Native and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers: An Integrated Approach in Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Pawan A. Talib

[1]Department of Islamic Studies, College of Islamic Sciences, Salahaddin University-Erbil, Erbil, Kurdistan region, Iraq

[2]Department of English Language, Aynda Private Technical Institute, Kurdistan region, Iraq

Abstract—These The aim of this paper is to analyze some argues of the terminology of native English-speaking teachers (NESTs)/non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), which George Braine and Peter Medgyes made their first steps toward this study. The study relied on the nature notion of these two concepts in linguistic studies in various areas of the world. It illuminates the strengths and the limitations of NESTs and NNESTs with respect to English language teaching to speakers of other languages, particularly in Kurdistan Regional of Iraq with different models of linguistics. Consequently, the work focuses on the perceptions, responses, and attitudes toward these two contexts with taking account their role in teaching English in Kurdistan Regional of Iraq. Finally, the evaluation portrays an outstanding method of teaching English by co-operating NESTs/NNESTs. Since recently, it considers as one of the highest applicable strategies in TEL, and the educational institutions may achieve a better success by providing both instructors in their programs.

Keywords—Native speaker teachers, Non-native speaker teachers, Teacher professionalism.

I. INTRODUCTION

As a result of globalization, it is necessary to recognize that contemporary English language (EL) is known as lingua franca due to the development of the language in most parts of the world to create a global and an intercultural communication. Therefore, the number of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) has increased, and the linguistic theories that indicate native speakering teacher as the only dependable source, since the last two decades they have been revised by a large number of linguistic scholars who debate critically against native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and NNESTs notion (Mahboob, 2003, 2004; Braine, 1999).

Nevertheless, the vast numbers of EL teachers around the world are NNESTs. Teaching English to foreign learners (TEFL) programs are still seeking to recruit NESTs in their programs besides their NNESTs to provide a more effective English language teaching (ELT) system for learners and settle this dichotomy by creating a collaborative environment of NESTs/NNESTs (Nurul, 2011). A vital issue rises that NNESTs should be introduced the same opportunity as NESTs to be capable to accomplish a successful program of ELT and proclaim the obstacles that face L2 learners (Medgyes, 1992).

In the countries of the Middle East, particularly Kurdistan, ELT has developed widely (Khudhur, 2012). The point here is noticeably not to take sides but to figure out some of privileges of having a native or non-native as a teacher and to try to extract some possible conclusions. Therefore, educational institutions are trying to engage NESTs with their ELT institutions to enable the Kurdish learners to achieve the target language through interaction with native speaker of English (NSs). In addition, learners potentially gain more from bicultural teachers in attaining native or native-like proficiency. Since the combination of the two instructors can raise consciousness in the learners of English Language(Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 2001).

The composition of this paper has two purposes: First, clarifying the number of users and official recognition of NESTs/NNESTs with regard to their standpoints in ELT in Kurdistan, and second, to report the attempt of the areas use EL as their second or foreign language, for recruiting NESTs at educational institutions particularly in Kurdistan. In Kurdistan, English teachers are classified as NESTs or NNESTs. Under the native English teachers' argument, NESTs are recruited from overseas to teach school students side by side with local English teachers who consider themselves NNESTs (Boyle, 1997). The aim of this article is to bring an answer to the following question: Are NESTs

better English teachers than NNESTs? What result can we achieve it if we team up the both types?

II. RECOGNITION AND THE GLOBAL POSITION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English language has changed substantially over the 1500 years so as its use. It is estimated that English is the language of 21st century. It is spoken by 1.75 billion people – one in four of the world's population (Moussu, 2018). As the language of communications, science, information technology, business, entertainment, and diplomacy, it has increasingly become the operating system for the global conversation.

English holds a significant status over 70 countries that Kachru (1981) demonstrates as three concentric circles. The inner circle is America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Australia that English has spread considerably due to English migration. Outer circle, where English has spoken as L2 including Singapore, India, Jamaica, and Philippine as a result of colonization, "the English language" has become a valuable language in these areas. Finally, in the expanding circle, English is used widely in many countries in the Middle East such as Japan, China, Indonesia, and Korea.

Since the use of the EL is changing dramatically all over the world, in many parts of the world, the status is variable due to the geographical, historical, economical, and sociocultural aspects (Crystal, 1997). Many countries are shifting from the expanding circles into the outer circles as Graddol (2006) listing them as: Argentina, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ethiopia, Honduras, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Somalia, Sudan, Surinam, Sweden, Switzerland's, and the United Arab Emirates. These changes theoretically and practically play a vital role in the forms of NS/non-native speaker of English (NNS) and different types of English, such as English as a native language, English as a second language (ESL), and finally, English as a foreign language (EFL) (Kirkpatrick 2007: 27).

Recently, Kurdistan is one of these regions that the EL is developing rapidly and becoming increasingly popular among people, especially in the educational institutions because the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has adjusted the curriculums in the educational institutions, and the EL has been integrated in the curricula and has become the main subject. As a consequence, Kurdistan region is joining the expanding circle alike some Middle East countries. Kurdistan is becoming one of those countries that people chose to learn EL to accomplish their needs through and interact more easily with the world.

III. NATIVE VERSUS NON-NATIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER

According to Ortega (2009), 1950s and early 1960s were regarded as the appearance of the differences between L1 and L2. This research opened further doors for linguistic scholars to analyze the differences and similarities between NESTs and NNESTs, which was recognized as the school of contrastive analysis. Lippi (1977) indicates that the reality of language perception is often valued by the discrimination of a group's language.

Linguists show the growth of the EL worldwide. The fact is English spoken by people whom English is their L2 more than those English is their L1 (Kachru, 1981). Experts in this field agree that the prevalence of the EL has two folds; first, users of the language as L1/L2 and those who use the language as their foreign language.

Modern studies have highlighted the conflict of NESTs/ NNESTs. These studies have carried out to question "why stakeholders are opting to have NESTs than NNESTs" which usually reverted to students' choice. NESTs have illustrated as an ideal model on the other hand, NNESTs are previewed as less qualified linguistics teachers. Besides, administrators started to play "native speaker card" as a business model. This reached a point that even NESTs from the outer circles regarded as less proficient teachers when teaching English to speakers of other languages. Therefore, institutions made up from both NESTs and NNESTs (Canagarajah, 1999b). Having linguistic competence does not automatically make one a good teacher.

In addition, some of the manifestations are introducing the contrasts between NESTs and NNESTs that have arisen in the eighties (Kachru, 198l). It evaluates NNESTs as having a better-structured method of teaching grammar and dealing with linguistic difficulties. They have experience of learning English as an additional language (Cook, 2005). Whereas NESTs are more aware of the right use of the language, they could see learning as an issue of making students conscious and aware of pronunciation and syntax (Brain, 1999).

Furthermore, "ideal" teachers in this case might be a proficient and experienced NS with a good knowledge of the language and culture of the learners or proficient NNS with a strong empathy with the learners. Medgyes (2011) claims that the NSs are unconscious of the overall difficulties that NNSs have to deal, while Quirk (1990) maintains NS as better pedagogical models for ELT.

Many English language scholars point out that the dichotomy of the NS-NNS arguments does not seem to be linguistically acceptable as it appears as senseless socially. Thus, it becomes an intriguing area of discussion in linguistics. Most stakeholders prefer having a collaborative team of NESTs and NNESTs in their institutions to deliver a better education. As a consequence, in some of the Asian countries, collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs is used as a strategy to promote education level in ESL/EFL classrooms (Moussu, 2018).

IV. THE STATUS OF NESTs AND NNESTs IN KURDISTAN

As far as, the NESTs/NNESTs have become a forefront content of the discussion, and the argument has created a dichotomy belief among EL learners. In the last two decades, Kurdistan region reforms the educational system in a great deal to a raise a more proficient generation. For this reason, the government believes that the EL is one of the prime ways that can keep the area connected with the outside world and alter the socioeconomic mobility (Amin and Yaseen, 2017).

KRG has made a further effective adaptation to the school curriculum by starting to run English classes from kindergarten schools, broadening private schools, and rising EL courses. Recent researches suggest that people are much more interested in learning English than they were 20 years ago since the demand has increased, and knowing English is valued as an essential skill for interaction with the outer world (Sofi Karim, 2015).

As far as the necessity of the EL is concerned, some of the first reflections are presenting the differences between NESTs and NNESTs that have emerged in the eighties (Kachru, 1981). Clark and Paran (2007) assert that different countries, educational institutions, and thousands of teaching jobs have shown an extreme interest by L2 learners to NSs rather than NNSs; many NNSs are even considered as being not appropriate for ELT jobs; and Kurdistan is no exception (Amin and Yaseen, 2017).

As the quest of learning English increases, the demand of people for NS rises as well because they want to acquire the proficiency in the target language. For this reason, Canagarajah (1999b) raises an extreme point that in EFL contexts, native speakers will be better teachers because of their cultural background. The majority of learners from outer and expanding circles advocate this idea by attending English courses and those universities where NSs are modeled. Moreover, another common issue in Kurdistan is that when administrators are hiring ELT teachers, they consider being native/non-native. Although NNESTs are having an incredible deal of training, sometimes they may be regarded as inferior language teachers because of their lack of proficiency in the target language, but they will still be preferred because of their multicultural experiences (Moussu, 2018).

It is believed that NNS teachers have better structures of teaching grammar, and they are more able to come over grammatical difficulties. They can improve language learning more beneficially and accurately. However, a common explanation from the institutes in Kurdistan is the poor level of EL skills of local teachers. Although NESTs are considered to be the right users of the language, they can see learning as a matter of making their students aware and consider on pronunciation and syntax seriously

V. AN INTEGRATED APPROACH OF NESTs AND NNESTs IN ELT

As far as NESTs/NNESTs are concerned, Kachru (1992) modified his study of the three circles. He has re-divided the ELS according to their lower, inner, and higher proficiency rather than according to their ethnicity. In addition, Labov (1969) uses the argument that the quality of a language should not be valued against that of other, and he stresses his idea claiming that the dichotomy between these two issues is ethnocentric and it is insupportable. Accordingly, the cooperative approach between NESTs and NNESTs has emerged as a product key for a progressive success in ESL classrooms because the majority of the EL teachers around the world are NNESTs (Crystal, 1997).

Recent studies advocate the co-operative method between NESTs and NNESTs in educational institutions which have developed widely. This co-operation of the NESTs/NNESTs has recommended by a large number of educators, linguistic scholars, and administrators to generate a new environment of ELT in areas where English is rated as L2 (Nurul, 2011). A range of studies, (Mahboob 2004; Medgyes 1992; Nayar; 1994), support the argument of collaboration NESTs/NNESTs that may provide a more propitiated ground for ESL/EFL students. In addition, an integrated team teaching has been applied to assist ESL/EFL learners' level of proficiency in the target language by achieving benefit from the both instructors' skills and experiences. As they are regarded as each other's complement due to their mutual precepts, advantages, and limitations.

This idea has officially taken place in several countries in the ELT institutions around the world as a part of education, where they have considered as expanding circles such as JET Program (Japan Exchange and Teaching Program), the Taiwanese Foreign English Teachers Recruitment Program, the English Program in Korea, and the Chinese (NEST Scheme) in Hong Kong. The work of Li Yi (2010) shows that many NESTs have been recruited in these areas to commit with the local teachers in TEFL. Medgyes (1994) summaries the concept who is better is senseless and unhelpful since strengths and drawbacks of the NS and NNS teachers balance each other out Finally, it has been acknowledged that NESTs can be better teachers in pronunciation, spelling, and culture. Rampton (1990) has listed the NESTs according to three aspects: Language expertise, language affiliation, and language inheritance. They are praised for their oral skills, variety of cultural knowledge, and vocabulary. On the other hand, NNESTs were graded for their experiences as L2 learners and rigorous pedagogy.

VI. COLLABORATION OF NESTs AND NNESTs IN ELT IN KURDISTAN

In what follows, it can be understood that the majority of the EL learners in Kurdistan and the outer circles are showing the attempt of having a cooperative team of NESTs/NNESTs. The existence of cultural knowledge and society in teaching a foreign language is an essential principle. Therefore, NESTs

possess the ability to instruct their native language culture and provide a real-life experience to the learners of the target language.

Linguistic scholars deeply have analyzed the NESTs/NNESTs issue, consequently to construct a proficient an integrated team in the ELT. Some of the researchers believe that proficiency of students can be improved by nationality of teachers (Sofi Karim, 2015). In accord with Khudhur (2012) work on the conditions of learning EL, Kurdistan does not experience in supporting EL learners to attain self-confidence and proficiency since it is mostly based on the traditional-based language learning system. Furthermore, it is mainly dependable on local teachers who lack cultural affiliation, self-identification, and political allegiance. Therefore, English learners in Kurdistan have realized that it may be one of the essential points to learn the target language from a NS as Canagarajah (1999b) argues an extreme point; NSs can be a good teacher in ELT contexts due to their cultural background.

A study by Cheung (2002) shows that "NESTs cause development in listening skill in students," where they collaborate with the school curriculum in Korea. Similarly, Kurdish learners can benefit from NSs fluency, and students can involve more with language of the NSs (Amin and Yaseen, 2017). Further studies by Khan (2011) point out that Saudi students have a low communication ability of the EL because of their lack of communication in English in their daily life. From Khan's investigation, we can see Kurdish students since they do not use the EL outside the classroom, and even in the classrooms, they may use their L1 (Khudhur, 2012). Moreover, deficiency of NESTs in Kurdistan has created a less motivated environment to learn English. Khan continues his opinion stating that a large number of learners has poor communication skill so that they make lexical errors. Likewise, the main goal of interaction with NESTs is to enable learners to achieve a communicative competence that fulfills accuracy, fluency, and control of grammar and vocabulary.

In reference to Khudhur (2012), Kurdistan can provide an adequate learning strategy because NNESTs can benefit their students and choose the best strategies of learning and teaching. However, students still find this insufficient, and they seek to incorporate with NESTs because many are in favor of native-like accent which they find it difficult to get it from their NNESTs. Therefore, this can be considered as another encouraging point of collaboration between NESTs and NNESTs in Kurdistan.

Several studies have been conducted in the presence of NESTs in classrooms. Many of them have concluded a positive result on the learners they come to the point that, prosperous language learning depends on the interaction pattern more than the method.

To sum up, both NESTs and NNESTs working collaboratively can provide a better learning environment for ESL students in Kurdistan. The reason is NNESTs being serious, and they are context-based instructors while NESTs are more flexible in teaching their language through games and songs. Students can obtain benefit from NESTs oral skills and NNESTs pedagogical education.

CONCLUSION

As globalization steps forward, the numbers of NNSs increase since they use EL as a communicative tool in the outer world. In the past 20 years, linguistic scholars are more interested in the integration of NESTs/NNESTs than on the dichotomy approaches on these concepts. The aim of this paper was to indicate the position of NS/NNS in the ELT, in Kurdistan. It demonstrated the polemic notions of manifold scholars with regard to NESTs/NNESTs proficiency and recognition. Overall, it is believed that pair interaction and group activities from NESTs/NNESTs should be provided in an ELT environment in Kurdistan. Finally, further supplementary studies can explain and recommend more about the collaboration of team teaching and obtaining benefits from their qualifications. A combined team can raise students' achievement

REFERENCES

Amin, M. and M. Yaseen. (2017). English language teaching methods and reforms in English curriculum in Iraq; an overview. *J. Univ. Hum. Dev*., 3(3): 578-583.

Boyle, J. (1997). Native-speaker teachers of English in Hong Kong. *Lang. Educ*., 11: 163-181.

Brutt-Griffler, J. and Samimy, K. (2001). Transcending the nativeness paradigm. *World Englishes*. 20(1): 99-106.

Canagarajah, A. S. (1999b). Interrogating the "native speaker fallacy": Non-linguistic roots, non-pedagogical results. In: G. Braine (Ed.), Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, Mahwah, NJ. p. 77-92.

Cheung, Y. L. (2002). The Attitude of University Students in Hong Kong Towards Native and Nonnative Teachers of English. Master's Thesis, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Clark, E. and A. Paran. (2007). The employability of non-native-speaker teachers of EFL: A UK survey. *System*, 35(4): 407-430.

Cook, V. (2005). *Basing teaching on the L2 user. In: E. Llurda (Ed.), Non-Native Language Teachers: Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession*. Springer, New York. p. 47-61.

Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Graddol, D. (2006). *English Next*. The British Council, London.

Kachru, B. (1981). *Models for non-native Englishes*. In: B. Kachru (Ed.), The Other Tongue: English Across Cultures. University of Illinois Press, Chicago. p. 31-57.

Kachru, B. B. (1992). *Teaching world Englishes*. In: Kachru B. B., editor. The other Tongue. English Across Cultures. 2nd ed. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press. p. 355-365.

Khan, I. (2011). Learning difficulties in English: Diagnosis and pedagogy. *Saudi Arabia. Int. Res. J.*, 7(2): 1248-1257. Retrieved August 1st, 2012. From http://interesjournals.org/ER/ pdf/2011/July/Khan.pdf

Khudhur, S. (2012). Barriers to English Language Learning in Kurdistan: A Comparative Study of Kurdish Students' English Language Learning Experiences in the UK and Kurdistan. Master's thesis. The University of Hertfordshire, UK.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2007). *World English's: Implications for International Communication and English Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Labov, W. (1969). Contraction, deletion, and inherent variability of the English. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, Bethesda,

Md. Li Yi, W. (2010). Preparing NESTS and NNESTS for Team Teaching at the Pre-Service Level. Available from: http://cscanada.net/index. php/sll/article/view/j.sll.1923156320120401.2000/3385. [Last accessed on 2012 Dec 20].

Lippi, G. (1997). *English with an accent language; idealogy, and discrimination in the United State*. Routledge, London and New Yorks.

Mahboob, A. (2003). Status of Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers in the United States. Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Mahboob, A. (2004). *Native or non-native: What do the students think?* In: L. D. Kamhi-Stein (Ed.), Learning and Teaching from Experience: Perspectives on Non-native English-Speaking Professionals. University of Michigan Press, Michigan.

Medgyes, P. (1992). *Native or non-native: Who's worth more? ELT. J.*, 46(4): 340-349.

Medgyes, P. (1994). *The Non-Native Teacher*. Macmillan, London.

Medgyes, P. (1999). *Language training: A neglected area in teacher education*. In: B. George (Ed.), Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching. Laurence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ. p.177-196.

Medgyes, P. (2011). *When the teacher is a non-native speaker. In: Heine and Heine Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. 3rd ed. Thomas Learning, United States of America. p. 429.

Moussu, L. (2018). Strengths of NESTs and NNESTs. In: J. I. Liontas (Ed.), The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching. Wiley/Blackwell Publishers, Hoboken, NJ. p. 1217-1223. https:// doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0813

Nayar, P. B. (1994). *Who's English is it?* TESL EJ. 1(1): F-1.

Nurul, I. M. (2011). Collaboration between Native and Non-native English-Speaking Teachers. Vol. 2. Canadian Academy of Oriental and Occidental Culture, Canada. p. 33-41.

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Hodder Arnold, London.

Quirk, R. (1990). Langue varieties and standard language. *Engl. Today*, 21: 3-10.

Rampton, M. B. H. (1990). Displacing the native speaker: Expertise, affiliation, and inheritance. *ELT. J.*, 44(2): 97-101.

Sofi Karim, M. (2015). English Language Teaching in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.3494.2564.