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Symbolic Violence of the Native Speaker Fallacy: A Qualitative Case Study of an NNES Teacher

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Taking the issues of inequity and power between NES and NNES teachers as a starting point, this qualitative study explores the way the widespread belief of the native speaker fallacy manifests itself in one NNES teacher's teaching life and is linked to the teacher's understanding of herself as an English teacher. Guided by critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001) and using Bourdieu's (1991) theorization of symbolic violence, I conducted an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) in an ESL writing class at a US university. I collected data through classroom observations and interviews over a nine-month period and analyzed the data using the constant comparison method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The findings illustrate the ways the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy works to maintain and reproduce the status quo unequal relation between NES and NNES teachers by making all parties involved believe in the artificial sociocultural arrangements that favor NES teachers as legitimate. The findings direct our attention to the importance of critical teacher education that will enable future TESOL professionals to engage in critical reflection on diverse issues and envision transformative change. The findings, in particular, point to the need for language support for NNES teachers in TESOL teacher education.

[critical teacher education/native speaker fallacy/non-native English speaking teachers/symbolic violence]

I. INTRODUCTION

English has become the lingua franca in this new age of information and globalization. It is one of the most popular languages to learn and use in the contemporary world (Crystal, 2001). With the global spread and position of English, there has been growing attention to

English language teaching and learning and to the need for qualified teachers of English in every classroom around the globe.

In many countries where English is learned as a foreign, a second, or an international language, non-native English speaking (NNES) teachers are the ones who are in charge of English education in their own local contexts to implement contextualized theories, methods, curriculum, and testing that reflect their own local settings (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Tang, 1997). But despite the important roles NNES teachers play in English language teaching (ELT), there have not been many studies done on NNES teachers in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and applied linguistics until very recently (Golombek & Jordan, 2005; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Not only have the voices of NNES teachers largely been marginalized both in academia and in the professional world (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), but their status as English teachers has been ambiguous and secondary (Canagarajah, 1999a; Liu, 1999). Given the fact that the majority of English teachers are now NNES teachers (McKay, 2002), it seems only natural that more studies should be carried out to examine and bring to light the variety of issues and concerns of NNES teachers.

As an attempt to make the hitherto marginalized voices of NNES teachers heard, in the present study, I look at the experience of one NNES teacher teaching academic writing at a university in the United States. Guided by critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 1999, 2001) and Bourdieu's (1991) notion of symbolic violence, I problematize the field of English as a second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL), and English as an international language (EIL) as a site of symbolic violence where the ideology of the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992a; 1992b) is perpetuated in such a way that NNES teachers are positioned as inferior and second-class while native English speaking (NES) teachers are legitimized as ideal teachers of English. Taking the issue of inequity and the unequal power distribution produced by the dominant ideology as a focal point of examination, I aim to explore the ways the widespread nativeness paradigm is played out in an actual classroom, influencing the NNES teacher's teaching practice and her understanding of herself as an English teacher. This research is intended to describe the reality and the lived experience of one NNES teacher and to reveal the workings of the hidden ideology as well as to raise collective awareness among TESOL professionals as to ways to bring about positive change and to empower the historically unacknowledged NNES teachers.

In this research, I use the term, NNES teachers, to describe English as a second language teachers whose first language is not English and who have spent most of their lives in countries where English is not a second or an official language. I recognize that by using the term, NNES teachers, I run the danger of essentializing the group of NNES teachers. Nonetheless, I have decided to use this term cautiously given the lack of a better alternative.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theoretical Framework

In the present study, I take Pennycook's (1999, 2001) critical applied linguistics (CALx) as a guiding paradigm. Bourdieu's (1991) symbolic violence and the notions of habitus, field, and capital provide analytical tools for a better understanding of the experience of one NNES teacher. CALx, according to Pennycook (1999, 2001), is concerned with language-related questions and domains such as language teaching and learning, language planning and policy, language testing, and translation, and takes the issues of access, power, inequality, difference, struggle, and resistance to the fore. CALx is always interested in examining the larger sociocultural, political, historical, and economic contexts and in relating language classrooms, conversation, and text to the broader social, cultural, and political world with a point of view that understands social relations as problematic. Grounding CALx in compassion and ethics of care, Pennycook (2001) argued that, as we all live in "a world of pain," (p. 7) critical applied linguists may play an important role in lessening some of the pain and in visioning for the possibility of change.

Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence and the notions of habitus, field, and capital offer good analytical tools for the present study in gaining an understanding of the workings of power. According to Bourdieu (1977), habitus is best understood by use of the word, hexis. Bodily hexis, he explained, "is political mythology realized, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking and thereby *feeling* and *thinking*" (p. 93, cited in Jenkins, p. 74, italics original). Bourdieu (1991) further explained that habitus is a set of dispositions that guide agents to act and respond in the social world. He considered dispositions durable in that they are inscribed in the body and last for the lifetime of the individual. The notion of field, according to Bourdieu (1991), is important because, when agents act and respond, they are always situated in specific social fields or markets. Therefore, their practices are seen as the relations between habitus and the specific field. Bourdieu considered field a structured social space of positions in which the positions are determined by the distribution of the resources or capital. Depending on the goods and capital that one possesses, which are at stake in the field, agents are positioned in terms of power relations. He defines five forms of capital: economic, cultural, social, linguistic, and symbolic. When economic, cultural, social, and linguistic capital is perceived as legitimate, then it is symbolic capital.

Bourdieu (1989) claimed that, because the social field is a symbolic space where groups with different lifestyles distance themselves from others, it presents a base for symbolic struggles over “the power to provide and to impose the legitimate visions of the world” (p. 20). According to him (1989), symbolic violence (symbolic power), the imposition of a vision of legitimate reality on other groups, is only possible for those who have already obtained the necessary recognition for the imposition to work, i.e. symbolic capital. Therefore, dominant groups with sufficient power to exercise imposition tend to reproduce the unequal distribution of cultural and social capital, hence reproducing the social structure. Bourdieu saw that the foundation of the exercise of symbolic violence is pedagogic action, of which there are three types: diffuse education, family education, and institutionalized education. The more the pedagogic work, the more obscure the objective structure inscribed in the habitus. Therefore, the legitimate culture, which is “a cultural arbitrary” (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 39) of the dominant, is recognized and experienced as natural and taken-for-granted. In addition, the effectiveness of symbolic violence presupposes a shared belief among groups in such a way that even groups with the least benefit tend to tacitly acknowledge the legitimacy of power. Symbolic violence and social and cultural reproduction of the unequal relations between the dominant and the dominated is achieved by ignoring the privilege of the dominant and by treating everyone as equal when in reality the competition and struggle are never carried out on an equal basis.

Guided by CALx (Pennycook, 2001) and using Bourdieu’s theory (1977, 1989, 1991), I take the field of TESOL as a linguistic market where different groups of speakers are structured based on their differing degrees of linguistic habitus and linguistic (cultural, social, economic, and symbolic) capital. I further problematize the field of ELT as a site of symbolic violence where the native speaker fallacy is naturalized in such a way that NES teachers are legitimized as ideal teachers while NNES teachers, positioned as second-class, are marginalized and silenced, which could have a profound effect on their professional identity constructions as English teachers. In particular, I aim to develop a better understanding of the ways the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy manifests itself in the experience and identity construction of an NNES teacher working in an ESL context.

2. Current Literature

Despite the efforts from academia to debunk the myth of native speaker (Canagarajah, 1999a; B. Kachru, 1987, 1991, 1996; Y. Kachru, 1994; Kramsch, 1998; McKay, 2002; Nayar, 1994; Paikeday, 1985; Srider, 1994; Thomas, 1999), the native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992a, 1992b), the belief that native English speaking teachers are ideal

teachers and that they are superior to NNES teachers, has remained powerful in the field of English language teaching and learning. While only a few empirical studies on NNES teachers have been carried out, most of the studies on NNES teachers have been restrictive to reporting some general characteristics of their linguistic and pedagogical behaviors, the differences between NES and NNES teachers, and their strengths and weaknesses as English teachers.

Medgyes (1992), on the basis of his deficit model of native speaker(NS)/non-native speaker(NNS), argues that the linguistic differences between the two groups of speakers manifest themselves in different pedagogical approaches among the two groups of teachers. Extending Medgyes' discussion (1992), Reves and Medgyes (1994) reported some perceived common characteristics about NES and NNES teachers through an international survey with 216 ESL/EFL teachers around the world. The participants in their study, most of whom were NNES teachers, thought that NES and NNES teachers had different teaching strategies and behaviors, and they attributed the differences to the divergent levels of English proficiency. Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) examined self-perceptions of 17 NNES teachers enrolled in a TESOL graduate program in the U. S. through a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research. Similar to Reves and Medgyes (1994), Samimy and Brutt-Griffler found that their participants saw differences between NES and NNES teachers in their linguistic and pedagogical behaviors. Tang (1997) conducted survey research in a teacher training course in Hong Kong and found a wide-spread belief in superiority of NES teachers among NNES teachers.

Some NNES professionals (Amin, 1999; Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999a; Thomas, 1999) shared their autobiographical stories to raise awareness of the effects of the native speaker fallacy on the professional lives of NNES teachers. The issues which they collectively raised included unequal job opportunities (Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999a; Thomas, 1999), students' negative attitudes toward NNES teachers' authority and credibility as English teachers (Amin, 1999; Braine, 1999; Thomas, 1999), challenges as students and English learners (Thomas, 1999), and organizational invisibility (Oda, 1999; Thomas, 1999).

In recent years, troubled with unequal situations in ELT in general and with the value-laden belief of the native speaker fallacy and its exertion on the lives of NNES teachers in particular, some scholars turned their attention to the need of critical pedagogy in TESOL with the hope of bringing positive change and envisioning democratic practice in ELT. While Auerbach (1995) pointed to the need of taking into account the sociopolitical nature of ELT and the intricate relation between language classrooms and larger social worlds in thinking of English learning and teaching, Canagarajah (1999b) introduced two different models of critical pedagogy, the reproduction and resistance models. While the critical pedagogy has largely been applied to the field of TESOL with the aim of bringing personal

and social transformation for English learners, Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) focused on educating NNES teachers. Conducting a qualitative study in a pilot graduate seminar designed for NNES teachers during one academic quarter, Brutt-Griffler and Samimy showed that, through their seminar focused on empowering NNES teachers, the NNES participants gradually became critically aware of the social construct of native speaker and began to view themselves as language experts and agents of change. The NNES participants disregarded the discussion of whether native speakers or non-native speakers were better language teachers as irrelevant and started to recognize their unique contributions to the field of TESOL.

In the field of ELT teacher education, several scholars (Choi, Joh, & Lee, 2008; Kamhi-Stein & Galvan, 1997; Liu, 1999; Maeng, 2008; Murdoch, 1994; Wright & Bolitho, 1997) highlighted the need to support NNES teachers through a language development component in teacher education because (a) pre-service NNES teachers expressed their desire to improve English proficiency, and (b) NNES teachers' English proficiency was closely related to their self-perceptions as confident teachers of English. While Kamhi-Stein and Galvan (1997), Liu (1999), and Wright and Bolitho (1997) provided their ideas on how to incorporate a language development component into TESOL teacher education, Murdoch (1994) presented a survey study conducted in two English teachers' colleges in Sri Lanka. He found that the majority of English teacher trainees recognized that a teacher's confidence came primarily from one's competency in English and that they wanted half of their teacher education curriculum devoted to their language development work. Based on the findings, Murdoch supported the need for a language development component in teacher education programs. Given the close relation between the English proficiency and the language anxiety that NNES teachers felt in their classrooms and in teacher training, Maeng (2008) underscored the importance of providing language support in teacher education. Choi, Joh, and Lee (2008) presented an alternative teacher training model that could improve NNES teachers' English speaking proficiency through collegial collaboration.

The literature indicates that studies focused on NNES teachers have been limited to reporting some general characteristics of their linguistic and pedagogical behaviors, their strengths and weaknesses as English teachers compared to NES teachers, and the challenges they experience as NNES teachers. Not much effort has been made to explore and to describe the lived experiences of NNES teachers interacting with real students situated within a larger sociocultural, political, historical, and economic context. Although a few scholars, in their personal narratives, have reported the struggles that NNES teachers experience due to the native speaker fallacy in ESL and EFL classrooms (Amin, 1999; Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999a; Thomas; 1999), there has not been much research focusing on the extent to which the native speaker fallacy is manifested in NNES teachers'

teaching life. With the guiding paradigm of CALx (Pennycook, 1999, 2001) and Bourdieu's (1991) theorization of symbolic violence, the present study investigates the ways the native speaker fallacy is manifested in one NNES teacher's teaching life and how this is linked to the teacher's perception of herself as an English teacher at a particular research site.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Context and Participants

The study was undertaken at the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) at a large midwestern university in the U.S. Attached to and organized by a TESOL graduate program, the CESL took charge of ESL education for international students and visiting scholars on campus. Grace (pseudonym), the primary participant of this research, was from Taiwan and teaching an academic writing class for international graduate students during the Spring semester of 2005. It was her second semester at the CESL. At the time of data collection, she was one of the four international teaching assistants (TAs) out of 21 TAs working at the CESL. The secondary participant of this research was the supervisor, Nick (pseudonym), at the CESL. He was in his mid-forties and from a small town near the campus. Nick recently obtained a master's degree in the TESOL graduate program and had been working at the CESL for two years as a supervisor at the time of data collection.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

This study incorporates instrumental case study (Stake, 1995). Qualitative case study researchers, according to Stake, aim to understand "the particularity and complexity of a single case" (p. xi) and to learn how it works in is ordinary circumstances. Stake (1995) claimed that case study researchers often do not put much emphasis on making generalizations, but they can create an opportunity to modify "grand generalizations" (p. 7) as the study itself will create a slightly new group from which to generalize. When researchers have a research question and intend to explore the question by studying a particular case, Stake called it instrumental case study.

Employing instrumental case study, I collected data through classroom observations and interviews over a nine-month period from October 2004 to June 2005. While I negotiated entering the field and carried out the first interview with Grace in the Fall semester of 2004, most of the data collection was carried out during the Spring semester of 2005 including classroom observations, two interviews with Grace and an interview with the supervisor. I

observed Grace's class five times during the Spring semester of 2005, which added up to 10 hours of classroom observation. During the observation, I remained as a pure observer, quietly recording an observation note at the back of the classroom. I conducted three semi-formal interviews with Grace, one in the Fall semester of 2004 and two in the Spring semester of 2005. Each interview took from 50 minutes to an hour and was audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. The interview questions were designed to better understand Grace's experience as an English teacher at the CESL and the way she experienced the native speaker fallacy in her immediate teaching context and in larger society. For each interview, I prepared loosely-organized interview questions but oftentimes let Grace lead the conversation to understand her issues and concerns as an English teacher at the CESL.

To develop a better understanding of the context where Grace worked, I interviewed the supervisor of the CESL in June right after the Spring semester was over. The one-time semi-structured interview with the supervisor lasted about an hour and dealt with issues such as the CESL's hiring policy, the overall atmosphere and culture of the CESL, the support system, and the supervisor's experience of working with teachers overall and NNES teachers in particular. The interview was audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. In my attempt to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Grace's teaching life, I originally planned to conduct a student questionnaire at the end of the Spring semester of 2005. Grace, however, did not want her students to be involved in the research so she opposed the idea.

In processing the data and doing systematic data analysis, I read and reread the data during and after the data collection with the aim of getting the general sense of the data as a whole. Through this multiple reading, the coding and sub-coding categories evolved, and their usefulness was tested (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Once a complete coded data chart for Grace and the context was created based on coding categories, I reviewed it carefully while paying attention to the possible relationships among different categories. I then created a narrative of Grace. This process of taking apart the data and synthesizing it allowed me to make sense of Grace's professional experience as an NNES teacher at the research site and the way she experienced the native speaker fallacy.

3. Limitations of the Study

The fact that I had previously taught at the research site and I am a NNES teacher, therefore an insider, might limit the validity of the study. The fact that participants were aware of their involvement in the study through my classroom observations and interviews might have changed their normal behaviors and therefore have contaminated the data.

IV. FINDINGS

1. The Center for English as a Second Language

While the CESL provided various ESL courses, the academic writing program was a major feature of the CESL. This program was designed to help international students adjust well to US academia by familiarizing themselves with the American rhetorical system. With a full-time supervisor, the writing component comprised teaching assistants, the majority of whom were enrolled in the TESOL graduate program or were recent graduates of the program. The supervisor described the overall work environment at the CESL as "pretty good" and "supportive" (Interview, June 2005). He "tr[ied] to promote [the] idea of collaboration," and believed that the collaborative atmosphere "contribute[d] to the work environment" and "to everybody's self-esteem and motivation" (Interview, June 2005).

As a supervisor, he perceived his role as "support[ing] teachers" (Interview, June 2005). For him, the support was not restricted to helping teachers with "their performances in the classroom" but covered a "broad" range such as "listening about the recent break-up with the boyfriend." The more systematic support included a 5-day TA orientation for new teachers and weekly TA meetings. The TA orientation was designed to "indoctrinat[e]" new TAs in the "culture of [the TESOL graduate program]" such as in the idea of "collaboration," "how to teach," and "how to think about teaching." The weekly TA meetings were aimed at providing teachers with a place where they could "bring questions and have other teachers give their perspectives."

In talking about the hiring policy of TAs at the CESL, the supervisor emphasized "experience" and "recommendation" as key factors (Interview, June 2005). He added that international students had to pass a speaking test in order to be eligible to apply. He further elaborated that teachers' linguistic background was not an important factor as long as they were good teachers:

> What I want to say, and I hope this is true because this is my ideal, is that there would not be any distinction [between NES and NNES teachers]. I can't speak for past, before me. But I think it's been true. Julia's [former director] leadership and Dr. Johnson [the present director]. Our attitudes are pretty similar. We don't make that distinction. If the person is a good teacher, and works hard and fits into the culture of [the TESOL graduate program], then, we don't make that distinction. (Interview, June 2005)

He explained that, for the coming Fall semester of 2005, he "got to hire eight [new teachers]" and "four [were] non-native teachers" from "China," "Korea," and "Colombia." According to him, "it happened…because [they] [were] considering credentials, not nationalities." This would bring some change in the composition of teachers in the CESL given that the number of NNES teachers in the Fall semester of 2004 were "five out of 21 teachers" and "four" in the Spring semester of 2005, most of them coming from Korea, Taiwan, China, and Russia.

This change seemed to reflect the supervisor's positive experience with NNES teachers both in his TESOL training and at the CESL. Describing his experience in one of the TESOL graduate classes, he spoke highly of having international students as classmates:

> I learned so much from my colleagues, from my non-native English speaking colleagues about teaching, about perceptions of students, about learning styles, about EFL. So I really feel that the fact that we have international students in the program is a great thing, an advantage for all teachers. And therefore, I'm much more open to that. (Interview, June 2005)

His positive experience with NNES teachers in the TESOL graduate program extended to his CESL life:

> Couple of my very best teachers are non-native English speaking teachers and therefore I depend on them a lot and I think the fact that I depend on them is visible to everybody and that show a respect…I think it's perceived that way and it should be that if I respect them enough to ask their advice, then other people can too…They're gonna see that I really live it and I mean it and I depend on them. (Interview, June 2005)

His beneficial experience with NNES teachers and the consequent trust in them as competent English teachers seemed related to his philosophy of teacher training. He said that, in the TA orientation, he tried to "emphasize" "to the new American [teachers]" that they were going to "learn a lot from these other teachers" and that they had to make sure "to listen to them."

In commenting on his belief about good English teachers, he regarded a "solid" knowledge base in English and "a responsive attitude" toward students as key elements:

> The good English teacher is, first of all, is…very solid in the English language itself. Very proficient in using the English language. But the initial requirement is that they have a strong intuition about grammar and structure of the English

> language as well as structure and rhetoric, rhetorical points of academic writing. They know these things intuitively, deep, you know. That's number one. Number two is their attitude, a caring and responsive attitude…[Good English teachers] are focusing on students and students' needs…I don't think you can be a good English teacher without both of those factors. (Interview, June 2005)

2. Grace

Grace was born and educated in Taiwan, then she came to the U.S. for graduate study. In the Spring semester of 2005, Grace was in her mid twenties and had lived in the U.S. for four years as a graduate student. She was enrolled in the Ph.D. program. While in college, she had had the experience of studying in the U.S. as an exchange student for ten months. Grace had learned English as a foreign language in Taiwan through the grammar-translation method. In applying for the TESOL graduate program, she had to earn a TOEFL score of 620 or higher on the pencil and paper test. To be eligible to apply for a teaching assistantship at the CESL, she had to pass the speaking test required for international speakers of English.

Before teaching at the CESL, she taught for the first time in the practicum course in the TESOL graduate program. She also volunteered to teach a survival English class on campus that met two hours per week for six months. At the CESL, although she was designated as a TA, she had her own class as an instructor and needed to prepare and modify the lessons following the general syllabus. Her academic writing class during the Spring semester of 2005 met two times per week in the evening, each class lasting two hours.

1) I'm More Experienced and Prepared as a Teacher

During the Spring semester of 2005, Grace felt that she was "more experienced" and "prepared" as a teacher than she had been in her first semester at the CESL (Interview 2, April, 2005). She thought that she had become "more spontaneous" in responding to students, got less "embarrassed" when students did not agree with her, and had "always a way" "not to show [her embarrassment]" in class (Interview 2, April 2005). Grace, however, thought that there were still many areas she needed to improve on as a teacher. She, in particular, wanted to work on executing the lesson plan in class because, on a couple of occasions during the Spring semester of 2005, she "confused" her students about what they had to do in class and as assignments (Interview 2, April 2005).

Not only did Grace feel that she had changed as a teacher, but she also thought her students and their attitudes were different in the Spring semester of 2005. While Grace had

a few students who did not "trust" her as a teacher and challenged her authority in the Fall semester of 2004, she said that her students in the Spring semester were "all nice," "pa[id] attention to what [she] [said], and "[did]…respect" her as a teacher (Interview 2, April 2005). Students' affirmation of her as a competent teacher as well as her one-semester experience at the CESL, according to Grace, influenced "how [she] fe[lt]" (Interview 2, April 2005) as an English teacher during the Spring semester of 2005, i.e., feeling "more confident" (Interview 3, May 2005).

Overall, Grace felt "lucky" to be a TA at the CESL because she knew that it was "very hard to get this kind of job as a NNES teacher in an ESL context" and that it was "a good foundation for [her] future career" (Interview 3, May 2005). However, she also thought that it was "a difficult job" given the amount of "preparation" and "efforts" she had to put into her teaching (Interview 3, May 2005).

2) Working as an NNES Teacher at the CESL

Describing her experience as an NNES teacher at the CESL, Grace stated that it was "difficult to be a NNES teacher in an ESL context" (Interview 3, May 2005). More specifically, she said that teaching at the CESL as an NNES teacher was "more difficult" than it was for NES teachers and that "do[ing] the same work" was "more time-consuming for non-native [teachers]." (Interview 3, May 2005).

Working as an NNES teacher also meant that Grace had to deal with potential as well as real prejudice from students. Grace commented that she thought "some of [her] students did not like [her] class because [she] was teaching the class and [she was], [she is] a non-native teacher" (Interview 1, November 2004). Her concern about the negative manifestation of her NNES teacher status did not remain just as a concern. According to Grace, one male student openly addressed the issue about her NNES teacher status in his journal by commenting that "he was worried about [her] accent" (Interview 1, November 2004). The supervisor also shared that Grace "had to suffer from complaints from students" because of students' expectations of "getting native English speaking teachers, which made [Grace] feel really bad for a while" (Interview, Supervisor, June 2005).

Recognizing and experiencing students' prejudicial attitudes towards NNES teachers made her "cautious" of not highlighting her NNES teacher identity in class. She, in particular, was careful not to project herself as a Taiwanese teacher of English:

> I tried not to talk much about Taiwan in my classroom cause…I don't know. It's like my hunch that, if I talk too much about Taiwan, then they wouldn't see me as an English teacher. You know, they will relate me more to Taiwan and…would that be good to them in terms of writing English papers? I don't know…I mean, I'm

trying not to. (Interview 1, November 2004)

Her reluctance seemed to come from the belief that the Taiwanese teacher of English identity, i.e., her NNES teacher identity, might affect her credibility as a legitimate teacher of English, particularly when compared to NES teachers:

> I'm worried if they see me as Taiwanese. I mean, it's OK. I'm Taiwanese. But I'm afraid that will affect their perception of me as an English teacher. If I talk too much about Taiwan, [and] when I talk about English writing, would that be convincing? As convincing to them as American teachers? So that's why I try not to talk, you know, to project myself as a Taiwanese teacher of English…I'm not sure if they see us differently from native [English speaking] teachers. (Interview 1, November 2004)

She also believed that being projected as a Taiwanese teacher of English would affect "[students'] trust" in her as an English teacher and therefore "their writing" and "class atmosphere" (Interview 1, November 2004).

Not only did Grace have to cope with students' biased attitudes towards her as an NNES teacher, but she also suffered from her own feelings of insecurity due to her NNES teacher status. Reflecting on the Fall semester of 2004, Grace said that she "was not comfortable [her]self being a teacher…[because she was] a big time non-native teacher" and added that she "was not confident" (Interview 2, April 2005). She said that she was "self-conscious" about her non-native speaker status. According to Grace, feeling self-conscious about her NNS status affected her interaction with NES TAs at the beginning of the Fall semester:

> With my colleagues…because I was self-conscious about me being a non-native speaker, I didn't really, although I had a question, I didn't ask those questions to my colleagues because I thought they'll see me as a not competent teacher cause I have all these questions, and especially I'm a non-native speaker. (Interview 1, November 2004)

Facing implicit and explicit prejudice towards NNES teachers and feeling insecure as an NNES teacher, Grace turned to teacher qualities other than linguistic status such as "hard work" and "preparation," believing that these would counterbalance the negative effect of one's NNES teacher identity (Interview 1, November 2004). Her belief in a teacher's preparedness and diligence as devices of overcoming his/her NNES teacher identity seemed to be based on her own experience at the CESL. With a semester-long experience at the CESL under her belt and knowing what would come next in terms of

lesson planning and curriculum, Grace, in the Spring semester of 2005, seemed more relaxed and confident as a teacher of writing than she had been in her first semester. In her interview in the Spring semester, she commented that "we [NNES teachers] [were] not that different [from] native [English speaking] teachers" (Interview 3, May 2005). She elaborated that what she did in her class "[was] not that different from how a NES would" do in class (Interview 3, May 2005). Gaining confidence through "hard work" and "preparation," Grace even commented that "preparation" and "experience" were the two most important characteristics of good English teachers at the CESL.

Interestingly, despite Grace's claim that a teacher's NS or NNS status would not weigh as much as his/her professional attitude and work ethic in his/her teaching life, Grace took a conflicting position when it came to hiring policy. Talking about who the administration would prefer in hiring, she remarked that they would prefer NES teachers over NNES ones and that she agreed with them:

> What I think they [people in administration] think…well, for sure, I think if there are native speaker and non-native speaker, they would prefer native speaker if other things equal because it's their native language. And let me emphasize that other things being equal. And I would prefer native person if I'm in an administration. (Interview 1, November 2004)

Grace even stated that NES teachers would be better for students in teaching academic writing at the CESL if the two types of teachers had the same qualification:

> If I compare myself with someone in this context…spending exactly the same amount of time, everything is equal, then definitely native speaker will better for [students]. You know, same preparation…because they have an advantage [of] writing [in] their native language. So, in that sense, yes. (Interview 3, May 2005)

3) I Need to Work on Improving My English

While Grace gradually became more confident as a teacher of academic writing at the CESL, her concern about English seemed to persist. In the Fall semester of 2004, Grace said that she "was nervous about [her] language" and that she "want[ed] to improve [her] English" and "to improve [her] accent" (Interview 1, November 2004). The lack of confidence she felt in her English persevered during the Spring semester of 2005. Grace remarked that she "still [did] not know much about language itself" and that she was "not satisfied with…[her] English" (Interview 3, May 2005). She, in particular, found it "difficult" "when read[ing] students' papers" because "there [were] several sentences that

[she] [was] not sure…whether this [was] right or wrong…correct or not" (Interview 1, November 2004). The challenge of providing feedback on students' writing due to her limited knowledge of English continued in the Spring semester of 2005:

> Maybe with the language. Especially grading, you know, is the most difficult thing. When I grade a sentence, I always have it proofread by a native speaker just in case…Sometimes, I get something wrong. But even sometimes I thought I was really sure, but still [I was not right]. So, that sets [NES and NNES teachers] different. (Interview 3, May 2005)

While giving students linguistic feedback was "frustrating" to Grace in the Fall semester of 2004, she seemed to find a way to overcome her difficulties in the Spring semester, i.e., asking her native speaker friends for help:

> When I grade papers, there are things that I'm not sure, and that was very frustrating in the first semester. And now I kind of get help from a friend of mine, you know. I sometimes send sentences of my students. First I…proofread, I correct those sentences, and I sent them. And [my friend] checks whether my corrections are correct or not. So, I felt much better since I did that. But my friend is also busy, right? So, it's hard to keep doing it. (Interview 3, May 2005)

The challenges she encountered due to her English were not restricted to writing but extended to the areas of vocabulary and oral communication. In one of the classes I observed, she said she came across "one frustrating moment" where she felt she could not provide adequate and prompt feedback on a students' oral presentation:

> Akiko was explaining things for Liu's project, and she had a hard time explaining things…She was saying there was this building…It's something [related to] an earthquake. Yeah, if we have an earthquake, then that does collapse the building. But it'll kinda push the building to one direction and something like that. And she had a hard time explaining that. And I thought I was not sure how to explain that either. So I gave couple of words, but I was not sure how to explain that situation. So, I was frustrated myself that time…because I'm not sure how to explain those…It would've been helpful if I had known how to. (Interview 3, May 2005)

Grace commented that not being able to help her students as much as she wanted to made her feel "guilty" and "bad" as a teacher (Interview 3, May 2005).

4) My Relationship with Other TAs and the Supervisor

In discussing her relationship with the supervisor and other TAs, she said that "it [was] a really good environment with [her] colleagues" and that she was "very comfortable in [her] office" (Interview 1, November 2004). Grace also found the supervisor's observations of TAs' classes helpful. Commenting on the review session with him on the recently observed class, Grace mentioned that his feedback was "very useful" and made her reevaluate some of her teaching routines (Interview 3, May 2005).

While she found the support from the supervisor helpful in general, she also shared a "traumatizing" moment in one of the classes observed by the supervisor at the beginning of the Spring semester of 2005 (Interview 3, May 2005). According to Grace, she was explaining one of the grammar points and subconsciously wrote an ungrammatical sentence on the board. As the students and Grace were discussing the grammaticality of the sentence, Grace saw the supervisor smiling at the back. Then the supervisor corrected the mistake in the sentence:

> I was explaining the [indefinite] article, *a*. [And I wrote on the board,] 'I had rain yesterday.' That's strange, right? But I wrote 'I had rain'…The problem was with *I*…Some students were, 'yeah, that's fine.' Some other students were, 'had rain?' They were focusing on [the verb]. I didn't know what the problem was, and then later I think I noticed. Nick was smiling, kind of. [I thought to myself,] 'OK. Something was wrong.' I was so embarrassed at that time, and Nick pointed out, 'We never say *I had*, it's *we had*.' And I was like, 'Oh, right…I made [the same] mistake before.' And I was trying to get over it smoothly…[but] I was very embarrassed…(Interview 3, May 2005).

Grace said that she felt apprehensive because the incident would hurt her credibility as a qualified teacher of English:

> I was very worried that my students would see me differently from then. That was really critical, traumatizing error because it just reveals me as a NNES teacher…who was not as competent as native [English speaking teachers], right?...[Nick] said *we* will never say, native speakers will never say…He didn't realize what he was saying, but that just cut the line between native and nonnative [teachers]. So, it was very hard for me to walk to the class next time. (Interview 3, May 2005)

Despite the supervisor's attempt to help Grace, she felt that his use of the word, we, only accentuated her NNES teacher identity in front of her students, which could work against her in presenting herself as a competent teacher of English.

V. DISCUSSION

Given the paucity of studies on NNES teachers and global reality of the increasing number of NNES teachers (McKay, 2002), the present study is focused on bringing to light the experience of one NNES teacher working in an ESL context. Taking the widespread but uncritically accepted belief of the superiority of NES teachers as the heart of the research, I intend to develop a better understanding of the ways the native speaker fallacy manifested itself in one NNES teacher's teaching life and is linked to the teacher's understanding of herself as an English teacher.

The primary participant in the study was a female NNES teacher from Taiwan working at an ESL division in a large midwestern university in the U.S. Incorporating an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995), I gathered data through interviews and classroom observations. To develop a contextual understanding, I interviewed the supervisor of the ESL division. I used the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to conduct qualitative analysis of the data. Through multiple reading of the data, coding themes and categories emerged.

Supporting Bourdieu's (1977, 1989, 1991) theorization of symbolic violence and social and cultural reproduction, the findings of the present study illustrate how the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy works to maintain the unequal sociocultural and political relations between NES and NNES teachers by naturalizing the arbitrary social arrangement to NES teachers' favor, thus legitimizing NES teachers over NNES teachers (Canagarajah, 1999a; Phillipson, 1992a; 1992b). The current study shows that the native speaker fallacy not only exerted its power in the life of Grace, thus affecting the way she felt about herself as an English teacher, but also manifested itself at the program level, influencing the minds of students and the supervisor in a subtle but powerful manner.

As a teacher of academic writing at the CESL, Grace perceived herself as a "big time NNES teacher." Her NNES teacher identity was closely linked to her feeling of insecurity as a teacher of English at the CESL. It made her feel self-conscious and cautious when interacting with NES colleagues because she was worried that they might perceive her as an incompetent teacher of English if she asked questions related to English. In the classroom, Grace was concerned that her identity as a Taiwanese teacher of English might harm her teacher authority making her less convincing as an English teacher in the eyes of

her students compared to NES counterparts. She also presumed that her students would not accept her because she was an NNES teacher. Knowing instinctively the prejudice against NNES teachers, Grace made efforts to counterbalance the negative manifestation of her NNES teacher identity through hard work and preparation. The above data illustrates that Grace took the native speaker fallacy for granted and believed in the superiority of NES teachers as model teachers of English. In other words, she struggled in dealing with her NNES teacher identity because she had wrongly been indoctrinated into the belief that only NNES teachers are legitimate, ideal teachers. This presents a powerful example of the symbolic violence of the native speaker fallacy inflicted on a marginalized group, influencing their perception of themselves, as shown in Grace's worries and feelings of insecurity as an English teacher (Bourdieu, 1977, 1989, 1991; Canagarajah, 1999a; Phillipson, 1992a; 1992b).

Grace's uncritical acceptance of the native speaker fallacy was also shown in her discussion of who she believed the administration at the CESL would prefer to hire. She explained that the administration would have a preference for NES teachers over NNES ones, if all other conditions were the same, because English is their native language. She even commented that she would favor NES teachers if she were in an administrative position. Her belief in the superiority of NES teachers was also displayed when she said that NES TAs would be better in teaching academic writing at the CESL compared to NNES teachers if the two types of TAs had the same qualifications because English is their native language. Even though she identified herself as an NNES teacher, she was willing to put herself in a marginalized position and jeopardize her future career opportunities. This revealed that she not only believed in the native speaker fallacy, but tacitly acknowledged that English belongs only to native speakers and therefore NES teachers are better candidates to be good teachers of English.

Bourdieu (1991) explained that symbolic violence assumes a form of complicity "which is neither passive submission to external constraint nor a free adherence to values" (p. 51). Symbolic violence, in other words, presupposes shared belief so that even those least benefiting from the exercise of the power tend to participate in their own subordination. The dominated recognize the legitimacy of power and therefore fail to see that the power itself is a cultural arbitrary that best serves the dominant and produces unequal power relations. Grace's belief in the legitimacy of NES teachers and the native speakers' ownership of English exemplifies the power of the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy, implicitly exercised in her life as an English teacher.

Supporting Bourdieu's (1977, 1989, 1991) theorization of symbolic violence and social and cultural reproduction, the findings also illustrate the way the sociopolitical reproduction of the native speaker fallacy is maintained and reproduced by ignoring the differences between NES and NNES teachers in terms of their linguistic habitus and capital

and by treating them as equal. Throughout the data, one of the most persistent issues for Grace was her difficulty to perform as a confident teacher of English due to her limited English capital. Not only was she dissatisfied with her English habitus and wanted to improve her accent and English overall, but she also felt challenged in grading students' papers because of her English. Her limited intuition in judging whether some of the sentences students produced were grammatically correct or not made her doubtful of her qualifications as a competent English teacher. Recognizing her limited English capital, Grace relied on native speakers of English by asking for help from her NES friends and colleagues. Grace's struggle for "legitimate competence" (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 69) had direct implications for the way she perceived herself as an English teacher at the CESL. Despite her strong motivation to help students, her linguistic habitus and capital as an NNES teacher did not allow her to help the students as much as she wanted to, which led her to feel dissatisfied, incompetent, blameworthy, and worried as a teacher.

Grace's challenge due to her level of linguistic habitus and linguistic capital, however, was experienced as an individual issue. It was Grace's responsibility to take care of the language problem and to improve her English. Grace neither mentioned the need for support from the program nor did the CESL provide any specific language-related help for NNES teachers. While the present supervisor tried to be as supportive as he could of all TAs and believed in NNES teachers as competent teachers of English, he was not aware of the need to support NNES teachers in terms of English. This individualization, leaving things to the level of each individual teacher's problem, responsibility, and motivation, is problematic when considering the very different linguistic habitus and capital that NES and NNES teachers possess. It is problematic because, without appropriate help, NNES teachers, as in Grace's case, are left only to blame themselves for their lack of linguistic capital, while NES teachers, equipped with better linguistic habitus and capital from the start, enjoy their legitimized status as ideal teachers. The failure to recognize the need of linguistic support for NNES teachers only enables the program to participate in the reproduction of the unequal distribution of linguistic and symbolic capital, therefore reproducing the status quo unequal relationship between NES and NNES teachers.

The unwitting participation in the reproduction of the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy at the program level was also demonstrated in the supervisor's emphasis on intuitive knowledge of grammar as the most important condition of good English teachers. According to studies on NES and NNES teachers, having an intuition in English is one of the well-known strengths of NES teachers (Medgyes, 1992; Reves and Medgyes, 1994; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Although not impossible to acquire as a non-native speaker, the researchers argued that intuitive knowledge is typically attainable through a long process of acquisition and learning, and via steady exposure to language and culture from an early age (Crystal, 2001; Reves and Medgyes, 1994). This illustrates that the

program, despite its open hiring policy and the supervisor's belief in NNES teachers as qualified teachers of English, tacitly participates in perpetuating the native speaker fallacy by highlighting intuitive knowledge of English as a condition of good English teachers, a condition that typically belongs to native speakers.

The subtle but enduring manifestation of the dominant ideology of the native speaker fallacy at the program level is further shown in Nick's use of the word, we, only referring to native speakers of English, in Grace's observed class. Despite Nick's intention to help Grace, his unconscious use of the word, we, only worked to concretize the differentiation between NES and NNES teachers and to jeopardize Grace's self-confidence as a competent teacher of English. This is another example demonstrating that the value-laden dichotomy between NES and NNES teachers has not only been ingrained in Grace and the students, but has also influenced the supervisor. The supervisor was unable to see the detrimental workings of the wide-spread ideology of the native speaker fallacy that has governed the field of TESOL and therefore failed to provide adequate help for Grace as he intended.

VI. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study present us with an opportunity to reevaluate the content and curriculum of existing TESOL teacher education. They, in particular, draw our attention to the importance of implementing critical TESOL teacher education, where future ELT professionals critically examine the sociocultural, political, historical, and economic meanings and implications of doing TESOL in this globalized world and their responsibility as global citizens in the ethics of care and compassion (Pennycook, 1999, 2001). Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) and Golombek and Jordan (2005) showed that their graduate seminars designed to engage NNES teachers in critical praxis not only allowed the teachers to revisit taken-for-granted issues such as the nativeness paradigm and standard language ideology but also helped them to reevaluate their roles in the field of ELT and to imagine themselves as language experts and agents of change. Samimy (2008) also demonstrated that, through the critical component in TESOL teacher education, not only NNES teachers but also NES teachers can develop a new identity as an advocate for the rights of NNES teachers and envision more collaborative and mutually empowering ELT professional communities.

As shown in the studies above, critically-oriented graduate seminars will help TESOL pre-service teachers reevaluate the many naturalized domains in second language acquisition theory and pedagogy and serve as a site for transformative change. The critical component in TESOL teacher education will not only work to raise collective awareness

among teachers but also to provide ways for teachers to help students fight against disempowering discourses, such as the native speaker fallacy. One possible example is to organize ESL/EFL/EIL curriculum to provide students with a chance to face the global reality of world Englishes (Canagarajah, 2006, 2007; Modiano, 1999, 2001; Rubdy & Saraceni, 2006) and its implications for cross-cultural communication. Providing that the nativeness paradigm affects the marginalization of English language learners as well by setting up an unattainable standard of native speaker, being able to engage language learners in critical dialogue on issues such as varieties of English in the world, accented speech and writing, and ideal English teachers should be a part of teacher preparation.

The findings of this study further shed light on the need to provide language support for NNES teachers. Language support seems critical given the unequal linguistic habitus and capital between NES and NNES teachers (Kamhi-Stein & Galvan, 1997; Liu, 1999; Medgyes, 1999; Murdoch, 1994; Wright & Bolitho, 1997) and its interrelation with NNES teachers' self-confidence as teachers and their professional identity constructions (Murdoch, 1994; Polio and Wilson-Duffy, 1998). As Grace's lack of confidence in using English was closely related to her feelings of self-doubt as an English teacher, it is essential to implement a language development component in TESOL teacher education that aims to help NNES teachers enhance their level of English proficiency.

The current study has implications for future research on students' attitudes and beliefs towards NES and NNES teachers and their impact on teachers' professional identity construction and teaching practice. As hinted in the data but not rigorously explored in the present study, the values, beliefs, and assumptions students bring to ESL/EFL/EIL classrooms are always intricately related to the ways teachers construct and develop their professional identity as English teachers (Amin, 1997, 1999). Considering the scarcity of research on students' assumptions and attitudes toward English teachers and the way these factors influence teachers, future investigation on the interaction between teachers and students will benefit our understanding of the reality of language classrooms and the way we support teachers. Further, a longitudinal qualitative study would contribute to the field by investigating the effect of a critical pedagogy of TESOL on NES and NNES teachers' understanding of issues relevant to NS and NNS constructs and their attitudinal changes.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Secondary/College/Higher

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