Experiences of a non-native English speaking teacher.

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Abstract

The presentation is related to the typical fears non-native English speaking teachers face in the classroom, and how to overcome them. During the session, I talk about how I learnt English and why I became an English teacher. Also, the presentation includes results of a survey carried out on 100 students of advanced level at Escuela Politecnica Nacional in Quito, Ecuador.

Some statistics about English speakers:

- 1.1 billion English speakers
- 380 million native speakers
- 740 million non-native speakers
- 1.5 billion English learners
- 80% of English teachers in non-native English speaking countries are non-NESTs

Common fears of non-NESTs:

- Proficiency
- Accent
- Pronunciation

How to overcome fears:

- Take a proficiency exam
- Embrace your accent
- Work hard on pronunciation
- Get training (TEFL, CELTA, DELTA)

Advantages of the non-NEST:

- Knowledge of the language (grammar)
- Empathy with beginner students
- Become an example of the successful learner
- Anticipate some difficulties students may have
- Teach learning strategies

To become a successful teacher, we must:

- Be respectful
- Organised
- Hardworking
- Good communicator
- Well prepared

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Results of a survey carried out on 100 students of advanced level at EPN.

1. What kind of teacher do you prefer?

- Native speaker: 29% (28)
- Non-native speaker: 22% (22)
- Don't care: 49% (48)

2. Do you think a non-native speaker gives more help to a beginner student?

- Yes: 85% (85)
- No: 15% (15)

3. Do you feel you learn more from a native speaker?

- Always: 15% (15)
- Sometimes: 80% (80)
- Never: 5% (5)

4. Who do you think knows more about grammar?

- Native speakers: 30% (30)
- Non-native speakers: 70% (70)

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5. What do you think it is more important in an English teacher?

- Nationality: 1% (1)
- Knowledge of the language: 99% (99)

6. Do you think it is better when your teacher can speak your first language?

- Yes: 63% (63)
- No: 6% (6)
- It is irrelevant: 31% (31)

7. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Non-native English teachers use the language less confidently.”

- Agree: 28% (28)
- Disagree: 72% (72)