

Native Speakerism Affecting Nonnative English Teachers' Identity Formation: A Critical Perspective

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A body of research has reported that nonnative English-speaking teachers experience low professional self-esteem (Kamhi-Stein, 1999, 2000; Medgyes, 1994; Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). However, in the prior literature, the identities of nonnative English teachers enrolled in U.S. English teacher education programs remain relatively unexamined, especially in relation to native speakerism. In this study, the author investigates how nonnative English teachers see themselves as EFL teachers by employing critical theory and identity theory. The combination of these two theories provides lenses to examine how nonnative English teachers' identities are affected by the native-speaker ideology within the intersections of power, language, culture, and race. These qualitative case studies show that nonnative English teachers are influenced by the ideology of native speakerism, leading to low professional self-esteem.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nonnative English-speaking teachers (non-NESTs) worldwide face challenges in the English language teaching (ELT) profession. They are likely to feel marginalized in terms of linguistic and sociopolitical power dynamics (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999), and, in many cases, authenticity and authority are awarded only to native English speakers (NESs) (Amin, 1997). Notions of authenticity and authority privilege the English used by NESs as the proper language for learning, and native English speaking teachers (NESTs) as the proper educators (Widdowson, 1994).

In particular, a body of research has reported that non-NESTs experience low professional self-esteem (Kamhi-Stein, 1999, 2000; Medgyes, 1994; Reves & Medgyes, 1994; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Kamhi-Stein (2000) reports that non-NESTs have "low confidence and self-perceived challenges to professional competence" and

“self-perceived prejudice based on ethnicity or nonnative status” (p. 10). Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) state that nonnative students enrolled in graduate TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher preparation programs demonstrate lower confidence. Reves and Medgyes’s (1994) study reveals that an awareness of the differences between NESTs and non-NESTs especially affects non-NESTs’ “general self-image and attitude to work” (p. 363). Kamhi-Stein (1999), therefore, claims that the TESOL curriculum should help nonnative pre-service teachers improve their self-image and self-perception.

However, in the previous literature, the identities of nonnative English-speaking graduate students enrolled in U.S. English teacher education programs, especially in relation to native speakerism, remain relatively unexamined. The purpose of this study is to explore how nonnative English speaking graduate students who speak English as a second language (ESL) negotiate and reshape their identities as pre-service English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers while they are in a U.S.-located English teacher education program. To this end, I investigate how nonnative English-speaking graduate students view themselves as future EFL teachers in terms of their experiences and challenges in the English teacher education program.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs critical theory (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1998, 2005) and multiple perspectives of identity theory (Norton, 1995, 1997, 2000; Pennycook, 2000; Gee, 2008) as theoretical lenses for understanding the participants’ teaching experiences in their home countries as well as their learning experiences in an English education program. Critical theory attempts to “locate and confront issues of power, privilege, and hegemony” (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005, p. 368). I adopt the following basic definitions of the term “critical,” which were elaborated in Kincheloe and McLaren’s study (1998):

[A]ll thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are social[ly] and historically constituted; ...facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from some form of ideological inscription;...language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness); ...certain groups in any society are privileged over others and, although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable. (p. 263)

My other major theoretical lens is based on Norton's (1997) theory of identity, which she understands as "how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (p. 410). My examination of identity is largely grounded in the following multiple perspectives (see also Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005; Kim, 2010): (a) identity is not fixed, but instead is diverse, dynamic, contradictory, multiple, and changeable over time and space (McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1995, 1997, 2000; Perry, 2001); (b) identity formation is dependent on social, cultural, and political contexts (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Ibrahim, 1999; Pennycook, 2000); and (c) identity is constructed and negotiated primarily through language and discourse (Gee, 2008). Critical theory and multiple perspectives on identity construction will provide a deep understanding of the intersections of identity, race, ideology, and culture in educational and social settings.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Kachru and Nelson (1996) define the term "native speaker" as referring to someone who learned English in a natural setting as a first language during childhood. Holliday (2005) defines native speakerism as "an established belief that 'native speaker' teachers represent a 'Western culture' from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology" (p. 6). Kramsch (1997) argues that native speakership is "neither a privilege of birth nor of education" but "acceptance by the group that created the distinction between native and nonnative speakers" (p. 363, cited in Braine, 1999, p. xv).

The ELT profession should progress from a dominant and deeply established native-speaker ideology (Braine, 1999, Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999; Davies, 2003; Holliday, 2005; Phillipson, 1992) to a more inclusive perspective that supports diversity because ideology is essentially linked to "the process of sustaining asymmetrical relations of power – that is, to the process of maintaining domination" (Thompson, 1984, p. 4). Studies show that many non-NESTs feel disempowered by their students' and parents' stereotypes of an authentic English teacher (Amin, 1997; Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 1999).

However, Samimy (1997) points out that a NES is not the only category in which to classify the ideal teacher and that the most important qualifications of English teachers are language proficiency, the extent of teachers' teaching experiences, and relevant teaching qualifications. In fact, many studies show that if non-NESTs achieve near-native proficiency in English, they can be ideal language teachers (Phillipson,

1992). According to Phillipson, nonnative English speakers (non-NESs) can achieve NESs' fluency, knowledge of idiomatic expressions, and cultural understanding. From this perspective, Cook (1999) argues that a multilingual teacher is qualitatively different and incomparably more qualified than a monolingual teacher.

Moreover, Medgyes (2001) names the advantageous qualities of non-NESTs: they can provide better learner models, teach language-learning strategies more effectively, and better anticipate language difficulties. In addition, they are more sensitive to their students' needs and can benefit from their ability to use the students' native language. In this sense, NESs should achieve proficiency in their students' native languages to become ideal English teachers. It is worthwhile to note Rampton's (1990) claim that the notion of the expert should shift from "who you are" to "what you know," since this revised construct of expertise can diminish the marginalization of nonnative English-speaking professionals (p. 99). Hence, teachers, educators, parents, and students need to recognize the positive elements of non-NESTs: they are good models of English language learners, culturally informed, and empathetic to learners' needs (Medgyes, 1994).

If Rampton's and others' assertions are true, how can non-NESTs overcome the disempowering discourses that may exist in the ELT profession? In order to raise teachers' and students' collective consciousness concerning the status of non-NESTs in the ESL/EFL practice, they need to take part in the deconstruction of the socially-imposed misconceptions that only NESs can be ideal English teachers and that non-NESTs always have linguistic deficits, especially in areas of vocabulary, oral fluency, and pronunciation (Medgyes, 1994). This fallacy supports Leung, Harris, and Rampton's (1997) argument that "language use and notions of ethnicity and social identity are inextricably linked" (p. 544). Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) point out that language, especially the discourse of nativeness in which non-NESTs are continually disempowered, influences their collective consciousness and identity formation and that critical pedagogy serves as a crucial tool to deconstruct socially imposed identities and reconstruct non-NESs' identities as English language professionals, by eliminating "the colonial construct of nativeness" in the ELT profession (p. 418).

IV. METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

A case study is the most appropriate qualitative research method for the present study

because it “concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contexts” (Stake, 2005, p. 444). The present study includes individual case studies of three nonnative English-speaking graduate students who will be English professionals in EFL settings in which the NEST/non-NEST dichotomy exists. Through these case studies, I “optimized” the understanding of each case, rather than generalizing beyond it (Stake, 2005, p. 443).

2. Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at a major research university in the mid-western United States. This top-tier research university provides a language education program within the School of Education to educate in-service and pre-service teachers on topics such as how to teach and research in the areas of English, ESL/EFL, foreign language, and literacy education, with a focus on the development of improved instructional procedures and curricula in English education. For the present study, I employed a purposeful sampling method (Creswell, 2008) to recruit participants. Three graduate students whose first language is not English were invited to participate in this study. I selected my participants from three different Asian countries to gain a broader understanding of native speakerism affecting non-NESTs' identity formation. They were selected on the basis of their willingness to participate in the study.

All the participants were born in what they considered their home countries, experienced regular school education from elementary school to college in the same country, and came to the United States to earn a master's degree in English Education. All three participants were in their late twenties to early thirties and had between one and two years of teaching experience in middle schools or cram schools in their home countries. All participants are identified by pseudonyms in this study to protect their privacy. What follows is a brief biographical profile of each of the three graduate students.

Mina is a Korean master's student in her early thirties who began learning English when she was in the third grade. She came to the United States to practice her English in a one-year intensive English program before working as an English teacher in Seoul, South Korea. After graduation, she taught English at a cram school located in Seoul for two years. She chose to study in the U.S. English education program because she wanted to learn new teaching methods and improve her teaching skills as an English teacher.

Huina is a Chinese master's student in her late twenties who began learning English when she was in middle school. Her undergraduate major was in Business, but she later changed to English Education. She worked as an English teacher in a public middle school located in Shanghai for one year. Huina decided to come to the United States to

improve her English and to learn teaching theories and methods. Despite the fact that she had already studied English Education at a Chinese college, she thought that her background was not sufficient to successfully teach a class.

Yiping is a doctoral student in her late twenties who came from Taiwan to study EFL with the goal of teaching English when she returns to Taiwan. She had studied English Literature for her undergraduate degree, but she felt it was too difficult and changed to the more practical program of English Education. She earned a master's degree from the same program in the United States where she is currently enrolled in the doctoral program.

All three participants had studied EFL in their home countries for more than ten years, but only Mina had learned English from a NEST until college. They reported that most NESTs taught practical English in conversation classes or writing classes, while non-NESTs taught reading classes or grammar classes. Interestingly, all three of the participants had changed their majors (from Japanese, Business, and English Literature) to English Education. They said that they wanted to be English teachers at public schools or colleges in their home countries after completing the English teacher education program.

3. Data Collection

I utilized a questionnaire and individual interviews in this study. A questionnaire was used to gather information about my participants' demographic and educational backgrounds. Each interview lasted for approximately sixty minutes and was conducted individually at a location based on the participants' preferences. I employed semi-structured interviews, which include "more open-ended and less structured" and "more flexibly worded" questions than structured interviews traditionally do (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). I began my interviews with "grand-tour" questions (e.g. Tell me about...), asking participants to share a personal story based on their learning and teaching journeys. The questionnaire and interview questions can be found in Appendices A and B.

4. Data Analysis

I began data analysis during data collection and continued throughout the remainder of the process of collecting data to look for emerging themes, categories, or patterns (Mertler, 2006). Given that analysis of the data might take several recursive stages, the final stage of data analysis occurred after I had completed the data collection. I employed thematic analysis of the data to bring fresh insights to my research questions

about how nonnative English-speaking graduate students negotiate and reshape their identities in a U.S. English teacher education program. Glesne (2006) describes thematic analysis as “a process that involves coding and then segregating the data by codes into data clumps for further analysis and description” (p. 147). For the analysis of qualitative data, I read all of the narrative data and coded the data several times until I had sufficiently clarified emergent themes, categories, or patterns. During the coding, categorizing, and theme-searching process, I interpreted my data from a more open-minded perspective (Mertler, 2006). In order to ensure validity and reliability (Merriam, 2002), I employed member checks by sending tentative interpretations back to the participants via email to test whether they were accurate.

VI. FINDINGS

The participants' multiple identities were found to be deeply rooted in past teaching experiences in their home countries and in their personal learning experience in the U.S. English teacher education program. In the process of data coding, five major themes emerged: native speakerism, a match or mismatch between expectations and experiences, speaking and writing skills as continuing barriers in expressing voices, seeing a native language and culture as an instructional resource, and the struggle to teach English in different educational settings.

1. Native Speakerism

All of the participants were found to be affected by the ideology of native speakerism (Holliday, 2005). The ideology of native speakerism plays a crucial role in how graduate students as non-NESs see themselves as future EFL teachers. Mina, a Korean graduate student, had a strong belief that only NESs can be “ideal” English teachers. She herself had a couple of students and parents who complained about her English pronunciation because she did not speak English like a NES. Mina said that she was always concerned about her accent and perhaps would always be concerned about it. She explained, “*I tried to listen to English tapes a lot to make my pronunciation like native English speakers for a long time, but later I realized it's useless. Now I think if other people can understand my English, that's fine*” (line 62).¹

Huina, a Chinese graduate student, also believed that only NESs can speak standard English and that her “accented” English would prevent her from finding a job in the

¹ All verbatim spoken data are presented in italics.

United States: *"I don't speak standard English, that's why it's hard to find a job here. I learned English from Chinese teachers and my accent was fixed when I was very young already...so it's very hard to get rid of my accent. I have spent a lot of time to correct my accent"* (line 72). Yiping, a Taiwanese graduate student, had similar concerns about her accent when she spoke English: *"I may not change my accent and intonation, but I still hope my accent is understandable"* (line 76). My in-depth interviews revealed that nonnative English-speaking graduate students believe that they cannot acquire perfect English and that their accented English might not be accepted as standard English in the United States (see also Lippi-Green, 1997).

2. A Match or Mismatch between Expectations and Experiences

Nonnative English-speaking graduate students' struggles in the program reflect a mismatch between their expectations and experiences. This theme was revealed by interview data. Before coming to the United States, Mina expected to improve her English skills a great deal, especially in speaking, and to learn new English teaching methods. After her arrival, however, she realized that the program was research-based and did not offer various content-based ESL courses. As Polio and Wilson-Duffy's (1998) study shows, nonnative English-speaking students want more practice and help with their English while enrolled in a U.S. language teacher preparation program. As a master's student, she seemed more interested in practicing her English and in learning various teaching methods that could be used in her EFL class after returning to her country. She believed that she needed more teaching experience in her country before pursuing a doctoral degree in the program. For Mina, her expectations did not perfectly match her learning experience in the program.

Huina was pleased with what she learned in the program. In particular, she attended two workshops through teaching methodology courses, which provided her with opportunities to attend ESL classes in an elementary school and a high school in the United States. She said, *"[I]t was a good experience for me. We can exchange our teaching ideas as English teachers...my professor invited some ESL teachers from all levels, elementary, middle, and high school...and we shared many teaching ideas"* (lines 20-21). Her expectations appropriately matched her leaning needs in the program.

Yiping had already experienced the American education system as a junior in college, but she did not articulate either a mismatch or appropriate match between her expectations and real experiences in the program. It seemed that her previous experience of different educational environments in Taiwan and the United States as an undergraduate student made her more open-minded than the other interviewees. In particular, she enjoyed that she could study with many international students in the

program and appreciated opportunities to observe ESL classes in an elementary school for one semester through a course she was taking: *"I really learned a lot from the class. Observing classes is very important to be trained as English teachers. I also had a chance to teach elementary schools there"* (line 32).

My data illustrates that because programs either fulfill or disappoint students' expectations, teacher educators and program administrators should raise their awareness of Asian graduate students' learning needs in order to create programs especially for nonnative English-speaking students. Many graduate students wanted an integrated curriculum that marries theory-based courses with practical training to give students a better understanding of what it is like to teach ESL or EFL.

3. Speaking and Writing Skills as Continuing Barriers in Expressing Voices

Non-NESs in the program face very basic challenges of speaking and writing. As Kamhi-Stein (2004) states, an English teacher preparation program tailored to the needs of non-NESs would improve their self-esteem. I realized that all of the participants came to the program to learn English teaching methods, as well as to improve their English. For the most part, participants were studying hard in the program, although their level of satisfaction varied. However, as non-NESs, these graduate students were still struggling with speaking and writing fluently. On the topic of speaking skills, one of the participants, Mina, said:

In terms of my speaking, actually I don't feel my speaking skills have improved a lot even though I stayed here in the U.S. for three years including my studies in an intensive English program...and now I understand my program focuses on educational research rather than on teaching methods. (line 10, interview, February 27, 2010)

She wanted to have more time for English practice both inside and outside the classroom. Mina shared her personal story regarding developing her language proficiency as a pre-service teacher: *"In the very beginning, I worked very hard to improve my English, but I had to stop attending a couple of activities to pay more attention to my classes"* (line 26). Because Mina's goal was to be a good English teacher who speaks English very fluently, she focused more on practical issues (e.g., speaking and writing skills) than on the theoretical issues of English in the program. Before coming to the United States, she expected to focus on practical issues in the program.

Similarly, another participant, Yiping, also mentioned that the most difficult obstacle

to overcome as a non-NES in the program was speaking:

I still can't understand class discussion because of culture issues and language issues. Especially in class mostly comprised of American students, it's still hard to follow the class because they usually speak a lot of slang and talk so fast...(line 50, interview, March 8, 2010)

As Polio and Wilson-Duffy (1998) point out, as a non-NES, Yiping had difficulty understanding U.S. slang, idioms, and cultural references used in class, despite her long career as a student in a U.S. university.

The significance of writing was pointed out by a Chinese participant. Huina said that writing skills are more important than speaking skills because “*when we speak, if we have some problems with communication we can use gestures, but writing is different*” (line 50). She acknowledged that especially for the doctoral students, writing skills are very important because typically doctoral students focus on generating research publications.

I believe that issues of speaking and writing are closely connected to cultural issues and that nonnative English-speaking students should understand academic rules and norms to improve their speaking and writing. Furthermore, rather than passively waiting for the program to do something for them, nonnative students should have proactive attitudes toward good speaking and writing; for example, they should feel empowered to speak with faculty and native peers to find solutions for improving their speaking and writing skills. As I mentioned earlier, nonnative English-speaking graduate students need to let the program faculty and administrators know their needs and concerns.

4. Seeing a Native Language and Culture as an Instructional Resource

I believe that language learners can learn English more effectively from teachers with the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds, especially if a diversity of languages and learning styles is regarded as a resource for learning. Huina showed her confidence as a non-NES by stating that she would attempt to find a job after going back to her home country. She believed that her learning experience of studying in a U.S. education system as a non-NES made a big difference in the job market. Below is our dialogue about this:

81 Huina: *I don't think there is discrimination against [non-NESs] in hiring because I have a degree in Language Education here*

from a US university. I can teach grammar and reading very well. If American English teachers have the same degree as mine...but they cannot speak Chinese, right?

82 H.K.: *Do you mean that they need to speak Chinese if they teach English to Chinese students?*

83 Huina: *Sure, they should know, but they cannot...so I think I can teach English more successfully.*

84 H.K.: *So, you don't worry about getting a job after returning to China.*

85 Huina: *No, especially in public schools...but in private schools situations can be different. (interview, February 26, 2010)*

This excerpt recalls Cook's (1999) argument that a multilingual teacher is qualitatively different and incomparably more qualified than a monolingual teacher. Huina viewed her bilingual status as a strength in the ELT profession. At the same time, she implicitly suggested that language teachers should speak another language other than English.

Yiping shared her attitudes toward her English teacher when she was an English language learner in Taiwan. She liked her Taiwanese English teachers, regardless of their native or nonnative status. She added, "*I could feel closer and friendlier to Taiwanese teachers than American teachers when I was a college student...because we shared the same culture as Taiwanese, and they understood us better*" (line 72). Yiping also stated that as an English teacher, sharing the same language and culture with English language learners can be an instructional resource of which teachers can take advantage.

In summary, this theme demonstrates that non-NESTs' self-images as non-NESs are reshaped in the program. Their learning experiences in a U.S. English teacher education program made non-NESTs feel more confident as English teachers in their home countries. As Yiping's narrative implies, they also learned that their native language and culture could be utilized as resources for instruction in future teaching positions.

5. The Struggle to Teach English in Different Educational Settings

Participants discussed the future challenges they might face as EFL teachers in their home countries. After being trained as English language professionals in the program, all three participants planned to teach EFL after returning to their home countries. Huina anticipated that teaching in large classes would be a challenge after returning home: "*I have to handle large classes effectively. One class usually has 50 students, [and]*

language learning is a long process, so it's not easy to teach English effectively within a short period of time...so it can be a big challenge" (line 91).

Yiping also described a learning and teaching gap between the United States and Taiwan:

In my case, I have been studying here in the U.S. already for five years and I might have five more years to finish my program here. For ten years, there might be a gap between the time when I learned English in my country and now in Taiwan in terms of educational environment. At that time, we learned in a teacher-centered environment, but here is more student-centered. So when I go back home, I might not adjust to the education system in my country because the educational focus is different between the U.S. and Taiwan. (line 88, interview, March 8, 2010)

Yiping was concerned about teaching Taiwanese students using what she had learned from a U.S. university after returning to her country. Through personal conversations, I realized that many nonnative English-speaking graduate students in general struggle with the same issue.

Mina was apprehensive about returning to her home country because of people's high expectations for her English. Mina did not think that her English had improved significantly since she had come to the United States. All of the participants were concerned about applying the knowledge they had gained from U.S. universities to teaching EFL students in their home countries because each setting has a different educational system with different styles of learning and teaching focuses.

VII. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The overall findings of this study show that non-NESs need to establish their credibility as legitimate speakers and teachers of English because they were influenced by the myths that only NESs can be "ideal" English teachers and that only NESs can speak standard English. All of the participants came to the U.S. English teacher education program to improve their English proficiency as well as to upgrade their professional skills, which, as Norton (1995, 1997, 2000) describes, can be understood as "investments" in learning the English language and its culture. The participants were mostly satisfied with what was taught in the program and especially appreciated having had opportunities to observe ESL classes in elementary, middle, and high schools. However, all of their expectations about improving their language and teaching skills

were higher than their experiences in the program. Additionally, because of their accents, none of them wished to pursue professional employment opportunities in the United States or any other English-speaking settings.

This study suggests that non-NESs are affected by the ideology of native speakerism, which ultimately leads to low professional self-esteem. I suggest that non-NESs should develop the personal and professional confidence to perceive themselves as legitimate English teachers. As Brutt-Griffler and Samimy (1999) argue, non-NESTs can empower themselves as "international English professionals" regardless of their race or accents through self-critical action and reflection. To this end, longitudinal study is required to look at how non-NESTs' identities are reconstructed in the process of teacher education programs according to how they position themselves and how others position them in educational and social contexts.

In the present study, purposeful sampling methods were used to recruit three participants. These participants might not be representative of non-NESTs in U.S. language teacher education programs. Accordingly, the findings of the present study were not intended to be generalized to other non-NESTs in different contexts. The usefulness of the study should be determined by how well the findings transfer to and offer insights into new settings (Christenson, 2004). Furthermore, group interviews and classroom observations should be added to enhance the trustworthiness and reliability of the findings.

I believe that this study will provide nonnative English-speaking graduate students with ample opportunities to realize that qualified and trained non-NESTs can contribute to the ELT profession by virtue of their own experiences as English language learners, as well as through their training and experience as English teachers. This can contribute to changing language students and parents' perceptions by helping them understand that NESTs or non-NESTs all have strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching qualities, and they can learn from each other. Non-NESTs should challenge dominant beliefs about their negative status and be more aware of their own advantages as English teachers in comparison with NESTs in order to help them have more favorable self-perceptions and confront the racial bias that exists in the ELT profession. Finally, the present study can provide insight into the identity transformations of future EFL teachers who are educated in U.S. English teacher training programs. Bringing the voices of nonnative English-speaking trainees to the forefront of teacher training programs can contribute to professional development and curriculum development in U.S. English teacher education programs.

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APPENDIX A

A questionnaire for demographic and educational background:

1. What is your date of birth?
2. What is your gender? Female ()/ Male ()
3. Where is your birthplace?
4. What is your native language?
5. Did you learn English as a second language or foreign language in your country?
6. When did you start learning English?
7. Have you taught English in your country? If yes, where? How long?
8. Have you ever studied in English teacher education programs in your country or any other English-speaking country? If yes, in what program? How long?
9. How long have you lived in the U.S. or any other English-speaking country?
10. What do you study now?

APPENDIX B

Interview questions that explore personal teaching/learning experience

1. Tell me why you decided to study in an English teacher training program in the U.S.
2. What were your expectations of your program?
3. How do you describe the experiences of your current English program in the U.S.?
4. Are you satisfied with what you are learning in terms of the content of your program? If yes, why? If no, why?
5. Are you pursuing a doctoral degree now? If yes, for what reasons? If no, for what reasons?
6. How many native English teachers were in your previous schools (elementary school, middle school, university)? How would you evaluate them?
7. Tell me what you think are the most important elements English teachers education programs should provide.
8. Depending on your language background, what is your learning focus in your

program?

9. Describe the most helpful academic resources in your program.
10. Tell me about the most difficult obstacle to overcome as a nonnative English speaker in your program.

Interview questions that explore situated identity as a nonnative speaker of English

1. Tell me what you think of the idea that a native English speaker can only be standard English speaker.
2. As a nonnative English speaker, what feelings related to the process of learning or teaching have you had or do you have now?
3. Tell me about your most positive and most negative reactions to your nonnative English teachers in your country.
4. As a nonnative English speaker, have you ever had a positive or negative reaction from your students and parents simply because of your nonnative English speaker status in your home country? If yes, why? If no, why?
5. Have you ever been concerned about your accent as a nonnative English speaker? If yes, why? If no, why?
6. Do you think there is an intrinsic connection between race and ability in English? If yes, why? If no, why?
7. Do you believe you can be an “ideal” English teacher after graduation? If yes, why? If no, why?
8. Do you think you can be discriminated against in hiring after graduation? If yes, why? If no, why?
9. Tell me about the most important elements English teachers should have.
10. Describe future challenges you might face as an English teacher back in your home country.

Applicable levels: college

Key words: native speakerism, identity formation, nonnative English speaking teachers, critical theory, English teacher education

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