

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section explores the strength and weakness of Native Speaking English Teachers (NESTs). The second section reviews the current situations of NESTs' teaching in Asian countries. The last section focuses on the current situations of NESTs' teaching in Taiwan.

2.1 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Native Speaking English Teachers

The belief that native speaking English teachers (NEST), compared with non-native English speaking teachers (NNEST), were necessarily the ideal teachers in ESL/EFL teaching content was widely accepted once. Phillipson (1992) proposed that NETs were able to serve as a 'perfect language model' for ESL /EFL students. In addition, NETs were rich sources of culture information and a strong motivator for getting students to talk in English. A. S. Canagarajah (1999) reviewed in his study that "Noam Chomsky's linguistic concepts lie at the heart of the discourse that promotes the superiority of the native speaker teachers. The Chomskyan notion that the native speaker is the authority on the language and that he or she is the ideal informant provides an understandable advantage to native speaker in grammaticality judgments."(p.78) Medgyes (1994) conducted an international survey whose hypotheses were: (1) NESTs and non-NESTs differ in terms of their language competence and teaching practice; and (2) the discrepancy in language competence accounts for most of the differences found in their teaching practice. The questionnaire of this survey was circulated among 216 native and non-native teachers who work in 10 countries. He argued that the differences found in these two kinds of teachers' teaching were closely related to their linguistic competencies. Considering that the earlier studies relied heavily on data obtained from

questionnaires, Arva and Medgyes (2000) conducted a small-scale ethno-cognitive study to supplement their previous findings with primary sources. In this study, Arva and Medgyes has observed the teaching behavior of NESTs and NNESTs in the Hungarian classroom and analyzed 10 video-recorded language lessons and 10 follow-up interviews with the recorded teachers. Arva and Medgyes concluded that the primary advantage attributed to NESTs lie in their superior English-language competence. NESTs can use languages spontaneously and in the most diverse communicative situation while NNESTs' usage was felt to be "out-of-date, smacking of textbook language" and consequently, NNESTs would pass their mistakes and inappropriacies to their students (p. 360-363). Followed by Arve and Medges, Maum (2003) further investigated 40 native- and 40 non-native-English-speaking, who teach ESL in adult education programs in twenty U.S. states, for the purpose of exploring their teachers' beliefs about teaching English as a second language to adult English language learners. By means of structured interviews, Maum's result has echoed with that of Arve and Medgeyes. The self-perceived advantages of being a native-speaking-English teacher (NEST) reported by NESTs themselves are "having cultural knowledge", and "innate ability to recognize correct grammatical structure" (Maum, 2003, p.123). As the focus shifted back to NESTs in cultures other than their own, Barratt and Kontra (2000) integrated the results of their two surveys conducted respectively in Hungary and in China, claiming that one of the positive comments about NESTs was that students and teachers in foreign countries value what native speakers bring with them—authenticity, which indicated authentic pronunciation, wide-ranging knowledge of vocabulary, and critical information of usage. Another strength of NESTs widely accepted in both countries was "positive personal traits", including enthusiasm, friendly demeanor, warm-heartedness, and sociability. (Barratt and Kontra, 2000) Moreover, this positive personal trait might

as well lower the students' anxiety and be a good facilitator which permitted ESL students to willingly communicate with NESTs in English for "they were good listeners who show genuine interests in whatever the students had to say....and the classroom had a relax atmosphere" (Arva and Medgyes, 2000, p.365).

However, being a successful English teacher requires more than his/her language competence and linguistic identity, let alone the friendly and enthusiastic personality. Auerbach (1993) asserts that being a model English speaker is not a sufficient qualification for teaching ESL and in some cases, not a necessary one. Phillipson (1992) claims that many of those qualities which are seen to make native speakers intrinsically better qualified as English teacher (e.g. their fluency, appropriate usage, and knowledge of cultural connotations of the language) can be acquired or instilled through training. He rejected the notion that the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker of the language and labeled it as "native speaker fallacy." Ironically, NESTs' innate linguistic strength has sometimes turned out to be their shortcoming in teaching ESL. When observing NESTs' teaching in the classroom, Arva and Medgyes (2000) noticed that NESTs' lack of knowledge of grammar indeed hindered their teaching in class. Just as one participant lamented in the study, "This is wrong, and that is the correct way you should say it, I know, but I can't explain why it's wrong or right...Most foreign teacher I know never really came across grammar until they started teaching it" (p.361). NESTs in Maum (2003)'s study also recognized this as one of their disadvantages—not having the metalinguistic awareness that comes from learning a second language. (p.126) Apart from the deficiency of grammar knowledge, much blame for NESTs as ESL teachers has attributed to (a) their lack of TEFL preparation, (b) poor teaching styles, (c) lack of insight into typical language problems of students, (d) lack of familiarity with the host educational system, (e) lack of basic knowledge of the host culture and language, and

(f) ignoring basic cultural differences or actively displaying a prejudice against the host culture. (Phillipson, 1992; Medgyes, 1993; Canagarajah, 1999; Cook, 1999; A.Tajino and Y. Tajino, 2000; Arva and Medgyes, 2000; Barratt and Kontra, 2000; Maum, 2003). It seems that a large proportion of the weakness mentioned above can be ascribed to not only NESTs' unreadiness of being an ESL teacher but the unfamiliarity of the host culture, covering from students' mother tongue to local learning and teaching context.

Therefore, a person's mother tongue does not guarantee him/her to be adequately qualified to teach a language (Phillipson, 1992). The notion of experts in English teaching should shift from "who you are" to "what you know" (Rampton, 1990). Since there is a growing number of NESTs looking for positions in foreign countries or being recruited to join the team-teaching programs in non-English-speaking countries, it is urgent and "a challenge that is not unique to any one country" (Barratt and Kontra, 2000) to help these NESTs fit into host cultures and provide them with examples of successful experiences in living and teaching in the host countries.

2.2 Current Situations of NESTs' Teaching in Asia

In view of the benefit which NESTs may bring into English teaching and learning, many Asian countries have implemented English teaching programs in which native English speakers were recruited from the so called "inner circle" countries, namely UK, USA, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, with the goal of benefiting their students' English learning performance. The earliest program was put into practice by Japan government, followed by Korea, Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan.

2.2.1 Japan

Realizing the strong wave of globalization, the Japanese government has been

engaging in recruiting NESTs since 1987. The program, which is known as JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching program), is launched by the local authorities in cooperation with the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Communications, and of Foreign Affairs, and of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR). (Jeon and Lee, 2006) For 20 years, approximately 30,000 young colleagues and university graduates have traveled to Japan to work as Assistant Language Teacher (ALTs), Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs), and Sports Exchange Advisors (SEAs) (Japan Ministry of Education, as cited in Scully, 2001). Since the main goal of the JET program is to encourage cultural exchange between young learners and NESTs, the qualified candidates should be younger than 40 years of age, strongly motivated toward teaching and have gained at least a Bachelor's degree by July before departure. However, the academic and practical experience of the candidates is not clearly defined and a TEFL qualification is helpful but not required (JET Website).

As the most crucial role in JET program, ALTs are placed by the local government to teach English in public elementary school, junior and senior high school in which they are expected to work for around thirty-five hours per week. Apart from working as assistant language teachers, meaning offering assistance to local English teachers in teaching conversational courses, ALTs are sometimes required to fulfill the extra duties such as developing teaching materials, participating in English speech contests, collaborating with officials at boards of education, and attending cultural-exchange events. The salary of ALTs is approximately 300,000 yen per month (US\$ 2,600), while the salary of local Japanese English teachers ranges from US\$2,043 to US\$3749 (Jeon and Lee, 2006).

In spite of the ideal initiatives of improving students' English communicative competence and deepen multicultural understanding through the cooperation of ALTs

and local Japanese teachers in the classroom, several problems have soon emerged to prevent the ALTs from successfully performing their instructions in class, one of which is the insufficient professional knowledge. According to Kawamura and Sloss' (1992) survey, 79.4 % of ALTs working at school have neither teaching qualification nor prior teaching experience. In addition, 82.4% of the ALTs majored in subjects not directly related to teaching English as foreign language. ALTs' inexperience of EFL teaching and insufficient professional knowledge have not only hindered the genuine cooperation with their counterparts but also indirectly resulted in the "discrepancy between what ALTs think their role is and what local teachers expect ALTs to do in the classroom" (Reiko and Lee, 2001). Matsumoto (2000) and Scully (2001) have respectively presented in their studies that many of the ALTs were showing strong frustration in response to being used only as "tape-recorders" and "game machines." Thus, it is urgent for ALTs in the JET program to engage in both pre-service and in-service teacher training. Just as one ALT in Reiko and Lee's study claimed,

I would have appreciated more practical and specific knowledge about our situation in Japan, for example the characteristics of Japanese teachers. In addition, since many of the participants in the JET programs were fresh from college, I observed that some of us were in need of training how to behave like a teacher. (p.9)

In addition, the above saying also reveals another problem which most NESTs have encountered in Japan—cultural adaptation. Stern (1992) surveyed a few private language institutes which possess a fruitful experience of dealing with NESTs in Japan and concluded that many ALTs in the JET programs were not aware of the challenges they might encountered until they launched their mission in Japan. After investigating ALTs motivation of coming to Japan, Scully (2000) has pinpointed that the primary factor was merely "to find a job which would allow them to travel."

Others are like “professional challenges”, “financial rewards” and “the opportunity to explore Asian culture.” Supported by the interview data and the results from questionnaire, Scully further indicated that almost none of the ALTs were able to speak Japanese upon their arrival to their country and few had more than a “rudimentary” knowledge of Japanese culture due to their mentality of short-term stay in Japan. With the unfamiliarity of Japanese culture and the lack of perceived need of learning Japanese, over half of the participants in the study reported “having feeling of isolation” and feeling like an “outsider” in their Japanese communities. Moreover, many ALTs also revealed that their difficulties in being accustomed to Japanese students’ reluctant attitude toward using verbal English. One of the ALTs even complained that sometimes he felt unmotivated because his students refused to speak English in his classroom (Scully, 2001). What compelled the Japanese students to behave such uncooperative attitude might probably be the absence of English oral tests in the national college entrance exam. Consequently, both the local teachers and students would concentrate simply on cultivating their grammatical knowledge, reading and writing skills. However, this has caused the majority of ALTs to lose interest in classroom teaching at some point and left Japan while their contracts were due.

2.2.2 South Korea

With the rapid pace of industrialization and a growing need of trading with foreign countries, South Korea is said to have developed “English fever” (Jeong, 2004). In response to the phenomenon, South Korean government has launched a program, known as English Program in Korea (EPIK), since 1995. With the goal of improving English proficiency among Korean students and teachers as well as developing cultural understanding, more than 240 NESTs have been recruited to join the program. The NESTs, who mainly came from Australia, Canada, Ireland, New

Zealand, the UK, and the USA, were required to teach English at public schools, train Korean English teachers, and assist the Board of Education. However, unlike JET and the other programs in Asian countries, EPIK did not specify a NEST's salary. Though the salary varied based on which district one NEST served, it was roughly estimated to be 2,600,000 won (US\$ 2, 750) per month (Jeon and Lee, 2006).

In spite of the time and effort which South Korean government has invested, EPIK still failed. NESTs lacked an understanding of Korean culture, language, educational context and learners' need, interests and preferences were reported as the main causes of failure (Han, 2005). What is worse, the sense of cultural superiority which NESTs revealed during teaching has been a negative impact on students' identification of their own culture (Shi, 2001). However, when Han (2005) interviewed 12 adult Korean learners' about their opinions on NESTs working in Korea, he found that the general views of all the learners about NESTs were surprisingly distinctly negative. It was reported that "NESTs appeared unable or unwilling to develop interpersonal relationships with learners and lacked the qualities of a good teacher, including sincerity, enthusiasm and responsibility" (Han, 2005, p. 206). Han argued that "only if both sides (i.e. Korean learners and NESTs) could be culturally sensitive and responsive to each other's culture can they truly understand each other and convey complex idea" (p. 210). Otherwise, it is very difficult for both learners and NESTs in a classroom to fully understand each other without shared communication systems and shared knowledge.

2.2.3 China

With the policy of opening its door to the rest of the world, China has recognized the importance of English as a key to country's development (Xiaoqiong, 2005) and to its economic and social mobility (Ross, 1993). Since the early 1980s, English education has been a boiling issue at all academic levels, and there has been

an explosive development of both public and private English language programs (Qiang & Wolff, 2003b). Recently, English is also highly encouraged for all young Chinese to learn by the Ministry of Education due to China's international roles as both a member of the World Trade Organization and the host of the 2008 Olympics (Qiang & Wolff, 2003b). Up to date, about 200 to 300 million Chinese can use English (Yang, 2006) and more than 60 million senior and junior high school students are studying English (Xiaoquioing, 2005). Apparently, recruiting NESTs has been the first priority both in public schools and in private organizations in China.

China does not have a central government policy on hiring NESTs (Qiang & Wolff, 2003a). Thus, universities institute Foreign Affairs Offices to be in charge of the recruitment of NESTs. Many public elementary, junior and senior high schools involve private recruitment agencies. Based on the professional knowledge, experiences and motivation, NESTs in China can be roughly categorized into "Foreign Expert", "Foreign Teacher" and "volunteer," who usually recruited by the U.N, V.S.O. (Voluntary Service Overseas), or V.I.A. (Volunteers in Asia). The differences among these three groups of NESTs are reflected on the target population they teach and their salaries (Maley, 1986).

However, since China lacks a government-driven set of standards which regulate NESTs' qualifications, the NEST qualifications vary from province to province (Jeon and Lee, 2006). On one hand, if one NEST is recruited officially or semi-officially, he or she might be expected "to earn a bachelor degree or higher and professional training in language teaching as well as some amount of language teaching experience" (2002, REGULATION No.1, as cited in Jeon and Lee, 2006). But the truth is that "in many circumstances, native English speakers have been employed with an associate degree or as little as a US high school diploma" (Jeon and Lee, 2006). This often happens in the remote provinces where most NESTs are

reluctant to teach. On the other hand, if NESTs are not formally recruited, the sole criterion for employment is: “If it walks, and talks English, it is O.K.” (Maley, 1986). Namely, one is employed simply because he or she is a native speaker of English regardless of the qualification and teaching experience of EFL. On closely examination of the chaotic NEST recruitment in China, Maley (1986) strongly stated that those unqualified NEST teachers have caused a “human wastage” all over China (p. 106). Economically, the government and local institutes have invested a huge amount of money on NESTs. But some of the recruits are young and without prior experience and consequently many do not finish their first-year contract (Qiang & Wolff, 2003b). Pedagogically, it is a waste of students’ time and energy on teachers who do not know how to teach English properly (Maley, 1986, p.107).

Despite complaints about their insufficient qualifications, most NESTs in China have encountered a great difficulty that they rarely share the same culture of learning with Chinese students (Maley, 1986). NESTs agree that Chinese students are hard-working, well-motivated, and friendly. However, the students seem unwilling to speak; they are passive and rather resistant to pair or group work. They seem oriented to exams and memorization, but not process of learning. (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996). Though NESTs are considered to be a perfect language model and a great source of cultural knowledge, Chinese students still complain that they learned quite little from NEST classes. P. Wang (2007) hypothesized that this may come from “a disparity of expectations between teachers and students” (p.45). In order to make an effective use of NESTs, an attempt to investigate the disparity between NESTs and Chinese students is necessary. After interviewing 4 native speaking teachers in Shandong University of Finance and conducting a survey on 90 Chinese students, he discovered the major disparities lies in (a) expectations, (b) treatments of class activities, (c) NESTs’ free thinking and discovery learning, and (d) communication

barrier. He further stated that for Chinese students, their learning is memory-based, requiring the teachers to explain the language elements systematically for them.

However, most foreign teachers in his study believe that “it is unnecessary to give much explanation in language learning. Their job is to offer authentic examples, and to encourage students to practice in a given situation” (p. 48). Maley (1986) even revealed that “the foreign teacher will admire the assiduity of his students.....but so often these study habits lead to knowledge about the language as an object rather than competence in using it as a tool...” (p. 105).

Moreover, NESTs in China have also suffered from lack of information, bureaucracy and isolation (Maley, 1986). As for the lack of information, it is disturbing for NESTs not to know exactly what their terms of employment are. Most of the contracts are not given until two months later. After two months, most NESTs are presented with the contract which is merely a document for NESTs to sign without giving them any further room for negotiation. This has evoked an element of insecurity into the employer/employee relationship. With regard to bureaucracy, Maley delineated with sign that “most NESTs cannot understand why ‘even apparently innocuous and minor requests cannot be agreed to immediately, and he finds it even more frustrating to be fobbed off with temporizing response” (p. 108). What disgracefully impressed on NESTs’ mind is that decisions are often made by those least qualified instead of the professionals. Even more awfully, a lot of NESTs complain that they are rarely consulted while the decisions about them, personally or professionally, are being made. Concerning the issue of isolation, many NESTs often feel alienated socially and psychologically, too. In spite of the hope of interacting closely with their colleagues and students, NESTs are tended “to be view as a tool for improving English of the students, to be taken out of the drawer in classtime, and put away again afterward” (Maley, 1986, p. 108).

2.2.4 Hong Kong

Since being occupied by the British in 1841, English has been an official language in Hong Kong. Even after her return to China in 1997, Hong Kong still highly values the importance of English for several reasons. First, English is served as an unmediated contact with the rest of the world (McArthur, 2005). Second, Hong Kong is viewed as an international finance center (Pang, 2003). Third, English remains a language for the elite in Hong Kong and “a widening middle class seeks to join the elite through learning English” (McArthur, 2005). Consequently, Hong Kong has launched a large-scale program of recruiting NESTs as government policy, which is known as Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme.

The aim of NET scheme is to support and strengthen English-language learning and teaching by providing an authentic environment for children to learn English and develop their confidence in using it (Jeon and Lee, 2006). Since 1997, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) government has provided each public secondary school with one NEST and since 2002, provided every two public primary schools with one NEST (Law, 2004). Moreover, the government sets up an Advisory Teaching Team (ATT), which consists of 20 NESTs and 20 local English teachers, to support for the Scheme. The functions of ATT are mainly to design and operate regular teacher-training programs as well as conducting school development visits to participating schools. ATT also monitors the effective deployment of the NESTs, provides support for the development of innovative teaching methods and related curriculum resources, and disseminates good teaching practices in schools (Jeon and Lee, 2006, p.55).

The qualifications for NESTs are (a) native speaker of English, and (b) bachelor's degree, and preference will be given to NESTs with experience in teaching English as a second/foreign language. The salary scale is from HK\$16,165 (US\$

2,077) to HK\$ 43,940 (US\$5,700). As for the teaching hour, it ranges from 16 to 18 hours per week.

Regardless of the delicate design of NET Scheme, some of the problems still need to be tackled by the government. First of all, the issue of inexperienced NESTs. Just like what Boyle (2000) described, “some of the foreign teachers were inexperience, but tended to look on themselves as the experts and the bringers of new ideas to the local teachers” (p.3). Such arrogant attitude has somewhat impeded the relationship between NESTs and local teachers. Second, local teachers have resented earning the comparatively lower salary but suffering from heavier teaching load and the more pressure of catching up with the fall-behind schedule than NESTs (Boyle, 2000). Lastly, the model of team teaching does not turn out to be successful. Instead of having genuine cooperation, NESTs and local English teachers separate the class time to teach their part individually (Evans, 2000). Thus, the public in Hong Kong begins to worry that whether NET scheme would be doomed to failure just like the EETC (Expatriate English Teacher) Scheme, which was initiated in 1987 and ended in 1989.

2.3 Current Situations of NESTs' Teaching in Taiwan

Under the pressure of globalization, Taiwanese government has introduced English to elementary school curriculum in Grade 5 and 6 since 2001 and such compulsory education has been extended since 2005 (Jeon and Lee, 2006). From then on, both Hsinchu City Government and Yilan County Government have respectively implemented a pioneering program which recruited NESTs to teach English in their public elementary schools. Two years later, the Taiwanese Ministry of Education began to recruit 3,000 NESTs for domestic public elementary and junior high schools. This nationwide NEST-recruiting program was initiated with an attempt to improve students' English communicative ability, to broaden students'

horizon of multi-cultures and to cultivate students' global view (Chen, 2007). However, hiring NESTs was never an innovation in Taiwanese society. In fact, a large amount of NESTs, with or without TESOL certificate, have already been employed to teach English by the local private language institutes in Taiwan. Shi (2007) pointed out that the number of NESTs working as English teachers in private cram schools in Taiwan has reached up to 6,831 by 2004. Therefore, a growing attention has been paid to the current situations of NESTs' teaching in Taiwan in recent years.

2.3.1 The background of NESTs in Taiwan

The NESTs who are recruited to teach English in the public schools in Taiwan are required to possess at least bachelor degrees and/or TESL/TEFL certificate and passports from countries recognized by the Taiwanese Ministry of Education as "native-English-speaking," such as USA, Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Ireland. The salary scale ranges from NT\$ 50,000 (US\$ 1,540) for those who have bachelor's degree to NT\$70,000 (US\$1,870) for those who have both bachelor's degree and qualified teacher certificate (Jeon and Lee, 2006).

However, the truth is that most NESTs in Taiwan do not major in English and fail to have ESL teaching experience before coming Taiwan. Ting (2000) investigated fifteen NESTs who taught English in the public junior high schools in Kaohsiung City and found out that 80% of NESTs were non-English majors. Lin (2003) interviewed nine NESTs who served in the public elementary schools in Hsinchu City and indicated that two-thirds of her interviewees do not majored in English or ESL.

When it comes to their English teaching experience, nearly 88% of the NESTs in Chou (2005)'s research had only less than one year of ESL teaching experience in Taiwan. Nine out of twenty-two NESTs in Chen (2007)'s study admitted that they

only had one to two years of teaching experience in Taiwan. Unfortunately, this drawback did not prompt NESTs to eagerly attend in-service trainings after their coming to Taiwan (Chen, 2005). What is worse, a small amount of the NESTs even considered the in-service teacher training programs not important simply because “they have no time” or “teaching English is just a part-time job” (Ting, 2000). Ironically, their reply has reflected a cruel truth—for most NESTs in Taiwan, the reasons why they came to Taiwan were either for culture-experiencing or for making money. (Ting, 2000; Lin, 2003; Pan, 2004). Once NESTs’ temporary goal had been fulfilled, they would undoubtedly leave Taiwan. They did not seriously plan a long-term stay in Taiwan and consider teaching English in Taiwan their career (Lin, 2003).

2.3.2 The studies on NESTs’ teaching in Taiwan

Several researchers in Taiwan have investigated the NESTs’ teaching in various aspects. Roughly speaking, the focus of each research could be sorted into the following categories—(a) the NESTs’ teaching behaviors in the classroom, (b) the functions of NESTs’ teaching, and (c) the problems of NESTs’ teaching.

2.3.2.1 NESTs’ classroom practices

Studies which focused on NESTs’ classroom practices have indicated that NESTs have successfully achieved teaching goals, appropriately adopting teaching aids, carefully arranged and designed teaching activities and obviously enabled to create an active and lively learning atmosphere (Chen, 2007; Lin, 2002). As a native-speaker of English, most of their teaching were closely related to their natural strength—linguistic proficiency. According to Chen (2007), nearly 93.3% of NESTs taught “Conversation” unit in the textbook, followed by “Speaking” and “Listening.” Over 70% of NESTs primarily conducted oral tests as a measurement to assess students’ English learning (p.154). Regarding the teaching activities, NESTs were

observed to adopt TPR (Total Physical Response) method or other dynamic teaching techniques, such as playing games, telling stories, watching movies, competitions in answering questions, reciting practices, group practices and activities for festivals, so as to arouse students' learning interest (Lin, 2002; Liu, 2004).

Chen (2005) conducted a questionnaire survey about the differences of classroom practices between the native and non-native English teachers in the kindergartens and she concluded that NESTs preferred to use a casual form of English, felt like making their teaching plan more flexible, had less preparation for their class, and tended to avoid making immediate correction when students' error occurs. Interestingly, NESTs in her study believed that although students' mother tongue may cause negative influence on students' L2 learning, yet they "resort to L1 translation more than non-native teachers do" (p.59).

Using students' mother tongue (i.e. Chinese) in the classroom, however, has long been a controversial issue among ESL teaching and learning. For the approvers of this issue, they believed that using Chinese appropriately in the classroom had some advantages. First, it enabled NESTs to promote their teaching efficiency when NESTs need to explain some difficult concepts or give some instructions which could not be understood simply by using gestures. Second, it facilitated NESTs to manage their classroom. Third, it produced some amusing effects when students heard NESTs uttering Chinese words with a weird intonation. Fourth, it empowered NESTs not to depend on local Taiwanese teachers to translate their instruction word by word, which not only hindered the class from going smoothly but increased the possibilities of misunderstanding between teachers and students (Lin, 2002). Furthermore, a NEST was able to create "a harmony teacher-student relationship successfully through using Chinese in his/her instruction" (Shi, 2007).

Regardless of the advantages mentioned above, some NESTs worried about the

following situation caused by L1 assistance in their classroom. Provided that NESTs uses Chinese randomly in class or local English teachers translate too much in class, students would probably depend greatly on the Chinese explanation and lose motivation to learn English (Lin, 2002, p. 135). Besides, Lin (2002) further suggested that the original purpose of hiring NESTs was to create a whole English environment for students to struggle for comprehending their NEST's teaching. Otherwise, such a good will would be obliterated by the abuse of Chinese translation in class.

2.3.2.2 NESTs' teaching effectiveness

As for investigating the NESTs' teaching effectiveness, many studies have shown that students' learning interests have been enhanced by NESTs and so have their listening and speaking abilities (Ting, 2000; Lin, 2002; Liu, 2004; Chou, 2005; Wen, 2006; Chen, 2007). Second, NESTs have acted as not only a perfect language model but also as a stimulant to the understanding of multi-cultures (Chou, 2005; Pan, 2004). Third, both local English teachers and parents agreed that NESTs have positively lower students' anxiety of conversing with foreigners in English and help students to pronounce English words accurately (Cheng, 2004).

Furthermore, Wen (2006) conducted a qualitative research on a NEST' teaching in Hualien Junior High School and pointed out that the NEST successfully elevated the students' motivation and encouraged their willingness of participation in English class. Meanwhile, the NEST has also played three roles on campus; that is, inducer, mediator, the facilitator. As for "inducer", the NEST demonstrated and induced students how to speak, read, listen and write English correctly. As for "mediator", the NEST helped students to relate their old experiences to their new knowledge, such as adopted students' first language to learn English. As for "facilitator", the NEST created a living environment where people converse only in English, which inevitably

forced students' to speak English and consequently facilitated students' English speaking ability.

In addition to NESTs' influence on students' learning, it was also generally accepted by the local teachers that they have learned a great deal of different teaching techniques from NESTs (Chou, 2005) and have been assisted by NESTs in terms of professional growth and compiling the supplementary materials (Cheng, 2004; Chen, 2007).

2.3.2.3 NESTs' teaching problems

Although there may be various benefits of introducing NESTs to teach English in Taiwan, yet this policy still caused some problems in terms of NESTs' pedagogical skills, NESTs' working attitude and the effect of the NESTs-hiring program.

As for the NESTs' pedagogical skills, the most notorious problem is their clumsy classroom management skills (Lin, 2002; Chou, 2005; Chuang, 2006). It was described that most NESTs relied heavily on local English teachers to discipline their students in class and to communicate with the low-achievers due to NESTs' linguistic deficiency of students' native language (Chou, 2005). Moreover, more than half of the NESTs failed to set up rules in the classroom with their students (Lin, 2002; Chuang, 2006). However, NESTs expressed just the opposite opinions on this issue. Lin (2000) found that 73.3% of NESTs in his study considered their classroom management skills "very good" (p. 80). Chen (2007) reported in her study that 63.5% of the NESTs agreed or strongly agreed that they can handle the behavior problems in class by themselves and only less than half of the NESTs need a local English teacher to help them deal with the behavioral problems in class (Chen, 2007, p.158). To probe into the factors which affect whether NESTs manage their classes successfully or not, Shi (2007) conducted a case study of two NESTs in Sesame's Street and discovered that the "foreign teachers' qualification and teaching

experience”, “views on an ideal class”, and “views on L1 assistance” play an influential role on their classroom management approaches. She further suggested that successful classroom management is based on teachers’ well-structured lesson plans, consistency of classroom rules and effective designs of classroom activities.

Next, NESTs were also blamed for their inability to understand Taiwanese students’ learning difficulties and their failure of providing additional supports for low achievers in the classroom (Lin, 2002; Pan, 2004; Chiang, 2006). Chou (2005) stated that about 70% of the local English teachers perceived that qualified NESTs are not always the professional language teachers and they are incompetent in recognizing EFL students’ proficiency levels and comprehending their learning difficulties. Chen (2007) surveyed the opinions of school administrators and local English teachers on NESTs’ teaching and reported that only 49.9% of them agreed that NESTs are able to notice the low achievers and manage to take care of them in class. As opposed to the opinions of the school administrators and local English teachers, more than 80% of NESTs in her study agreed that they did notice the need of low achievers in class and provide additional support for them (Chen, 2007). In addition, Wen (2006) observed that the NEST in his study successfully motivated both high and low achievers to participate in his teaching activities and both groups showed a great deal of interest in learning English. Wen (2006) concluded that this tremendous success might be attributed to the NEST’s excellent teaching strategies and his ample ESL teaching experience in Cambodia, South Africa and China.

Regarding the working attitude of NESTs, lack of enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility for their work is the main criticism from local English teachers and administrators. Pan (2004) pointed out that some NESTs came to Taiwan with a sense of culture superiority, complaining about the facilities of the schools and students’ learning ability, but they themselves did not show any responsible attitude

toward their teaching. Lin (2002) indicated that only few NESTs succeeded in fulfilling the duty of grading students' homework after class. Worst of all, some of the NESTs were even unable to show up in class on time in the morning classes. A possible explanation was provided that "foreign teachers were more likely to 'enjoy' their life here. They went to pub and drank at night. But the next morning, they were too drunk to show up in class" (Pan, 2004). Another example which indicated NESTs' irresponsible mentality was that some of the NESTs would rely too much on their teaching experience and fail to have good preparation before class (Shi, 2007). This often made students feel confused about NESTs' instructions and led to "pause" during NESTs' instructions in class for many times (Chou, 2005). It was even reported that the students would hope their foreign teachers can prepared more before they come to the class (Ting, 2001). In addition, many local English teachers complained that NESTs were reluctant to communicate with local English teachers about their team-teaching lesson plans or the students' learning situations (Lin, 2002). The interaction between NESTs and local English teachers were limited to the time when both teachers are teaching in the English class only (Chiang, 2006). Consequently, such team-teaching method was somewhat doomed to fail due to the insufficient communication and the lack of genuine cooperation between NESTs and local English teachers.

As for the effect of NEST-hiring program, high turnover rate of NESTs has been a strong factor which declines the effect of this program (Pan, 2004). Wen (2006) proposed that the effect of NESTs' teaching can only be seen through the long-term instruction. However, the high turnover rate of NESTs has not only discouraged the government from maintaining the effort of training the NESTs to teach successfully in Taiwan but also increased the students' burden of accustoming to a new NEST's teaching style in the second year (Pan, 2004). Thus, an increasing

doubt among the public about the appropriateness of hiring NESTs to teach English has gradually appeared. In fact, when analyzing the common traits of NESTs who are willing to continue his/her teaching in Taiwan, Chen (2007) has discovered that NESTs who are “male”, “married”, “over 30 years old”, “with TESOL certificate”, who have comparatively more years of teaching experience, and who work in the metropolitan area, such as Taipei City, are more likely to stay in Taiwan for a long time.

2.3.3 The difficulties NESTs encountered in Taiwan

The first difficulty NESTs encountered in Taiwan was the language barrier. Because of their language deficiency, difficulties were emerged in various aspects of their teaching in Taiwan. Pedagogically, they were unable to manage their class well, obtain feedback from their students, and have fewer chances to interact with their students and colleagues (Lin, 2002). Psychologically, NESTs feel excluded from their colleagues or being hurt by their colleagues' indifferent attitude toward them (Pan, 2004). Plus, they were viewed as outsiders instead of insiders and their physical and mental needs were likely to be neglected (Chen, 2007). One of the NEST in Tsai's (2004) study even pinpointed that language barrier may just be the direct cause of the high turnover rate of NESTs.

Second, Chen (2005) mentioned that being unfamiliar with the Taiwanese teaching environment is considered to be the most difficult challenge for NESTs. The NEST in Wen (2006)'s study proposed that NESTs may be forced to deal with some difficulties in the classroom when they teach English in Taiwan; that is, compulsion, mixed ability, and class size. As for compulsion, he commented that it is impossible for English to be taught in a meaningful way as a compulsory learning subject under the exam-oriented educational system like Taiwan. As for mixed ability, he mentioned that having students with mixed ability in one classroom was a

“night-mare scenario” for a teacher who cannot speak students’ native tongue. As for class size, he believed that the class size in Taiwan is too large to be conducive to efficient language teaching.

Third, what NESTs constantly complained about is that the insecure teaching environment (Chen, 2005). In the western society, the contract is strictly followed by both the employers and employees. However, NESTs in Taiwan were frequently informed to change the content of their working contract unilaterally and orally by their Taiwanese employers and some of them did not even have the equal labor rights (Lin, 2002; Chou, 2005; Chen, 2007). As a result, such different attitude toward treating the working contracts has become another reason for NESTs to often change their jobs (Lin, 2002).

Fourth, the immature design for team-teaching scheme is one of the difficulties for NESTs to face in Taiwan. NESTs suffered greatly from the unclear regulations of NESTs’ and local English teachers’ duties in the classroom. Most NESTs have no ideas about what their role was and how certain content they were to be taught (Wang, 2007). This would worsen the misunderstanding between NESTs and local English teachers. In addition, NESTs expected to dominate the whole teaching in class but in vain. NESTs appealed that they should be viewed as a real teacher, and since they have been certified ESL teachers, they are, therefore, capable of dealing with any problems happened in their classroom (Chen, 2007). NESTs and their counterparts are two different groups of teachers who possess different sets of standards about the ways of conducting an English class, disciplining the students and evaluating students’ performance (Chou, 2005). It is a waste of time and money to squeeze two different teachers in one room, expecting them to cooperate well. Thus, NESTs suggested that the government should strive to lower the number of students in each class instead of spending money on searching for the best collaborative mode of

team-teaching (Chen, 2007).

Lastly, there is no channel or platform set up for NESTs to share their teaching experience in Taiwan or to exchange their ideas of teaching with each other (Lin, 2002; Chen, 2007). Some researchers also called upon that NESTs themselves are in an urgent need of having access to continue their in-service training and to be informed how other NESTs have successfully survived in teaching and living in Taiwan (Lin, 2002; Chou, 2005; Chen, 2007).

2.4 Conclusion

Examining from the previous literature, the researcher has found that most studies on NESTs in Taiwan were conducted quantitatively, aimed at investigating the current NESTs' teaching situations and the public's opinion on NESTs' classroom practices through questionnaires. In addition, the participants of the studies were mainly NESTs who have worked only for two or three years either in public junior high schools or in the elementary schools (Ting, 2000; Lin, 2002; Chou, 2005; Cheng, 2004; Chen, 2005; Chuang, 2006; Chen, 2007), not in cram schools. Only few studies have touched upon NESTs' classroom practices through qualitative methods (Wen, 2006; Chiang, 2006; Wang, 2007) and nearly none of the studies has explored the teaching experience and classroom practices of experienced NESTs who both have taught English in cram schools and regular schools. However, in order to obtain a better understanding of how NESTs developed into English teachers in Taiwan, more research should be conducted to explore NESTs teaching experience and their classroom practices both in cram schools and regular schools in qualitative methods.