December 2011–Volume 15, Number 3

Juggling Identity and Authority: A Case Study of One Non-Native Instructor of English

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Abstract

Authority in the classroom is an important concept to teachers everywhere. The act of teaching continuously engages them in the negotiation and construction of an identity that is accepted as authoritative by their students. Identity and authority, however, are in conflict in the context of NNSTs ['non-native' speaker teachers] of English (and other languages). Commonly-held beliefs like the "native speaker fallacy" (Phillipson, 1992), which holds that 'native' speakers are the ideal teachers of a language, pose a threat to a NNST's ability to speak with authority in the classroom, requiring the construction of an identity that is authoritative without being 'native'. In light of this, a case study was undertaken of one NNST teaching a grammar course in a US setting. Class meetings and an interview with the participant informed the study. The analysis revealed that the participant uses a variety of strategies to juggle his 'non-native' speaker status and his need to speak as authority in the classroom. In particular, it was found that the participant constructs an identity as linguist allowing him to successfully maintain his authority. Implications for teaching and teacher training are discussed.

Introduction

Authority in the classroom has a potentially dual meaning as noted by Peters (1966), who points out that the instructor can be *in* authority and *an* authority. Buzzelli and Johnston (2001) elaborate on this idea by stating that "the former refers to the teacher's ability to direct actions within the classroom, the latter to her status as the possessor and transmitter of sanctioned forms of knowledge" (p. 874). These authors also take the position that the two are interrelated. Being *in* authority may rely on being *an* authority and vice-versa. Furthermore, they argue that the two are ubiquitous and necessary components of classroom discourse and practice. In order to fulfill certain aspects of his or her institutional role, instructors generally require the ability to act as authority, and as a result they use various techniques to establish said authority (Doyle & Carter, 1984; Cothran & Ennis, 1997).

Traditionally, an instructor's authority has been accepted (or at least thought to be accepted) by his or her students on the grounds of the institutional authority granted the individual in

this position (Cothran & Ennis, 1997). Thus, according to Cothran and Ennis, the only aspect of identity relevant to the establishment of authority in the traditional conception of a classroom was the institutional affiliation. However, according to Cothran and Ennis, this situation has begun to change at least in the United States primary and secondary education contexts (or perhaps was not entirely true to begin with, see Waller, 1932), and instructors' authority is more commonly challenged in the classroom. In a study of Chinese heritage language classes, He (2004) argues, "[T]he teacher's expertness and authority is not presupposed to the same degree at all times and is not readily accepted by the student at all times" (p. 208). She demonstrates that at various critical moments authority and expertise are negotiated between the instructor and the students and that instructors appear to be working to establish and maintain their authority. One finding of He's study was to show that various aspects of an individual may be particularly relevant in determining whether the instructor is able to act as legitimate authority including his or her cultural identity. Other studies have found other factors relevant such as (a) ethnicity (Ng, 1991; Braine, 1999; Amin, 2001), (b) gender (Hoodfar, 1992; Ng, 1991; Amin, 1999; 2001), and, particularly relevant for this study, (c) 'native' speaker [NS] or 'non-native' speaker [NNS] status (Braine, 1999; Thomas, 1999; Amin, 1997; 1999; 2001).

Therefore, it appears that English language instructors have a need to construct identities that are compatible with their students' expectations about what constitutes an authority of the language. Traditionally, this has been thought of as the exclusive territory of NSs of the language as reflected in such beliefs as the 'native speaker' fallacy (see Phillipson, 1992), which holds that NSs are the ideal instructors of English (or by extension any language). The prevalence of this belief permits NSs to have assumed authority from an aspect of their identity, which they are easily able to index. For example, Tsui and Bunton (2000) found that on a discussion board used by English language instructors in Hong Kong, NS instructors were more likely to appeal to their own intuitions about the language as evidence of their beliefs about linguistic matters due to their identities as NSs, an identity that apparently in this community carries with it authority over all aspects of the language not just within the classroom but even among other instructors. Students themselves do not appear to be immune from this belief. First, Braine (1999) in his discussion of his own teaching experience claims that threats to his authority and credibility from students as a result of his NNS status were a fairly common problem for him. Thomas (1999), in her own discussion of her teaching experience, reports similar attacks to her credibility and challenges to her authority and also adds that ESL students often felt disappointed at the idea of being assigned a NNST rather than a NST. Amin (1997) reports similar problems for herself as a NNST. Furthermore, Butler's (2007) work on the attitudes elementary school students held toward two different guises – one NNST and one NST – in a matched guise test, suggests that the young Korean students in her study held strong opinions about teaching quality, style, and other factors based purely on the speaker's 'native' or 'non-native' accent. The NST guise, the participants believed:

[H]ad better pronunciation, was relatively more confident in her use of English, would focus more on fluency than on accuracy, and would use less Korean in the English class. The

students also expressed a preference to have the American-accented English guise as their English teacher. (Butler, 2007, p. 731)

Another traditional attitude about language learning is the belief in the necessity and superiority of a NS norm (see Cook, 1999; Timmis, 2002), defined here as a standard which holds that teachers, administrators, materials designers, testing agencies, and even students themselves should measure the student's performance in the second language against the language performance of a monolingual speaker of a prestigious dialect of the target language (typically the "Received Pronunciation" of the United Kingdom or North America's "General American"). The use of a NS norm places NNSTs at an obvious disadvantage as the result of their NNS status, especially in regards to issues like 'native-sounding accent' or decisions about whether a given usage sounds 'natural'. The use of a strict NS norm may force NNSTs to forfeit any claim to authority over English, heeding instead to the authority of NSs and NS-produced sources (see e.g., Tsui & Bunton, 2000), resulting in an identity that appears incompatible with the authoritative, language expert role expected of instructors of English by many students.

However, research over the past several decades has unveiled several basic objections to the use of an NS norm. In particular, researchers have accused the NS norm of being:

- Unnecessary, as evidenced by findings in the research area of non-native speaker [NNS] intelligibility (see e.g., Derwing & Munro, 1997 for a discussion of intelligibility and foreign accent)

- Unrealistic, as evidenced by findings from research linking age of onset to decreased likelihood of 'native-like' proficiency (for an in-depth discussion of the effects of age on acquisition of 'native-like' proficiency, see Long, 2005; Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009) as well as the fact that the category of 'native speaker' appears to be a "non-elective social category" rather than a measure of linguistic proficiency (Brutt-Griffler & Samimy, 2001)

- Arbitrary and ethnocentric, as evidenced by the multiple varieties of English that exist in the world and the arbitrary selection of one (or a few) prestige dialect(s) as the norm (for a discussion of the multiple international varieties of English see Kachru, 1985)

Such findings have led researchers to argue in favor of other standards that favor the development of intelligibility on a broad scale, such as English as an international language [EIL], which seeks to train learners to be intelligible in NNS to NNS interaction (Jenkins, 2000) (researchers in this area have since the publication of Jenkins (2000) settled on the preferred term "English as a lingua franca" [ELF], see Jenkins, 2007).

Despite excellent reasons for moving away from the NS norm in favor of another alternative, such as EIL/ELF, current sentiment and practice does not seem to be in favor of the move. In fact, NNSTs appear just as resistant to the change, if not more so, than NSTs (Llurda, 2004; Jenkins, 2005, 2007), despite the advantage such a standard provides, by giving NNSTs the opportunity to serve as authentic and excellent models as opposed to imperfect replications of a NS. In other words, replacing the NS norm with a standard based upon EIL/EFL allows NNSTs the opportunity to identify as speakers of EIL/EFL, for which they are excellently

suited to serve as authorities of. The discrimination that NNSTs themselves have faced as a result of their status, particularly in hiring practices, and a desire to protect their students from this discrimination may be partially motivating the resistance to such a change. For example, Quirk (1990) argues that whether it is fair or not, the norms of NS English are held to be prestigious throughout the world and, therefore, to offer students anything 'less' is to prepare them for a world that does not exist and to set them up for failure.

It appears then that NNSTs are faced with a dilemma created by their identities as NNSs of English being incompatible with the traditional notion of authority over the language, which is assumed to be the exclusive purview of NSs. This belief appears to be so strong that many students may assume that simply by the very nature of his or her position that the NNST is actually a NS. Inbar-Lourie's (2005) work reveals that NNSTs' status is often unclear or ambiguous to their students. The participants' misidentification of NNSTs as NSs may have resulted from an extension of the student's belief that the ultimate authority of the language is the NS. Thus, by simple extension, the institution would be unlikely to hire a non-authority, or NNS, to fill such a position. Such a situation might not be ideal but might however offer certain advantages such as an avoidance of the challenges to their authority reported by some NNSTs (e.g., Amin, 1997; Braine, 1999; Thomas, 1999). This is not to say, however, that learners are equally as likely to misidentify any NNST as NS. Rather, according to Amin (1997) the notion of 'nativeness' is conflated with 'whiteness' for many learners, and, therefore, we may actually observe the opposite effect: NSTs of non-white ethnicity being mistaken for NNSs.

However, assuming the option of leaving his or her identity ambiguous to the students is even available to the particular NNST, the construction of an ambiguous or false identity as NS is by no means a perfect solution. First of all, it assumes that the attitudes constructing the NNST as inferior are held only by the students. In fact, however, traditional attitudes conflating authority of language with NSs appear also to result in NNSTs themselves questioning their own authority. For example, Rajagopalan (2005) describes the NNST participants in her study as displaying an "inferiority complex" derived from beliefs about the superiority of NSs as users and teachers of English.

Second, such a solution would prevent NNSTs from utilizing what Tang (1997) argues are the NNST's advantages over the NS as instructor of English. These advantages include his/her shared status of NNS with his/her students and a greater ability to empathize or predict problems in learning as a result of this shared status. Jenkins (2000) presents a similar view arguing that in general NNSTs are more qualified to deal with their students' language development, having been learners themselves once.

Some researchers have attempted to describe alternative identities available to NNSTs that offer them the means of juggling their NNST identity with their need to speak as authority. At least two studies have explored pre-service and in-service NNSTs who developed alternative identities such as one based upon Cook's (1995a, 1995b, 1999) notion of multi-competence that holds the NNST to be a legitimate L2 user of English as opposed to a mere failed attempt at copying a NS. Pavlenko (2003) collected professional narratives from students in a Master's of TESOL program. She found that theories such as Cook's

multi-competence allowed her NNST participants "to construe themselves and their future students as legitimate L2 users rather than as failed native speakers of the target language" (p. 251). Golombek and Jordan (2005) similarly worked with students in a Master's of TESOL program who had also been exposed to Cook's theories. By the end of the course the researchers report that the participants had developed "other means, besides native-like pronunciation, to establish their legitimacy" (p. 513).

As a result, while it appears that the NS fallacy continues to exist and the NS norm prevails as the overwhelming choice of standards for English language learning (see Timmis, 2002) so to do alternative discourses that construct NNSTs as legitimate, authoritative users and instructors of English. The present study seeks to further our knowledge of such alternative discourses by examining the "juggling act" of one NNST, who successfully constructs an identity as NNS while still speaking with authority in his classroom about his second language, English.

The Study: Analyzing the Juggling Act

A successful NNST must it appears juggle the need to speak as authority on English with his or her identity as NNS in order simply to be able to perform his or her job. In light of the past research reported on above and the objective of this study to contribute to the presentation of alternative discourses available to NNSTs seeking to establish classroom authority, the present case study was undertaken to explore the way in which one successful NNST manages the juggling act. The participant in this study, Professor S, was selected as a good fit for the intended research due to several factors that allow him to elucidate some of the issues explored here. First, as an ethnic German, his physical appearance is clearly compatible with stereotypical notions of 'normal' race and ethnicity in the Midwestern United States (the location of the study). In other words, his ethnicity would be generally perceived by his students as compatible with a 'native' identity. His style of dress, which mirrors the preferred dressing practices of other male instructors at the university, would also not index any 'non-native' racial, ethnic, or national identity. Finally, at the time of data collection there were no German-speaking students enrolled in the intensive English program who might have identified his name, manner of dress, or accent as distinctly German. These factors were especially important for dealing with the first research question (described below), which deals with whether or not Professor S openly identifies as NNS to his students. Other NNSTs may be unable to obfuscate the issue of their own statuses due to the presence of some physical characteristic that indexes them as NNSs (see e.g., Amin, 2001).

The primary research questions addressed by this study are:

1. Does the NNST studied in this case study openly identify as NNS to his students?

2. Does he demonstrate an attempt to profit from mistaken assumptions that he is a NS?

3. If he does reveal his NNS identity, what strategies does he use to assert himself as authority of the English language as well as legitimate speaker and teacher?

In order to study these questions, a case study was performed, in which meetings of a course taught by Professor S were recorded. The course was a high intermediate to low advanced

(level 5 of 6 levels) grammar course taught in a university intensive English program. Two two-hour class meetings were recorded: the second and third meetings of the particular session. The session's first meeting was not chosen, because it involved mainly administrative procedures such as reviewing the syllabus. In the second meeting, the researcher, a male NST and colleague of Professor S's, remained in the room to observe while he was teaching. In the third meeting, the researcher set up the camera, but left the room while Professor S was teaching. The presence of the researcher was thought to have the potential to affect Professor S's identity work as he constructed himself as authority over the language especially given the researcher's status as NS. No evidence of this emerged from the data, and thus the issue of the researcher's presence is not commented on further in this study.

Data was transcribed and analyzed through the constant comparative method (see Glaser, 1965). This was accomplished through the use of several pre-conceived categories as well as several post hoc categories:

Preconceived Categories

- Explicit discussion of participant NNS status
    - Professor S's own status
    - Students' statuses
- Explicit discussion of other authorities
    - Dictionaries and other reference works
    - Other teachers
    - The textbook
    - Other authorities
- Explicit discussion of standards for language learning (ie. NS norm or some other)
    - Explicit discussion of end goals for language learning
    - Corrective feedback

Post Hoc Categories

- Explicit mention of knowledge of other languages
- Explicit mention of knowledge about language in general

The first grouping of categories under preconceived categories resulted from a need to answer research questions 1 and 2 regarding whether or not Professor S identifies as NNS in his classroom, whether he constructs some other identity, or whether he remains silent on the topic. Examining Professor S's students' statuses would allow for the analysis, in the case of silence on Professor S's identity, to determine whether he makes use of the NS vs. NNS dichotomy. The second grouping, explicit discussion of other authorities, arose from the work Tsui and Bunton (2000) who focused on how NNSTs and NSTs utilized other

authorities to support their points. This grouping of categories was developed to serve as a possible strategy that Professor S might develop his authority (although as I discuss below, he actually utilizes them in an unexpected manner). The final grouping in the preconceived categories was considered relevant as Cook's notion of multicompetence had been previously shown to offer a means of establishing an alternative identity not based on the NS vs. NNS dichotomy for NNSTs (see Pavlenko, 2003; Golombek & Jordan, 2005). Finally, the post hoc categories emerged from the data as additional strategies that Professor S appeared to utilize as methods of developing his authority (a notion that was further supported by the later interview).

Utterances attributed to Professor S himself were the primary focus. Utterances issued by students were generally attributed to one generic category of "student," because (a) the nature of the recording (from the back of the classroom) does not allow for easy identification of each student participant and (b) the students are not the focus of the present research. One exception is Student A, who plays a major role in the development of the discourse.

Additionally, as a means of triangulation, following the collection of the data and its initial analysis, the participant was interviewed in a semi-structured manner in order to elicit further information about his teaching practice and potentially confirm findings from the study. The interview was conducted and recorded by the researcher approximately one month after the collection of data. The data from the interview was subjected to the same analysis. For a list of exact questions that were used in the interview see Appendix A.

Research Questions 1 and 2: The Teacher's Identity

As previously mentioned, the cases of Braine (1999) and Thomas (1999) highlight the potential for NNSTs to experience challenges to their authority from their students. Furthermore, Butler's (2007) study suggests the existence of unfavorable judgments made toward NNSTs from students. It is also important to reconsider Inbar-Lourie's (2005) work here, which demonstrated a great amount of confusion and ambiguity for students regarding their NNSTs' status. In the subsequent interview, Professor S indicated that this type of ambiguity could also exist among his students regarding his own NNS status:

Interview Excerpt 1

1   99% of my students if I would not point that I'm German they would
      not know probably not

2   that I'm that I'm a non-native speaker

However, Interview Excerpt 1 demonstrates that Professor S does not seem to feel that this ambiguity exists, because he states that he does point out to the students that he is German. Given the research findings though, it would not be at all surprising to find Professor S in the data, unwilling or hesitant to identify as NNS.

Data from the study reveals, however, that Professor S does, in fact, openly identify as NNS in the following sequence, in which a student (Student A) asks Professor S, how he personally overcame the difficulties associated with using the English tense and aspect system:

Excerpt 1

1 Student A: **how did you overcome this difficulty?**

2 Professor S: how did I overcome it?

3 Student A: yeah

4 Professor S: patience… and practice… there is no key to this… umm I couldn't tell

5 you… ok this is what you have to do and then… meet me again in two weeks and you

6 will be great yeah and then you will make no mistakes I [gesturing toward self] still make

7 mistakes sometimes… ummm… perfectly normal **I'm not a native speaker**… and **while**

8 **I'm trying to be pretty good at english or very close to native speaker**… uhh…

[Day 2 – 54:00 into the class]

In his second turn above Professor S, clearly states that he is not a NS (line 7), openly declaring his NNS status to the class. He is able to do so by the rather tactfully constructed question from Student A (line 1) who asks about how he overcame the difficulty, which simultaneously points to Professor S's NNS-ness but also acknowledges him as having overcome the learner stage to advance onto authority of the language. The frame of the question allows Professor S to speak as both authority of the language and NNS, allowing him to utilize both his authority as legitimate English speaker as well as his advantage of shared status between the students and himself. Significantly, also, Professor S reveals a tendency toward a NS norm in this statement, when he claims that he is trying to be *pretty good at English or very close to native speaker* (line 8). His use of the NS norm was both confirmed and elaborated on in the subsequent interview:

Interview excerpt 2

1 Professor S: well I think that uh it is good not to forget about that standard, because uhh i-…

2 ideally I mean on the continuum of not knowing the language at all to **the language being**

3 **somewhere on the continuum from not knowing the language at all to native speaker**

4 **proficiency… ideally you want to get to that end of the continuum** but i mean you gotta keep

5   in mind what the native speaker proficiency would be like… **but for evaluation it might or**

6   **might not be necessary depending on what you're evaluating**

He states here that he does not necessarily reject the norm and sees it as an ideal (lines 2-4) an ideal that he holds himself and his language production to as was revealed in Excerpt 1. However, he does not seem to see it as necessary in every classroom evaluation instance (lines 5-6).

However, it appears that it would be misleading and simplistic to suggest that his open identification as NNS is the entire picture. The above exchange (Excerpt 1) actually occurs relatively late in the data, about half-way through the second of the two class meetings, when the researcher is absent from the room. Professor S's NNS identity up until this point is actually characterized mainly by silence, which is demonstrated by his lack of participation in his own self-initiated instances of cultural and linguistic sharing among the students:

Excerpt 2

1   <u>Professor S</u>: start in the present then somebody talks about the past and then then you talk

2   about something that was even before the past… that you talked about this is the third

3   one this is the… past before the past if you want to it's tricky in English [rolls away from

4   board] **does your own language have that?… I know that Chinese doesn't really have**

5   **any… especially not with a verb**… you don't you don't really say that… **does**

6   **Japanese or Arabic have something like this?**

7   <u>Student</u>: **no, just past**

8   <u>Professor S</u>: past and then the past is past… ok… **Japanese?**

9   <u>Student</u>: **just past and present**

10 <u>Professor S</u>: past and present… mhmm… so like English you have future present and

11 past which Chinese can also make uh distinction between but you use different additional

12 words to show its future or past right? you don't change the verb

13 <u>Student</u>: we don't change verb

14 Professor S: no you don't change the verb right umm… but you have a you you can talk

15 about future in Chinese and you can talk about the present and about the past too, so the

16 Chinese language and all your all your languages have those three different tenses like

17 English…

[Day 2 – 35:00 into class]

Here, Professor S initiates an atmosphere of exchanging information about different languages (line 4), which is a fairly frequent occurrence in the data. He discusses Chinese (lines 4-5) and asks students about their languages (lines 5-7), but chooses not to discuss his own language, German, resulting in a noticeable silence on his part. Slightly further in the data the following similar exchange occurs, in which he is once again silent about his own 'native' language:

Excerpt 3

1 Professor S: [stands up out of chair] so… that's the basic difference… we have tense and

2 we have aspect in English verbs… in other languages they are sometimes those things are

3 not explained through verbs in Chinese it is not expressed through verbs **in Chinese you**

4 **have to use other words to help people to to communicate** that it was in the past or that

5 it was in the future… **in Japanese you change the verb right? to show it's past or**

6 **future? how do you do it in Japanese?**

7 Student: uhh… don't change

8 Professor S: you don't change so if you talk about the verb is always the same… well I

9 mean always the same when you talk about the past or the future? if I say umm… I will

10 go to the airport tomorrow or I go to the airport everyday… same verb?… maybe that's a

11 bad example… ok but it's not the verb necessarily that changes **what about Arabic does**

12 **the verb change between future and present?**

13 <u>Student</u>: mhmm

    [Day 2 – 42:00 into class]

Once again, Professor S initiates discussion of various cultures and languages (lines 5 and 11-12), but chooses not to add his own, instead choosing once again to discuss Chinese (lines 3-4).

Prior to this, Professor S already encountered one direct reference to his NNS status from the same student, Student A, who asked the question about overcoming difficulties in Excerpt 1 – a student, who Professor S taught in another course during a previous session and is obviously aware of his NNS status. In the following excerpt, the class has been broken into groups, and they are working on developing lists of grammar structures they feel are difficult to master. Professor S is moving from group to group. The following quiet exchange occurs, when he sits down with the group, in which Student A is working:

Excerpt 4

1   <u>Student A</u>: [inaudible] **your language**

2   <u>Professor S</u>: **in my language?…** the tense system is very similar to English **so it's easy**

3   **for me… it was easy…** I also have articles in my language so…. **I know that chinese**

4   **doesn't have articles**… [pointing to Japanese student] **Japanese… doesn't have**

5   **articles?…** [pointing to Turkish student] **Turkish?** Not no.. interesting so articles might

6   be kind of a problem [stands]

    [Day 1 – 18:00 into class]

Here Student A makes reference to Professor S's native language (line 1) forcing him to make reference to his own NNS status (line 2). However, in this exchange, which occurred significantly before Excerpt 1, Professor S is speaking to a small group of students in a very quiet tone. He, also, appears slightly uncomfortable with the subject as he abruptly changes the subject to his knowledge of Chinese (line 3-4), which is a recurrent strategy in the data. Furthermore, an interesting slip occurs (lines 2-3), in which Professor S corrects his tense usage changing from "it *is* easy" to "it *was* easy [emphasis added]," indicating in other words that he believes that he has mastered the English verb system, and is thereby granted authority to speak on it.

In addition, other general statements made by Professor S indicate silence or what might even be intentional ambiguity, such as:

Excerpt 5

1   Professor S: you started to write?… ok… I'll give you two more minutes to write down

2   things ummm… the groups that are done that ar- that think they are done I want you to

3   compare results cuz you never done with your mistakes in grammar they are endless but

4   uh… that's true for all of us **I make mistakes in grammar… umm we all do…** so

5   umm…

[Day 1 – 25:00 into class]

Here Professor S states that he makes mistakes in grammar (line 4), yet does not relate this back to his NNS status, perhaps instead choosing to leave the statement ambiguous, because presumably even a NS could at times be guilty of such things as seems to be indicated by the addition of *we all do* (line 4).

However, Excerpt 1 does seem to mark some type of significant turning point, because at this point in the data, Professor S appears comfortable enough in his NNS status to discuss at length his own difficulties as a NNS:

Excerpt 6:

[continuation from Excerpt 1]

1   <u>Professor S:</u> **I'm not too worried about making some mistakes**… yeah… uh just keep

2   trying… at the same time when I listen to myself and I hear that I'm making a mistake I

3   try to think about it and try to remember not to make it again… so or I correct myself

4   sometimes I talk and I know… I know what I just said is wrong so I have the choice… do

5   I just keep talking because people understood me anyway or do I go back and try to

6   correct myself?… which just means that… I have to spend five more seconds explaining

7   what I'm trying to say because I have to go back and correct myself… umm practice is

8   one thing… talking at the same time you will hopefully get feedback from people that

9   you should improve these things… so uh hopefully this lesson this grammar class will

10 help you that's the goal right?… umm and this is part umm… part of this is that I want

11 you to identify your own mistakes umm or help people uh help you identify your own

12 mistakes because if you can do that then you can focus a little more on the things you

13 have problems with right? umm actually… [rolls toward desk] let's just go to that

[Day 2 – 55:00 into class]

Here he portrays himself as comfortable making infrequent, minor *mistakes*, but is always conscious of them (lines 1-7). Significantly, this and Excerpt 1 represent the first moment, in which he openly before the whole class allows his NNS status to be the subject of discussion. Interestingly, following this moment, the silence that characterized the previous cultural and linguistic sharing opportunities is broken with this exchange, in which the class discusses full titles of countries that require the use of articles:

Excerpt 7

1   Professor S: no do we use an article for saudi arabia?

2   Student: the kingdom of saudi arabia

3   Professor S: the kingdom of saudi arabia uh huh can we use an article for china all of the

4   sudden?

5   Student: people's republic

6   Professor S: the people's republic exactly if you use the full official title how bout japan?

7   Student: [inaudible]

8   Professor S: do you use an article when you say I'm from japan?

9   Student: the kingdom of japan

10 Professor S: no do we do you have that? do you have an expression in japanese?

11 Student: what's the full name of Japan?

12 Professor S: what's the full name? do you have that? or do you just say could be

13 Students: [inaudible]

14 Professor S: ok… japan… so it's just japan… that works… ummm… **in germany it's**

15 **the federal republic of germany**… but **I say I'm from germany I'm I don't usually**

16 **say I'm from the federal republic of germany**

[Day 2 – 76:00 into class]

Here it appears that Professor S's silence about his own NNS status has been broken by the previous exchange in Excerpts 1 and 6, and he willingly adds a comment regarding his own NNS status and country of origin (lines 14-16) into the exchange.

During the interview, Professor S was asked about his silence regarding his own NNS status. He offered several possible explanations.

Interview Excerpt 3

1 Professor S: this kind of cross-cultural comparison… **what is more important to me is that the**

2 **students see compare their own culture to the u s the target culture** and I'm I guess as a

3 teacher **I'm trying to focus on the target culture which is u s culture**

Interview Excerpt 4

1 Professor S: going back to the question of why I umm didn't frequently reference that [referring

2 to his NNS identity] there are a lot of factors… **it might have been a lack of time**… it **might**

3 **have been that I felt that there were enough examples already**… umm it certainly also is that

4 I am… I am aw-… **I don't think by asserting my germanness I can gain anything** in that very

5 situation

Interview Excerpt 5

1 Professor S: I could umm I guess represent my country or my culture or the language… and

2   umm… be an ambassador in that way but I feel that that is not my job in the situation becaus

3   **I'm a teacher of english not a teacher of german or an ambassador of german**

Lack of time (Interview Excerpt 4, line 2) and the possible redundancy of the information (Interview Excerpt 4, lines 2-3) were practical considerations that Professor S appears to take into consideration when deciding whether to mention his own culture. In addition, it appears that he feels that his own identity and culture are not altogether relevant to the task at hand (Interview Excerpt 3, lines 1-3), which is chiefly concerned with the target culture (in this case the United States). Finally, in Excerpt 5, Professor S mentions the idea of being an *ambassador of German*, but rejects the notion preferring instead to identify as *teacher of English* (Interview Excerpt 5, line 3) isolating his national identity and NNS status as somewhat irrelevant to his teaching role.

The data seems to support the idea that Professor S does not openly attempt to deceive the students regarding his NNS status. However, it is clear from both the silences in the data excerpts above as well as Professor S's own explicit responses that he does at times make conscious decisions not to bring up the topic at moments when it could be appropriate for him to do so. These decisions are made for various reasons including practical reasons such as remaining class time (Interview Excerpt 4, line 2). However, more relevant to the current study, are the non-practical reasons such as the fact that he identifies as *teacher of English* not as *ambassador of German* and also the possibility that he is hesitant to discuss it as a result of the stigma and negative beliefs surrounding NNSs and NNSTs. The result is that rather than openly and voluntarily identifying as NNS, he appears at the beginning of the data more comfortable remaining silent about the topic and maintaining a focus on the students' statuses as well as on the target culture. However, once his status has been specifically brought up by a student he begins to appear more comfortable in his ability to maintain his authority in spite of it. As a result he appears to lose some of his hesitation to identify as NNS and begins to contribute to the atmosphere of cultural sharing, as can be seen in Excerpt 7 above, when he adds information about his own country (Excerpt 7, lines 14-16) despite the fact that two examples have already been provided by students (Excerpt 7, lines 2 and 5). It appears at this moment that he has begun to fully capitalize on the advantages his shared NNS status affords him.

Research Question 3: Strategies for Establishing Authority and Legitimacy

Positioning vis-à-vis other authorities

One way to show that one considers oneself to be an authority would be to position oneself as equal to or above other authoritative sources and individuals. Tsui and Bunton (2000) studied the way that English teachers in Hong Kong positioned themselves or did not position themselves as authorities of English, as well as what they tended to rely upon as authorities of the language. They found that while NSTs somewhat frequently relied upon their own expertise and authority as well as that of other NSs, NNSTs were much less likely to use their own authority as speakers of the language. Rather, they chose instead to refer to various

reference works and printed media as their authorities. In this study's data, the way that Professor S positions himself in relation to other potential authorities provides one of the main strategies he utilizes for the construction of his identity as authority on the English language. Throughout the data, he gives himself equal or superior status to a variety of different authorities, such as dictionaries and reference books:

Excerpt 8

[Professor S is attempting to get the students to tell him what the word "prompt" means after having given the students a prompt]

1 Professor S: **don't use your dictionaries** [laughs] I by the way **I want you to have**

2 **your dictionaries closed all the time** only when I say dictionaries are allowed you can have

3 dictionaries… what is a prompt? do you know? **if you don't know ask me the question**

4 **ok?**… cuz I actually mean you when I say ask me ask me as many questions as you can

5 you should do that yeah it's the same for emails or office hours if you have a concern or

6 problem come talk to me that's what I'm there for

[Day 2 – 8:00 into class]

Here, Professor S insists that the students not rely on dictionaries during class (lines 1-2) and instead utilize him as a resource (line 3), effectively positioning himself as just as effective if not better at providing linguistic information in this particular situation.

His positioning of himself in relationship with the textbook is also quite telling. In the following excerpt from the data, the class is going over a grammar exercise from the textbook:

Excerpt 9

1 Professor S: what about c?

2 Student: will find

3 Professor S: will find?… or… will find is good probably yeah… so it's not very certain

4 usually we use will future then… umm… **the will usually is used after the he which**

5 means that **the book is kinda confusing here but that happens**… ok… [points to

6   student] yeah you have a question?

7   <u>Student</u>: [inaudible]

8   <u>Professor S</u>: the answer? what was the answer?…

9   […2 turns skipped…]

10   <u>Professor S</u>: yeah what is the answer to her [points to student who asked question]

11   question?

12   <u>Student</u>: will find

13   <u>Professor S</u>: will find yeah… he will probably find is the most common word order here

14   **but the book doesn't allow that you see that textbooks make mistakes**… good…

[Day 1 – 43:00 into class]

In his second turn of this excerpt (line 4), Professor S asserts that the normal word order for a particular sentence is one not permitted by the positioning of the blank in the activity. He characterizes the book as *confusing* (line 5) and later as having made a mistake (line 14). Having pointed out the mistake of what might often be considered the ultimate classroom authority, the textbook, Professor S is able to position himself as authority of the English language.

Another authority that Professor S positions himself in relation to is that of more traditionally-minded teachers or texts. In the following excerpt he takes on the character of mock traditionally-taught student, as he introduces the tense and aspects of English:

Excerpt 10

1   <u>Professor S</u>: have… have been yeah… [writing on board] have been… so that's the

2   present perfect… and that's [writing on board] present perfect progressive… why's that

3   in the sim- why's that he- you said… it's simp- it's present tense… present tense time

4   frame… **but in grammar class the teachers always tell us that's past tense**…

5   why is it in the present tense frame?… why do you all say it's present tense?

[Day 1 – 9:00 into class]

In the middle of this excerpt, he assumes the role of a student who has been instructed by a more traditional teacher (line 4). This hypothetical student then has a certain common

misconception that perfect aspect represents past tense. Professor S's teaching and understanding of English, therefore, are positioned as more superior to this essentially imagined other authority. A similar occurrence is found in the following excerpt, in which two possible answers for a particular item in a grammar exercise from the textbook are discussed. Here Professor S even goes so far as to challenge one of the industry-standard authorities, the TOEFL:

Excerpt 11

1 <u>Professor S</u>: yeah… and so again it seems to make more sense that simple present but

2 depending upon the situation present progressive could be right… let's imagine

3 [student's name] right now starts talking umm… an African language… or I don't

4 know… or no [laughs] you can't? well… just how bout Indonesian? no I'm just kidding I

5 mean he starts talking another language and we know well he starts talking in Japanese of

6 course we know he speaks Japanese but let's imagine he's an American he starts talking

7 Japanese… oh he's speaking Japanese right now at this very moment I wonder where he

8 learned it… see works too… but I see him all the time and he always speaks Japanese…

9 then it's more permanent right? then I know oh he speaks Japanese so I say oh how did

10 you learn it where did you learn it? k so see the difference between progressive so you

11 were right [student's name] and [student's name] too… both is possible… [looking down

12 at book] what about six?… [looks up quickly from book] if you learned it traditionally in

13 yo- in your grammar textbooks by the way… five **most teachers probably would have**

14 **said speaks Russian**… **yeah and when you take the toefl test maybe they would say**

15 uh speaks is better uh or is right… but I'm I say is speaking Russian depending on

16 the context could be right… what about six?

[Day 2 – 51:00 into class]

In excerpt 11, Professor S both discusses *most teachers* as well as the TOEFL (lines 13-16), and arrives at a different more flexible conclusion than he claims either one would (line 15-16), demonstrating to the class once more by comparison his own strong authority and control over the English language.

Authority as a Linguist

In addition to his attempts to position himself in relation to other authorities of English, Professor S also engages in strategies of demonstrating himself as an authority by utilizing his knowledge of linguistics. He frequently alludes both to his knowledge of other languages, particularly Chinese, as well as his general knowledge about the way natural languages typically operate. Examples of Professor S's referral to his knowledge of Chinese are evident in Excerpts 2 (lines 4-5, 11, and 15-16) and 3 (lines 3-4) as well as frequently throughout the rest of the body of data. When asked about this tendency during the subsequent interview, Professor S reveals that there is once again a practical consideration involved as well as one of authority-establishing:

Interview Excerpt 6

1 <u>Professor S</u>: connecting with the students because there are **I don't know if how many students**

2 **on that showed up on that day but there are probably six Chinese students in that class**…

3 umm… if I show knowledge about their culture and language I can connect to them they have a

4 stronger connection to me they listen up **it often causes a moment of surprise and atten- and it**

5 **focuses them on what I'm saying they pay more attention**

His knowledge of Chinese clearly has practical advantages for Professor S, such as allowing him to connect with a large group of his students (Interview Excerpt 6, lines 1-2). It also, he feels, causes the students to pay better attention (Interview Excerpt 6, lines 4-5). However, the use of Chinese examples in his classroom also serves another purpose he admits:

Interview Excerpt 7

1 <u>Professor S</u>: my status of a teacher as we kind of talked about before… or we touched on it…

2 ummm depends on my… ultimately my knowledge and my skills… and **if I uhh show that I**

3 **know chinese… I I kind of to the students I think I signal that I have a large amount of**

4 **knowledge** if you want to call it that… so whereas… if I only about english… umm… I'm

5 clearly more limited in what I know… if I know about chinese… umm I think that ummm…

6 **that just raises the respect that they have for me and the respect for my knowledge**

7 because… that situation I would not only be a non-native speaker who knows about english and

8 who has learned english and who knows of course his native language but also knows about

9 another language that the students are coming from and that they didn't expect me to know so

10 because in their eyes chinese is something very difficult to learn and most people don't know it

11 most people don't learn it so I'm a relatively rare case because I know chinese or something

12 about chinese

In Interview Excerpt 7, Professor S discusses the idea that his mention of his knowledge of Chinese can be viewed as a means of establishing his authority and knowledge of language in general (lines 2-4). It increases their respect for his knowledge and authority he claims (line 6). It seems clear, then, that although it is also practical for the purpose of instructing students in the course content, Professor S utilizes his knowledge of Chinese strategically to establish his authority and gain the students' trust.

In addition to drawing on specific linguistic examples from Chinese, Professor S also makes more general statements about language that establish his authority on the subject of languages and by association English. In Excerpt 12 below, the class is reviewing a grammar exercise and discussing perfect aspect.

Excerpt 12

1 <u>Professor S:</u> will [writes on board] exactly so because it's in the future we have to use

2 will and now we have to check about the aspect and the aspect you say it's perfect… so it

3 is perfect because the action is done before is completed [pointing at time line on board]

4   before the point of time that we're talking about yeah that we have here so that's why you

5   have [writing on board] will have… thi- this expression these kinds of expressions are

6   not used very often it's not very of- **it's not a situation that in language happens very**

7   **often that we talk about the future what someone will have accomplished in the**

8   **future** yeah? but uhh [rolls away from board in chair]… it is something that is used so

9   you need to be aware of it ok perfect… umm what about… has been living?

[Day 2 – 26:00 into class]

In this discussion Professor S discusses the idea that something having been accomplished at a point in the future is not often relevant (lines 6-8), and therefore does not come up frequently in conversation or as he states *it's not a situation that in language happens very often*.

Along these lines, in Excerpts 13, 14, and 15 Professor S makes abstract generalizations and arguments about language that establish him as an authority about language in general and by association English:

Excerpt 13

1   Student: what is difference between I live in or I'm living in

2   Professor S: ok [turns to board begins to write]… live in the usa… I… I am living in the

3   usa… what's the difference? there's a difference in meaning… right? **languages never**

4   **usually have two different words or two different ways of saying something there's**

5   **always a meaning there's** always a difference in meaning… you know… if those wo-

6   would me- mean the same then we don't need… uh… progressive or present… so why

7   do we use it here [signaling to one of the two forms on the board]… there's a difference

8   in meaning… think about the… page 14 again

Excerpt 14

1 <u>Student</u>: so… we can say I'm living on the earth?

2 <u>Professor S</u>: well that sounds like next month I'll go to mars or Jupiter or the moon yeah?

3 so I'm living on right now I'm living on the earth but I'm thinking of moving to another

4 [gəlæksəs] or something… yeah so that doesn't really make sense… **you can say that**

5 **and grammatically it's correct yeah? but… language is not only about being**

6 **grammatically correct it also has to make sense right?**

Excerpt 15

1 <u>Student</u>: perfect and perfect progressive

2 <u>Professor S</u>: k… good… umm **some people argue… that you could say just**

3 **progressive and you don't need to distinguish between perfect progressive and**

4 **progressive**… but we'll follow the book here.. ok.. so

In each of these excerpts, Professor S reveals knowledge about fundamental ideas in linguistics. In Excerpt 13 he expresses the widely held notion that if some type of distinction exists it is most likely productive and meaningful (lines 3-5). In Excerpt 14, he discusses the idea of appropriateness of language use versus merely being grammatically correct (lines 4-6). In Excerpt 15, he mentions *some people* who make an argument claiming that the distinction of "perfect progressive" as opposed to simply "progressive" is actually not altogether meaningful (lines 2-4) [1]. Through these carefully placed statements, he appears very knowledgeable about the topic and establishes himself as an authority on language, grammar, and English. The final excerpt (Excerpt 15) is an especially striking instance, because it appears to be completely disconnected to the course's content; one cannot help but assume it is included merely to demonstrate his authority of language and the fact that he has read widely in the subject area, a tactic that may be common in other fields, in which authority is gained by being widely read in the field, but does not seem as common or likely in one where simply speaking the language is sometimes (probably mistakenly) considered sufficient to be an authority on it.

Professor S's NNS status deprives him of the ability to make appeals to 'native' proficiency as a means of establishing authority over the language, a strategy often utilized by the NSTs in Tsui and Bunton's (2000) study. However, the data reveals that he uses two basic strategies to compensate for this. First, he attempts to demonstrate his knowledge and proficiency in relation to other authorities particularly textbooks or other printed material and other "more traditional" teachers. These other authorities are traditionally highly-regarded,

and the students are likely to view them as very reliable. By demonstrating the occasional slips each of them makes, Professor S puts himself forth as just as or even more reliable. Second, he attempts to establish himself as an individual, who is knowledgeable and well-read about language in general and by association English. Through this strategy, he puts forth an identity as linguist, as an individual who does not need NS status, because he is familiar with the way that languages work and can speak with authority about their use, as a result of this knowledge. This identity then renders the NNS vs. NS distinction irrelevant, because linguists derive their authority over languages from careful study of them as opposed to NS status. Furthermore, because the goal of language learning is to acquire language skills, an individual's overt mastery of those skills (his or her proficiency) is often assumed to represent that individual's knowledge of the language. As a result, the NS norm and NS fallacy, which would hold that the NNS by definition is at best a poor attempt at mimicking the NS, could be seen as obstacles to Professor S assuming the right to speak as authority of the language. However, by establishing an identity as widely-read linguist he employs a means of establishing authority more conventional in other fields, where being widely-read and generally knowledgeable is commonly associated with an individual being allowed to speak as authority as opposed to overt language skills.

Discussion

Professor S seems to be a particularly successful case of a NNST being allowed to speak with authority on the language despite his students' recognition of his NNS status. His position as English teacher requires him to be able to speak with authority on the subject. His NNS status poses a threat to that, especially in the eyes of his students, a threat which appears to be mitigated through the use of the various strategies he employs. Some evidence (albeit not sufficient evidence) of the fact that his authority is accepted by the students comes from the complete absence in the data of any challenges to that authority by the students. Even Student A's question about his NNS status (discussed above) is worded so as to indicate that Professor S is viewed as an authority. In addition, in the subsequent interview Professor S, himself, states that he is not aware of ever having personally experienced a situation where a student has refused to accept or trust his authority on the language as a direct result of his NNS status.

However, the accounts of Amin (1997), Thomas (1999), and Braine (1999) indicate that the opportunity or ability to manage both one's NNS status and simultaneously one's need to speak as authority of the language is not always available to NNSTs. Challenges to authority, according to them, are not an infrequent occurrence. Professor S's successful case then presents a potentially useful example to NNSTs struggling with how to simultaneously identify as NNST and potentially capitalize on the advantages thereof while still maintaining the right to speak as authority of the language. The identity of "linguist" that Professor S establishes for himself may provide NNSTs a sufficiently neutral ground for them to be perceived as authority without the privileged NST status.

Of course, authority is not only an issue of the rhetorical and other strategies that one employs to assert it. Those strategies must also be successful vis-à-vis those parties toward whom they are directed. Other factors that this case study did not thoroughly examine can come into play here such as biases regarding gender, personality, race, or other characteristics of the

individual. Amin (1999), for example, states that "As a woman and a university teacher one's power and authority is undermined constantly by existing gender relations that operate in the society at large" (p. 99). Furthermore, other less obvious, more individualistic factors may come into play such as the quality of the voice, the individual's posture, the clothing worn, or other factors. Any of these may also play a role in Professor S's successful management of his NNS status and his ability to speak as authority. Pinpointing their effects, however, requires further research of both qualitative and quantitative natures in order to draw comparisons across gender or other lines. Future research should be directed toward isolating factors that are both successful in establishing authority for the NNST and able to be manipulated by the individual.

Conclusion

The research undertaken in this study was able to provide answers to the various research questions, although these answers need to be qualified as already discussed in the previous section.

Research question #1: Open identification, silence, or deceit?

Data from Professor S's classroom interactions provide clear evidence that he does not attempt to deceive his students regarding his NNS status. He also appears to discuss it explicitly. However, he does show reluctance to initiate conversation about his status. Reasons for this include his personal identity's irrelevance to the task at hand, lack of time, as well as his choice to identify as "teacher of English" rather than as "ambassador of German." It appears then that although willing to admit his NNS status, Professor S feels most comfortable in an origin-less identity as teacher of English when at the front of the classroom.

Research question #2: Profiting from mistaken assumptions?

Professor S's responses to the interview questions reveal that he believes that the potential exists for his students to be confused regarding his NNS status. Given that little if anything from his outward appearance would lead an individual to automatically assume he was a NNS, it seems that he is in a position to profit from mistaken assumptions regarding his NNS status. However, his openness regarding his NNS status should prevent any mistaken assumptions.

Research question #3: Strategies for claiming the right to speak as authority

Professor S is open about his NNS status and thereby places himself in a vulnerable position, because of the persistence of misguided beliefs such as the NS fallacy as well as the apparent contradiction between his mild support for an NS norm and his lack of NS status. In other words, as an NNST, who openly identifies as NNS to his students, Professor S opens up the potential for unfair challenges to his authority based on his permanent status as NNS. For example, a student could conceivably argue that he is not fit to judge them on what is or is not grammatically correct, as he himself is not a NS. As a result, there arises a need to establish his authority of the language through some strategy. This case study found evidence of two such basic strategies. First, Professor S challenges the information supplied by other widely-

accepted authorities, particularly the textbook used for the course and other "more traditional" English teachers. In this way, he is able to establish his own authority on the coattails of the authority that his students presumably already bestow upon these traditional authorities. Second, he appears to attempt to build his claims to authority not on his English language skill-set, which is remarkably proficient yet potentially vulnerable to appeals to the NS fallacy or the contradiction inherent in his belief in the NS norm and his own lack of NS status. Instead, Professor S builds his claims to authority on an identity as well-read linguist. He frequently references his knowledge of other languages, particularly Chinese, as well as his general knowledge of how languages work. In this way, he establishes an authoritative identity not in a way that makes him merely an imperfect replication of an NS but rather as a well-read linguist.

Implications for teaching and teacher education

This case study provides a successful example of an NNST, who is able to juggle his NNS status as well as his right to speak as authority on the English language. In that light, it should serve as reassurance to other NNSTs, who may be struggling to gain the right to speak as authorities of English, particularly NNSTs, who believe their oral proficiency may not be satisfactory. Utilizing strategies that establish ones authority based upon knowledge about English and about other languages rather than on outward fluency or command of the language (although no doubt command of the language should never simply be entirely neglected by a language instructor) may provide a safe ground for NNSTs. Examples of this might include preparing for classes by doing contrastive analyses of English and other languages spoken by students in the course. Swan and Smith's (2001) work, *Learner English*, is an excellent and convenient resource for beginning to gather this information. When difficulties arise in the understanding of difficult points of grammar, the instructor can then appeal to the contrastive analyses in order to provide students with the relevant information about their own native languages. This strategy is not only potentially helpful to the student struggling to grasp the nuances of English grammar but also the NNST seeking to gain the respect of students so that he or she may be allowed to speak as authority. Of course, this is in no way a suggestion intended merely for NNSTs, NSTs may be able to benefit from it as well.

In addition, it may be useful to suggest that NNSTs not feel as though they are forbidden from challenging the imparted wisdom of textbooks (although as is clear from the example of Professor S, not all NNSTs avoid challenging the text). Certainly discretion should be used so as to avoid completely destroying the credibility of a course's text. However, providing an alternative, equally well-formed (or better-formed) utterance or sentence is, like the strategy above, a win-win situation. Students gain by being made more aware of the flexibility of language, and the instructor gains by appearing to have an authoritative identity established not merely on the grounds of being the only person in the room with the teacher's edition.

Note

[1] Although Professor S specifically draws a distinction between perfect progressive and progressive, it is likely that he actually intended to draw a distinction between the perfect

progressive and *perfect* aspects, which often produce meanings much more in line with the argument that Professor S is making.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

   "teachers, administrators, materials designers, testing agencies, and even students themselves should measure the student's performance in the second language against the language performance of a monolingual speaker of a prestigious dialect of the target language (typically the "Received Pronunciation" of the United Kingdom or North America's "General American")"

   –Why or why not?

2. A common belief among those involved in language pedagogy (instructors, administrators, and even students) is that native speakers of a language make the best teachers of the language.

   –Do you agree or disagree with this? Why or why not?

   –Do you feel that such a belief has effects on you personally as an English teacher, who happens to be a non-native speaker?

   –If your students believed this, how would it affect your ability to perform in your position?

3. How open would you say you are to your students about the fact that you are a non-native speaker?

   –Do you make it a point to inform them of this?

   –Are you unwilling to discuss it?

4. Do you feel that your status as a non-native speaker in any way threatens your ability to speak as an authority on the English language in your classroom?

5. Some instructors report that their ESL students are disappointed by the prospect of having a non-native speaker as opposed to a native speaker as their English teacher.

   –Have you ever experienced this?

   –Are you ever worried that this could happen?

6. Some non-native speaker instructors report that their ESL students are unwilling to accept and trust their authority and knowledge of the language.

   –Have you ever experienced this?

   –Are you ever worried that this could happen?

7. During the class sessions that I recorded, you frequently asked students to share information about their own cultures and languages with the class while discussing English. However, you rarely offered information about the German language and/or

culture. When you did provide this information, in some of the cases it was the result of direct questioning from a student.

–Can you explain why you did not frequently volunteer this information?

8. Rather than discussing German, you often brought up your knowledge of Chinese.

–What would you say the purpose of discussing Chinese was?

–Do you feel as though knowledge of Chinese increased your credibility in the eyes of the students?

9. Some non-native speaker teachers report feeling uncomfortable speaking as an authority on the language in the presence of native speakers.

–Would you say that my presence as a native speaker in your classroom caused you to be at all hesitant when speaking about English?

–Was your level of comfort or discomfort affected by our relationship as colleagues, former classmates, and friends?

–Would you be more comfortable or less comfortable in your ability to speak as an authority with another native speaker English instructor who was unfamiliar to you?