



Multilingual English teachers in Asian Expanding Circle ELT

Shorter Article

Multilingual English teachers in Asian Expanding Circle ELT: A literature review

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ABSTRACT

This paper surveys studies that explore the experiences of multilingual English teachers (MET) teaching English to learners from the Eastern part of Asia (China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand). By MET, I refer to teachers who speak English as one of their multilingual repertoires and teach English to students from different linguistic backgrounds than their own (Galloway 2014). Studies have recently shown that Outer Circle has been establishing a role in providing English education to Expanding Circle learners. Moreover, it is also becoming common for teachers from Expanding Circle to cross national borders in order to teach English in another Expanding Circle country. This paper reviews studies specifically addressing those teachers and identifies three contact zones: (a) study abroad programs in Asian Outer Circle; (b) EFL classrooms; and (c) digital space. As there are some distinctive characteristics pertaining to different contact zones, I first briefly review the previous studies by each zone, followed by a synthesis of the research findings with a focus on how environment influences teachers’ experiences based on the lens of intersectionality and situated power dynamics. Then, I conclude the review by discussing the problematic nature of treating this unique teacher population as pseudo-native speakers from a pedagogical perspective.

English language learning and teaching in China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand has continuously been criticized for being Inner Circle norm-dependent (Huttayavilaiphan 2021; Jenks and Lee 2020; Samuella 2024). It is often assumed that Expanding Circle learners’ goal is to acquire an Inner Circle variety of English and its associated culture (Kachru 1985). This Expanding Circle learners’ belief about the ideal English variety is reflected in the hiring practice of the English language teaching (ELT) industry, where teachers from Inner Circle countries are considered ideal teachers. It is also found that Expanding Circle learners have a commonly shared assumption that the best way to acquire English skills is to live in an Inner Circle country and have an immersive experience in the target language environment (Park and Bae 2009; Takahashi 2013). However, studies have recently come to show that Asian Outer Circle has been establishing a role in providing English education to Expanding Circle learners. Moreover, the contact zone of Expanding Circle learners and Outer Circle teachers is not limited to the geographical boundary of Outer Circle countries. Some teachers migrate to Expanding Circle countries and teach English there. The teacher population in this context is not limited to Outer Circle, but it is also becoming common for teachers from Expanding Circle to live in another Expanding Circle country to teach English. Furthermore, human interaction is not restricted to offline space. Online English tutoring services provided by Outer Circle teachers targeting Expanding Circle learners have recently gained momentum, allowing both teachers and students to stay in their respective locations. To sum up, both Expanding Circle learners and Outer and non-local Expanding Circle teachers cross borders either physically or virtually to learn or teach English.

This trend looks like a sign of positive progress in the ELT industry in the Eastern part of Asia, where the monopoly of the job market by Western L1-English-speaking teachers has continuously been criticized. Rose and Galloway (2019) argue that ideal teachers should be the ones who are qualified and competent in teaching English regardless of speaker status (i.e., being a ‘native’ or ‘non-native’ speaker of

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English) or ethnic background. They further argue the threefold benefit of hiring L2-English-speaking teachers of different L1s: (a) they can show multilingual repertoire, (b) they can provide an authentic English as a contact language setting, and (c) hiring this teacher population can result in rectifying unfair hiring practices based on native-speakerism (Holliday 2006). Conceptually, researchers have identified the legitimacy and benefit of recruiting L2-English-speaking teachers who have a different L1 and cultural background from that of their students, but their actual teaching experiences have only begun to be explored by researchers. There is abundant literature exploring teachers through the lens of LETs (local English teachers), NESTs (native English-speaking teachers), and NNESTs (non-native English-speaking teachers) (Copland et al. 2016; Selvi et al. 2024), but those who do not fit and/or identify themselves in either of the categories have been marginalized in the research field.

This gap in research is problematic because those teachers are too often taken advantage of for their unique linguistic backgrounds. For example, Panaligan and Curran (2022) examined how online tutoring ‘platforms seek to capitalize on their Filipino teachers’ proximity to nativeness, while also denying them the salaries that native teachers command’ (p. 260). They are habitually treated as native speakers when it suits their employers’ interests while being stripped of native-speaker privileges. Given the present-day reality of ELT, where teachers are differently valued depending on their speaker status, race, gender, and socioeconomic status, it is necessary to explore the experiences of this unique teacher population in its own right.

To address this need, this paper aims to review the studies that specifically explored the experiences of teachers from Outer Circle and Expanding Circle who speak English as one of their multilingual repertoires and do not share the same L1 with their students. Following Galloway (2014), I use the term ‘multilingual English teacher’ (MET) to refer to this teacher population.¹ Although the original definition of MET by Kirkpatrick (2011) is more inclusive and refers to any multilingual English teachers who embody English as a contact language setting, I use the term MET narrowly to specifically refer to L2-English-speaking teachers with different L1s in this paper. By using MET, I intend to avoid the unnecessary creation of new terminology and redundancy in the discussion. The NEST (Native English-speaking teacher)-NNEST (Non-native English-speaking teacher) categorization itself is not the framework this review is based on, but this lens was commonly used in most of the studies reviewed. In this case, I follow the terminology used in the study for summarizing the research findings.²

There are three major contact zones for METs and English learners in the Eastern part of Asia: (a) study abroad in Asian Outer Circle, (b) EFL classrooms, and (c) digital space. There are some distinctive characteristics pertaining to different contact zones. In this paper, I first briefly review the previous studies by each zone. Then, I synthesize the research findings with a focus on how the environment influences METs’ experiences from the lens of intersectionality and discuss the problematic nature of

treating METs as pseudo-native speakers from a pedagogical perspective.

Study abroad in Asian Outer Circle

Study abroad in Outer Circle countries in Asia for the purpose of learning English is becoming more and more popular among English learners. The most common pattern is that students from economically advanced East Asian countries (e.g., Korea and Japan) sojourn in English-speaking Southeast Asian countries (e.g., Singapore and the Philippines), which are also called ASEAN Outer Circle (Percillier 2024). Early studies identified the popularity of Singapore as a study-abroad destination, where students attended local schools or language schools with diverse student populations (Kobayashi 2011; Park and Bae 2009).

More recent studies have observed the mushrooming of English language schools in the Philippines. Jang (2018) identified the following features as major differences between English study in the Philippines and traditional study abroad experience in Inner Circle countries: (a) the length of stay is shorter, (b) students study at a wellfacilitated boarding school instead of staying with a host family, (c) the curriculum is intensified, and (d) the format of instruction is private one-on-one tutoring. These structural features reflect the students’ particular motives for studying English in the Philippines. The students are driven by instrumental motivation and their focus is more on developing English skills through intensive schooling rather than having an immersive and integrative cultural experience in a host country (Choe and Son 2018; Jang 2018; Kobayashi 2018). Moreover, although there are some English language schools in the Philippines where students’ countries of origin are diverse (Litman 2022; Seo 2023), it is a common practice for language schools to exclusively enroll students from a particular country (i.e., Korean or Japanese) and tailor the curriculum and the living environment to meet the demand of the group (Choe 2016; Choe and Son 2018; Jang 2018; Morikawa and Parba 2023).

Choe (2016) interviewed Filipino teachers teaching English exclusively to Korean students in Manila to explore their teacher identity construction. The participants expressed added advantages (e.g., having a ‘neutral’ accent, which is different from the local Filipino variety and easier for students to understand than American-accented variety, understanding students’ language learning struggles) and disadvantages (e.g., lack of knowledge of American culture, lack of professional training) for teaching Korean students. The teachers recognized the Korean students’ motives for studying English in the Philippines and positively viewed the Philippines’ role ‘as a bridging country between Korea and the Inner Circle’ (Choe 2016, 9). Some teachers mentioned that learning English from Filipino teachers is beneficial to the students, but they also addressed that a target model for Korean students should be an American variety of English because of its perceived widespread usage. Choe (2016) argues that Filipino teachers’ perspective toward standard English was influenced by the Korean students’ desire to acquire Inner Circle English and that this signifies

'not only the Inner Circle but also the Expanding Circle can be part of the English dissemination' (10). In other words, Korean learners' idealization of the 'native-speaking' variety affected Filipino teachers' views toward standard English. This resulted in further dissemination of native-speakerism ideology by Filipino teachers that teach American English to Korean students.

Studying English in Asian Outer Circle is neither a purpose by itself nor a sign of appreciation for the local variety of English (Choe 2016; Jang 2018; Park and Bae 2009). Service providers recognized and institutionalized the learners' strong affinity for acquiring Western 'native-speaking' English varieties. For example, only Western-looking teachers were hired at some language schools in Singapore (Kobayashi 2011), and many schools in the Philippines offered curricula that targeted specific learner groups and trained to meet their needs, including the desire to acquire American variety of English (Choe 2016; Choe and Son 2018; Jang 2018). The learners' expectations directly influenced MET teachers' experiences and perceptions of their own variety.

METs in EFL Classrooms in Asia

METs in EFL classrooms refer to the teacher population living in an Asian EFL country that teach English to local students who share the same linguistic background with their peers. An excessive desire to acquire a 'native-speaking' variety has continued to be problematized in ELT in the Eastern part of Asia (Huttayavilaiphan 2021; Jenks and Lee 2020; Samuell 2024). The native-speakerism ideology prevailing in this region is also reflected in governmental educational policies. China and Korea issue English-teaching professional visas only to citizens from certain countries, such as the US, UK, or Australia, which are designated as 'native-English speaking' countries (Litman 2022; Seo 2023). As the visa restrictions show, the macro governmental educational policy directly influences MET's professional experiences. Therefore, rather than grouping METs teaching in different countries together, the unique social conditions METs face in each region need to be considered. Korea, Japan, and Thailand are the countries where some literatures are available. In the following sections, I review studies from those countries, followed by a discussion on the salient themes that emerge for METs working in these countries.

Korea

E2 visa, a type of work visa issued for foreign English teachers, is limited to citizens of seven English-speaking nations designated by the Korean government.³ Visa restrictions and feeling illegitimate as an English teacher are common themes observed among the studies on pre- and in-service MET experiences in Korea. Kudaibergenov and Lee (2022) explored the experiences of three pre-service METs in a TESOL program at a Korean graduate school. They were Korean government-sponsored international students from Nicaragua, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan. Despite their investment in studying TESOL

and expertise, the participants questioned their legitimacy as English teachers in Korea due to being structurally denied their teaching qualifications. The findings resonate with Seo's (2023) study that explored a Ugandan teacher's experience. At the time of the study, she resided in Korea as a refugee, holding a humanitarian stay permit. She acquired an MA in TESOL from a Korean university to leverage her marketability in the country as an ELT professional. However, despite the diploma and her recognition of English as her 'second mother tongue' (Seo 2023, 11), her E2 visa application was repeatedly rejected. The participant regarded her origin and racial background (not from an E2 visa country and being a black woman) as hindering her from gaining access to English teaching jobs in Korean society. Race, or more specifically whiteness, was also a key factor recognized by the participant of Kudaibergenov's (2023) study, who was teaching English in Korea by circumventing legal constraints. The participant was a Caucasian German who married a Korean woman and taught English using a spouse visa. Teaching English with a spouse visa is illegal in Korea, but the school exploited the legal loophole to hire him. The participant reflected that his being white added an advantage to easily finding an English teaching job; at the same time, being a 'nonnative' speaker made him experience unequal employment treatment and unnecessary identity tensions, such as being told by the school to fake his nationality to Australia.

Japan

Research on METs in Japan has been conducted in two teaching contexts: public schools and commercial English conversation schools. Balgoa (2019) explored Filipino ALTs' (assistant language teachers) experiences in Japanese public schools by focusing on their life trajectory, the challenges of teaching English as NNESTs, and their views toward English education in Japan. All 18 participants initially migrated to Japan for a purpose other than teaching English and later became ALTs, motivated by economic reasons. Their self-identification as an NNEST was reinforced by comparing themselves with NEST colleagues. They even experienced accent-based discrimination by their local Japanese co-teachers and/or NEST colleagues. The participants shared a common belief in working diligently and earning the trust of local teachers to resist native-speakerism and regarded teaching English as a respected job that brings upward social mobility in Japan, where expertise in English is recognized as a symbolic capital associated with a high social status (Balgoa, 2019, 2023).

Galloway (2014) explored the experience of an East-European MET at a commercial English conversation school. While public schools are part of compulsory education, commercial English conversation schools are operated by profit-based businesses, and learners have various motivations for engaging in English learning (Kubota, 2011). Similar to the findings of Kudaibergenov (2023), while being a white European increased her marketability as an English teacher, her background as an L2-English speaker

was marginalized by the school, and her supervisor told her to fake her identity to American in front of the students. Even though she recognized her multilingual background as a strength, as she could embody herself as a multilingual English speaker in global communication to Japanese students, she was not able to capitalize on it. Being marginalized and forced to adopt a fake identity as an American, she became apathetic toward English education in Japan and kept a psychological distance from it.

Thailand

Thailand is a member of ASEAN, where English is officially an ASEAN working language (Lee et al. 2023). It is also the country's political aspiration to improve English education to increase its international competitiveness. Against this background, Thailand welcomes migrant English teachers, and the most common country of origin is the Philippines (Ulla 2018). Ulla (2021) conducted a mass survey and individual interviews with Filipino teachers in secondary schools in Bangkok. While their experiences were generally positive, they felt they were treated differently from NESTs, especially with regard to financial compensation. Many Filipino teachers were satisfied with the working environment, including higher salaries compared to teaching in the Philippines, support from local colleagues, and the respect they received from the students. An earlier study conducted in the college education context also identified perceived students' respect as one factor leading to Filipino teachers' satisfaction with their careers (Ulla, 2018). As a major challenge, Filipino teachers mentioned a lack of opportunities for professional development. Because the teachers acquired English in an ESL environment and their learning experience was different from their students, they felt the necessity to acquire teaching skills to understand the needs of EFL students.

While Ulla's (2018, 2021) focus was on Filipino teachers' experiences in the classroom, Compendio and Savski (2020) explored how METs were perceived by their students, parents, local teachers, and school administrators. The study identified how METs, especially Filipino teachers, were viewed differently from white NESTs. From Occidentalism and Orientalism perspectives, Compendio and Savski (2020) discussed how participants associated white NESTs as the embodiment of the ideal target language and culture, while regarding Filipino teachers as approachable learner models from the same cultural community. The differences in perception were reflected in unequal treatment among METs, such as perceived inability to teach 'proper' English accents and preference for hiring NESTs. Later interview studies with METs also identified how job discrimination based on racial background was perceived by the participants (Savski and Compendio 2024; Copland, Garton, and Mann 2016).

Salient themes across the countries

Three themes particularly become salient in this contact zone. First, as teachers are foreign residents and not

mainstream citizens, their immigration status, including the kind of entry visa and their marital status, affects their life in the host country and their professional experience. Furthermore, even when there is no work visa restriction based on the country of origin, this does not mean METs have an equal chance of getting a job as Inner Circle teachers. For example, English language schools in Japan and Thailand prefer to sponsor a work visa for Inner Circle English speakers and racially white teachers (Galloway 2014; Savski 2021). Second, race, or more specifically whiteness, intersects with the local stakeholders' perception toward METs. Savski and Compendio (2024) point out 'the construction of a 'hierarchy of Others', through which 'white Others', while consistently treated as outsiders[sic], are placed in a position of privilege over 'Others with colour' on the basis of their value on the local symbolic market' (p. 7, quotes in original). It is not just speaker status but also whiteness that matters to be qualified as a competent teacher.

Lastly, partially related to the first point, the historical and political relation between the host and home countries influences METs' perception of their professional experience. Filipino teachers make up the majority of METs in both Japan and Thailand. Filipino teachers in Japan recognized that teaching English was a way to uplift their social status and the image of the Philippines among Japanese people. On the other hand, Filipino teachers in Thailand did not show such motives. Thailand is recognized as a destination in the ASEAN network, where they can find a better-paying teaching job. Filipino teachers in Japan and Thailand have different views towards what their act of teaching English to local students means in relation to macro social and historical settings.

METs in digital space

Due to the worldwide increased accessibility of telecommunications technology, online English conversation tutoring services have become a common option for learning English among EFL learners, and popularity for this surged during the COVID pandemic (Litman 2022; Morikawa and Parba 2022; Tajima 2022). The change in modality from offline to online directly affects the eligibility to be a tutor. Work visa applications for English language professionals are limited to the citizens of certain countries in China and Korea (Litman 2022; Seo 2023). However, because the legal impediment does not apply to online employment, many Filipinos are hired as tutors by Chinese online English tutoring service providers (Litman 2022). In contrast to traditional offline schools, where students are required to physically attend classes, online English lessons provide learners with greater convenience, flexibility, and high affordability. Although a few providers hire teachers from various countries, including teachers from Inner Circle and local teachers (i.e., those who speak the same L1 as their students) (Martinez 2022; Morikawa and Parba 2022), female Filipino teachers dominate the industry (Panaligan and Curran 2022). The disparity in teacher demographics reflects the neoliberal economies, where the commodification of English is structurally promoted to allow the nationals of wealthy states to exploit the

human resources of economically disadvantaged parts of the world (Litman 2022; Panaligan and Curran 2022; Tajima 2018).

Analysis of web advertisements is a common method to explore how METs are conceptualized in online tutoring services. Martinez (2022), Morikawa and Parba (2022), and Tajima (2022) analyzed how the discourse of Filipino teachers as legitimate English language professionals was constructed in the advertisements. In the studies, the researchers found service providers stressed the 'high quality of English' they provided by emphasizing the proximity of Filipino variety of English to American English and describing the 'quality control' measures, such as accent reduction training for teachers and a competitive employment screening system. Rather than legitimizing the Filipino English variety itself, Filipino English was commodified as a good enough alternative for Inner Circle varieties. At the same time, the teachers' background as L2 English users was also presented in a positive light. Non-linguistic qualities, such as Filipinos' kind and charming personalities, were also highlighted in the promotional materials.

Using an online ethnography as a method, Litman (2022) investigated Filipino teachers' experiences at two of China's online English tutoring companies. Filipino and North American teachers were treated differently at multiple levels within the companies. For example, Filipino teachers went through a week-long rigorous job screening process that involved multiple steps, including accent-reduction training, while their North American counterparts were exempted from such training. However, North American teachers were paid 5-11 times more than the Filipino teachers (Litman, 2022). Corresponding to Litman's (2022) finding, Panaligan and Curran's (2022) interview study with Filipino online tutors found that they experienced multi-layered precarity under poor working conditions, such as strict company rules, including penalties and the monetary burden of preparing necessary technology tools and business attire to dress in accordance with the company's dress code. Proximity to American accent variety was not just considered an advantage; distance from it was punished. When a teacher received a bad evaluation from their students, they had a pay cut, or even their contract with the platform was terminated. Such a biased discourse was also reflected in the micro-interactions within the lesson. Some teachers even directly received discriminatory remarks from their students.

The studies I reviewed up to this point discovered how native-speakerism among EFL learners and the neoliberal economy are combined to force METs from economically disadvantaged countries to experience injustice in digital platforms. Kobayashi (2023a, 2023b) explored Japanese female students' differing perceptions of Filipino and Western English teachers. According to Kobayashi (2023b), although the learners appreciated Filipino teachers and their skills in teaching English, they never considered Filipino teachers' variety of English as their target model. Their target model remained 'native English speaking' varieties, and the appreciation of Filipino teachers was grounded in their view of Filipino

teachers as a near-peer mentor rather than someone embodying a target model. Affective factors, such as an affiliative feeling of 'Filipino teachers as "the same" Asian English learners as "us" Japanese English learners', also influenced the positive evaluation of Filipino teachers (Kobayashi 2023b, 10).

Tajima (2018) provided a different angle in exploring METs' experiences: the learners' desire to participate in English learning as a leisure activity rather than a practical skill development activity (Kubota 2011). Tajima (2018) explored the portrayal of female Filipina online teachers as fetishized teachers by Japanese male learners. Drawing attention to the historical background between the Philippines and Japan, Tajima (2018) contended that these romantically idealized discourses 'emerged not solely from recent technological developments and the rise of neoliberalism, but rather from the intricate intersection of pre-existing and current economic, socio-political, cultural-political, and technological components' (101). This heterosexual fetishization of Filipina online teachers among male Japanese learners was also identified in web advertisements (Morikawa and Parba 2022).

The studies I reviewed in this section all identified that the cost of online lessons with Filipino teachers was significantly affordable, and the enhanced cost-effectiveness is the major sales pitch for the students. The increased affordability for students, which equates to the lowered salary paid to METs, is a common feature across the three contact zones. However, this theme becomes even more salient in the digital space, where the student-teacher relationship is often more characterized by that of consumers and service suppliers. EFL learners' strong adherence to Inner Circle varieties is also observed in the digital space. The web advertisements emphasized proximity to native speaker's norms in describing Filipino teachers (Litman 2022; Martinez 2022; Morikawa and Parba 2022; Tajima 2022), and learners also evaluated the quality of lessons based on the kind of variety a teacher used in the lesson (Kobayashi 2023a; Kobayashi 2023b; Morikawa and Parba 2022; Tajima 2022). As Martinez (2022) examined the construction of a new concept, 'half-native-English-speaking' teachers (HNEST), by a service provider in comparison with NESTs and LETs, the comparison of METs and NESTs becomes more foregrounded than the other two zones.

Discussion

Intersectionality and influence of environment on the METs

This review of studies within the three contact zones shows that there are multiple social categories and identities that affect METs' experiences. These include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, marital status, linguistic background, educational background, speaker status, occupational status, and socioeconomic status. Depending on the contact zone, some themes directly impact a MET's professional experiences more than others (Table 1). Different hierarchies of power locally operated

Table 1. Contact zone and salient intersecting themes

| Contact zone | Social positioning of MET in the zone | Salient intersecting themes in the zone |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Study abroad in Asian Outer Circle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainstream citizen | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFL teacher training (Choe 2016) knowledge of American English, culture (Choe 2016; Morikawa and Parba 2022) |
| Asian EFL classroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> foreign resident visa stayer; work, spouse (Balgoa 2019, 2023; Kudaibergenov 2023), refugee (Seo 2023) migrant worker (Ulla 2018, 2021) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> nationality (Kudaibergenov 2023; Kudaibergenov and Lee 2022; Seo 2023) race (Galloway 2014; Kudaibergenov 2023; Savski 2021; Comprendio and Savski 2020; Seo 2023) comparison with 'native' English speaker colleagues (Balgoa 2019; Comprendio and Savski 2020) |
| digital space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainstream citizen gig worker (Panaligan and Curran 2022) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> neoliberal worker (Litman 2022; Martinez 2022; Panaligan & Curran 2022) gender (Tajima 2018) proximity to 'native' speaker variety (Kobayashi 2023a, 2023b; Morikawa and Parba 2022; Tajima 2022) race (Panaligan and Curran, 2022) |

by wider sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical reality (i.e., native-speakerism, racism, gender inequality, neoliberalism, coloniality, and immigration policy) shape the local dynamics METs are engaged in. To gain a deeper understanding of METs' situated experiences, it is necessary to look at language teacher identity through the lens of intersectionality with its relation to wider dimensions of power (Lawrence and Nagashima 2020). Moreover, it is important to note that the different dimensions of power do not operate on their own. As racism and native-speakerism are closely related concepts that construct a situated reality of White supremacy in ELT (Kubota and Lin 2006), the ways in which different forms of power operate are interconnected.

In all three zones, METs experience students' and employers' expectations to follow the Inner Circle English speaker norm in teaching English. However, although they are all under the same umbrella of native-speakerism, they are realized differently depending on the zone. In Asian Outer Circle study abroad programs, METs believed acquiring 'American' English and culture could develop their expertise and gain legitimacy as teachers. In EFL classrooms, the social relationship becomes more complex than in other zones because of the presence of local English teachers and 'native English speaker' colleagues, and each actor's perception of METs creates a situated reality of their professional experience. METs experienced being compared with 'native English speaker' colleagues and treated differently from them. Moreover, some employers expected white-looking METs to fake their country of origin as an 'English-speaking' country (Galloway 2014; Kudaibergenov 2023). When METs are in the digital space, the discourse of neoliberalism becomes more saliently connected with native-speakerism than in the other zones, as English teachers are directly commodified as a kind of service and proximity to a 'native speaker' is distilled to monetary value, and distance from it is penalized (Litman 2022; Martinez 2022; Panaligan and Curran 2022).

Problematic nature of treating METs as pseudo-native speakers

METs themselves, as well as their students, used the Inner Circle English speaker norm, especially in terms of accent, as a benchmark in assessing their teaching ability in all three zones. EFL learners still expected to learn an Inner Circle speaker model even when they learned English from METs. Physical and virtual human movement for the purpose of English education does not equate to appreciation or increased awareness of the diversity of English varieties and users.

Even when METs' expertise as an ELT professional was recognized by students, as Kobayashi (2023a) argues, they were rather treated as 'pseudo-native speaker or honorary native speaker' and their ability was assessed based on the 'native' English speaker norm (Medgyes 1999, 178). Validating METs' teaching skills by comparing them to the 'native English speaker' norm is problematic for three main reasons. First, not looking at METs in their own right dismisses the unique affordances they can offer to students. Second, treating METs as pseudo-native speakers is still based on the assumption that the 'native English speaker' model is a benchmark of English language proficiency and leads to the reproduction and reinforcement of native-speakerism. Third, as Morikawa and Parba (2022) critically pointed out how the Philippines' colonial history was used as evidence for its legitimacy as an English-speaking country in web advertisements, this view can result in a celebration of colonialism.

Conclusion

Although Rose and Galloway (2019) conceptually discussed the threefold benefit of hiring METs (i.e., presenting multi-lingual repertoire in front of students, creating an authentic situation where English serves as a contact language, and correcting unjust hiring practices), the review suggests that these benefits have not been translated and realized

in the situated teaching practices METs are engaged in. Structurally and socially, METs are constrained from showing their unique language backgrounds in front of their students. To realize the pedagogical ideals and reify the unjust working conditions and expectations, future studies need to explore the hindrance that prevents METs from sharing their linguistic backgrounds with learners by paying close attention to how their identity intersects with the social reality of the situated local context. It is also imperative that researchers advocate the pedagogical importance of diversifying the English teacher population beyond the research community.

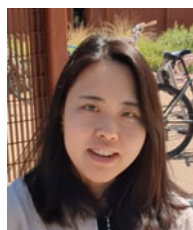
Note

- 1 It is not Galloway's (2014) or my intention to imply the denial of multilingual repertoires for local teachers of English or Inner Circle English teachers.
- 2 It is important to note that NEST was used synonymously as Inner Circle teachers in the studies I reviewed.
- 3 These countries are the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (Seo 2023).

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