80% (32% strongly agree) of the respondents believed that NNS teachers are better models to their students in learning English.

Table 6

Participants' Attitude towards English Teacher's Professional Competence

No.	Statement	Participants	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q11	ELT teachers should focus more on language knowledge than on the pedagogy.	Teachers	6%	33%	52%	8%
		Students	13%	36%	44%	5%
Q12	Native speaking teachers are more effective teachers for language students.	Teachers	5%	18%	64%	12%
		Students	17%	41%	38%	3%
Q13	I agree that government should hire native speaking teachers from English speaking countries to teach in Taiwan.	Teachers	2%	25%	56%	16%
		Students	16%	44%	35%	3%
Q14	Bilingual non-native speaking teachers are better models to my students on learning English.	Teachers	32%	48%	14%	1%
		Students	23%	61%	13%	2%

Interestingly, students held a rather different view on these issues. They see teachers' language proficiency and pedagogy as equally important. Results show that nearly half (49%) of them agreed that language proficiency is more important (Q11), and 58% believed that NS English teachers are more effective in teaching English (Q12). Also, 60% supported the government's policy of hiring NS English teachers to teach in the official schooling system in Taiwan. However, they valued bilingual local English teachers as their model in learning English. Lastly, 84% of the student respondents agreed that local English teachers are better role models in learning English. As learners with specific needs, students' attitudes could challenge what the EIL proponents have envisioned.

Coming back to the teachers' attitudes, most respondents demonstrated a much higher tolerance of students' and the general public's productive skills. Judging from these results solely, it is easy to jump to the conclusion that most of the respondents are already practicing the implications of EIL in their teaching. However, when we consider these answers, along with respondents' high expectation of their students' productive

performances, they remind us that respondents' ultimate goals in teaching English remain to attain native-like proficiency and use correct grammar. It is highly possible that respondents' encouragement and tolerance towards students' imperfect command of English is part of their teaching strategy: empowering and motivating students to practice more, in order to improve their productive skills in the target language.

Respondents' preferences in recruitment

According to the discourse of EIL, NNS and NS teachers should enjoy equal professional opportunities in the context of EIL. In order to have a better understanding of the participants' perception of the ownership of English and its relationship to their perception of teachers' professional competence, the questionnaire asked the participants to imagine that they are in charge of recruiting teachers for their institutes and list their preferences for teachers from different countries. Teachers from 7 countries were listed on the choices, with USA, UK, and Australia representing inner circle countries, Singapore and India representing outer circle countries, and Germany and Taiwan representing expanding circle countries. German teachers were put on the list for the purpose of discerning participants attitudes towards 'whiteness' and professional competence (Golombek & Jordan, 2005).

On the teacher respondents' side, the results showed a very interesting distribution of the job opportunities in Taiwan (Figure 4). Taiwanese NNS applicants would have won the best job opportunities in this job market. Nearly half of respondents (48%) put Taiwanese applicants as their first priority in recruitment. However, Taiwanese NNS teachers would have to face strong competition from American teachers. Nearly the same percentage of the respondents (40%) put American teachers as their first priority. If we include the respondents' preferences for British teachers (4%), the respondents' preferences for NS teachers (44%) have made NS applicants as competitive as Taiwanese applicants. Judging from Taiwanese NNS teachers' strong opposition (72%) to the government's NS teacher policy, teachers' personal preferences for NS applicants presents contradictory attitudes towards NS teachers' professional competence. Teacher respondents' low preference for teachers from Germany shows that 'whiteness' is not a criterion in the respondents' recruitment considerations. This result also revealed Taiwanese teachers' diverse attitudes towards NS teachers from different inner circle

countries. American applicants are the most favoured among NS applicants. British applicants' opportunities remain high, but are dramatically lower than American teachers' opportunities. Australian applicants were on the list, but were not considered to be the first priority of recruitment.

Students showed a rather consistent preference for NS English teachers (Figure 5). They preferred NS English teachers rather than local English teachers, who were preferred by EIL scholars. 53% of them chose English teachers from the US as their first preference in recruitment. Taiwanese English teachers' job opportunities were only half of American teachers' opportunities. Student respondents welcomed British English teachers to teach English in Taiwan, but their job opportunities are just a quarter of their American counterparts. These empirical findings suggest that, without appropriate introduction and explanation of the development of EIL in the world, it is very difficult for learners to accept the notion of EIL.
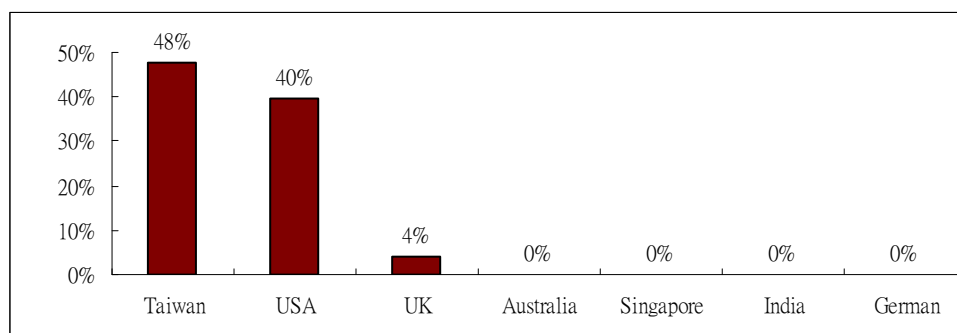

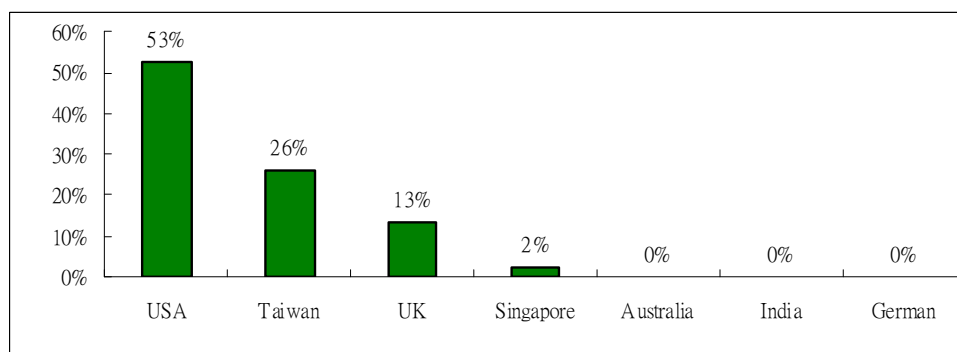*Figure 4.* Teachers' recruitment preferences.

Figure 5. Students' recruitment preferences.

Conclusion

This paper showed that, concerning the notions of EIL, participants held different attitudes towards different issues of teaching English as an international language. Teacher respondents' perception of their teaching professionalism was positively related to their high expectations on subject competence. When teaching English in the classroom, teachers have a strong sense of commanding the 'correct' use of English rather than the locally accented English or other varieties that were welcomed by the EIL scholars. Having a good command of Standard English, in both pronunciation and grammar, was highly valued as an important criterion of a 'good' English teacher. Teacher participants also showed consistent attitudes in choosing textbooks and the cultural contents to be taught in the classroom. In other circumstances, they accepted English variations. As a general English user, the same individuals were more likely to become EIL users. Teacher respondents were aware of their pedagogical competence, and they knew what they could contribute from their bilingual advantages to the teaching of English.

Most learners wished to learn the English of native speakers rather than of EIL users. In their view, English still belongs to its native speakers. Some students' preference (33%) for textbooks published by NNS publishers should be interpreted with caution. One of the possible reasons might be students' difficulty in using English textbooks without Chinese interpretations, rather than an ideological choice. The shift of the participants' attitude from an EFL speaker to an EIL user will depend on the change of social expectations, which includes changes in textbooks, English proficiency assessments, and NNS English users awareness of English as an international language.

There are several limitations in this paper. First, the data of student participants was obtained by convenient sampling, and the reliability of the collected data could be improved by random sampling. Second, as explained in the section of research method, the Taipei metropolis was selected on the assumption that a negative attitude towards EIL in this area implies an even lower acceptability of EIL in other parts of Taiwan. Whether this assumption is valid can be examined by applying the same study to other areas of Taiwan. Resolving the limitations requires the input of more research resources, which can be fulfilled by future studies.

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