

The Challenges and Strategies Faced by Native and Non-Native Teachers Teaching in an ESL Context: A Case Study

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Abstract

Teaching English as a second language (ESL) in an international context presents different challenges and requires different strategies, especially for native and non-native teachers. This study explores the challenges faced by native and non-native English teachers in teaching ESL classes and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges. This qualitative case study involves a non-native English teacher from Indonesia and a native English teacher from Australia, both teaching a "Bridging Course" aimed at improving the academic standards of international students to help them achieve the necessary academic skills for university studies. The primary data instrument is semi-structured interviews, with document analysis as the secondary data instrument. Interviews were conducted separately using online media and analyzed using embedded analysis methods. Data analysis included transcription, familiarization, coding, theme formation, and interpretation. Member checking was used to ensure the data's validity. The study found that both native and non-native teachers are highly enthusiastic and motivated to gain new experiences. Both face similar challenges in managing classes with diverse students, including differences in background, culture, learning styles, and academic abilities. These challenges require them to develop materials and be flexible in their teaching processes. Native teachers focus more on group methods that balance abilities and communication among students, while non-native teachers use more flexible inclusive learning methods. This study is limited to discussing the challenges and strategies of teaching ESL. Future studies should expand the scope with quantitative methods and involve more participants for more valid and comprehensive data.

Keywords: Teaching, Challenges, Strategies

INTRODUCTION

In English language education, there is a common belief that native teachers are superior language models and ideal instructors compared to non-native teachers (Kesevan et al., 2018). This preference for Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) stems from the perception that they represent the "ideal" or "authentic" form of the language and embody Western teaching methodologies (Holliday, 2006). However, no empirical evidence supports the inherent superiority of native teachers over non-native teachers, although this perception persists in many ESL and EFL classrooms (Nayar, 1998). The preference for NESTs has led to significant global discrimination against non-native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs), who, despite their qualifications, often face biases from managers, peers, and students (Chakma, 2020). Phillipson (2012) described these beliefs as 'myths' or 'fallacies,' and subsequent scholarly works have challenged and debunked them, leading to changes in policies, recruitment practices, and promotional materials since the late 1990s.

Studies on the effectiveness of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) suggest that NNESTs often have a greater impact due to their personal experience as language learners. Recently, the global population of NNESTs has risen, now outnumbering NESTs (Wulandari et al., 2021), with nine out of ten English teachers worldwide being non-native speakers (Jaber, 2016). Floris and Renandiyas (2020) found that 80% of the 15 million English teachers are NNESTs, reflecting increased trust in their proficiency. NESTs often face assumptions that their skills come naturally, leading to high expectations for their cultural and linguistic expertise, which can be challenging (Moussu & Llorca, 2008). Conversely, NNESTs may encounter biases questioning their language proficiency despite their training and experience and face professional credibility issues based on race, ethnicity, and linguistic background (Chakma, 2020).

Teaching in an ESL context presents distinct challenges for both native and non-native teachers. Native teachers must navigate linguistic diversity and cultural disparities, such as expressions, speech manners, diverse accents, and interpretations of body language, requiring a nuanced understanding of various cultures to engage students effectively (Hutchison & Jazsar, 2007). They face potential communication gaps despite being proficient in English, demanding more than language skills alone. Non-native teachers contend with additional challenges, including personal complexities of being away from family and adapting to a new culture, which can be emotionally taxing (Ospina & Medina, 2020). The most significant challenge for non-native teachers is classroom management, as they often struggle with handling behavioral issues despite their extensive experience in their home countries, highlighting the difficulties of navigating new school systems (Ospina & Medina, 2020).

Navigating the challenges of ESL teaching requires recognizing the unique strengths of both native and non-native English teachers. Hungarian students often prefer Non-native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) for their ability to explain complex grammatical concepts in the students' native language, drawing from their own experiences of learning English (Cook, 2005; Ma, 2012). Rahmati (2017) concludes that both native and non-native teachers have equal opportunities to become successful, though their paths may differ. Studies by Chakma (2020) and Haufiku et al. (2022) highlight persistent challenges in ESL teaching, such as diverse educational backgrounds, varied student cultures, and a lack of effective teaching materials. Similar challenges are noted in the EFL context by Altaai and Gokgoz-kurt (2023) and Deng et al. (2023), who emphasize language barriers, cultural adaptation, and classroom instruction difficulties. Teachers overcome these obstacles by mastering the language and understanding the educational systems to foster intercultural understanding.

It is quite rare to come across studies that specifically address the challenges and strategies employed by both Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English Speaker Teachers (NNESTs) who teach in an ESL setting. In addition, research comparing the challenges and strategies of NNESTs and NESTs is also very rare. Therefore, this research was coming out to provide a more in-depth perspective and also compare between NNESTs and NESTs in facing challenges and the strategies they use, so that it can help teachers who want to teach in an international context know what they have to prepare. This study focuses on finding answers to the questions 1. What challenges does a Native English-Speaking Teacher (NEST) face in the context of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), and what strategies does the teacher employ to overcome these challenges? 2. What challenges does a Non-native English-Speaking Teacher (NNEST) encounter in the context of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), and what strategies does the teacher employ to address these challenges? and 3. What are the similarities and

differences in the challenges faced by native and non-native teachers when teaching in an ESL context, and what effective strategies do they employ to overcome these challenges?

METHOD

This study use a qualitative approach and case studies as research design. According to Creswell, (2016) case study research can be divided into 3 (three) types, namely single instrumental case study, collective or multiple case study and intrinsic case study. In this study, researcher use multiple case studies as research design, the purpose of using multiple case studies as research design is because this study discusses more than one case and to obtain more detailed data on the challenges and strategies of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) and Non-native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) when teaching in ESL context.

The setting of this study is located in one of the public universities in Australia. It is interesting to know that the university has international students from different cultures and different backgrounds, not only students from various countries such as England, China, Indonesia, and Malaysia even some teachers also come from various countries. The many differences in background and culture make learning and teaching activities more interesting.

Participants in the study were two female teachers of English who are teach at one of Australia's public universities. The first is Athena (a pseudonym), she is 32 years old and what is interesting is that she comes from Indonesia where English is considered a foreign language. The second is Artemis (a pseudonym), a 30-year-old native English teacher who teaches at the same course as Athena, the academic English and study skills bridging course. She was born in the United States and moved to Australia in 2001 for important reasons about her father's work.

In this research, the data sources included in-depth interviews and visual documents in the form of photographs. The interviews consisted of twenty questions divided into seven sections, covering general background, common challenges, specific challenges for native and non-native teachers, general and specific strategies for both groups, cultural sensitivity, professional development, and advice for fellow teachers. The questions, validated by experts, were customized for each participant, with a total of sixteen questions posed individually. Interviews were conducted separately to ensure comfort and privacy, using Indonesian with Athena (non-native teacher) and English with Artemis (native teacher). Visual documents, comprising photographs from a video clip of the participants teaching international students in an ESL context, provided additional detailed information. All interview sessions were conducted online since the researcher and participants were unable to meet offline due to being in different countries. Communication platforms such as WhatsApp calls and Discord were utilized. With participants' consent, all interview sessions were recorded using an audio recorder and later transcribed for more detailed data analysis.

During data analysis, the researcher will use the Embedded Analysis method for a detailed exploration of the data. As outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), this involves transcribing interview recordings to avoid errors, familiarizing with the transcriptions by thorough reading, and then using deductive coding to highlight statements about challenges and strategies. For instance, green may indicate common strategies, and yellow common challenges faced by both participants in the ESL context. Next, the theming stage groups the coded data, and in the final interpretation phase, the researcher reanalyzes the data concerning the challenges and strategies of native and non-native English teachers. For visual documents, screenshots from video clips showing teaching challenges are analyzed, explained, and validated by participants to ensure accuracy. Participants are provided with interview transcript data to verify the accuracy of the information obtained. Participants are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the given data; they can add or

remove from it. According to Doyle (2007), the interview data results can be considered valid and reliable by the researcher after member checking is conducted.

FINDINGS

After collecting data using semi-structured interviews as the main data source and document analysis to investigate the challenges and strategies in teaching by native English speaker teachers (NEST) and non-native English speaker teachers (NNEST), as well as their similarities and differences. The findings are divided into three sections, each intended to answer a research question.

Challenges and Strategies in Teaching by Native English-Speaking Teachers (NEST)

Challenges

When Artemis first began teaching ESL, the variety of students she encountered energized her, bringing her immense joy and a strong passion for her job. However, she soon understood that this diversity came with its own set of challenges shared by all ESL educators. These challenges involved accommodating different learning styles, overcoming cultural barriers, and making sure that every student could succeed.

"Umm... Maybe the most common challenge we face as ESL teachers is regarding their culture, it's the first issue and the most common one we encounter in the ESL classroom."

Cultural diversity, learning styles, and student learning abilities which are considered common challenges by ESL teachers are only some of the challenges faced. There are still many more specific challenges that ESL teachers must face when teaching. These challenges include language limitations that hinder effective communication, difficulties in adapting teaching materials to suit individual student needs, and dealing with differences in students' educational backgrounds that affect the speed and manner in which they understand lessons.

"In my opinion..., there are several key issues, with the first being how to make our language more easily understood by them. Specifically, this involves simplifying our language and speaking at a slower and clearer pace."

The diverse language abilities and learning styles of students in ESL classes have been mentioned previously. This makes ESL teachers obliged to be as creative as possible in developing material from the given curriculum system. This diversity requires teachers to not only rely on standard materials, but also to adapt them to suit students' individual needs. As a result, ESL teachers have to work extra hard to ensure that every student can understand and apply what they learn.

"The main issue we face to this day is how we develop teaching materials for them, which must always be adjusted each year. Their skill levels vary, their backgrounds are different, and their learning styles are definitely different. As ESL teachers, we have to be truly creative in creating balanced teaching materials to better approach their needs"

In the Academic English and Study Skills Bridging Course class taught by Artemis, there are no particular challenges regarding teaching the subject. However, external factors also play an important role in influencing the course of learning. The external factor in question is diversity in

the ESL class itself. This diversity influences a teacher's creativity in developing the material provided so that every student can receive and understand it.

“Teaching this course is not an issue because it is essentially the same as other language courses, which aim to enhance students' language proficiency to a standard level required for university admission. As I mentioned earlier, we need to start by familiarizing ourselves with the basics and adapting as quickly as possible. There are no particular problems with the course itself; as teachers, we have already planned the curriculum for the students.”

Strategies

As a native English teacher who teaches ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, Artemis faces various challenges. The main challenge is the diversity of students' backgrounds and differences in their English academic abilities. To overcome this problem, Artemis uses a quite unique method which she calls the "Mosaic Method". In addition, to handle students' cultural diversity in the classroom, Artemis uses teaching materials that contain cultures from various students' countries of origin.



Picture 1 Mosaic Method

“I start by giving both written and oral assessments to determine their abilities. Then, I adjust the material I will provide to ensure the difficulty is balanced for them. Next, I often use a group method divided into three categories: students with strong theoretical skills, students with strong oral skills, and students with lower abilities than the other two groups. I then switch group members to work together and enhance each individual's abilities. I usually call this the mosaic method...Regarding the diversity of backgrounds, I mix it with learning materials the cultures they come from so they can learn about each other”

Still in the same concept in group form and can also be applied using the “Mosaic Method”, one of the strategies used by Artemis which works effectively is by collaborating with teachers or lecturers from other countries. In this case, teachers or lecturers will share experiences and knowledge in order to broaden their knowledge of different cultures and learning styles. This method not only has an effect on students, but as a teacher, Artemis can also develop her teaching methods to be more flexible.



Picture 2 Collaboration with lecturers from other countries

“When I collaborated with other teachers inviting teachers from various countries through online applications to provide their knowledge and learning styles from each teacher and introduce their culture to the students. After that the students ask each other about their culture and become closer which makes communication between students easier in learning”

In the field of "Bridging Course," there is no material that is much different from English academics in general. The curriculum system has provided a basic framework. Not only Artemis, ESL teachers must be able to adapt their teaching methods according to the needs and abilities of each student. ESL teachers are required to develop their creativity and flexibility in processing the teaching materials provided by the curriculum.

“Perhaps it's not what you'd call a particularly unique teaching strategy. The first thing I do is focus on academic grammar because it's part of the curriculum in this course. Then, advance their creativity in expressing themselves, gradually giving them tasks to assess their progress, and finally, develop their ability to write with proper academic standards. quite enjoy employing group methods to develop their communication skills, like the “Mosaic Method” I mentioned earlier. It allows them to be more open with each other and exchange ideas”

In the most important part, specifically ensuring students' understanding of the material provided, the curriculum system plays a fairly large role. The curriculum system provides a schedule and examination material which aims to assess the extent of students' understanding of the material that has been presented. However, ESL teachers, including Artemis, have a very significant role in this process. Teachers are fully responsible for developing the material or exam questions that will be given to students, the material created must first be verified by the relevant department in the course.

“This is also part of our curriculum in this course, so everything is already in the teaching system. Every two lessons, we give individual quizzes or presentations that are appropriate to the material that has been taught, and every week we hold it. Every week, the teacher will give another evaluation regarding material and student test results by providing feedback to each individual. Every month, we conduct exams to ensure each student's understanding...”

Challenges and Strategies in Teaching by Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNEST)

Challenges

Athena's opportunity to teach abroad will not be wasted, her motivation and dreams create a special enthusiasm for Athena to teach. As a non-native teacher, Athena is not free from various obstacles or challenges that arise from various sources. One of the obstacles he encountered was how she could unite communication between students and ensure that all students could be active and understand each other even though they had different backgrounds and academic abilities.

"If that's a common problem, how do we unite them first so they get to know each other and can learn from each other? Right from the start they are already strangers from each other's backgrounds, the general problem is that they are really strangers, so how do we get them to know each other, maybe all ESL teachers feel that is the most common problem or the first problem they have to think about, that's my opinion yaa..."

In Athena's first year teaching as a non-native English teacher, one of the problems that may arise when a non-native English teacher teaches an ESL class is the occurrence of bias based on the diversity of students in the class, especially native speaker students. Early in her teaching career, Athena experienced this problem.

"Yaaaaa, that definitely happens, and I experienced it too in my first year. They seemed uninterested when I was teaching. One of the students even told me that some of the others were a bit biased. They said, 'How can she teach us when she's not a native speaker herself?' hahaha...There were some students like that..."

In addition to challenges based on the diversity of students in ESL classes, Athena also had personal issues regarding grammar to overcome. Athena's main language is Indonesian, so she finds it difficult to construct English well in an academic context. For example, when explaining complicated material, he must simplify the explanation so that it is easy for students to understand. This often makes Athena feel a little stiff in giving explanations.

"When it comes to language, I study mainly because I am not a native speaker. My mother tongue is Indonesian-Javanese, so there are bound to be mistakes both when I speak and write. In essence, I also learned the language. Just like them, my language management, especially when explaining rather complicated material, making my language as easy as possible so that they understand is difficult in my opinion because I myself am still too rigid in my language, so sometimes I repeat it once so that they really understand. Sometimes when that happens, they get a little confused."

In the field of "Bridging Course" taught by Athena, there are no special obstacles or challenges when teaching this course, but there are several things that must still be underlined, namely the main challenge remains the diversity of students and language processing when teaching, she must adapt first. Perhaps the general problem that occurs is that adjusting the level of material must be adjusted to students' abilities and teachers must also carry out further research into the very diverse backgrounds of students so that there are no misunderstandings.

"I think it's the same, it's not a matter of arrogance or anything, this course is just the same as teaching high school students who want to go to college, there's no difference, the aim is to improve their English skills so that they reach campus standards, right, so the learning is just the same "from the basics again, but not basic" really, they already have that, so our

job is to just improve that, the material is the same. I don't think there is any particular problem."

In her first year of teaching, Athena, as a non-native English teacher, faced the problem of bias from students towards non-native teachers. Indirectly, Athena had prepared a strategy to deal with this situation because she had expected it to happen. She approaches students more personally and respects them through research into their backgrounds, so that students can be more open and Athena can prove and meet their expectations.

"As teachers, we also have to prepare for this. For problems like this, first of all, indirectly we have to fulfill their expectations first if we are truly capable. The first thing I do is be honest with them, if I don't feel smarter than them..., I ask for their opinions, their stories, and their experiences. I took the first step so that they felt open to me and I also felt open to them. Continuing to include in the material we bring up their culture, it shows that we actually also research about their background, I show them that I as a teacher must respect them, on the other hand, I hope they also respect me as a teacher..."

Strategies

Since Athena has been teaching in an ESL context for three years, she has faced many challenges. The essence of this problem is the diversity of students, both in terms of culture and their learning styles. However, as a non-native teacher, Athena took advantage of this opportunity to gain experience by discussing with other teachers how to overcome this problem. She was advised to form groups among students. Athena developed this method into learning outside the classroom or in the library.

"In my first year, I was advised to do group learning for communication students. Several lecturers there taught me something like that, so I applied it in my first year. "Then for a long time I was interested in outdoor learning so we went outside to class, whether in the library, in the canteen or on the campus grounds."



Picture 3 Outdoor Class



Picture 4 Library Class

Besides the challenges of student diversity, such as their culture and learning styles, another factor is the difference in their academic abilities. In this situation, Athena does not use a specific strategy because, at the beginning of the learning process, the curriculum already assesses their abilities through tests. The test results are shared with the teacher who will teach the class, so the teacher's job is to develop the material to suit the students' abilities. Athena also holds discussions with other teachers to exchange ideas and facilitate material development.

"I don't focus too much on that issue because I refer to the system. As an external teacher, I am advised to follow the curriculum. For ESL classes, there is a test at the beginning, and the scores are given to us as the teaching teachers, so we know from the start. As for learning styles, I don't delve into that much because I find it too complicated. So..., I ask for opinions from experienced teachers about their learning habits and get advice from other teachers."

In the field of "Bridging Course," Athena does not experience significant obstacles because the course is basically similar to learning English in general. Athena continues to use the material provided by the curriculum system to facilitate the learning process. For example, to improve speaking skills, Athena holds various activities such as debates and interviews, both with students and teachers

"In my opinion, this is the same as before, it was more about following instructions from the curriculum system, so there is no special strategy terrapin, although fields like this are rare, and this is also an ESL class, so in our curriculum system we have prepared everything because it is more complex. The fall is in terms of the students, the material and the subject area... Emm... for example, we are in the Improvement in Academic Speaking Skills lesson. So, there we learn how students can be more fluent, more skilled, better at choosing vocabulary when speaking, we have debate sessions, and we also have interviews with lecturers or friends from different classes"

In the final part, namely ensuring students' understanding of the material, which is a very important part, Athena has a special method. Athena provides time for students outside of school hours to ask questions about material they have not yet understood. Apart from that, this also aims to bring Athena closer to students so that they get to know each other better and open up. She also

continues to implement procedures prepared by the curriculum system, namely by providing exams to assess students' understanding of the material that has been provided.

"If this is new, maybe I'm a bit different from other teachers, because I prefer to approach students from the start, so every theory meeting or explanation from me, there will definitely be assignments at every meeting, that's outside of learning time, I give them time. I ask my students what they don't understand, but on the other hand, my intention is also to make them closer to me and of course they won't be embarrassed to say anything if they really know me."

Similarities and Differences in Challenges and Strategies for Native and Non-Native English Teachers

Similarities in the challenges faced

Within the scope of the common challenges faced by Athena and Artemis, there is the same core problem, namely that they feel the diversity of students, ranging from culture, language, learning styles, to academic abilities. Artemis feels that as an ESL teacher, students with diverse backgrounds are required to first understand their diversity to make learning easier.

"Umm... maybe the most common challenge we face as ESL teachers is regarding their culture, it's the first issue and the most common one we encounter in the ESL classroom"

While Athena, as a non-native teacher, feels that student diversity causes a lack of communication between students and makes the learning process less effective.

"Right from the start they were strangers from each other's backgrounds, the general problem is that they are really strangers, so how do we get them to know each other, maybe all ESL teachers feel that way..."

In the course they taught, namely the "Bridging Course", Athena and Artemis did not face any special problems. Athena felt that the course was not much different from learning English in general.

"It's the same in my opinion, it's not a matter of arrogance or anything, this course is just the same as teaching high school students who want to go to college, there's no difference, the aim is to improve their English skills so that they reach campus standards"

For Artemis, she also felt the same way, namely that learning on the "Bridging Course" course did not have its own difficulties. According to him, the course is basically similar to English courses in general, so it does not pose significant additional challenges.

"Teaching this course is not an issue because it is essentially the same as other language courses, which aim to enhance students' language proficiency to a standard level required for university admission..."

Student diversity is a common challenge that ESL teachers have to face, but this problem is not an ordinary problem that can be solved easily and has a big impact on the learning process. In fact, Athena and Artemis both feel that student diversity is at the heart of all the challenges they face. Athena, who is a non-native teacher, felt a significant impact, she had to do a lot of communication and research regarding their background.

"That's really true... yes, first of all we have to adapt them to each other first, and then how do I use English as formally as possible... I have to research them first, where do they come from, what is their culture, how do they learn?"

Artemis feels that diversity in ESL classes not only has a significant impact on her but on all teachers who teach in ESL classes. He feels that in ESL classes' creativity is really needed in the teaching process.

"Yaa.., it has a significant impact not only on me but also on other ESL teachers. They definitely face this issue. This is one of the external factors I mentioned earlier. The diversity of students greatly affects the learning activities"

Similarities of strategies used

In terms of strategy, both Athena and Artemis are guided by the curriculum system that has been provided. However, in facing various challenges that arise, even though some of the problems faced are similar, both of them develop these strategies in different ways. Therefore, even though they adhere to the same curriculum, their approaches and methods in overcoming learning challenges vary according to their respective skills.

Differences in challenges faced

In the learning process, Athena as a native speaking teacher faces the main problem, namely in terms of material development. Athena finds it quite difficult to find resources and develop materials that suit the diversity and needs of its students. Diversity in culture, language, learning styles and academic abilities means that we must be more selective and creative in selecting and developing learning materials that can accommodate all students effectively.

"... the main issue we face to this day is how we develop teaching materials for them, which must always be adjusted each year. Their skill levels vary, their backgrounds are different, and their learning styles are definitely different."

In contrast to Artemis, Athena, who is a non-native speaker teacher, faces special difficulties in terms of structuring language when teaching. He often has difficulty explaining complex concepts using language that is easy for students to understand. Athena must make extra efforts to ensure that the delivery of the material is well received by all students, without causing confusion or misunderstandings.

"My language management, especially when explaining something quite complicated, makes my language as easy for them to understand as possible. I think it's difficult because I myself am still too rigid in my language, so sometimes I repeat it so they really understand, sometimes they spell it wrong and they feel confused."

Apart from the problems of student diversity and difficulties in language management that Athena faces, there is one special problem that Artemis does not experience. Many students felt biased because Athena was not a native English speaker. This makes some students doubt their competence in teaching English effectively. They tend to feel that learning provided by a non-native speaker will not be as good or as accurate as learning provided by a native speaker.

I experienced it too in my first year. They seemed uninterested when I was teaching. One of the students even told me that some of the others were a bit biased. They said, 'How can she teach us when she's not a native speaker herself?' hahaha...There were some students like that..."

Different from Athena, Artemis also refers to the curriculum and continues to use the "Mosaic Method" grouping strategy, which aims to develop creativity, communication, and also allows students to share ideas with each other.

The first thing I do is focus on academic grammar because it's part of the curriculum in this course. Then, advance their creativity in expressing themselves... I quite enjoy employing group methods to develop their communication skills, like the mosaic method that I mentioned earlier..."

Differences in strategies used

The diversity of ESL students, ranging from culture, learning styles, language, to academic abilities, is the main challenge that Athena and Artemis must face as ESL teachers. They need certain strategies to overcome these problems so that the learning process runs effectively. Athena, who has a background as a non-native English teacher, initially chose to discuss with a more experienced ESL teacher. She was advised to do group learning. Over time, Athena developed this method into learning outside the classroom, such as in the campus yard, library and canteen.

"In my first year, I was advised to do group learning for communication, I was taught by several lecturers there to do something like that, so I applied it like that in my first year. Then for a long time I was interested in outdoor learning, so we went out of class, either in the library, in the canteen or on the campus grounds."

Meanwhile, Artemis focuses more on grouping methods based on their academic abilities. This method is called the "Mosaic Method" and she also collaborates with ESL teachers from various countries with online methods to share their knowledge with ESL students.

"I often use a group method divided into three categories: students with strong theoretical skills, students with strong oral skills, and students with lower abilities than the other two groups...collaborated with other teachers inviting teachers from various countries through online applications to provide their knowledge and learning styles from each teacher and introduce their culture to the students."

The final part is the stage of assessing students' understanding of the learning material provided. Athena and Artemis also continue to use curriculum suggestions that hold regular exams every few meetings and provide feedback during each learning process. However, in this case, Athena added her own strategy, namely approaching students as a strategy to strengthen communication while assessing their understanding. Athena provides time outside of class hours for students to ask questions about material they don't understand.

"Because I prefer to approach students from the start, so every theory meeting or explanation from me there will definitely be assignments at every meeting, outside of learning time I give my students time to ask everyone what they don't understand, on the other hand My intention is also to make them closer to me and they definitely won't be embarrassed to say anything if they get to know me better."

Meanwhile, Artemis only focuses on the methods provided by the curriculum system, such as taking quizzes and providing feedback at every meeting. Artemis also focuses on developing exam materials according to those provided in the curriculum.

"This is also part of our curriculum in this course, so everything is already in the teaching system. Every two lessons, we give individual quizzes or presentations that are appropriate to the material that has been taught, and every week we hold it. Every week, the teacher will give another evaluation regarding material and student test results by providing feedback to each individual. Every month, we conduct exams to ensure each student's understanding"

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research indicate that both participants have their own motivation and enthusiasm for teaching in an ESL context, seeing it as a new and interesting experience. This is in line with Luthans et al., (2021), who states that motivation is a process that begins due to the emergence of physiological or psychological deficiencies or needs that create a desire or impulse aimed at a goal or achievement. Artemis feels very enthusiastic about her new experience as an ESL teacher, especially seeing the diversity of her students, which encourages her to develop her teaching skills and improve her students' skills. On the other hand, Athena, a non-native English teacher from Indonesia, also has a drive to develop herself and gain as much experience as possible by teaching in an ESL context. This allows him to contribute to the development of the teacher community in his own country. This statement is also supported by Filgona et al., (2020) stated that motivation is the key to the success of the teaching and learning process. Motivation, as the name suggests, is what moves us. That's the reason we do anything.

Research conducted by Macapagong et al., (2023) found the complexity of maintaining order, developing students, and creating an effective learning environment to be an extraordinary challenge. This is in line with these findings, which show that the main challenge experienced by Athena and Artemis is that managing classes with a diversity of students makes the teaching and learning process a little more difficult. This was in accordance with Ospina and Medina (2020) who stated that professional teachers said that classroom management was one of the most challenging aspects in the school system. Even though they have years of teaching experience, they need help to properly understand behavior problems in the classroom.

Apart from that, the diversity of students which makes it difficult to manage classes raises other new problems. Artemis finds it difficult to handle the problem of managing material that will be given to students from various cultural backgrounds and different academic abilities, so it requires more time and material resources. According to Garcia and Weiss (2019), teachers report that students' diverse needs require more resources and time to meet their needs, which can lead to burnout and increased stress levels. Even with the help of technology, Artemis still finds it difficult to develop appropriate and balanced material so that the student learning process runs well. Bebell and O'Dwyer (2010) stated that teachers' technological and pedagogical skills greatly influence their level of success, and this becomes a burden for inexperienced teachers.

In contrast to Artemis, Athena as a non-native teacher experiences problems which may only exist because she is not a native teacher. Some students in the class taught by Athena appear biased because they feel it would be better if they were taught directly by a native English teacher. Dwyer (2019) says that the teacher as an educator who is responsive to culture, you can be aware of privilege, identity, bias and how this can influence one's teaching and learning process. Apart from that, because Athena has a non-native background, sometimes she has a little difficulty in processing grammar so that it is easy to understand when presenting material in the learning process and this can cause students to misunderstand.

The problem of student diversity which makes classroom management more difficult, Athena and Artemis have implemented strategies they consider effective to make the teaching and learning process easier. They adopted a curriculum system that utilizes several learning methods that are proven to be effective, especially in ESL classes. One of the strategies they implement is to conduct an initial assessment of students' academic abilities and their learning styles. By using the results of this assessment, they can group students based on their needs, so that the material taught can be adjusted to each student's level of understanding. Variations in student assessment strategies

allow teachers to better know and meet the individual characteristics and needs of each student (Nafisah et al., 2021).

Not only guided by the curriculum, Artemis developed its own strategy called the "Mosaic Method" to manage student diversity in its classes. This method forms groups based on students' academic abilities, where they exchange places to share knowledge and learning strategies. Group or cooperative learning makes students' learning activities more active and easier to interact with each other (Yunus and Sari, 2018). In this method, Artemis can monitor students' needs and encourage them to build communication between students, as well as develop their speaking skills. The strategy used by Artemis is in line with (Khalidah et al., 2023) which states that students with higher abilities can share information with other students with the aim of developing students' communication skills.

Apart from using group methods, Artemis also uses collaboration methods with teachers from various backgrounds via online media. Artemis leverages digital platforms to collaborate with teachers from various countries, aiming to share diverse knowledge and teaching strategies. Meanwhile, when Athena feels that her teaching methods are less effective or feels that she has encountered new obstacles, she often collaborates or discusses with local teachers who are more experienced in the ESL context to develop teaching methods and materials that will be used during the learning process. This is in line with the statements of Hutchison and Jazzar (2007), that in an international environment, collaboration between native and non-native speaker teachers can help both adapt to the international environment and develop their teaching abilities. This collaboration not only expands their teaching but also helps them understand the needs of diverse students.

In contrast to Artemis, Athena faced the challenge of bias early in her teaching life. She tries to be more open and uses an inclusive approach that focuses on building good communication with students. She uses time outside of school hours to get to know each individual student, understand their backgrounds, and listen to their concerns and needs. Athena also adopts inclusive teaching methods, which encourage active participation and open dialogue in the classroom. Through this approach, by using this method, Athena has not only succeeded in overcoming bias, she also developed a learning environment that supports and respects diversity, so that every student feels valued and heard. In ELT, an inclusive approach is important because it has a big role in meeting the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities, different backgrounds and learning preferences (Anis, 2023).

Besides using an inclusive approach method, Athena also developed a method obtained from discussions with local teachers, namely using a group method but outside the classroom area. This method aims to increase students' creativity as well as social skills in a more real context. Agusta & Noorhapizah (2018) stated that the development of the character of independence, cooperation between students, mutual cooperation and emotional control can be achieved through outdoor learning. Developing these skills will be more effective if carried out with varied methods such as learning outside the classroom. By using this method, Athena and her students can experience the learning process in a new atmosphere while also having a good impact on the development of their creativity.

In the assessment section of students' understanding, Athena and Artemis use methods provided by the curriculum to measure the level of understanding of the material that has been given to students. Exams that have been scheduled by the curriculum system are carried out at certain time intervals to assess students' understanding of the material, but as teachers they must develop exam materials independently so that the material they provide is balanced with the abilities of their respective students. Providing feedback after each lesson, creating quizzes and presenting the results of student assignments are also strategies that Athena and Artemis developed

from the guidelines provided by the curriculum. Khotimah et al., (2019) stated that evaluation of student learning outcomes such as writing results, speaking abilities and so on is a common thing that can influence students' views of these elements.

The challenges in managing classes faced by Athena and Artemis include diversity of backgrounds, academic abilities and needs. Both of them must be able to adapt teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students. However, even though they have the same core problem, they use different strategies. Athena addresses the problem of bias in particular by using an inclusive approach to get to know individual students and understand their needs. Meanwhile, Artemis uses a group method called the "Mosaic Method" based on academic abilities and exchanging knowledge between students. The collaboration used by Artemis and Athena is also different, Athena collaborates with teachers from various backgrounds using online media, while Athena collaborates with local teachers to develop her learning methods.

Although Athena and Artemis use different methods in the learning process, in the field of "Bridging Course" they have the same main goal. Develop students' academic skills and real social communication so that they can achieve the academic standards needed to enter the college they want.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on interview data and document analysis, it can be concluded that Athena and Artemis both have their own enthusiasm and motivation to gain new experience teaching in ESL classes. In this process they face the same challenges, namely managing classes with a diversity of students, including differences in backgrounds, cultures, learning styles and academic abilities. This triggers the emergence of new problems which require them to develop materials and be flexible in the teaching process.

Athena, as a non-native teacher, faces challenges that she has never faced as a teacher before, namely bias in the teaching process. Apart from that, during the teaching process, sometimes he feels a little difficult in organizing his grammar, which causes a little misunderstanding among students. From this, she understands that student diversity gives rise to various variables that require him to develop his learning methods to be more flexible and balanced. Athena uses inclusive learning methods that prioritize communication and flexibility to overcome various problems. She also discussed with more experienced teachers to get feedback on her learning methods so that he could use the right methods in the teaching process in the ESL class. Through this method, she was able to slowly resolve various problems, especially the bias she experienced at the beginning of the teaching period, and create a teaching and learning environment that unites diversity, where every student feels fair and valued.

Meanwhile, Artemis also has a major problem in managing the diversity of students in her class. He focuses more on balancing the abilities and communication of his students' diversity through a group method he calls the "Mosaic Method". Apart from that, Artemis gets good results by collaborating with teachers with diverse backgrounds who aim to develop cultural knowledge, learning styles and at the same time the skills of their students. Artemis, who experienced difficulties in developing material, was also helped by this method, making him have various different sources to develop the material given to his students. Student diversity as the main problem triggers Artemis to develop and adapt in order to improve her teaching abilities and create a learning atmosphere that supports students to develop according to their individual needs.

Athena and Artemis, who both teach ESL classes in the "Bridging Course" field, basically have the same problem, namely managing classes with a diversity of students. This raises different

main problems for the two individuals, Athena who experiences bias and difficulty in arranging language when teaching so that it is easily understood by her students, while Artemis has problems developing material to give to her students. In the end, they innovated to develop their own methods to solve the problems that arose. Artemis focuses on the "Mosaic Method" or group method while utilizing technology by collaborating with teachers from various backgrounds, while Athena, received advice after discussing with local teachers who were more experienced in using the group method. Athena used this method before she developed it with the outdoor learning method and also adapted an inclusive approach to build better and more open communication in her students.

For all the differences and similarities in challenges and strategies in their teaching process, the curriculum has a very significant impact as a guiding framework for those who teach in ESL classes. The curriculum framework provides methods and materials that can be innovated and adapted based on the classroom situation they face. This is none other than because they have the same goal in the field of "Bridging Course" that they teach. Despite experiencing problems and using different methods, their goals are to improve academic abilities, develop social skills, and create a real learning environment to meet the standards that have been adjusted to the college they want to study at.

Based on the findings produced by this research, it is only limited to the challenges and strategies faced by native and non-native speaker teachers who teach English in context (ESL). It is hoped that future research can fill the gaps in this research by focusing on comparisons based on other regions. This can expand knowledge about how regional location and culture can influence teaching methods using quantitative methods. Future research can also utilize a larger number of participants to fill in the gaps in this research in order to obtain more data to create more valid research.

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