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UNDERSTANDING NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING TEACHERS' IDENTITY
CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING
COMMUNITY: A CLOSER LOOK AT PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

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ABSTRACT

Building on Kachru's (2005) diagram of World Englishes and Norton's (2000) theoretical conception of identity, the researcher acknowledges that each Non-Native English Speaking Teacher (NNEST) comes to the English-speaking community with a different variety of Englishes. Each believes in various cultural values and norms, and his or her identity is an ongoing process that can be impacted when he or she is immersed in different contexts. Using a qualitative approach, this study examined the way NNESTs construct their self-perceptions of English Language Teaching (ELT) professionalism based on social and educational experiences in their countries. In addition, the study examined how they reconstruct professional identity depending on current social and educational experiences in an English-speaking country, and how they contribute this newly-constructed sense of professionalism in future ELT practices.

Findings revealed participants possessed less awareness of the importance of professional identity in their home countries, but the education offered through Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programs in the United States played an essential role in raising this awareness. However, the participants' identity was impacted by feelings of inferiority. Most participants never thought that they were as competent as Native English Speaking Teacher's (NESTs) in terms of English teaching. Various contributing components, such as self-confidence, expectation, perception, investment, language ideology, and language proficiency played essential roles in the development of each NNEST's self-image. Having a TESOL program that provides practicums and social programs that connect NNESTs with NEST's and

other people in the society where they are studying could impact the dissonance between expectation and reality of an NNEST's educational experience. However, each NNEST retains his or her own right to develop a positive or negative self-image by nurturing an active and open-minded attitude.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

With globalization, the population of English speakers is increasing, and the number of nonnative English speakers now exceeds the number of native English speakers (Braine, 1999; Liu, 1999). Thus, the need for English teachers is increasing, too, and it is increasing among both types of English teachers, native English speaking teachers (NESTs) and nonnative English speaking teachers (NNESTs). In the contexts that English is not spoken as the mother tongue, NNESTs are the major group to teach English. Therefore, many of them experience the process of being English learners and then English teachers in their non-English speaking home countries. However, as the world becomes a global village, there are increasing numbers of NNESTs studying in English-speaking countries. When NNESTs study and live in the social context other than their own, the way they identify themselves in personal and professional phases becomes an interesting topic to explore as it is of such importance, identity has been a dominant issue in the recent trend of the ELT profession. Each individual spends his or her life searching for self-identity. According to Norton (2000), identity is not fixed but identity will change across time and place. Also, Case (2004) concluded that with the acquisition of higher competence in a second language, the speakers are connected to more social networks. In this way, their new social identities will emerge with the impact of new social networks. Each subject will identify his or her identity in different positions according to various social roles and

contexts. For example, an individual will identify as a parent at home, and as an English teacher at school. While an individual places the self in different positions, he or she will reposition the self in various contexts in order to meet responsibilities of particular positions. During the interchangeable process of positioning and repositioning, whether one identity impacts on the perceptions of another identity becomes an interesting issue to explore.

In the world of English learning and teaching, NNESTs place the self in two positions; one is language learner and another is language teacher. During the process of language learning, each NNEST identifies the self as a language learner. When a NNEST starts to teach English as an occupation, he or she will reposition the self as a language teacher. Another important role he or she might recognize is the status of nonnative speakers. Some researchers have indicated that when there exists native and nonnative English speakers, the process of social comparison is unavoidable.

The process of social comparison involves awareness of the relative status of the social identities of both the in-group and the out-group; individuals are seen to attempt to maximize a sense of their positive psychological distinctiveness by establishing terms for the comparison that will favour in-group membership. (McNamara, 1997, p. 563)

According to the above statement, the same idea can be applied to the ELT profession. Via the process of social comparison, NNESTs attempt to figure out a sense of the self and to do social comparisons with the native English speaking group. In this way, the process of positioning, repositioning, and social comparison is considered significant in NNESTs' identity construction and reconstruction. These components were examined in the present study.

In the process of constructing identity, an individual's social context plays significant roles, too. Kim (2003) contends that the perceptions of an individual's identity are not under

control; instead, the context has fundamental influences in the construction of the identity. A context includes both conscious and unconscious variables. Conscious variables refer to race, culture, language, economics, and politics; unconscious variables indicate social and cultural behavior in addition to norms. Immersing the self in different contexts will produce different levels of influence on an individual's identity development. Whether NNESTs identify the self similarly or differently in the context they belong to and other than their own is the major focus in this study.

In 2001, Norton and Toohey examined the changing perspectives on the notion of good language learners; they have argued that the connection between communities and language learners' practices should be carefully studied in order to examine the facilitation and constraining of learner's access to the target linguistic resources in the particular community. Their work has again confirmed the interrelationship between individuals and social contexts. In order to examine the identity of an individual, social context is a significant variable that should be taken seriously. In the current global community, more and more NNESTs decide to pursue higher education in English-speaking countries such as the United States. With many years of constructing self-identity in home countries, NNESTs begin to live in different contexts and face different challenges in personal life. Challenges include culture shock, context, and language. NNESTs will begin to encounter new challenges in the culture other than their own, and those challenges might impact the NNESTs' life in the English-speaking context. Therefore, NNESTs might need to spend time to reposition the self in order to fit the self to the new context. During the process of repositioning the self, there might or might not be changes impacting on the NNESTs' identity reorganization. Whether there is an impact on NNESTs' identity construction

while living in an English-speaking community is the significant question to be explored in the present study.

Norton (1997) defined the term “investment” to indicate “the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it” (p. 411). The same concept can be applied to the nonnative speaking group. Each NNEST presents unique motivations to develop personal relationships in a social context. With different levels of developed relationships, each NNEST’s identity is unique. Norton’s (1995) case studies also showed that language learners’ motivation can be understood by understanding their investments in the target language; therefore, she determined that learners’ investment is “closely connected to the ongoing production of a language learner’s social identity” (p. 20). The same concept is applied to the present subject, NNESTs. A strong connection between language teachers’ investments in English and in professionalism and their ongoing identity production is predicted. Therefore, the variables of NNESTs’ motivations and investments were examined in the present study as well.

Researcher’s Profile

The researcher was born in Taiwan, grew up in the context of English as a foreign language, and started to learn English in second grade at age 8. She received a bachelor’s degree in English in Taiwan, and Master’s Degree in Linguistics/TESL in the United States. She had two one-semester practical English teaching experiences in elementary schools in Northern Taiwan and one four-month English teaching experience in an elementary school in Southern Taiwan. Without a longer teaching experience, she did not perceive herself as a full-time English language teacher.

In her English teaching experience in Taiwan, the researcher had chances to meet several full-time English teachers in public schools. All of the English teachers she met had many years of English teaching experience. The English teachers perceived themselves as ELT professionals in Taiwan's EFL context; however, most of them were only equipped with basic English knowledge and skills for teaching elementary students. They did not have confidence in having a real conversation with native English speakers. The researcher has heard many of them saying that they are so afraid of talking to native English speakers, especially in English-speaking settings.

While studying in the United States, the researcher had a classmate, who also came from an East Asian country with 10 years of experience teaching English. The classmate mentioned that she was very confident about her English teaching and proficiency before coming to the United States to pursue her Masters' degree. However, she felt that she lost all her confidence after she arrived and faced most native English speakers. She began to feel inferior in the ELT profession. She did not want to tell people that she had many years of English teaching in her native country.

The above experiences imply that NNESTs' low confidence in personal English communication might lead them to have low confidence in professional development. Furthermore, NNESTs' low confidence might lead them to have inferior perceptions toward their ELT roles and status. NNESTs perceive their own non-native English members as an inferior group. Braine (1999), Kramsch (2003), Norton (2000), and Kachru and Nelson (2006) suggest that NNESTs should not be considered and treated as an inferior group; instead, their multilingual and multicultural experiences should be emphasized and developed. In recent years, the population of NNESTs coming to English speaking countries to pursue higher education has

been increasing. Being a NNEST, the researcher intends to listen to NNESTs' voices and investigate how the NNESTs construct, reconstruct and transform their professional identities in an English-speaking context. In this way, the research hopes to help all NNESTs enhance their identification in the ELT profession in addition to assisting all NESTs and teacher educators in understanding the way NNESTs perceive the self as ELT professionals.

Statement of the Problem

Identity is regarded as an individual's perceptions of the self in relation to diverse relationships with the surrounding subjects and contexts. The construction and transformation of an identity is not a fixed process; instead, an identity changes constantly across time and space (Norton, 2000). Any relevant variables, such as social or educational experiences, learning contexts, native languages and cultures, and the investment that NNESTs make in personal ongoing identity development might produce a different impact on the construction and transformation of each individual's professional identity.

With the emergence of globalization, many NNESTs now decide to study in English-speaking countries, including the United States. Whether immersion in an English-speaking community brings a dramatic impact to an NNEST's identity toward his or her ELT professionalism stimulates the researcher's interest in conducting this study. Accordingly, the present study explores those influential variables contributing to NNESTs' professional identity and examines whether those variables contribute to NNESTs' self-perceptions toward their professional roles.

Significance of the Study

The researcher of the present study is a member of the nonnative group, and has encountered difficulty and confusion with self-identity while pursuing a master's and doctoral

degree. The researcher has sought to listen to more voices from the inner group members and to assist more NNESTs in understanding the self in all aspects, including personal, academic, and professional achievements. With a better understanding of the self, NNESTs can enhance self-awareness in the ELT profession.

With the utilization of qualitative focus-group interviews, a collaborative environment was created for NNESTs to share challenges and solutions, to instill an awareness of NNESTs toward their professional identity, and to encourage NNESTs to reflect on their professional identity. The ultimate goal of the study was to assist more NNESTs in realizing and enhancing their professional significance in the ELT profession through a better understanding of their identity construction and transformation.

Research Questions

In this study, the researcher focused on NNESTs who pursue higher education in the United States. She explored qualitatively the way NNESTs construct their self-perceptions of ELT professionalism based on prior social and educational experiences in their countries, how they reconstruct professional identity depending on current social and educational experiences in an English-speaking country, and how they can contribute their newly-constructed sense of professionalism in future ELT practices. Three major research questions were investigated in this study:

1. How do NNESTs perceive the self as ELT professionals in their home country?
2. How do NNESTs perceive the self as ELT professionals in the United States?
3. How do NNESTs self-report the impact of current experiences in the United States on their transformation of professional ELT identity?

Limitations of the Study

The researcher came from an East Asian country, Taiwan, and was raised in East Asian culture for 20 years. She is a member of the NNEST group, and has chosen only to investigate the self-perceptions among this group. Voices of NESTs were excluded in the study. Next, since the target subjects came from East Asian countries, the study was limited to the nationalities of non-native English speaking teachers. Since the ELT profession contains multiple nationalities, the participants' populations are too small to inform generalization of findings to the entire global ELT populations. It may be more effective to observe NNESTs' identity formation and transformation by grouping nationalities depending on geographical regions. Last, data analysis was also limited according to participants' ages, personalities and English teaching experiences. With different ages, personalities and English teaching experiences, each individual NNEST might develop or transform his or her perceptions of the self diversely so the research findings would not be appropriate to apply to the entire population. In future studies, it might be useful to learn the extent of influences in identity transformation by separating NNEST into groups based on ranges of ages, types of personalities, and years of English teaching experiences.

Definition of Terms

Nonnative English speaking teacher (NNEST) is a term to describe an English teacher who grew up with the nonnative English status and serves in the position of English teaching. In general, most NNESTs teach English in their home countries, especially EFL settings.

Native English speaking teacher (NEST) is a term to indicate an English teacher whose first language is English and serves as an English teacher. Those NESTs teach English in their home countries to English-speaking students, ESL students, or EFL students. Otherwise, many of NESTs choose to teach English in worldwide ESL and EFL contexts.

Matsuda (2003) provided his own experiences and perspectives of being a nonnative English speaker to give specific insights in the use of *native* and *nonnative*. His perspectives supported the usage of the terms, native and nonnative in the present study. Matsuda said that nonnative is not actually the term that should be questioned; instead, he pointed out that “the assumption that native is somehow more positive than nonnative needs to be challenged” (p. 15). Matsuda’s viewpoints are taken by the researcher; the dichotomy between native and nonnative is not the biggest problem in debating the issues of native and nonnative. However, the positive and negative assumption toward native and nonnative will be more significant elements than the issues of native and nonnative. Therefore, in this study, the researcher used the terms, *native* and *nonnative* speakers.

Summary

Identity, NNESTs, and social contexts have been proposed as key words in this chapter and in the present study. The research study was conducted to examine NNESTs’ perceptions of their experience in their home countries and in the United States and to research NNESTs’ awareness about the impact of their experience in the English-speaking community on their ELT identity. Through the study, the researcher intended to assist more NNESTs to enhance their personal awareness in the ELT professional and to help them build up professional credibility.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Generally, when people talk about the native status of a language speaker, they usually define the term based on the language the speaker has spoken since childhood. In recent decades, debates about the native speaker (NS) and nonnative speaker (NNS) have been present in the ELT profession. The criteria to define who is a native speaker or a nonnative speaker have been questioned by some scholars. Independent of the native/non-native issue, language is considered a tool for human beings to communicate with others. Language not only consists of written languages, but also symbolic verbal and body language in addition to emotions. When human beings express personal points of view via verbal and written communication, culture and identity are two components embedded in language. The way language is used varies when speakers grow up in different speech communities because their perspectives and perceptions are developed based on various cultural, social values, and norms. Speech communities refer to contexts in which human beings develop individual culture, identity, and language; in addition, accepted and rejected norms vary among speech communities. Based on sociocultural perspectives, language, culture, identity, and speech community are interrelated components, since each individual develops his or her personal meaning-making process differently according to the cultural and social values in which he or she believes.

This review explores how Chomsky's (1965) Generative Grammar and the ideas of world Englishes have impacted the native speaker-nonnative speaker (NS-NNS) dichotomy and present the more recent studies that discuss nonnative English-speaking teacher (NNEST) perceptions toward native speaker norms. Studies on the issues of language, culture, identity, and speech community are discussed in order to provide an explicit explanation of the interrelated relationship among those variables. Last, studies related to NNEST's confidence and self-awareness of language proficiency in addition to credibility and investment in the ELT profession are presented to explain their significance to the present study.

Generative Grammar, World Englishes, and the NS-NNS Dichotomy

An idea that traces its origins back to Chomsky's (1965) Theory of Generative Grammar is that each individual is born with membership in a particular language in a monolingual context. Chomsky asserts that a language grammar is supported by "a description of the ideal speaker-hearer's intrinsic competence" (p. 4). However, Davies (2003) questioned Chomsky's idea of the idealized native speaker, pointing out that "it takes no account of situation, purpose, domain or variety" (p. 21). The concept of Generative Grammar was developed without considering social components. The emphasis on *an ideal speaker-listener* reinforced the concept of the existence of the native speaker norm. Davies emphasized that the importance of "communicative competence" exceeded "linguistic competence" (p. 79). Language competence of a language user does not just depend on linguistic features but also includes communicative characteristics. In the current multilingual society, the concept of *an ideal speaker-listener* and the NS-NNS dichotomy has been challenged. Most people learn at least one language as a foreign or second language in their life. After an individual begins to learn a foreign language or a second language, he or she possesses nonnative speaking membership in the target language and may achieve a

high level of language proficiency. However, the conception of the NS-NNS dichotomy still dominates most people's perceptions, and the hiring practices in the ELT profession are influenced significantly by this bias.

In the 1980s, there were scholars, like Kachru (1985) and McArthur (1987), proposing the diagrams of world Englishes. McArthur proposed the circle of world English by highlighting "the broad three-part spectrum that ranges from the 'innumerable' popular Englishes through the various national and regional standards to the remarkably homogeneous but negotiable 'common core' of World Standard English" (p. 11). In McArthur's diagram, he divided the varieties of Englishes based on the national and regional phases. He indicated that the definition of Standard English does depend on attitude. Even though in the context of Standard English, like among British and Irish Standard English, there is still the existence of nonstandard English such as the dialects of Orkney and Shetland, Glaswegian and Highland English (McArthur, 1987). Tracing back to the present time and context, more and more varieties of Englishes are formed in every corner of the world. To define whose English is Standard English seems to be more complicated. The idea of speaking good English seems to be used in recent years. However, who speaks good English still varies on how an individual perceives it.

In the field of world Englishes, Kachru's (1985) model of world Englishes plays a predominant role in the spread of English. Kachru included the social, cultural, linguistic, historical, educational, and geographical metaphors in the model. This model leads readers to have an in-depth understanding of the expanding varieties of world Englishes (Kachru, 2005). Kachru (1985) conceived of three circles of world Englishes: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle is made up of countries where English is spoken as the first language such as the United Kingdom and the United States. English has been accepted

and used officially in countries, like India, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines; these countries are included in the Outer Circle. English is also learned as a foreign language in countries which are included in the Expanding Circle like China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

With the impact of local culture and language, English has been contextualized and indigenized. In the Outer Circle countries, some indigenized English forms (Englishes) are used widely and accepted as formal usage. In this way, more and more English varieties are emerging; moreover, the terms *native speakers* and *nonnative speakers* are getting harder and harder to define explicitly. Kramsch (1998) questioned the general definition of native speakers, and states that there is not a clear boundary to define a native speaker depending on “birth,” “education,” or “virtue of being recognized and accepted as a member of a like-minded cultural group” (p. 80). Indeed, with the emergence of diverse English varieties, there is no clear and definite criterion to identify a person as a native or nonnative speaker of a language. The NS-NNS dichotomy has been challenged and becomes more complicated in the multilingual world.

Motha (2006) stated that diverse varieties of English that have emerged in the world should be recognized as legitimate because different varieties of English are spoken by different racial groups. Basically, race is the major factor impacting English status in the world rather than the degree of language variation. Furthermore, race has a significant impact on the emergence of language variation (Motha, 2006). Therefore, teachers’ usage of a language may produce a hidden impact on students’ understanding of legitimate language. The pedagogies and attitudes used by teachers can help to develop positive perspectives of language legitimacy. In other words, race, language, and identity in addition to the legitimacy and variation of language have correlative relationships with each other. To some extent, Motha’s perspectives confirm the

significance of race in the evolution of native-speaker norms and the necessity to deconstruct the norms in the ELT profession.

Shuck (2006) conducted a study in the southwestern United States to “investigate the process by which White, middle-class, native-English-speaking, U.S.-born college students position themselves and others within a language-race-nationality matrix” (p. 263). Within the positioning process of those college students, the speaker’s Whiteness and nativeness in English are positioned as unmarked and normal while they mark nonnative speakers of English as non-White and foreign (Shuck, 2006). He argued that those processes have led those students to produce naturalized connections between language, national origin, and race. The students from the dominant group may label a person as a nonnative English speaker because that person speaks with an unfamiliar accent; however, the dominant group ignores the fact that many dialects are spoken in different regions and by different groups in the United States. This practice of associating race with language has been embedded in the monolingual ideology of the dominant group. The practice has an impact on the ideological models in general attitudes and perceptions and has contributed to the reproduction of a hierarchical order in society. Drawing on Shuck’s ideas, it appears that the racializing practice also has influence in the reproduction of the NS-NNS dichotomy; and this situation does not just happen in the United States, but also in the whole world.

Rajagopalan (2006) conducted a mixed-methods study to examine the problems that NNESTs face in the ELT profession and to provide suggestions to help them enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem. He thoroughly examined the reasons contributing to NNESTs’ marginalization in the ELT professions and argued that Chomsky’s theory has had a significant and negative impact on the NS-NNS dichotomy. He argued that the belief of native speaker

norms has been and should be challenged. An interesting finding reveals that novice NNESTs do not take their nonnative status in the ELT profession as seriously as NNESTs who have more than ten years' teaching experience (Rajagopalan). Significantly, based on the study results, Rajagopalan concluded that self-confidence does not correlate with teachers' knowledge of the language but with their perceptions of their language proficiency. This confirms that the more teaching experience NNESTs have, the more aware they are of their language proficiency. Based on the above reasons, factors and components impacting on novice and experienced NNESTs' anxieties, confidence, and self-esteem of being ELT professionals are taken into account in the present study.

Language, Culture, Identity, and Speech Community

In the areas of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Norton (2000) argued that SLA theorists have not determined a comprehensive relationship between the identity of language learners and their contexts. Power relations play predominant roles in a complex social world, especially on social interaction. In the field of SLA, relations of power have not been taken seriously in examining social interactions between language learners and native/other English speakers. SLA theorists are still exploring the way language learners identify self in target learning. Norton has emphasized the importance of exploring language learners' identity development within the complex social world. In the same way, since many NNESTs do not learn English only in English-speaking countries, it is necessary to examine the differences of their constructions of the ELT profession in their home countries and target contexts. It is also necessary to realize how NNESTs develop and maintain an intelligible and comprehensible relationship with the target language and culture.

Kim (2003) describes the concept of identity, and points out the perceptions of personal identity are not always under one's control. Instead, contexts have fundamental influences in the construction of identity. In addition, an investment in language learning will change across time and space (Kim, 2003; Norton, 2000). Kim's findings show that the diverse identities of each participant are concerned with the context and the groups with which he or she interacts. The level of investment participants put into English learning reveals the level of their desire to belong to the particular group. Kim's findings confirm the strong relationship between human social and cultural behavior within the encompassing social situations and contexts.

Ha and Que (2006) investigated Vietnamese teachers' identity transformation in the English speaking country of Australia. They concluded that teachers' identity is not only constructed by self-awareness but is also influenced by surrounding components like tradition, social norms, and others' performance in morality. Ha and Que confirmed demonstrated that even though Vietnamese teachers taught English as an academic subject, the moral values and responsibility of being a moral guide they accepted from Vietnamese society was part of their negotiation of personal identity and impacted their cultural and professional practice greatly. In diverse cultures and languages, there are similar or different accepted and rejected norms. NNESTs are always learning, experiencing, and negotiating their personal and cultural identity with the target culture in target speech communities.

According to Davies (2003), human beings living in a speech community have shared meaning in language and behavior, but importantly, a typical speech community does not just consist of one language but multiple languages. Additionally, Kramsch (1998) stated that meaning does not just depend on the viewpoints of verbal expression by a speaker, but also is associated with action the speaker does with words in the target context. In a multilingual

community, each individual will equip the self with multilingual competence and multicultural identity. The huge gaps among cultures and languages are easily observed in human communication. Therefore, the way human beings make meaning varies from culture to culture and from language to language. An individual's verbal and behavioral presentation reflects his or her meaning-making process based on the contexts in which he or she grew up and is immersed.

Identity, Confidence, Language Proficiency, and the NNESTs

Confidence, language proficiency, and the NNESTs themselves are three predominant variables in the examination of the identity perceptions of NNESTs. Braine (1999) found that lack of identity could produce low self-confidence in addition to a marginalized sense of the self and status in the ELT profession. Liu (2006) applied the ideas of inferiority complex and schizophrenia as a lens through which to investigate the challenges and difficulties that four Chinese graduate teaching assistants (GTA) faced in their teaching practices. Liu found that in the beginning stage of teaching, the four Chinese GTAs were trapped by their inferiority complex; they felt disadvantaged in teaching Freshman English to native English-speaking students. Cultural gaps and misunderstandings led the participants to have low self-confidence, and their feelings of intimidation and insecurity became obstacles to establishing credibility in front of native English-speaking students. However, after the participants' credibility was established, they finally realized that their nonnative roles could not be changed and their learning experiences helped them to teach English writing to native English-speaking students (Liu). Based on these studies, it appears that the enhancement of NNESTs credibility in the ELT profession may help them to develop self-confidence in their professionalism.

The differences between NESTs' and NNESTs' identity and teaching beliefs are based on their language development and learning process. The ways teachers experience their language

learning process creates a dramatic impact on their teaching beliefs in being language teachers. A majority of NNESTs accept the notion of native speaker norms in their home countries, which are EFL settings. Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) conducted questionnaires and interviews to explore nonnative English speaking students' perceptions toward their professionalism and the NS-NNS dichotomy in a TESOL program. Since the selected participants were equipped with higher levels of English proficiency and have years of English teaching experience in their home countries, answers for the question that whether NESTs or NNESTs are more successful English teachers vary depending on different individuals. In general, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler concluded that the definition of successful teaching depends on "learner factors (age, motivation, goals/objectives, aptitude), teacher factors (knowledge, skills, training, experience, personality), and contextual factors (ESL vs. EFL context, amount of available input, degree of contact with native speakers, availability of authentic materials)" (p. 141). In most EFL settings, traditional language teaching pedagogies tend to emphasize grammatical and linguistic features of the target language and lack abundant cultural information of the target culture. This phenomenon has led NNESTs to rely on linguistic and cultural content in their textbooks and to develop individual professionalism mainly in linguistic components, especially grammar. However, a majority of NNESTs have been challenged by ESL contexts in both personal and professional aspects, even though they are equipped with abundant teaching experiences and a higher level of English proficiency (Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Through the struggle in a different language context, NNESTs change their personal perceptions toward teaching beliefs and pedagogies. This study reveals a significant viewpoint that NNESTs' self-perceptions of identity, confidence, and English proficiency could change across time and the contexts they experience.

Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) also examined NNESTs' self-perceptions toward the NS-NNS dichotomy. They suggest that NNESTs should put more effort into the development of professional skills and knowledge in order to be ELT professionals. At the same time, NNESTs also need to enhance self-awareness by discussing more issues of diversity and multilingualism. Most Western TESOL programs do not provide adequate curriculum instruction to prepare NNESTs to teach in their home countries (Carrier, 2003). The context in which NNESTs pursue higher education is very different than the context in which they apply teaching practices. Those NNESTs are significant linguistic and cultural informants in language classrooms; therefore, their beliefs and self-perceptions toward personal self and professional self could produce a major impact on students' perceptions as well. For this reason, methods to help NNESTs enhance their expertise in English-speaking contexts should be taken seriously. With the enhancement of their expertise in the ELT profession, NNESTs' self-confidence will be developed in a positive direction.

Pasternak and Bailey (2004) stated that professional preparation for NNESTs cannot be equal with the ownership of either nativeness or language proficiency. The authors try to provide a better explanation of declarative and procedural knowledge between NESTs and NNESTs. NESTs' and NNESTs' declarative and procedural knowledge cannot be judged by nativeness, so teacher education programs should provide more opportunities for both NESTs and NNESTs to develop their knowledge of being ESL/EFL professionals. Importantly, "each individual's unique blend of professional preparation and proficiency" should be taken into account while mentioning a teacher's participation in the ELT profession instead of whether he or she is a native or nonnative speaker (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004, p. 173). Teacher education programs should work on this issue to assist both NESTs and NNESTs in being aware of the importance of

professional preparation and proficiency. In this way, both NESTs and NNESTs can develop positive and objective attitudes toward ELT professionalism.

Inbar-Lourie (2006) examined female teachers' linguistic history and self-perceived native speaker identity in the Israeli school system. With the analysis of each teacher's response, Inbar-Lourie compared self-ascribed native/nonnative identity with the identity perceived by EFL colleagues and students. There was a significant gap between the self and perceived EFL teacher identities. This finding supports the viewpoint that NNESTs' self-perceived identity should be taken into account because the way NNESTs perceive themselves might produce dramatic impacts on the way of identifying their professional roles in the ELT profession.

Kamhi-Stein (1999) also affirmed that those nonnative English-speaking teacher trainees' language learning histories, beliefs, and perceptions of the native-speaker norm should be taken into account to enhance their self-awareness of their value as nonnative speakers. In her study, there was a positive improvement of nonnative trainees' self-perceptions toward "theories of L2 acquisition, teaching methodologies and curriculum design, and cultural and social factors affecting L1 and L2 development" (p. 155). Most Western-based TESOL programs aim to educate teacher trainees to teach in Western school systems and fail to provide adequate curriculum to educate nonnative English speakers to teach English in home countries (Carrier, 2003; Kamhi-Stein, 1999). Accordingly, further examination of how current curriculum in most Western TESOL programs impacts the construction of nonnative trainees' professional identity should be conducted to determine how the curriculum can be redesigned to meet both NESTs' and NNESTs' needs.

Investigating NNESTs' social and family lives may help to obtain a better understanding of the conscious and unconscious perceptions that NNESTs construct of the self outside the

academic context. Norton (2000) proposed the notion of investment because she takes the position that each language learner possesses multiphase needs, desires, and motivations in the learning progress. Each individual invests the self in a complex social world and changes the self across time and space. Additionally, while individuals have different social roles in a complex social world, like mother, father, teacher, and so forth, they change their self-perceptions consciously or unconsciously based on different roles and contexts. Norton's research confirms the importance of an individual's investment in language learning in Canada. Therefore, drawing on Norton's concept of investment, the researcher aimed to investigate NNESTs' investment in academic and social experiences in the United States, which assist in understanding how NNESTs exchange, organize, and construct the sense of self in the target culture.

Liu (1999) concluded that a rapport will be developed between the teacher and students when the NNEST's self-perceptions toward his or her professional roles are the same as the way students perceive their teacher. Significantly, Liu asserted that a good ESL professional cannot be judged by race, accent, and appearance only; instead, various components like "the teacher's professional training, linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, understanding of the students' needs, continuous encouragement of students' efforts, and the realistic expectation of students' progress" (p. 174) make up a good ESL professional.

Summary

Since a majority of NNESTs start to learn English in countries which are not considered English-speaking communities, they have grown up with a home culture, language, and identity. If they decide to pursue higher education in English-speaking communities, they need to negotiate the self with target speakers, culture, language, and social norms in personal and

professional aspects. In the process of this negotiation, NNESTs might have to deconstruct, construct, or transform the self across time and space, including their self-awareness and self-confidence of their language proficiency, professional knowledge, social experiences, and so forth. The present study included the variables mentioned in this chapter to explore how NNESTs construct and transform their identity and sense of ELT professionalism and to assist all NNESTs in enhancing self-awareness and self-confidence in their professionalism.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Building on Kachru's (2005) diagram of World Englishes, the researcher took the position that each NNEST comes to the English-speaking community with a different variety of Englishes and believes in various cultural values and norms. Additionally, the researcher drew on Norton's (2000) theoretical conception of identity and consents that identity is an ongoing process that can be impacted when an individual immerses in different contexts. Therefore, the present study was proposed as a qualitative case study with focus group interviews to examine NNESTs' identity construction and transformation in an English-speaking community in the United States.

The research questions were to investigate NNESTs' self-perception as ELT professionals in their home countries, NNESTs self-perception as ELT professionals in the United States, and NNESTs' self-description of the impact of current experiences in the United States on their transformation of professional ELT identity. The research data was collected via focus group interviews to reveal a variety of pieces in the puzzle of NNESTs' identity. Afterwards, the various pieces of research data were analyzed and divided by coding group into different sets of categories depending on emergent themes. This chapter provides a detailed account of the major components of methodology in the present study. Eight sections were divided: (a) research questions, (b) research context, (c) research participants, (d) researcher's

role, (e) research instruments, (f) data collection, (g) data analysis, (h) limitations, (i) confidentiality, and (j) validity and reliability.

Research Questions

In this study, the researcher focused on NNESTs who pursue higher education in the United States. She explored qualitatively the way NNESTs construct their self-perceptions of ELT professionalism based on prior social and educational experiences in their countries, how they reconstruct professional identity depending on current social and educational experiences in an English-speaking country, and how they can contribute their newly-constructed sense of professionalism in future ELT practices. Three major research questions investigated in this study were:

1. How do NNESTs perceive the self as ELT professionals in their home country?
2. How do NNESTs perceive the self as ELT professionals in the United States?
3. How do NNESTs self-report the impact of current experiences in the United States on their transformation of professional ELT identity?

Research Context

A state-run university (here named Midwest State University) in the Midwest United States was selected as the research site. The researcher had shared learning and living experience with the study subjects, so she had a better understanding of subjects' contextualized situations in the target context. The study was conducted in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program in Midwest State University located in the Midwestern region of the United States. Midwest State University is located in a Midwest township dominated by a river and at the intersection of two major U.S. roadways. The city in the center location is 3 or 4 hours away from several important Midwest cities, like Chicago. The approximate population in

the city is about 60,000 people. The majority population is about 86.7% white, 9.8% African American and 5.3% other races like American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander, and other races (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Midwest State University is a public and coeducational university with approximately 10,000 students. The enrollment includes men, women, and full-time, part-time, undergraduate and graduate students. The degrees offered include associate, bachelor's, master's, doctorate, and educational specialist. There are more than 100 majors including majors in education, nursing, technology, business, arts and sciences.

This TESOL program is a master's program under the Language Department recruiting both native and nonnative English speaking students. The master's curriculum is designed to offer two years of course work including both theoretical and methodological approaches and disciplines. Students graduated from the program might choose to work or to pursue further study. Both native and nonnative English speakers are welcome to apply this program. Each year, many nonnative English speaking students come from around the world. The background of students varies depending on individuals. Some of the students have several years of teaching English in their home countries, but some enter this program with English teaching experiences of fewer than two years or with no English teaching experiences at all.

Research Participants

Research participants were selected purposefully in this study. Creswell (2003) pointed out that selecting participants or sites in a purposeful way is the idea behind qualitative research, and the idea is to better assist researchers in understanding research problems and questions. In order to investigate the way NNESTs construct and transform self-perceptions toward identity

developed in the English-speaking community, purposeful sampling was employed as the method in this study.

Liu (2006) conducted a study with the purposeful recruitment of the participants from his home country because he believed that “the shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the participants would give me a better basis for comparison and cultural interpretation” (p. 158). In this study, the researcher recruited participants from East Asian countries because the researcher took Liu’s standpoint that our shared social, linguistic, cultural, and historical background helped to give a thorough explanation of NNESTs’ identity construction and transformation. The researcher of the study came from Taiwan. Taiwan is an East Asian country so the researcher has an East Asian cultural background. In respect to selecting participants with similar cultural backgrounds, the researcher recruited four to six first and second year nonnative English practitioners who registered in the TESOL program and come from East Asian countries including China, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. The target participants had at least one year of English teaching experience in their home countries. First and second year students in the target master’s program were recruited in order to obtain data from levels of varied progress of identity construction and transformation.

Research Instruments

Qualitative research. The major concern for qualitative researchers is “the meanings people attach to things in their lives” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 7). The connection between the meanings and human beings’ lives hold the researcher’s careful attention in conducting a qualitative study. The researcher was eager to look for how human beings make sense of the self and make meanings for their professional lives in a specific field. For these reasons, in the present study, the researcher intended to identify how NNESTs perceive the sense of the self in

the ELT profession. An interview protocol was implemented as the strategy of inquiry in this study as the researcher explored the process of NNESTs' identity construction and transformation in an English-speaking community in the Midwest United States. The major research technique utilized in the study was focus group interviews.

Focus group interviews. Focus group interviews were employed in this study. Grouping participants helped the researcher inspire participants to share their similar or different perspectives in relevant topics and issues in addition to assisting participants in obtaining a better understanding of self-perspectives in diverse aspects (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Focus group interviews helped participants share their viewpoints and experiences not only with the researcher, but also with other NNESTs. In this way, participants gained a better understanding of self-perception as well as a realization of the perspectives of other members of the group. The method of traditional face-to-face interview was used to allow the researcher to observe participants' nonverbal interaction and language in addition to examining their similar or different awareness toward the interview questions.

Participants were divided into two groups according to their year in the TESOL program. The two groups were named *First-year Group* and *Second-year Group*. Four to six participants were recruited in each group. An initial and a follow-up interview were conducted with the two groups in this study. Three months separated the two interviews in order to examine whether participants had changes in their self-perceptions after being exposed to the issues of NNESTs' identity. Participants' initial and follow-up reactions toward the nonnative issues were the major elements to be observed in focus group interviews.

English was used as the language to communicate in all interviews. Although all participants came from East Asian countries, there were still diverse languages spoken by all

participants. For example, Japanese language is spoken by Japanese participants; Korean language is spoken by Korean participants; Mandarin Chinese is spoken by Chinese and Taiwanese participants. Therefore, in the English-speaking context, English is the universal language to be used in communication with people from various contexts.

Focus group interviews were voice recorded with a digital voice recorder; however, names of participants were not revealed. According to Seidman (2006):

The participants' thoughts become embodied in their words. To substitute the researcher's paraphrasing or summaries of what the participants say for their actual words is to substitute the researcher's consciousness for that of the participant. Although inevitably the researcher's consciousness will play a major role in the interpretation of interview data, that consciousness must interact with the words of the participant recorded as fully and as accurately as possible. (p. 114)

Each individual has his or her own mind and consciousness; inevitably, the researcher might bring his or her consciousness in the interpretation of interview data in some ways. Therefore, utilizing voice recording is a good way to help avoid an inappropriate interpretation by the researcher. Seidman stated that tape-recording does not just provide benefits to researchers but also to participants in studies. To researchers, it is easy to go back to the original data to check the accuracy and to demonstrate accountability. To participants, the original record can help participants confirm and be responsible for what they have said (p. 114). Importantly, voice recording can be used as strong evidence to verify participants' words and confirm the validity and reliability of the research study. Also, recording can be an effective tool to help the researcher take notes during the interview.

In addition to interviewing techniques and equipment, the size of the focus group played an important role in obtaining research data. According to Morgan (1997), a small group is more helpful for the researcher “when the researcher desires a clear sense of each participant’s reaction to a topic simply because they give each participant more time to talk” (p. 42). However, a large group will limit the data that the researcher desires to obtain from the conversation (Morgan). The present study aimed to obtain an in-depth understanding of NNESTs’ self-perceptions toward their ELT profession; a small group allowed the researcher to encourage participants to have in-depth conversation related to the desired topics.

Interview questions. Structured, semi-structured, and open-ended questions have been widely utilized by researchers. In this study, two types of questions were utilized; structured and open-ended. Structured questions helped the researcher focus on the target information to be collected in the study. On the other hand, open-ended questions were considered a stimulus to encourage participants to share their perspectives and experiences. Open-ended questions were designed to get participants more involved with questions and share their ideas. According to Krueger (1994), the significance of an open-ended question is “that it reveals what is on the interviewee’s mind as opposed to what the interviewer suspects is on the interviewee’s mind” (p. 57). Therefore, open-ended questions can be utilized as a two-way interaction between interviewers and interviewees. This approach helped the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the participants’ perceptions. In this study, structured and open-ended questions were both used in the initial questionnaire and the initial interview protocol and open-ended questions were the major type of question in the follow-up interview protocol. In this study, the utilization of two types of questions was a great help for the researcher to obtain a conceptual

understanding of how NNESTs construct and transform NNESTs' professional identity in the English speaking community.

The researcher's notes. The strategy of descriptive field notes was utilized for interview conversation. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) stated that the goal of descriptive field notes is to capture all aspects of an individual's life components. In the present study, the goal was to explore how NNESTs produce and convey meanings to the self and others in the target settings. Therefore, any pieces of significant themes that emerged in conversation represented meanings of nonverbal interaction. Nonverbal interaction was monitored to confirm or question emergent themes. In addition to obtaining topical data from participants' utterances, nonverbal interactions were observed and transcribed by the researcher. Each action consists of people's thoughts and emotions. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998), meaning plays the determining role in deciding human beings' action and behavior. During interviews, with participants' participation, the nonverbal interactions were written in order to examine further meanings beyond their actions. In this way, the researcher's notes for interviews included participants' words and nonverbal interaction.

Initial questionnaire. Norton (1993), in her study to examine the relationship between immigrant women's identity and language learning, created two questionnaires. The researcher obtained Norton's permission (see Appendix D) to use her questionnaires as the reference to create the initial questionnaire and the follow-up interview protocol (see Appendix A and B) in this study. However, the target participants in Norton's study were immigrant women so they are different than the present target subjects, NNESTs. Also, the research setting of Norton's study is different than the setting here. Moreover, the target subjects for the revised questions were NNESTs in the TESOL master program and the research context was in the Midwest United

States. In order to meet the goal of the present study, questions were revised and explained in the following statements. The entire set of questions was developed in a structured and topic-guided method. The questions were used with both First-year and Second-year Groups. The initial questionnaire is in Appendix A.

The initial questionnaire was divided into 12 sections: (a) demographic information, (b) language background, (c) immigration information, (d) accommodation, (e) English language skills, (f) work experience, (g) the Master of Arts courses, (h) language contacts, (i) extent of English usage, (j) self-assessment of English progress, (k) the learning process, (l) language and culture.

Demographic information. The major focus of this section of Norton's (1993) questionnaire was to investigate subjects' gender, nationality, place of growing-up, and location of receiving bachelor's degree. Therefore, the label of biographical information was changed to demographic information. Questions about subjects' name, address, date of birth, and marriage status were removed and the question of participants' highest level of education was revised to participants' location of receiving university degrees.

Language background. Norton's (1993) intention for the section of language background in her questionnaire was to realize participants' native language and what other languages participants have learned. Two portions in this section were revised to match the current participants. In Norton's item two, participants were asked to answer "Did you know any English before you came to Canada?" This question could not be applied appropriately to the current participants; therefore, the researcher revised this question to "How long have you been studying English?" In addition, to understand NNESTs' perceptions toward their own English proficiency in teaching English in home countries, the question "How do you describe the level

of your English proficiency while you were teaching in your home country?” was added as item 4.

Immigration information. The third section of Norton’s (1993) questionnaire was intended to know participants’ affiliation with the English speaking community. In Norton’s item two, the question was focused on immigrant women’s immigrant class which cannot be applied to NNESTs, so the researcher revised it to focus on whether NNESTs have attended language courses in the United States before registering in the TESOL Master of Arts (MA) program and asked them to explain in detail. Other questions were maintained in this section; only location was changed.

Accommodation/housing. The next section of Norton’s (1993) questionnaire aimed to understand how participants accommodate the English-speaking community. The researcher did not make revisions for questions in this section since all questions are applicable to NNESTs’ situations. Only the context, Canada, was changed to the United States.

English language skills. Norton’s (1993) section of English language skills examined participants’ self-perceptions of their English language skills. All questions were retained for NNESTs. However, the researcher removed the three answering options, about the same, a little worse and much worse, and left the answers as open-ended.

English teaching experience. Norton’s (1993) title of “work experience” was changed to English teaching experience. Participants’ English teaching experience in home countries and the current English speaking context was asked in order to examine their affiliation from another perspective. The context, Canada, was changed to the United States. The question about the kind of job participants have at the moment was added in item three.

The Master of Arts course. Understanding how participants describe their experience with the academic ELT courses in the TESOL program is significant to the present study, too. This section of Norton's (1993) questionnaire helped the researcher understand the way participants construct or transform the self as ELT professionals. In this questionnaire, the title of this section was changed from *the English language course* to *the Master of Arts course*. In Norton's item one, *the 6-month English course* was changed to *the Master of Arts course*. In item two, the question was revised to ask participants' to explain how much English they learned while they were taking the course instead of providing four scales for them to choose. In item three, a question was added to ask about the extent of academic knowledge participants learned in the course. All questions were changed to be open-ended. Items seven, eight, and nine, focusing on the English language course that immigrant women took, were removed.

Language contacts. In this section of Norton's (1993) questionnaire, five-scaled answers were provided to immigrant women. The researcher revised all questions to be open-ended questions so that NNESTs could provide more information; in addition, specific neighborhoods in specific contexts were added in questions. In this section, the researcher wanted to know how each participant develops language contacts in the English-speaking community differently than in home countries.

Extent of English usage. The purpose of Norton's (1993) section was to examine the frequencies of participants' English usage in daily life in both English-speaking and home contexts. Questions related to how often participants speak, to whom, and in which contexts were provided. In the questionnaire, Norton used five-scaled answers to let participants choose; in the revised interview protocol, the researcher used open-ended questions to lead participants to share related information.

Self-assessment of English progress. In this section, participants were encouraged to review self-learning progress in English and share ideas of their self-assessment. Norton (1993) provided four-scale answers for participants; the researcher also revised all questions to become open-ended questions. Instead of using “how easy or hard is it for you to use English to do the following things?” the researcher revised the sentence to “please explain what are the things you think that are easy or hard for you to use English?” Examples like, fill out forms and questionnaires, write letters, or watch TV/movies, etc. in the original questionnaire were retained to encourage participants to provide further information if possible. In item two, the researcher also revised the questions to make them open-ended questions by adding *please describe*.

The learning process. In this section of Norton’s (1993) questionnaire, all three items were applicable to the current subjects; therefore, the researcher did not revise any questions.

Language and culture. This was the last section of Norton’s (1993) questionnaire in this interview protocol, and there were two parts. Part I focused on participants’ perceptions toward self-improvement in English usage or learning; Part II focused on participants’ good and bad experiences of being nonnative English speakers. The answering options in the original questionnaire were revised into open-ended questions. The last three sections, self assessment of English progress, the learning process, and language and culture, were designed to know how participants self-describe their personal learning progress and the significant components they perceive in an English speaking context.

Follow-up interview protocol. The follow-up interview protocol contained 12 questions which examined whether participants produce different perspectives toward the self. After the initial focus interview, participants were exposed to the issues of their nonnative status; therefore, the intention for the follow-up interview was to understand whether participants

produce different perceptions toward the self-role in personal or in professional phases. To have subjects self-describe the impact of their current U.S. experience on the identity development, seven questions were created. The follow-up interview protocol is in Appendix B.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study was conducted during one academic semester, from August 2009 to December 2009. Two groups, First-year and Second-year Groups, were interviewed according to the year in the TESOL program. Two focus interviews were conducted for each group, an initial interview and a follow-up interview. Thus, there were a total of four interviews in the present study. The initial and follow-up interviews were conducted in a topical and semi-structured method. The follow-up interview followed three months after the initial interviews. Krueger (1994) mentioned a primary consideration for selecting the interviewing location is that “the location is easy to find” (p. 48). Therefore, a classroom where six to eight participants would sit comfortably was considered to be the most appropriate location to conduct the two focus group interviews in the university. The researcher arrived 20 minutes earlier than the interviewing schedule to arrange tables and chairs in a circle so that the researcher and participants could engage in face-to-face conversation.

A week prior to the initial interviews, the researcher sent out a copy of the initial questionnaire in a Microsoft Word file to participants. Participants were expected to return the protocol by the deadline. The researcher read through the answers and created follow-up questions before starting the initial interviews. Each interview took 1½ -2 hours. A 5-10 minute break was given after 45 minutes. A digital voice recorder was utilized throughout all of the interviews. In order to keep participants’ confidentiality, all conversation was recorded using no personal information. A pseudonym was given to each participant when he or she entered the

interviewing classroom. A card with each pseudonym was placed on each participant's table so the researcher and other participants could recognize and use those pseudonyms in all conversations. In four interviews, a doctoral student from the coding group helped the researcher take field notes. The field notes were included in the research data to be analyzed.

Between the initial and follow-up interviews, two informal activities were scheduled. The informal activities were conducted in a relaxed gathering with light refreshment provided by the researcher. General questions (see Appendix C) were prepared by the researcher to lead the activities smoothly and naturally. A doctoral student from the coding group and the researcher made observations and took field notes following the activities. The purposes of the activities were to demonstrate care about participants' lives in the United States and to collect more information about participants' perceptions by participating in their social life. Procedures for the First-year Group were as follows.

Consent form. At the orientation meeting, the researcher gave a short announcement about the recruitment for this study. Subjects who were interested could come to the researcher and pick up the consent form. The forms were sealed and collected by the researcher.

Initial questionnaire. In the first week of September, the initial questionnaire was sent individually to each participant with Microsoft Word Files. Participants were expected to return it by September 4th.

Initial interview. During the third week of September, the initial interview was conducted. The researcher asked the questions and the doctoral student from the coding group completed the recording and field notes.

First informal event. The activity took place in the first week of October. Both First-year and Second-year students in the study were invited. The researcher and the doctoral student made observations; field notes were taken following the activity. No voice recording was used.

Second informal event. The activity took place in the third week of October. Both First-year and Second-year students in the study were invited. The researcher and the doctoral student made observations, and field notes were taken following the activity. No voice recording was used.

Follow-up interview. In the third week of November, the follow-up interview was conducted. The follow-up interview protocol was used. Field notes and voice recording were applied. The interviews took place in a reserved classroom on campus. The researcher asked the questions and the doctoral student from the coding group completed the recording and field notes.

Procedures for the Second-year Group were as follows.

Consent form. In the fourth week of August, the researcher sent out the recruitment email to Second-year students. Once subjects agreed to participate, the researcher made an appointment with each participant to sign the consent form individually. The consent form was sealed and collected by the researcher.

Initial questionnaire. In the first week of September, the initial questionnaire was sent individually to each participant with Microsoft Word Files. Participants were expected to return it by September 4th.

Initial interview. During the third week of September, the initial interview was conducted. The researcher asked the question and the doctoral student from the coding group completed the recording and field notes.

First informal event. The activity took place in the first week of October. Both First-year and Second-year students in the study were invited. The researcher and the doctoral student made observations, and field notes were taken following the activity. No voice recording was applied.

Second informal event. The activity took place in the third week of October. Both First-year and Second-year students in the study were invited. The researcher and the doctoral student made observations, and field notes were taken following the activity. No voice recording was used.

Follow-up interview. In the third week of November, the follow-up interview was conducted. The follow-up interview protocol was used. Field notes and voice recording were applied. The interviews took place in a reserved classroom on campus. The researcher asked the question and the doctoral student from the coding group completed the recording and field notes.

Data Analysis

In the present study, the researcher belonged to the group of NNESTs and had shared a similar background with her subjects. Both the researcher and participants came from East Asian countries, and pursued higher education in Midwest State University in the Midwestern area of the United States. In this way, the researcher had a better understanding of subjects' linguistic and cultural background providing better advantage in interpreting the research data. However, the researcher was mindful of avoiding bias given this circumstance.

The interview data and field notes were the major information to be analyzed in this study. The interview questions were composed of 12 sections. Each section had three major categories: demographics, language experience, and life experience. Demographical information, language background, and immigration information were included in the category of background information. Accommodation/housing and language background included English language skills, M.A. courses, language contacts, extent of English usage, and self-assessment of English progress in addition to the learning process. Life experience included work experience as well as language and culture. All interview data were voice recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Emergent themes in the interview data were coded based on the relationship of NNESTs' identity construction and transformation. Then, coded themes were placed into appropriate categories by the researcher.

A coding group was formed with one professor, one doctoral student and the researcher. The coding group was responsible for reviewing all the raw data and determining the accuracy of transcribed and analyzed data. This procedure helped the researcher eliminate her own biases away from data analysis. Creswell (2003) gave a clear description of data analysis as the following:

The process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data. (p. 190)

The process of data analysis was a continual and repeated process that contained an abundance of the researcher's reflective thinking. With the implementation of coding schemes in the study, major coding categories were developed prior to the collection of interview data. The

emergent themes from the raw data were collected, and then smaller pieces of coding themes were identified and placed in logical coding categories. The major coding categories helped the researcher have a clear direction for coding raw data, while the coding themes helped the researcher to explore an in-depth understanding of NNESTs' identity construction and transformation.

As for the reliability of coding procedures, Taylor and Bogdan (1998) provided the following statement:

In qualitative data analysis, most researchers are not concerned with the reliability of their coding procedures as commonly thought of in quantitative research. A coding scheme can be thought of as a personal filing system. Place data in the code – or file folder, to continue the analogy – along with related data in which you see conceptual similarities. Coding is intended to help you develop insights and generate theoretical understandings, not to produce frequency counts to prove your hypotheses. (p. 154)

Quantitative researchers use numeric data to confirm the reliability of a study; in contrast, qualitative researchers utilize interpretation of research data to represent its reliability. In the present study, the researcher tried to use multiple strategies to keep an objective stance to interpret and review the data for confirming or disconfirming evidence. First, the researcher centered her self-experience as a NNEST to distinguish between herself and the participants. Additionally, in the process of data analysis, she constantly self-checked her experience with participants. Member checking was a major way to make sure that the researcher was not inserting subjective experience or perspectives. Last, the coding group and the entire committee were strong support behind the researcher to help review the research data and ensure

objectivity. The above means were utilized by the researcher to develop reliability and creditability of the coding procedures in this study.

Limitations

Although the researcher had advantages in interpreting the data, there were still some confounding variables influencing the study results. The first limitation was subjects' level of English proficiency. Each subject was equipped with different levels of English language proficiency in interpreting and comprehending utterances and conversation. The differences of English proficiency may have led subjects to misunderstand the interview questions. The misunderstanding might have led the researcher to misinterpret the research data. Next, this study was limited to the research time period. Since an individual's identity was not fixed to certain context or events, it might change at any given time. The present study was conducted within one semester. Subjects might have different perspectives toward the interview questions in a subsequent time. Additionally, each individual faced various experiences so different people had different ideas regarding the questions. Therefore, the research data only represented subjects' perspectives within a short timeframe, and could not be applied to the entire population.

Confidentiality

In order to keep participants' confidentiality, pseudonyms for participants, the program, and the institution were employed in this study. For demographic information, participants were required to use pseudonyms. Otherwise, pseudonyms were employed in the entire source of interviewing records and transcripts. In this way, no one could identify the participants in this study. The audiotapes will not be played by anyone outside the study unless an additional permission form was signed by participants. The tapes will be destroyed three years after the end of the study. All interviewing data, including informed consent and tapes, will be stored and

locked in the individual closet of the researcher's room for three years. Only the researcher, members in the coding group, and the researcher's committee members were allowed to view the research data. If someone would like to view the research data for research purposes, admission must be obtained from the researcher.

Validity and Reliability

Validity is another significant component in a research study. Richards' (2003) three key techniques for validity checking were employed in this study: member validation, constant comparison, and negative evidence. Copies of the transcription of the interview data were sent to participants to confirm the accuracy of the information transcribed by the researcher. This led the researcher to understand whether subjects comprehended the interview questions appropriately and to confirm the raw data. Next, the researcher identified, compared, and noted coding themes and classifications with relevant relationships and properties (Richards, 2003). Negative evidence emerging from a data analysis might represent different symbolic meanings for data, so measures were taken to "assess their relevance to interpretations" (Richards, 2003, p. 287). In addition to the above three techniques, a coding group was formed to overcome the researcher's own biases.

Two questionnaires designed by Norton in 1993 were modified to be used in the present study. Despite the fact that the questionnaires were not published, Norton's articles have been published in peer review journals, and many people read her articles and cited them over 50 times in the journals of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) field.

Summary

The participants in this study were recruited from East Asian countries, where English is learned as a foreign language. The foreign language learners, who become English teachers in

their home countries and come to English-speaking countries to pursue higher education, were the major participants in the study. Focus group interviews were applied for the researcher to examine the participants' process of identity development in native and English-speaking contexts. In addition, the researcher provided opportunities for the participants to think reflectively on the target issues so participants were able to understand how they could change their self-perceptions in native settings and settings other than their own. Finally, case study was used in the study, focus group interviews were used to collect research data, and coding schemes were implemented to analyze the participants' statements of personal attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions in their ELT profession. Through qualitative analysis, the researcher hoped to provide a basic framework of the participants' identity development as ELT professionals in an English-speaking country to help more NNESTs enhanced self-awareness in personal and professional development for future teaching positions.

CHAPTER 4

Research Findings

This chapter includes five main sections, the questionnaire, first informal event, second informal event, emergent themes, and a focus on two students in transition. The purpose is to present the data analysis examined from the questionnaires, first and final interviews, and two informal activities. The first part introduces the basic profiles of both First-year and Second-year students and a detailed analysis from the questionnaires of First-year and Second-year students. An in-depth conversation analysis from two informal activities is provided in the second and third sections. The fourth part is comprised of the emergent themes from the four interviews. The final section highlights two students. This study was conducted from August 2009 to November 2009. A total seven of participants participated, three First-year participants and four Second-year participants. The questionnaire was completed by participants individually at home. The interviews were conducted separately in two groups, First-year students and Second-year students. The two informal events were held with both groups together. In the reporting of this data, students were assigned pseudonyms.

The Questionnaire

Language background of participants. Three First-year students came from Taiwan; therefore, they spoke Mandarin Chinese as their native language. All of them had experiences of

learning foreign languages apart from the native language and English. All of them had been studying English for more than 10 years.

Among the four Second-year participants, one student spoke Korean as the native language; the remaining three participants spoke Mandarin Chinese as their mother tongue. All participants had been studying English for more than 10 years. Three participants had studied other foreign languages apart from their mother tongue and English.

Table 1

Profile of First-year Students

	Chao-Yang	Xiao-Zhu	Jia-Mei
Nationality	Taiwan	Taiwan	Taiwan
Mother Tongue	Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin Chinese
Length of Studying English	14 years	About 12 years	More than 15 years
Date of Arriving U.S.	August 2009	March 2008	January 2009

Table 2

Profile of Second-year Students

	Ming-Ta	Sang Kyung	Li-Ting	Mei-Jing
Nationality	Taiwan	South Korea	Taiwan	Mainland China
Mother Tongue	Mandarin Chinese	Korean	Mandarin Chinese	Mandarin Chinese
Length of Studying English	Over 15 years	15 years	12 years	12 years
Date of Arriving U.S.	May 2006	June 2008	August 2008	August 2008

Accommodation/housing. All First-year students lived in apartments offered by the university. Jia-Mei stayed in a single room without having roommates, but she lived in a dormitory before moving into her current apartment. Chao-Yang lived in a two-bedroom apartment with a friend. Xiao-Zhu lived with her family. Jia-Mei and Chao-Yang felt fine with their apartment, but Xiao-Zhu didn't like the color and the look of the building. She said, "It was very cold and the house looked like a hospital because of the color." With their living experiences in the apartment, it was rare for them to meet neighbors or to have in-depth interactions. As Xiao-Zhu said, "I never say hi to my neighbor because maybe we don't have the time to see each other. Even I think I don't know who is living next to me."

All Second-year students also lived in the university apartments. Ming-Ta lived in a one-bedroom apartment. Li-Ting and Mei-Jing lived in two-bedroom apartments with their own

roommates. Sang Kyung lived with her family. Ming-Ta moved often because his previous roommates had to leave. He felt that the apartment was comfortable but expensive. Li-Ting moved twice; the reasons included saving rent and living with her friend. Mei-Jing had to move every semester due to the movement of her previous roommates. Sang Kyung felt fine living in this apartment and never moved. Mei-Jing's roommate was from Japan, but they did not have much communication due to their busy schedules. They only spoke English for daily greetings and small talk. Li-Ting lived with her friend who spoke the same native language with her, so she did not use English to communicate in her apartment. Ming-Ta lived in a single room and he did not know his neighbors. As he said, "the only chance for me to speak English is in school."

English teaching experience. One of the First-year participants, Jia-Mei, taught English in public schools. Two of the First-year participants, Xiao-Zhu and Chao-Yang taught English in cram schools in their home countries. Cram schools are private after-school institutions that teach a variety of academic or non-academic subjects to students, including English, math, science, ballet, piano, and etc. The major goal of cram schools is to prepare students to pass examinations. English is one of the major foreign languages in East Asian Countries, so a majority of parents send their children to English cram schools.

The students that First-year participants taught were at elementary, junior, and high school levels. There was no one who had experiences in teaching college level. At the time interviews were conducted, none of the participants had English teaching or related experiences in the United States, but all of them showed high willingness to teach in the new setting.

Second-year students' English teaching experiences in their home countries included tutoring, as well as teaching in cram schools and public schools. They taught middle and high school students. One participant stated that she taught different age groups with varying levels of

English proficiency. The same as First-year students, the levels the students taught ranged from elementary school to high school. In the new setting, Ming-Ta and Sang Kyung had just started teaching ESL in the Department of Foreign Languages at the time interviews were conducted. Mei-Jing and Li-Ting had started to teach their native language, Mandarin Chinese, in the Department of Foreign Languages on campus and the Chinese language center off campus.

The Master of Arts course. Two First-year students learned about the M.A. program by surfing the web, and one from an agent. When asking their expectations for learning while enrolled in the program, two participants expected to learn as much as possible, and one specified that she expected to learn more on teaching methods. As for personal expectations for English proficiency, Jia-Mei expected to be more fluent and Chao-Yang said that he had learned more about listening than other skills so far.

Among Second-year students, Ming-Ta and Mei-Jing found the program through the Internet; Li-Ting knew the program from her friend. To examine their expectation of English acquisition, Ming-Ta and Mei-Jing shared the same opinion that they would like to learn as much as possible while remaining enrolled in the program. Li-Ting said, “I think I’ll learn more about the teaching rather than language ability.” Sang Kyung also mentioned that the program “will help me to improve the reading and writing but not so much in speaking and listening.” As for the acquisition of academic knowledge, each participant possessed a different perspective. Ming-Ta said, “I expect to gain as much academic knowledge as long as they are relevant to my future career.” Li-Ting stated, “I do not expect that I will learn a lot, but I think that would be enough for preparing me to be an English teacher.” Sang Kyung said, “The basic academic knowledge.” Mei-Jing said, “Like I said, language learning may take the whole life, as long as the program teaches me how to learn instead of what to learn.”

Language contacts (First-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants' answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 3

First-year Students: People in Your Neighborhood in Your Home Country Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	None
Jia-Mei	Fewer than 10
Chao-Yang	None

Table 4

First-year Students: People You Work with in Your Home Country Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	None
Jia-Mei	2
Chao-Yang	Around 15

Table 5

First-year Students: People You Work with in the United States Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	About 2
Jia-Mei	None
Chao-Yang	None

Table 6

First-year Students: Friends in Your Home Country Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	None
Jia-Mei	2
Chao-Yang	Around 15

Table 7

First-year Students: Friends in the United States Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	None
Jia-Mei	Fewer than 5
Chao-Yang	3

Table 8

First-year Students: Friends in Your Neighborhood in the United States Who Have the Same Mother Tongue as You

Name	Number of People
Xiao-Zhu	Around 10
Jia-Mei	More than 20
Chao-Yang	Around 10

Xiao-Zhu and Chao-Yang stated that there were no native English speakers in the neighborhood where they lived in their home countries. Jia-Mei mentioned the number was fewer than 10. In the work environment, Xiao-Zhu encountered no native English speakers in the home country. But, Jia-Mei said she knew two in her work environment and Chao-Yang knew around 15. In the English-speaking context, the answers showed that participants had more friends with the same mother language. Xiao-Zhu answered that she had no friends who speak English as a mother tongue. Jia-Mei answered that she had fewer than five English-speaking friends; Chao-Yang had three English-speaking friends. As for friends who speak the same mother tongue, Xiao-Zhu said she had around 10. Jia-Mei mentioned more than twenty, and Chao-Yang also had around 10.

Language contacts (Second-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants' answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 9

Second-year Students: People in Your Neighborhood in Your Home Country Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Ming-Ta	None
Li-Ting	None
Sang Kyung	1
Mei-Jing	None

Table 10

Second-year Students: People You Work with in Your Home Country Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Ming-Ta	None
Li-Ting	None
Sang Kyung	1
Mei-Jing	2 or 3

Table 11

Second-year Students: People You Work with in the United States Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of People
Ming-Ta	None
Li-Ting	About 20
Sang Kyung	About 10
Mei-Jing	Many

Table 12

Second-year Students: Your Friends in Your Home Country Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of Friends
Ming-Ta	None
Li-Ting	About 5
Sang Kyung	None
Mei-Jing	Fewer than 5

Table 13

Second-year Students: Your Friends in the United States Who Speak English as a Mother Tongue

Name	Number of Friends
Ming-Ta	All of my classmates that are native American
Li-Ting	About 10
Sang Kyung	About 3
Mei-Jing	Very much of them speak English as a mother tongue

Table 14

Second-year Students: Friends in Your Neighborhood in the United States Who Have the Same Mother Tongue as You

Name	Number of Friends
Ming-Ta	So far I have known two of them have the same mother tongue as I do
Li-Ting	About 30
Sang Kyung	About 10
Mei-Jing	Around 10

Extent of English usage (First-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants' answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 15

First-year Students: Number of Hours Per Week You Speak English in Your Home Country

Name	Number of Hours	Context
Xiao-Zhu	About 12 hours	Work
Jia-Mei	About 20 hours	School, work
Chao-Yang	About 4 hours	Work

Table 16

First-year Students: Number of Hours Per Week You Speak English in the United States

Name	Number of Hours	Context
Xiao-Zhu	About 20 hours	School and home
Jia-Mei	25 hours	School, daily life
Chao-Yang	1 hour	School

A question of *How often do you speak English in your home country?* was asked in the questionnaire. Xiao-Zhu mentioned “around 12 hours per week”, Jia-Mei “20 hours per week”, and Chao-Yang “4 hours a week.” The settings to speak English were at school or at work. Another question was asked “how often do you speak English in the United States.” Xiao-Zhu answered “around 20 hours per week”, Jia-Mei “25 hours per week” and Chao-Yang “one hour.” The settings included school, home, and daily life. For such a low amount, Chao-Yang explained that he just arrived in the United States and did not know many friends, whether English-speaking friends or friends from his home country. The only two places he stayed are home and school. Therefore, the number of hours he spoke English at that time was only about 1 hour.

As for their satisfaction, Xiao-Zhu used “Not good” to express her dissatisfaction of English usage in her home country. Jia-Mei answered, “I think I can teach junior high school, but I do not really satisfy.” She thinks that she has achieved the English proficiency to teach in junior high school; however, she is still not satisfied with her English usage in Taiwan. Chao-Yang used “Not bad” to show that he is satisfied with his English usage in Taiwan. In the English-speaking context, none of the three participants showed that they are satisfied with their English usage. Xia-Zhu answered, “So so.” Jia-Mei said, “I do not very satisfy because I need to improve it”. Chao-Yang said, “Not good so far.”

Extent of English usage (Second-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants’ answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 17

Second-year Students: Number of Hours per Week You Speak English in Your Home Country

Name	Number of Hours/Week	Context
Ming-Ta	About 5 hours	Work
Li-Ting	About 9 hours	In a language class
Sang Kyung	Less than 1 hour	Work
Mei-Jing	About 3 hours the most	School

Table 18

Second-year Students: Number of Hours per Week You Speak English in the United States

Name	Number of hours per week	Context
Ming-Ta	At least 6 hours	School
Li-Ting	About 30 hours	Work, School, anywhere besides home
Sang Kyung	Less than 5 hours	School
Mei-Jing:	About 25 hours	All of them

Asking Second-year students about their satisfaction with English usage in their home country, Li-Ting, and Mei-Jing showed satisfaction, but Ming-Ta answered they were not satisfied. Ming-Ta said, “Not quite satisfied with it.” Li-Ting said, “I think I spoke English enough because English was not a communicative language in Taiwan.” Mei-Jing said, “Not bad, better than most other people.” In terms of their satisfaction with speaking English in the United States, Ming-Ta is the only participant who expressed the positive response; “I feel more familiar with English usage in the United States and thus more satisfied.” The other 3 remaining participants showed negative responses. Li-Ting said, “I think I still hang out with people who speak the same language as me”; she thinks that she speaks Chinese more than English. Sang Kyung answered, “Not so satisfied.” Mei-Jing said, “Still need to improve a lot, especially compared with native speakers.”

Self-assessment of English progress (First-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants' answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 19

First-year Students: The Difficulty of Speaking English in the United States

Question	Easy	Hard	N/A
Speaking to your husband/wife	1	0	2
Speaking to your children	0	0	3
Speaking to other relatives	0	1	2
Speaking to friends	3	0	0
Speaking to neighbors	3	0	0
Speaking to employers/supervisors	1	1	1
Speaking to clients/customers	0	1	2
Speaking to other workers	0	1	2
Speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists	1	2	0
Speaking to shop attendants/clerks	3	0	0
Speaking to government officials	1	1	1
Speaking to people you don't know	2	0	1
Reading a newspaper	2	1	0
Watching TV/movies	1	1	1
Listening to the radio	1	1	1
Filling out forms and questionnaires	1	1	1
Writing letters	1	1	1

Self-assessment of English progress (Second-year students). All the responses in the following tables are retrieved from participants' answers in the initial questionnaires.

Table 20

Second-year Students: The Difficulty of Speaking English in the United States

Question	Easy	Hard	N/A
Speaking to your husband/wife	0	0	3
Speaking to your children	0	1	3
Speaking to other relatives	0	0	3
Speaking to friends	3	1	0
Speaking to neighbors	3	1	0
Speaking to employers/supervisors	0	4	0
Speaking to clients/customers	1	1	2
Speaking to other workers	3	0	1
Speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists	0	4	0
Speaking to shop attendants/clerks	4	0	0
Speaking to government officials	0	3	1
Speaking to people you don't know	1	3	0
Reading a newspaper	1	2	1
Watching TV/movies	3	1	0
Listening to the radio	3	1	0
Filling out forms and questionnaires	3	1	0
Writing letters	2	2	0

For their self-assessment of English progress, the answers revealed that all participants think speaking to friends, neighbors, or shop attendants/clerks was easy. Two participants checked that speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists was hard. Based on the results, the situations in which participants felt comfortable using English in the United States included talking with friends, daily life, at school or shopping. Chao-Yang stated, "I have an Asian face; people here seem to be nicer or more patient when I am speaking English." Talking with professors or having a discussion with unfamiliar topics made two participants feel uncomfortable using English. Conversely, Chao-Yang did not feel any discomfort.

With regards to Second-year students' self-assessment of English-speaking progress, the participants who did not answer questions or answered "N/A" indicate that they don't speak English for those purposes in their daily lives. In general, three out of four participants felt that speaking to friends and neighbors is easy. However, all four participants agreed that speaking to employers/supervisors and speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists is hard. To speak to shop attendants/clerks, all participants expressed that it is easy. Three out of four participants stated that speaking to government officials is hard. Three participants said that speaking to people you don't know is hard, but one answered that it is easy. Reading a newspaper is easy for one participant, and two felt it is hard. In regard to watching TV/movies, listening to the radio, and filling out forms and questionnaires, three out of four participants answered easy, but one answered hard for each question. As for writing letters, two participants answered easy and two answered hard.

The English learning process (First-year students). As for First-year students' self-learning process, all of them recognized that watching TV, movies, and making native English-speaking friends were the most helpful ways to learn English. When asked, *When you become a*

better English speaker, what will you be able to do in the future that you are not able to do now. Xiao-Zhu answered, “I will work as a secretary in the USA.” Jia-Mei answered, “I will teach students in the university.” Last, Chao-Yang said, “To express myself or describe things with explicit dictions.” To answer *When you become a better English speaker, what will you be able to do as an NNEST?* Xiao-Zhu said, “I would share my good ways of becoming a better English speakers to them.” Jia-Mei said, “I will teach foreigner how to speak my mother language.” Chao-Yang said, “To express myself or describe things with explicit dictions.”

The English learning process (Second-year students). All of the Second-year students, responded that watching TV helped them the most to learn English. An in-depth question of watching TV to help English learning was asked at the first interview. Li-Ting answered,

Watching TV basically I think it helps your pronunciation the most, listening and pronunciation, because I usually murmur (I mean imitate). I say what the people say in the television show. So, I think that's the way to improve your American accent or intonation.

Mei-Jing agreed with her statement. Ming-Ta expressed in a different perspective that he got to understand American culture by watching TV, for example how Americans told jokes. Therefore, Ming-Ta tried to learn about American humor and culture by watching American TV. Other than TV shows, the Internet and friends were mentioned by Mei-Jing. She also thought that using the Internet and making friends helped her to learn English.

For the questions of *When you become a better English speaker, what will you be able to do in the future that you are not able to do now?*, Ming-Ta said that he would be able to “speak as fluently as native speakers of English.” Li-Ting said, “I think the way I speak English would be more fluent and smooth.” Sang Kyung expressed in academic perspectives; she would be able

to “help students to improve their speaking abilities.” Mei-Jing said that she would be able to “translate a novel or something.”

Asking *When you become a better English speaker, what will you be able to do as an NNEST?*, Ming-Ta said, “I expect to be able to understand conversations with students with different accents.” Li-Ting said, “I might have more chances than other NNEST in job hunting.” Sang Kyung said, “I will be able to help students authentic English, not just based on the textbooks.” Mei-Jing said, “I can be a ‘culture translator’ one day.”

The following two questions were asked of Second-year students only. The questions concerned their ability to be English speakers a year ago and now, as ESL/EFL teachers, if their English has gotten better. For the first question, Ming-Ta said that “I am able to spend half of the time on reading than I had to a year ago.” Li-Ting said that “I can express my opinions than what I did before.” Sang Kyung said that “I will have little difficulty in watching movies in English.” Mei-Jing had a different opinion; “Many things, for example, I can go travel by myself in the States. I can do a part time job which I couldn’t do last year.” For the second questions, Ming-Ta said that “I am able to stand in front of the class and talk to them in my target language.” Ling-Ting said that “I can teach English more native-like. In other words, the language I learned in the textbooks before I came here was a dead language, but the English I have learned here is the language that people are using every day.” Sang Kyung said that “I will be able to teach the class that I’m in charge now more competently.” Mei-Jing said that “At least, I can bring my personal experiences to my ESL students back in China or here about how to improve English.”

Language and culture (First-year students). In the question asking what kind of additional opportunity they would like to speak English, Xiao-Zhu’s answer reflected that she would like to speak English to whoever can speak English. Jia-Mei said that she would like to

speak English by making friends and travelling. As for Chao-Yang, he would like to get a job “that is needed to deal with native English speakers.” A subsequent question asked what kind of opportunities they would like to help develop their English writing. Jia-Mei answered “no.” Xiao-Zhu answered, “I need to look for a job related to English”, and Chao-Yang said, “I guess my TESL program will do all the writing training already.” To ask whether they would like more English-speaking friends, all participants responded yes. To examine whether Americans helped them to speak English, Jia-Mei and Xiao-Zhu responded positively, but Chao-Yang had a negative answer. All of them responded yes to the question about whether they have to speak English to do well in the United States. Two of the participants, Xiao-Zhu and Jia-Mei, used strong expression in stating, “Of course” to agree that they would get more chances to find a better English teaching job in their home countries if their English were better. Chao-Yang had a positive answer to this question. However, when the same question was applied to the context of the United States, different answers came out. Xiao-Zhu answered “yes”, Jia-Mei, “maybe”, and Chao-Yang, “no.”

In terms of NNESTs’ cultural identity, all of the First-year participants stated that they will not lose contact with their culture if they learn more English. As for the best way to learn English, their answers were very similar. Xiao-Zhu said, “Trying to speak English in your daily life.” Jia-Mei said, “Have good environment and study abroad.” Chao-Yang stated, “Exposed in an English speaking environment.” To First-year students’ satisfaction with coming to the United States, Xiao-Zhu and Jia-Mei agreed that they were happy they had come to the United States. However, Chao-Yang offered a different answer, “not for now.”

In addition to the general questions regarding cultural identity discussed above, questions were also provided to understand the positive and negative experiences NNESTs faced in their

home countries. Xiao-Zhu said it was easier for her to get a job because of her English major. The positive experience Jia-Mei perceived was being the translator when students did not understand foreign teachers. The positive experience Chao-Yang had was to have chances to practice English with his native English-speaking colleagues. In terms of negative experiences, Xiao-Zhu had to react to the unfair job market because many job advertisements require native speakers. Jia-Mei pointed out the situation that “some students like to learn English with foreign teachers.” Additionally, Chao-Yang added the statement that NNESTs received lower pay than NESTs.

Asking participants to trace back their positive life experiences in the United States, Xiao-Zhu answered that there were no positive experiences. Jia-Mei stated that some people behaved in a friendly manner to her; Chao-Yang said “People here won’t criticize much about my incorrect sentence structures or grammar and as long as they understand what I want to indicate, they are fine with that.” To negative experiences, Xia-Zhu said, “Sometimes I would lose some information because it was written in English, and I could not catch the meaning.” Jia-Mei felt that some people behaved impolitely to her. As for Chao-Yang, “Sometimes people in the United States speak quickly and with some accents and I don’t get used to it. Therefore, I am confused.”

One question that was included asked their opinions on whether people will behave differently toward them when they become better speakers of English. Xiao-Zhu said, “They will be proud of me.” Since English is not her mother language, people would be surprised if she becomes a better English speaker. Jia-Mei spoke from a different perspective; she thought that in the current U.S. environment, “people like to speak to better speakers, and it is easy to communicate with foreigners.” Chao-Yang also agreed that people will behave differently

because “they think I can really communicate with them, not just talking about very superficial participants.”

With regard to *How does the American way of life make it easy for you to learn English?*, Xia-Zhu wrote, “Everything around me is all showed in English, and it is a situational teaching and it is very natural for me to learn things automatically and quickly because I have to use it every day.” Jia-Mei’s answer echoed Xiao-Zhu’s statement by saying “I need to use English everyday and I have to improve myself.” Chao-Yang said, “Since this is a country where most of people speak English; inevitably when I step out of my apartment, I must speak English to cope with everything.”

In response to *How does the American way of life make it hard for you to learn English?* Xiao-Zhu answered, “It is a challenge to speak English to a native English speaker, especially when they show impatient to answer my questions or doubts.” Jia-Mei said, “Sometimes, I feel stressful if people can’t understand me if I need their help.” Chao-Yang stated, “Because I am Taiwanese, it is hard to make friends with American friends. I don’t know whether it is related to the American way of life or not.”

Language and culture (Second-year students). In answer to, *What kind of additional opportunities would you like to speak English?* Ming-Ta said that “I hope to join parties in American families and talk to them without being stuck.” Li-Ting said that “I want to have more chance to practice English in a working environment.” Sang Kyung did not answer the question, and Mei-Jing answered “none.”

When asked, *What kind of additional opportunity would you like to write English?* Ming-Ta said that “I would like to write something like jokes that is understandable by native English speakers.” Li-Ting said “no.” Sang Kyung did not answer this question. Mei-Jing said that she

wants additional opportunities when she is required to write a paper. A following question asked whether they want more English speaking friends, all of them answered 'yes.' Furthermore, Li-Ting said "especially people who are NES." NES here stands for native English speakers. Therefore, she would like to have more friends whose native language is English.

Regarding whether Americans help non-native English speakers when they try to speak English, most Second-year participants answered yes, Li-Ting expressed, "Usually they don't correct me as what teachers do in classes, but they would just say my wrong sentences in the correct way." Sang Kyung's statement, "but not everyone", confirmed Li-Ting's statement. Whether NNESTs have to speak English to do well in the United States, most participants had positive answers. Especially, Mei-Jing said "I think it is necessary." To understand whether they could get more chances to find a better English teaching job in their home country if their English was better, all participants answered yes. Additionally, Li-Ting and Mei-Jing used positive adverbs to confirm their answers, like "definitely" and "absolutely." In answer to whether one would get more chances to find a better English job in the United States if one's English was better, the responses varied. Ming-Ta and Sang Kyung answered yes. However, Ling-Ting said, "No, because I am not a NEST." Mei-Jing said, "Yes. If I can speak like a native speaker, that's much better."

Reacting to whether they will lose contact with their own culture after acquiring more English, the answers of Second-year students were the same as those of the First-year students. None of the First-year students stated that they would lose their own culture if they learn more English. Similar responses were revealed among Second-year students. Ming-Ta said, "I don't think so." Li-Ting said, "No, I don't think so." Sang Kyung said, "No." Mei-Jing said, "No

way.” Unlike First-year students’ strong answers, Ming-Ta and Li-Ting chose “I don’t think so” to express their ideas.

In the following question, *What do you think is the best way to learn English?* Ming-Ta said, “Living in the target culture.” Li-Ting said, “Watching TV and talk in English to people around you.” Sang Kyung said, “To be exposed in real situations.” Mei-Jing said, “Listen first, speak later.” In response to their happiness in coming to the United States, all of them offered positive answers. However, Sang Kyung stated that she was not always happy.

Another question asked, *What positive experiences have you had at work in your home country because you are a nonnative English speaker?* Ming-Ta answered that in his memory, “there was almost none of the positive experience happened at work in my home country.” Li-Ting also had the similar response that she did not have positive work experiences in her home country. Sang Kyung had a different opinion. She said, “It was easy when giving students the lesson in terms of grammar.” Mei-Jing answered, “I can know more about my Chinese students, their situations, their study experiences.”

As for their negative experiences as NNESTs in their home country, Li-Ting, Sang Kyung and Mei-Jing offered their perspectives based on teaching experience while Ming-Ta pulled out his experience as an international sales person. Other than English tutoring experience, Ming-Ta also worked as an international salesman in a company before coming to the United States. Ming-Ta said, “I usually was not able to convey clearly with my customers on the phone when I was working as an international sales representative in my home country.” Li-Ting said, “Because I am a NNEST, I got lower paid than those NES teachers.” Sang Kyung said, “I found it hard that the native speaker and I taught the lesson together from time to time because

of the lack of my speaking and listening abilities.” Mei-Jing said, “People usually don’t hire nonnative English speaker to teach speaking classes, which I think is not fair.”

When asked, *What positive experiences have you had in your community in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker?* Ming-Ta said, “I sometimes got some helps by American people when I had hard time communicate with native speakers.” Li-Ting said, “The professor had more patient for me even though I did not really express myself well”. Interestingly, Sang Kyung answered “Nothing.” Mei-Jing said that “They always ask me about my culture, the comparison of the two different cultures.” As for the negative experience, Ming-Ta said, “I had to spend more time making myself clear when I talked with native speakers of English. Also, a lot of time, I didn’t know how to react to native speakers even though I understand what they said, which made embarrassed.” Li-Ting said, “When the professor asked the whole class to have group discussion, some of the NES classmates would just ignore me.” Sang Kyung said, “When giving lesson in ESL class, I am sometime stuck in explaining the specific grammar in English.” Mei-Jing said, “Of course language skills and culture shocks.”

A subsequent question asked, *How do you think people will behave differently toward you when you become a better speaker of English?* Ming-Ta said, “I guess they would be friendlier to me and we could save more time on our conversations if I were to speak English more fluently.” Li-Ting said, “The interaction between me and my classmates would become more. I can also understand the joke that the classmates and the professors say.” Sang Kyung said, “I think they will show more respect to me.” Mei-Jing said, “I think there is no difference as long as we can communicate well.”

In answer to, *How does the American way of life make it easy for you to learn English?* Ming-Ta said, “I think the American way of life make it easy for me to learn English because I

am able to learn how native speakers talk, not just what I have learned in textbooks.” Li-Ting answered “No.” Sang Kyung said, “I don’t find big difference.” Mei-Jing said, “The easy and relaxed environment of learning English.” Regarding of the question, *How does the American way of life make it hard for you to learn English?* Ming-Ta said, “I realized that the most difficult part of learning English was to know the culture, which was not easy to achieve even though I live in the American way of life.” Li-Ting said, “The slang is one of the most difficult parts for me to fit into this society.” Sang Kyung said, “I don’t find big difference.” Mei-Jing said, “Some of the dialects and slangs or accents from different people confuse me a lot.”

The following questions were asked to Second-year students only. The first question asked, *What positive experiences have you had working on campus in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker?* Li-Ting said, “When I work with a NES and someone has a problem to ask, they usually ask the NES first instead of asking me. Sometimes that makes my work load lighter.” Sang Kyung said “Nothing.” Mei-Jing said, “I have the chance to experience different cultures and compare to my own one.” Ming-Ta did not answer this question. A following question asked was, *What negative experiences have you had working on campus in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker?* Ming-Ta didn’t answer this question. Li-Ting said, “Due to the cultural differences, I might make my supervisor unhappy by accidents and without noticing that.” Sang Kyung said “Nothing.” Mei-Jing said, “Sometimes I cannot quite understand people due to the language skills are not good enough.”

The final question set asked first, *How is the American way of life similar to the way of life in your home country?* Ming-Ta said, “I feel that the American way of life is similar to the way of life in my home country in that I present the same respect to my teachers and professors. Also, the way that American people treat each other tends to be as friendly as people in my home

country.” Li-Ting said, “Most the daily life is the same.” Sang Kyung said, “I find it similar that parents of both countries care about their children’s academic success in a school.” Mei-Jing said, “The life styles are both good. In terms of school, I think the graduate school in my country is much more alike here in the United States.”

In answer to the contrasting question, *How is the American way of life different from the way of life in your home country?* Ming-Ta said, “Generally, the American way of life is different from the way of life in my home country in that American people are more enthusiastic than people in my home country. Also, another thing that is quite different is that professors and teachers in American give more freedom to students and encourage students’ independent thinking.” Li-Ting said, “The education in the US and in Taiwan is very different. The students in the US have more freedom than the students in Taiwan. Moreover, the teachers teach their students to think critically.” Sang Kyung said, “In my country, people usually prefer getting the works done as fast as possible; but, in U.S., it takes much more time to get the works done.” Mei-Jing said, “We have two majorly different cultures, so as the language. We can do things more independently here in the United States. Besides that, the population back in my country is much larger than here.”

First Informal Event

The first informal event took place on October 4, 2009, and First-year students, Xiao-Zhu, Chao-Yang, and Jia-Mei, and Second-year students, Sang Kyung, Li-Ting, and Ming-Ta, attended. This event was to provide a comfortable and relaxed setting for the researcher to communicate with participants closely. With the gathering of two groups, participants had a chance to hear the opinions from another group. Thirteen questions were asked during the event; however, only the conversation related to NNESTs’ perceptions is provided here.

In response to their feelings about being in the TESOL program, most participants stated that the schoolwork was too heavy, so they did not have much time to participate actively in the community. Regarding of their feelings about living in this context, most participants mentioned that their lives were limited to studying and meeting with friends, especially with friends from the home country. When discussing about participants' participation in local activities, the entire conversation revealed that most participants were not well-informed about local events, activities, or festivals. An interesting question about possessing English names and personal identity was asked in the conversation. Opinions varied from individual to individual and country to country. The reasons for those NNESTs to possess English names were reduced into three. One was for Americans' convenience; it was easier for native speakers to pronounce. Next, they had English names since they were very young. Or, English teachers gave them English names when learning English in the home country.

Xiao-Zhu said that she still prefers being called by her Chinese name because that is her name and her identity. Jia-Mei said she thought that a name is just a name for someone to call you. Li-Ting had a different opinion; she does not feel that her English name affects her Taiwanese identity. She still has her notion of being a Taiwanese. Chao-Yang said that he is neutral. It does not matter whether someone calls him his Chinese or English name. Ming-Ta did not show any opinions but just agreed with everyone. Sang Kyung thought that it depends. In her own case, her first son's Korean name is easy to pronounce, so she kept his Korean name. Then, she gave her second son an English name because his name is hard to pronounce. Also, she mentioned that in private academies in South Korea, those native English-speaking teachers gave the children English names.

Second Informal Event

The second informal event took place on November 1, 2009. First-year students, Xiao-Zhu and Chao-Yang, and Second-year students, Sang Kyung, Li-Ting, and Ming-Ta, attended the event. At the time of conducting the second informal event, midterm exams and Halloween were two important events that had occurred between the first and the second informal events. Therefore, the researcher started the conversation about midterm exams and Halloween. The conversation showed that most of participants joined Halloween parties or activities; two of them did not.

Then, the conversation jumped into the way the participants thought English culture and language influenced the society in China, Taiwan, and South Korea. Li-Ting brought up the topic of Christmas in Taiwan. In Taiwan, Christmas is not a national holiday, but many young people celebrate it. However, Sang Kyung mentioned that most Korean people celebrate Christmas in South Korea. Korean people consider Christmas one of the important holidays. Korean people celebrate Christmas with particular and specific religious purposes.

Later on, the topic was changed to World Englishes. While mentioning diverse varieties of Englishes, some of the participants noted that they had taken the class of World Englishes, and some had not. Those who had not taken the course were encouraged to talk first. Sang Kyung was one of them who did not take World Englishes, but she was aware of the differences of diverse Englishes. She mentioned her experience of visiting Australia for one month. She spent two weeks adjusting herself to Australian English and considered that Australian people have produced some of their own English. Some language terms are used and comprehensible only by people in this country; in addition, some differences in pronunciation could be distinguished by the way they speak. Then, the conversation went into the issue of Standard English. Sang Kyung

mentioned that in Korean public and private school settings, what matters is the appearance of English speakers. She said that there are three different levels of hiring standards depending on the appearance and regions. American and White appearance is the first priority. Additionally, salaries vary depending on this standard. The situation is similar in Taiwan, but salaries and hiring practices are not based on such a strict standard. For example, Taiwanese employers still would hire a teacher who is an American born Taiwanese, but in South Korea, they do not hire a teacher who is an American born Korean. Another similarity is that Sang Kyung and Taiwanese participants mentioned that in a private academy, parents pay more attention to the way the teacher is teaching, especially his or her accent. They both have the same opinions in this aspect. Parents prefer Standard English, which usually refers to American English in that setting.

To ask NNESTs' ideas about minimizing Asian parents' bias, Chao-Yang is the one who had tried to persuade parents that there are different varieties of Englishes in the world; the children need to learn different varieties. The rest of the participants did not mention that they did something to minimize the bias.

Emergent Themes from All Interviews

NNESTs and self-perceived English proficiency. The criteria that participants used to determine NNESTs' English self-proficiency differed by the year they were in the program. First-year students tended to use the age group they were able to teach in their home country to determine the level of their English proficiency while Second-year students tended to determine proficiency by their fluency, grammatical accuracy, speaking/pronunciation, and comparison with other NNESTs around them. To illustrate Second-year students' reactions, Mei-Jing said, "I think my own criteria is want to be fluency, first of all, and accuracy. And most importantly is that I can let my students understand. That's what I can think of so far." She added later that

these criteria refer to her English proficiency to teach a class, not for social activities. Li-Ting compared herself with other nonnative speaker. Here is her statement: “Yeah. Um...Basically, I just compare myself with other teachers. Yeah. I compare my speaking ability and my...Um...do I know the grammar or not. Basically, I just evaluate myself, and compare myself to other teachers.” Sang Kyung also stated, “My criteria, which is considered important is speaking and pronunciation when teaching grammar or other things.” Ming-Ta had a short answer, “A lot of time, my criteriaaccuracy.”

It seems that both groups tend to define their English proficiency by their English ability; however, there is a big difference in the language terminology they used. This difference could be traced back to their changing roles from a teacher to a student. To illustrate First-year students' examples, Xiao-Zhu stated,

I taught junior high school students. But, in my class, I just speak Chinese and I focus on grammar. So, that is not necessary to speak English all the class. So, I think in my country, I said I have the ability to teach junior high school students just focus on teaching plenty of grammar I can teach them. And, I can let students-answer the questions quickly. Just-train them to have the skills to choose the multiple choices, not focus on speaking.

Jia-Mei also stated, “Because I have the teacher license is about the junior high school.”

Therefore, when First-year students determined their proficiency, they decided it was based on a teacher's perspectives. Student group is the preferred terminology they used. In contrast, Second-year students had played the role of students and studied academic terminologies from textbooks; perhaps this is why they tended to use professional terms for descriptions.

NNESTs' language usage in home country and U.S. Another common theme that emerged was the language usage in both the home country and the United States. According to the First-year students, the hours of speaking English in their home country were fewer than or around 20 hours per week, and fewer than or around 25 hours per week in the United States. The contexts in which they were speaking English in their home country were basically at work. The contexts in the United States varied from home to school and daily life. Most Second-year students had fewer than 10 hours of speaking English in their home country; the hours in the United States ranged from 5 hours to 30 hours depending on the individual. For Second-year students, the contexts in which they speak English in their home country included work, school, and language classes. In the United States, the contexts included school and anywhere besides their home. Basically, contexts for First-year students and Second-year students to speak English in their home countries and the United States were limited to work and school. The benefit of living in the United States is to expand their speaking to daily life. However, the extent of how they use English in daily life does vary depending on the desires of each individual NNEST.

In addition to their desires, the way that each individual sets up his or her life in the United States is also essential. For example, Ming-Ta decided to live in a single room in the school apartment so that he had less chance to communicate with people. Ming-Ta described, "I live in a single room. I don't know my neighbors, so the only chance for me to speak English is in school." In Table 13, Ming-Ta offered an interesting answer to the number of his native English-speaking friends in the United States. He counted all his native English-speaking classmates in this category; however, he did not mention any friends outside classrooms. Table 14 showed that Ming-Ta only stated only two friends who spoke the same mother tongue as he

did. It appears that personality and the way that Ming-Ta arranged his life were two contributing factors.

Sang Kyung and Xiao-Zhu are two good examples to illustrate as well. Both of them lived with families and used their mother tongue at home most of the time so that they had less chance to communicate in English. Furthermore, Table 7 showed that Xiao-Zhu did not have any native English-speaking friends in the United States. With limited chances to speaking English, Xiao-Zhu created an English-speaking environment with her husband at home. She stated,

Right now, I just talked with my husband in English because we think when we are outside the class, we didn't have any foreign friends. So we just think we have to speak English to practice that. Yeah! So now I just talk with my friends. Some friends I will talk in English even they are from Taiwan. And for my husband, sometimes we will speak English. Yeah! But, now every day, we will speak English. But, that will be very fun because sometimes we will fight with each other because we couldn't catch what he is trying to say. Yeah! Yeah!

Unlike the above three participants, Mei-Jing lived with a Japanese girl. Even though they did not have much communication due to busy schedules, they still did daily greetings and talked when they could. Table 13 demonstrated that Mei-Jing also had more native English-speaking friends even though she did not offer an exact number. Hence, the above analysis displayed each individual's desires and arrangement of his or her life vital components impacting his or her language usages in the United States.

NNESTs and English learning process. During the English learning process, both First-year and Second-year students agreed that watching TV/movies, talking to native English speakers, and making friends were the most effective ways to learn English. However, the study

results also revealed that the participants were not satisfied with their English usage in the United States. For example, Li-Ting said,

I think I am not satisfied the usage of English here is because I have more Chinese native speaking friends than English native speaking friends. And I want to hang out with my friends. I must give up...huh...I will go to where I have more friends. So I hang out with friends who speak the same language as I do. Yeah. That makes me don't use English as much as I expected before I came here.

Li-Ting's statement revealed that she had more attachments with friends from her home country; therefore, she had to give up contact with those friends if she wanted to make more American friends. Sang Kyung also stated that her family responsibilities limited her chances to interact with more native speakers. As she said,

Before I came here, I thought once I went to the United States, my English abilities, especially speaking and listening, will be much improving. I expected that but the reality is not like that. Actually, we spend too much time reading, writing, taking lectures. For me, I have sons to take care of. So after going back home, I am usually busy as I was in Korea. Actually, I don't have that much time to interact with native speakers to improve my speaking ability. I usually watch TV, CNN news or dramas. I am sure my listening ability improves as I expected, but I am not sure about the speaking. In that sense, I am satisfied with the issue you are talking about.

Mei-Jing expressed her ideas in an interesting way. She said,

Um...due to some personal reasons, like everybody mentioned we all have been done improvement and for me, I think um...in different time periods, we have different goals,

different purposes, and my next purpose is to how to speak good English, and to speak it elegantly. I am trying to get that goal. Yeah.

The above statements revealed that NNESTs' desire to gain English-speaking friends was still high, and they were very eager to learn English in a native-speaking way. Indeed, there were some free services for ESL learning on and off campus, like Conversational English; though there was a communication or cultural gap between non-native English speakers and those native English speakers to a certain extent. As Sang Kyung and Li-Ting mentioned, being immersed in authentic situations, like working part-time on campus, was more important to NNESTs' English learning in the English-speaking setting.

NNESTs and life attitude. The attitude about living in the United States varied from person to person. Two First-year students kept an open-minded attitude and welcomed their new life in the United States while one just expected others to welcome her. She confessed that this was her personality; she considered herself shy and not so out-going. She did not find it easy to talk to people with whom she was not familiar. Two Second-year students engaged themselves in the local culture and context better than the other two students. They did not perceive any huge challenges in their U.S. life. However, Ming-Ta confessed that he did not have a strong social relationship with local people. Since he lived in a single room, he did not have further contacts with people after returning to his apartment. Ming-Ta's personality is another important factor contributing to this situation; and he is aware of it. Sang Kyung, the only mother in the group, found that there was a gap in her communication with other native speakers because of cultural differences and lack of shared cultural background with target speakers.

NNESTs' positive and negative work experience in home country. In the questionnaire of First-year students, negative working experiences in the home country included

NNESTs' lower pay, unfair employment requirements, and language learners' strong willingness to learn from NESTs. In the two groups, lower pay and unfair employment were the two common emergent themes. Some Second-year students also related negative experiences, like unclear communication skills as well as weak speaking and listening abilities. Second-year students related no positive working experiences in their home countries. In contrast, positive experiences provided by most First-year students included "English major is easy to get a job, be a translator or an interpreter between students and NESTs, and be able to practice with native English colleagues."

NNESTs' positive and negative living experience in U.S. Regarding negative living experiences in the United States, First-year students mentioned the themes of lack of comprehensive skills in written English and English-diverse accents. Second-year students mentioned themes like unclear communication skills, ignorance of in-class group discussion, language skills, cultural shock, and difficulty in expressing self-perspectives. The themes emerging from First-year students' positive living experiences in the United States included friendly people and no criticism on personal English, and Second-year students mentioned that they received assistance from native speakers in communication and felt that professors are more patient. People and experiences they have met in the United States impacted Second-year students' perceptions toward the English language and culture.

NNESTs' changing perceptions of personal roles. Both First-year and Second-year students felt that their main role in the TESOL program was that of student. One of the First-year students had just jumped from the teacher's role to the student's role, so he was in the adjustment process. Since he taught English in his home country for seven years, he was adjusting himself from a teacher to a student. During the adjustment process, he used two different perspectives to

view his life and situation. Second-year students taught ESL or their native languages in the Department of Language. They all stated that they were students but tried to learn to be teachers.

NNESTs, identity and language ideology. Each NNEST comes to this English-speaking context with their imagined language community. The ideology of coming to the English-speaking context is equal to acquiring better English proficiency. Whether or not they are able to achieve their imagined language ideology becomes an interesting question in this study. Study data revealed that there is a gap between the reality and participants' imagined language community. Sang Kyung shared,

Before I came here, I thought once I went to the United States, my English abilities, especially speaking and listening, will be much improving. I expected that but the reality is not like that. Actually, we spend too much time reading, writing, taking lectures. For me, I have sons to take care of. So after going back home, I am usually busy as I was in Korea. Actually, I don't have that much time to interact with native speakers to improve my speaking ability. I usually watch TV, CNN news or dramas. I am sure my listening ability improves as I expected, but I am not sure about the speaking. In that sense, I am satisfied with the issue you are talking about.

Another Second-year student, Li-Ting, stated,

I think I am not satisfied the usage of English here is because I have more Chinese native speaking friends than English native speaking friends. And I want to hang out with my friends. I must give up...huh...I will go to where I have more friends. So I hang out with friends who speak the same language as I do. Yeah. That makes me don't use English as much as I expected before I came here.

For Li-Ting, she still likes to hang out with friends who speak the same mother language. Her selection of making friendship investments leads her to invest less in making English-speaking friends. Ming-Jing expressed her imagined language skills in an interesting way,

Um...due to some personal reasons, like everybody mentioned we all have been done improvement and for me, I think um...in different time periods, we have different goals, different purposes, and my next purpose is to how to speak good English, and to speak it elegantly. I am trying to get that goal. Yeah.

NNESTs, identity and inferiority complex. According to the study analysis, the perception of inferiority complex comes from the level of English competency and self-confidence. NNESTs only feel confident in the NNEST group. They perceive that they never compete with NESTs regarding their teaching career or English proficiency. To illustrate this, Sang Kyung said,

Yeah. I think it's the matter of competency. In the United States, even though we are foreign speakers, but still we are nonnative speakers. I think I cannot be better than native speakers as a teacher in the United States because as a teacher in the United States, I think I am not competent here. But, back in my country, if I go back to my country, I think I still feel a little be more competent teacher than two years ago.

Li-Ting stated,

I think that's the problem of your confidence because I am not confident enough that I can compete with those native English speaking teachers. But, I do have confidence that I am better than those people who are from the same country. I do. Yes.

Ming-Ta added,

I think just like Li-Ting said, we are not as competitive as native speakers in terms of our career job. You know. As the employer, they will rather hire native speakers of English because I mean they speak Standard English and he knows the culture and he knows how to deal with people which most of us are not able to handle. So, I thought...that's the thing we maybe not competitive to them.

Mei-Jing also shared her ideas,

Yes! But, I think your language skill is the basic thing. At least it's the basic thing for employers they are taking into and then after that part, they will like ask you question about your teaching methods, teaching experiences or those qualifications. How could we pass the first step?

The above statements revealed participants' perceptions of inferiority by being NNESTs. Even though some of them are fluent English speakers, they are still not confident while being compared with NESTs. This inferiority complex seems to be embedded deeply in all participants' perceptions.

NNESTs and teaching styles. Both First-year and Second-year students realized that the teaching methods and styles were different in EFL and ESL settings. In the English-speaking setting, a teacher tended to apply more classroom activities. However, in East Asian settings, a teacher-centered teaching style is still the mainstream, and focusing on grammar is important in English teaching. Sang Kyung explained by citing her teaching experience in junior high schools. She still remembered the way that her teachers explained specific grammar points and methods. She felt that she was influenced by her teachers and followed their teaching style. When NNESTs studied in the TESOL program, they experienced new teaching skills and styles.

NNESTs felt that when they return to their home countries, most of them said that they may change their teaching styles, but some said that they won't change.

Sang Kyung stated,

And for me, I think my teaching style didn't change much with my experience in the United States. One thing I can say it was a little bit different was I try to do a lot of group activities here, not just giving lectures to them. And, I usually follow the instruction of my textbook. It was really useful, and I try to find out more fun activities on the Internet, and it was useful, too.

Li-Ting also expressed her thoughts.

I think I will work on class activities because in my notion, the goal of learning a language is to communicate with people. Based on my notion, I think I will want my students to have more chances to practice their speaking and listening because they use the language not for just passing exams. I want them to use the language more to communicate. So, I think I will work on that part.

NNESTs and parent/student expectations. In the context of NNESTs' home countries, a very common issue noted was parent and student expectation. A majority of parents want their children to be taught by native speakers, and so do students. Participants confessed that this is the reality that they have to face after going back to their home countries. One First-year student had tried to dispel the myth of the native speaker. He tried to educate parents and students by providing examples of different English varieties and accents. The rest of the participants all agreed that they will integrate World Englishes into their teaching by educating students with diverse English varieties and their own learning and living experiences in the United States.

NNESTs and professional development. Another finding was that First-year students had less awareness of professional development than Second-year students. Even though First-year NNESTs had just changed their roles from a teacher to a student, it seemed that the awareness of professional development and organizations was low. In their home countries, they attended teacher seminars offered by the institutions for which they worked for. Otherwise, they had no ideas of further professional development. Similarly, most of the Second-year participants confessed that they were not aware of the importance of professional development and the existence of TESOL organizations in their home countries. After entering the program, they got to know local and national TESOL organizations in the United States, and some of them attended local organizations in their First-year of the program. Mei-Jing said, “it’s just the beginning, and we are going to that direction.” However, another interesting finding concerned the question of whether or not to continue professional development. The answer to that question depended on the context in which they were planning to teach in the future. Ling-Ting said, “I think it might depend on where you are going to teach.” In the interview conversation with First-year students, Chao-Yang said, “I have no idea about what you said TESOL Organization in my home country.” Xiao-Zhu and Jia-Mei agreed with Chao-Yang by nodding their heads. This revealed that First-year students had less awareness of professional development than Second-year students.

NNESTs, contexts and continuing professional development. Context variables lead to different participants’ perceptions of professional development. To illustrate this, Li-Ting’s example showed,

I think it might depend on where you are going to teach. For example, if I am going to teach English here, maybe I will keep involving in that kind of professional associations.

But, if I go back to my home country and become a teacher like in high school or even in cram school, then I don't think I will go to the conferences like I am doing right now.

To understand the factors contributing to the differences, Li-Ting said,

Because I think that's way too professional that they do more like theoretical things rather than practical things. So, if I teach there, I don't think the stuff I learned from conference don't really help a lot in my teaching, especially only to high school or even elementary school students. I have to emphasize the reality in Taiwan again. The initial goal of the students learning English usually is to pass high school and university entrance exam. Therefore, the parents and the schools want the teachers to help their children pass the exams more than helping them learn the language.

After Li-Ting's statement, Sang Kyung agreed with her that what they learn from conferences do not meet the needs in teaching English in their home countries.

Two NNESTs in Transition

Among all participants, Sang Kyung and Li-Ting had two interesting stories, so they were selected purposely to present how an individual changes his or her self-perceptions across time. Being the only mother and elder classmate in the Second-year Group, Sang Kyung was selected to present her experience of being mother, ESL instructor, and Master's level TESOL student in the United States. She shared productive experiences that other students did not have; for example, she had difficulty in balancing family and student responsibilities. Li-Ting was selected because of her resistance to be an English teacher after studying in the TESOL program. Instead of teaching English, she decided to teach her mother language, Mandarin Chinese, in the United States. Even though the reason why she changed dramatically from an English teacher to a Chinese teacher was not clear, her goal and thoughts of being an excellent language teacher

were clearly presented in her statements. The two individual stories helped to understand how different confounding factors impacted an individual's ways of doing and thinking.

Transition from ideal to reality. Sang Kyung is the Second-year student who came to the United State with her two sons. One goes to junior high school and one goes to elementary school. During her life in the TESOL program, she has to cope with various roles, including being a mother, a TESOL Master's student, a language learner, an ESL instructor, and a social agent. Before landing in the United States, she possessed expectations of her life in the English-speaking setting. However, after living in this context for a year and half, she realizes that there is a gap between reality and her imagined community. Sang Kyung's statement below revealed that she expects to improve a lot in her English abilities; however, the reality does not meet her expectation. She stated,

Before I came here, I thought once I went to the United States, my English abilities, especially speaking and listening, will be much improving. I expected that but the reality is not like that. Actually, we spend too much time reading, writing, taking lectures. For me, I have sons to take care of. So after going back home, I am usually busy as I was in Korea. Actually, I don't have that much time to interact with native speakers to improve my speaking ability. I usually watch TV, CNN news or dramas. I am sure my listening ability improves as I expected, but I am not sure about the speaking. In that sense, I am satisfied with the issue you are talking about.

Due to various responsibilities of taking care of two sons and studying for Master's courses, she didn't have time to make friends with local native English-speaking people.

Even though she mentioned that she has a busy schedule for school and family, she still tried to get herself involved in the local community. However, she said:

Yeah, I think it's the same thing. I have little opportunities to communicate with native speakers. And, I have tried to join some activities in the community center. But, I failed. I couldn't communicate with other nonnative English speakers. Just join them, and enjoy, and coming back.

In the final interview, the researcher asked about whether she still felt like an outsider in the English-speaking community, and she said,

Actually, I tried to get involved in the native speakers' society. I go to church and I go to some meetings. But, at the beginning, when we talked about the common subjects, I feel I belong to this group. But, as time goes by, when we talk different things related to American culture or their unique cultures. I feel I am like an outsider and I feel it's really hard to overcome this feeling because I am not a native speaker. Even though I think I know something about their culture and their personalities. But, sometimes, I feel don't know where about the people here, their culture so I still feel I am an outsider.

In addition, she also took time to attend free resources near campus, like the free conversational English class. The English conversational class is a free resource offered by the Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) organization on campus; there is a person who is in charge of this class. The person in charge of the class prepared a topic and some idioms for each class and invited volunteer native English speakers to attend. During the class, the person in charge of the class usually divided international students into groups and assigned one native English speakers to each group. Then, the group would have a discussion for the assigned topic. Sang Kyung tried to attend this class when she had time. However, the reality also differs from what she expects in this class. Sang Kyung stated:

I agree with her (Li-Ting). I think the advantage of real situation is really important.

Actually, I joined the BCM meeting. I attended there for one year and I found they are really great helpers. There were around 9 to 10 native speakers. They helped international students to talk about the topic and develop some vocabularies and idioms. Sometimes, I felt they are really good helpers, but they feel more comfortable when they talk each other, not to international students. So, sometimes, I felt even though they are really good helpers, I felt kind of gap between native speakers and international students. It makes me feel a little bit hard to do more close relationship with them so in this sense, I agree with Li-Ting. Real situations, kind of part-time job, things like that will be really helpful.

She expected to practice her speaking and also make friends in this class. However, the reality showed that she did not feel that she gets involved in the conversation with those native English speakers. When another Second-year student, Li-Ting, mentioned that getting a part-time job is really helpful for international students to get involved in local culture, Sang Kyung could not agree more. Therefore, empowering international students or non-native English speakers in realistic environment will be more helpful than creating an environment for them to practice English and to learn local culture.

In the first interview, the researcher asked participants a question about whether they have more chances to find better English teaching job in the United States. Sang Kyung responded:

Yeah. I think it's the matter of competency. In the United States, even though we are foreign speakers, but still we are nonnative speakers. I think I cannot be better than native speakers as a teacher in the United States because as a teacher in the United States, I

think I am not competent here. But, back in my country, if I go back to my country, I think I still feel a little be more competent teacher than two years ago.

Sang Kyung's response revealed that she is not confident in her English competence. Even though she had received TESOL education and had lived in the United States, she still thought that she could not compete with native English speakers. But, she agreed that she could compete with other non-native English-speaking teachers in her home country.

Her major concern about English competence is basically the pronunciation. Sang Kyung stated,

One more thing I want to add is pronunciation. Because as you know it's international society these days. In Korea and I assume in a lot of Asian countries, there are lots of native speakers in private institutes. They employ native English speaking teachers. So, students are getting used to the native speaker accent so they compare the native speaker accent with the school teachers (non-native English-speaking teachers), especially the public school teachers. And sometimes, they ask to the teachers why do they mispronounce that word. That is not that why. It is the reality these days. I think nonnative speaking teachers should emphasize practicing their pronunciation more and more.

She considered that it is a reality that students in Asian countries are getting used to the accent of native English speakers and will compare it with non-native English-speaking teachers in her home country. Therefore, she affirmed that NNESTs should focus on practicing their pronunciation. In another statement, she thought that it is reasonable to have native English speakers to teach speaking and listening and non-native English speakers to teach grammar, writing, and reading.

Yes. Sometimes, I think it makes sense because they are native speakers and native speaking teachers. They can teach the students in speaking and listening part more actively than nonnative speaking teachers. But, in grammar or writing reading part, I think nonnative speaking teachers could be more excellent than native speakers. In the sense, I felt it's unfair. But, most parents and students prefer native speaking teachers to nonnative speaking teachers because they put the emphasis on speaking and listening abilities to be a competent English learner. So, I think we cannot ignore the reality because the parents and students are the people we have to consider when you think of education, especially English education. So, I think nonnative speaking teachers should try to improve their four skills, especially speaking and listening part which we lack, to survive the real educational field.

For Sang Kyung, she did not have much access to interact with native English speakers, so watching TV, news, or drama became her major source to improve her English. She said, "To me, watching TV, for listening, a lot of news or drama was really helpful to improve my English. I think that is the most and biggest source to improve my English."

At the time of conducting this study, Sang Kyung played the role of ESL instructor and taught ESL essay writing in the Department of Languages. She was very happy that she could be a student and a teacher at the same time. She said,

I have the similar answer. My role is a student and a teacher at the same time. It was very good for me to learn something as a student and I can teach. Sometimes, I can apply what I learn during the class to my students. So, the role as a student and a teacher was really good.

Empowering students to teach while as a student in the TESOL program helps them to apply theory into practice. However, being a non-native English-speaking teacher in the United States, she also faced some challenges. For example:

I think I am not so professional here because while teaching, I realize the biggest obstacle to me is speaking. Because I think knowing is one thing and explaining or teaching is one another. Even though I am really good at grammar, and I know what I have to teach during the class, but every time I encounter is my speaking ability. Due to lack of speaking ability, so I am usually stuck explaining something or some grammar point. I know what I need. So at that time, always I feel I am not so professional here teaching English.

She realized that speaking is her biggest obstacle while teaching English in the United States, and that obstacle impacted her teaching ability. Her low competence in English speaking contributed to her low confidence in English teaching to an extent. That results in her feeling of not being professional in teaching English in the United States. Also, she did not just feel unprofessional in English teaching, but also felt like an outsider in teaching. She mentioned,

I somewhat feel like an outsider in teaching. At first when I started to teach here, it was very strange. There was no orientation in teaching or... I didn't get any information about teaching, office, using facilities here. That was very strange. I had to try to get plenty of everything by myself and ask someone. So, it was very different. Teaching itself. Even though I teach international students in English, I feel I am not confident at teaching English in English. Sometimes, I feel in the class. Even though I am the teacher, I am the instructor; I feel that I am an outsider in language teaching profession.

The reality of studying in TESOL preparation program also differs from her expectations. Sang Kyung mentioned,

My answer will be the same as her. I future goal is to be a professional English teacher. That's the reason why I am here. Even though I have a long experience teaching English, I always felt I am not so qualified teaching English as an English teacher. I want to improve my teaching techniques or language skills. Actually, I think I don't get much help from this course. Like she said, I originally wanted to learn a lot of methods in teaching English, but our course is too restricted to theoretical ones. This is the third semester, and I feel this is not what I wanted. But, anyway, I learnt a lot theoretical ones. In some aspects, I am equipped with theoretical ones. But the problem is I have to find out to apply what I learned here to the practical situation to my students when I went back to my country. Anyway, I think this experience in the United States will help me to be a more professional teacher

As an English teacher, she expected to improve a lot in her English teaching techniques or language skills; however, the reality did not meet her expectations. She found that the TESOL master's courses are too theoretical for her. Even though the gap between reality and her expectation exists, she still thought that her experience in the TESOL program will be helpful.

Being a Second-year student in the TESOL program, she was going to face the reality of returning back to her home country to teach very soon. Before going back, she already had her imagined community for her future career. Sang Kyung said,

I think when I go back to my country, I will encounter the competitive society, the educational field. I remembered I taught it last time. A lot of ESL or EFL countries, there are many native English teachers there. Sometimes, nonnative English teachers inevitably

compete with them because of parents and kids. Sometimes, they want fluent English speakers as their English teachers. I think even though I finish the master's degree here. When I go back to my country, like she said, I should get myself involved in TESOL meetings, or watching English TVs/channels, reading some English books. I think I have to try to develop myself continuously to prepare the competitive world and to be a fluent English teacher as a nonnative speaker.

She had realized that the community she will face very soon is a very competitive society. She already set up her plans for how to keep up her teaching credibility back home.

Sang Kyung has a clear goal that she would go back to her home country after graduating from the TESOL program. Similarly, Li-Ting set up a clear goal for her future, too. However, unlike Sang Kyung, she wanted to stay in the United States after finishing the program. The following section presents how Li-Ting conveyed her attitude of being a foreign language teacher and how she reacted to her professional identity.

Transition from English to Chinese language teaching. Li-Ting is a Second-year student from Taiwan. The interesting part of her story is that she changed her career goal from English teaching to Foreign Language teaching. She possesses a strong goal of being a language teacher, especially a Chinese teacher. During her study in the TESOL Preparation Program, she taught Chinese in the Language Department and in a local Chinese School. In her perceptions, she thought that TESOL organizations are for college professors to attend, not English teachers.

I think when I teach English in Taiwan. I was a student. I not only taught English, but I also need to work on my study. And moreover, I think...um...the association, that kind of like TESOL association. That's more for like college profession...um...Professors. Usually, we teachers don't participate in that kind of association.

In addition, she would have different investments in her professional development depending on different contexts.

I think it might depend on where you are going to teach. For example, if I am going to teach English here, maybe I will keep involving in that kind of professional associations. But, if I go back to my home country and become a teacher like in high school or even in cram school, then I don't think I will go to the conferences like I am doing right now. To Li-Ting, information learned at conferences does not meet her desire of being a language teacher. She considered that the information at conferences was too theoretically based while what she believes she needs is practical.

Because I think that's way too professional that they do more like theoretical things rather than practical things. So, if I teach there, I don't think the stuff I learned from conference don't really help a lot in my teaching, especially only to high school or even elementary school students. I have to emphasize the reality in Taiwan again. The initial goal of the students learning English usually is to pass high school and university entrance exam. Therefore, the parents and the schools want the teachers to help their children pass the exams more than helping them learn the language.

While she lives in different contexts, she will apply different teaching techniques in her teaching.

I think it depends. It depends on where you are going to teach. If I am going to teach in the States, I think I will focus more on listening speaking and listening. Because the people you are teaching probably might be the intentional students, and you need to make your ear adopt to so many accents. First of all, you must train your ear, your listening ability and you also make yourself understandable. So, speaking and listening will be the

most important thing for teaching here. But, if I am going back to my home country, I think I will focus more on writing and reading.

The reasons that she would like to focus more on reading and writing is because of different educational practices in the two contexts.

Because in my home country, that's the exam oriented place. That means you need to have your students learn basic the grammatical things and you need to make up tests. So, I will probably train my writing skill.

Li-Ting's motivation to be a Chinese teacher is very strong.

I think I want to be an excellent teacher, especially in Chinese. I don't want to be like really profession like those professors in our department teaching students to teach a language. I want to be a real teacher to teach a language...

Li-Ting did think that studying experiences in the United States affected her professional identity.

So, you mean does my American experience affect my self-identity or my professional identity. I think it does not affect a lot for my personal identity because I know whom I am still. But, I think that affect a lot on my professional identity. If I go back to my country, that will be a huge difference. Oh, you are from...you got your master from American university...other teachers got their masters...no matter masters or bachelors' degree in our home country. I think for the school who hires those two kinds of teachers, they might pay differently. So, I think that's the biggest different because people will consider you are more professional if you study abroad. And as what I know, many teachers come to study in the United States after they teach many years. The reason is they can get five thousands more....So, I think studying here really affects my

professional identity because I will also consider I am kind of different from those teachers who got their degree in our home country.

Her studying experiences in the TESOL preparation program did affect her teaching techniques in some ways.

Um...I think before I came here, I didn't really know how to make my class more communicative because you were taught in traditional way. So, you will teach your students in the same way. But, when you come here, you see many people and you are in this environment. You were taught to be more communicative in your teaching and you will bring your experience back to your home country. That will make your class more. I think your students will get more cultural differences from you than from other teachers who have never been here. And also, you can make your class more vivid, I will say. Students will get more fun in your classes because you were taught this way.

The two stories clearly demonstrate how two NNESTs perceived and reacted to their personal and professional identities. Li-Ting's professional identity of being a foreign language teacher, especially in Chinese, grew dramatically while studying in the TESOL program. Sang Kyung still wanted to be an English teacher back in South Korea and was ready to continue her professional development in South Korea in order to survive in the competitive educational world. One issue for sure was that both of them worked hard to achieve their goals of being a good teacher.

Summary

From the entire study, an interesting finding was that all participants expressed the desire to improve significantly in listening and speaking in this English-speaking context. They seldom mentioned reading and writing skills and activities. One of the reasons that could contribute to

these opinions is participants' strong desire to enhance their speaking abilities in the English-speaking environment. In their home countries, the whole English-speaking environment is very limited. Therefore, other than obtaining a master's degree, all participants had the desire to enhance the level of their listening and speaking abilities.

This study aimed to explore an in-depth understanding of NNESTs' identity construction and transformation while they pursue M.A. degrees in the English-speaking context, the United States. The study findings showed that language, culture, attitude, and context are contributing factors impacting on NNESTs' changing identity in the context other than their own. First-year participants revealed the ELT identity developed under the education and social environment in their home countries. NNESTs were not aware of their professional identities consciously even though they had done some professional development activities in their home countries. Second-year participants showed that their professional identities were stronger through the education of the TESOL program. The findings support that identity is changing constantly with the acquisition of new knowledge and experience.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Limitations, Implications, and Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the influential components that contribute to NNESTs' professional identity and to examine whether those variables also contribute to self-perceptions of professional roles. The major questions guiding this study pertain to the way NNESTs perceive themselves as ELT professionals in their home countries, the way NNESTs perceive themselves as ELT professionals while they are in teacher preparation programs in the United States, and the way they self-report the impact of their current experiences in the United States and how these transform their professional ELT identity. A detailed analysis of the collected research data was described in the preceding chapter. This chapter discusses study results, limitations of the study, implications for NNESTs and TESOL preparation programs, and provides recommendations for NNESTs and those who teach them.

Discussion

This study consisted of two groups divided by year of study so that First-year students and Second-year students were interviewed in two separate groups. Participants for this study included three volunteer students in the First-year Group and four volunteer students in the Second-year Group. Participants must have had at least one year of English teaching experience in their home country and must have been currently studying in a TESOL program at the time of the interview. Even though this small sample does not allow for generalizing findings to the

larger population of NNESTs, significant findings of this study could help NNESTs review the process of their identity development and enhance their identification in both personal and professional roles. Furthermore, administrators and teacher educators within TESOL preparation programs could benefit from insights provided in this study and better understand how NNESTs live and learn in English-speaking settings so that appropriate curricula and assistance inside and outside TESOL programs can be provided.

Identity in home country. In regard to the first research question, how do NNESTs perceive themselves as ELT professionals in their home countries, study findings revealed that participants exhibited less awareness of being ELT professionals in their home countries. Additionally, participants did not realize the importance of professional development in their career advancement. When the researcher asked if they participated in any organizations related to TESOL, none of the participants felt that they had participated despite the fact that in their responses, they had mentioned that they attended teaching or training seminars provided by their institutions. The findings showed that even though they had participated in some relevant professional growth activities like teaching training seminars and workshops, they did not understand the breadth of their professional development and did not reflect seriously upon it.

Identity in the United States. The research showed that after arriving in the United States, a First-year participant was more likely to show less awareness of being an ELT professional than a Second-year participant because the new arrivals had just entered the program and had not yet received much information or training in terms of professional development. Their awareness of professionalism resembled that of their original thoughts conceived while still in their home country. On the other hand, Second-year participants had stronger perceptions of being ELT professionals through the educational experience in the

TESOL program. Even though the small number of study participants cannot be generalized to the entire NNEST population, the findings imply that the education offered through TESOL programs plays an essential role in raising NNESTs' awareness of professional development. Therefore, this suggests that the perception of being ELT professionals may change based on time, educational experiences, and environment.

For example, two Second-year Students changed their career goals after coming to the United States. One, instead of being an English teacher, decided to teach her mother language, Chinese. Therefore, in the current English-speaking context, she chose to attend those professional development activities related to Chinese teaching and rejected those relevant to English teaching. Her resistance to English teaching development was clearly presented. In another example, the other Second-year Student mentioned that due to busy family and work schedules, she may not continue her professional development after returning to South Korea. Nevertheless, in the final interview, she had changed this decision and expressed that she must continue her professional development to survive in the competitive educational society of South Korea. Interestingly, this discussion actually brought up another important issue. She has decided not to continue based on an awareness of the importance of professional development for being a more effective teacher; instead, she made her decision based on an economic or job-security standpoint. It exhibits that there is a gap between her perceptions of knowing and doing professional development.

Based on the above two cases, determining the plans of continuing professional development may change due to multiple factors. However, it revealed that through TESOL training courses, Second-year participants were able to identify NNEST strengths, even though they still felt they could never compete with native English-speaking teachers due to their low

confidence in their English speaking abilities. Consequently, one important aspect of TESOL training programs is for them to raise awareness of NNESTs' self-perceptions of confidence and self-assuredness. This is important and needs to be promoted in existing and future TESOL programs.

Identity and transformation. In this study, the participants did not possess a high awareness of the importance of professional identity while living in their home countries, and this professional identity was better developed through a master's TESOL program in the United States. With different individual experiences, each participant self-reported differently on the transformation of his or her professional identity. Three Second-year participants stated that their experiences in the U.S. had impacted their changing identities although not exactly in the same ways. For example, one thought that regardless of the parameters of professional or personal phrases, she underwent much change, while another perceived changes in her professional identity, but believed she had not changed a lot in terms of personal identity. In contrast to the others, the third Second-year student did not perceive any changes personally or professionally.

Identity and language ideology. Race, ethnicity, social and economic powers, and colonialism are important elements in determining and legitimizing the status of a specific variety of Englishes in a social context (Grant & Lee, 2009; Kubota & Lin, 2009). The particular English status in a social context brings influential impact on language ideology. As Kubota and Lin (2009) pointed out, "Race could certainly be a focus of analysis in investigating language-related ideology" (p. 15). Examined closely in East Asian contexts, especially in China, Taiwan, and South Korea, American English is the leading variety among all World English varieties. To further illustrate, Grant and Lee (2009) described that American English is considered to be the Standard English in South Korea and this prevalent attitude has led to the devaluation of other

varieties of English. Social and economic powers were essential influences resulting in this attitude, and a similar attitude was found in the present study. Most participants' perceptions of the most legitimate English were American English. Even though they had learned of the diverse varieties of English, they could not usurp the prejudice and perceptions of that which is deemed Standard English, which really signifies either British or American English.

Identity, isolation, and racial/cultural perception. When participants studied in the United States, they were sometimes susceptible to feelings of isolation as a result of a lack of local cultural knowledge. One First-year student reported not participating in classroom discussions when native English speaking classmates spoke of English teaching in the United States. Her English as a Foreign Language teaching experience did not facilitate participation in such discussions; instead, she experienced feelings of isolation. A similar feeling was found in Chacón's (2009) own experience when she was a Ph.D. student in the United States. She stated, "As an NNES student in mainstream classes, I felt excluded because my native classmates dominated the discourse; I felt marginalized because my experience as a Latina did not seem to count in discussions centered on the United States" (p. 217). Even though this First-year student and Chacón came from two different contexts and cultures, East Asian and Latino, both of them shared a similar feeling of isolation in the mainstream class settings in the United States.

Lack of shared cultural background and knowledge seems to be another contributing factor resulting in the feeling of isolation. While listening to various speakers in one of her master's classes, the same First-year student also failed to acquire much information from presentations and did not participate in resulting discussions because she did not share the same cultural background with target speakers. A different First-year student felt similar isolation when she tried to acquire friends who are native speakers; furthermore, she reported

experiencing discrimination. She stated, “it’s not just what we think, it also depends on how other people think of us.” This implies that racial perception does not only have a base in the target participants’ perceptions but also in the perceptions of her surrounding subjects. The way an individual perceives other people’s thoughts and behavior has direct influences on his or her own perceptions.

Identity, self-confidence, and language proficiency. According to Rajagopalan’s (2006) study results, a teacher’s self-confidence does not correlate with his or her knowledge of the language but rather his or her perceptions of language proficiency. In addition, the more teaching experience a teacher possesses, the more likely his or her awareness of target language proficiency is increased. One of the Second-year students, who is Korean, is the most experienced English teacher among all of the participants. She taught English as a Foreign Language in South Korea for over 10 years and taught English as a Second Language in the United States for a semester. According to her, she discovered that speaking English is one of her biggest obstacles in English teaching, especially when she must use English to teach. As she stated, “I think I am not so professional here because while teaching, I realize the biggest obstacle to me is speaking.” In addition, she felt that her English speaking competency limits her ability to explain certain grammatical points to her non-native students. Therefore, in the interview, she asserted that improving pronunciation is one of the most important aspects of becoming an effective English teacher.

All participants in the present study tended to define their language proficiency based on speaking ability. Participants seldom mentioned their reading and writing capabilities. One of the other Second-year students was the student to bring up this issue in the first interview. She said, “I was curious why you ask the question, and all of us just automatically went to the speaking

and listening part. Nobody mentioned reading and writing, right?” To answer her own question, she confessed that she improved a lot in reading; however, she was not very sure whether she improved a lot for writing and she thought that she needs more practice in writing. The third Second-year student had a different opinion. She stated, “Much more than I did before I came here. Because we have writing center to correct our writing, and we also turn in assignments that the professor...” One of the Second-year students responded that “turning assignments is just like one paper for one semester in one class. Not enough.” The above narration revealed that each participant possessed a different expectation of his or her reading and writing proficiency in English. Even though they have done more writing practice in the United States than in their home countries, one participant was not satisfied, but another was satisfied. With less focus on reading and writing in interview conversations, the narration seems to imply that the participants did not take reading and writing as seriously as speaking while they were in the United States. It appears that the speaking ability is an important component for NNESTs in defining their English proficiency.

Brady and Gulikers (2004) state, “For NNES student teachers, we must often assume that language proficiency is an issue” (p. 217). It is important to help NNES student teachers view the relationship between language proficiency and teaching behavior. In the present study, two Second-year students had experience in teaching ESL writing in the United States, and both of them perceived that speaking ability was the biggest obstacle in their teaching. Turkish participants in Tatar’s and Yildiz’s (2010) study also identified “nonnative pronunciation as a major program in terms of teaching the language” (p. 119). Brady and Gulikers suggested that the next step toward remedying this issue is to provide an assessment and feedback component to NNESTs’ educational program. Helping NNES student teachers understand the effectiveness of

their management in classroom discourse may help them develop confidence and self-esteem, which will be reflected in their teaching behavior. Therefore, Brady and Gulikers might suggest that the Korean Second-Year-Student build her teaching confidence through the use of assessment and feedback to evaluate her own teaching.

Identity and power relations. In the initial questionnaire, a set of questions was designed to target participant's difficulty in speaking English in the United States. Results of First-year students showed that they did not feel trepidation when engaged in communication with friends, neighbors and shop attendants/clerks; two out of three participants still felt that speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists was hard. As for the Second-year students, three out of four participants felt it easy to speak with friends, neighbors and shop attendants/clerks. All four Second-year participants agreed that it was hard to speak with employers/supervisors and teachers/doctors/dentists. The lack of knowledge in medical terminology led to difficulty in speaking with doctors and dentists. However, the stratification of power that exists in the roles of students and professors led to nervousness and difficulty in speaking with teachers. Participants said they were self-conscious of making mistakes in front of their teachers. For example, one Second-year student, stated, "I am afraid of making mistakes in front of my professors, but I don't care if I make mistakes in front of any common people." One of the First-year students, also expressed similar thoughts,

When I go shopping, when I buy something, I think I don't need to use very difficult English. I feel it will be even more comfortable. If you talk with your teacher or your professor, you will be a little more nervous. And you will think about the sentence.

The status differences resulted in participants' nervousness. The power relations and status that exist between the speakers definitely impacted the students' perceptions of expression in the

target language. In addition, no matter how long those participants had studied in the TESOL program, their perceptions of status differences between a student and a teacher did not change across time. This interesting finding may be caused by the influences of East Asian cultures since teachers are highly respected in this culture. In this regard, similar feelings and perceptions might happen to other NNESTs who come from East Asian countries and study in an English-speaking environment, like the United States.

Identity, desire, investment, and reality. Within the context of various life experiences, each participant performed a variety of roles including mother, teacher, student, and learner. However, an important role that everyone played was the English language learner. Norton (2000) writes that each language learner possesses multiple needs, desires, and motivations throughout their learning progress. For example, one Second-year student desires to learn Standard English. For her, Standard English only includes American and British Englishes. In reaction to the reason why these two varieties were chosen, she stated that these Englishes are the most accepted varieties and so she chose them for that reason. Take for example, another Second-year Student; with her experience in the United States, she expected to improve the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), especially listening and speaking. However, her desires did not meet reality. Even though she agreed that her listening and speaking had improved a lot, she was not satisfied with her speaking ability. Furthermore, through her ESL teaching in the United States, she found that speaking was a big challenge to her. Indeed, each participant possesses various desires in his or her learning process, though the above examples reveal that what an individual desires does not meet reality all the time.

According to Kim (2003), the context and the groups an individual interacts with have essential influences in the formation of an individual's diverse identities. The level to which an

individual invests time into English learning has a major impact on the level of his or her desire to belong to a particular group. Participants in the study stated a strong desire to engage themselves in the local community and tried various ways to participate. Take one of the Second-year students for instance, Sang Kyung. She actively participated in local church and community activities. This indicates her strong desire for community involvement; however, the actual interaction between her and other speakers did not meet her expectations and left her feeling isolated. As she stated,

Actually, I tried to get involved in the native speakers' society. I go to church and I go to some meetings. But, at the beginning, when we talked about the common subjects, I feel I belong to this group. But, as time goes by, when we talk different things related to American culture or their unique cultures, I feel I am like an outsider, and I feel it's really hard to overcome this feeling because I am not a native speaker. Even though I think I know something about their culture and their personalities. But, sometimes, I feel don't know about the people here, their culture, so I still feel I am an outsider.

This feeling of isolation was a result of different cultural backgrounds between Sang Kyung and native speakers. In the First-year students' interview, participants also addressed that they have feelings of isolation when they do not share the same cultural background as the native speakers. This also supports the findings of Ha and Que's (2006) study that a teacher's identity is constructed by an individual's self-awareness but is culturally and socially constructed by essential components such as tradition and social norms. Therefore, feelings of isolation have produced a negative image in NNESTs' identity in that they feel like an outsider in some contexts.

Identity and inferiority complex. Liu (1999) found that the four Chinese graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) in his study were crippled by their inferiority complex about English speaking and teaching. The four Chinese GTAs taught freshman English to native English-speaking students. Similar feelings and perceptions of inferiority emerged in the present study. This inferiority complex has also embedded itself in the participants' identity. Two Second-year students, who had taught ESL writing for the Language Department, stated that speaking is the biggest obstacle for them. One even questioned her professional competence in teaching English. Their limited English speaking proficiency resulted in these participants experiencing an inferiority complex. In addition, negative perceptions of being a nonnative English speaker emerged in the data. Four of seven students in the study expressed negative perceptions, which have reflected the participants' inferiority complex in being professional NNESTs. Some participants showed more confidence when comparing themselves with other NNESTs; however, they never thought that they were as competent as NESTs in terms of English teaching. Even though they were more than halfway through the TESOL program, all Second-year participants still lacked confidence in being competent English teachers in terms of their professional identity.

Identity, NNESTs, and western-based TESOL program. With the increasing number of NNESTs coming to the United States to pursue their master's degree, the issue of whether Western-based TESOL programs are ready to prepare their NNES students to teach in their home countries becomes more important. Carrier (2003) found a negative answer to this issue in her study. Most Western-based TESOL programs may not be able to provide curricula that most NNES students expect. What kind of curricula do NNESTs expect to receive in an English-

speaking context? It seems that there is a gap between students' expectation towards the TESOL program and the reality. As one student expressed:

My future goal is to be a professional English teacher. That's the reason why I am here. Even though I have a long experience teaching English, I always felt I am not so qualified teaching English as an English teacher. I want to improve my teaching techniques or language skills. Actually, I think I don't get much help from this course. Like she said, I originally wanted to learn a lot of methods in teaching English, but our course is too restricted to theoretical ones. This is the third semester, and I feel this is not what I wanted. But, anyway, I learnt a lot theoretical ones. In some aspects, I am equipped with theoretical ones. But the problem is I have to find out the way how to apply what I learned here to the practical situation to my students when I went back to my country. Anyway, I think this experience in the United States will help me to be a more professional teacher.

Comments like the one above demonstrate that some nonnative English-speaking students expect to learn practical teaching skills and strategies in the program. In addition, participants in the first interview felt that the curriculum in this TESOL program included more theory instead of practical education than they anticipated before enrolling. Some courses in the program seem to be overly theoretical to them. In a discussion of the first event, all participants said that they spend too much time completing reading and writing assignments such that they had limited time to engage with the community. Furthermore, each participant possesses different goals or expectations to be met by the program. To illustrate this one of the First-year participants stated that he desired to learn more about education since he did not take any educational courses in Taiwan. Another First-year student added that she expected to learn more teaching activities so

that she could implement these in her future teaching. In short, NNESTs in this TESOL program expect to enhance their language proficiency, especially in speaking, and to learn practical teaching components.

Limitations of the Study

An interesting phenomenon of limitation and delimitation was revealed in this study. The researcher shared a similar cultural and linguistic background with the subjects. Participants and the researcher had all grown up under teacher-centered teaching and Confucius education. In addition, the researcher had also experienced the linguistic and cultural conflicts that the participants had gone through in the United States. Therefore, the shared experience and background led the researcher to better understand the participants' difficulties and language terms. Though this possibly offered a better understanding for interpreting the data, this limitation could be considered the delimitation. The researcher better interpreted the research data with the inner group voices, the NNEST voices. This indicated that an in-depth understanding of the research and participants was demonstrated. However, as a limitation, this study excluded the voices of outside groups, such as the NEST voices and other NNES voices of those not from East Asia.

This study utilized participation from students in a small TESOL program in the Midwest region of the United States. Along with different curricular organization and policies, this small program cannot represent all TESOL programs in the United States. In addition, each different town produces a variety of people and cultures. So, similar to the aforementioned limitation of generalization, this town cannot represent all towns in the Midwest area of the United States. People, culture, and the TESOL program examined in this study cannot be generalized to the entire population.

All participants in this study came from East Asian countries. Under the influences of teacher-centered education in East Asian settings, students tend to speak less than students who have been raised in a Western setting. During interview discussions, most East Asian students tend to follow the dominate student in a given group. For example, in the First-year Group, the student with more years of English teaching experience and who spoke English more fluently was the dominate student. Therefore, the other two students in the First-year Group followed his opinions. He seemed more articulate in sharing his thoughts. In the Second-year Group, there was only one male and he did not talk much. He always needed more time to express his thoughts in English. With limited interview time, he seemed to follow the other three female participants' opinions most of the time. In this regard, personal opinions toward specific events could not be observed in further detail. This limited the researcher in acquiring more individualized, personal stories. Accordingly, one recommendation for future study would be to conduct individual interviews with each participant separately in order to acquire better personal stories and perspectives.

Implications

TESOL preparation program. One concept to consider during the development of TESOL curriculum is how to structure the program so it will provide home and classroom support for NNESTs. Due to cultural differences, most non-native English-speaking students in this TESOL program did not establish many interpersonal relationships with native English-speaking students who were in the same class. As one student mentioned earlier, he thinks that American students do not like to make friends. When he recalled memories of his college years in his home country, he remembered having close relationships with his classmates. However, in the college setting of this program, most students leave the classroom as soon as a class is

dismissed. Therefore, this culture difference created biased thoughts by non-native English-speaking students. Even though there were some extracurricular activities offered in the department housing the TESOL program, such as Mentoring Groups, a student organization for language learners which offered activities such as movie nights, game days, etc., it appears that participants were not aware of or did not take good advantage of these activities, or the results of their participation did not meet their expectation. A huge gap seems to exist between participants' expectations and the reality of department activities, and this gap could be an important reason to cause some participants' feelings of isolation in the TESOL program. Hence, the huge gap between NNESTs' expectations and reality should be revisited to create more effective programs.

The study findings reveal that English proficiency, especially speaking proficiency, is one of the predominant factors impacting NNESTs' self-confidence in teaching. In addition, the study participants stated that their writing and reading skills improved more than their speaking skills in the TESOL program. Nemtchinova, Mahboob, Eslami, and Dogancay-Aktuna (2010) argue that TESOL education programs need to "integrate approaches to help NNES graduate students with limited English proficiency to develop their language skills" (p. 226). Indeed, the ways in which these programs assist NNEST students outside of their home country becomes an important issue that needs to be explored. For example, offering volunteering opportunities or teaching-related jobs in schools or communities may help NNESTs develop their communication and collaborative skills in addition to raising their cultural awareness. Indeed, in this TESOL program, there are department activities and student organizations, like Mentoring Groups and Linking Language Learners that participants in which students could participate. However, it appears that students expect more practical teaching opportunities. Therefore, for NNESTs in the

program, it would be beneficial to provide practicum opportunities. In this way, reinforcement will assist NNESTs to apply theory into practice and also empower them to develop their professional identity while in the program. The above components may be integrated in a TESOL program in order to develop a better curriculum and extra-curricular activities for all NNESTs across the globe. Definitely, each TESOL program has set up its own curriculum based on its focused purposes. Due to the small sample of the study, the implications for TESOL programs could only be used as recommendations for similar programs and could not be applied to the majority of programs in English-speaking contexts.

NNESTs. Within the TESOL program, it is crucial for NNESTs to develop a strong sense of self-confidence in order to succeed. The present study proves that the concept and bias of the “native speaker” is still embedded strongly in most NNESTs’ perceptions. Their confidence can only be strongly asserted in the non-native group, not in the native group, especially in teaching. Perceptions like “...I am not confidence [sic] enough that I can compete with those native English-speaking teachers” and “...we are not competitive as native speakers in terms of our career job” still occupy NNESTs’ thoughts and subsequently contribute to their inferiority complex. Therefore, as a NNEST in a TESOL program, equipping the self with competent language proficiency while simultaneously improving teaching pedagogies should be well-considered and implemented.

Recommendations for NNESTs

Revisiting English language and culture in EFL contexts. In East Asian contexts, English is taught as a foreign language, and there is a huge demand for acquiring English proficiency. The native speaker norm prevails over these contexts. This circumstance is particularly true because many parents, students, and administrators believe that a language

learner will acquire better English proficiency from a native speaker than a non-native speaker. Therefore, NESTs are more welcome than NNESTs in some EFL contexts, like China, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. Turkey seems to have a similar situation. Tatar and Yildiz (2010) pointed out that “Many teacher candidates tend to lose self-confidence as early as when carrying out their practicum and believe that they step into the professional life disadvantaged in many ways due to their nonnative status” (p. 115). Similar findings were found in this study; participants also possessed negative perceptions of their nonnative status like the Turkish participants in Tatar and Yildiz’s study. Consequently, the role of English in EFL contexts should be seriously revisited.

Nowadays, English should be taught as an international language. Instead of spending resources on hiring NESTs, especially those teachers who are unqualified, Tatar and Yildiz (2010) recommended that “NNESTs should be given opportunities to improve their language skills through professional development activities and more cross-cultural experiences” (p. 125). Two Second-year students, who possessed open attitudes and had more cross-cultural experiences in the local community, seemed to experience less difficulties in adjusting themselves in a different culture. One of them stated that she did not perceive any difficult cultural adjustment in her experience; instead, she believed that America is a big melting pot with many people coming from various cultures, so American people are more willing to accept different cultures. Therefore, the concept of being open-minded and accepting multiple cultures appears to be a good way to help NNESTs adjust themselves while they are immersed in a culture other than their own. Additionally, instead of being limited to British or American culture, the awareness of teaching culture in the EFL classroom needs to be revisited. But perhaps more importantly, Tatar and Yildiz (2010) concluded that a NNEST in their study

seemed to be more dedicated and willing to take responsibility compared to a NEST, who might simply be interested in the job due to the high salary or fringe benefits, or simply cross-cultural experiences. Therefore, NNESTs should revisit their roles as educators. Particularly, NNESTs from EFL contexts should strengthen their awareness that they are not just language educators, but also cultural and behavioral informants of their home language and the target English language.

Enhancing personal and professional credibility. Even though they were completing a two-year TESOL program, the Second-year participants still exhibited low confidence in teaching English effectively and comparing themselves with NESTs. Therefore, they should be made aware of a variety of coping strategies that were provided by Wu, Liang, and Csepelyi (2010) for NNESTs to improve their professional development and enhance their personal and teaching credibility. To begin with, one of the more important steps is developing a positive self-image. One student speculated that being open-minded is a good start to face the new culture and environment. The next important strategy provided by Wu et al. is to extend intercultural friendships. In this way one should try to be open-minded and ready to make friends worldwide. The first two strategies, *develop a positive self-image* and *extend intercultural friendships*, are a good start for all NNESTs to improve their credibility no matter in their personal or professional life. In addition, the research suggests that an NNEST should spend more time in engaging oneself in school and community activities, such as volunteering in local public schools or related programs. In this way, an NNEST does not just develop their communication skills but also leadership and collaborative skills. This level of engagement is an effective means that the researcher personally used to meet more English-speaking friends and to be immersed in

different cultures when studying in the United States. Certainly, more NNES participants are needed to try these strategies out in further studies.

Summary

In this chapter, the NNESTs' identity has been discussed based on their expectations, perceptions, investments, and self-confidence. Various experiences can make essential changes to those phases so that each NNEST regards him/herself with positive or negative self-images especially in the context that differs from his or her own culture. The process of identity formation and transformation is socially and culturally constructed. However, each NNEST maintains his or her own right to retain a positive or negative self-image by nurturing an active and open-minded attitude. To combat the negative label of NNEST, it would be beneficial if the TESOL program adds more practical teaching components to fill the gap between reality and NNESTs' expectations and provide more extra-curricular assistance in enhancing NNESTs' English proficiency. More importantly, it is the NNESTs' responsibility to aspire to become competent language users, learners, and teachers.

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APPENDIX A: INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The initial questionnaire is modified based on the first questionnaire designed by Bonny Norton (1993) in her unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Pseudonym:
2. Gender: Male Female
3. Nationality:
4. Country where you grew up:
5. Please give the country where you received your university degree:

B. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

1. What is your mother tongue (native language)?
2. Apart from your mother tongue and English, do you know any other languages?
Yes___ No___
3. How long have you been studying English?
4. How would you describe your English proficiency while you were teaching in your home country?

C. IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

1. Date of arrival in the United States (Month and Year)

2. Did you attend language courses in the United States before you registered in this M.A. program?

Yes___ No___ If yes, please explain.

3. Why did you come to the United States?

4. Why did you come to the Indiana?

- a. Did you have friends in the United States before you arrived?

Yes___ No___

- b. Did you have family in the United States before you arrived?

Yes___ No___

5. Before you arrived in the United States, did you live anywhere else apart from your home country?

Yes___ No___ If yes, state where and for how long?

D. ACCOMMODATION/HOUSING

1. Do you currently live: (circle one answer)

a. Alone

b. With friends

c. With family

2. Where did you stay when you first arrived in the United States?

3. How would you describe your accommodations (housing) in the United States since your arrival? How often have you moved and why?

E. ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

1. Comparing yourself to people who speak English as their mother tongue, how well do you think you speak English? Please explain.

2. Comparing yourself to other NNESTs you know, how well do you think you speak English? Please explain.

F. ENGLISH TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1. What English teaching experience did you have in your home country?
2. What English teaching experience have you had since you arrived in the United States?
3. Will the work you are doing now help you to enhance your English teaching expertise? Please explain.

G. THE MASTER OF ARTS COURSE

For First-year students:

1. How did you find out about this M.A. program?
2. In general, how much English do you expect to learn while you remain enrolled in the M.A. program?
3. In general, how much academic knowledge do you expect to gain while you remain enrolled the M.A. program?
4. Is there anything else you expect to learn from the program or think you will like about the program?

Yes___ No___ If yes, please explain.

5. In general, how much English do you expect to learn in the four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing?

For Second-year students:

1. How did you find out about this M.A. program?
2. In general, how much English do you expect to learn while you are still enrolled in the M.A. program?

3. In general, how much academic knowledge do you expect to gain while you are still enrolled the M.A. program?
4. Please state all the courses you have taken so far from most helpful to least helpful in your professional development.
5. Is there anything else you have learned from the program or liked in the program?
Yes___ No___ If yes, please explain.
6. In general, how much English have you learned in your time in the U.S. in the four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
7. How do you think the M.A. program might be changed to help future NNESTs increase their professional development?

H. LANGUAGE CONTACTS

1. How many of the people in your neighborhood where you live in your home country speak English as a mother tongue?
2. How many of the people you work with in your home country speak English as a mother tongue?
3. How many of the people you work with in the United States speak English as a mother tongue?
4. How many of your friends in your home country speak English as a mother tongue?
5. How many of your friends in the United States speak English as a mother tongue?
6. How many of your friends in your neighborhood in the United States have the same mother tongue as you do?

I. EXTENT OF ENGLISH USAGE

1. How often do you speak English in your home country? (Give in number of hours per week)

In what context do you speak English in your home country? (i.e. home, school, work)

2. How often do you speak English in the United States? (Give in number of hours per week)

In what context do you speak English in the United States? (i.e. home, school, work)

3. How would you describe your satisfaction with your English usage in your home country?
4. How would you describe your satisfaction with your English usage in the United States?

J. SELF ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH PROGRESS

1. In general, please mark the things that you think are easy or hard for you to use English for in the United States?

- | | | | |
|--|---------|---------|--------|
| a. Speaking to your husband/wife | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| b. Speaking to your children | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| c. Speaking to other relatives | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| d. Speaking to friends | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| e. Speaking to neighbors | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| f. Speaking to employers/supervisors | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| g. Speaking to Clients/customers | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| h. Speaking to other workers | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |
| i. Speaking to teachers/doctors/dentists | Easy___ | Hard___ | N/A___ |

j. Speaking to shop attendants/clerks	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
k. Speaking to government officials	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
l. Speaking to people you don't know	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
m. Reading a newspaper	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
n. Watching TV/movies	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
o. Listening to the radio	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
p. Filling out forms and questionnaires	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___
q. Writing letters	Easy___	Hard___	N/A___

2. Please describe when you feel comfortable using English in the United States.
3. Please describe when you feel uncomfortable using English in the United States.

K. THE ENGLISH LEARNING PROCESS

1. What do you think has helped you the most to learn English? (For example, working, television, Internet, friends, etc.)
2. When you become a better English speaker, what will you be able to do in the future that you are not able to do now?
3. When you become a better English speaker, what will you be able to do as an NNEST?

Only for Second-year students:

4. If your English has gotten better, what are you able to do now that you were not able to do a year ago?
5. If your English has gotten better, what are you able to do now as an ESL/EFL teacher?

L. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

1. Please state your opinions to the following questions.
 - a. What kind of additional opportunities would you like to speak English?

- b. What kind of additional opportunities would you like to write English?
 - c. Would you like more English speaking friends?
 - d. Do Americans help you when you try to speak English?
 - e. Do you have to speak English to do well in the United States?
 - f. Do you think you would get more chances to find a better English teaching job in your home country if your English was better?
 - g. Do you think you would get more chances to find a better English teaching job in the United States if your English was better?
 - h. Will you lose contact with your culture if you learn more English?
 - i. What do you think is the best way to learn English?
 - j. Are you happy that you came to the United States?
2. Please state your answers to these questions.
- a. What positive experiences have you had at work in your home country because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
 - b. What negative experiences have you had at work in your home country because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
 - c. What positive experiences have you had in your community in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
 - d. What negative experience have you had in your community in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
 - e. How do you think people will behave differently toward you when you become a better speaker of English? Why? Give details.

- f. How does the American way of life make it easy for you to learn English? Please explain.
- g. How does the American way of life make it hard for you to learn English? Please explain.

Only for Second-year students:

- h. What positive experiences have you had working on campus in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
- i. What negative experiences have you had working on campus in the United States because you are a nonnative English speaker? Give details.
- j. How is the American way of life similar to the way of life in your home country? Please explain. (i.e. school, work, social life)
- k. How is the American way of life different from the way of life in your home country? Please explain. (i.e. school, work, social life)

APPENDIX B: FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What do you think has helped you the most to learn English?
2. What do you think has helped the most to enhance your ELT expertise?
3. How do you describe the level of your involvement in the ELT profession?
4. When do you feel comfortable using English in daily life? Please explain.
5. When do you feel uncomfortable using English in daily life? Please explain.
6. When do you feel comfortable using English in the ELT profession? Please explain.
7. When do you feel uncomfortable using in the ELT profession? Please explain.
8. After immersing yourself in the United States, how do you describe yourself as an ELT professional in the United States?
9. How do you describe the impact of your experience in the United States on your ELT profession?
10. Do you still feel like an “outsider” in the United States? Please explain.
11. Do you still feel like an “outsider” in the ELT profession? Please explain.
12. After pursuing your degree in the United States, how do you describe your future goals in the ELT profession?

APPENDIX C: GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR INFORMAL EVENTS

1. How is it going?
2. How are your classes going?
3. Have you encountered any questions on classes or U.S. life so far?
4. Is it different from what you imagined it would be?
5. When do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable using English in daily life?
6. What do you think has helped the most to improve English?
7. How do you feel being in the TESOL program?
8. How do you feel living in this context?
9. Where are you living right now? (For example, dormitory, University Apartments, or off-campus apartments, etc.)
10. Do you have any roommates? What's your roommate's nationality?
11. Have you been involved in the local community so far? (For example, attending local festivals in town, volunteering in the public library, joining in any organizations, etc.)
12. What interesting activities have you participated in?
13. Have you met some good friends in this area?
14. Where do most of your friends come from?
15. Have you experienced any interesting cultural shocks here?
16. How do you make plans for long weekends? (For example, Labor Day, Fall break, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.)

17. What are the goals that you would like to achieve before leaving this place? (For example, making many friends in this context, immersing the self in local culture, obtaining higher level of academic knowledge, etc.)

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF PERMISSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Department of Language & Literacy Education
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4
Tel: (604) 822-5788
Tel: (604) 822-5154

March 4, 2009

Ms. Shu-Chun Tseng
Doctoral Candidate
Curriculum and Instruction
With Specialization in Language Education
Indiana State University, USA

Dear Ms. Tseng,

In response to your request, you have my permission to use the questionnaires from my PhD thesis as the base of your interview protocols in your own PhD research. Thank you for acknowledging this permission in your thesis. The citation for the thesis is as follows:

Norton Peirce, B. (1993). *Language learning, social identity, and immigrant women*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Toronto/OISE. 262 pp.

I wish you all the best in your research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bonny Norton
Professor and Distinguished University Scholar
Department of Language and Literacy Education
University of British Columbia

Email: LLED.educ@ubc.ca
Web Site: www.LLED.educ.ubc.ca

Courier Address: 2034 Lower Mall Road, Room 100
UBC, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z2

APPENDIX E: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



Institutional Review Board

Terre Haute, Indiana 47809
812-237-3088
Fax 812-237-3092

13 August 2009

Shu-Chun Tseng
Dr. Susan Kiger
Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Media Technologies
College of Education
Indiana State University

RE: UNDERSTANDING NONNATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING TEACHERS' IDENTITY
CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY: A
CLOSER LOOK AT PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE (IRB# 9145)

Dear Shu-Chun Tseng,

The Institutional Review Board has conducted an expedited review of your proposed research project listed above. Your proposed study is approved. The approval for this study expires on **July 1, 2010**. Prior to the approval expiration date, if you plan to continue this study you will need to submit a continuation request (Form E) for review and approval by the IRB. Additionally, once you complete your study, you will need to submit the Completion of Activities report (Form G).

Informed Consent: I have enclosed your consent documents. Please type the IRB number, approval date, and expiration date at the bottom of the documents. As a reminder, the signed informed consent, parental permission, and child assent forms must be kept for at least three years after your study is completed.

Reporting of Problems: Any problems involving risk to subjects or others, injury or other adverse effects experienced by subjects, and incidents of noncompliance must be reported to the IRB Chairperson or Vice Chairperson via phone or e-mail immediately. Additionally, you must submit Form F to the Office of Sponsored Programs within 5 working days after first awareness of the problem.

Modifications: Any modifications to this proposed study or to the informed consent form will need to be submitted using Form D for review and approval by the IRB prior to implementation.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs at 812-237-3088 or irb@indstate.edu, your question will be directed to the appropriate person. I wish you well in completing your study.

Sincerely,

Thomas L. Steiger
Chair, IRB

cc: Dawn Underwood, IRB Administrator