

Filipino Teachers of English vs Native English Teachers: Learners' Perceptions

Shigeru Ozaki

Doshisha University, Japan

Abstract

Since learning English from Filipino Teachers of English (FTEs) has gained popularity, this research investigated learners' perceptions of the difference between FTEs and native English teachers (NETs) by conducting semi-structured interviews at two English language schools that have both FTEs and NETs. Many learners felt that FTEs were better at explaining grammar explicitly and comprehensibly, while others said that they could better improve their listening and pronunciation skills with NETs since they spoke faster and with more phonological changes and colloquial expressions. However, some felt more comfortable talking to FTEs, since their English was easier to understand. Additionally, some believed that the pronunciation of NETs was better simply because they were native speakers. One of the schools had an NET who was trained in teaching how to articulate English phonemes. His students noted that NETs were better at teaching pronunciation. However, this view was not shared by learners from other schools. Some reported that FTEs were easier to befriend, though this was because the learners and their teachers belonged to similar age groups. Some mentioned that FTEs, who are also English learners, were more passionate about teaching, understanding, and helping learners, while only one student claimed that NTEs were more serious teachers. A few were more motivated by NETs solely because they admired native speakers. In summary, the participants of this study generally considered FTEs to be better, although some individual differences were observed. The results suggest the importance of teacher training and teachers' experience in learning a second/foreign language.

Keywords: grammar, pronunciation, listening skills, passion, teacher training