English Language & Literature Teaching, Vol. 26, No. 4 Winter 2020
https://doi.org/10.35828/etak.2020.26.4.21

Examining the Academic Contribution of Non-native and Native Language Instructors in College English Courses

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Im, Hyunsun (2020). Examining the academic contribution of non-native and native language instructors in college English courses. *English Language & Literature Teaching*, *26*(4), 21-37.

In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) education, native-English-speaking teachers (NESTs) have long been considered more valuable than non-native-English-speaking teachers (NNESTs). As a growing number of people around the world are becoming English learners, however, NNESTs now outnumber NESTs. This fact calls for greater attention to how the two groups of language instructors are perceived and what they actually bring to the EFL language classroom. This study examines how the predominance of NESTs in Korean EFL contexts affects Korean EFL learners and Korean college education. Grouping students according to change in their TOEIC scores over one semester (increase, decrease, no change), the study investigates the influence of NNESTs versus NESTs on (1) their students' academic sincerity and (2) their students' academic achievement. The study finds no meaningful difference between NNESTs' and NESTs' students in academic sincerity or achievement, which suggests that English teachers' status as native or non-native speakers is irrelevant. It concludes that such labeling is no indication of the quality of language education provided by these groups.

[English education/native speaker/non-native speaker/TOEIC/academic sincerity/ academic achievement]

I. INTRODUCTION

The biggest selling point for Korean schools in the 1990s was to have native-English-speaking teachers (NESTs)—more specifically, native speakers from the United States. Most Koreans were keen on the idea of speaking "like Americans," which started a trend of commercializing the nationalities of teachers in the field of English language teaching

(ELT). Among Korean speakers of English, social recognition is often based on judgments of the speakers' accent. People typically display a fairly high ability to spot accentedness in speech (Munro & Derwing, 1995), and because Koreans are exposed to American media such as movies and TV programs much more than media from any other English-dominant nation, American-like pronunciation became the ideal. However, with rapid globalization and advances in information technology, more people in recent decades have come to accept the idea that English is a universal language with a plurality of forms and norms. In turn, Korean English education has gradually begun to put less emphasis on "native-like" speech. Im (2018b) delineated the problems associated with the outdated concept of superior and inferior forms of Englishes, while also highlighting that the concept nevertheless retains some power, and continues to show up in attitudes and behaviors of many people with diverse relationships to the English language. The vast majority of language researchers and educators, however, have embraced the fact that English is spoken by more people as a second language than as a first language, and the notion that English is no longer exclusively owned by native-speaking communities. More importantly, non-native speakers increasingly outnumber native speakers globally. In fact, the number of non-native English speakers has long been greater than the total combined population of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada (Kachru, 1990). Ahn's (2014) recent work is one of many studies building on the idea that the center of gravity of the English language has moved away from the native speaker, as a natural consequence of the unprecedented worldwide use of English.

Thus, the world has witnessed the emergence of "Englishes"—such as Indian English, Chinglish, and Korean English—on a global scale, and non-native English speakers have claimed the right to be heard. In the context of globalization, the concept of English has been reborn as a user-oriented rather than native-oriented language. Along with these shifts, issues related to nativeness have arisen in the field of English language teaching. The World Englishes framework gives us tools to address these issues. Moussu and Llurda (2008) suggested that the two categories of NNEST and NEST fail to reflect real conditions and levels of command of the language by a given speaker, and are sometimes misleading in suggesting that one group of speakers has a superior capacity to communicate efficiently and intelligibly. According to Modiano (1999), in international contexts, non-native speakers are often more communicatively efficient than native speakers, who may speak fairly local or substandard varieties of the language. In the Korean context, the ultimate goal of most English learners is to be able to communicate among people from all over the world who have similar English education backgrounds and similar exposure to the language. In such global settings, NESTs can be far less intelligible than well-educated, proficient NNESTs. Thus, the path to the ultimate goal

for English learners is similar to the path followed by NNESTs as language users, and may be a good model for ELT to follow.

Against this background, English education in Korea, especially in universities, faces a question: are the 16,262 native-English-speaking language professionals, including 2,216 university professors, currently working in Korea (Korea immigration Service, 2020) worthwhile, considering all the effort and expense of bringing them to the country? The current high number of NESTs in Korea is a consequence of the 1997 seventh national English curriculum of the Ministry of Education, in which, for the first time, communicative competence was the main objective (Ministry of Education, 1999). At that time, learning English from native speakers seemed natural and was widely thought to be the best choice. Abundant research, however, has reported a wide range of evidence that suggests otherwise. For instance, Ha (2013) pointed out some of the adverse side effects of hiring NESTs who have little knowledge of their EFL students' culture. Medgyes (1992) elucidated the bias against NNESTs and discussed specific advantages and disadvantages of both groups—while stressing that NNESTs can be just as successful as NESTs at teaching the language.

With these thoughts in mind, this study considers it crucial to examine how instructors' native speaker status affects Korean English learners and English college education in Korea. The study therefore investigates the influence of NNESTs versus NESTs on (1) their students' academic sincerity and (2) their students' academic achievement, with the students grouped according to change in their TOEIC scores (increase, decrease, no change) over one semester.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. English in Korea

Many people around the world whose first language is not English work hard to improve their communicative skills in English, and Koreans are no exception. In the context of South Korea, the ability to speak like a native is taken as a symbol of cultural social status, just like an expensive car (Im, 2018a). The perception of the desirability of not just being able to communicate in English but speaking like a native certainly caused Korea's English boom, which could also be called an obsession. The Korean government has definitely played a role in this phenomenon, particularly through revisions to the national curriculum and to the national university entrance examinations. In 1991, the government announced that English would be taught in all grades of elementary school by 1995; that announcement swept the whole country into the English fever that is still

burning (“English education in elementary schools: From 1995, as an elective course for higher graders.”, 1991). The 1994 revision of the university entrance examinations, like the 1997 national school curriculum, focused more on the communicative approach than grammatical knowledge; all teaching materials were subsequently revised in order to meet the new needs of this focus. As the influence of communicative language teaching methods continued to grow, leading to ever greater emphasis on productive skills such as speaking and writing, many learners developed an intense desire to speak English like a native (Shin, 2005). English educators weighed in with strong support for English-only instruction. Universities began promoting lectures in content courses in English to help students improve their English competence, and the practice soon spread to elementary teachers, forcing them to teach English only in English regardless of their fluency (Oh, 1996). The trend led to a preference for hiring professors in all fields who could teach their courses in English, while in the field of ELT itself, the general thinking was that NESTs were the best teachers of English.

2. Characteristics of NNESTs and NESTs

Good teaching is the result of many variables. If there were only language competence to consider, a NEST would be clearly superior to a NNEST. It would also follow that any native speaker, with or without ELT qualifications, would be more effective than any non-native speaker as an English teacher. However, language is not all about language competence, and the many complexities of language learning and pedagogy should not be oversimplified. The experience, age, sex, aptitude, motivation, and training of teachers, to name only a few factors, can all play decisive roles in their teaching and in the learning process of their students (Medgyes, 1992). Having teachers who are not NESTs can be a good motivation for learners, as the teachers are learners themselves; the NNEST can be a good model of a successful learner of English. Even when NESTs can provide perfect language models, they cannot be learner models in the sense that NNESTs are.

NNESTs have learned the language by employing strategies, memorizing vocabulary and grammar, and effortfully honing their linguistic skills, while NESTs have simply acquired it through natural exposure. Thus, NNESTs can often teach learning strategies very effectively because they have learned the strategies through their own learning process. And with their explicit knowledge of the language and how it works, NNESTs can be much better informants than NESTs. As Mahboob (2004) pointed out, many NESTs acknowledge that while they know how to use the language, they lack explicit knowledge of its rules. Mahboob further noted that the lack of grammatical understanding appears to be noticeable to students, who sometimes judge NESTs as poor

teachers of grammar, presumably because they have observed the inability of NESTs to explain grammatical concepts.

Furthermore, NNESTs are more capable of anticipating learners' language difficulties. Their experience as language learners enables them to help students overcome language difficulties and avoid pitfalls. Medgyes (1992) also indicated that NNESTs may have more empathy regarding the needs and problems of their learners because they themselves never cease to be learners of English; they thus continue to encounter difficulties similar to those of their students, which may lead them to be more sensitive and understanding of those difficulties.

According to Mahboob (2004), the students in his study felt that NNESTs' experience of learning English as a second language makes them aware of the problems that ESL learners may face. The students described NNESTs as better equipped to help them and as more empathetic toward them. Mahboob further claimed that the students perceived NNESTs' grammar teaching ability to be important in the students' preparation for standardized tests of English such as TOEFL and TOEIC. A pertinent observation here is that many NNESTs have studied in English-dominant countries, and so they have had to take the TOEFL themselves. NNESTs' experience of taking these tests may aid them in their ability to help their students prepare for the tests.

In addition, only NNESTs can share their learners' mother tongue and cultural background, which can be an important motivating factor for learners. The mother tongue is an effective vehicle of communication in the language classroom, which can facilitate the teaching and learning process in countless ways. Learners who share a first language (L1) with their teacher appreciate the teacher's ability to code-switch to the L1 when required. Furthermore, Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014) pointed out that different cultures between teachers and learners can lead to misunderstandings and miscommunications. In addition, some students sometimes feel that learning with a NEST is stressful, perhaps because learners who share their teacher's cultural background can judge more easily how to frame requests or opinions, what topics might be restricted, and when to take or relinquish the floor (Cazden, 2001).

NESTs are undeniably helpful as a resource for oral skills such as natural pronunciation. The goal of most learners is to speak like natives, and it is true that native-like fluency on the part of a teacher is a big attraction for many language learners. Mahboob's (2004) student participants, for example, indicated that the best part of having native speakers as teachers is that they could learn natural pronunciation and prosody from them, which they felt to be effective in improving their listening and speaking skills. Mahboob's participants also perceived NESTs as having a large vocabulary, including slang and new words.

Another advantage of having NESTs is that they create an environment where the

learners have to speak and listen in English, which naturally helps them improve. If the teacher does not speak the learners' mother tongue, the learners have no option but to use English at all times in the classroom, which can be beneficial to EFL learners at all proficiency levels.

Furthermore, NESTs have more knowledge of their own culture, which is important in language learning. Teaching culture has been an important trend in foreign language instruction since the 1970s (Lafayette, 1975). Sapir (1970) gave the example of the impossibility of understanding even a simple poem without understanding the culture from which it emerged – the whole life of the community and its overtones. Language teachers came to realize that language was deeply rooted in culture and could not be separated from it. Presenting the cultural foundations for language learning provides learners necessary insight into the way in which language forms reflect cultural values and world views (Bourgeacq, 1970). Without understanding cultural meanings, it is not possible to understand a language as its native speakers do, no matter how well a learner can manipulate the forms of the language. Given the importance of culture education, NESTs may have some advantage over NNESTs in this matter—but that advantage continues to diminish as we learn more about the role of World Englishes in diverse cultures worldwide.

3. Previous Studies

Many previous studies have conducted qualitative surveys on learners' preferences and opinions regarding NESTs and NNESTs. A survey by Chun (2015) found that Korean university students perceived the main advantages of having NESTs for instructors to be the NESTs' ability to speak English fluently and naturally, and the free and relaxed learning environment NESTs tend to prefer. The main disadvantages were the instructors' lack of passion, responsibility, awareness of Korean culture, and linguistic knowledge. The same learners evaluated NNESTs' grammar competence as high but also pointed out that NNESTs spent too much time explaining grammar. In Yeo's (2012) study with 756 Korean university students, the majority felt that upper level English courses should be taught by NESTs, but they preferred NNESTs to teach their grammar and writing classes. Kim (2009) also investigated Korean students' perceptions of NESTs and NNESTs. The learners preferred NESTs from the United States and England, and their ideal was NESTs with a decent understanding of Korean culture, TESOL certificates, and American pronunciation. The advanced level students expressed a stronger preference for NESTs than did the lower level students, and all of the participants preferred NESTs for all topics/skills except grammar. Klemsen and Seong (2012) surveyed 160 university students in Korea on advantages and

disadvantages of learning TOEIC from NESTs and NNESTs. The respondents indicated that having NESTs exposed them to more talk in English and facilitated their TOEIC-oriented listening skill development. On the other hand, many of the students admitted having a hard time understanding lessons fully when the instruction was in English. In addition, not being able to ask questions and unsystematic grammar explanations were mentioned as disadvantages of having NESTs. Regarding NNESTs, the respondents described the clear understanding of lectures and clear grammar teaching as the most important benefits, while the NNESTs' pronunciation and less opportunity to speak English were the disadvantages.

As shown by this review, the previous studies have been very much focused on surveys of learners and employed rather subjective methods. In contrast, this study analyzes changes in the test scores of students of both groups (NESTs and NNESTs) over three semesters in an effort to objectively compare the influence of the two kinds of teachers.

III. METHODOLOGY

The specific goals of this study are: (1) to investigate the influence of NNEST versus NEST instructors on the academic sincerity of learners grouped according to change in their TOEIC scores (increase, decrease, no change); and (2) to compare the academic achievement of students of NNESTs and students of NESTs.

1. Participants

A total of 1316 students at a university in Gyeonggi-do, South Korea participated in this study. They were all enrolled in a course titled "Practical English Writing and Reading," which is taken by freshmen majoring in many different fields. The course focuses on reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar based on readings on various topics. The university offers several sections of the same course each semester, and the teachers may be NNESTs or NESTs; all of the teachers use the same fixed lesson plans. Therefore, all the instructors taught the class with the same curriculum in the same environment. As the course name suggests, its content is not directly related to the TOEIC. However, its focus is on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension and its students are generally at the lower-intermediate level of the TOEIC; therefore, the course is likely to influence the outcome of its students' TOEIC scores.

2. Data Collection

The data were collected over three semesters (Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019) from 41 classes; 26 classes were taught by NNESTs, and 15 classes were taught by NESTs. Each semester, the ratio of classes taught by NNESTS and NESTS was slightly different (Fall 2018: 8 NNESTs and 5 NESTs; Spring 2019: 8 NNESTs and 4 NESTs; Fall 2019: 10 NNESTs and 6 NESTs).

In addition to sharing the syllabus and lesson plans, all of the classes have the same objectives, expected outcomes, evaluation procedures, projects, and policies. Each semester, all students enrolled in the course mandatorily take a pre-test in week 2 and a post-test in week 14; both tests are based on the reading comprehension part of the TOEIC. Each of these two 50-question TOEIC tests counts for 5% of the course grade. To earn 5% on the pre-test requires only that students take the test; however, the percentage a student earns on the post-test is calculated according to the score difference between the two tests: 5% for a score gain of 450 or more, 4% for a score gain of 400–449, 3% for a score gain of 350–399, 2% for a score gain of 300–349, and 1% for a score gain under 300. Students are given 40 minutes to take the test in class. At the end of the semester, the TOEIC scores are collated by the Faculty of Liberal Arts and reported to each instructor.

3. Instrument

For this study, the two scores from the pre-tests and post-tests were collected and analyzed quantitatively. These scores were used in three ways. First, in order to examine the academic sincerity of the participants, the students were categorized into three groups according to the difference in their pre- and post-test scores: the students whose scores decreased; the students whose scores remained the same; and the students whose scores increased. Second, to explore the source of positive influences on the learners, the scores of the increased-score group were separately analyzed to compare the improvement between students of NNESTs and students of NESTs. These two analyses address the first research question.

To answer the second research question, *t*-tests were conducted using the average TOEIC scores of all NNEST-taught classes on the one hand and of all NEST-taught classes on the other hand. By using NNEST and NEST status as a variable to compare changes in the students' TOEIC scores over the course of one semester, the study assesses the contribution of the two groups of teachers to English education. Before conducting the *t*-test, the averages and the variances of improvement of the scores from the two groups were calculated and an F-test was conducted on the equality of the two variances.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Academic Sincerity

As mentioned in the previous section, the percentage of the course grade from the students' final TOEIC evaluation was calculated as the difference between the pre- and post-tests. These freshmen's first try at a TOEIC test in week 2 probably had a lot of potential to improve by the second test, considering the many factors that could be expected to come into play in the course of the semester; for example, by week 14, they would be used to the learning environment and style; they would have gained more linguistic knowledge; they would have been exposed to more English through activities focused on grammar, reading comprehension, and vocabulary; and of course, they would have the experience of their first go at the TOEIC test and thus know what to expect. All things considered, higher scores in week 14 than in week 2 would be natural.

This study's examination of the influence of NNESTs and NESTs on students focuses on attitudes in the sense of the students' willingness or reluctance to devote effort to learning English. This paper uses the term "academic sincerity" for this construct. Put differently, because a score increase could be expected from minimal effort, this study uses score increase as a measure of a sincere effort to learn, regardless of the students' abilities or cognitive skills. Accordingly, if the scores remained the same or decreased, the students were considered to lack academic sincerity. In order to examine their academic sincerity, the percentages of students whose scores decreased, remained the same, and increased are compared.

TABLE 1

Academic Sincerity: Fall 2018–Fall 2019

		Number of students	Improved	Same	Dropped	Improved %	Same %	Dropped %
2018	NNEST	270	175	8	87	64.8%	3.0%	32.2%
Fall	NEST	170	119	8	43	70.0%	4.7%	25.3%
2019	NNEST	289	195	12	82	67.5%	4.2%	28.4%
Spring	NEST	126	85	1	40	67.5%	0.8%	31.7%
2019	NNEST	290	180	10	100	62.1%	3.4%	34.5%
Fall	NEST	171	110	7	54	64.3%	4.1%	31.6%
Total	NNEST	894	550	30	269	64.8%	3.5%	31.7%
	NEST	467	314	16	137	67.2%	3.4%	29.3%

As shown in table 1, the differences in academic sincerity across the three semesters and across NNEST- and NEST-taught classes are insignificant. In other words, every class has a different mix of diligent and less diligent students, regardless of other factors such as instructors' speaker status. The small differences observed here are considered natural variation.

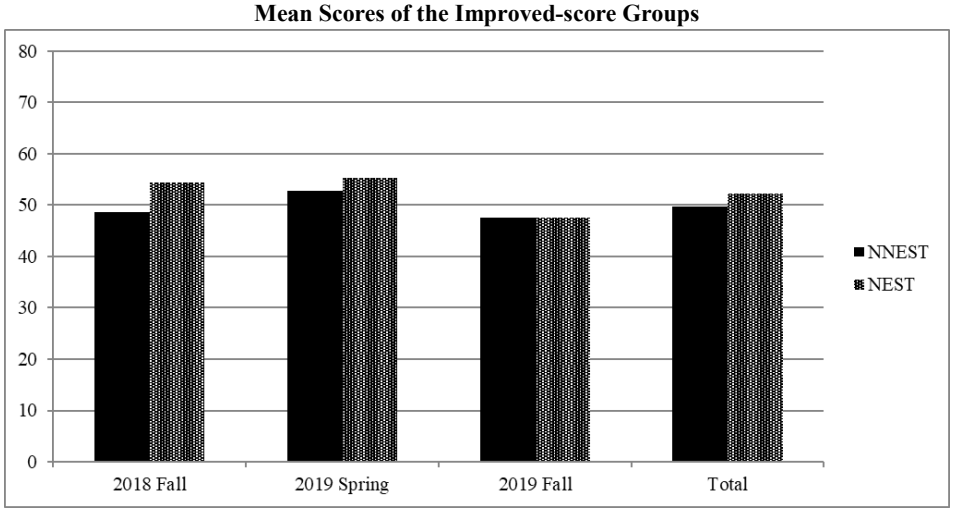
Each semester, there was a higher rate of students who improved in NESTs' classes than in NNESTs' classes: by 5.2% in Fall 2018, 0% in Spring 2019, and 2.2% in Fall 2019. These differences are too small to support any conclusions regarding NESTs' versus NNESTs' influence on learners' academic sincerity.

However, there are some other factors to consider: a higher number of participants—almost double—were students in NNESTs' classes, which means the percentage change in NESTs' classes appears exaggerated when compared to that in NNESTs' classes.

In order to take a closer look at whether NNESTs or NESTs had more positive influence on their learners, the mean scores from only the students who showed improvement were calculated, as shown in figure 1. The reason for focusing on the improved group separately is that a noticeable difference in positive effects in the groups would suggest that the status of the instructor could be an important factor in learners' academic sincerity. However, throughout the three semesters, the biggest difference is 5.88; for the most part, the students improved at about the same ratio. The total mean score of NNESTs' students was 49.73, compared to 52.23 from the NESTs' students; the difference is not significant.

FIGURE 1

Mean Scores of the Improved-score Groups



As shown in table 2, there is a slightly higher mean value for NESTs' classes in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, but it is not statistically significant (p = 0.32). In Fall 2019, the mean values are exactly the same (p = 0.99), which again shows no significant difference.

TABLE 2
Statistical Analysis of Mean Scores of the Improved-score Groups

		N	Mean	S.D.	df	t stat	*t* Critical two-tail	*p*(T<=t) two-tail
2018 Fall	NNEST	175	48.5714	43.6215	219	-0.9977	1.9709	0.3195
	NEST	119	54.4538	53.3170				
2019 Spring	NNEST	195	52.7692	48.4026	278	-0.4171	1.9685	0.6769
	NEST	85	55.2353	37.9293				
2019 Fall	NNEST	180	47.5556	39.2047	288	0.0115	1.9682	0.9908
	NEST	110	47.5000	40.9001				
Total	NNEST	550	49.7273	44.0154	862	-0.7951	1.9627	0.4268
	NEST	314	52.2293	45.3048				

The lack of a noticeable influence on the learners by NNESTs or NESTs is interesting. It can be concluded that the academic sincerity of students is not affected by the native-speaker status of their instructors.

2. Academic Achievement

The achievement of the students from NESTs' and NNESTs' classes over the three semesters (Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019) is examined in this section.

For the fall semester of 2018, the F distribution is used to see the difference between NEST and NNEST students. The variance between the two groups in Fall 2018 proved to be unequal, with a critical value of F at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance. This result indicates a difference in achievement between the two groups of students (NESTs' students and NNESTs' students). Next, a *t*-test was conducted to see if the difference was significant.

Table 3 shows the average scores for all three semesters. For Fall 2018, the average score of students taught by NNESTs, 21.43, is lower than that of students taught by NESTs, 29.06. However, the difference is not significant (p = 0.18). Overall, neither the 270 students in NNEST classes nor the 170 students in NEST classes showed much improvement on the TOEIC.

For Spring 2019, the F distribution showed equal value ($p > 0.05$) for the two instructor groups. A *t*-test was conducted. The mean score of NNESTs' students was

26.26, while that of NESTs' students was 27.78; again, the difference is not statistically significant (p = 0.80).

For Fall 2019, the F distribution of the mean scores of the students again indicated equal value (p = 0.05), and the following t-test showed no significant difference (p = 0.87).

TABLE 3

Statistical Analysis of Academic Achievement: Fall 2018–Fall 2019

		N	Mean	S.D.	df	t stat	t Critical two-tail	p(T<=t) two-tail
2018 Fall	NNEST	270	21.4259	53.3131	322	-1.3339	1.9674	0.1832
	NEST	170	29.0588	61.4542				
2019 Spring	NNEST	289	26.2630	56.9940	413	-0.2559	1.9657	0.7982
	NEST	126	27.7778	51.7515				
2019 Fall	NNEST	290	17.2931	52.0480	459	-0.1696	1.9651	0.8654
	NEST	171	18.1579	54.2730				
Total	NNEST	849	21.6608	54.2385	1314	-0.9653	1.9618	0.3346
	NEST	467	24.7216	56.4606				

FIGURE 2

Overall Academic Achievement

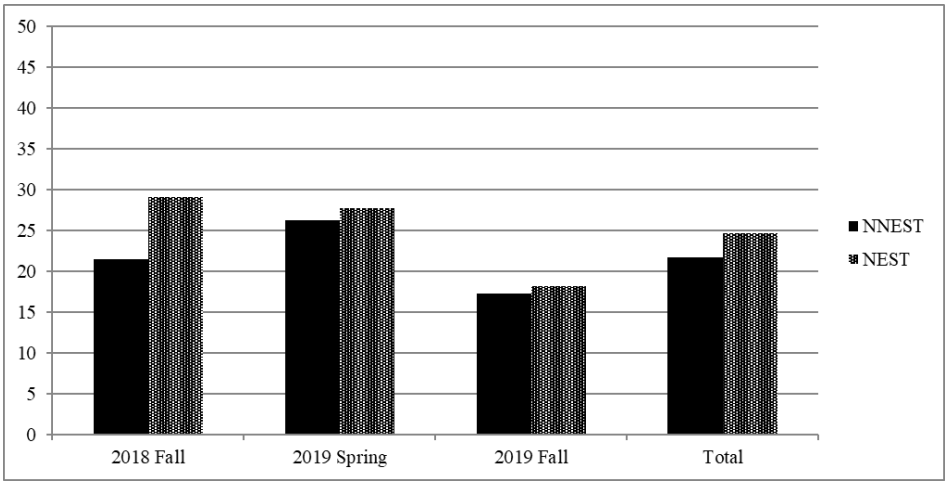


Figure 2 presents the total mean scores visually, illustrating the subtle but not significant difference. From the perspectives of academic sincerity and achievement, there is no distinctive influence of NNESTs versus NESTs. In short, these analyses do

not show any effect of the native-speaker status of the instructors.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to find out what influence the status of instructors has on students' learning and accomplishment. The study found slightly higher mean scores from NESTs' students than NNESTs' students, but none of the differences were significant. Although this study is limited to beginner level learners, the outcome is meaningful. If there are no specific differences in the effectiveness of NNESTs and NESTs, there are more options or choices for English educators who can provide quality education. Many previous studies at the university level have shown that EFL students prefer NESTs to NNESTs for a few purposes, such as modeling pronunciation, and prefer NNESTs to NESTs for many purposes, such as explaining grammar clearly, communicating effectively, and modeling successful language learning. All things considered, students' preferences and their actual achievement need to be balanced for the good of their education as well as for the good of educational institutions. As this study suggests, the issue of native versus non-native English teachers needs to be rethought and redefined in this era of globalization. For English teachers, native-speaker status still has symbolic value, while non-native-speaker status is sometimes perceived as a negative. The inappropriateness of this labeling as a measure of a certain group of speakers' ability to provide quality English education should now be obvious. In the field of English language teaching, a growing number of teachers are not native speakers of English. According to Canagarajah (1999), even twenty years ago, 80% of the world's English language teachers were non-natives, which means that the steadily increasing number of learners are largely taught by non-native speakers. Although many studies have assessed the matter, no consensus has been reached in regard to whether native or non-native speakers make better English language teachers. As mentioned earlier in this paper, what this lack of consensus demonstrates is that both NNESTs and NESTs have merits and demerits as teachers, but judging non-natives as lacking in comparison to natives is simply incorrect (Bueno, 2006; Park, 2009). Luksha and Solovova (2006) also pointed out that while both NNESTs and NESTs have intrinsic advantages and disadvantages, whether any individual is a good teacher depends on personality and ability, among other factors. There is no doubt that language fluency is crucial, but it is simply not the only factor that qualifies a person as an instructor. Many other attributes of ELT teachers need to be recognized and considered for enhancing learning environments.

The participants of this study were freshmen with beginning level English. Therefore,

the study's results apply only to similar situations. In addition, while the classes were meant to use the same curriculum, the study did not attempt to detect whether individual instructors used additional or different activities, which could be another factor. Moreover, more students were taught by NNESTs than NESTs, which may have affected the percentages. For further study, both subjective (e.g., perception surveys) and objective (e.g., test scores) methods with larger sample sizes of learners at various levels of English will lead to more specific and accurate findings.

VI. IMPLICATIONS

In spite of the limited scope of the study, a few pedagogical implications emerge. Both instructor groups have strengths that should be recognized. Sharing the strengths and insights they have gained from their unique and diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds would allow English teachers to provide moral support for each other and facilitate their professional growth. Coordinators in English education in Korea should recognize these advantages of both groups and make the best of them by employing approaches such as team teaching and collaborative teaching whenever possible. Moreover, the Korean government should provide in-service training programs that focus on developing NNESTs' linguistic skills in areas where they may be lacking, particularly oral skills, pronunciation, intonation, and knowledge and awareness of target cultures. Furthermore, researchers, practitioners, and educational policymakers should make efforts to change the perceptions of learners when they are biased against NNESTs. But probably the most effective way to give EFL students a good impression or to change a negative perception is to make sure that students encounter competent NNESTs in the actual course of their English learning. Providing NNESTs with more chances to improve where they need improvement will give them greater confidence as English instructors and increase their ability to be good language models for learners as well. Both learners and NNESTs themselves need to recognize and appreciate the value of NNESTs' experiences and background. Moreover, it is important to take the further step of recognizing the global context. Although the NNEST and NEST distinction can be useful, it must be stressed that there is no theoretical evidence for distinguishing between them. English is now a tool for everybody, and it does not matter if the tool is made in the USA or not, as long as it does the job. In the era of globalization, however, it is crucial to offer learners language teaching that is appropriate to the world in which they actually live. It is therefore vital not to teach only so-called standard or mainstream English with one single accent or model. Instead, it is imperative that learners experience and understand the variety of Englishes, which is represented by NNESTs from different

cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In this way, learners of English today will be more open to more choices, and be able to decide for themselves what is most relevant to their context, which in turn will make them much more adaptable to the globalized world. For learners themselves to understand this, authoritative perceptions of NNESTs must change so that learners' perceptions can change as well.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Language: English
Applicable Level: Secondary

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Received: October 13, 2020
Reviewed: November 24, 2020
Revised version received: December 5, 2020