



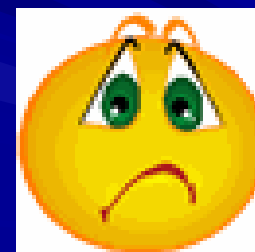
Developing an identity as a teacher:

*Perceptions of nonnative speaker
teacher trainees on a TESOL
programme*

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“Half students in our class are non-native speakers. Many of us including me want to be an English teacher. However, as non-English native speakers, are we able to become a good English teacher here? What are the advantages and disadvantages of it? What should we do to achieve this goal?

I'd like to know about your opinions.”





Overview

- NS and NNS in ELT
- The research
- Findings
- Reflections

NS and NNS teachers in ELT

- 1961 Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English as a Second Language: The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker.
- Differences between, and status of, NS and NNS teachers addressed in late 80s/early 90s.
- The 'native speaker fallacy' (Phillipson, 1992)

NNS teachers (NNESTs) in ELT

- More than 80% of ELT professionals internationally are non-native speakers.
- The number of NNESTs has been larger than the number of NESTs for some time.

(Canagarajah, 1999)



Unique strengths of NNESTs

- Can serve as imitable models of the successful learner of English
- Can teach language-learning strategies more effectively
- Can provide learners with more information about the English language
- Are more able to anticipate language difficulties of their students
- Can be more empathetic to the needs and problems of their learners
- Can benefit from sharing the learners' mother tongue.

(Medgyes, 1999)

Non-native speakers in ELT

- NNESTs suffer from:
 - Inferiority complex
 - Schizophrenia (Medgyes, 1999)
- “NNESTs struggle for equal treatment in the ELT profession” (Maum, 2002)
- A high percentage of NNS teachers believed that NS teachers were superior in all language skills areas: speaking (100%), pronunciation (92%), listening (87%), vocabulary (79%), and reading (72%). (Tang (1997)

The TESOL programme

- Introductory level TESOL qualification:
 - Cert in ELT (Level 5 NZQA)
 - Grad Cert TESOL (Level 6 NZQA)
- 1 semester (12/15 weeks) full-time
- Accept those with and without a degree
- Accept NS and NNS students
- Interview and selection task
- IELTS level 6 or equivalent required

The participants

- **15** out of 22 NNS trainees who had completed a TESOL programme in the previous 18 months (2006-2007)
- 9 different L1
- Previous Qualifications: Certificate to Masters
- Previous Teaching Experience: 12 of 15 (8 had used English as medium of instruction)



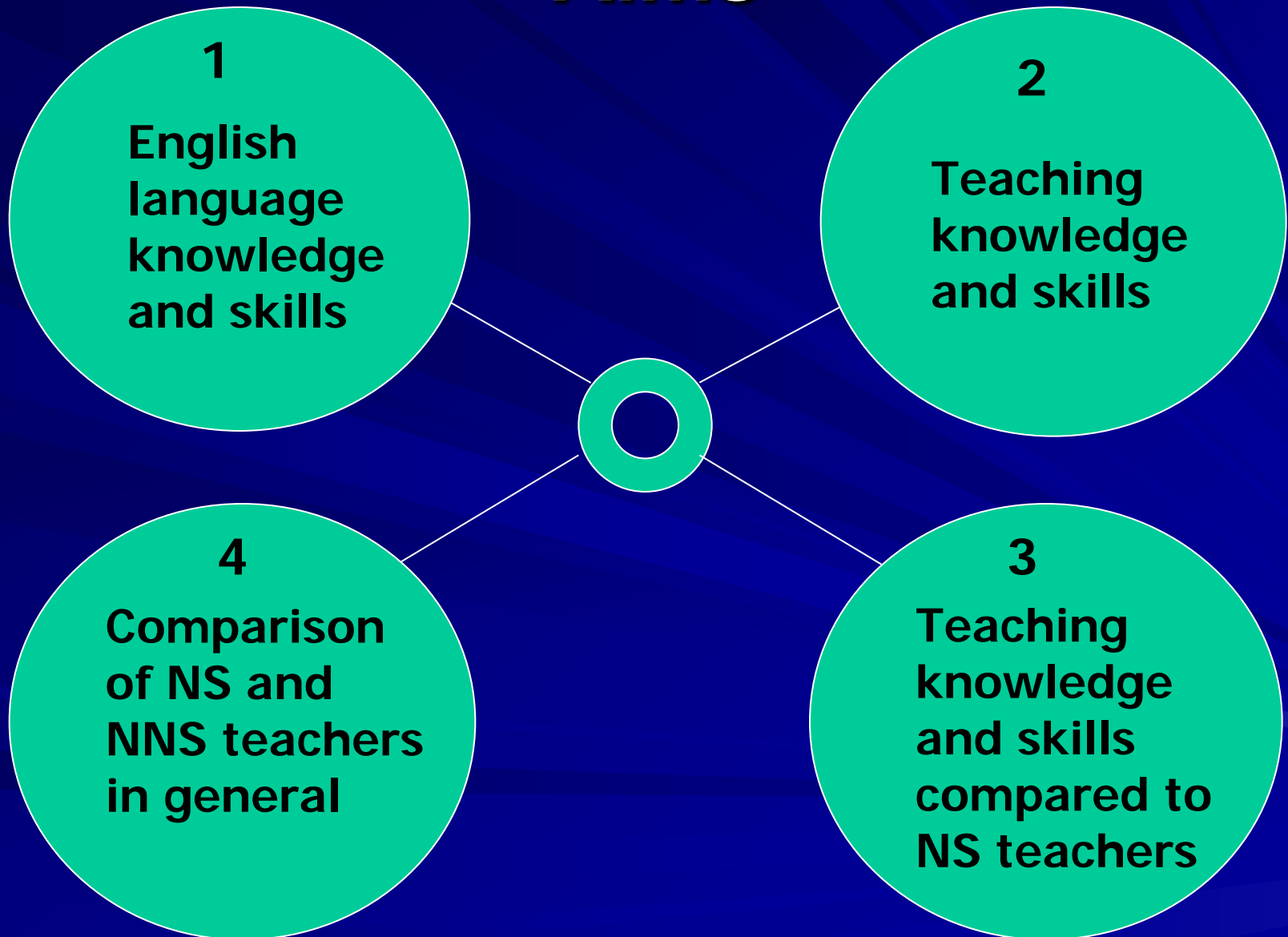


The Methodology:

■ Questionnaire:

- Qualitative items: Experiences (8)
- Quantitative items: Perceptions (4)

Aims

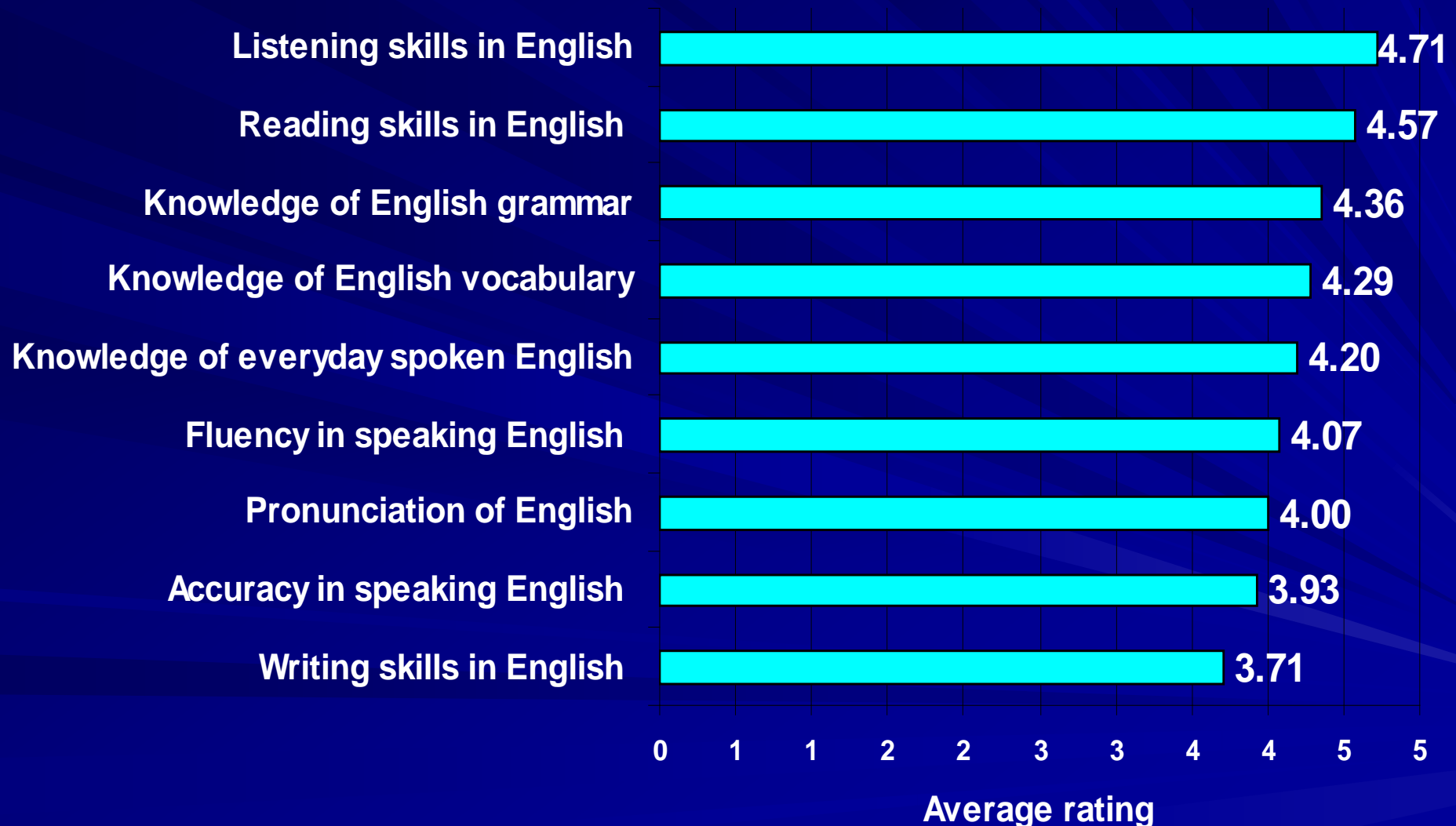


Findings (1)

Participants' rating of their own English language knowledge and skills



Participants' rating of their own English language knowledge and skills

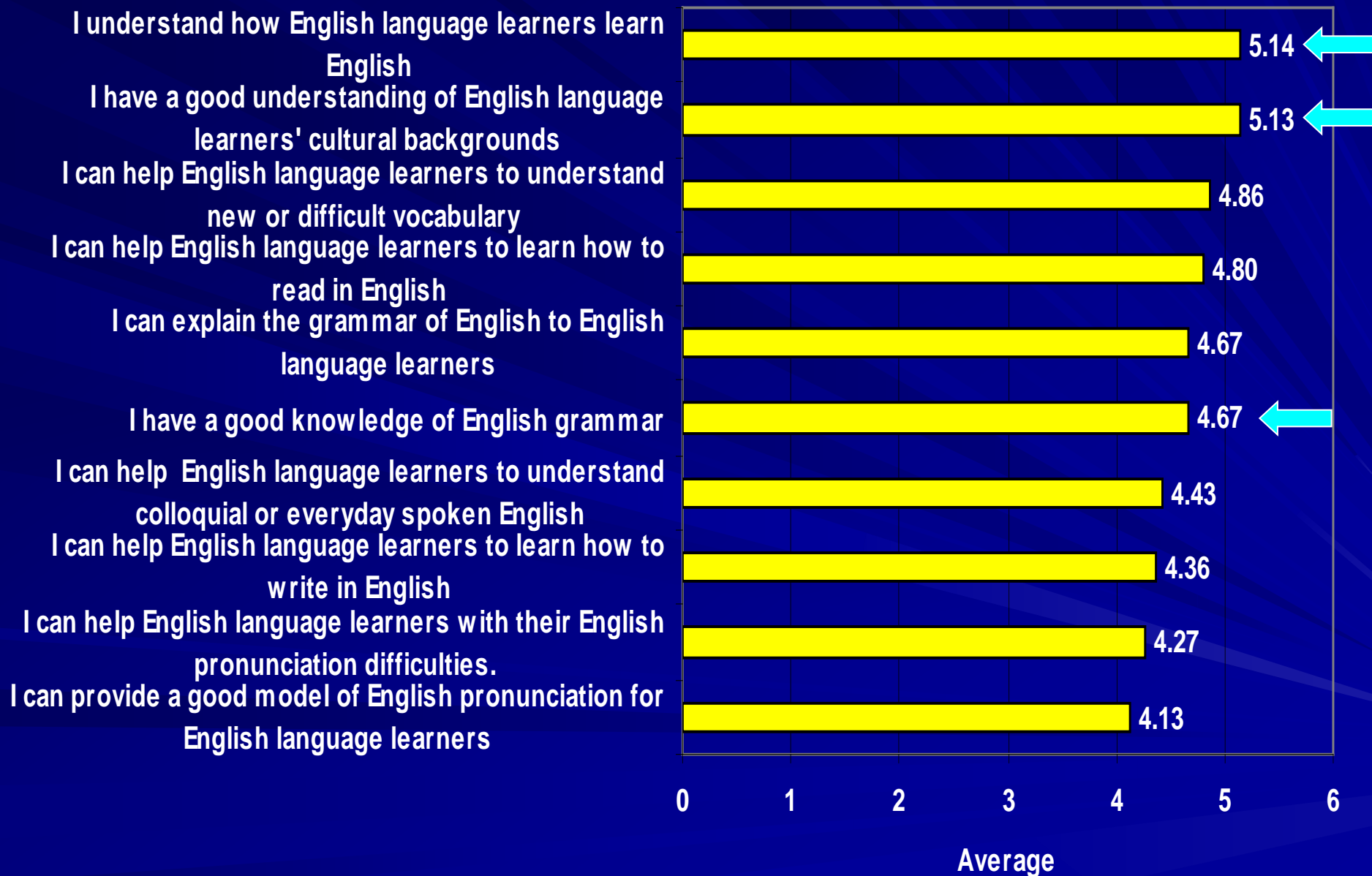


Findings (2)

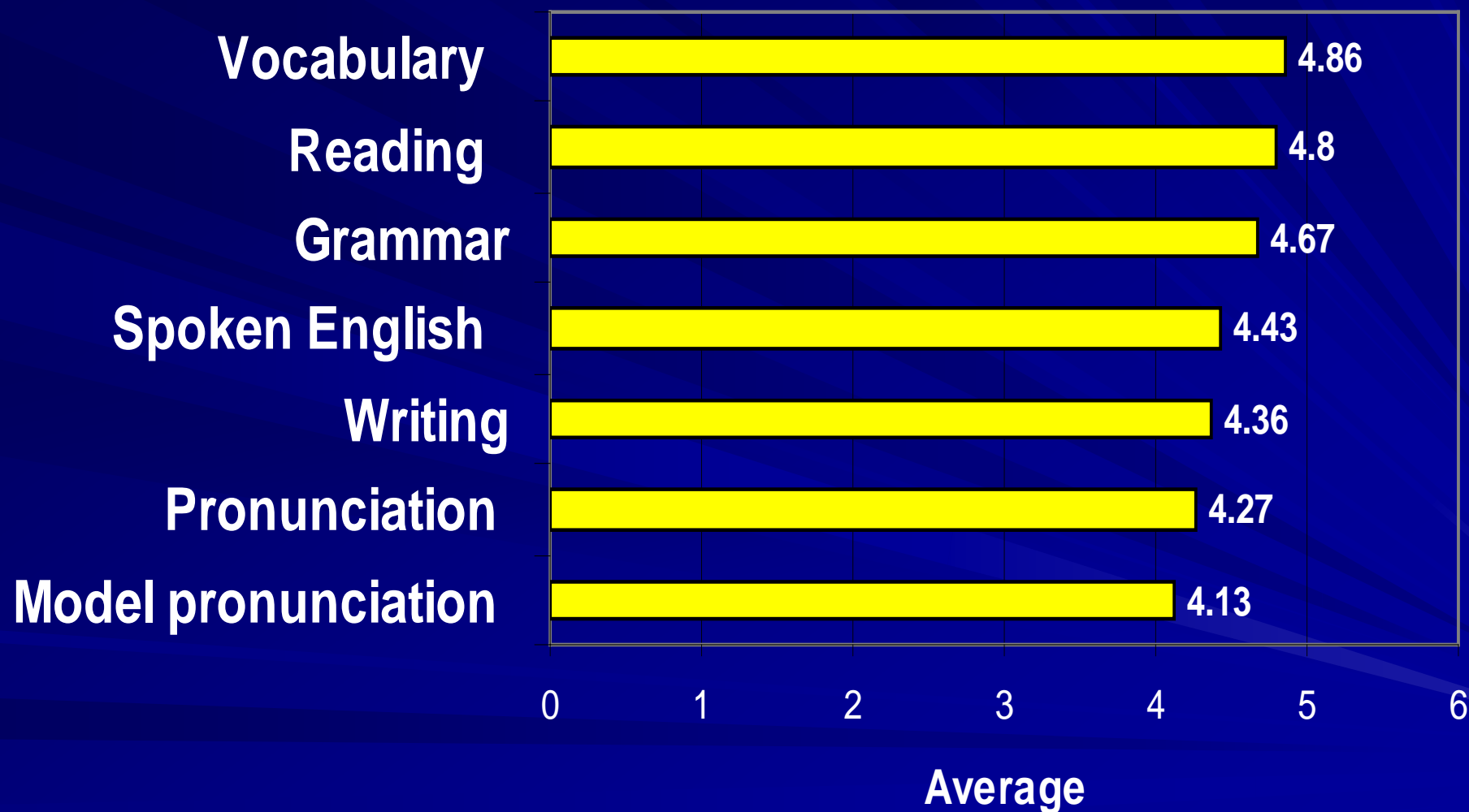
**Participants' rating of their own
teaching knowledge and skills**



Participants' rating of their own teaching knowledge and skills

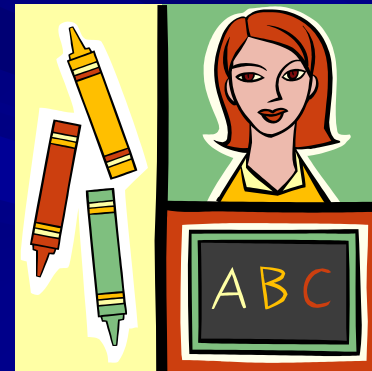
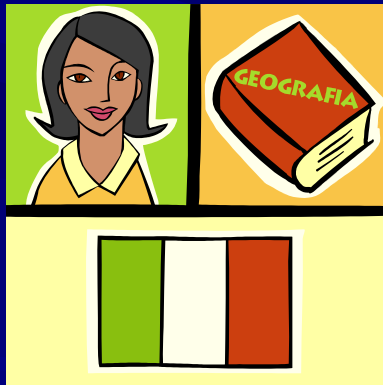


Participants' rating of teaching skills



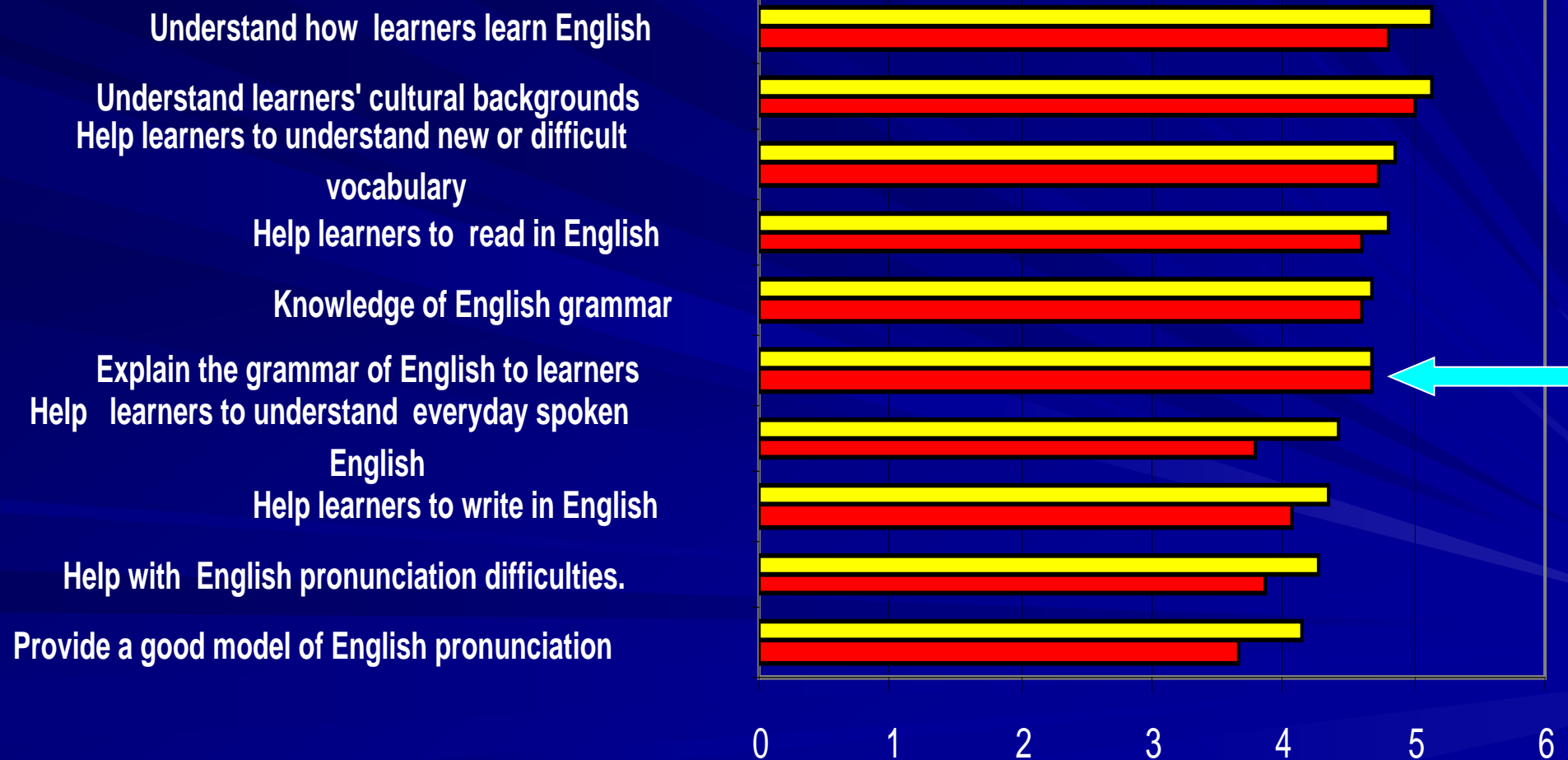
Findings (3)


Participants' rating of their own teaching knowledge and skills compared to NS teachers



Comparison with NS teachers

■ Comparison with NS teachers ■ Participants' rating of themselves





Discussion:

Rating of teaching skills compared to NS teachers

Own teaching skills	Comparison with NS
1) Vocabulary	1) Vocabulary
2) Reading	2) Grammar
3) Grammar	3) Reading
4) Everyday spoken English	4) Writing
5) Writing	5) Pronunciation
6) Pronunciation	6) Everyday spoken English
7) Providing a good model of English pronunciation	7) Providing a good model of English pronunciation

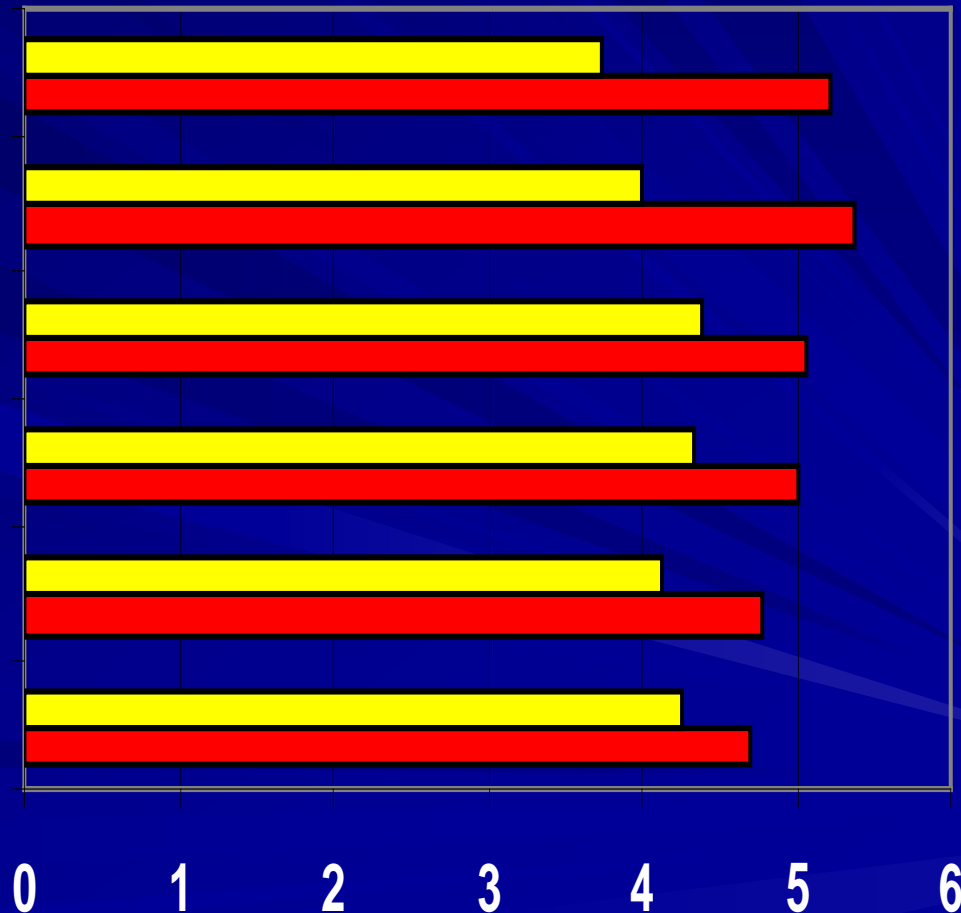
Findings (4)

- Participants' rating of the teaching knowledge and skills of NS and NNS teachers in general

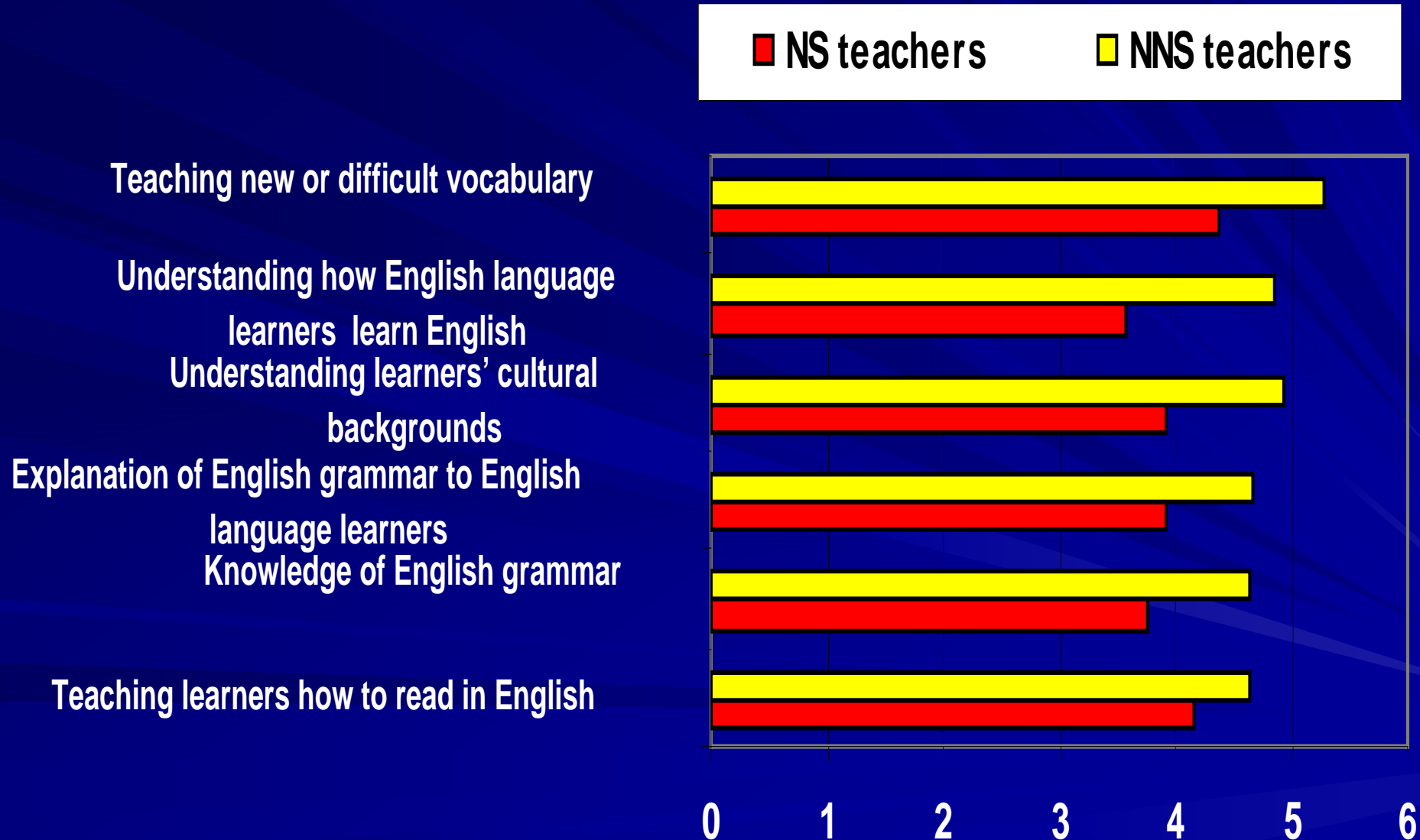
NS teachers rated more highly

■ NS teachers ■ NNS teachers

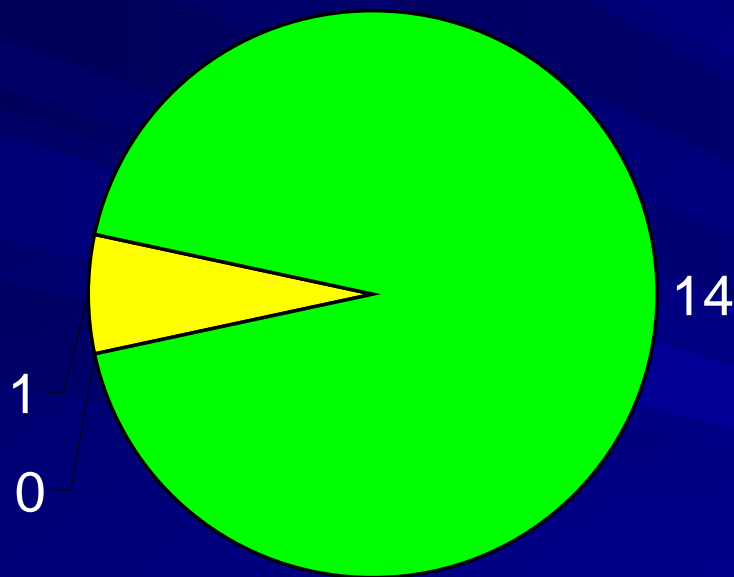
Providing a good model of English
pronunciation for learners
Teaching learners about everyday spoken
English
Helping learners to correct errors when
speaking English
Helping learners to correct errors when
writing English
Teaching learners how to write in English
Helping learners with pronunciation
difficulties



NNS teachers rated more highly



Who is the better teacher – NS or NNS?



- A native speaker of English will generally be better at teaching English
- A non-native speaker of English will generally be better at teaching English
- It is difficult to predict who will make the best English language teacher

Themes emerging from the results


- A fairly high degree of confidence in their ability to do the job of an ESOL/EL teacher
- Clear areas where participants feel that NNSs are more proficient than NSs, and others where they feel they are less proficient
- They do not see NS teachers as being automatically better than NNS teachers.

Reflections

- How many NNS teachers work in your institution?
- What is the proportion of NS/NNS teachers?
- Do NNS teachers experience discrimination from employers in NZ?
- How do NS teachers view NNS teachers?
- What are the attitudes of NS teachers towards NNS teachers?

Recommendations from previous research regarding the training of NNS teachers (cont.)

- Provide English language training for NNS trainees. "...for NNS English teachers to be effective, self-confident, and satisfied professionals, first, we have to be near-native speakers of English" (Medgyes, 1999)
- Provide NNS trainees with instruction and support in key areas (Liu, D., 1999)
- Provide a separate course for NNS trainees, focussing on EFL teaching in non-Western/their home country settings (Carrier, 2003)
- Provide a forum to discuss issues and concerns relating to ELT professionals from diverse backgrounds (Samimy and Brutt-Gifler, 1999)



■ Are we drawing on “the unique insights
Periphery professionals can provide from
their experience and background” ?

(Canagarajah, 1999, p. 87)

Recommendations regarding the training of NNS teachers

- Offer classes that would increase the confidence NNS have of their language and teaching skills (Berry, 1990)
- Both NS and NNS could benefit from courses in grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and culture (Cullen, 1994)
- Teach the value of collaboration between NS and NNS teachers
- Show NS and NNS how to take advantage of their respective strengths and weaknesses (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2004)
- Integrate instruction on issues related to NNS across the whole teacher training curriculum. (Kamhi-Stein, 2004)