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## Do qualifications even matter? A qualitative analysis of English as a foreign language teacher job ads in Poland

### 1. Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) is a rapidly evolving field that demands that English language teachers stay up-to-date with the latest developments in technology and educational practices<sup>1</sup>. This includes staying abreast of new teaching methodologies, materials, and tools that can enhance student learning. Notwithstanding this constant need to develop, non-native English speakers often face discrimination in the job market, regardless of their professional qualifications<sup>2,3</sup>. This can create significant barriers to employment and professional development, particularly in an industry where native speakerism remains prevalent<sup>4</sup>.

Despite the importance of this issue, research on native speakerism in ELT job ads has primarily focused on Asia and the Middle East, with little attention given to European countries such as Poland. This is surprising given that English is the most popular foreign language among Polish students, with 96% of school-leavers opting to take the English language Matura exam<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> BASILOTTA-GÓMEZ-PABLOS V., MATARRANZ L., OTTO A., *Teachers' digital competencies in higher education: a systematic literature review*, "International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education" 2022, vol. 19, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> CLARK E., PARAN A., *The employability of non-native-speaker teachers of EFL: A UK survey*, "System" 2007, vol. 35, 4, pp. 407–430.

<sup>3</sup> MAHBOOB A., *Native or nonnative: What do students enrolled in an intensive English program think?*, [in:] Kamhi-Stein L. (ed.), *Learning and teaching from experience: Perspective on nonnative English-speaking professionals*, University of Michigan Press, Michigan 2004, pp. 121–147.

<sup>4</sup> LOWE R., KICZKOWIAK M., *Native-speakerism and the complexity of personal experience: A duoethnographic study*, "Cogent Education" 2016, vol. 3, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Sprawozdanie – Egzamin Maturalny 2022, [https://www.oke.poznan.pl/files/cms/735/ogolny\\_raport\\_kraj\\_2022.pdf](https://www.oke.poznan.pl/files/cms/735/ogolny_raport_kraj_2022.pdf), [dostęp: 02.12.2022].

This study addresses this research gap by analysing job requirements listed in on-line job postings for ELT teachers in Poland, specifically on the pracuj.pl website. The study will address the following research questions:

1. What are the requirements that Polish teachers of English must meet according to the job ads posted on a major job offer aggregate?;
2. Are there any indications of native speakerism present in the job ads?

While prior research on native speakerism in Poland has centred on the perspectives of teachers, students, parents, and language schools<sup>6 7</sup>, this study seeks to provide a qualitative analysis of the job ads themselves. By examining the language used in these job postings, this study aims to illuminate the qualifications and attributes that are most highly valued in English language teachers in Poland. Additionally, it will try to uncover whether native speakerism in the ELT job market in Poland influences the requirements placed before prospective English language teachers.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Native Speakerism in ELT

The ideology of native speakerism has been a topic of exploration for many researchers over the past few decades. Holliday<sup>8</sup> defines the ideology as “an established belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘Western culture’ from which spring the ideals both of the English language and English language teaching methodology”. Native speakerism stems from the notions of linguistic imperialism and the native speaker fallacy developed by Phillipson<sup>9</sup>. Both concepts also levelled their criticism at the promotion of neoliberal and capitalist values through the means of ELT and the idealised figure of an English native speaker. Consequently, Holliday’s<sup>10</sup> term sought to become more all-encompassing to integrate the postcolonial legacy, power dynamics, and political influences that result in tangible effects experienced by teachers daily<sup>11</sup>.

Research shows a plethora of negative implications of the native-speakerist ideology for the field of ELT, as it marginalises non-native speaker teachers and reinforces the idea that they need constant supervision from native

<sup>6</sup> KICZKOWIAK M., *Native Speakerism in English Language Teaching: Voices From Poland*, <https://theses.whiterose.ac.uk/20985/>, [dostęp: 15.08.2022].

<sup>7</sup> PACIORKOWSKI T., *Native Speakerism: Discriminatory Employment Practices in Polish Language Schools*, Peter Lang Verlag, New York 2022.

<sup>8</sup> HOLIDAY A., *Native-speakerism*, “ELT Journal” 2006, vol. 60, 4, pp. 385–387.

<sup>9</sup> PHILLIPSON R., *Linguistic Imperialism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1992.

<sup>10</sup> HOLLIDAY A., dz. cyt.

<sup>11</sup> PACIORKOWSKI T., dz. cyt., p. 45.

speakers<sup>12 13</sup>. Moreover, it reinforces the ELT market and business practices that rely heavily on native-speaker experts<sup>14 15</sup> whose competencies are also bolstered by mainstream media<sup>16</sup>. As a result, it biases stakeholders' opinions in favour of native speaker models of the English language<sup>17</sup>.

## 2.2. Native Speakerism in Poland

Studies investigating native speakerism in Poland and other Eastern European countries are relatively scarce. However, Kiczowski<sup>18</sup> and Paciorkowski<sup>19</sup> have attempted to fill this gap in the literature by examining the viewpoints and attitudes of various stakeholders involved in the process of teaching English as a foreign language in Poland. Specifically, Kiczowski's research covered teachers (both native and non-native), students, and language schools, while Paciorkowski concentrated on Polish teachers of English, students, parents, and language schools. Both research studies demonstrate the presence of native speakerism in Poland, which is evident through the attitudes and perceptions held by the aforementioned groups. Kiczowski's investigation revealed that most students (85%) prefer classes with native speakers, and a considerable number of them (79%) inquire about the employment of native speakers by language schools before registering for a course.

On the other hand, Paciorkowski's survey, which involved 31 language schools, disclosed that 58% of the schools mandate that their non-native teachers have the appropriate qualifications compared to only 36% for native speakers. Surprisingly, native speaker status was deemed least significant in the hiring process. Nonetheless, non-native teachers were found to receive an hourly wage that was 15% smaller than that of their native-speaking counterparts.

In conclusion, it seems that the situation of non-native teachers of English in the job market in Poland and worldwide needs to be continuously monitored closely as a tendency to treat them less favourably compared to their native-speaking colleagues is evident. This bias also manifests itself in job advertisements.

<sup>12</sup> HOLLIDAY A., dz. cyt.

<sup>13</sup> KUMARAVADIVELU, *The Decolonial Option in English Teaching: Can the Subaltern Act?*, "TESOL Quarterly" 2016, vol. 50, 1, pp. 66–85.

<sup>14</sup> PHILLIPSON, R., *Myths and realities of 'global' English*, "Language Policy" 2017, vol. 16, 3, pp. 313–331.

<sup>15</sup> KICZOWIAK M., *Are most ELT course book writers white 'native speakers'? A survey of 28 general English course books for adults*, "Language Teaching Research" 2022.

<sup>16</sup> CRYSTAL D., *English as a Global Language*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003.

<sup>17</sup> COLMENERO K., LASAGABASTER, D., *Native and nonnative teachers in a minority language: An analysis of stakeholders' opinions*, "International Journal of Bilingualism" 2023.

<sup>18</sup> KICZOWIAK M., *Native Speakerism in English Language Teaching...*

<sup>19</sup> PACIORKOWSKI T., dz. cyt.

### 2.3. Native Speakerism in job advertisements

Several studies have focused on job advertisements for English language teachers worldwide, particularly emphasising the effect of native speakerism on employment practices in the ELT industry. In a review of four articles on the subject, Fithriani<sup>20</sup> found that ELT job postings frequently prioritise ‘nativeness’ and nationality as criteria for selecting candidates. Selvi<sup>21</sup> analysed job ads posted on TESOL’s Online Career Centre and Dave’s ESL Café, two prominent venues for job advertisements for English language teachers. He found that most job recruiters exhibit a preference for native speakers, especially from Inner Circle countries<sup>22</sup>. Similarly, Song and Zhang<sup>23</sup> discovered that approximately 80% of all job ads they examined contained at least one discriminatory criterion, such as native speaker status or a passport from an Inner Circle country. Ruecker and Ives<sup>24</sup> found that the recruitment websites for language schools in Southeast Asia emphasised the requirement of teachers being native speakers, with only 14% of them prioritising prior teaching experience. Moreover, the websites portrayed the positions as opportunities for applicants from predominantly white, Inner Circle countries to travel and have experiences rather than focus on professional development. According to the findings by Kiczkowiak<sup>25</sup>, about 75% of job ads posted on tefl.com in the European Union contained the native speaker status requirement. Daoud and Kasztalska<sup>26</sup> employed Legitimation Code Theory to scrutinise 53 online job advertisements to shed light on teacher requirements and the impact of native speakerism in the United Arab Emirates. According to this research, employers value personal qualities, such as flexibility, passion, or native speaker status more than qualities related to education or expertise. The researchers argued that English language teaching should focus more on the latter qualities and believe such a situation can be attributed to native speakerism as it tends to underscore personal qualities.

To date, there has been no known research on the presence of native speakerism in job ads for English language teachers in Poland. Since English is the most popular

<sup>20</sup> FITHRIANI R., *Discrimination Behind Nest and Nnest Dichotomy in ELT Professionalism*, “KNe Social Sciences” 2018, vol. 3, 4, pp. 741–755.

<sup>21</sup> SELVI A., *All Teachers are Equal, but Some Teachers are More Equal than Others: Trend Analysis of Job Advertisements in English Language Teaching*, [in:] Brady B. (ed.), “The WATESOL NNEST Caucus Annual Review” 2010, pp. 156–181.

<sup>22</sup> KACHRU B., *Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle*, [in:] Quirk R., Widdowson H. (eds.), *English in the World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1985, pp. 11–30.

<sup>23</sup> SONG S., ZHANG Y., *Re-imagining the employment of nonnative-English-speaking teachers in EFL contexts*, “Forum for Fair Employment Fall 2010 Newsletter”, vol. 1–2.

<sup>24</sup> RUECKER T., IVES L., *White Native English Speakers Needed: The Rhetorical Construction of Privilege in Online Teacher Recruitment Spaces*, “TESOL Quarterly” 2015, vol. 49, 4, pp. 733–756.

<sup>25</sup> KICZKOWIAK, M., *Native Speakers only*, “IATEFL Voices” 2015, vol. 2, 243, pp. 8–9.

<sup>26</sup> DAOUD S., KASZTALSKA A., *Exploring native-speakerism in teacher job recruitment discourse through Legitimation Code Theory: The case of the United Arab Emirates*, “Language Teaching Research” 2022.

foreign language among Polish students, it seems essential to investigate the requirements and preferences of ELT employers in Poland to shed light on potential biases against non-native speaker teachers.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Data Collection

The study collected data from pracuj.pl, the most popular Polish job ads aggregator<sup>27</sup>, during the months of December 2022–January 2023. The website was also chosen due to the fact that every job ad posted on it provides a separate section entitled *Requirements*, allowing a systematic collection of the required qualifications for English language teachers. The search phrase “*nauczyciel języka angielskiego*” (English language teacher) was chosen to ensure specificity and relevance to the research questions while simultaneously being broad enough to capture a wide range of job ads. Furthermore, the phrase reflects the terminology usually used in job ads for this profession. The collected data is qualitative in nature. In total, the researcher gathered and examined 44 unique job advertisements, which produced a total of 298 tokens, with each token representing a singular requirement. Most collected tokens were written in Polish, with some minor exceptions; therefore, most of the tokens were translated into English for the purposes of this paper.

#### 3.2. Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed using Thematic Analysis, which is a widely used method of qualitative analysis. In short, it can be defined as: “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail”<sup>28</sup>. For the purposes of this project, this process was divided into three steps: pre-coding and coding, growing ideas, and data interpretations and conclusions. In the first step, the researcher familiarised themselves with the data and labelled key concepts and ideas. Following this, the coding process began, wherein the researcher categorised the data into themes based on previously established concepts and ideas. The themes were further refined and developed in the third step, and new ideas were identified and incorporated into the analysis. The final step involved interpreting the data and drawing conclusions. The guidelines for this process were informed by Dörnyei<sup>29</sup> and Braun and Clarke<sup>30</sup>. Despite a seemingly lin-

<sup>27</sup> KOWALSKA, D., *Gdzie i jak szukać pracy? [Portale i strony z ofertami 2023]*, <https://interviewme.pl/blog/jak-szukac-pracy-strony>, [dostęp: 21.08.2023].

<sup>28</sup> BRAUN V., CLARKE V., *Using thematic analysis in psychology*, “Qualitative Research in Psychology” 2006, vol. 3, 2, pp. 77–101.

<sup>29</sup> DÖRNYEI Z., *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007.

<sup>30</sup> BRAUN V., CLARKE V., dz. cyt., p. 87.

ear nature, it must be borne in mind that the process of qualitative analysis is iterative; thus, the steps were revisited and revised when necessary<sup>31</sup>. Additionally, Spradley's<sup>32</sup> similarity and contrast principle was employed to categorise the themes. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori<sup>33</sup>, the similarity principle involves grouping codes based on their similarities, whilst, on the other hand, the contrast principle allows a researcher to explore the unique characteristics of distinct themes.

A single researcher conducted the analysis. Nevertheless, a couple of steps were taken to increase the data analysis's validity and reliability. First, a book of codes and themes was created to ensure consistent data categorisation. Second, the researcher coded the data and refined the codes continuously to ensure that they accurately reflected the data. By following these steps, the rigour of the study was enhanced.

Note finally that to facilitate a more concise examination of the results, the qualitative data were subjected to a process of quantisation. This process can be described as the numerical interpretation, transformation, or conversion of qualitative information (Sandelowski et al. 2009: 208). Consequently, the occurrences of themes and codes were converted into numerical form to allow for basic statistical analysis.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Overview of the themes

Three main themes were identified in the analysis of the requirements for English language teachers: qualifications and skills, personal qualities, and miscellaneous factors. Additionally, each of the themes included other subthemes (see Table 1). The first theme, qualifications and skills, encompasses codes related to such requirements as language proficiency, teaching expertise, or being tech-savvy. Therefore, the theme consists of knowledge and experience-based requirements that potential candidates have the most control over. The second identified theme, personal qualities, includes codes pertaining to character traits, attitudes, and native speaker status. Consequently, the theme is based on natural predispositions like openness, communicativeness or mindset. A decision was made to include native speaker status in the category as, following Daoud and Kasztalska<sup>34</sup>, the criterion "grants legitimacy based on an individual's place of birth and their participation in a particular linguistic community as a child". Finally, the last theme consists of codes related to miscellaneous requirements that are considered necessary for the job. The theme includes requirements such as a stable internet connection or scheduling flexibility. Therefore, this theme requires neither knowledge nor personal qualities.

<sup>31</sup> BROWN J., *Mixed Methods Research for TESOL*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2014.

<sup>32</sup> SPRADLEY J., *The Ethnographic Interview*, Harcourt, Grace, Jovanovich, New York 1979.

<sup>33</sup> TEDDLIE Ch., TASHAKKORI A., *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, "SAGE" 2009.

<sup>34</sup> DAOUD S., KASZTALSKA A., dz. cyt. p. 10.

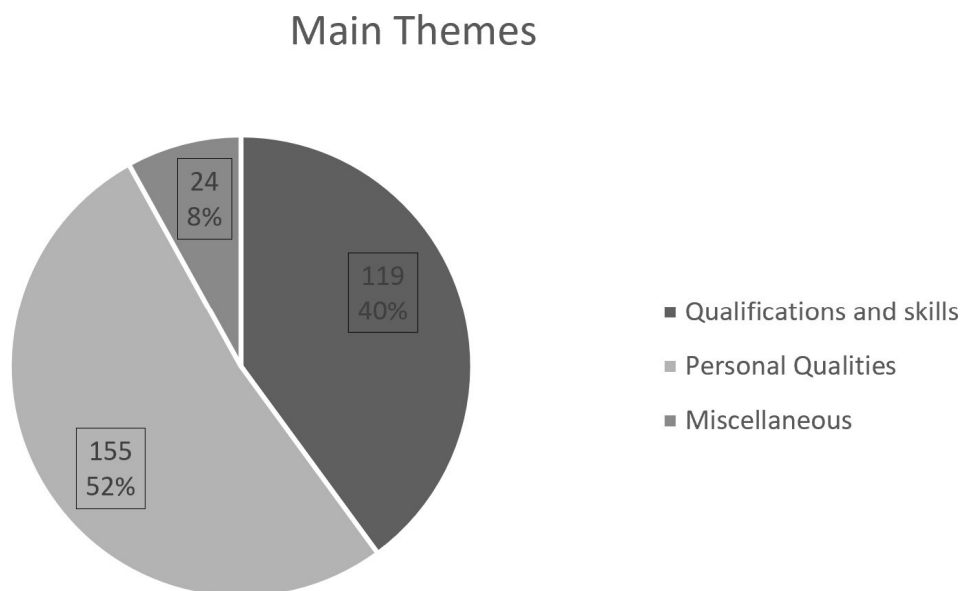
Tabela 1. List of themes with codes and examples

Theme	Code	Examples
Qualifications and skills	English language proficiency	“you know the English language at C1 level”, “you use English fluently”, “practical knowledge of English”, “good knowledge of English”, “language skills at the highest level”, “you fluently use the English language”
	Polish language	“you know Polish at a communicative level (A2/B1 level)”, “Polish: native or fluent”, “good knowledge of the Polish language”
	Teaching expertise	“knowledge of teaching techniques using new technologies will be a great asset”, “people with experience in teaching children and adults”, “experience in teaching”, “minimum experience in teaching language courses”, “experience in teaching English - teaching individual classes will be a big plus”, “you have had your first experience teaching English”
	University degree	“completed philology studies”, “a university degree or in the course of study”, “English Philology graduate”, “teacher’s education (English philology, applied linguistics, teacher’s college)”, “min. a completed bachelor’s degree in English philology (teaching specialization, pedagogy course, etc. is welcome)”
	Certificates	“C1 certificate”, “relevant certificates”, “holding a CPE certificate”, “appropriate certificates”
	Technological skills	“computer skills”, “familiarity with Skype and computer skills”
Personal Qualities	Character traits	“communicativeness”, “openness”, “positive energy”, “punctuality”, “ability to self-organize”, “creativity”, “responsibility”, “high standards of personal conduct”
	Attitudes	“commitment”, “motivation to work”, “willingness to continuously develop their competence to teach”, “enthusiasm to teach”, “willingness to learn and develop”, “you want to be part of our team”
	Native speaker status	“our preference is for native speakers”

Miscellaneous	Equipment requirements	“working computer”, “access to stable internet”, “access to fast and reliable internet”, “working microphone”, “working camera”
	Scheduling flexibility	“the ability to teach on-site classes at the school’s premises”, “availability in the afternoons and evenings and on Saturdays - a minimum of 15 hours per week in the afternoons”, “1.5 hours per week”, “availability on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm”, “availability 4 days a week, preferably from 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm (additional availability would be an asset)”

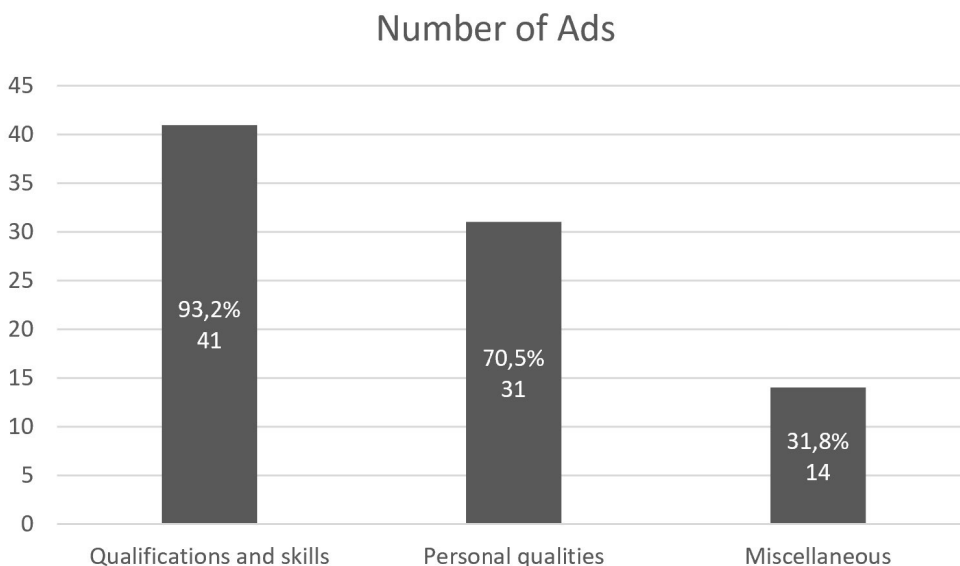
Having identified and scrutinised the main themes and subthemes, the next step was analysing the frequency of these themes appearing in job ads to understand the English teacher requirements better. As can be seen in Figure 1, the most sought-after requirements were related to personal qualities, with 52% of all tokens (n=155). The qualifications and skills theme accounted for 40% (n=119), and the miscellaneous theme collected 8% (n=24) of all tokens.

Rys. 1. Main themes



It is also worth considering the number of job ads wherein the themes appear. According to the findings, qualifications and skills were mentioned in 93.2% (n=41) of the job advertisements, while personal qualities were listed in 70.5% (n=31). Additionally, the miscellaneous theme was identified in 31.8% (n=14) of the ads.

Rys. 2. Number of ads



#### 4.2. Qualifications and skills

In order to provide effective instruction, teachers should possess formal qualifications, as well as certain skills that allow them to navigate the complexities of the language learning process<sup>35</sup>.

This analysis shows that teaching expertise and experience are mentioned more frequently (35.3%, n=42) than university degrees (30.3%, n=36). English language proficiency also seems to rank relatively high, constituting 23.5% (n=28) of all tokens in this theme. In some cases, a university degree was not a mandatory requirement, but a suitable certificate was considered sufficient as a qualification (5.9%, n=7). Some job ads also listed Polish language skills (3.4%, n=4) and technological skills (1.7%, n=2). Interestingly, further analysis of the job ads showed that almost 18% (n=8) of them only required applicants to have an advanced command of the language without any other qualifications.

<sup>35</sup> WERBIŃSKA D., *Skuteczny nauczyciel języka obcego*, „Fraszka Edukacyjna” 2017.

Tabela 2. Qualifications and skills theme

Qualifications and skills	Tokens	Percentage (theme)	Percentage (total)
Polish language	4	3.4%	1.3%
English language proficiency	28	23.5%	9.4%
Teaching expertise	42	35.3%	14.1%
University degree	36	30.3%	12.1%
Certificate	7	5.9%	2.3%
Technological skills	2	1.7%	0.7%
Total	119		39.9%

### 4.3. Personal Qualities

The personal qualities theme encompasses codes related to character traits and attitudes that are considered important for English language teachers beyond their formal qualifications and skills<sup>36</sup>. Of all the subthemes, character traits comprised the most considerable portion, accounting for 60.6% (n=94) of tokens, while attitude amounted to 37.4% (n=58). It is noteworthy that the native speaker requirement was listed only thrice, constituting a mere 1.9% of the tokens.

Tabela 3. Personal qualities theme

Personal Qualities	Tokens	Percentage (theme)	Percentage (total)
Character traits	94	60.6%	31.5%
Attitude	58	37.4%	19.5%
Native speaker status	3	1.9%	1.0%
Total	155		52.0%

### 4.4. Miscellaneous

The collected data revealed that certain requirements appeared circumstantial rather than pertaining to potential teachers' knowledge or personal qualities. Therefore, they were subsumed under the Miscellaneous theme.

The theme consists of two subthemes: equipment requirements and scheduling flexibility. Within this theme, equipment requirements accounted for 45.8% of the tokens (n=11) and scheduling flexibility for 54.2% (n=13).

<sup>36</sup> WERNIŃSKA D., dz. cyt.

Tabela 4. Miscellaneous theme

Miscellaneous	Tokens	Percentage (theme)	Percentage (total)
Equipment requirements	11	45.8%	3.7%
Scheduling flexibility	13	54.2%	4.4%
Total	24		8.1%

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the various requirements and demands pursued by employers, which ultimately shape the employability of English language teachers.

Firstly, the results indicate that codes pertaining to personal qualities appear more frequently (52%, n=155) than qualifications or knowledge-oriented ones (40%, n=119). Thus, it appears that employers may prioritise attitudes, dispositions, and character traits over formal qualifications, such as English language degrees, knowledge of teaching methodology, and skills when evaluating potential candidates. The analysis of job ads in the United Arab Emirates by Daoud and Kasztalska<sup>37</sup> discovered a comparable pattern. Interestingly, many of the attitudes and character traits that employers seek may be considered ephemeral and highly situation-specific, e.g., “has enthusiasm for work” or “positive energy”. One can imagine such attitudes changing depending even on the work environment. However, it is important to notice that formal qualifications and skills are still in demand as, overall, they appeared in more ads (93.2%); nevertheless, employers tend to be less specific about them, e.g., not always mentioning teaching specialisation. Importantly, university degrees (12.1%, n=36) received more recognition than certificates (2.3%, n=7). This can be seen as a positive trend, as university degrees tend to provide a more comprehensive understanding of education, offering in-depth knowledge in pedagogy and other related fields. Similarly, the need for teaching skills and experience is also evident in the data (14.1%, n=42).

Surprisingly, the presence of technological skills (0.7%, n=2) is low, considering the increasing integration of technology in language teaching and learning<sup>38</sup>. Employers may assume that English language teachers already possess these skills, or they may not yet fully recognise the importance of such expertise in the current and future language teaching contexts.

Despite its infamous presence in job ads around the world, including in Europe<sup>39</sup>, the native speaker criterion rarely appeared in job ads posted on pracuj.pl (1%, n=3). This could potentially be attributed to the website’s policy against discriminatory lan-

<sup>37</sup> DAOUD S., KASZTALSKA A., dz. cyt.

<sup>38</sup> BASILOTTA-GÓMEZ-PABLOS V., MATARRANZ L., OTTO A., dz. cyt.

<sup>39</sup> KICZKOWIAK M., *Native Speakers only...*

guage in job postings, as the website has the authority not to publish or delete recruitment advertisements on their service without any responsibility or obligation and keep the full payment if, among others, a job ad: “violates the prohibition of discrimination”<sup>40</sup>. The criterion of native speaker status could be perceived as discriminatory as suggested by the European Commission<sup>41</sup>, i.e., “[t]he Commission is of the opinion that the phrase “native speaker” is not acceptable, under any circumstances, under Community law”. However, the true cause remains unclear and calls for more in-depth research, given that native speakerism in Poland presents itself in intricate and multifaceted manners<sup>42</sup>.

In conclusion, it can be argued that job ads for English language teachers posted on Poland’s largest job ads aggregate do not overtly perpetuate native speakerism. Nevertheless, there is definite room for improvement in terms of recognising the importance of qualifications and skills compared to personal qualities. It should be argued that teachers ought to be expected to possess certain discernible knowledge and skills that need to be applied over the course of the teaching process. Overemphasising personal qualities may result in the recruitment of underqualified but enthusiastic teachers, which can hurt students and undermine the value of teacher training programs<sup>43 44</sup>.

Finally, it must be mentioned that the study was not short of its limitations. Firstly, the researcher took the utmost care to remove any instances of duplicates from the data set; however, despite the researcher’s efforts to do so, there is still a possibility that some cases of duplicates may have been missed, given that job ads are often written in a generic and repetitive style. Moreover, it could be argued that the data set itself was quite limited; nevertheless, the researcher wished to focus on a particular job aggregate website to provide coherent results as the culture and language used in job ads posted on social media, such as Facebook, is very different and less formal. Lastly, the analysis would be more complete if it was supplemented by, e.g., interviews with Human Resources personnel responsible for writing and publishing job ads to gain a deeper understanding of the reasoning behind choosing certain hiring criteria. This is, however, an avenue to be explored by further research.

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<sup>40</sup> pracuj.pl, *Regulamin świadczenia Usług w ramach Sklepu*, [https://dlafirm.pracuj.pl/static/docs/Regulamin\\_swiadczenia\\_Uslug\\_w\\_ramach\\_Serwisu.pdf](https://dlafirm.pracuj.pl/static/docs/Regulamin_swiadczenia_Uslug_w_ramach_Serwisu.pdf), [dostęp: 25.08.2023].

<sup>41</sup> European Commission, *Parliamentary question | Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission (written question E-0941/02) | E-0941/2002(ASW) | European Parliament*, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-5-2002-0941-ASW\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-5-2002-0941-ASW_EN.html), [dostęp: 25.08.2023].

<sup>42</sup> PACIORKOWSKI T. dz. cyt.

<sup>43</sup> MAHBOOB A., GOLDEN R., *Looking for native speakers of English: Discrimination in English Language Teaching Job Advertisements*, “Voices in Asia Journal” 2013, vol. 1, 1, pp. 72–81.

<sup>44</sup> DAOUD S., KASZTALSKA A., dz. cyt.

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### **Do qualifications even matter? A qualitative analysis of English as a foreign language teacher job ads in Poland**

**Abstract:** Job ads have long been of interest to researchers concerned with the issue of native speakerism as they may constitute the initial and often insurmountable barrier to career opportunities for non-native teachers of English. This article explores the requirements that potential employers place before teachers of English in job ads posted on a major Polish job offer aggregate. By means of Thematic Analysis, this research sheds more light on the demands that teachers of English need to meet in the Polish job market and investigates whether job ads in Poland disseminate the ideology of native speakerism. The results show employers may over-emphasise personal qualities, such as character traits and attitudes, compared to qualifications and skills. Although the majority of job ads explored did not overtly perpetuate the ideology of native speakerism, further research is necessary to understand the extent of this issue fully.

**Keywords:** qualifications, job ads, ELF teachers, recruitment, Poland

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