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Non-Native English Speaking Teachers' Identity: Review of Relevant Studies and Critical Issues for Future Studies*

Jihyun Jeon
Pusan National University

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This study intended to explore issues related to Non-Native English Speaking Teacher (NNEST)s' identity. Although NNESTs have come to take a great responsibility in English Language Teaching (ELT), most NNESTs still struggle for equal treatment with Native English Speaking Teacher (NEST)s in ELT. Establishing a solid identity as a teaching professional and being aware of critical issues they might face would help NNESTs to establish the basis of understanding their possibilities of self-development in ELT. For this, this study first briefly reviewed the relevant studies for identity formation, especially focusing on the importance of identity construction and examined the relevant NNESTs' identity studies. Then some critical issues that need further investigations were highlighted with related literature in order to contribute to the development of NNESTs' equal and secure status in ELT as well as to empower teacher education programs in ELT. Three issues for future empirical research were proposed.

[NNEST's identity/factors affecting NNESTs' identity formation/empowerment of teacher education program/비원어민 영어교사의 주체성/비원어민 교사의 주체성 형성요소/교원양성 교육 강화]

I. INTRODUCTION

By the time that English has shifted from being one of the local languages to being the global language, the number of Native English Speaking Teachers (NESTs)[1] has been inadequate to meet worldwide demands because of the

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increasing number of students learning English as a Second/ Foreign language. At the same time, the need of Non-Native English Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) as a solution to the world ESL/EFL request has been increasing (Braine, 1999a). Keeping pace with this situation, the importance of high degree training and the need to develop effective training programs for those NNESTs have been endlessly emphasized (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). In spite of the need of NNESTs in the English Language Teaching (ELT), however, the concern regarding their (NNESTs) roles and effectiveness has grown among English educators as well as English learners, and they have been publicly criticized by being compared with NESTs in terms of English fluency. Although professional training and enormous endeavors of NNESTs could diminish this concern and criticism, the challenges NNESTs might face in the process of establishing a stable status in ELT seem to emerge in most ELT contexts.

The complex status of NNESTs in ELT has received great attention from many researchers because of its effects on English language learners and on NNESTs' attitude to themselves and their teachings. Since this complex status of NNESTs in ELT has influenced their (NNESTs) understanding of the world, and this understanding could construct the relationship between NNESTs themselves and other educational components across time and space, it could be said that an urgent need of NNESTs might be the establishment of a solid and secure status in ELT, which could not be demolished or threatened due to the difference of national origins.

There are many ways which NNESTs could establish the solid status in ELT. Being an English expert by way of training programs, being equipped with enough material resources (or information) which could help students' learning, and acquiring useful skills to manage teaching environments might be among them. However, recognizing who they (NNESTs) are, what they want to be, and what they want to do for their students could be the most urgent and crucial issue for NNESTs to build up a confidential standing in ELT. Recognizing who I am, what I want to be, and what I want to do for my students, that is, the desire of recognition is closely related to identity[2]. The ways of understanding

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[1] In spite of the argument related to the term 'native' vs. 'nonnative' in this paper, I will use these terms in this paper because of a lack of any other commonly used terminology.

[2] According to Norton-Pierce (1997), "social identity refers to the relationship between the individual and the larger social world, as mediated through institutions such as families, schools, work places, social services, and law courts, whereas cultural identity refers to the relationship between individuals and members of a group who share a

my work, the ways of understanding others' works, the ways of talking with others, the ways of negotiating with the world, all of these could be interpreted based on an individual's identity.

NNESTs' identity "in Second and Foreign language education has only recently emerged as a subtopic within the field of language teacher education" (Morgan, 2004, p. 172). Although several researchers have devoted themselves in order to reveal the factors which might affect the construction of NNESTs' identities (Amin, 1997, 1999; Braine, 1999a; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999, 2001; Norton-Pierce, 1995, 1997), there are still many factors and issues which need further investigation.

This paper intends to explore issues related to NNESTs' identities. Before presenting relevant literature, this paper will provide the definition of identity and its theoretical background research in order to show the importance of identity research. Then, some issues that need further investigation will be highlighted with related literature.

II. REVIEW OF RELEVANT STUDIES

1. Definition of Identity and Its Importance in NNESTs' Social Interaction

According to Webster's dictionary, identity refers to how individuals conceptualize their place and status within a particular community. It also indicates that identity is self-expression as well as self-principle, which guides individuals' performances. The concept of identity speculates that it is influenced by factors such as nationality, race, gender, ethnicity, and class and that it could change across time and space. In addition, the evidence of belonging to any particular racial, social, or cultural category could be regarded as a real consequence of identity of an individual.

Identity relates to desire: "The desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety" (Norton-Pierce, 1997, p. 410). Such a

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common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world" (p. 420). Concerning NNESTs, most research has focused on the social identity of NNESTs. In addition, as Norton-Pierce pointed out, the difference between social identity and cultural identity is fluid, and the commonalities between them are more marked than the differences. In this paper, only social identities of NNESTs will be discussed.

desire influences how individuals understand their relationship to the world and can change in accordance with the social and economic relations. Identity construction could be understood with respect to larger social processes, marked "by relations of power that can be either coercive or collaborative" (Norton-Pierce, 1997, p. 419), and relations of power enable or constrain the range of identities that individuals can negotiate in their communities.

In the case of language education, identity constructs and is constructed by language. Duff and Uchida (1997) mentioned that "identities and ideologies are not static, deterministic constructs that teachers and students bring to the classroom and then take away unchanged at the end of a lesson or course" (p. 452). Rather, identities are co-constructed, negotiated and transformed by means of language as pointed out by many researchers (Hall, 2002; Norton-Pierce, 1995). The relationship between language and identity is complicated. According to Hall (2002), by using a language, we represent a particular identity: "When we enter a communicative event, we do so as individuals with particular constellations of historically laden social identities. While these social identities influence our linguistic actions, they do not determine them, rather they predispose us to participate in our activities and perceive the involvement of others in certain ways" (p. 36). Norton-Pierce (1995) also mentioned that language organizes and reorganizes a sense of who we are and how we relate to the world when language is used by us. She further pointed out that "the relationship between language and identity is not only abstract and theoretical but also has important consequences for positive and productive language learning and teaching" (Norton-Pierce, 1997, p. 413-414).

Braine (1999a) argued in the introduction of the book *Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching* that the lack of identity of a NNEST could "lead to low self-confidence and to an acute sense of one's marginalized, unstable status in the profession" (p. xvii). Identity affects the way a NNEST selects educational methodologies in the classroom and has influence on the classroom interaction between him/her and his/her students. In addition, the sense of self (identity) constructs a NNEST's social interaction in the ELT professions and comes to be a basis of understanding his/her possibilities of self-development in the future. "Notions of identity are central to the way in which a NNEST thinks about him/herself and his/her work" (Brown, 2001, p. 1). A NNEST might talk about the importance of feeling congruence between him/herself and his/her work reflecting his/her identity, and due to a healthy sense of identity, he/she could be more open to people from other backgrounds because he/she is less likely to fear

difference or put others down to feel better about him/herself (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, the construct of identity of a NNEST is important since the lack of identity could lead to the loss of self-determination in the process of decision making, resulting in losing a sense of belonging to a certain social group.

2. Theoretical Background Research

1) Tajfel's Identity Theory

One of the theories of social identity was developed by Tajfel[3] (1974). He mentioned that social identity is an individual's self-concept that is derived from a membership of a social group. According to him, an individual does not have a self but selves, corresponding to wide circles of groups he/she belongs to. Therefore, an individual's social identity could be defined as "individual-based perception of what defines the 'us' associated with any internalized group membership" (p. 72). In the process of constructing social identity, Tajfel emphasized that a group membership could create the in-group favoritism at the expense of the out-group. According to him, individuals categorize themselves as members of one group in terms of common interests and behaviors, which is sufficient to lead them to display the in-group favoritism. After being categorized by a group membership, individuals come to seek to achieve positive self-esteem by differentiating their group from a comparison with the out-group on some value dimension. Through these processes, according to Tajfel, individuals' sense of who they are (identity) comes to be achieved in terms of 'we' rather than 'I'.

2) Norton-Pierce's Identity Theory

While Tajfel explained social identity of individuals from a social psychologist perspective, Norton-Pierce (1995, 1997) discussed social identity from a post-structuralist perspective, connecting it with second language learning. Linking Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory to social identity of language learners, she insisted that SLA theorists not fully understand the language learner's relationship to the social world (learning contexts). In addition, she argued that the concept of instrumental and integrative motivation that has greatly influenced

[3] Tajfel's social theory was originally developed to understand the psychological basis of intergroup discrimination.

the SLA was not adequate in describing language learners who lived in inequitable relations of power. Drawing on Weedon (1987, as cited in Norton-Pierce, 1995, p. 15), she equated the social identity of language learners with subjectivity[4], and insisted that the social identity (or subjectivity) of individual learners should be interpreted by three main characteristics: "The multiple nature of the subject, subjectivity as a site of struggle, and subjectivity as changing over time" (1995, p. 15). That is, an individual should be defined to be diverse, contradictory, dynamic, multiple, and decentered, and his/her social identity is not fixed but changeable over time. Furthermore, "subjectivity of an individual is produced in a variety of social sites, all of which are structured by relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions" (1995, p. 15) such as a teacher, a mother, a manager, etc. In addition, in order to explain the complex relationship among power, identity, and language learning, she suggested the concept of investment. She mentioned that whereas motivation might be understood as an aspect of the language learner, investment could describe the complex dynamic relationship between learners and the social world. According to her, when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but also organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus, she believed that "an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space" (1995, p. 18).

3) McNamara's Identity Theory

Being slightly distressed by Norton-Pierce (1995)'s socially critical stance to identity construction, McNamara (1997) attempted to show how Tajfel's social identity theory could also be applicable to explain the construction of language learners' attitude and identity toward the social world. Connecting Tajfel's social identity theory with his own research (1987) of native Hebrew-speaking Israeli families in Australia, McNamara identified four main processes involving the construction of social identity: "social categorization, the formation of an awareness of social identity, social comparison, and a search for psychological distinctiveness" (1997, p. 562). For example, the relations between salient social

[4] Weedon (1987, as cited in Norton-Pierce, 1995, p. 15) defines "subjectivity as the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world."

groups (Israelis vs. Australians) provide categories “through which individuals (Israelis) allocate others (Australians) to category membership and learn the valuation applied by the in-group (Israelis) and the salient out-group (Australians) to this membership” (1997, p. 562, except parentheses). In this process, linguistic or other behavioral cues (for example, the experience of anti-Semitic social attitudes together with the Christian symbolism in the Australian culture) play a role as a reminder to Israelis families of their Jewish characteristics. In addition, in the process of maximizing a sense of the positive psychological distinctiveness, Israelis (in-group) tend to refer the issue of national consciousness on the dimension of ‘historicity’ particularly, which results in the positive psychological distinctiveness of Israelis to Australians. Supporting Norton-Pierce’s insistence, McNamara also stated that social identity could change depending on the particular inter-group setting where individuals find themselves. He mentioned that when “the newly altered social context is likely to render many intergroup comparisons irrelevant and introduce new ones, the awareness of the new in-group realities is developed" (1997, p. 564), resulting in a transformation of social identity.

4) Hansen and Liu's Overview of Identity Research

Hansen and Liu (1997) provided an overview of social identity research by discussing and criticizing various theoretical stances and methodologies employed in those kinds of research. They insisted that while Tajfel’ theory have made “significant contributions to the understanding of social identity and its relationship to language” (p. 571), it did not discuss multiple group memberships within its framework. According to them, instead of choosing to belong to one group or the other group (in-group or out-group) as Tajfel insisted, most individuals tend to “belong to several groups based not only on ethnic and gender characteristics but also on personal beliefs and economic circumstances” (p. 571). In addition, they claimed that “individuals may wish to identify with a certain group in specific contexts” (p. 571) by using the language of the group. Concerning the theory of ethno-linguistic identity, Hansen and Liu criticized the rigid and narrow category of identity developed by Giles and Johnson (1981, 1987, as cited in Hansen & Liu, 1997) since, according to them, Giles and Johnson did not consider certain characteristics that could differ among groups and between individuals. Related to Norton-Pierce’s social identity theory, Hansen and Liu pointed out the need of further research about the relationship between

students' investment and teachers' roles in terms of empowerment. Concerning methodological issues, Hansen and Liu questioned the validity and reliability of methods employed in the work of social identity research. They pointed out that most of the studies conducted by social psychologists in relation to social identity were confined to one-time questionnaire surveys. With respect to the fact that "social identity is a dynamic phenomenon" (p. 573), they argued that a one time questionnaire survey or interview which yielded only one view of a complex phenomenon was not adequate to study social identity.

3. Relevant Literature to Identity of NNESTs

Since it is considered that identity is constructed through social contact and is derived from a group membership, it is naturally assumed that NNESTs may adopt different identities after they interact with NESTs in ELT. In addition, their formal identities might be developed in their native countries or from formal experiences, and thus they might not be adequately applied to new situations. In the earlier studies, many researchers investigated social identities of NNESTs with comparison to those of their counterparts, NESTs (Amin, 1997; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999; Thomas, 1999). Overall, they found that NNESTs felt inferior to NESTs in terms of fluency, and that they felt marginalized in the English speaking communities due to their non-nativeness (Amin, 1997; Tang, 1997; Thomas, 1999). Researchers also found that most NNESTs considered NESTs as models in English language learning although they acknowledged some limitations of applying NEST models in their classrooms. However, recently, ELT professionals have started to emphasize the teacher's knowledge, skills, and expertise more than nativeness and authenticity (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), and it resulted in the change of social identity of NNESTs in ELT worlds. The following literature will show some findings about perception changes regarding NNESTs' personal and professional identity as well as some factors which might affect the construction of identity of NNESTs.

1) Definitions of NNESTs

Lippi-Green (1997) said that a clear definition of the term 'NNEST' is necessary since the background of teachers as native or non-native speakers of English is of major concern in English education due to its primary role in the subject matter of language teaching. NNESTs indicate English teachers who were

born and brought up in a non-native English speaking country but are engaged in English teaching area. However, there are some controversies over the term NNEST as an opposite term of NEST.

Inbar (2001) mentioned that NNEST should be considered with several different aspects. According to her, the term of NNEST failed to encompass the complex nature of the non-native speaker construct since NNEST was formulated without the consideration about personal and professional variables such as length of residence in English speaking country, level of training and professional expertise, school level, or perceived type of school except country of birth. Canagarajah (1999) also insisted that the term NNEST should be revised since NNESTs form a heterogeneous group because their experiences of English may be very different: Some NNESTs might have native-like fluency in English, some might speak or at least understand English for communication purposes, or some might have only a few words and phrases in English.

Implications of the controversy over the term NNEST related to the need for caution in employing the term NNEST in English teaching.

2) Characteristics of NNESTs

Although he considered NNESTs as being inferior and handicapped in terms of language competence by accepting Chomsky's notion of linguistic competence[5] which defined native speakers of English as an ideal of speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly, early studies of Medgyes (1992, 1994) shed light on the new perspective of the role of NNESTs and contributed to the formation of positive identity of NNESTs. He insisted that NNESTs could be portrayed to English learners with their own strengths. For example, NNESTs could serve as successful imitable models for language learners (a role model), could provide more information about the English language (a resource), could anticipate learning difficulties that language learners might encounter (a detective), could be more empathetic to the needs and problems of language learners (a helper), and could take the advantage of sharing the learners' mother tongue (a participant).

Phillipson (1992) revealed a similar view to NNESTs with Medgyes (1992). He insisted that the ideal teacher should have "near native-speaker proficiency in the foreign language and come from the same linguistic and cultural background as

[5] According to Chomsky, "competence has to do with intuitive knowledge of what is grammatical and ungrammatical in a language" (Braine, 1999a, p. xv).

the learners" (p. 15). According to him, if NNESTs have gone through the complex process of acquiring English as a second or foreign language, they could be a detective for language learners' linguistic and cultural needs, could provide useful information to them as a first-hand experiencer, and thus could come to be an ideal teacher to English learners. Concerning the native speaker fallacy, he stated that "an untrained or unqualified native speaker is in fact potentially a menace because of ignorance of the structure of the mother tongue" (p. 14). In addition, he underlined the importance of teacher training in ELT since he thought the virtues which were considered to belong to only NESTs could be attained by NNESTs through training and practice. The virtues are the knowledge of how English works, the insights into the language learning process, and the ability to analyze and explain English.

3) Factors Affecting the Formation of NNESTs' Identity

Tang (1997) defined social identities of NNESTs as agents of change in language policy and facilitators of the administrative mechanism. With the data obtained from 47 NNESTs in Hong Kong through a questionnaire, she found that the familiarity with the local society could play an important role in the formation of the new identity of NNESTs. According to her, the localized English learning purpose provided NNESTs with a bridge role between local authorities (such as the Ministry of Education) and students, which might not be fulfilled by NESTs. Since localized English learning purposes needed the experts of local society as well as language, NNESTs' knowledge of pedagogical resource and experience as L2 learners could fulfill this local need and bring a change to the status of NNESTs in the society, resulting in new identities of NNESTs, such as "needs analysts, agents of change, and coaches for public examinations in the local context" (p. 576) as well as a pedagogical role (a language teacher).

While Tang investigated identities of NNESTs in an EFL context where localized English learning purposes played an important role in identity construction, Amin (1997) looked at the identity formation of NNESTs in an ESL context where the purpose of English learners was to gain power against the dominant group in order to negotiate their social status. Her study indicated that there was a connection between the attitude of the students toward English teachers and identity construction of NNESTs. According to her, although minority teachers invested a great deal of energy in establishing themselves as

authentic teachers in the eyes of their students, the students' perception of their teachers as NNESTs could disempower NNESTs and affect NNESTs' identity formation negatively, resulting in NNESTs' self-perception as less qualified teachers than NESTs. Although NNS vs. NS is a taboo in ELT professions and is no longer regarded to be a controversial issue among ELT teachers in the situation that expertise has been more emphasized in ELT, Amin's study showed that the nativeness still has an influence on identity formation of NNESTs.

In attempting to examine teachers' construction, conceptualization, and interrogation of their identities relative to their teaching practice and culture, Duff and Uchida (1997) found that "teachers' sociocultural identifications and displays appeared to develop along at least two dimensions: a biographical/ professional basis and a more immediate contextual basis" (p. 467). From a biographical/ professional basis, four EFL (Japanese context) teachers revealed that their identity construction and negotiation were deeply rooted in their personal histories, "based on past educational, professional, and (cross-) cultural experiences" (p. 460)[6]. Since as pointed out by other researchers, (Johnson, 1994; Kagan, 1992, as cited in Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 468) teacher trainees normally bring to teacher education programs an internalized role identity that was developed through their own learning experiences, it might not be surprising to see that EFL teachers' perception of their social identity was drawn on their own learning experiences. From a contextual basis, Duff and Uchida found that the participants' sociocultural identities came to be negotiated due to "changing contextual elements such as the classroom/ institutional culture, instructional materials, and reactions from students and colleagues" (p. 460). For example, one participant, Kimiko, projected herself as an expert of both language and culture in the beginning. However, soon, she posited herself as another learner in her class because the reactions from her Japanese students to her class were different from her expectations and because she found her students to be cultural informants for her. Duff and Uchida concluded that it is impossible to define EFL teachers' identities as simply cultural (and linguistic) negotiators and practitioners due to the fact that numerous factors are involved in the formation of teachers' identity.

Acknowledging the contribution of NNESTs to ELT, Liu (1999) investigated the labels, NS and NNS from the perspective of seven NNESTs in TESOL.

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[6] For example, one of participants, MiKi gave an advice to students on how to study by looking back on her experience and another participant, Danny (American) frequently referred to his college experience in his spontaneous mini-lectures.

Through email discussion and face-to-face interviews, he revealed the negative perception of NNESTs toward the dichotomy NS-NNS. He also found that NNESTs considered social identity and cultural affiliation to be important psychological factors and the environment as a crucial social factor on the NS-NNS continuum. Through this study, NNESTs mentioned that the labels, NS and NNS, contained invisible power relations that might reinforce the idea that NESTs are better at using and teaching the language than NNESTs are. The concern about the difficulty of the hiring process was also expressed by NNESTs. Through this study, Liu found that "non-native professionals have multiple social identities and these identities can change with new experiences and new social interactions, according to their needs and their readiness to accept how they are perceived by others" (p. 95). Finally, he emphasized the importance of developing teachers' identity as a professional in education.

4) Teacher Training Program as a Factor Positively Affecting NNESTs' Identity Formation

It might be true that nativeness still has an effect on identity formation of NNESTs as seen in some of research such as Amin (1997). However, several pieces of research showed that through teacher training which emphasizes the professionalism and consciousness of ELT situations, NNESTs could overcome the challenges that they might encounter due to the issue of nativeness. This kind of research also implied that teacher education programs could have a great influence on identity formation of NNESTs. Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) pointed out that successful teaching does not depend on nativeness but rather on the teacher's knowledge, skills, training, experience, and personality. Through the research of non-native TESOL graduates' self-perception and belief about English teaching, which revealed the importance of "the dynamics and demands of a particular sociocultural and linguistic contexts" (p. 141), they emphasized the need of strong focus on the issue of "the multi-dimensionality and expertise rather than on nativeness or authenticity" (p. 142). Samimy and Brutt-Griffler also emphasized the importance of constructing an identity which could empower NNESTs. They pointed out that "many aspects of current TESOL practice may unconsciously reinforce Western cultural hegemony in teacher education classrooms, unwittingly silencing multi-cultural voices and domesticating them into an ESL ethos" (p. 427-428). In order to deconstruct discursive practices that might disempower NNEST trainees in TESOL programs, they suggested the

development of a new identity which could deconstruct the social value imposing the formal imperialistic conception. For instance, they mentioned that “NS-NNS dichotomy represents not a linguistic construct but a socially constructed identity based on cultural assumptions of who conforms to the preconceived notion of a NS” (p. 416) and that “the social construct of nonnativeness assigns to the L2 speaker the identity of a permanent learner” (p. 425) as well as a deficient L2 users. In order to deconstruct the social value imposing this nonnativeness, NNESTs (or trainees) might need an identity such as a critic who could recognize the problem, analyze its cause and eventually generate a new sense of self as a critic. They implied that this might be achieved by critical consciousness about their experience and self-representation as a NNEST in the field of ELT.

Morita (2000) conducted a study that explored the discourse socialization of NNEST and NEST trainees through their engagement in a classroom speech event (Oral Academic Presentation, OAP). She assumed that “language learning is not just an individual psychological process but is also social process” (p. 279). She found that the dynamic, moment-by-moment negotiations of expertise during the OAP contributed to the change of identity of NNEST trainees that was formerly perceived as a novice, a cultural stranger, or a linguistically deficient participant among themselves as well as among native speakers. According to her, NNEST trainees (as well as NEST trainees) acquired a complex identity such as a researcher, a graduate student, an administrator, a negotiator, an observer, and a presenter by negotiating with instructors and peers and by conflicting identities within themselves through OAP courses. Like other researchers, Morita also pointed out the inappropriateness of using the dichotomy NS-NNS, which might result in a false assumption that NNEST trainees are inferior to NEST trainees, since she found that in spite of their language difficulties, many NNEST trainees were as successful as NEST trainees in performing OAPs, and that NNEST trainees were able to use a range of strategies and resources which were normally assumed to be used by only NEST trainees.

Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001)[7] developed a further study based on their previous findings (1999) that nativeness was a non-elective socially constructed identity attached to NNESTs rather than a linguistic category. According to them, “determination of the identity of international speakers of English as native or nonnative speakers depends upon social factors that are not contemplated within

[7] Instead of the term of the non-native English speaker, the international speakers of English was used in this study.

the linguistic construct of the native speaker" (p. 100). Based on a case study with four subjects, they identified some social factors which might affect the determination of identities of international speakers of English as NSs or NNSs: Cultural assumptions (what a native/nonnative speaker looks or sounds like), and national identity (national origin, or ownership of the language attached to natural environment). They argued that the socially constructed notion of NS arising out of the cultural basis rather than of self-ascription exerted its effect on self-identity of international speakers of English, and that the appeal to the "natural" is "a way of understanding social relations which denies history and the possibility of change for the future" (p. 104). They also pointed out the socio-political considerations embedded in the term of nativeness, which would eventually result in the disempowerment of international speakers of English.

In spite of the fact that some research in the above revealed students' negative perception of NNESTs and its impact on NNESTs' identity formation, and that NNESTs admitted that they felt disadvantaged in comparison to NESTs due to prejudice based on NNEST status, most research showed that NNESTs have come to perceive themselves as having certain strengths. That is, studies indicated that NNESTs have perceived themselves to have several more advantages than NESTs as a result of having empathy, being able to understand the needs of learners, being a role model, teaching learning strategies more effectively, better anticipating language difficulties, and etc.

However, there are still several issues to be further investigated in relation to identities of NNESTs in order for NNESTs to establish a more stable and secure status in ELT. The dichotomous distinction between NNS and NS, the difficulty of the hiring process, and the empowerment of teacher education programs are some of those issues.

III. ISSUES TO BE FURTHER INVESTIGATED RELATED TO NNESTs' IDENTITY FORMATION

1. Critical Issues in NNESTs' Identity Formation

Phillipson (1992) argued that the native speaker fallacy is "a result of the British government appreciating the connection between the promotion of English as a worldwide second language and the maintenance of British influence in the

post-colonial era" (p. 13). Nevertheless, the NEST ideal has remained in the ELT profession, and as with many hegemonic practices, there has still been a tendency to accept it without question. As pointed out in the above, in recent years, nativeness has no longer been seen as a crucial element in ELT. However, the influence of the native speaker fallacy on ELT has still remained and has resulted in several obstacles NNESTs might encounter in the process of positive identity formation. The following are some issues which need further research in relation to identities of NNESTs.

1) Binary Classification of NS-NNS: Unequal Power

In the book *The Alchemy of English*, Kachru (1986) mentioned that "English was a tool of political power of the British" (p. 5), and that the term 'non-native' was "closely related to colonization" (p. 88), resulting in the acceptance of 'native' as an ideal learning model. He also pointed out that the dichotomy NS-NNS tended to provide a concept of deviation from standard for NNESTs. Ferguson (1992) also revealed his concern of using the terms 'native speaker' or 'mother tongue' by mentioning that "the whole mystique of NS and the mother tongue should be quietly dropped from the linguist's set of professional myths about language" (p. xiii).

Recently, Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (2001) pointed out that the binary classification of NS-NNS was so common that "its basis is seldom explicitly considered" (p. 99). According to them, although it has been well acknowledged that "such a facile distinction" (p. 99) is the remains of the native speaker fallacy, ELT professionals have continued to adhere to it. They further argued that the simple category of nativeness was so limited in terms of the choice that it became a problem of NNESTs in the formation of social and professional identities. Similar ideas were shown by several researchers (Cook, 1999, 2000; Leung, Harris, & Rampton, 1997; Morita, 2000; Rampton, 1990; Suarez, 2000). Cook (1999) listed a number of characteristics that were used to define a NS[8]. However, he mentioned that all of these "characteristics are incidental, describing

[8] Cook (1999) referred several definitions stated by researchers: A subconscious knowledge of rules, an intuitive grasp of meanings, the ability to communicate within social settings (Stern, 1993), the ability to produce fluent discourse, knowledge of differences between their own speech (Davis, 1996), a range of language skill, creativity of language use, identification with a language community, knowledge of the standard form of the language, the ability to interpret and translate into the L1 of which she or he is a native speaker.

how well an individual uses the language" (1999, p. 187) and did not exclude someone (NNS) who could have several or all of characteristics listed, but who might learn that language as a second or foreign language. He further mentioned that the political and economical status that was embedded in the norm NS might discriminate again the others, and therefore, we might need to create a new term, such as the multicompetent language user (the language user and the language learner).

Morita (2000) pointed out the need to reexamine the dichotomy NS-NNS in terms of false assumptions embedded in the term of NNS. According to her, "based on this dichotomy, L2 researchers and educators often assume that the ultimate goal for NNSs is to gain native-like proficiency in their L2" (p. 304). Through the research, she proved that in spite of their language difficulties, most NNEST trainees were as successful as NEST trainees in performing academic courses, that "the nonnative trainees were able to use a range of strategies and resources and were perceived as successful presenters by their peers and instructors" (p. 304), and that both NNEST and NEST trainees faced similar degrees of challenges of acquiring academic discourses. Suarez[9] (2000) described her personal struggles to find two terms less biased and subjective than the ELT world's NS and NNS. She argued that although the dichotomy NS-NNS in ELT traditions seemed to be presented and perceived as a neutral description of two different types of speakers, it was apparent that "there are profoundly historical, ideological, and psychological variables that are not always taken into account and are not that easy to measure" (p. 1). Furthermore, she mentioned that using the dichotomy of NS-NNS induced the competitiveness, aggression, and discrimination between NS and NNS and finally resulted in the feeling of inadequacy from NNESTs.

Related to the issue of the formation of new terms which might substitute NS-NNS dichotomy, Rampton (1990; Leung, Harris & Rampton, 1997) suggested that the term NS should be dropped and replaced by others, more inclusive terminologies such as expertise, affiliation, and inheritance since using the notion of mother tongue (or native) denied the full involvement of minority language users in mainstream education. He claimed that the notion of expertise might overcome at least some problems that the term 'nativeness' might bring. According to him, expertise is learned and is relative to other experts' knowledge. In addition, "to achieve expertise, one goes through processes of

[9] She could not come up suitable terms for NS and NNS.

certification, in which one is judged by other people" (1990, p. 99). Furthermore, "a language expert does not have to feel close to what he/she knows a lot about since expertise is different from identification" (1990, p. 98). In addition to expertise, Rampton stated that two aspects of language loyalty, language inheritance, and language affiliation, might also be used to describe individuals' relationship with a language[10]. As Rampton insisted, the use of this kind of terminology might help in clarifying some issues that were raised by the term, NS. However, as seen in Braine (1999a)[11] until now, there are no other commonly accepted alternatives for the terms, NS and NNS.

The division between NESTs and NNESTs which seemed to be made considering the superiority of NESTs seems to indicate a power struggle over professional status between NESTs and NNESTs. In addition, the ineffectiveness of teacher classification according to their nationality could be seen to devalue the professional expertise and training which NNESTs received in order to have specific knowledge of English. Furthermore, the dichotomous distinction between NESTs and NNESTs based on national origin could result in forming a negative and deficient identity to NNESTs, which might be manifested in their pedagogical perception and choices. Moreover, the differentiating among teachers based on their status as NS or NNS might perpetuate the dominance of NESTs in the ELT profession and might contribute to the discrimination in the hiring process which will be examined in the following section.

2) Discrimination in the Hiring Process

Many people in ELT have argued that teaching qualifications (or certification) should be required of all English teachers in the hiring process, regardless of their native language (Liu, 1999; Nayar, 1994; Rampton, 1990). However, as pointed out by many researchers, NSs without teaching qualifications are more

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10 "The crucial difference between language affiliation and inheritance is that affiliation refers to a connection between people and groups that are considered to be separate or different whereas inheritance is concerned with the continuity between people and groups who are felt to be closely linked. Inheritance occurs within social boundaries, while affiliation takes place around them" (Rampton, 1990, p. 99).

11 Braine (1999a) showed the following alternatives for the term, non-native speaking teacher: Second language speaking professionals, English teachers speaking other languages, non-native speakers of English in TESOL, non-native professionals in TESOL, non-native teachers of English, non-native English speaking professionals, second language teaching professionals, and non-native English teachers.

likely to be hired as ESL teachers than qualified and experienced NNESTs, especially in EFL contexts. Several studies (Braine, 1999b; Cook, 2000; Medgyes, 1992; Thomas, 1999) have shown the hiring process that favored NESTs. Medgyes (1992) stated that language (English) program administrators in the United Kingdom preferred NSs because they thought that international students who were studying English preferred to learn from NESTs. Thomas (1999) also referred several disturbing statements of some English professionals who believed that being a NS was a necessary condition to teach English. She argued that professionals who boasted the English program only by hiring NESTs would not hire "native speakers of international varieties of English merely because they do not fit the profile of the native speaker" (p. 7). Similar to Medgyes (1992), Cook (2000) pointed out that the main reason for program administrators not hiring NNESTs was their perception that ESL students expected NSs to be their teachers. He reported a brief evaluation of students' attitudes toward NESTs and NNESTs in different countries, and concluded that "no where is there an overwhelming preference for native speaker teachers. Being a native speaker is only one among many factors that influence students' views of teaching" (p. 331).

Braine's (1999b) personal journey from the periphery to the center also showed the challenge he faced in hiring processes. For example, in spite of his 14-year experience of teaching English as an NNEST, the choice of a university's language center was some NSs with no teaching experience. Although NNESTs have gradually received recognition and have taken great responsibility in the center countries, he pointed out that "prejudice and discrimination to NNESTs are spreading rapidly in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong" (p. 26), where being a NS is considered to be more important than being a trained English teacher with full qualifications. However, unfortunately, there is little empirical research for the hiring processes of NNESTs who have encountered and faced these issues.

Most researchers who studied the process of hiring have recommended that the hiring process should be conducted on the basis of professional expertise and personal attributes rather than on native speaking background. However, as seen in Liu (1999), currently in the ESL/EFL job market, being a NNEST seems to be less desirable and be discouraged in competing with NESTs. This undesirable situation definitely creates NNESTs to doubt their qualifications and lead to feelings of being a second rate teacher. Therefore, the ways to reform this hiring process and to establish comprehensible hiring criteria should be one of the

issues to be further investigated in order to establish higher self-confidence and self-esteem of NNESTs in ELT.

If the dichotomy NS-NNS and the hiring process are those that need to be further investigated due to those effects on identities of NNESTs at present, the following issue is what could provide some hope for NNESTs in developing positive self-images in the future.

3) Empowerment of Teacher Education Programs

Liu (1998) mentioned that close to 40% of students who have enrolled in TESOL programs are NNEST trainees. However, he insisted that most TESOL programs in NABA (North America, Britain, and Australia) countries have neglected needs of NNEST trainees by ignoring cultural differences and by encouraging NNEST trainees to adopt "ideas and practices that are valued in only NABA" (p. 4). He also added that by providing NNEST trainees with the same training as NEST trainees and by applying the same criteria for their performances, TESOL programs have resulted in negative impressions of NNEST trainees such as being less adequately prepared than NEST trainees.

However, several other researchers pointed out new possibilities that TESOL programs could provide NNEST trainees in order for them to develop positive self-images in ELT. For example, some TESOL programs addressed the NNEST issues by offering a seminar specifically on NNEST related issues (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999) or by reconceptualizing an existing course to better address the needs of NNEST trainees (Bradly & Gulikers, 1998, as cited in Matsuda, 2003, p. 726). In the same vein, Kamhi-Stein (1999) detailed how the NNEST issues were integrated into the curriculum through classroom activities as well as out-of-class activities in TESOL programs. Those included analyzing the language learning histories of NNEST trainees, exploring the beliefs of NNEST trainees, challenging the assumption that only a White Anglo-Saxon NEST is a better ESL/EFL teacher, doing classroom-centered research on the topic of NNSs, encouraging collaboration between NEST trainees and NNEST trainees, engaging in advocacy activities on behalf of NNEST trainees, and etc. By doing so, she insisted that NNEST trainees could develop "understanding of their own assets, beliefs, and values" (p. 148) and promote "an improvement of the teacher-trainees competencies" (p. 148). Carrier (2003) also suggested several ideas which might promote NNEST trainees' self-confidence in ELT through TESOL programs: Including contextually relevant content, including instruction in academic writing,

assigning specific training for success in a different school culture, and encouraging NNEST trainees to "develop and carry out a research agenda to investigate topics related to NNEST issues" (p. 244). Similar to Kamhi-Stein, she also emphasized the importance of the involvement in professional organizations, which, according to her, could promote a feeling of self-confidence and accomplishment for NNEST trainees.

Although several researchers pointed out some limitations of TESOL programs (Brown, 1993, as cited in Matsuda, 2003; Liu 1998), by starting to include issues of concern and interest of NNESTs in the curriculum, TESOL programs could be considered to provide some hope for NNESTs in the process of positive identity formation. This new approach of TESOL programs could give NNEST trainees a voice to their concerns, and provide opportunities for both NEST trainees and NNEST trainees to learn from each other (Kamhi-Stein, 1999). In addition, as pointed out by Matsuda (2003), through program coursework, NNEST trainees could be given "on going opportunities, both during and after the program, to evaluate their weaknesses and strengths, to overcome their weaknesses and to make the most of their strengths" (p. 725). Furthermore, by sharing their strengths and insights from their various linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds, both NNEST and NEST trainees could find that they could benefit and grow professionally both as individuals and as a group together in ELT (Carrier, 2003; Jeong-Ok Kim & Byung-Bin Im, 2008). Therefore, the empowerment of TESOL programs in terms of contents of the course and class activities could be one of the issues to be further investigated in order to establish higher self-confidence and self-esteem of NNESTs in ELT.

2. Issues for Future Empirical Research

After reviewing literature relevant to NNESTs' identities, three issues which might be interesting to investigate for future empirical research were found. First, Liu (1998) predicted that some NNESTs might experience conflicts between their newly acquired ideas and identities from TESOL programs in NABA countries and those still firmly followed by local professionals when NNESTs return to their home countries. However, few studies followed NNESTs to their actual classrooms in their home countries in order to examine whether their ideas and identities that might be constructed in TESOL programs in NABA countries were changed or sustained. That is, it might be necessary to look at how NNESTs could negotiate their original identities obtained from their home countries with

newly developed identities as a result of the experiences in TESOL programs, after returning to their home countries to teach English.

Second, as noted in the above, many researchers expressed their concern about the hiring process which NNESTs should face. Some researchers (Cook, 2000; Medgyes, 1992) mentioned that the main reason for program administrators not hiring NNESTs was their perception that ESL students expected NESTs to be their teachers. Some researchers stated that the unclear hiring criteria (e.g. nationality of teaching applicants) which might favor NESTs could contribute to the difficult hiring process for NNESTs. Although several personal stories and assumptions related to the hiring process were found through literature, however, there is little empirical research of the hiring criteria in various English language programs in ESL/EFL contexts.

Last, considering the growing body of NESTs in periphery countries in English such as Korea, Japan, or China (Sang-Ok Park, 2008; Eugene Yoon, 2008), research focusing on the relationship between NESTs and NNESTs should be conducted. Among many English periphery countries, Korea has recently recommended the implementation of Korean-English two way immersion program in school settings and has started to employ many NESTs as an English teacher for public schools where most English teachers are Korean. Although many studies have launched to find out the effect of hiring NESTs in public school settings of Korea, empirical studies that aim to explore the relationship between NESTs and NNESTs in school settings are still scarce. Research investigating perceptual roles of NESTs and NNESTs in school settings and potential discrimination that might be caused by the binary classification of NS-NNS from students, or research comparing students' learning outcomes taught by NESTs with those with NNESTs is recommended.

IV. CONCLUSION

Several pieces of research have been conducted concerning identity formation of NNESTs in ELT, recognizing that the lack of identity of a NNEST could “lead to low self-confidence and to an acute sense of one’s marginalized, unstable status in the profession” (Braine, 1999a, p. xvii). Some research revealed students’ negative perception of NNESTs and its impact on NNESTs’ identity formation. They also revealed that NNESTs have felt disadvantaged in comparison to NESTs due to prejudice based on nonnative status. However, most research

showed that NNESTs have perceived themselves to have several more advantages than NESTs as a result of having empathy, being able to understand the needs of learners, being a role model, teaching learning strategies more effectively, and better anticipating language difficulties, etc.

Although, recently, ELT professionals have started to emphasize teachers' knowledge, skills, and expertise more than nativeness and authenticity in ELT, there are still several issues which might affect the construction of identities of NNESTs. Those are the issue of the dichotomous distinction between NS and NNS, the difficulty of hiring process, and the empowerment of teacher education programs. Among these issues, the dichotomy and the difficulty of the hiring process are those which have shown the current NNEST's status and which have threatened NNESTs' identity as a professional in ELT. Researchers pointed out that the ineffectiveness of teacher classification based on nativeness devalued the expertise of NNESTs in the area of English knowledge components acquired through training and practices, and that this dichotomy might lead to the negative identity formation of NNESTs as well as the prejudice in the process of hiring.

Related to the hiring process, researchers insisted that the hiring process should be conducted on the basis of professional expertise and personal attributes rather than on native speaking background. With respect to the fact that these two issues have continuously affected NNESTs' status in ELT, the need of a further investigation should be urgently highlighted. Some researchers expressed concern about limitations of teacher training programs by mentioning that those programs have neglected needs of NNEST trainees. However, it is widely recognized that qualified and trained NNESTs could contribute in meaningful ways to English teaching by virtue of their own experiences as English learners and their expertise acquired through training programs (Kamhi-Stein, 1999). Therefore, further research for the empowerment of teacher education programs could be regarded to contribute to the development of NNEST's equal and secure status as well as affect NNESTs' positive identity formation in ELT.

The strengths of NNESTs are still somewhat unknown and are often underestimated by their colleagues and students (Amin, 1997; Thomas, 1999). In addition, the place of NNESTs in the role of English teachers is still controversial. Although NNESTs have come to take a great responsibility in the ELT profession and have perceived the importance of their contribution to ELT, most NNESTs still struggle for equal treatment with NESTs in the ELT profession. Research about NNESTs' identity could help them to establish the basis of understanding their possibilities of self-development in ELT and help

them to realize the existence of challenges that they might face as teaching professionals. In addition, being aware of their identities would help NNESTs to find more effective ways to overcome these challenges and to create a professional environment for them in ELT. Furthermore, the established identity of NNESTs as a teaching professional would help to enhance their students' learning outcome by adopting appropriate curricula for students based on their confident determination about subject matters. Therefore, in order to help NNESTs to realize the importance of the formation of positive and professional identities (or multicompetent identities) such as a teaching expert, more research should be conducted in relation to NNESTs' identity issues.

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Jihyun Jeon
Department of English Language and Literature
Pusan National University
Jangjeon-dong, Geumjeong-gu, Busan, 609-735, Korea
Tel: (051) 510-1037 / H.P.: 010-4100-6230
Email: jeon.24@gmail.com

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