



## CHALLENGING NATIVE SPEAKERISM: TEFL IN INDONESIA BEYOND NATIVE SPEAKER FALLACY

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### Abstract

This article examines the English native speaker fallacy and its implications in the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Indonesia. The NS fallacy refers to the belief that Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) are inherently superior and more competent in teaching English, disregarding the importance of their Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PKC). Through a synthesis research methodology, this article involves examining, integrating, and synthesizing existing conceptual and empirical studies related to teacher professional identity, NESTs, TEFL, and its implementation in Indonesia. The findings suggest that the notion of standard English taught in EFL classrooms should be questioned, as it is influenced by linguistic imperialism and marginalizes World Englishes. In Indonesia, the dominance of standardized English tests further reinforces the perception that NESTs are more competent in teaching standard English. To challenge native speakerism, the article argues for a shift in focus from linguistic proficiency to pedagogical expertise when evaluating NESTs' qualifications. Emphasizing the value of Pedagogical Content Knowledge can lead to a more inclusive and equitable hiring process, where NESTs are assessed based on their teaching capabilities and experience. By prioritizing pedagogical expertise, educational institutions can promote a culturally responsive learning environment that embraces linguistic diversity and enhances the quality of English language education in a globalized world.

**Keywords:** speakerism; NESTs; TEFL; professional identity; Indonesia

### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji kekeliruan tentang penutur asli Bahasa Inggris dan implikasinya dalam bidang pengajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (TEFL) di Indonesia. Kekeliruan ini merujuk pada keyakinan bahwa pengajar yang berasal dari Penutur Asli Bahasa Inggris (NESTs) lebih unggul dan kompeten dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris, dan mengabaikan pentingnya Pengetahuan Konten Pedagogis (PKC) mereka. Melalui metodologi penelitian sintesis, penulis melakukan pemeriksaan, integrasi, dan sintesis studi konseptual dan empiris terkait dengan identitas profesional guru, Guru NESTs, TEFL, dan implementasinya dalam konteks TEFL di Indonesia. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konsep standar Bahasa Inggris yang diajarkan di kelas TEFL perlu dipertanyakan, karena dipengaruhi oleh imperialisme linguistik dan mengabaikan Bahasa Inggris Dunia (World Englishes). Di Indonesia, dominasi tes bahasa Inggris berstandar semakin memperkuat persepsi bahwa NESTs lebih kompeten dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris. Untuk menguji istilah native speakerism, penelitian ini mengusulkan harus ada pergeseran fokus dari kemahiran linguistik ke keahlian pedagogis saat melihat kualifikasi NESTs. Menekankan nilai Pengetahuan Konten Pedagogis dapat mengarah pada proses perekrutan yang lebih inklusif dan adil, di mana NESTs dinilai berdasarkan kemampuan dan pengalaman mengajar mereka. Dengan memprioritaskan keahlian pedagogis, lembaga pendidikan dapat mempromosikan lingkungan pembelajaran yang responsif



*secara budaya yang merangkul keragaman linguistik dan meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan bahasa Inggris di dunia yang mengglobal.*

**Kata Kunci:** *speakerism; NEST; TEFL; identitas profesional; Indonesia*

## 1. Introduction

The presence of Native English-Speaking Teachers (NESTs) in TEFL has been a longstanding topic of debate and raises important questions about language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and the qualifications necessary for effective English language instruction. Despite the larger number of Local English Teachers (LETs) in many countries, there persists a strong preference for recruiting NESTs. This preference is evident in empirical research, such as the study by Mahboob and Golden (2013), which reveals a clear distinction between NESTs and LETs, with a bias towards selecting NESTs for English teaching positions. Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014) further support this perspective, emphasizing that NESTs are still considered the "gold standard" in terms of English language proficiency and cultural familiarity, particularly in East and Southeast Asia.

However, this preference for NESTs has resulted in discrimination against LETs, who may possess equally valuable qualifications and expertise in English language teaching. In countries like Indonesia, the preference for NESTs is widespread, leading to the prioritization of individuals perceived as "English native speakers" in the recruitment process, often at the expense of considering their educational qualifications (Alvarez, 2024). This preference stems from the belief that NESTs not only embody ideal English teaching standards but also bring prestige to educational institutions.

This paper aims to critically examine the professional identity of NESTs and its implications for the teaching profession in the context of TEFL in Indonesia. It begins by exploring the discourse surrounding the criteria for defining an "English native speaker," acknowledging the complexities and challenges associated with this concept. The paper then delves into the multifaceted factors that contribute to the professional identity of NESTs, including language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and teaching experience. By analyzing the professional identity of NESTs, the paper seeks to shed light on the potential biases and limitations of prioritizing NESTs in TEFL.

Furthermore, the paper will investigate how the professional identity of NESTs influences TEFL practices in Indonesia, examining the impact on educational policies, and the broader English language learning environment. By addressing the research questions, this paper aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the role of NESTs in TEFL and encourage discussions on inclusive hiring practices, recognition of diverse qualifications, and the promotion of equal opportunities for all qualified English language teachers, regardless of their native speaker status.

## 2. Method

The synthesis research methodology is utilized in this study to address the research questions. This choice is influenced by various factors, including the nature of the research questions, the availability of relevant literature, the limited number of scholarly works in the form of a literature review. The synthesis research methodology involves examining, integrating, and synthesizing existing conceptual and empirical studies related to teacher professional identity, NESTs, TEFL, and its implementation in the context of TEFL in Indonesia.

The concept of synthesis research was initially introduced by Onwuegbuzie, Leach, and Collins (2017), who advocate for synthesizing data from various related empirical studies. By employing this approach, the study aims to build upon existing research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Since the study relies solely on available related literature, issues related to validity, reliability, or ethical concerns are not addressed, as the data used is unreactive and poses no harm to human participants (Gray, 2004; Pole & Morrison, 2003).



In practice, the Monash education library was selected as the primary online database to initiate the search for relevant conceptual and empirical studies. The Monash Library was chosen for its reliability, wide range of journal providers, and researchers' access to its database. To focus the search on relevant journals within the Education Monash library, three key journal providers were selected: ERIC (Education Resources Information Centre), Scopus, and ProQuest Education Journal. These providers are known for their reputable and high-quality publications on educational topics. The search for relevant journals involved using selected keywords such as "teacher professional identity," "NESTs," "implication," "TEFL," and "Indonesia." Boolean operators (e.g., OR, AND, NOT) were employed to refine the search and narrow down the results to relevant materials. After conducting a thorough search for relevant articles using the Monash education library's databases, we identified and analyzed 35 articles that were pertinent to the study's focus. These articles were selected based on their alignment with the keywords which were crucial in refining the search to include studies specifically addressing the role of NESTs in TEFL contexts within Indonesia.

The obtained journal articles were carefully evaluated for quality and relevance. After completing the search for relevant literature, the selected journals were thoroughly examined, analyzed, and synthesized to draw conclusions, present new insights, and apply the findings to the specific context of TEFL in Indonesia. By adopting the synthesis research methodology and employing a rigorous and systematic approach to the literature review, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the complex and important topic of teacher professional identity, NESTs, and TEFL in the context of Indonesia.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1 The Discourse of Nativeness in TEFL**

The classification of native speakers in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) has been a topic of discussion among linguists for many years. Various attempts have been made to define the term "native speaker" and establish specific characteristics and scope for it. The concept of nativeness is closely connected to issues of identity. One commonly accepted definition of nativeness in language refers to individuals who acquire a language from early childhood (Davies, 2003). This definition associates native speakers with monolingual groups living in homogeneous communities. Chomsky (1965), a prominent linguist, supports this definition by stating that a native speaker is someone who lives in a completely homogeneous speech community, possesses perfect knowledge of its language, and remains unaffected by grammatically irrelevant conditions such as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, or errors in language application during actual communication (Houghton, Rivers & Hashimoto, 2018).

However, this definition becomes problematic when applied to individuals who acquire multiple languages simultaneously during early linguistic development. In Indonesia, for example, balanced bilingualism is common, with many children growing up exposed to two or more languages, typically the local language and Bahasa Indonesia (Lestari, 2017; Juwariyah, 2021). On a global scale, Baker and Wright (2017) argue that more than half of the world's population is bilingual. Consequently, defining what a native speaker looks like in bilingual individuals becomes challenging. Determining which language becomes the native language of a bilingual person or whether they become native speakers of both languages poses a significant dilemma. In such situations, the aforementioned definition appears inadequate and fails to accommodate these complexities.

Moreover, the concept of nativeness not only presents challenges but also hinders progress in the distinction between native speakers and non-native speakers. Davies (2003) questions the relevance of defining nativeness in language due to the lack of consensus on an appropriate definition of a native speaker. He argues that the notion of a native speaker is largely constructed based on an idealized acceptance. Similarly, Kramersch (1998) suggests that native speaker status should not be determined solely by linguistic parameters but rather by the acceptance of the group that creates the distinction



between native and non-native speakers. In essence, the classification of someone as a native English speaker depends on various social parameters, including how they are perceived and recognized by the community based on appearance and language use.

This biased definition of nativeness has become a significant issue in the field of TEFL. The belief that individuals from English-speaking western countries such as the UK, Australia, and the USA are the only authentic native speakers of English has greatly impacted their employability in TEFL positions. This contentious belief has led to the problematic notion that the ideal English teacher should exclusively come from these countries. Phillipson (1992) refers to this belief as the "native speaker fallacy," while Holliday (2006) further labels it as "native speakerism." Both concepts assume that white teachers from western countries outperform non-native English teachers in terms of linguistic ability and pedagogical performance. Consequently, this assumption has resulted in a preference for hiring NESTs in English courses offered by educational institutions in Asia, driven by market demand (Nasir, Yawan & Saifullah, 2022). This preference is primarily influenced by the majority of English learners in certain Asian countries expressing a preference for white teachers or NESTs as their ideal English instructors (Ruecker & Ives, 2015; Sari, Pratolo & Purwanti, 2020).

In Indonesia, certain educational institutions, particularly in major cities, opt to NESTs with the aim of boosting their enrollment numbers by promoting the belief that NESTs represent a higher standard of English proficiency. Examples of such institutions include EF (English First) and IALF (Indonesian Australian Language Foundation), which predominantly employ teachers from native English-speaking countries. These institutions utilize NESTs as a marketing strategy to attract potential learners and ultimately increase their profitability. Regrettably, this preference for NESTs has resulted in a stereotype that considers them superior to Local English Teachers (LETs) in terms of salary, job opportunities, and overall desirability within the field of TEFL (Alvarez, 2024).

This discrimination based on nativeness can have adverse effects on LETs, leading to disparities in opportunities and treatment. However, this paper aims to refrain from engaging in the "comparative fallacy" between NESTs and NNSTs and avoids determining which group holds more value, as they represent two distinct identities and possess their own unique strengths (Selvi, Yazan & Mahboob, 2023). Instead, the focus of this investigation will specifically center on the concept of NESTs within the context of TEFL. To comprehensively address this issue, the following sections will examine the professional identity of NESTs, evaluate the validity of considering them as the ideal English teachers based on current research, and explore the implications of this perspective on TEFL practices in Indonesia. Through this analysis, we aim to shed light on the complexities surrounding the discourse on NESTs and its impact on the broader educational landscape.

### **3.2 Professional identity of NESTs and its implication in TEFL in Indonesia**

The exploration of teacher identity has been extensively examined by Palmer (1997) in a book chapter titled "The Heart of a Teacher: Identity and Integrity in Teaching." Palmer addresses the challenges teachers encounter in integrating their own selves, the subject matter they teach, and their students. He emphasizes the significance of recognizing and embracing one's authentic self, which he refers to as "self-knowledge," as a crucial step in effectively merging these essential dimensions in teaching. According to Palmer (1997), "we teach who we are," and without comprehending ourselves, we cannot fully understand our students or effectively convey our intended teachings (p.15). Teacher identity is viewed as an ongoing and dynamic process, influenced by both internal factors such as emotions (O'Connor, 2008; Zembylas, 2003) and external factors including life experiences and the teaching context (; Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Gordon & Barrantes-Elizondo, 2024).

Emotions play a critical role in teaching and learning. Palmer (1997) argues that emotions, alongside the soul and mind, lie at the core of a teacher's being. When emotions are disconnected from teaching practice, education may produce "minds that do not know how to feel." Palmer (1997) refers to this as the "Paradox in teaching and learning," where teachers tend to separate "head from heart, facts



from feelings, theory from practice, and teaching from learning." Expanding on this notion, O'Connor (2008) suggests that discussions on teacher professional identity should encompass a comprehensive understanding of how emotions can guide teachers in their professional roles, as emotions and emotional labor contribute to shaping and defining a teacher's professional identity, as argued by Zembylas (2003). Additionally, Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006) emphasize the significance of caring relationships in teaching and believe that receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness are essential aspects of education within the school community. However, this perspective has been overlooked by many educational stakeholders in postmodern education.

In practical terms, a teacher's professional identity undergoes continuous development through interactions within the learning community, including students, colleagues, parents, and society. Beijaard et al. (2000) refer to this learning community as the teacher's "teaching context," which encompasses the classroom environment, cultural aspects, and norms prevalent within an educational setting. School cultures may involve expectations from the community, parents, students, colleagues, and the educational institution itself. These interactions and the broader teaching context shape a teacher's professional identity over time. Moreover, drawing on Bromme's work (1991), Beijaard et al. (2000) categorize the characteristics of teacher professional identity into three primary dimensions: "teachers as subject matter experts, teachers as pedagogical experts, and teachers as didactical experts" (p. 751). This concept is closely connected to Shulman's (1987) seminal work on teacher professional identity, particularly through the notion of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which encompasses both subject matter knowledge (SMK) and Pedagogical Knowledge (PK). In recent years, this framework has expanded to include additional elements, such as knowledge of the curriculum, knowledge of the teaching context, and technological pedagogical knowledge.

In Indonesia, the professional identity of teachers is regulated by the Ministry of National Education through document number 16 in the year 2007, which outlines four competencies: pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies (Yawan et al., 2023). These competencies are collectively referred to as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PKC). Therefore, this paper will employ the concept of PKC to critically examine the professional identity of NESTs within the context of TEFL in Indonesia. By utilizing this framework, we can gain valuable insights into how NESTs navigate their roles as teachers, subject matter experts, and pedagogical practitioners in the Indonesian TEFL setting.

### **3.3 Subject-Matter Knowledge of NESTs**

An agreed-upon characteristic of professional teachers is their deep knowledge of the subject they teach, as subject matter knowledge is crucial for effective teaching and learning. In the context of TEFL, there are varying perspectives on the knowledge base of English teachers. However, consensus has been reached regarding the essential types of knowledge that English teachers should possess.

Troudi (2005) identifies two types of knowledge: content knowledge and cultural knowledge. Content knowledge in TEFL refers to a teacher's understanding of the English language taught in the classroom, including its system, structure, syntax, phonology, and everyday usage. NESTs are often seen as having a distinct advantage in this aspect, as they acquire English as their first language from early childhood. Their natural fluency, representative accent, and idiomatic expressions are often perceived as ideal qualities by many educational institutions, leading to the phenomenon of native speakerism. This assumption, which assumes that Caucasian teachers possess comprehensive knowledge of the target language, reinforces the perception that they are the best English teachers.

Troudi (2005) also distinguishes cultural knowledge into two categories: large culture and small culture. Large culture encompasses traditions, customs, nationalities, ethnicities, and their influence on everyday life. Small culture refers to specific behaviors and values embedded in society. NESTs are often viewed as representatives of English-speaking cultures and are believed to have a good



understanding of the target language in terms of fluency, language usage, authenticity, and the ability to explain natural language usage.

In the context of Indonesia, both LETs and students commonly believe that NESTs are the ideal English teachers because they can provide more exposure to English in a speaking environment. English is less commonly spoken in educational and public settings in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context like Indonesia, leading to a preference for NESTs (Nur et al., 2022). Research conducted by Lin, Wu, and Wang (2020) in China supports this argument, as their findings indicate that a majority of NESTs in China have a better understanding of the target language, its related cultural nuances, and idiomatic language skills compared to non-native English-speaking teachers. Consequently, NESTs are often perceived as the preferred choice for teaching English in TEFL contexts due to their perceived linguistic superiority and cultural familiarity.

The perception of NESTs as the epitome of good English in the TEFL context raises several problematic issues that warrant further discussion. The association of good English with NESTs creates a circular definition where NESTs are seen as white-skinned individuals who possess the capacity to teach standard English (Holliday, 2005). This perspective perpetuates the idea that only NESTs, primarily from English-speaking countries, are qualified to teach English effectively, leading to biases in hiring practices and limiting opportunities for equally competent NNSTs.

This perspective clashes with the concept of English as an International Language, where English is no longer solely associated with English-speaking countries. The phenomenon of World English, as described by Bruthiaux (2010), acknowledges the existence of diverse varieties of English, such as Chinglish, Singlish, and Spanglish, which have their own unique characteristics in terms of accents, cultures, and expressions. These varieties have been standardized and applied in educational institutions (Juwariah, 2021). In Indonesia, English is commonly spoken with an Indonesian style, reflecting the influence of local culture on the language (Saifullah & Yawan, 2023).

The emergence of World English challenges the traditional notion of standard English and raises questions about what should be taught in EFL classrooms. The role of NESTs in this context becomes crucial as their identity is closely tied to the notion of standard English. However, it is essential to recognize that World Englishes are valid forms of the language and should be respected and embraced in English language teaching. Addressing these complexities requires a critical examination of the native speaker fallacy and a reconsideration of what constitutes standard English in terms of content and cultural knowledge. It is important to foster a more inclusive and diverse approach to language teaching, recognizing the richness and validity of different English varieties while promoting effective communication and understanding among learners. By moving away from the exclusive association of good English with NESTs and embracing the diversity of World English, TEFL can become a more inclusive and dynamic field, better reflecting the global nature of the language and the people who use it.

Regarding the concept of Standard English (SE), it is important to clarify its meaning. SE refers to a form of language that is considered correct and acceptable by the majority of its speakers. It involves a dialect or variety of English that has undergone a process of selection, codification, and acceptance (Crystal, 2004). Non-Standard English (NSE), on the other hand, refers to any variety that differs in spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation from the standard form, encompassing regional dialects, English pidgins, and social varieties (Crystal, 2004). It is crucial to recognize that each English-speaking country has its specific standard of English, and many of these varieties are protected because they hold unique cultural and linguistic identities. Crystal (2004) emphasizes that each country where English is the first language is conscious of its linguistic identity and is eager to preserve it from the influence of others. This implies that the notion of SE may vary depending on the geographical context.

In the context of TEFL, the question of which variety of Standard English (SE) should be taught and whether Non-Standard English (NSE) should be included in the curriculum is an important one. While SE is crucial for effective communication in many formal and academic settings, it is equally



important to recognize and respect the existence of NSE varieties. Incorporating NSE in the EFL curriculum can have several benefits. Firstly, including NSE can enhance learners' language awareness and linguistic flexibility (Selvi et al., 2023). It exposes them to different language varieties and helps them develop a broader understanding of English as a dynamic and evolving language. This can be particularly valuable in preparing learners to navigate diverse language contexts and communicate effectively with speakers of different English varieties.

Secondly, incorporating NSE can contribute to learners' cultural sensitivity. Language and culture are closely intertwined, and by including NSE, learners gain insights into the cultural contexts in which these varieties are used (Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). This can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of different cultures and promote intercultural competence. Moreover, NESTs in EFL classrooms need to be prepared to handle local socio-cultural differences sensitively. These differences may manifest in language usage, behavior, and classroom dynamics. NESTs should strive to create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment where all students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds are valued and integrated into the language learning process. By acknowledging and embracing linguistic variation, NESTs can enrich the language learning experience and promote mutual respect and understanding among students from different cultural backgrounds. Ultimately, the selection of the language variety to be taught in the EFL classroom and the approach to dealing with socio-cultural differences require careful consideration, sensitivity, and openness to fostering a comprehensive language learning experience that goes beyond a single standardized form of English. By incorporating NSE and addressing local socio-cultural differences, TEFL can become a more inclusive and culturally responsive field, better preparing learners for real-world language use and promoting intercultural understanding.

Getu (2016) emphasizes the importance for NESTs to refrain from perceiving Non-Standard English (NSE) as inferior or deficient, including non-standard dialects spoken by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This avoidance of stereotypes is crucial in effectively navigating the social and linguistic differences present in the classroom (Wang & Fang, 2020). Instead, a primary focus should be placed on mutual accommodation in multilingual and multicultural EFL environments. NESTs must demonstrate awareness of the cultural and linguistic disparities among their students and strive to avoid one-sided accommodation. It is crucial to acknowledge that teaching and learning involve a negotiation of identities between NESTs and EFL learners. Insufficient awareness of potential conflicts arising from cultural disconnections, as highlighted by Palmer (1997), can impede the effectiveness of teaching and learning. As facilitators of identity negotiation, NESTs should accommodate the local culture and embrace linguistic diversity to establish an inclusive and harmonious learning environment. Ultimately, nurturing mutual accommodation and facilitating a balanced exchange of cultural and linguistic knowledge between NESTs and EFL learners can result in a more profound and enriching educational experience. By refraining from stereotypes, acknowledging differences, and embracing diversity, NESTs can promote identity negotiation and foster an environment that values and respects the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students (Getu, 2016).

### **3.4 Pedagogical Knowledge of NESTs**

In addition to PCK, the pedagogical knowledge (PK) of NESTs significantly contributes to their success in the EFL classroom. PK refers to the understanding and application of various teaching strategies that evolve through experience and professional practice. Scholars have proposed different definitions of pedagogy, each shedding light on distinct aspects of teaching and learning. Shuman (1987) defines pedagogy as encompassing broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that transcend subject matter, emphasizing the importance of effective classroom management in facilitating learning across disciplines. Loughran (2002) highlights the relationship between teaching and learning, emphasizing the role of meaningful practice in fostering student growth



and understanding. Corner (2005) describes pedagogy as the art and science of educating children, emphasizing the holistic nature of pedagogy that combines artistic and scientific elements in the educational process.

Considering these definitions, it becomes evident that pedagogy involves the knowledge and application of diverse teaching strategies used by teachers to effectively transmit subject matter knowledge. Successful NESTs leverage their pedagogical knowledge to tailor their teaching approaches to students' individual potentials and interests, creating engaging and relevant learning experiences in the EFL classroom (Lin et al., 2020). Furthermore, Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), often associated with the art of teaching, is acquired through teacher education or teaching experience. In EFL contexts, candidates for NEST positions typically need to hold TEFL certification, which can be obtained through various courses such as CELTA, TESOL, and Trinity Certificate. These courses provide participants with a certificate that attests to their eligibility to teach in EFL classrooms. However, it is important to note that in some cases, qualification requirements may not be as stringent, and being a native-like English speaker may be considered sufficient.

Rivers (2016) conducted a study on the effects of native speakerism in employment advertisements in Japanese higher education. He highlights the commoditization of the term "native speaker" during teacher recruitment processes, which leads to an overemphasis on superficial elements such as skin color, race, and country of origin. This emphasis overlooks essential aspects of a teacher, including pedagogical knowledge, curriculum understanding, and familiarity with the educational context. Rivers refers to this phenomenon as "qualifying sociosemiotic association," which undermines the significance of pedagogical knowledge and teaching expertise. Being a native-like English speaker does not automatically guarantee possessing the necessary teaching skills and strategies required to effectively educate EFL learners. Therefore, NESTs should be evaluated based on their comprehensive qualifications and teaching capabilities rather than solely on their native-like linguistic attributes.

To address this issue, educational institutions should strive for more holistic and inclusive teacher recruitment practices. Recognizing the value of both linguistic proficiency and pedagogical expertise is crucial for ensuring the provision of high-quality English language education in EFL contexts. By placing greater emphasis on a candidate's qualifications and teaching experience, rather than solely on their native speaker status, educational institutions can better equip NESTs to meet the diverse needs of EFL learners and create more effective and enriching language learning experiences.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The discussion has highlighted two significant issues in the context of TEFL. The first issue is the Native Speaker (NS) fallacy, which perpetuates the belief that NESTs are the ideal English teachers, while overlooking the importance of their PKC. While NESTs may possess linguistic competence and cultural representation, the notion of standard English taught in EFL classrooms remains debatable. Standard English, associated with linguistic imperialism, has been influenced by political power and economic agendas from English-speaking countries, marginalizing World Englishes like Singlish, Spanglish, and Chinglish. In Indonesia, the dominance of TOEFL and IELTS as compulsory university entry, graduation requirements, and job criteria, has further legitimized the perception that NESTs are more competent in teaching standard English in TEFL settings. Consequently, there has been an increase in the number of NESTs working in both private and public educational institutions. To challenge the effects of native speakerism, it is crucial to prioritize professional identity, particularly PKC over linguistic and superficial factors when considering the recruitment of NESTs. Therefore, the focus should shift from "who the teacher is" to "what the teacher knows" in the context of TEFL. By valuing and prioritizing PCK, educational institutions can empower NESTs to deliver high-quality English language education, embracing linguistic diversity and promoting a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment for EFL learners. However, this study, relying on existing literature and theoretical frameworks without direct interviews with NESTs, risks overlooking nuanced



personal perspectives crucial for understanding native speakerism in TEFL. Future studies should prioritize qualitative interviews with NESTs investigate their personal experiences, professional development needs, and responses to native speakerism, enhancing understanding of their roles and challenges across varied educational settings.

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