# The 'native/ non-native teacher' debate

Chaired by Andreas Grundtvig & Susan Holden

“Do you think I should stop calling myself a native speaker? I don’t want to because it is my USP and something different. I think I’m the only female Brit in town with any experience. Economically, it is crazy not to mention this. I also hope I am a good teacher, or at least I try to be. So for pragmatic reasons, I want to keep calling myself a NS.”
*Anon*

“Since we removed all reference to native  speakers at Oxford House, we have had our busiest year. No-one has complained, the students don’t actually care that much!”

*Daniel Baines & Karen Krummenacher*
*Oxford House, Prague*

# Legality?

**TESOL-SPAIN**

**POSITION STATEMENT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION**

In compliance with Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, TESOL-SPAIN stands in opposition to discrimination against teachers on the basis of their national, ethnic or lin-guistic background, religion, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, in terms of hiring, pro-motion, recruitment for jobs, or employment conditions.

With respect to the common, long-standing notion, unsupported by research, that a certain ethnici-ty, accent, or national background gives a person an advantage as a teacher of English, TESOL-SPAIN firmly believes that all teachers should be evaluated and valued solely on the basis of their teaching competence, teaching experience, formal education and linguistic expertise. Therefore, TESOL-SPAIN does not condone job announcements that list "native English," "native command of English," "native-like fluency," "standard accented English," or similar, as required or desirable qualities.

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ANGLO
Academia de Inglés
Profesores Nativos
Av. Joan Carles I, № 17

# Questions

- *How can the legal issues over employment discrimination be enforced and extended worldwide?*

# Questions

- *How can parents of young children choosing a course or institute be convinced that the key element is the teachers' professional training for the teaching of that age group?*

# Questions

- *How can training managers in companies be convinced in the same way that professional training and relevant knowledge of the business world are the key criteria?*

# Questions

- *- Is it right, in a school situation, that the non-native-speaker teacher should 'only' be allowed to teach grammar and vocabulary, while the native speaker colleague should 'only' be allowed to teach pronunciation and conversation.*

# Questions

- *- How relevant is a shared culture within the school system? And is this something the native-speaker teacher can learn?*

# Questions

- *- What varieties of English should be used as production models? Who decides what is relevant to a specific group of learners? How can the learning materials reflect this?*

# Questions

- *- If a native-speaker teacher from outside the country has to apply and reapply for permission to live and work there, involving personal insecurity and possible extra expense, is that any argument for a difference in salary?*

# Questions

- *- If local exams demand specific forms of English, how important is it for any teacher to respect these, even if they do not seem to reflect the current position of English as an international language – or the user's potential use of it in the real world? What compromises are justifiable?*

# Questions

- *- What are the general strengths and weaknesses of many native-speaker teachers? How can general or specific training programmes build on these?*

# Questions

- *- The same questions for non-native speaker teachers.*

# Questions

- *- How can the two groups work together to complement and support each other, whatever limitations their particular teaching context seems to impose on them?*

# Links

Websites: Medgyes video

https://youtu.be/8JXB7-BBXtQ

HLT conversation October 2017

http://www.hltmag.co.uk/oct17/pubs03.htm

Tefl Equity website

www.teflequityadvocates.com

# The Medgyes book

- Print book 'The Non-Native Teacher' Swan Communication 2017

- Intrinsic Publishing – digital version
  - www.intrinsicbooks.co.uk

# Looking ahead: over to you

Keep in touch …

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