Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers' Legitimacy Negotiation in North American ELT Classrooms
Chao Song

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in English speaking countries is no longer a profession dominated by native English speakers. Instead, English language teaching has become a worldwide enterprise involving groups of people who are often perceived as racially and culturally distinct (Kubota & Lin, 2006). In Canagarajah (2005), it was estimated that approximately 75% of the ESL (English as a second language) or EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers globally are non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs), which constitute the majority of English language teachers. Even in Canada there are an increasing number of teachers from countries other than North America coming to the U.S. and Canada to teach English for local students.

However, due to NNESTs' language and cultural differences, discriminatory practices against non-native English speaking teachers in English language teaching profession are not uncommon. As Braine (1999) suggests, discrimination against NNESTs is inappropriate in that it hinders them from making contribution to English language teaching with their rich multicultural and multilingual qualities.

One of NNESTs' biggest challenges stemming from this discrimination involves their negotiation of legitimacy, by which, newcomers (in this case NNESTs) gain access to competent and valuable membership in the English-speaking community (Wenger, 1998). Only after admission into the community can NNESTs have access to resources rather than be excluded or neglected. Since peripherality (i.e.,"a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" [Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37]) has great impact on individuals' engagement in social participation, NNESTs' legitimacy negotiation in academic discourse is crucial to their ability to perform to professional standards as well as develop membership in the mainstream community.

Because non-native teachers' participation and socialization "is closely related to important issues such as identity, difference, power, access, and agency", it is imperative to recognize the construction of NNESTs' legitimacy from views of identity formation, power relations, and human agency (Morita, 2002, p. 6). According to Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005), to understand teachers, we need to have a clear sense of their "professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them" (p. 22). Additionally, non-native teachers' legitimacy formation is not only constituted by internal elements like language, culture and race, but also external factors, such as the asymmetric power relations between native English speakers and non-native English speakers. These elements cause significant challenges for those non-native English speaking teachers, working in a North American context. For NNESTs who are confronted with the aforementioned challenges, there are possibilities of addressing their depressing situations by exercising agency. Mainly based on Canagarajah's (1999) resistant theory, this paper includes several good examples illustrating how NNESTs negotiate their roles and positionalities in ELT settings by actively exercising their personal agency.

1

The purpose of this paper is to examine the complexities of non-native English-speaking teachers' (NNESTs') legitimacy negotiation process in North American English language teaching (ELT) classrooms. This paper explores how NNESTs' processes and outcomes of legitimacy negotiation can be impacted by unbalanced power relations, assigned-identity, and human agency. By drawing on various sociocultural theories, particularly power relations (Bourdieu, 1977; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain 2001; Norton, 2000), identity (Norton, 2000; Harklau, 2000; Morita, 2004), and human agency (Canagarajah, 1999; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001), the analysis examines how the three factors—unbalanced power relations, assigned identity and personal agency manifest themselves in NNESTs' attempting to cross barriers erected by language, culture, and racial boundaries.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Identity

Viewed from Wenger's (1998) emphasis on the necessity of peripherality and legitimacy in community, which makes newcomers' participation possible, NNESTs' entry into North American academic discourse is far more complex than what knowledge and skills they own. It involves challenges in accessing resources, resisting dominant racial ideologies, and, more importantly, (re)construction of their identities. According to Norton (2000), identity involves recognition and affiliation as well as security and safety. She takes the position that identity refers to "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2000, p. 5). In other words, identity manifests an individual's interpretation of his/her positionality, social being, and legitimacy in daily life. Additionally, identity is not only self-constructed, but co-constructed by various factors. As Wenger (1998) claims identity is concerned with an emphasis on the social systems by which people organize and coordinate their activities, mutual relationships, and interpretations of the world. Cultural background, education level,

interactions with people, working conditions, and other social experiences all have great impacts on one's identity formation. Accordingly, identity is a social formation and cultural interpretation of a person, representing individuals' membership of certain social categories and complex interactions with one another.

An important aspect of identity formation lies in evidential conflicts between assigned identity—the identity imposed by others, and claimed identity—the identity or identities one acknowledges or claims for oneself (Varghese et al., 2005). Norton and Toohey (2001) found that individuals' identities are sometimes constructed depending on how they are labeled by others' perceptions. For example, native speaker fallacy (Phillipson, 1992, Canagarajah, 1999), which positions non-native teachers in lower hierarchy and identifies them mostly according to their language performance. Therefore NNESTs' competence is often considered lower by institutions, native colleagues, and students because of their nationalities, cultures, and even colors.

2.2 Power and cultural capital

Holland et al. (2001) claim that "another facet of lived worlds, that of power, status, relative privilege, and their negotiation, and another facet of lived identities, that of one's self as entitled or as disqualified and inappropriate, must also receive theoretical attention" (p. 125). Viewed from this perspective, non-native teachers' legitimacy negotiation is tightly interwoven with power relations.

Norton (2000) takes the position that power can operate from a micro-level, such as people's everyday social interaction and access to resources, to a macro-level such as within legal systems. She discusses two categories of power relations—coercive power relations, meaning the exercise of power by a dominant hierarchy to maintain inequitable access to resources and society; and collaborative power relations, serving to empower rather than marginalize. Although it is possible for both dominant and subordinate groups in a society to exercise power, the dominant groups inevitably have wider realm of influence than the subordinate groups do. Accordingly, groups with more power determine what is valued and what is legitimate. In relation to NNESTs, it is possible their difficulties of

negotiating legitimacy manifest in gaining full recognition and respect for their cultural assets from the dominant groups.

Among the oppressive factors caused by dominant groups, a major one is that NNESTs' linguistic performance is regarded as lower than native teachers' by the mainstream community. As Bourdieu (1977) states, linguistic production reflects "a particular expression of the structure of the power relations between […] the dominant language and the dominated language" (p.647). Power relations influence people's attitude toward dominated groups and their language use, and in this case, non-native English teachers and their imperfect English. Since it is through language that people negotiate a sense of self and gain access to powerful social networks (Norton, 2000), language barriers undermine NNESTs growth and privilege in the academic workplace and weakens their agency of gaining access to the central community.

Valued cultural capital is another essential element for NNESTs' legitimacy negotiation. Bourdieu (1986) puts cultural capital into three states: *embodied*, objectified, and institutionalized. Embodied state means cultural capital in the form of "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body"; *objectified* state refers to cultural capital in the form of cultural materials which record or criticize theories; and *institutionalized* state stands for cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications. Bourdieu describes institutionalized cultural capital as follows: "a certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture" (p. 47). Specifically, cultural capital of NNESTs here can be viewed as their expertise, skills, experience, academic achievements and so forth. Due to the unbalanced power relations between two groups mentioned above, NNESTs' cultural capital may be underestimated and misrecognized. NNESTs' cultural capital and teaching competence is currently devalued and their legitimacy is weakened by asymmetric power relations in the dominant academic discourse.

2.3 Agency

It is commonly assumed that human agency is a significant factor that influences people's response to particular situations (McKay & Wong,

1996; Canagarajah, 1999; Morita, 2002; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Cervatiuc, 2009). Therefore, the role of NNESTs' personal agency in negotiating legitimacy and constructing their positionalities in school settings is of critical relevance. The theory of human agency has been helpful for explaining a wide range of possibilities for individuals to make changes and can be applied towards the academic contexts in which NNESTs find themselves.

Agency is defined as the capacity of people to manage their own behaviors and to act reflectively on the world in the complex interrelationships with others, which individuals produce through interaction within different social contexts (Bourdieu, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978; Inden, 1990). In a word, human agency is the relationship that individuals co-construct and reshape through interaction with the society, and relates to people's values, which form their interpretations and reactions to the world (Lantolf and Pavlenko, 2001). When NNESTs as active human agents change and reframe their conditions of social participation and interaction, their personal agency can facilitate smooth negotiation of legitimate membership or hinder their engagement in given contexts.

Views of agency are also guided by Canagarajah's (1999) resistance theory. Canagarajah (1999) defines agency by emphasizing the possibility for change rather than highlighting the dominant influence of power. To be specific, individuals as human agents have the capacity to resist the dominant imposed positionalities of marginal members, and to generate a counter discourse to empower themselves with more competence and privilege (Canagarajah, 1999; McKay & Wong, 1996; Duff, 2012). With strong personal agency, marginalized people are capable to author the world from their own perspectives, fashion themselves alternative positions in given discourses, and create more space to negotiate their legitimacy in the mainstream community. Accordingly, human agency can greatly enhance NNESTs' resistance to being passively affected by discriminatory processes, for instance, social and cultural identities assigned by dominant racial ideology. Enacting human agency effectively or not results in NNESTs' success or failure of entering mainstream community, in this case, the North American academic discourse.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 The impact of power relations on NNEST's legitimacy negotiation

Beynon (2008) claimed that difficult circumstances, obstacles created by formal institutional policies and procedures, as well as historical acts of oppression and institutional norms limit teachers' possibilities for improving their learning and teaching. Although Beynon (2008) focuses on first nation teachers' academic socialization, her analysis can be used to explain NNESTs' current situations, as both first nation teachers and non-native teachers encounter similar power issues which stand in opposition to their legitimacy negotiation in a native-speaker dominant academic community. Non-native teachers with less power have to make accommodations and adjustments, sometimes create a space for themselves in the margins, and be wary and on guard. "From their perspective, they are coping with their circumstances, not reforming their classrooms and schools"; still in the early stages as agents of reform, NNESTs are in the margins where change subtly happens (Thiessen et al., 1996, p. 151).

The works of Thiessen et al. (1996) and Simon-Maeda (2004) show us several non-native teachers' life experience. Those non-native teachers all encountered challenges based on power issues, such as racial discrimination and marginalization from native speakers. Nonnative speakers have similar feelings of being isolated, different, and free game for discriminatory comments (Thiessen et al., 1996). Their experience related to these feelings reveals the extent of their "isolation in the face of discriminatory treatment and racism" (Thiessen et al., p.25).

3.1.1 Native speaker fallacy

Bourdieu (1977) states that "the question of the meaning of speech" has been replaced with "the question of the value and power of speech" (p. 646), hence it is necessary to bring power relations to the discussion of NNESTs' linguistic competence. According to Varghese et al. (2005), both native English speakers (NES) and non-native English speakers (NNES) are undertaking English language teaching enterprise today; however, NNESTs'

proficiency levels in English may be considered a vital aspect leading to their difficulties of surviving in North American academic discourse.

By referring to the statement that "what speaks is not the utterance, the language, but the whole person", we see that linguistic performance is not the deterministic element that affects participation in given context (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 653). Instead, it is individual's role as valued member and their assets as valuable capital. The dominant group is recognized as holding more valued capital, especially linguistic capital (Steinmetz 2006). Therefore, NNESTs, the dominated group, are naturally considered as having lower language competence by the majority (the dominant) so that their "linguistic capital" is devalued in dominant community (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 651). The biased perception of NNESTs' language competence prevailing in North America constitutes a major obstacle of non-native teachers' obtaining legitimate roles in English academic discourse. Their devalued linguistic capital inevitably limits non-native teachers' opportunities to maintain a job as a language educator and "negotiating a sense of self" (Norton, 2006, p. 5).

At the same time, NNESTs have to reconcile the "tension exacerbated by the profession's continued adherence to native speakers' dominance" (Varghese et al, 2005). Pavlenko (2003) claims that one powerful discourse that informs non-native teachers' view of themselves is that of standard language and native speaker-like proficiency. Pavlenko (2003) also points out that this discourse portrays native speaker with 'standard English' as the only legitimate and competent language users. This leads to native-speaker employment preference which closes the door on many minority teachers and is another point of great concern.

Simon-Maeda's (2004) article, which focuses on ELT educators' complex construction of professional identities, shows several cases of NNESTs' stress caused by native speaker fallacy. According to Simon-Maeda (2004), native speaker fallacy considers native speakers to be white and the sacred dispensers of 'standard English'. So Se-ri (Korean) and Mariko (Japanese) suffer greatly from the native speaker fallacy in their job hunting and professional status. In the same circumstance, NNESTs from other outer circle countries like Mariah (South African) and Diana (Filipino) also "have an additional hurdle to leap in establishing their professional

teaching identities" because of the judgmental views on them that stems from their non-native speaker status (Simon-Maeda, 2004, p. 422). Canagarajah (1999) claims pedagogies are appropriate to the demands and values of the local communities. Hence, teachers' pedagogical qualifications are supposed to be in line with local communities' value orientation— monolingual fallacy and vernacular-only policy. In the cases mentioned above, all these NNESTs' are disqualified by linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), which exists commonly in post-colonial communities.

3.1.2 Devalued cultural capital

Language performance is not the only affective factor that leads to NNESTs' difficulties of legitimacy negotiation in academic context. Han (2011) also claims that "linguistic performance was only one of several dimensions that mattered in assigning speaking roles", cultural capital which serves to represent the "whole person" is also deterministic in assigning NNESTs' legitimate identification (p. 393).

Framed by Bourdieu's (1986) definition of cultural capital, which is "convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications" (p. 47), NNESTs' cultural capital can be narrowed down to their knowledge, teaching skills, experience and advantages. The important factor that causes NNESTs' cultural capital being devalued lies in administrators' arrangement and recognition of NNESTs' teaching roles.

> Bakhtin (1981) pointed out that
> an individual's becoming, an ideological process, is characterized precisely by a sharp gap between […] two categories: in one, the authoritative word (religious, political, moral; the word of a father, of adults and of teachers, etc.) that does not know internal persuasiveness, in the other internally persuasive word that is denied all privilege, backed up by no authority at all, and is frequently not even acknowledged in society (not by public opinion, nor by scholarly norms, nor by criticism). (p. 342)

This statement can be further explained by real situations in school settings. Curriculum developers, who do not believe in NNESTs' agency of

participating in designing curriculum, tend to ignore their valuable functions and contributions in teaching because they have to look after their own interests—maintaining the dominant role of English, which is called linguistic reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977). Non-native teachers' needs and abilities to teach English are not understood or legitimated by authorities. Involved in conflicts between themselves and various authoritative discourses, non-native teachers have less power and opportunities to answer with their internally persuasive discourses that represent their qualifications and demands.

When NNESTs' cultural capital is devalued, that is, their cultural backgrounds are not fully respected and their contributions to the institutions are not recognized completely, their access to teaching resources and opportunities is more likely to be restricted. In turn, when positioned on the edge or as peripheral members only, NNESTs' scholastic achievements and academic qualifications can be misrecognized or even ignored.

3.2 The impact of assigned identity on NNESTs' legitimacy negotiation

During their identity construction process, NNESTs often battle with the identities imposed by others through clarifying and demonstrating who they really are and what they are qualified for. Thus with less power, authority and respect in target society, minority teachers have to mediate between the assigned identity and the claimed identity (Varghese et al, 2005). For instance, Ladson-Billings (2009) suggests black teachers are inevitably related to poverty, criminality, and slavery, and are often correlated with harsh social and economic realities. Another example of assigned identify is the belief that Asian teachers are powerless and undeveloped (Thiessen et al, 1996).

As Bakhtin(1981) pointed out, all the words we have are "half-ours and half-someone else's", because voices of authority constitute the official line, which are infiltrated by oppressive hierarchy into our daily speeches (p. 345). Dominant remarks shape our thinking, writing and speaking. Ironically, we often do not have full awareness that this is happening. The authority demands our acknowledgement; it binds us and persuades us internally, it is hierarchically superior, and it is paternalistic instruction. Deeply influenced by years of repetition of these official discourses, which has become "an

unquestioned part of daily life", people tend to view things from official perspectives to demonstrate they are gregarious and close to authority (Beynon, 2008, p. 20). Yet minorities whose cultural assets are not in line with the majority's value orientation are considered different and should be excluded. Although non-native teachers define themselves in their own words which are called "internally persuasive discourses", the authority's words were already acknowledged in the past and people's everyday consciousness (Bakhtin 1981, p. 341). Once the majority and the dominant assign certain positionalities to the minority, it is quite difficult for the latter to get rid of those imposed labels.

Thiessen et al (1996) illustrates how assigned identity, also known as imposed identity poses negative influences on non-native teachers' becoming respected members in school community through the experience of Rose, a Chinese immigrant teacher in Canada. In Rose's case, discrimination prevailing in her work settings indicated that the school hierarchy only treats her and other non-native teachers as peripheral participants. As Thiessen et al. (1996) claimed that stereotyping and prejudice which involve recycled negative attitudes to those who are 'different' are precursors to discrimination. Unequal treatment, which created unbalanced power relations between her and her native colleagues, constrained her agency to negotiate a confident professional identity as a respected and valued member of the school. As Rose reported, she was expected by her colleagues and vice-principle to interpret for all Asian students because they acted in the belief that Asians are more or less the same, without any effort to understand each other. This misunderstanding increased her work burden and prevented her from developing the capability of dealing with non-Asian students. Her native colleagues anticipated various barriers in their interactions with her until she could prove herself. This made her feel marginalized and isolated at work. Clearly, native speakers are in the center of power and authority and in some way control and decide dominant ideologies and attitudes towards certain groups, consciously or not.

In stark contrast to Rose, Carleton's experience provides a compelling example of negotiating one's positionality from a more protective

perspective by resisting school hierarchal authority—"He maintained a distanced, watchful stance, ensuring the safe passage of black students, teachers and families from the Caribbean" (Thiessen, 1996, p. 145). Carleton reported that when he worked in school as a counselor, people tended to send black children to see him for help, because he is black. Thus he was identified as a black counselor and expected to deal with all black students. However, he protested this kind of prejudice, for this limited his effectiveness with all students he was responsible for. He did not want his teaching reputation to depend only on his racial priority. He believed that he was good not only because of his cultural background, but his capability of teaching, because "as immigrant teachers, they are minorities in number, not in status" (Thiessen, 1996, p. 147). By actively demonstrating his capability and negotiating his roles in school, Carleton successfully changed his situation from negative to positive.

As demonstrated by aforementioned examples, lacking power and authority constrains NNESTs' capabilities to raise their status in school settings and make a difference in their current situations. Dominant groups compel NNESTs to move in one direction which Rose and Carleton were reluctant to go to, leaving little place for them to resist and reverse asymmetric power relations. Overwhelming stereotyping sometimes devalues non-native teachers' effectiveness as teachers, and forces them to protect themselves and combat against imposed identities from dominant hierarchy in their workplace from time to time.

3.3 The impact of agency on NNESTs' legitimacy negotiation

Non-native teachers participate in the given academic community in a subordinated position. Their narratives are connected with the particular social relations, to be specific, the larger complex relationship between NESs and NNESs in North America. Actions taken to resist discrimination and inequality are all limited by their power and legitimacy in dominant groups. However, confronted with difficulties and challenges in negotiating legitimacy in North American academic discourse, some NNESTs become empowered to change the status quo. Beynon (2009) asserts that "even in difficult circumstances, our ability to direct our actions and ways of thinking open possibilities for positive changes" (p. 19). Engaged in struggles with a

variety of authoritative discourses, non-native teachers are able to answer with internally persuasive discourses that consist of their unique voices and identities. Exercising agency maximizes NNESTs opportunities of negotiating legitimate membership.

The participant of the study of Thiessen et al. (1998), Carlton, who believed in having the right to self-determination, successfully gained access to becoming a legitimate participant in the target community by enacting his personal agency. After finding that teachers always seemed to be "caught at the end of the line" and had to live with government decisions that people with greater power make for them, Carlton suggested teachers find ways of "lobbying to influence decisions before they are made" and "try to be part of the decision making that affects their work" (Thiessen, 1996, p. 107). Entering mainstream community substantially empowered Carlton to make difference for both the status quo and his students.

Initially, Carlton was engaged in the salary negotiation, which gave him his first chance to speak up for himself in front of the school committee and colleagues. It is then that other teachers in the school began to realize his value and ability, and later agreed to let him get more deeply involved in school decision making. He became a leader of the school committee and several other associations soon after. With more power, he made greater contributions to making a difference for himself and the people around him. For instance, he helped teachers in his school to write a contract about 'leaves of absence' rules and salary scale. He then realized that his personal growth occurred as a result of his involvement in the decision making things, and he gained a deeper understanding of "the variety of influences in society that have an impact on what happens in schools and what happens to teachers" (Thiessen et al., 1998, p. 106). Apparently, Carlton is an example of how successful legitimacy negotiation benefits greatly from active exertion of agency.

However, at the same time Carlton expressed his insights on being involved in making change: it is risky to advocate for change, particularly when one's goal is to establish one's self at the administrative level, because he or she may "annoy the people who have to make the decisions that would lead your promotion" (Thiessen et al., 1998, p. 108). This reveals that

although NNESTs are capable activists, actions depend on certain spheres which limit power. Evidentially, individuals' exertion of agency is closely linked to power relations. To enhance agency, one needs to be empowered with more priority; in turn striving for more power is a form of exertion of agency.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

NNESTs' difficulties and challenges in legitimacy negotiation experiences can be seen from the perspectives of power relations, identity, and human agency in North American academic discourse. The cases analyzed above indicate, first of all, that oppressed power imbalance in academic discourse can be an overwhelming factor that prevents NNESTs from gaining fair treatment and presenting their valuable cultural capital. One challenge lies in discriminatory views of their language competence. Due to native speaker fallacy, non-native teachers are commonly considered less competent English teachers and labeled as failed native speakers. Hence, their institutionalized cultural capital can be devalued by dominant groups, and in this case, native colleagues and administrators. Second, removing other-assigned identity to form valued professional identity is another important part of their legitimacy negotiation. Since identity is co-constructed and situated, NNESTs' professional identity formation contributes greatly to their legitimacy negotiation. Because of their minority status, they are likely to be misunderstood by the majority with stereotypes. Being wrongly positioned, non-native teachers' teaching practice is restricted within certain fields. They may lose many opportunities to expand their teaching experience and demonstrate teaching abilities. Finally, effective legitimacy negotiation depends greatly on enacting human agency. Exercising agency to resist discrimination and inequity in mainstream academic discourse helps NNESTs to change the status quo. Some non-native teachers successfully negotiate legitimacy by speaking out and participating in formulating school policies. Their success implicates that although they are seen as relatively powerless and vulnerable, they can make change by negotiating the unbalanced hierarchy and fighting for their rights.

The presented challenges show implications for pedagogy concerning how to promote a more inclusive academic community for NNESTs' to access legitimacy in an English dominant context from both conceptual and practical perspectives. On the conceptual level, in order to enact agency, non-native teachers need to fight for themselves and find allies among NESs. An effective way to claim their positions and change current situations is to become aware of the importance of liberatory pedagogy. Liberatory pedagogy that "addresses issues of agency and power is a rich source for both the development of human agency and for the crafting of change in educational and social settings with histories of oppression" (Beynon, 2008, p. 17). Hooks (1994) writes about education as a practice of freedom, encouraging teachers to transgress against racial, sexual, and class boundaries in order to achieve the freedom. Inspired by Paulo Freire's thoughts that education could be the practice of freedom and "a tool for bringing liberation and agency to people who have suffered political and social oppression" (Beynon, 2008, p.18), I suggest that NNESTs be active participants rather than passive consumers in given contexts. Although non-native teachers are sometimes oppressed by the authorities who design curriculum according to their own interests and define valued social capital according to the dominant culture, NNESTs should resist inequalities and discriminatory ideologies in dominant education systems.

Bakhtin (1981) also claimed that:

The importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence in the history of an individual's coming to ideological consciousness, is enormous. One's own discourse and one's own voice, although born of another or dynamically stimulated by another, will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of the other's discourse. (p. 348)

Liberatory education which represents teachers' and students' own discourse will assist them to struggle with another's discourse. By maintaining critical attitudes to current language education, for instance, English-only policy and native speaker fallacy, NNESTs are empowered to negotiate more space for liberty in teaching discourse and legitimacy to access core activities of teaching, even in administration. Non-native

teachers with a sense of crisis need to seek liberatory education, which can be used as a tool to contest various forms of oppression in teaching interactions.

Second, it is significant for administrators to value the experiences and cultural capital of NNESTs and offer them equal opportunities to demonstrate their capacity and participate in school activities. Cook (1999) suggests that educational institutions should pay more attention to second language users rather than concentrating on native speakers only. Non-native teachers with second language learning experience are described by Shin (2008) as being more competent in teaching English and have more empathy with the students than native speakers who are born with the language, because non-native teachers know more about the learning process and have more knowledge in overcoming difficulties in language learning. Shin (2008) also encourages people to describe NNESTs according to their expertise of teaching language instead of skills of using language only, and shift the emphasis from "who you are" to "what you know" (p. 59). The common belief that native teachers with a native speaker label are superior prevents institutions from benefiting from highly trained non-native teachers who have more consciousness of English grammar and learning experiences, and serve as good models for language learners (Braine, 1999). Administrators need to regard NNESTs as "successful multi-competent speakers, not failed native speakers" so as to offer them more opportunities to demonstrate their capacity (Cook, 1999, p. 204).

Additionally, monolingual policy, for example, English-only policy turns down non-native teachers for making use of code-switching in dealing with a multi-cultural class. Monolingual education stabilizes the power of the dominant group. In other words, it encourages the consecutive (re)production of unequal social order, i.e. native speakers are in the central community, while nonnative speakers are on the edge (Bourdieu, 1977). As Han (2011) indicates, minority languages are regarded only suitable for offstage and are discouraged or even prohibited, so "code-switching in general has been viewed negatively in educational institutions" (p. 391). However, code-switching is an effective way to mobilize and invite students to bring their own linguistic resources to the room for acquiring knowledge. Code-switching serves to prevent monolingual teaching from causing

15

"linguistic production", which reflects "a particular expression of the structure of the power relations between […] the dominant language and the dominated language" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 647). Hence, using code-switching in a language teaching class helps to undermine the power of the dominant language emphasized by linguistic production, and to indirectly avoid passing on the unequal social order from one generation to the next. Meanwhile code-switching leads to smoother teaching processes and more satisfying teaching results, and recognizes and values NNESTs' linguistic resources by the majority and students rather than marginalizing or even ignoring them.

On the practical level, I suggest that NNESTs improve their professional competence through enhancing English skills and language teaching knowledge, and institutions should better prepare NNESTs and modify curriculum to take full advantage of NNESTs as a resource.

NNESTs themselves need to make changes in their current situations. Non-native teachers need to build more valuable professional identities by improving teaching skills and linguistic expertise. To be qualified in the English language teaching field, teachers are expected to have a high level of English competence, including oral and written proficiency; hence, non-native teachers who are considered having relatively lower English skills can suffer from constant pressure to perform. Having a lack of regular exposure to English, NNESTs may not have many opportunities to develop their English proficiency. Therefore, they need to gain a higher level of English proficiency. I suggest they improve their English skills through (a) attending more academic conferences, which is quite helpful to gain written and oral English skills and public speaking experience; (b) expanding social interactions with native colleagues and communities, such as collaborating with native teachers designing course syllabus, and participating more social activities like volunteering in communities in order to communicate more with local people; (c) practice more, provide adequate preparation time, and imitate rather than create. For instance, being a certified ELT teacher definitely helps to strengthen language skills and teaching strategies. Since certificates authorized by authoritative organizations represent certain criteria, NNESTs who meet the criteria thereby being certified are more

likely recognized as qualifying and competent teachers. Additionally, volunteer teaching is an effective way to gain more teaching practice and experience.

Professional skills, including teaching approaches, teaching experience and academic performance are other useful tools for NNESTs to gain legitimacy in academic discourse. For instance, NNESTs can communicate more with students according to their learning needs and learn what changes teachers should make in selecting teaching materials and designing course syllabi. Next, NNESTs need to start discussions with other non-native teachers about teaching so as to explore more effective instructional approaches to dealing with mono-culture and multicultural classrooms. They also can consult with native speaker teachers about the North American education system and academic atmosphere to enhance their academic competence and construct a professional identity as competent English language teachers instead of outsiders.

Institutions also play an important role in legitimizing NNEST instructional roles. I suggest educational institutions and administrations open courses about culture issues. Courses about culture give NNESTs chances to take advantage of their cultural resources and bring more cultural awareness to class, which accelerate NNESTs' membership in the classroom. Furthermore, culture courses should not only be taught by non-native teachers and racial minority teachers, because native teachers also need to expand their knowledge of cultures other than North American to adapt to the increasingly diverse teaching contexts. NNESTs can present workshops to better prepare native teachers to teach members of diverse cultural backgrounds. Through this kind of curriculum interaction and modification, non-native teachers' cultural resources can be recognized and identified, so they may gain more power, privilege, and access to authority.

To conclude, NNESTs' legitimacy negotiation is deeply interwoven with power issues, professional identity construction, and the exercise of human agency. Non-native teachers have the potential to break the barriers to express their unique advantages of teaching English through various ways. More research in typical and informative cases in the NNEST field is needed to expand our recognition and understanding of multilingual and multicultural teachers' conditions in North American ELT classrooms, and

provide feasible and ideological tools for NNESTs legitimacy negotiation in diverse academic discourses.

References

Ajayi, L. (2011). How ESL Teachers' Sociocultural Identities Mediate Their Teacher Role Identities in a Diverse Urban School Setting. The Urban Review. 43 (5), p. 654-680.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). "Discourse and the novel" from *The dialogic imagination.* Ed. Holquist, M. Transl. Holquist &Emerson, C. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Beynon, J. (2008). *First nations teachers: identity and community, struggle and change.* Calgary: Detselig Enterprises.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Science Information, 16* (6), 645-668.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The forms of capital*. In A. H. Halsey (Ed.), *Education: Culture, economy, and society* (pp. 46-58). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Braine, G. (Ed) (1999). *Non-native educators in English language teaching.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). Interrogating the "native speaker fallacy": non-linguistic roots, non-pedagogical results. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 77–92). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching.* New York: Oxford University Press

Canagarajah, A. S. (Ed.). (2005). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cervatiuc, A. (2005). Identity, good language learning, and adult immigrants in Canada. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 8, p. 254–271.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly 33* (2), p. 185-209.

Duff, P. (2012). Identity, agency, and Second Language Acquisition. In A. Mackey & S. Gass (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp.410-426). London: Routledge.

Han, H. (2011) Inclusion through multilingual institutional policies and practice: a case study of a minority church. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 14* (4), 383-398.

Harklau, L. (2000). From the "good kids" to the "worst": representations of English language learners across educational settings. *TESOL Quarterly, 34,* 35-67.

Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner D., Cain C. (2001). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds.* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press (2nd edition).

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: education as the practice of freedom.* New York: Routledge.

Inden, R. (1990). *Imagining India.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Kubota, R., & Lin, A. (2006). Race and TESOL: introduction to concepts and theories. *TESOL Quarterly, 40* (3), 471-493. Special Issue on RACE.

Lantolf, J. P. & Pavlenko, A. (2001). (S)econd (L)anguage (A)ctivity theory:

understanding second language learners as people. In M. P. Breen (Ed.), leaner contribution to language learning: New directions in research (pp. 141-158). Essex, England: Pearson Education.

Ladson-Billings.G. (2009). The dream-keepers: Successful teacher of African American children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (2nd edition).

McKay, S. L. & Wong, S. C. (1996). Multiple discourses, multiple identities: investment and agency in second-language learning among Chinese adolescent immigrant students. *Harvard Educational Review, 66 (3),* 577-608.

Morita, N. (2002). Negotiating participation in second language academic communities: A study of identity, agency, and transformation. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Morita, N. (2004). Negotiating participation and identity in second language academic communities. *TESOL Quarterly, 38(4),* p. 573-603.

Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: gender, ethnicity, and educational change.* London: Longman/Pearson Education.

Norton, B. (2006). Identity as a sociocultural construct in second language education. In K.Cadman & K. O'Regan (Eds.), *TESOL in Context* [Special Issue], pp. 22-33.

Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2001). Changing perspectives on good language learners. *TESOL Quarterly, 35*(2), 307-322.

Pavlenko, A. (2003). "I never knew I was bilingual": re-imagining teacher identities in TESOL. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education, 2* (4), 251-268.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shin, S. (2008). Preparing non-native English-speaking ESL teachers. *Teacher Development, 12* (1), p. 57-65

Simon-Maeda, A. (2004). The complex construction of professional identities: female EFL educators in Japan speak out. *TESOL Quarterly, 38* (3), 405-436.

Steinmetz, G. (2006). Bourdieu's disavowal of Lacan: psychoanalytic theory and the concepts of "habitus" and "symbolic capital". *Constellations, 13* (4), 445-464.

Thiessen, D., Bascia, N., Goodson, I. (1996). *Making a difference about difference: the lives and careers of racial minority immigrant teachers.* Toronto: REMTEL/Garamond Press.

Toohey, K. (2001). Disputes in child L2 learning. *TESOL Quarterly 35*(2), 257-278.

Varghese, M., Morgan, B., Johnston, B., & Jonhson, K. A. (2005). Theorizing language teacher identity: three perspectives and beyond. *Journal of Langauge, Identity, and Education, 4* (1), 21-44.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.