"Nonnative? Next!" Native-speakerism in world language job advertisements

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Abstract

Given the lack of research into native-speakerism among teachers of languages other than English (LOTEs), this qualitative study aims to bridge the gap by investigating the discriminatory and inclusive language employed in online recruitment for post-secondary institution instructors of LOTEs. The study also looks at how post-secondary institutions phrase language requirements and whether there is a difference in "native-speaker-teacher" bias depending on the language. For the purposes of this study, qualitative content analysis was used to examine 187 online job advertisements for teaching positions of different LOTEs that were posted by different post-secondary institutions across the United States. The findings of the study show that post-secondary institutions use discriminatory language such as "native" or "near-native" much more often than inclusive language such as "superior language skills," regardless of the language(s) that the position advertises for. The findings, however, show that job candidates for teaching positions of LOTEs are often required to have "native" or "near-native" proficiency in at least two languages, most commonly English plus the target language of focus.

Keywords: native-speakerism; LOTEs; online recruitment discourse; employment discrimination

1. Introduction

The dichotomous distinction between "native" and "nonnative" speaker teachers is a construct that has sparked much debate in the language teaching profession (Derivry-Plard, 2018). Because these terms are constructs that are context-dependent (Rivers, 2018), they are used in quotation marks in this study to signal that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to viewing them. In fact, some scholars argue that the terms "native" and "nonnative" speakers, as well as "native language," are metaphorical (Radwanska-Williams, 2008) or imagined (Holliday, 2021, 2022) constructs because they "work up from instances" (Holliday, 2021, p. 111). That is to say, the constructs "native" and "nonnative" have more to do with a person's race, ethnicity, country of origin, and language variety they speak, rather than whether they speak this or that language as their first language (L1). Furthermore, the term "native speaker" is considered a metaphor or imagined construct because it implies a connection with birth, meaning that speaking this or that language as a "native" speaker is a "birthright" (Derivry-Plard, 2013, 2018; Radwanska-Williams, 2008). The abbreviations NS ("native" speaker) and NNS ("nonnative" speaker), or NST ("native" speaker teacher) and NNST ("nonnative" speaker teacher) (e.g., Aslan & Thompson, 2017; Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013) are also commonly used. To reflect the constructed nature of the terms, quotation marks are preferred, but the abbreviations may be found in the existing literature.

While the terms "native" and "nonnative" were first used for linguistic purposes to describe "linguistic competence," Derivry-Plard (2008, 2013, 2018) wrote that "native" and "nonnative" are now used as social categories. This is also evidenced by the vague term "near-native speaker" that, just as "native" and "nonative," is also a social construct with different interpretations in different settings (Koike & Liskin-Gasparro, 1999; Rivers, 2016; Valdes, 1998). As a result, the binary between "native" and "nonnative" teachers has resulted in several consequences, despite their metaphorical, socially constructed, or imaginary nature. For example, Derivry-Plard (2008) noted that "employers within the teaching market seem to promote the very concept of nativeness as a commercial and competitive argument for excellence" (p. 282). Her observation has thus been supported by numerous studies that analyze the bias toward "native" speaker teachers in hiring and job advertisements primarily in English language teaching (ELT) (e.g., Daoud & Kasztalska, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015; Selvi, 2010). This ideology that positions "native" over "nonnative" language teachers has been referred to as *native-speakerism*.

Although hiring discrimination also occurs for languages other than English (LOTEs), there is a combination of lack of awareness, advocacy, and research

(Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022) surrounding these hiring practices, which is the gap that the current study fills. An examination of the wording of job advertisements from the *MLA Job List* provided data to explore whether and how native-speakerism was present in the recruitment of LOTE faculty for language teaching positions in US post-secondary institutions, and whether there was a difference in the "native-speaker" bias based on the language of focus in the advertisement.

2. Literature review

2.1. Native-speakerism

According to Llurda and Calvet-Terré (2022), native-speakerism is "an ideology that presents NS as the ultimate models of language use and the ideal teachers of a language, thus invalidating, discriminating, and/or underestimating NNS" (pp. 5-6). The term builds upon Phillipson's idea of *native speaker fallacy* (1992), that is, the idea that an ideal language teacher is a "native" speaker, and the fact that someone's "nativeness" or "nonnativeness" can be used to have a bias toward or against them, for example, on the job market (Derivry-Plard 2008, 2013; Kiczkowiak & Wu, 2018), thus making native-speakerism a "pervasive ideology" (Holliday, 2006). Although research (e.g., Cohen, 2016; Holliday, 2022; Thompson, 2021a) has shown that both "native" and "nonnative" language teachers benefit from training, peer support, and improving their intercultural competence, the "native" speaker teachers are considered the target language model (e.g., Derivry-Plard, 2018; Thompson, 2021a; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013; Ushioda, 2017; Wernicke, 2017) and so enjoy advantages on the language teaching market. This idea was supported by Derivry-Plard (2013) who noted that "native" speaker teachers were held in high esteem mainly because they are "native" speakers: They are valued for their "no accent, a better pronunciation', 'more words, phrases and idioms' and 'no grammar mistakes'" (p. 250) rather than their instructional acumen. She then concluded that "this essentialist perception categorizes the native speaker by a natural link to the language implying a natural approach to language teaching" (p. 251).

Coined by Holliday (2006), native-speakerism was originally defined as focusing on "a Western culture from which spring the ideals of both the English language and of English learning" (p. 6). It is not surprising that the original definition of native-speakerism focuses on English. Ushioda (2017) wrote that research into ELT has become a standard for research in language education and applied linguistics because of how widespread English is nowadays. Furthermore, scholars have noticed an ever-growing demand for teachers in ELT (e.g., Daoud & Kasztalska, 2022; Ushioda, 2017), which is why "the specific position

of English language teachers is the first point to consider when analyzing the language teaching field" (Derivry-Plard, 2013, p. 244).

Despite the appeal for the expansion of research into other world languages (e.g., Derivry-Plard, 2013; Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022; Rivers, 2016, 2018), very little research concerning native-speakerism in relation to teaching LOTEs has been carried out compared to ELT. The following section considers the origins of, or contributors to, native-speakerism and gives examples of studies that have looked into native-speakerism in the teaching of LOTEs.

2.2. Origins of native-speakerism

While there is no universally agreed-upon set of origins contributing to native-speakerism, researchers usually discuss the following "-isms" as being foundational to native-speakerism, among others: *linguicism* (Rivers, 2018), *(neo-)racism* (Holliday, 2015), and *essentialism* (Holliday, 2005, 2021, 2022). Neoliberalism as a driving force of native-speakerism (Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015) will also be discussed later in the section.

2.2.1. Linguicism, hegemony, and the monolingual fallacy

One of the origins of native-speakerism is linguicism (Rivers, 2018). The term, coined by Skutnabb-Kangas (1988), refers to "ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, regulate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (p. 13). Skutnabb-Kangas (2015) argued that what linguicism shares with other -isms, such as racism or classism, is a form of discrimination that people experience based on which language(s) they use either as their L1 or additional language (L2) or which language(s) they do not: it creates "the dichotomy between us and them, those who speak the language and those who don't" (Derivry-Plard, 2018, p. 131). Linguicism primarily affects "indigenous/tribal peoples, autochthonous, immigrant and refugee minorities, and minoritized groups (hereafter ITMs)" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015, p. 1), interacting with other -isms that affect the same populations. For example, DeGraff (2019) wrote that in Haiti, French and Kreyol were de jure co-official languages, but French is de facto used in many situations, both formal and informal, resulting in a lack of access to different services, including legal services, for Haitians who do not speak French well.

Linguicism, in turn, derives from *hegemony*, which is "political, economic, social, cultural, linguistic, or ideological control exercised by one group or nation

over another" (Kumaravadivelu, 2016, p. 76). Linguicism is then a hegemonic structure because it promotes one dominant language as the only language, or one variety of the language, worth speaking, learning in, and living in. The dominant language is considered more practical and widespread, and functions "as a window onto the world" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2015, p. 2). On the other hand, languages of ITM people, or "the subaltern" (Kumaravadivelu, 2016), are stigmatized and are deemed deficient and less worthy, if not worthless.

For example, Wernicke (2017) conducted a qualitative multiple case study looking into French as a second language (FSL) francophone and non-francophone teachers from British Columbia and how they oriented themselves to a "native-speaker" ideal while they underwent professional development in France. In fact, the study found that the value of professional development for non-francophone instructors from Canada was instrumental in "authenticating" their FSL teacher self, that is, keeping up with the ideal FSL teacher self, originating in France. The participants were posited as both teachers and learners in the study because they came to France to develop as teachers. The development in the eyes of those teachers was, however, a way to legitimate their identity as an FSL teacher because they learned from the French in France. This is an interesting and important detail because the study participants taught in Canada, a country with a significant francophone population. However, because of the "idealized NS Parisian standard" (p. 226), both non-francophone and francophone instructors in Canada find themselves needing to take professional development trips to France to validate their identity and expertise. Consequently, teachers become more preoccupied with "their expertise in French, often at the cost of pedagogical and methodological aspects of their teaching" (p. 225).

Linguicism is also tied to the dominance of the monolingual native speaker that represents a certain dominant culture that has a certain dominant language associated with it. Phillipson (1992, 2018) called this idea *the monolingual fallacy* that is one of the ways that have established and promoted the ideal of a "native" speaker in English language education. Similarly, Ushioda (2017) wrote that the monolingual bias undermined students' motivation to study LOTEs worldwide because students associate certain languages with certain nations and do not see any purpose for learning languages of the nations that they do not intend to visit or engage with. As a result, she argued that students were discouraged from developing "translingual and transcultural competence" (p. 474) and instead oriented themselves to and measured their development against "monolingual 'native speaker' standards of target language proficiency" (p. 475). The monolingual fallacy has shaped instructors and program administrators' perceptions of what a native speaker must be like, leaving hardly any room for the recognized presence and input of the "nonnative" language teacher (Derivry-Plard,

2018). For example, Carreira (2011) looked at the effects of monolingualism in Spanish departments in the United States and found that people who spoke a US variety of Spanish were considered inferior to Latin Americans and Spaniards because they did not have the same cultural and linguistic "baggage" and came from a society where they practiced multilingualism. As a result, Spanish speakers of different varieties were hierarchized, and US "native" speakers of Spanish were not considered "native" as their Latin American and Spanish counterparts, even though all these groups speak Spanish as their dominant language or one of their dominant languages.

2.2.2. Essentialism

Essentialism, or, more specifically, a form of it called *culturism*, argues that "'cultures' are reduced to particular countries, regions, and continents, implying that one can visit them while traveling and that they contain 'mutually exclusive types of behavior' so that people 'from' or 'in' French culture are essentially different from those 'from' or 'in' Chinese culture" (Holliday, 2005, p. 17). According to Holliday (2005), culturism reduces cultures and their people to monoliths, which allows for stereotypes, such as "in Middle Eastern culture there is no concept of individualized critical thinking" (p. 18).

Furthermore, scholars have argued (Derivry-Plard, 2018; Holliday, 2021, 2022) that the connection between the target language and the target culture is instrumental in viewing a "native" speaker as someone who has enough authority to be the language model and the perfect candidate for teaching the language and culture. As a result, this essentialist view of culture adds to "the native criterion (i.e., pure, authentic and with authority" (Rivers, 2018, p. 31) and so creates "cultural disbelief": "a disbelief in the cultural contribution of teachers who have been labelled 'non-native' speakers" (Holliday, 2015, p. 11). This is to say that because of cultural disbelief, "nonnative" language teachers' qualifications, experiences, and knowledge are discredited. This is particularly evidenced by the relationship that "nonnative" teachers have with pronunciation and their accents. Thompson and Fioramonte (2013) found that for two out of three "nonnative" Spanish teachers they interviewed, "native-like" pronunciation was of great importance. More specifically, they believed it was important for people to learn from "native" speakers how to pronounce words. For example, Katya, a Russian participant in the study, said that she wanted her students to have a "native speaker" teacher in more advanced levels of Spanish so that they could "just hear the difference and [of] native speaker pronunciation" (p. 572). In fact, Katya even said that even though she thought it was wrong of her

to think like that, she would prefer a "native" speaker to a "nonnative" speaker teacher to teach her Spanish pronunciation. Similarly, Susan, a North American study participant, believed that teachers with "nonnative accents" may put students off and discourage them from learning the language. Furthermore, she stated that "teachers with "thick nonnative accents" are not taken seriously in the classroom" (p. 573). This external and internal prejudice leads to "the deficit model that many have about non-native speaker speech" (Thompson, 2021a, p. 28).

2.2.3. (Neo-)racism

Holliday (2015, 2021, 2022) considers the effects of racism and neo-racism as a contributing factor to native-speakerism. Holliday (2015) claimed that cultural disbelief about "nonnative" speaker teachers is instrumental in viewing native-speakerism as neo-racism, i.e., a form of racism that builds on socially constructed ideas of racial and ethnic inferiority (Oxford Reference, n.d.) and is "implicit in but hidden by supposedly neutral and innocent talk of cultural difference" (Holliday, 2015, p. 13).

According to Holliday (2015, 2021, 2022), constructs "native" and "nonnative" are often based on cultural differences that in turn often involve skin color being a major characteristic against which both "native" and "nonnative" speakers are judged. Research (e.g., Holliday, 2015, 2022; Kiczkowiak & Wu, 2018; Ruecker & Ives, 2015) has shown that in ELT teachers are often recruited based not only on their "nativeness" but also on their skin color, along with different ideas associated with it, because there exists an idea of what an Anglophone "native" speaker should look like: white, blonde, is from an Anglophone country such as the United States and the United Kingdom, and speaks English in a certain way, among others. Similarly, Anya (2020) wrote that this idea of a white "native" teacher speaker is dominant in LOTEs, too. This, in turn, affects African American student enrollments in the United States because of a lack of representation in language classrooms. Furthermore, Anya wrote that it is also true of Black scholars in applied linguistics and Black language teachers: "I never had a black colleague when I taught languages, nor did I have a black classmate or faculty member in my applied linguistics doctoral program. Today, as a scholar in applied linguistics and language education, I often attend gatherings where I see no, or very few, black faces among hundreds" (p. 99).

2.3. Native-speakerism and employment discrimination

According to US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (n.d.), *employment discrimination* involves treating a job candidate unfavorably because of

their "race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, disability, age (age 40 or older), or genetic information." The existing research (Lippens et al., 2023) has shown that people experience employment discrimination in different parts of the world on different bases, as well as at different hiring stages because they do not fit into the ideal physical and figurative image of the perfect worker.

Despite a growing interest in native-speakerism in LOTEs, there is scant research that discusses the hiring biases toward or against "native" and "nonnative" professionals. In contrast, there are numerous studies that investigate hiring biases in ELT in different contexts and countries. For example, there are studies that look at recruiters' attitudes toward hiring "native" and "nonnative" English teachers. While some studies (e.g., Flynn & Gulikers, 2001; Kiczkowiak, 2020; Moussu, 2006) reported that recruiters did not necessarily care about someone's nativeness as much as they cared about their qualifications and teaching methods, others (e.g., Clark & Paran, 2007; Kiczkowiak, 2019) showed that recruiters tended to favor "native" speaker teachers to "nonnative" speaker ones because of what students and/or their parents wanted.

According to Derivry-Plard (2008), in 1997 and 2007, two studies were carried out in France to see how learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) and learners of FSL in a post-secondary institution perceived their teachers, respectively. The students were asked how they felt about the competencies of their teachers, whether "native" or "nonnative," and what teachers they preferred. The results of both surveys showed that students preferred "native" teachers to "nonnative" ones, regardless of the language. Derivry-Plard (2008) wrote that it was because many learners thought of their "native" teachers as having "native" accents, speaking the target language fluently, and knowing the target culture(s) better, among other things. These findings can, however, be challenged by other studies. For example, Aslan and Thompson (2017) carried out a study where learners of English as a second language (ESL) evaluated their instructors on a scale using adjectives such as "creative" or "approachable." The students were not, however, exposed to the terms "native" and "nonnative" at any point during the study. As a result, the students had the same positive evaluations of both "native" and "nonnative" teachers that taught them.

More recent studies (e.g., Daoud & Kasztalska, 2022; Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Mackenzie, 2021; Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015; Selvi, 2010) have looked at online job advertisements as a means of sorting through eligible and non-eligible candidates for ELT jobs all over the world. According to Rivers (2016), through their role in society, schools and universities reinforce "social categories, norms, values, attitudes and ethics" (p. 71). It is especially through employment advertisements that schools and universities reflect not only social trends but

also their organization values, making it clear that nowadays schools and universities are run as businesses (Askehave, 2007, as cited in Rivers, 2016) that correspond to market forces and neoliberal economies (Fairclough, 1993, as cited in Rivers, 2016; Xioing, 2012, as cited in Rivers, 2016). Such connection has also been observed in ELT online recruitment (e.g., Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015).

While it is noted (Rivers, 2016) that labels such as "native" and "near-native" are not clearly defined and lack detail, the studies looking at job advertisements have unveiled that "native" speaker teachers are more often preferred to "nonnative" speaker teachers. Interestingly, the findings indicate that the "native-speaker-teacher" bias in hiring practices remains prevalent, even though the TESOL International Association (TESOL International Association, 2006) has long opposed discriminatory hiring practices that favor "native" speaker teachers over "nonnative" speaker teachers according to their "nativeness" rather than their qualifications and experiences. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) does not have an equivalent position statement and still orients instructors and students to "native" and "nonnative" language models and standards in materials on their website (e.g., ACTFL, 2012).

2.4. Research rationale and research questions

Despite the prevalence of studies dedicated to ELT hiring practices, there is scant research that investigates how native-speakerism has impacted job advertisements and hiring process of teachers of LOTEs (Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022). As examples show (e.g., Anya, 2020; Derivry-Plard, 2008, 2013, 2018; Carreira, 2011; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013; Wernicke, 2017), in LOTEs, "nonnative" teachers and those that do not fit the traditional image of a "native" speaker, are still considered "deficit," are underrepresented, and/or find themselves modeling their teaching after "native" speaker teachers. This is an especially important area of inquiry to study because recent research has shown (e.g., Thompson & Morgan, 2022) that some college students in the United States that study languages consider language teaching and language-related academic fields as potential future career choices.

Research demonstrates that the disbelief about "nonnative" speaker teachers is typically an instructor-internalized societal construct. It has been established in both ELT and LOTEs that stakeholders such as recruiters, students, and colleagues influence teachers' perceptions of their teaching ability based on their "nativeness." Thus, it is important to look into the impact that native-speakerism job advertisement recruitment language has on recruitment for LOTE instructors to bridge the gap in the current research, whether they teach

more commonly taught languages such as Spanish or French or less commonly taught languages such as Russian or Japanese in the United States (Thompson, 2021b). Additionally, scholars (Derivry-Plard, 2018; Holliday, 2015, 2021; Radwanska-Williams, 2008; Rivers, 2018) have written about the imaginary nature of terms "native" and "nonnative;" thus, research that investigates the causes of native-speakerism, such as discriminatory hiring, responds to the need to conduct research that looks at the social construction of native-speakerism. With this in mind, we formulated the following research questions for the study:

1. Does the language of LOTE job advertisements reflect a bias toward native-speakerism? If so, how?
2. If such a bias exists, to what extent is there a difference in the native-speakerism bias based on the language of focus in the job advertisement?

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

For this study, we looked at job advertisements listed on the Modern Language Association (MLA) website: *MLA Job List*. The *MLA Job List* is a website that "features announcements for available positions in humanities fields in and outside academia" (MLA Job List, n.d.). Given that the MLA is an organization that serves "English and foreign language teachers" (Modern Language Association, n.d.), the *MLA Job List* is a well-trusted website to look for a job in World Languages "at North American colleges and universities" (MLA Job List, n.d.). Although the website also features job openings from post-secondary institutions from different countries, we only looked at job advertisements submitted by post-secondary institutions across the United States because we established that there was a lack of research looking at the effects of native-speakerism on the hiring of LOTE faculty in the context. Furthermore, the US higher education context is the most relevant to our current positions.

For a job advertisement to be relevant to our study, it had to come from a US post-secondary institution, include a teaching component, be of any rank (e.g., postdoctoral fellow, assistant professor, associate professor, etc.), and have to do with any LOTE. For us to analyze job advertisements, they had to be written in English because that is the language that we use in our academic setting; it is also the language that job advertisements are published in on the *MLA Job List* website. Jobs that offered flexibility in choosing the primary language and jobs that required proficiency in more than one language were also included.

3.2. Data collection

To collect data, the *MLA Job List* was monitored daily from May 15th, 2022 to October 1st, 2022. All job advertisements that were available on the website during the above period were downloaded and saved as PDF files. The PDFs were then stored in a DropBox folder, which only the authors had access to. The advertisements were selected if they met the following criteria:

1) written in English;
2) for a US post-secondary institution;
3) advertise a job that has some percentage of language, literature, or culture teaching;
4) include a specific language(s) of expertise.

The data were organized in an Excel spreadsheet, with a tab for each language. For initial coding, each advertisement was coded for the following information: date posted, date downloaded, name of institution, job title, job description, minimum qualifications, preferred qualifications, language about language proficiency (i.e., indicated if "native speaker" or a similar term was used), and notes. In the "notes," we indicated whether a requirement(s) concerning language proficiency was (were) included in minimum qualifications or preferred qualifications, as well as any other information that was important to consider but did not fit into any of the above categories.

3.3. Data analysis

To analyze the data, qualitative content analysis (QCA) was implemented (Selvi, 2019; Schreier, 2014). This method of analysis was the most appropriate for us to apply to our data because our data was a collection of job postings that were essentially texts. Hammond and Wellington (2021) wrote that content analysis is used "to identify the frequency with which certain words, functions or concepts occur within a text and, at a more challenging level, to explore the context in which these words are positioned for rhetorical or other context" (p. 40). They specify that over the years, "text" has taken on different meanings that can describe anything that communicates meaning and that can take the form of words, images, films, or signs. As for the qualitative part of content analysis, Schreier (2014) noted that QCA "requires the researcher to focus on selected aspects of meaning, namely those aspects that relate to the overall research questions" (p. 2). While it was important for us to create a coding framework

that included different categories other than the language of language requirements, the research questions were instrumental in guiding us what aspects of collected data to focus on. Lastly, Selvi (2019) argued that QCA is growing in popularity in applied linguistics and has "great potential . . . due to the explicit emphasis it places on discovering patterns and revealing the meanings and values behind subtle messages . . . while being sensitive to the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts . . ." (p. 448).

To conduct our QCA, we followed the steps outlined in existing literature (e.g., Selvi, 2019; Schrier, 2014): selecting, structuring, generating, defining, revising, and expanding. Having decided on our research questions and selected our sample, we built our QCA coding frame by deciding to code each advertisement for relevant information that would fall into *categories,* that is, "meaningful, manageable, specific, and smaller units of information" (Selvi, 2019, p. 444). After performing our initial coding, we focused on the information in minimum and preferred qualifications concerning language proficiency requirements because it was relevant to our research questions. Thus, we coded advertisements for language requirement phrasings both in a concept-driven way, that is, deductively, and in a data-driven way, that is, inductively (Schrier, 2014). We used labels such as "discriminatory language" and "inclusive language" to create categories, which in turn structured our coding frame. Although we had no expectations as to what language LOTE job advertisements would have for language proficiency requirements, we chose these two broad labels based on the findings and ideas from the existing literature on online recruitment discourse in ELT (e.g., Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). The categories were defined as follows: "discriminatory language" included language such as "native," "native-like," and "near-native," and "inclusive language" applied to advertisements that did not have these terms. We then started performing trial coding until October 1st, the last data collection day, to ensure that the advertisements were coded for the information key to answering the research questions. As a result of our trial coding, we inductively generated subcategories for "discriminatory language," such as "discriminatory language: one target language" and "discriminatory language: more than one language." While performing our trial coding, we also realized that we had some advertisements that had no mention of language proficiency that we originally coded as "inclusive language." Because the number of such advertisements was high, we revised our coding frame and expanded it to include another separate category under the name of "no mention of language proficiency." At the end, we performed our final coding with all new categories and subcategories in place.

4. Results

For the purposes of the study, 187 job advertisements from *MLA Job List* were collected from May 15, 2022, to October 1, 2022, and then analyzed through QCA. The greatest number of advertisements for most languages was posted in mid-August. The job advertisements came from different post-secondary institutions and departments in the United States and required candidates to speak one or more LOTEs. Based on the advertisements available for us during the data collection process, we gathered data for the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Hebrew, Korean, German, Japanese, Italian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, and Ukrainian. We also coded teaching positions that advertised for proficiency in more than one language (e.g., Spanish and English). Besides being a job in post-secondary education and requiring proficiency in LOTEs, the jobs were selected for the study if they were in the United States and required a teaching component.

With 187 job advertisements used for the study, languages like Spanish and French had the most numbers of advertisements (N = 59 and N = 46, respectively). Languages such as Polish, Swahili, and Ukrainian were the least represented in the sample with one advertisement each. The job advertisements were coded for different pieces of information. To answer our research questions, we were particularly interested in coding the advertisements for discriminatory language versus inclusive language. Advertisements that used discriminatory language were ones that used phrasings such as "native or near-native proficiency is required" "or "near-native fluency." The advertisements that used discriminatory language were then divided into those that had one language in the language requirements and those that had more than one language in the language requirements. As for advertisements that used phrasings such as "superior proficiency" or "professional level proficiency," they were coded as using inclusive language. Lastly, the advertisements that did not mention the candidate's proficiency requirement were also coded but as a separate category "no mention of language proficiency."

As can be seen from Table 1, the job advertisements that used discriminatory language outnumber those that used inclusive language: While advertisements that included discriminatory language made up 68 percent of all advertisements (N = 127), ones that involved inclusive language made up 7 percent (N = 13). Job advertisements that had no mention of language proficiency made up 25 percent (N = 47).

Because we were interested in learning what language was used to phrase language requirements, it was important to look across the advertisements to see if there were any patterns. Figure 1 shows all language requirement phrasings that we encountered. The phrasings that are larger were more frequent than those that are smaller. Thus, phrasings such as "native or near-native fluency," "native or near-native proficiency," and "native or near-native" were the most frequent

examples of discriminatory language. As for inclusive language, "superior profi-ciency" was the most common.

Table 1 Summary of LOTE job advertisements

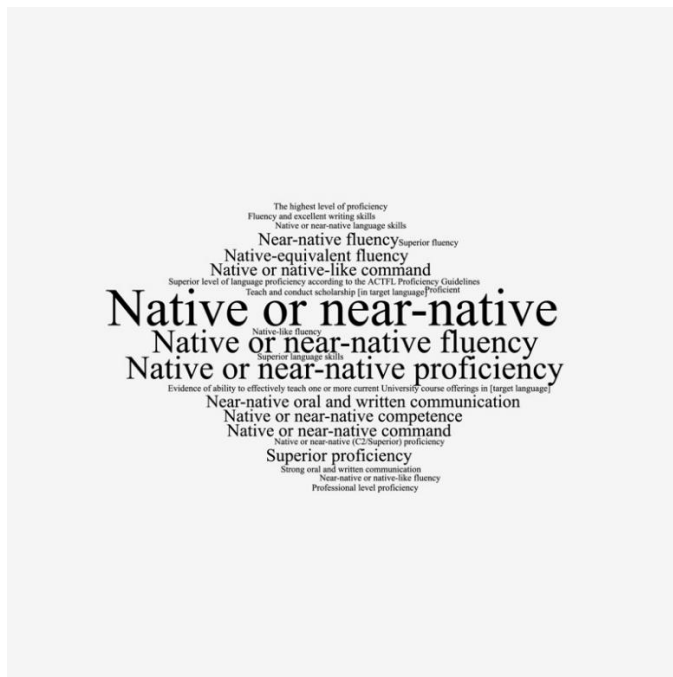| Language	Total number	# of discriminatory language	# of inclusive language	# of No mention of language proficiency
Arabic	4	2	1	1
Chinese	3	2	0	1
French	46	33	4	9
German	26	20	1	5
Hebrew	4	2	1	1
Italian	12	6	1	5
Japanese	14	9	2	3
Korean	2	2	0	0
Polish	1	0	0	1
Russian	14	10	1	3
Spanish	59	40	2	17
Swahili	1	0	0	1
Ukrainian	1	1	0	0
Total	187	127	13	47

Figure 1 A word cloud of all language requirements used in the advertisements

Tables 2 and 3 include information about discriminatory language across different language advertisements in terms of "native" or "native-like" profi-ciency either in one language or more than one language. The tables also show

the number of advertisements with discriminatory language across all languages and give examples of discriminatory language found in those advertisements.

Table 2 Discriminatory language (one target language): Languages and examples

	Languages	Total	Illustrative examples
"Native"/ "Native-like" (one target language)	Arabic	1	*The ideal candidate will be with na-*
	French	12	*tive or near-native proficiency in*
	German	6	*Spanish.*
	Italian	2	
	Japanese	2	
	Korean	1	*Applicants should have native or*
	Russian	1	*near-native fluency in Italian.*
	Spanish	14	

Table 3 Discriminatory language (more than one language): Languages and examples

	Languages	Total	Illustrative examples
"Native"/ "Native-like" (more than one language: the target language, English, and potentially a third language)	Arabic	1	*Native or near-native fluency in Eng-*
	Chinese	2	*lish and Chinese is also required.*
	French	21	
	German	14	
	Hebrew	2	
	Italian	4	*Native or near-native fluency in He-*
	Japanese	7	*brew and English is required, as well*
	Korean	1	*as proficiency in at least one other*
	Russian	9	*language.*
	Spanish	26	
	Ukrainian	1	

Table 4 has information about job advertisements that used inclusive language about the candidate's language proficiency. Just as in Table 2, Table 4 also shows the number of advertisements in this category across all languages and gives examples of inclusive language found in the advertisements.

Table 4 Inclusive language: Languages and examples

	Languages	Total	Illustrative examples
Superior proficiency	Arabic	1	*Superior level of language profi-*
	French	4	*ciency in Japanese and English, ac-*
	German	1	*cording to the ACTFL Proficiency*
	Hebrew	1	*Guidelines.*
	Japanese	2	*The successful candidate must have*
	Italian	1	*superior Russian language skills.*
	Russian	1	
	Spanish	2	

Lastly, Table 5 shows the number of jobs that had no mention of language proficiency.

Table 5 Number of language jobs that had no mention of language proficiency

	Languages	Total
No mention of language proficiency	Arabic	1
	Chinese	1
	French	9
	German	5
	Hebrew	1
	Japanese	3
	Italian	5
	Polish	1
	Russian	3
	Spanish	17
	Swahili	1

5. Discussion

5.1. Discriminatory language

The findings of this study echo those of its predecessors in ELT (e.g., Daoud & Kasztalska, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Rivers, 2016; Selvi, 2010) in that there still exists a clear dichotomy between "native" and "nonnative" speaker teachers in the field. The findings show that "native" or "near-native" proficiency is a common and prevalent selection criterion, which contributes to the "us-versus-them" idea lying at the core of native-speakerism (Derivry-Plard, 2018; Holliday, 2021, 2022). This aligns with Lippens et al. (2023) who demonstrated that despite the world becoming aware of diversity, minority groups are often subjugated to hiring discrimination. Furthermore, the findings support the existing research into native-speakerism in LOTEs (e.g., Derivry-Plard, 2008, 2013; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013; Wernicke, 2017) in that there is a preference for "native" language teachers. According to our findings, 127 out of 187 selected jobs advertised for "native" or "near-native" fluency or proficiency. Furthermore, within these 127 job advertisements, 82 jobs required "native" or "near-native" proficiency in more than one language (e.g., Russian and English). There were even jobs that required "native" or "near-native" proficiency in more than two languages. For example, one of the job advertisements stated that the candidate was required to have "native or near-native fluency in Hebrew and English, as well as proficiency in at least one other language" (see Table 3).

According to Figure 1, apart from "native" and "near-native," the other two commonly found words were "fluency" and "proficiency." The constructs are used

interchangeably across the job advertisements, even though it is believed (Loewen & Reinders, 2011) that fluency is just a part of the speaker's proficiency and that it is commonly associated with spoken language. Furthermore, scholars have written (e.g., Lazaraton, 2014; Loewen & Reinders, 2011) that fluency is and should be assessed together with constructs such as appropriacy, authenticity, and accuracy that together make up proficiency. This ambiguous use of "fluency" or "proficiency" along with "native" or "near-native" makes it even less unclear what level of proficiency is expected of job candidates and according to what criteria (e.g., ACTFL or CEFR). As a result, it even further alienates "nonnative" speakers because, as researchers argue (e.g., Holliday, 2015, 2022; Thompson, 2021a), "nonnative" speakers are discriminated against because they are believed to be deficient. This view persists because "nonnative" speakers do not have a proper accent (Derivry-Plard, 2008; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013) or because they are not from the target language culture and so do not "own" the language (Carreira, 2011; Derivry-Plard, 2008, 2013, 2018; Holliday, 2022; Wernicke, 2017).

The findings of the study also echo those in ELT (e.g., Rivers, 2016) in that the terms such as "near-native" or "native-like" are commonly used in job advertisements. Valdes (1998) and Koike and Liskin-Gasparro (1999) claimed that "near-native" proficiency is an unquestioned and well-accepted selection criterion in job advertisements for LOTE teachers. However, Valdes (1998) argued that "near-native ability is in the eye of the beholder" (p. 157), which was supported by Koike & Liskin-Gasparro (1999) who found that Spanish graduate students and search committees at post-secondary institutions in the United States defined "near-native" differently. Furthermore, Valdes (1998) wrote that someone's "near-native" ability is a result of the general impression that they give the hiring committee, which makes it just as imagined, metaphorical, and/or context-dependent as "native" and "nonnative." In fact, Koike and Liskin-Gasparro (1999) argued that the term "near-native" is so commonly used across job advertisements that people assume that there is consensus on this term, even though they define it differently, and that "any discussion of it would have taken place in the distant past" (p. 58). All the recent research on "near-nativeness" does not concern the use and understanding of the term in the teaching profession, which was the case when Koike and Liskin-Gasparro wrote their article over 20 years ago.

Another issue that Valdes (1998) and Koike and Liskin-Gasparro (1999) raised is the idea that these criteria serve as gate-keeping practices for future professoriate. Not being able to understand what recruiters want from "near-native" candidates, which, as Valdes (1998) and Koike and Liskin-Gasparro (1999) claimed, is not even understood by recruiters themselves, can intimidate candidates and dissuade them from pursuing a career in teaching languages in higher education. In the same way, Rivers (2016) wrote that the lack of description and

detail accompanying the term "near-native," as well as "native," in job advertisements makes the hiring process ambiguous and inequitable. This is an important argument because according to the latest research (e.g., Thompson & Morgan, 2022), language teaching appeals to some college students as a career choice. While the research has not specified how many of them want to teach in secondary or post-secondary institutions, this imposition of unclear labels that everyone defines differently because of their subjective nature can discourage students from joining the language teaching profession.

5.2. Inclusive language and no mention of language proficiency

Out of the sample, 74 job advertisements were found to have language requirements other than "native" or "near-native." However, only 13 job advertisements implemented inclusive language such as "superior language skills" or "superior proficiency." The rest of the jobs (N = 47) did not have any language requirements listed. However, the ambiguous language leaves one to wonder what the recruiter's expectations are. The research into ELT (e.g., Kiczkowiak, 2020; Kiczkowiak & Wu, 2018; Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Ruecker & Ives, 2015) has shown that even "native" speakers may be subject to racial profiling because there is believed to be a way to look like a "native" speaker. The same may be true of professionals in LOTEs, though more research, especially of qualitative design, is needed to investigate racial and ethnic biases in the hiring of LOTE faculty because racism, neo-racism, and essentialism can also be encountered in the teaching of LOTEs (e.g., Anya, 2020).

Furthermore, advertisements that do not mention any language proficiency should be treated with caution: They may be misleading in that they can make one believe that language command is of no importance. This study, just as its predecessors in ELT (e.g., Dauod & Kasztalska, 2022; Kiczkowiak, 2020; Mackenzie, 2021; Ruecker & Ives, 2015;), does emphasize that candidates should have a strong command of the target language that they are applying to work with, whether they speak it as their L1 or L2. Research (e.g., Cohen, 2016; Holliday, 2022; Thompson, 2021a) has shown that regardless of the language, both "native" and "nonnative" instructors benefit from professional development and networking with colleagues that can represent diverse cultural and teaching contexts to provide a better learning experience for students.

Interestingly, the image of the monolingual "native" speaker does not prevail in LOTEs as it does in TESOL (Phillipson, 1992, 2018). According to most job advertisements, candidates were required to be proficient in at least two languages, including the target LOTE and English. Given the fact that 88 job advertisements out

of the 127 advertisements that employed discriminatory language required candidates to have "native" or "near-native" proficiency or fluency in the target LOTE and English, this creates extra pressure for the job candidates. Even though they may be a "native speaker" of the target LOTE, they still must prove their proficiency in English because they are expected to be linguistically diverse and flexible. Unlike most ELT job advertisements requiring "native" or "near-native" proficiency in English only and occasionally in another language (Daoud & Kasztalska, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Ruecker & Ives, 2015; Rivers, 2016; Selvi, 2010), job advertisements for LOTEs often require "native" or "near-native" proficiency in both English and the target language in question, rather than "translingual and transcultural competence" (Ushioda, 2017, p. 479) or multilingual competence (Derivry-Plard, 2018) in more than one language.

5.3. Native-speakerism and individual languages

We coded a different number of job advertisements for each language because we had a different number of job advertisements available for each language from May 15th to October 1st, 2022. While we cannot compare job advertisements among themselves because some languages are better represented than others, the findings across most job advertisements show that post-secondary institutions adopt constructs "native" or "near-native" to recruit people for faculty positions across all languages (Table 1). Regardless of whether a language is more commonly taught (e.g., Spanish, French, or German) or less commonly taught (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, or Russian) (Thompson, 2021b) in the United States, the "nativeness" criterion, or "native-speaker-teacher" bias, persists and is used to advertise language teaching positions in post-secondary education.

These findings show that native-speakerism is common in LOTEs. The existing literature has for a long time addressed the issue of native-speakerism in ELT, and it has led many professional organizations to publish official statements and even start advocacy/initiative groups to tackle issues concerning native-speakerism bias, such as recruitment (TESOL International Association, 2006). In contrast, because there is significantly less research that looks at native-speakerism in LOTEs, especially in hiring practices (Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022), major LOTE organizations in the United States, such as ACTFL, have yet to address this issue directly. Although ACTFL has a statement on their website called "Diversity and Inclusion in World Language Teaching & Learning" (2019), it does not directly address the issue of native-speakerism in the field. Not to mention that through its materials, ACTFL continues to reinforce "native" standards for language learning (ACTFL, 2012).

Because the research into native-speakerism in recruitment discourse for LOTEs is scarce (Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022), this study aims to bridge this gap and illustrate the similarities in native-speakerism for LOTEs and ELT. The primary difference between native-speakerism in the two groups is that much less awareness-raising of the issue has taken place on the LOTE front. The current study provides an understanding of native-speakerism in hiring for LOTE positions in the US context. Thus, more qualitative research is necessary to understand the individual experiences of both "native" and "nonnative" teachers of LOTEs. Additionally, there needs to be more research to understand why recruiters at post-secondary institutions use the language they do in hiring. It is also important to establish whether recruiters adopt certain language to respond to market demands and essentialize neoliberal state of education (Rivers, 2016; Ruecker & Ives, 2015) because students and their parents want "native" language teachers, as was the case in two surveys reported by Derivry-Plard (2008), or because they intentionally or unintentionally give in and contribute to this imagined, constructed divide between "native" and "nonnative" language teachers that turns them into different species with different characteristics (Derivry-Plard, 2018; Holliday, 2021, 2022). Furthermore, examples in Tables 2 and 3 show that terms such as "ideal" and "successful" can be found in language proficiency requirements. Thus, there needs to be done a discourse analysis of how these words contribute to recruiters' and shape applicants' perceptions of what an ideal or successful LOTE teaching candidate should be like. Lastly, as relevant research in ELT suggests (e.g., Dauod & Kasztalska, 2022; Mackenzie, 2021; Ruecker & Ives, 2015), it is also important to consider other factors that may influence recruitment discourse in LOTEs, such as age, gender, education, and others. This can help get a fuller picture of hiring biases in LOTEs.

6. Conclusion

Through the QCA of 187 job advertisements, we found that native-speakerism as a discriminatory, pervasive ideology (Holliday, 2006) is present in world language job advertisements in the United States, with most advertisements targeting exclusively "native" and "near-native" professionals. While the advertisements do not specify what is meant by "native" and "near-native," the existing literature on the issue of native-speakerism (e.g., Derivry-Plard, 2013; Holliday, 2022; Rivers, 2016; Thompson & Fioramonte, 2013; Wernicke, 2017) supports our findings that "native" speaker teachers are considered the ultimate language models and the best candidates for language teaching jobs at the post-secondary institutions in the United States. It is now illegal in the United States

to overtly discriminate based on race, gender, religion, sexuality, marital status, among other characteristics (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.). However, as our study shows, people are still discriminated against based on their "native" or "near-native" language proficiency. As a result, this distinction between "native" and "nonnative" speaker teachers feeds into the essentialization of each group, presenting each of them as a commodity with a set of different characteristics that can be exploited for different purposes (Holliday, 2022; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). Moreover, recent research (Thompson & Morgan, 2022) has shown that some US college students are interested in teaching languages after they graduate. Thus, it is important to work toward dismantling the "native" – "nonnative" divide to make teaching spaces welcoming to all employees, current and future. All in all, studies like ours can raise awareness of native-speakerism in LOTEs where the issue has been significantly less researched than in ELT (Llurda & Calvet-Terré, 2022).

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