NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

TEACHERS' MULTILEVEL EXPERIENCES AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT: A MULTIPLE-CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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YUANYIBO ZHANG

In recent decades, a growing interest in studies of teacher identity in the field of English as a second language (ESL) teacher education research has developed. In order to better understand issues in teacher education, researchers need to explore how teacher identities are developed through the negotiations of their experiences. This study frames teacher identity development based on Dewey's philosophy of education and experience and other identity research, aiming to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the interplays between teachers' multilevel experiences and professional identity development. Using identity as a tool to analyze teachers' stories provides additional lenses to understand the interactions between teachers' inner selves and external worlds across time and space.

The findings of three non-native English-speaking (NNES) ESL teachers' stories highlighted three dimensions – temporality, sociality, and rationality – in the complex process of teacher identity development. The temporal dimension helps to understand a teacher's present and imagined identities through exploring their past experiences. In addition, the three teachers' stories highlighted the ways in which their imagined identities created motivation to actively engage with professional growth to become the teachers they desire or are expected to be. The teachers' stories about the rewarding moments demonstrated how their career commitment was enhanced by positive teaching experiences. Moreover, the findings suggest that teachers' transcultural and transnational educational and teaching experiences can create both constraints and affordances for their professional identity development. The three participating teachers' stories showcased that their negotiations of

experiences and active positioning of selves were at the core of teacher identity development. The findings of this study offer suggestions for teacher educators working with teachers from diverse backgrounds and provide future directions for teacher education researchers to further support the development of teacher identity. I offer new ways of interpreting identity for teacher educators and teacher identity researchers.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, a growing interest in studies of teacher identity in the field of English as a second language (ESL) teacher education research (Raja Harun, 2019) has developed. Gee (2000) argued that identity is a critical analytical lens to understand important issues of theory and practice in education. Norton (1995), as one of the most influential researchers in the field of identity-focused second language acquisition (SLA), asserted that SLA theorists should conceptualize the relationship between language teachers and the social world. According to Kayi-Aydar (2015), ESL teachers are not neutral players who only transmit linguistic knowledge to the student. In fact, they bring their personal histories into the classroom, which serves as a critical component of the classroom's sociocultural context (Ajayi, 2011). To understand the complex issues in ESL teaching, researchers need to recognize the multiple facets of teacher identities that teachers claimed or that were assigned to them (Kayi-Aydar, 2015).

In order to answer the call to understand the development of teachers' identities, researchers need to explore teachers' experiences as teacher identities are developed through the negotiations of their experiences (Sachs, 2005). These experiences take place across time and space, which determines two dimensions of identity development– interaction and continuity (Dewey, 1986; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The interactive dimension of teacher identity development concerns the connections between self and contexts (McCarthey & Moje, 2002) or relations a person has with others in different contexts (Coldron & Smith, 1999). In addition, this dimension addresses the multifaceted nature of identities, as the interactions in different contexts create multiple identities that can be conflicting, overlapping, or complementary (Saka et al., 2013). The second dimension, continuity, emphasizes that identity development happens across time, which links a teacher's past, present, and future. Identities at the present moment are negotiated in the interpretations of

past experiences (Luehmann, 2007). Teachers' imagined identities, or what they feel they are expected to be in the future (Farrell, 2011; Sfard and Prusak, 2005), are developed in the interactions between self and contexts in the past and present moments. Ideologies play a vital role in the interactive and continual development of teacher identities. The collective voices in educational contexts (Lamm, 1986; Rampton, 1990) can either conflict or align with a teacher's perceptions of who they are at specific moments in particular contexts, thus leading to the construction, deconstruction, or reconstruction of teacher identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Block, 2007).

The literature highlights the complexity of teacher identity development, as identities are multifaceted, dynamic, and contradictory (Gee, 2000; Brown, 2005; Lee, 2018). These perspectives suggested that teacher identities could be investigated through teachers' stories within the frame of temporality, place, and sociality (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). These three aspects of experiences focus on the when, where, and who/with whom dimensions (Barkhuizen, 2016) of teachers' narrated experiences.

Building on the frameworks discussed above, this study specifically concerns the development of teacher identities of non-native, English-speaking (NNES), ESL teachers. Recent literature has emphasized that research on ESL teaching needed to be opened up beyond its roots in linguistics and cognitive psychology (Block, 2007) because the old foci on the forms of language failed to account in a satisfactory way for sociocultural dimensions of language teaching. Another challenge the field of ESL education is facing is the increasing number of NNES ESL teachers in the classroom (Ajayi, 2011). To address this challenge, Darvin and Norton (2018) called researchers' attention to language teachers' native/non-native status in order to investigate how it further influences language teachers' identity development.

When it comes to NNES ESL teachers, the issue of teacher identity development becomes more complex (Amin, 1997) as these teachers have unique backgrounds and experiences compared to other teachers. The impacts of their experiences are two-fold, as their NNES status creates both constraints and affordances related to teacher identity development. One example of these constraints is that, although identity development is continual, NNES ESL teachers might develop competing sub identities when they transition between cultural, educational, linguistic, or educational settings. The epistemologies developed in one setting could contradict the ones obtained in other settings (Swearingen, 2019; Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). As a result, they sometimes experience epistemological clashes when they switch from one context to another. Such epistemological classes can cause identity struggles, thus leading to marginalization and self-marginalization in both social and teaching contexts. Consequently, while NNES ESL teachers are willing to speak up, they are sometimes silenced and dismissed (Swearingen, 2019) as their beliefs might contradict ideologies in and outside the current teaching context.

Another example of the constraints related to ideologies that privilege native English-speaking (NES) teachers, which considered NNES teachers less competent in teaching English (Amin, 1997). Such ideologies could further marginalize NNES teachers (Phillipson, 1996)., Influenced by these ideologies, NNES teachers sometimes internalize the voices of marginalization from the external world and reproduce these voices in their practice (Phillipson, 1996). As a result, these constraints could cause the disparity between NNES teachers' perceptions of what they have to, want to, and can do (Medgyes, 1994), which consequently leads to struggles in the process of teacher identity development.

Despite the challenges discussed above, NNES ESL teachers may also possess affordances in the development of teacher identities due to their unique experiences. First, NNES ESL teachers' second language learning experiences better qualify them to teach the

language (Braine, 2018). These experiences enable them to establish a greater understanding of ESL students' academic, emotional, and psychological needs. Second, when an NNES teacher shares commonalities with the students' backgrounds, the students may find it easier to connect to the teacher (Calafato, 2019). Third, many NNES ESL teachers developed multicompetence in the knowledge of more than one language and culture and possess a high level of cultural awareness (Calafato, 2019), which allows them to create more inclusive learning environments.

One significance of studying the affordances and constraints in NNES ESL teachers' identity development lies in the intertwined relationship between teachers' experiences, professional identities, and teaching practice. Teachers are members of classroom communities (Ajayi, 2011) who bring their identities into teaching practices. More specifically, in second language classrooms, NNES ESL teachers' own language learning experiences could affect how they see themselves as ESL users, thus impacting their pedagogical decisions. When they feel deficient in their capabilities to teach the English language, they are less likely to provide effective language learning strategies and instruction in the classroom (Park, 2012). However, they may regain confidence and recognize their competence when their language and teaching skills are validated by people in that context, such as students and administrators (Huang, 2014).

Although considerable research has been conducted to investigate the issues around ESL teacher identity, very few studies have been found that comprehensively address the complexity of NNES ESL teachers' identity development. These teachers usually have varied cultural, linguistic, educational, and teaching backgrounds that interplay with each other. The intersectionality of their multilevel experiences adds another layer to how they see themselves as an ESL teacher. A thorough understanding of the relationships between NNES

ESL teachers' multilevel experiences and multifaceted identities seems to be missing in the field.

In addition, ESL teacher education research has a primary focus on second language pedagogy and teachers' language skills which highly emphasize cognitive psychology and linguistics (Block, 2007). Therefore, a deep exploration of the sociocultural factors in NNES ESL teachers' personal histories and their teacher identity development is needed so as to discover how they make sense of themselves and their surrounding environments. Such a focus seeks to understand each teacher as a complex human being. Their teacher identities, developed in and outside teaching contexts, may influence the development of pedagogical and linguistic knowledge as well as their teaching practice. Therefore, this study attempts to narrow the knowledge gaps in the field by focusing on the relationships between NNES ESL teachers' multilevel experiences and professional identity development. To address this purpose, I explore how NNES ESL teachers' identities are represented in their stories to investigate how their multifaceted teacher identities are developed across time and within the interactions with people in their social spaces.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND FRAMEWORK

Literature Review

Considering the definition of identity, researchers seem to agree on three qualities: identity is multifaceted, dynamic, and contradictory (Gee, 2000; Brown, 2005; Lee, 2018). Indeed, a person's identities are not unified but fragmented; they are not singular but multiple, as they are constructed across discourses, practices, and positions in different contexts; they are constantly changing and transforming (Hall, 2000). Given these general features of identity, in this chapter, I first define the construct of teacher identity. Then I address the complexity of studying NNES ESL teachers' identity development to indicate the significance of this research. In addition, I present connections between teacher identity development, experience, and teaching practice.

Teacher Identity Development: A Conceptual Understanding

In this section, I call on Dewey's (1986) philosophy of experience and identity, which suggested that identity is negotiated in the continuity and interaction of experiences. These two dimensions create a conceptual basis of teacher identity in relation to experiences I discuss in this section. The interaction of experiences occurs between the internal self and external situations, as well as across multiple external situations; the continuity of experience indicates that a teacher carries forward experiences from the past and present, to the future. The relationship between experience and identity is clear in the literature. Sachs (2005) argued that teacher identities are negotiated and developed while they make sense of experiences. In addition, teacher identity development involves the ongoing process of reshaping within experiences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) in the past, present, and future. Thus, as teachers' experiences occur within and across time and space, the nature of teacher identity development can also be understood from the two dimensions – interaction and continuity.

The Interactive Dimension of Teacher Identity Development

Identity has been viewed as a sense-making process that links self and contexts (McCarthey & Moje, 2002). Teacher identity development involves the process where an individual negotiates the relationship between the inner self and the external world. A research focus on contextually specific ways in which identities are developed allows for a more dynamic approach (Gee, 2000) where people recognize the relationships between the inner selves and the external world. Olsen (2008) viewed identity as a label formed by the collection of influences from immediate contexts, prior constructs of self, and meaning systems. In addition, teachers "simultaneously react to and negotiate given contexts and human relationships at given moments" (Olsen, 2008, p.139). In other words, teacher identity development involves the process of making sense of and internalizing the external conditions, which guides teachers' practice and reactions to the contexts. While contexts affect how a teacher views themself and their relationships with others, their identity also determines how they react to the contexts.

Among the various elements that constitute a teacher's identity, there has been a specific interest in investigating how identities are developed in social spaces - a series of relations a person has with others (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The notion of social space underscores that identity development is never completely autonomous or independent (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) but involves the acquisition of a person's meaning of self in relation to factors in social spaces. Within social spaces, teachers make sense of their role through the interpretation of the relationships between the self and other people as they position the roles of self and others in interactions (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). In other words, teachers know who they are by knowing and negotiating their relational positions with others (Coldron & Smith, 1999). Additionally, in a single interaction, different kinds of relational positions occur simultaneously (Bucholtz & Hall,

2005). In different interactions in multiple social spaces, teachers enact multiple identities as they play different roles in their lives (Saka et al., 2013). These interactions create multiple sub identities that are sometimes conflicting, overlapping, or complementary.

One example of the interactive nature of identity development in social spaces is the interactions with students and colleagues (Cummins, 1994) in the teaching context. To illustrate such nature of identity and the co-existing sub identities, Saka et al. (2013) studied a novice teacher's identities developed in interactions with students and school administrators. The participating teacher in this study saw himself as a champion of the students when he spent most of his time maintaining rapport with the students and "fighting their fights" (Saka et al., 2013, p. 1243). However, when he openly expressed his opinions about the school policies to advocate for the underachieving students, he received negative feedback from the school administrators who recognized him only as a novice teacher who should remain silent and carry out school policies. As a result of the contradicting feedback he received from the students and the school administrators, he developed a first-year teacher identity that was in contrast to his own professional identity. This example illustrated the interactive dimension of identity, in which teachers develop and perform different sub identities in relation to their positions in different social spaces.

The Continual Dimension of Teacher Identity Development

Identity has a continual nature that links the past, present, and future. In each of these moments, teachers construct and reconstruct their identity based on their self-image of who they are and what they feel they are expected to be (Farrell, 2011; Sfard and Prusak, 2005). Darvin and Norton (2015) further pointed out that identity is a struggle of habitus and desire, of the competing present and imagined identities. The present selves are constituted in interpretations and narrations of past experiences (Luehmann, 2007), and the imagined

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identities of who they are in the future are dependent on the interactions between the self and the social spaces in past and present moments.

To negotiate the temporal identities of past, present, and future selves, teachers face challenges created by ideologies. Ideological assumptions are "dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 72). More specifically, ideological assumptions are socially constructed and guide people's thoughts on the appropriateness of behaviors and actions (Darvin & Norton, 2015). The collective voice of all stakeholders of education, including school administrators, board members, politicians, educational researchers, teachers, parents, and students, determines ideologies in educational contexts. These ideologies create the accepted or desirable ways of educational practice (Lamm, 1986). , Similar to the role interaction plays in teacher identity development, the continuity of identity can cause teachers to possess multiple sub identities, formed by past and present experiences, which either conflict or align with the ideological assumptions about a teacher's role. As an example, in the same study of a novice teacher's identity development, (Saka et al., 2013), the participating teacher developed two sub identities as both a good student and a successful student teacher in his past experiences. However, in his first year of teaching, the school community saw him as a novice teacher who should implement the mandated teaching activities and policies with fidelity rather than performing the teacher identity of a friend of students that was developed in his past experiences. Thus, a teacher may experience identity clashes when they carry forward experiences from one situation to another. Such clashes may further lead to struggles in identity development as they develop different ideological assumptions about a teacher's role in different social spaces.

Identity development involves struggles between competing ideologies and imagined identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Ideological assumptions could affect a teacher's

thoughts, choices, or practice, as they seek a dynamic balance between their inner self and ideologies in social spaces. Such a balance predisposes a teacher to develop relations to the external world based on what they believe is expected (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Therefore, teachers' negotiations of and reactions to the struggles between their beliefs and the established collective expectations cause their identities to be constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed (Block, 2007), which leads to the development of present and future selves.

Defining Teacher Identity

Echoing the continual and interactive natures of identity in prior scholarship, researchers identified the following three features that are significant for teacher identity formation and reconstruction (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day, 1999; Cooper & Olson, 1996, Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) First, teacher identity development is an ongoing process of career-long learning (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day, 1999) which never stops. Second, teacher identity development involves the interaction of two dimensions – the person and social spaces (Beijaard et al., 2004). These past and present social spaces and the connections to the person create multiple sub identities that harmonize or conflict. In other words, different social spaces could elicit differing, and sometimes contradictory, teacher identities (Cooper & Olson, 1996). Third, teachers take agency over the process of professional identity development. For example, when teachers perceive conflicts between the sub identities or the selves in the past, present, or future moments, they sometimes actively seek opportunities for professional development or reflect on teaching practice to negotiate such conflicts. Beauchamp & Thomas (2009) stated that reflection is a key factor in teacher identity development. Teachers reflect to harmonize the inner self and a larger context that involves others.

Considering these prior discussions, Yazan (2017) gave a more comprehensive definition of teacher identity as,

The collection of influences and effects from immediate contexts, prior constructs of

self, and meaning systems that become intertwined inside the flow of activity as a

teacher simultaneously reacts to and negotiates given contexts and human

relationships at given moments. (p. 39)

More specifically, teachers' professional identities are recognized within their world, which

involves their beliefs, values, and assumptions about good teaching practice and being a good

teacher (Yazan, 2017). On the other hand, teachers' self-images are balanced with the roles

they are expected to play as a teacher. Furthermore, teachers can manifest, take on, negotiate,

and contest their imagined, future identities based on their thoughts, actions, and past

experiences. This definition pointed out the multiple, intertwined layers that form teacher

identity, which situates this study's primary focus on teachers' identity development related

to how they make meaning through negotiations with time and social space.

NNES ESL Teacher Identity Development: The Complex Issues

A non-native teacher of English is traditionally defined as a teacher who does not

speak English as their first language (Medgyes, 1992). English as a second language (ESL)

teachers in this study refer to the group of English language teachers in English-speaking

countries working with students whose first languages are not English. When it comes to this

specific population of NNES ESL teachers, their NNES status creates both constraints and

affordances, adding another layer of complexity (Amin, 1997) to their professional identity

development.

The Constraints

NNES ESL teachers' unique personal histories and pathways toward becoming a

teacher might create constraints for the process of their teacher identity development. In this

subsection, I discuss how some constraints presented in the literature, such as NNES ESL

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teachers' disrupted continuity of experiences, marginalization and self-marginalization, and native-speakerism may cause struggles as they negotiate their teacher identity.

Disrupted Continuity of Experience. Although teacher identity development is a continual process of negotiation over time, when NNES ESL teachers are exposed to a completely different cultural, educational, or teaching context, such continuity is, to some extent, disrupted. Huang and Varghese (2015), in their work with NNES teachers in U.S. secondary ESL programs, found that NNES ESL teachers reported multiple identities as they crossed geographical, linguistic, and ethnic boundaries. In their study, a teacher brought up in a Chinese family reported a split between the two cultures in her familial and professional worlds. She was expected to be a quiet and obedient daughter at home while she had to voice herself in staff meetings at school. This example illustrated that NNES ESL teachers' disconnected experiences are a predominant factor that creates conflicts in teacher identity negotiation.

As a result of the NNES status and the disconnected experiences, teachers were reported to experience epistemological clashes (Swearingen, 2019; Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). Teachers developed epistemic stances rooted in cultural ways of knowing, which were somewhat rejected when they were expected to reproduce Western academic practices and knowledge (Swearingen, 2019). As NNES ESL teachers often experienced disconnects between their past and present learning and teaching experiences, especially if these experiences are transnational or transcultural, their sub identities sometimes clash between Western and non-Western epistemologies (Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). As an example, prior to teaching in the U.S., NNES immigrant teachers from east Asia were engaged in educational contexts that focused heavily on examinations (Park, 2012) rather than building critical thinking skills in learner-centered classrooms (Hooks, 2009). These conflicting

ideologies of language teaching practice in two cultural settings added another layer to NNES ESL teachers' identity negotiation.

Marginalization and Self-Marginalization. Some NNES teachers possessed a willingness to articulate and contribute to the field while sometimes being silenced and dismissed (Swearingen, 2019). Their status as NNES teachers and disconnects between past and present may contribute to a sense of marginalization, which may lead to a loss of power and silence in academic contexts. Park's (2012) study of a teacher's journey of identity negotiation illustrated the many challenges an NNES ESL teacher experienced due to marginalization. In this study, the participating teacher had an ESL educational background in China where the primary goal was to pass a series of tests, but language use for authentic, communicative purposes was almost nonexistent. When she relocated to the United States, she felt powerless to participate in communicative activities in many contexts. Due to her background and NNES status, she was rejected by the recruiter in an ESL teacher job interview; she felt confused when other people had to repeat what she said to figure out what she meant in her master's program; she was even discouraged by a friend who questioned her ability to teach in an English-speaking classroom. This example showcased an NNES teacher's feelings of powerlessness rooted in the interactions with social spaces, which created challenges in the process of identity negotiation in English-speaking contexts.

Moreover, NNES teachers were reported to internalize and reproduce the ideologies that privilege NES teachers, which, consequently, created the situation of self-marginalization (Phillipson, 1992). In a study on primary NNES ESL teachers' preferences for NES or NNES teachers as language teachers, Llurda and Huguet (2003) found that 47.1% of the participating NNES teachers suggested that schools should hire more NES teachers, while only 5.9% thought that more NNES ESL teachers should be hired. This study demonstrated the teachers' self-marginalization as they doubted their own expertise and

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believed that NES teachers were more qualified to teach ESL. Such experiences of marginalization and self-marginalization resulted in NNES teachers' confusion about who they were as teachers, which exemplified Swearingen's (2019) finding of the struggles the silenced NNES teachers had to face in order to negotiate the relationships between the self and the social space in teaching contexts.

English Language Proficiency and Native Speakerism. NNES ESL teachers sometimes perceived incompetency in proficiency and knowledge of English while being expected to fill the role of a language expert (Swearingen, 2019). In a study on ESL students' perceptions of NNES teachers (Huang, 2014), the participating students shared concerns about their NNES ESL teachers' competency in providing specific instructions in overwhelmingly English-speaking contexts. Moreover, Amin (1997) pointed out that NNES ESL teachers also faced ideologies privileging Native English-Speaking (NES) teachers. These ideologies include the native speaker fallacy, suggesting that NES teachers are more competent in teaching the English language (Phillipson, 1992) than NNES teachers. Amin's study showed that some ELLs and parents assumed a connection between teachers' race and their English language abilities or teaching skills.

More specifically, students had a decided preference for White over non-White ESL teachers as the students matched the non-White appearance to non-native speakers and perceived them as less able to teach English than White, native-speaking teachers. As a result, NNES ESL teachers, especially those new to the profession, needed to invest extra time and energy to convince their students and colleagues that they were competent ESL users and teachers. When compared with NES teachers by the students, the NNES teachers questioned their own legitimacy as English speakers and ownership of English (Swearingen, 2019). Such skepticism of language proficiency may contribute to a lack of confidence in their teaching abilities as they believed NS provided better models of speaking English.

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Swearingen (2019) also found that the perceived lack of language proficiency prevented NNES ESL teachers from actively participating in teaching practice and increased stress in the classroom. This finding is supported by Eslami and Fatahi's study (2008) of NNES teachers' self-efficacy and English proficiency. According to them, NNES teachers' perceived teaching efficacy was positively correlated with their self-reported English proficiency. In addition, teachers with low self-efficacy were less willing to include communication-oriented language teaching strategies, such as teacher-modeled role-play and interviews. Although these strategies are research-proven to be effective in supporting students' oral proficiency development (Pennington & Richards, 2015), NNES teachers demonstrated some level of hesitation when they needed to include communicative activities in the classroom. This study illustrated Medgyes' (1994) finding that NNES ESL teachers' academic stress in the classroom could create some incompatibility between their duties and wishes. According to Medgyes, teaching is a two-way process in which the teacher and students need to adapt to each other's goals and procedures. In other words, teachers' wishes in the classroom are partially constructed by the students' expectations. Thus, classroom interaction involves endless negotiations between the two parties. The disparity between what NNES ESL teachers have to, want to, and can do (Medgyes, 1994) brings back the interconnections between ideologies, imagined identity, and present identity as a main focus of this study.

The Affordances

Despite the challenges NNES ESL teachers face, researchers have been aware of the native speaker fallacy and posited that NNES ESL teachers possess some unique affordances, such as specific knowledge and skills, which positively affected their professional identity development (Medgyes, 1994; Swearingen, 2019; Calafato, 2019). The fact that NNES ESL teachers have undergone the process of English language learning themselves better qualifies

them to teach the language (Braine, 2018). In Medgyes' (1994) study on NNES teachers'

perceptions of the positive influences of the NNES status, the participating teachers reported

several aspects they benefited from their linguistic backgrounds and ESL learning

experiences. Most NNES ESL teachers self-identified as successful English language

learners. The successful language learning experiences allowed them to anticipate and

understand the language difficulties the learners might face. In addition, NNES teachers

provided a good learner model for the students to imitate, including linguistic knowledge and

skills, language learning strategies, and experiences in the language learning trajectory.

Moreover, NNES ESL teachers developed stronger linguistic awareness, meaning explicit

knowledge about the language, than NES ESL teachers. NNES teachers can also predict and

fulfill ESL students' real academic, emotional, and psychological needs to a greater extent as

the NNES teachers usually share some familiarity with the students' linguistic, cultural,

familial, or personal backgrounds.

Similarly, Calafato (2019) found in her study that when an NNES ESL teacher shares

the same first language (L1) with students, they can provide more helpful strategies for

learning the target language. When an NNES ESL teacher is perceived by students as a

successful language learner, the students are more likely to consider the teacher as their role

model in language learning. Meanwhile, the students' motivation in language learning is

boosted by the teacher's high English proficiency as well as their experiential knowledge of

language teaching and learning.

The positive influences of the NNES status on ESL teachers' identity development

have been evident in more recent research as NNES ESL teachers have started to claim their

multilingual identity and viewed it as a privilege in ESL teaching (Calafato, 2019). As an

example, in a study on the multilingual identity of an NNES teacher, Jiang et al. (2014) found

that the teacher not only embraced his identity as a multilingual teacher but also utilized this identity to promote multilingualism in his students.

In addition, the multilingual identity is closely associated with NNES ESL teachers' awareness and development of multicultural identity. With many schools increasingly emphasizing multiculturalism, teachers are encouraged to develop a multicultural identity in order to better promote multiculturalism among students (Calafato, 2019). Many NNES ESL teachers have developed a sense of the value of multicompetence – knowledge of more than one language and culture, while the surrounding world does not share this value (Swearingen, 2019). In quantitative research on language teachers' self-perceptions of diversity (Vidwans & Faez, 2019), internationally educated language teachers reported higher confidence in implementing culturally responsive teaching. As most NNES ESL teachers received general education or teacher preparation in more than one cultural setting, their diversity awareness constitutes a critical part of their professional identity. Such diversity awareness allows them to put forth more effort in culturally responsive activities (Vidwans & Faez, 2019) with their students and colleagues.

The literature discussed in this section emphasized the challenges faced by NNES ESL teachers and unpacked the reasons behind their complex identity struggles, including the competing sub identities, marginalization, and disconnected past and present experiences. I presented studies in which teachers identified their NNES status as an affordance in teaching ESL. In addition, I reviewed literature that highlighted the focus on intersectionality and NNES teacher identity development. To further underscore the significant role that experiences play in the development of NNES ESL teachers' identities, in the next section, I present literature about NNES teachers' multilevel experiences, in relation to their identity development and teaching practice.

NNES ESL Teachers' Experience, Teacher Identity, and Teaching Practice

NNES ESL teachers' experience, professional identities, and teaching practice are intertwined. Research has suggested that NNES ESL teachers bring their social, political, and cultural lives into classrooms (Ajayi, 2011). Teachers' available choices in teaching practice come ready-packaged because their ways of acting and thinking, as a part of their identities, are patterned into practices (Coldron & Smith, 1999). Such patterns are rooted in their past experiences. Thus, NNES ESL teachers' identities have been considered closely related to classroom practice (Shahri, 2018). On the other hand, teachers negotiate their identities in classroom practice as teachers are also members of classroom communities (Ajayi, 2011). This assertion emphasized that identity is developed in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), in which teachers develop expectations of how to interact with the students. Therefore, understanding the development of NNES ESL teachers' identities requires the investigation of their personal histories, especially how their experiences are interconnected with teaching practice.

As discussed in previous sections, teacher identity is constituted in interpretations and narrations of past experiences (Luehmann, 2007). The investigation of NNES teachers' pathways and multi-leveled experiences is complex due to three reasons. First, NNES ESL teachers are diverse in their socio-cultural backgrounds. Their own cultural experiences and perceptions of social power can be brought into teaching practice (Ajayi, 2011). Ajayi's study (2011) exemplified the relationship between ESL teachers' cultural backgrounds, identities, and teaching practices. In this study, the Hispanic ESL teachers utilized their experiences as members of marginalized ethnic minority groups to relate their teaching practice to the socio-cultural backgrounds of the students. Coming from the same culture as the Hispanic ESL students, the teachers utilized their cultural background to build rapport with the students as they understood the difficulties the students face with a low social economic status and

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limited resources, power, and opportunities in learning. In teaching, the teachers emphasized the importance of linking learning to family and community values as a part of their Hispanic culture. The affordances created by the teachers' own backgrounds also solidified student-teacher relationships as they shared similar socio-cultural experiences (Huang, 2014). The teachers' beliefs and teaching practices were deeply rooted in their personal histories as minorities. Such histories could build into the process of professional identity development especially when the teachers' own cultural experiences interact with the students' backgrounds and learning experiences.

Second, NNES ESL teachers' language learning experiences affect their teaching practice. These experiences are considered both a resource and an obstacle of the development of second language teaching skills (Ellis, 2004). As discussed in the previous section, NNES ESL teachers with the experience of having explicitly learned English developed a higher level of language awareness in some domains of language teaching (Calafato, 2019). For example, in a quantitative study of NNES and NES ESL teachers' language awareness McNeill (2018) found that NNES teachers scored higher in grammar awareness than NES teachers. One possible reason for this difference was that most of the NNES teachers learned the grammatical rules of English explicitly while the NES teachers acquired English grammar implicitly. On the other hand, challenges that NNES ESL teachers face in comparison to the NES teachers include vocabulary size (McNeill, 2018) and appropriacy of language use for communicative purposes (Park, 2012). These challenges can be interpreted as a result of the NNES teachers' language learning experience in non-English-speaking countries where they have limited access to extensive comprehensible input of English or opportunities to use English for communicative purposes. According to these studies, it appears that NNES ESL teachers' varied language learning experiences might impact their teacher identity development, in both positive and negative ways. However, very

few studies explicitly focused on investigating the relationships between NNES ESL teachers' language learning experiences and identity development. Thus, another purpose of this study is to unpack the relationship between these experiences and NNES teachers' beliefs of ESL pedagogy, as well as how these two aspects contribute to the development of their teacher identities.

Third, it is evident that in-service ESL teachers' identity formation involves factors including teaching experiences, especially knowledge obtained from academic discourse practices and real fieldwork experiences (Ahmadi et al., 2013). Second-language classrooms are not only learning places but also social places (Markee, 2004). Even though NNES ESL teachers sometimes feel deficient in their abilities to teach English due to their NNES status, when their language and teaching skills are validated by the students and administrators, they regain confidence in teaching and start to recognize their capacity in participating in private and professional contexts (Huang, 2014). As an example, in Huang's study, a student shared their confidence in the NNES teacher's instructional skills as the teacher was able to identify the difficulties the students might experience when learning American idioms. The student noticed that to illustrate the slangs and idioms, the teacher gave a lot of examples and explained how to use them in sentences. In addition, the administrators in the study praised the NNES teachers' English proficiency, especially speech intelligibility, and their efforts to complete tasks with their NES colleagues. Students and administrators, as interlocuters in academic discourses, interacting with the NNES teachers daily, play an important role in helping the teachers recognize their competence in teaching. These examples illustrated the close connections between the NNES ESL teachers' teaching experiences, especially the interactions with all interlocuters in teaching contexts, and professional identity development.

In addition, ESL teachers' experiences, such as years of teaching and professional development experiences, are strong predictors of how they see themselves (Kraut et al.,

2016). Kraut et al. (2016) found that ESL teachers' years of teaching experience is positively correlated to their confidence in providing engaging ESL instruction. Similarly, Dewaele et al. (2018) reported that experienced ESL teachers saw themselves as more creative, better at managing classroom activities, and possessing stronger pedagogical skills than novice ESL teachers. In Kraut et al.'s study (2016), a majority of the participating teachers reported a positive correlation between professional development and their confidence in teaching ESL. Even though a number of studies have focused on the connections between factors related to ESL teachers' teaching experiences, such as years of teaching and professional development, and teachers' self-efficacy, few deeply explored how these experiences affect NNES teachers' identity development. Questions remaining unanswered include how these experiences help NNES teachers negotiate between their NNES status and identity and whether the years of teaching affect how they see themselves as NNES teachers.

Conclusion

Teachers' professional identities are developed in continual and interactive dimensions. The process of teacher identity development, which occurs between the inner self and the external world, as well as within and across time and space, determines the nature of teacher identity, which is multifaceted, dynamic, and contradictory. Previous research on NNES ESL teacher identity development suggested that this group of teachers experienced specific constrains and affordances caused by their multilevel experiences (language learning, culture, and teaching), ideologies in educational contexts, and social marginalization and self-marginalization. Their unique experiences add another level of complexity in exploring their teacher identity development.

In this section, I also presented research that investigated the interconnections between NNES ESL teachers' experiences, professional identity development, and teaching practice. However, there is still a need to unpack the relationships between NNES ESL

teachers' language learning/teaching experiences and how they negotiate the inner self and social spaces in educational contexts in an English-speaking country. In the next section, I will explicate the theories upon which I draw to explore interplays between experience and identity development, and how NNES teachers negotiate their present and imagined identities.

Theoretical Framework

Intersectionality of Experiences

In recent decades, researchers in the field of language education research developed a focus on the intersections between various aspects of experiences and teacher identity (Block, 2007; Lawrence & Nagashima, 2020). Levon (2015) defined intersectionality as the product of multiple intersecting social classifications that affect people's understanding of self and the access and opportunities they receive. Collins and Bilge (2016) pointed out that intersectionality is "the many axes that work together and influence each other" (p. 2) which provides a way of understanding the "complexity of people's lives and the organization of power" (p. 2) across different contexts. When teachers participate in different contexts, they develop different group memberships (Rampton, 1990). Consequently, they develop multiple sub identities out of these group memberships, which intersect. Such intersections are also dynamic as these sub identities developed from multilevel experiences "not only intersect but mutually constitute one another" (Levon, 2015, p. 298) across time and space.

In the case of NNES ESL teachers, their social categories, such as cultural and linguistic background, ethnicity, family, gender, social class, and migration/immigration status, create an intersectionality issue in teachers' identity development (Norton & De Costa, 2018; Lawrence & Nagashima. 2020). In the framework of this research, the notion of the intersectionality of experiences specifically focuses on three aspects of NNES ESL teachers' experiences (Figure 1): – cultural experience and race, educational experience (especially

language learning and teacher education experiences), and teaching experience – in relation

to teacher identity development.

Figure 1

Intersectionality of NNES ESL Teachers' Three Types of Experiences
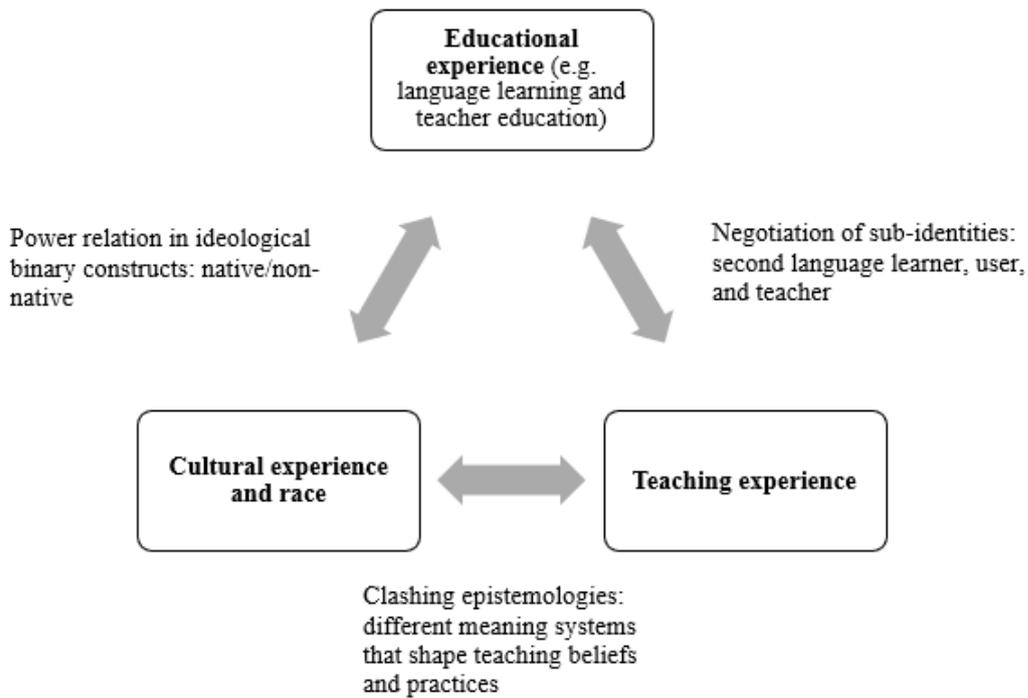
Every NNES ESL teacher was an ESL learner at a point prior to becoming a teacher,

although some of the teachers developed an ESL user identity out of their learner identity

when they became proficient in English (Huang and Varghese, 2015). The intersection of an

NNES ESL teacher's ESL learning and teaching experiences causes the negotiation of two

competing sub identities – self as learner and self as a teacher (McDonough, 2002). In such

negotiation, on one hand, the discrepancy between the co-existing sub identities of language

learner/user and teacher (McDonough, 2002) could create some struggles in teacher identity

development, as these two sub identities are developed from interactions in different social

spaces. On the other hand, ESL teachers' beliefs and identities are informed by their prior

language learning experiences (Ellis, 2006). To understand the intersection of NNES ESL

teachers' teacher education and language learning experiences), and teaching experience. Aneja (2016) suggested a research focus on their language and teaching practices, which may illuminate how they negotiate their identities as language learners/users and teachers.

At the intersection of cultural and teaching experiences, NNES ESL teachers face the challenges of clashing epistemologies. As discussed in the previous section, NNES ESL teachers sometimes develop competing meaning systems between different educational and cultural contexts. Their transnational or transcultural experiences require them to navigate the epistemic clashes (Lindahl and Yazan, 2019) in order to negotiate their teacher identity. In many cases, what such negotiation means to NNES ESL teachers is having to adjust their cultural ways of knowing in order to meet the standards in the U.S. educational system (Fan & de Jong, 2019) to fulfill the requirements in the ideology-laden U.S. teacher certification structures (Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). The ideologies in the U.S. educational system involve language ideologies, at the intersection of NNES ESL teachers' race and language learning experiences, which creates an unequal power structure (Yazan, 2019) that may disempower NNES ESL teachers.

Language Ideologies

Typically, NNES ESL teachers face challenges related to language ideologies (Darvin & Norton, 2015) in the process of teacher identity development. Woolard & Schieffelin (1994) defined language ideologies, in general, as sets of beliefs about a specific language that are socially constructed by all its users, which creates a common sense about the power structure, use, and nature of the language. More specifically, language ideologies have a social emphasis that includes assumptions and "objectives a group holds concerning roles of language in the social experiences of members as they contribute to the expression of the group" (p. 57). In addition, language ideologies represent the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships in the social spaces of language users. Such a definition of

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language ideology indicates a link between the social practice of language and the social structures in which language ideologies occur (Cavanaugh, 2020). In the case of NNES ESL teachers, the notion of language ideology could further create issues of inequality and access to power in teaching contexts. For example, the superiority of native speakers, as a type of language ideology, has shaped a widespread belief in the field of ESL education that a language belongs to its native speakers, who "possess unique qualities involving nationality and race that cannot be acquired by non-native speakers" (Ferri & Magne, 2020, p. 3). This language ideology is reproduced in educational contexts through language policies, such as restrictions on using non-standard English accents (Darvin & Norton, 2015) or other languages in ESL classrooms. Such a language ideology creates and reinforces an unequal power relationship between the binary constructs of native and non-native speakerism in which NNES ESL teachers have less power in teaching the language. The intersection of NNES ESL teachers' race and language learning experience (see Figure 1) requires that they need to make sense of and negotiate the relationship between their experiences and power structure to position themselves in teaching contexts.

The relationships between language ideologies, teachers' experiences, and professional identity development were exemplified in Kim's case study (2017) of a Korean-born NNES ESL teacher in the United States, who demonstrated two competing sub identities in her narratives. On one hand, in relation to the language ideology of native speakerism, the teacher positioned herself as a "less-than-confident English teacher" (p. 94) who wanted to erase her accent as it was "incompatible with prevailing expectations of an English teacher" (p. 94). On the other hand, to negotiate the negative impacts of the language ideology on self, the teacher developed another sub identity as a multilingual ESL teacher who could communicate in both English, despite her accent, and students' native languages. This study demonstrated that identity development is a meaning-making process (Yazan, 2019; Darvin

& Norton, 2015) in which teachers negotiate between self and external conditions (e.g., personal backgrounds and ideologies). This example illustrated the role that ideologies play in the continual development of teacher identity when teachers carry forward their experiences from one situation to another across time.

Present and Imagined Teacher Identities

Identity is a site of struggle and continually changes over time (Gee, 2000; Brown, 2005; Lee, 2018; Norton & Kramsch, 2013). Identity development is a process that involves the internalization of external conditions (Yazan, 2019; Darvin & Norton, 2015) and the negotiation between the remembered past, perceived present, and imagined future identities (Domenico et al., 2016). According to Darvin & Norton (2015), the notion of present identity represents a teacher's habitus, developed by how they position themselves and are positioned by others at the present moment. Such habitus guides their "tendency to think and act in ways that correspond with the social spaces" (p. 46). Imagined identity, on the contrary, refers to the desire of how teachers position themselves and will be positioned by others in future, imagined communities (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Thus, the relationship between present and imagined teacher identities is connected to the alignment or conflict between their habitus and desire.

The notions of present and imagined identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Kanno & Norton, 2003) are similar to Sfard & Prusak's (2005) concepts of actual and designated identities. According to Sfard & Prusak, teachers' actual identities consist of stories about the actual state of who they are at the present moment; while designated identities are demonstrated in their narratives of what they are expected to be in the future. However, they indicated that teachers' designated identities, in contrast to Norton's notion of imagined identities which are constructed based on a person's desire, are not "necessarily desired but always are perceived as binding" (p. 18). They pointed out that designated identities are not

always deliberate rational choices, but certain positions about a person when they are not consciously aware that there are alternatives. For example, an NNES teacher tries to adapt their beliefs to meet expectations in the U.S. educational system, not because they desire to, but because they are not aware of the option of maintaining their identities developed from their unique past experiences. These two ideas about a teacher's perceptions of future selves lead to the discussion of agency in the process of identity development. Although both perspectives considered the development of imagined/designated identities in relation to the position of power, Sfard and Prusak (2005) believed that teachers' designated identities are determined by how they are positioned in social spaces, which is, to some extent, the expectations imposed on them. However, Darvin & Norton (2015) considered that teachers have agency, through critical awareness of and reflections on ideologies, to position themselves in future social spaces.

In this framework, I view the notion of present identity interchangeably with actual identity as both concepts refer to teachers' perceptions of who they are at the present moment. I consider the development of teachers' imagined identities as a process of critical reflection and negotiation of external conditions to position themselves in future social spaces. In this process, teachers possess agency to imagine themselves based on their desire. This perspective will allow me to explore the role of self in the complex process of identity development and underscore the intertwined relationship between internal and external conditions across time.
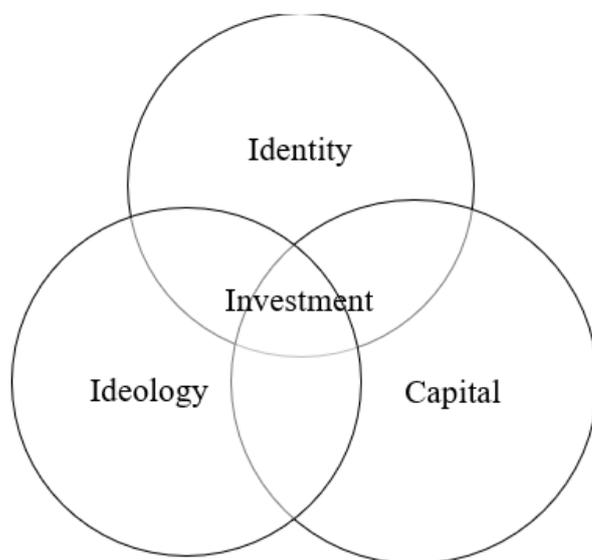
Norton's Investment Model

A comprehensive model by Norton, aiming to explore identity and its relevant factors, considered investment as occurring at the center and intersection of identity, ideology, and capital (Norton, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015, Barkhuizen, 2016). Among these factors, the concepts of identity and ideology have been discussed in previous sections. One of the new

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notions introduced in this model, capital, drew on the work of Bourdieu (1986). According to

him, capital is power, which extends from the material/economic level to the cultural and

social level. Individuals possessing more capital have higher levels of power in their social

spaces. Bourdieu also indicated a few types of capital that are relevant to educational

research: economic capital refers to wealth, property, and income; cultural capital refers to

appreciation of cultural forms; social capital refers to the connections to networks of power in

different settings. For NNES ESL teachers, their unique socio-cultural experiences, such as

coming from an ethnic minority group, low socioeconomic status (SES), or underrepresented

groups, might increase their desire to increase their capital. Such a desire could further affect

their identity development, negotiation of ideologies, and investment, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Norton's Investment Model

Despite its original use in the exploration of learners' investment in language

learning, this model can also be adapted as a theoretical foundation for the analysis of teacher

identity development. In this model, the overlapping areas between identity, ideology, and

capital indicate the complex relationships between these factors and their connections with

the central construct, investment. To begin with, teachers invest in teacher education,

professional development, and teaching practice for the purpose of receiving some rewards

they desire, not only increased financial security, but an accumulation of economic, social,

and cultural capital for themselves, their families, and the larger social groups they belong to

(Norton, 1995; Barkhuizen, 2016). In NNES teachers' cases, they invest in learning, not only

for a more stable or better income but to make themselves and their underrepresented cultures

and communities more visible. For example, Barkhuizen's (2016) study showcased a Tongan

immigrant teacher who engaged in master's studies in order to return to and serve her Tongan

immigrant community. This teacher's story highlighted her desire of being a better teacher,

through investment in learning, to increase the capital of herself and her community.

In addition to receiving increased capital, teachers' investment also serves as an

approach to closing the gap between their present and imagined identities. In Tsui's (2007)

narrative study of an NNES ESL teacher's construction of multiple identities, the teacher

invested in professional development in linguistic and pedagogical knowledge to "reclaim

ownership of meanings" (p. 676) related to ESL teaching. The teacher in this study had an

imagined identity that an ESL teacher must develop a high level of English proficiency and

communicative language teaching skills in order to provide accurate and effective instruction.

Such an imagined identity was developed from the ideologies in his social spaces, such as his

colleagues' teaching practice and the institution's requirements. As a result of this imagined

identity, he proactively sought professional development and other language learning

opportunities to enhance linguistic knowledge and communication skills to improve his

knowledge of communicative language teaching strategies. In this example, his identity as a

teacher who needed to learn was developed through the negotiation of the competing present

and imagined identities. As a teacher who attached great importance to external conditions,

the development of his imagined identity was greatly affected by ideologies in his social

spaces, which served as a driving force of investment in professional learning to narrow the

gap between his present and imagined identities. Similarly, Tsui's study illustrated the intersection of ideology and identity in Norton's (2013) model, which concerns the relationship between agency and power structure in identity formation. According to Tsui, the power structures in educational contexts, created by ideologies, could undermine teachers' agency, and marginalize their positions in social spaces. However, through "a deliberate and critical awareness" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 46) of how the power structure operates, ideologies can be made sense of or challenged. Thus, teachers can actively make choices and determine whether and to what extent they should adapt their own beliefs and practice to meet the ideologies. NNES ESL teachers, especially when their cultural beliefs or epistemic stances developed from past experiences conflict with the ideologies in their social spaces, might need to negotiate between the internal conditions and external power structures in order to position themselves in their present and future social spaces.

Norton's investment model considers ideology, identity, and capital as factors that impact teachers' decisions on whether to invest in professional development and other learning opportunities. Teachers' perceived ideologies and possible increases in capital create imagined identities. The distance between the present and imagined identities leads to teachers' investment. However, what was not explicit in Norton's model (Norton, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015) but clear in other studies (Tsui, 2007; Barkhuizen, 2016) was that investment, in turn, helps teachers move from who they are at the present moment to what they want to be in the future. In short, teachers' investment could narrow the gap between present and imagined identities. Therefore, examining ideologies in social spaces and teachers' investment provides a theoretical basis for exploring their professional identity development.

The Experience-Identity Model

     This study aims to unpack the relationships between the intersections of NNES ESL teachers' multilevel experiences and professional identity development. With the lack of a previously developed theoretical model to support the purpose of this study, I draw on Norton's identity model, the notions of present and imagined identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Sfard & Prusak, 2005), and the literature in teachers' experiences to frame the following model (see Figure 3). This model illustrates the potential connections of constructs such as intersections of NNES ESL teachers' multi-leveled experiences, ideologies, investment in professional learning, and present and imagined teacher identities.

Figure 3

The Experience-Identity Model
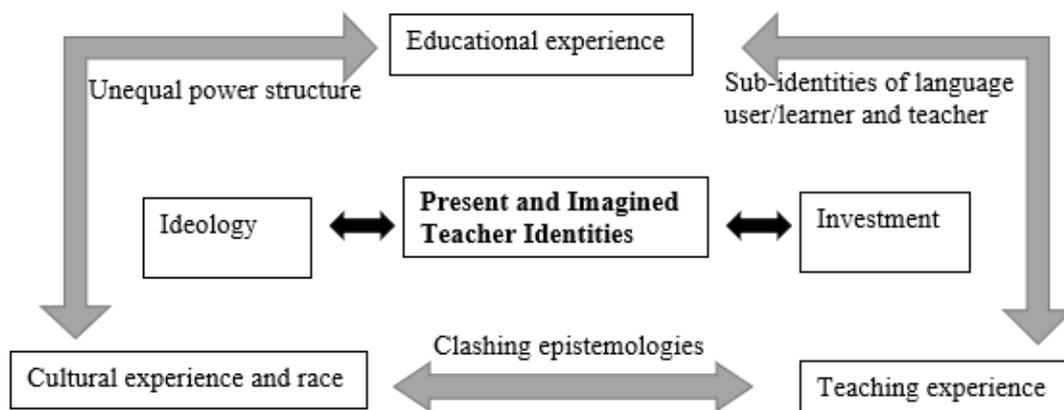
     This framework illustrates the relationships between the three layers of factors that are central to a teacher's identity development and the interrelationships of the elements within and across each layer. NNES ESL teachers' multi-leveled experiences such as cultural, teaching, and educational backgrounds are the factors in the outer rim that are the foundational pieces in constructing their teacher identities. The intersections of these

experiences interplay with the two constructs, ideology and investment, in the middle layer, and present and imagined teacher identities, at the center of the framework.

As previously discussed, the unequal power structure in ESL teaching contexts disempowers NNES teachers due to their unique educational experience, cultural experience, and race. Such inequality is associated with language ideologies that consider NNES teachers less qualified in language teaching. As a result, some teachers invested in professional development to improve their language proficiency (Tsui, 2007) and teaching skills as a means to close the gap between who they are and what they are expected to be. Meanwhile, some teachers developed a multilingual identity as teachers who could communicate with students in both the target language and their native language (Calafato, 2019).

NNES ESL teachers' epistemological clashes caused by their personal and teaching experience in cross-cultural settings, in some cases, create motivation for investment in personal learning and professional development in order to negotiate the meanings of ideologies in different educational systems (Swearingen, 2019). In addition, novice NNES teachers and in-service teachers in graduate programs can negotiate the sub identities as a language teacher and student (Swearingen, 2019) by investing in professional learning experiences. For example, the further development of linguistic (content) and pedagogical knowledge could aid NNES ESL teachers in transferring their own language learning experience to teaching in order to build confidence. These investments interplay with the negotiation of present and imagined identities. The conflicting present and imagined identities could lead to investment; investment, in turn, may help teachers close the gap between their present and imagined identities.

Summary

In this section, I presented literature related to intersectionality to build connections between NNES ESL teachers' multilevel experiences. I drew on Norton's investment model

(Norton, 1995; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2013; Darvin & Norton, 2015) to explore the intertwining relationships between experiences and identity development over time and space. More specifically, I reviewed theories of language ideology to unpack how it impacts NNES ESL teachers' negotiation of past, present, and future. Based on the literature and theories, my theoretical framework supports the purpose of the study which will explore how NNES ESL teachers' identities are developed in the interaction and continuity of their experiences.

Research Questions

1. What roles do experiences play in how NNES ESL teachers negotiate their present and imagined identities?

    a. What experiences have salient impacts on NNES ESL teachers' negotiation of present and imagined identities?

    b. How do NNES ESL teachers perceive the intersectionality of their multilevel experiences in relation to the development of their teacher identities?

2. What is the relationship between ideologies, NNES ESL teachers' investment in professional learning experiences, and identity development?

    a. How do NNES ESL teachers perceive and react to (language) ideologies in teaching contexts?

    b. In what ways do NNES ESL teachers' investment in professional learning experiences contribute to teacher identity development?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study employed a combination of narrative and multiple-case study approaches. The narrative approach was chosen as a means to study stories that involve the construction and reconstruction of personal and social experiences (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). More importantly, the experiences in stories can shed light on individuals' identities and how they see themselves (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In addition, the research questions in this study emphasize the unique experiences NNES ESL teachers have and the influences of these experiences on each participating teacher's identity development. Thus, a multiple-case study approach was utilized to illustrate different perspectives on the selected issue (Creswell & Poth, 2016) of NNES ESL teacher identity development. Another purpose of employing the multiple-case study approach is to examine a phenomenon (i.e., NNES ESL teacher identity development) that occurs in all cases (Yin, 1981). In this section, I describe the context of the study, the screening criteria for participant recruitment, data collection methods, and an analytical framework for data analysis. Furthermore, I present the process of data collection based on the chosen narrative, multiple-case study approach, and the analytical framework.

Context

This study was conducted at a public research university in the southwestern United States. Due to the focus of this study on in-service ESL teachers, participants were recruited from three master's programs – ESL and Bilingual Education, Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), and Applied Linguistics. The coursework in these programs aims to enhance participating teachers' knowledge, skills, and experiences in ESL teaching and research. The classes focus on teaching philosophy, linguistic knowledge, pedagogical skills, cultural awareness, community involvement, and research methods. In addition, teachers in the ESL and Bilingual Education program and the TESL program are required to complete a fieldwork experience course to fulfill the graduation requirements. This course requires 135

hours of classroom observation and/or teaching. Teachers are required to discuss in advance with their instructors the setting where they will complete their fieldwork experience, which should be based on their preferences or career goals. For example, an in-service ESL teacher can continue teaching in their current ESL classroom to fulfill this requirement. Preservice teachers can choose to observe or student-teach ESL classes in K-12 or higher education settings. This teaching experience, in addition to their learning experiences in the program, was a critical component of this study as the teachers' narratives of fieldwork experiences could demonstrate how their teacher identities further develop in their respective classrooms (Huang & Varghese, 2015) during professional learning experiences.

In this study, the notions of professional learning experiences and professional development specifically concerned teachers' personal and professional growth while undertaking postgraduate studies. Because one purpose of the study was to explore the impact of NNES ESL teachers' learning and teaching experiences on professional identity development, a focus on in-service teachers who were pursuing graduate degrees can address the interplays between these two types of experiences. This focus helped unpack the identity change when the teachers' teaching and learning experiences converge (or compete). In addition, this emphasis added another lens to explore NNES ESL teachers' multifaceted identities to reveal how they negotiated the identity of the teacher as a student.

There are a variety of students in these programs, including in-service teachers who work full-time, teachers who quit teaching to focus on classes, and preservice teachers who have no teaching experience. Some teachers in these programs, who taught other subjects than ESL previously, had little preparation for working with ESL students. The majority of teachers in this program have teaching experience in public schools or other educational settings in the United States or other countries. A small percentage of the teachers received their bachelor's degrees in areas other than education/teaching.

Participants

The participating teachers in this study were diverse in their backgrounds, including their countries of origin, length of residence in the United States, immigration status, and prior educational and teaching contexts. Participants were recruited from the group of in-service teachers who currently or previously taught in ESL settings at the time of the study. Thus, I excluded preservice teachers in this program who had little to no experience in ESL teaching. In addition, participants in this study learned English as a second or additional language. This screening criterion allowed the teachers to demonstrate how their ESL learning experiences and non-native status affect their teacher identity. Research shows that different instructional delivery formats can affect learners' attitudes, performance, and learning outcomes (Sankaran et al., 2000; Todd et al., 2017) and thus may have varying influences on their identity development. For the purpose of the study, I only included teachers who were enrolled in synchronous in-person classes, as face-to-face interactions with instructors and peers might contribute significantly to their identity development.

Based on these screening criteria, I recruited three participants (Alara, Benjamin, and Yvette; pseudonyms) from these programs to participate in the study by sending a recruitment email. These participants represented a range of backgrounds to showcase how factors such as different cultural, educational, and teaching experiences impacted their teacher identity development across time and space. The participants' diverse backgrounds also allowed me to better compare and contrast each teacher's case to analyze how their different experiences impact the development of teacher identities.

Alara was a fourth-year graduate student in the Applied Linguistics program, who speaks Turkish as her first language and English as her second language. She completed her teacher preparation in Turkey. Prior to her doctoral studies, she had taught EFL at a university in South Korea and ESL at the Program in Intensive English at an American public

university. Benjamin had almost 25 years of experience working with ELLs in the United States and Costa Rica. He started teaching after receiving his bachelor's degree in Central America. At the time of the study, Benjamin was enrolled in the ESL and Bilingual Education program. Yvette was born and raised on the border of Mexico and the United States. She was a graduate of the TESL and Applied Linguistics programs. She had worked with EFL/ESL students for more than 30 years. More specific information about the participants' backgrounds will be discussed in Chapters 4-6 (see the personal timeline sections for more details).

Data Collection

Many researchers suggested the use of triangulation methods in qualitative research (Flick, 2004; Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006; Heale & Forbes, 2013). The term triangulation refers to collecting research data using at least two different methods in order to achieve a more valid analysis for particular constructs (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006). Keats (2009) recommended the use of multiple means of expressing stories, including written, spoken, and visual texts in narrative research. In this study, to explore the participating teachers' development from multiple angles, I collected data from four sources: teaching philosophy statements, personal and professional timelines, individual semi-structured interviews, and focus group interviews (Figure 4). In this section, I detail how each data source can reflect the connections between teachers' experiences and professional identity development.

Figure 4

Data Collection Process

Artifact	• Teaching Philosophy Statement
1st Meeting	• Individual • Personal and professional timeline • Follow-up questions
2nd Meeting	• Individual semi-strcutured interview • Structured questions based on the research foci; follow-up questions developed from particpants' timelines and responses to the structured questions.
3rd Meeting	• Moderated focus group interview • Questions based on the preliminary analysis of responses in the 1st and 2nd meetings

Teaching Philosophy Statement

Creswsell and Poth (2016) suggested the use of documents as a data collection method to obtain the language and words of participants in a deeper manner. Compared to oral interviews, collecting data from the participants' documents such as journals or course papers allows for more thoughtful responses (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Writing takes more time and in-depth thinking than oral responses to a specific question, as oral interviews usually require the participants' immediate actions. Due to the complex nature of the topics related to identity in this research, I intended to collect the participants' teaching philosophy statements to get familiar with each teacher's situation and supplement data obtained from interviews in order to deepen the scope of the analysis. However, only one participant provided her teaching philosophy statement as the other two participants did not have teaching philosophy statements that could be used for the purpose of this study.

Personal and Professional Timeline

As previously discussed, teacher identity development is a meaning-making process that involves the negotiation of multiple past, present, and future experiences. These

experiences are embedded in and can be represented by real or imagined scenarios and storylines (Martsin, 2017). The incorporation of visuals as a data collection method in qualitative methodology (Martsin, 2017; Rose 2012) allows participants to reveal their experiences that might otherwise remain hidden. Thus, in this study, in the first meeting with individual participants, I collected data using a timeline approach (Martsin, 2017) which combined visual and verbal ways of representing participants' personal stories to illustrate their personal pathways.

Teachers could use their personal and professional timelines as a visual reference to begin the narrations and reflections (Mercier, 2020) of their perceptions of experiences. The participating teachers in this study described a timeline that included the most significant events in their life and career trajectories, especially the moments that had changed their teacher identity. These significant moments on their timeline included relocation to a different country, entering a new educational system, change of immigration status, etc. Then, the participants identified whether these events positively or negatively impacted their identity development and explained verbally how these events affected the teachers' ways of seeing the relationships between themselves and the outer world. In addition, the participants were asked to imagine a storyline in their future life and career and describe events that could possibly happen in these imagined scenarios. The future timeline allowed for a deeper understanding of participants' imagined identities and whether these imagined identities are in conflict or alignment with their present identities and past experiences.

Individual Semi-Structured Interview

Many qualitative studies rely on spoken interviews to gather detailed information from the participants regarding the issues being examined (Knox & Burkard, 2009; Longhurst, 2003). The interview approaches to eliciting detailed information could range from open-ended, unstructured interviews to highly structured protocols with predetermined

questions (Knox & Burkard, 2009). Dialogues in an interview sometimes focus closely on the topics on the agenda (Adams, 2015) while, in some situations, the conversations could develop in unforeseen directions. These unforeseen responses can sometimes provide rich data that deepen the understanding of the issues being studied and enlarge the scope of the research.

A semi-structured interview falls between standardized, closed-ended surveys and free-form, open-ended interviews with individuals or groups (Adams, 2015). Semi-structured interviews usually include a set of structured questions followed by unstructured questions to address the predetermined topics and elicit responses from the participants' own experiences. In semi-structured interviews, the predetermined questions (Longhurst, 2003) are usually the same for each individual interview while the unstructured questions are developed based on each participant's unique situation. The predetermined, structured questions can be ideal gateways to probing open-ended, unstructured questions (Adams, 2015) based on each participant's responses to the structured questions. In addition, semi-structured interviews encourage the interviewer and participants to deeply explore topics covered in the predetermined questions and unpack issues that are not explicitly mentioned in these questions. In short, semi-structured interviews grant the interviewers "maximum latitude" (Adams, 2015, p. 494) to lead the conversations to examine both the predetermined questions and the unknown but potentially significant issues related to the research focus.

In this study, I first drafted a list of interview questions (Table 1) based on the research questions and a preliminary analysis of the participants' past and future timelines. These structured questions allowed for consistency across participants (Canipe, 2016) and aimed to further address the a priori topics determined by the purpose of this study. These topics included educational background (teacher education and language learning), teaching experience, linguistic background, cultural experience, ideologies, investment in professional

learning, and present and imagined identities. In the second meeting with each participant, following the structured questions, unstructured questions were asked based on their timelines in the first meeting and their responses to the structured questions. The use of structured and unstructured questions in this semi-structured interview allowed for a deep and comprehensive exploration of the participating teachers' experiences and identity development.

Table 1

Structured Interview Questions

Topic	Description	Example Question
Linguistic Background	Questions about how the participating teachers' NNES status affects their teacher identity development	Do you think your status as a non-native English-speaking ESL teacher has some influence on your teaching practice and self-image as an ESL teacher? Please explain.
Cultural Background	Questions aimed at understanding the conflicts or alignments between the participants' cultural values and the Western epistemology	How do you negotiate your cultural values and the western teaching philosophy? Do they conflict? If so, do the conflicts affect how you see yourself as a teacher? Please elaborate.
Teaching Experience	Questions focused on unpacking how the participants' teacher identities are developed in different teaching contexts.	Imagine this scenario that an observer walks into your current ESL classroom. What does the classroom look like? What did your classroom look like when you first started teaching?
Educational Experience	These questions aim to explore the impact of teacher education and language learning experiences on identity development.	As an ESL teacher, would you consider your ESL learning experience as a positive or negative thing? Please elaborate.
Investment	Questions addressing participants' investment in professional learning	Why did you decide to pursue a graduate degree? How would/did the graduate studies benefit your teaching and the way how you see yourself as an ESL teacher?
Ideology	Questions that explore how the participants negotiate between ideologies and teacher identities	What are your perceptions of how society would expect an NNES ESL teacher's role? Do you think your students, parents, colleagues, and

		society might have different expectations of NNES and NES ESL teachers? If so, has your way of seeing yourself been affected by those expectations?
Present and Imagined Identities	Questions aimed to discover how the participants' identities are negotiated over time	How do you see yourself in five years as an ESL teacher? Do you see any differences between yourself at this current moment and in five years?

Focus Group Interview

In a focus group interview, participants meet in an informal setting to discuss specific topics decided by the researcher (McLafferty 2004; Longhurst, 2003; Williams & Katz, 2001). According to Kruger and Casey (2000), the use of focus groups can promote a comfortable environment in which participants discuss their ideas and experiences with less pressure than in one-on-one interviews. Another difference between one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions is that the latter creates a social context for the generation of new ideas (Breen, 2006). In focus groups, participants influence each other and are influenced by each other. Thus, the collective responses and individual responses inspired by the focus group setting (Glitz, 1998) can generate richer data to supplement the individual interviews. Researchers play an essential role in focus group interviews as a moderator to ask questions and facilitate the discussion (Williams & Katz, 2001; Canipe, 2020). Effective moderation requires the researcher to continuously assess the interactions between the participants, especially how one's responses could affect others' participation in the group. The use of focus group interviews in this study stimulated the participating teachers' social spaces in which they are influenced by the fluid power dynamics in the surrounding contexts.

In the third meeting, I conducted a moderated focus group interview with all the participating teachers via a virtual conference platform. I first explained the goal of the focus
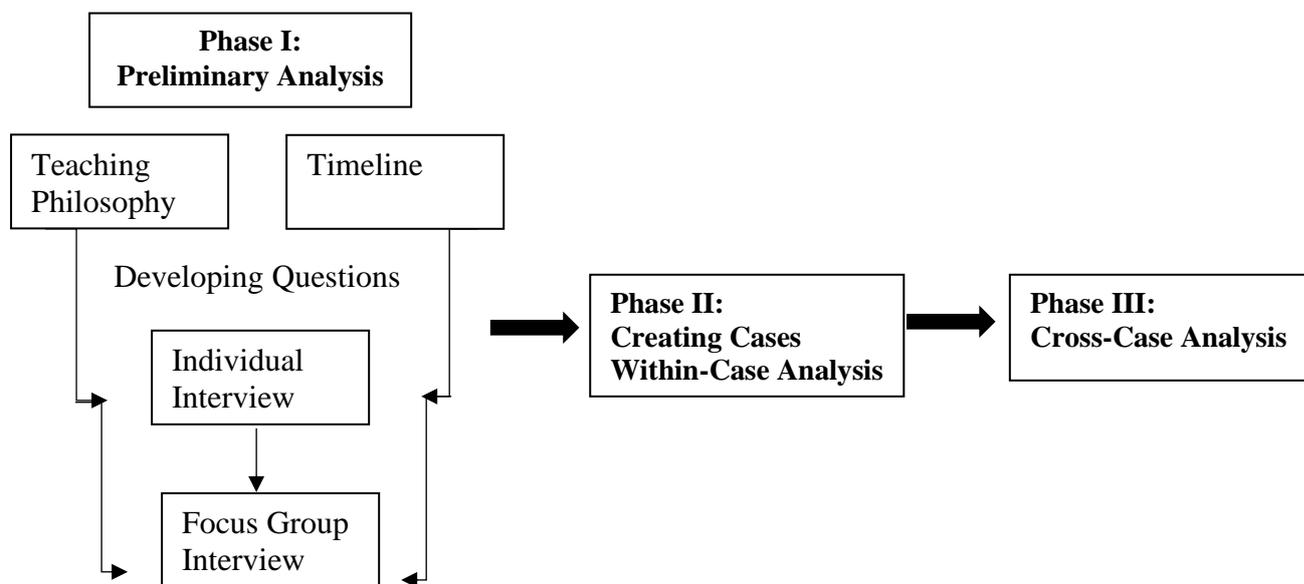
group interview to the participants and provided them with a set of questions in both written and oral formats. Prompts were generated from a preliminary analysis of their responses based on the individual interviews. These questions were not simple repetitions of the individual interview questions but focused on eliciting more in-depth responses from the interactions of the participants. To mitigate the potential risk of having too much control over the focus group (Canipe, 2020), I focused on listening, not commenting on the details of the discussion (Grønkjær et al, 2011), and developing questions relevant to the study based on the group discussion.

Data Analysis

This study utilized a multiple case study approach (See Figure 5 for the procedure). In each step of the data collection phase, I conducted a preliminary analysis of the data to develop questions for the following phases of data collection. In the second phase of data analysis, individual cases were created to demonstrate the unique features of single cases. The within-case analysis in this phase focused on each teacher's stories and the relationships between their experiences and professional identity development. In the third phase, a systematic cross-case analysis was conducted to examine the commonalities and differences between individual cases (Yin, 2003). In this section, I present an analytical framework to establish the foundation for the within- and cross-case analyses. In addition, I discuss how data collected from each source was analyzed to address the research questions.

Figure 5

Data Analysis Procedure

Analytical Framework

In this study, I drew on Connelly and Clandinin's analytical framework (1990; Clandinin, 2006) for studying lived experiences, which suggested that narratives should be analyzed within the frames of temporality, place, and sociality. In this framework, temporality refers to the past, present, and future experiences; place relates to the contexts where the experiences occur; and sociality emphasizes the interactions in specific contexts among individuals. The use of this analytical framework makes possible the analysis of the data to address the research questions, as teachers' identity development and experiences all happen within the three dimensions.

Based on this framework, Barkhuizen (2016) developed a story analysis approach in which teachers' experiences are represented in three intersecting dimensions of narrative:

who, *where*, and *when*. The *who* dimension refers to narrators' relationships, or positions, with others; *where* relates to the social spaces in which the stories take place; *and* concerns the time of the story - past, present, or future. For the purpose of this study, I attached a fourth dimension, *why,* to the story analysis approach in order to explore the participating teachers' thinking processes and rationales, especially how the former three dimensions contribute to teacher identity development. This dimension is also used to unpack reasons why teachers invest in professional development in their narratives. Moreover, in this study, teachers' past, present, and future experiences are represented in their narratives of *when*, especially when their stories have a temporal reference. Their negotiation between the inner self and ideologies in social spaces are described in the *who* (or *with whom*) and *where* dimensions in their stories, as they talk about how people and contexts impact their identity development.

Phase I: Preliminary Analysis

Creswell and Poth (2016) suggested that, in order to conduct effective narrative research, researchers need to have a clear understanding of the context of the participant's life. Therefore, one purpose of the preliminary analysis of the timeline data and teaching philosophy statements was to provide me with a picture of each participant's experiences and personality traits, especially those related to teacher identity development. Based on this purpose, the analysis in this phase primarily focused on the a priori codes related to the continual dimension of teacher identity development to help me understand each teacher's personal history. The a priori codes used in this section included past experience, present experience, imagined experience, present identity, imagined identity, negotiation across time, etc. In addition, the "processes of data collection and analysis are not distinct steps" (Creswell and Poth, 2016, p. 150), but rather they are interrelated in a research project. Thus, the preliminary analysis of the timeline data helped me decide on the individual interview

questions based on each participant's situation. Following the same logic, I also analyzed the individual interview data in this phase to develop focus group interview questions to better address the commonalities and differences among the participants.

Phase II: Within-Case Analysis

An important step to understanding each participating teacher's lived experiences is through "restorying" (p. 9) the stories from the original data (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996). Restorying is a process of gathering stories, reorganizing the stories in a chronological sequence, and analyzing them for key elements (Creswell and Poth, 2016). According to Creswell (2013), the restoried experiences should consist of the three dimensions in Connelly & Clandinin's analytical framework for narrative inquiry (1990): temporality, place, and sociality. As discussed in the analytical framework, to analyze these three dimensions of teachers' stories, I applied a story analysis approach to explore the three aspects of when, where, and who/with whom (Barkhuizen, 2016), and a fourth aspect of why.

In this phase, I transcribed the interview data and reorganized the transcribed texts in chronological order. Then, I read the reorganized stories multiple times and wrote research memos. I applied several categories and a priori codes to each case based on the research questions (see Table 2) and then conducted an open coding analysis. In the open coding process, the codes emerging from the data demonstrated information that I did not expect to find before the research (Creswell and Poth, 2016) but that was potentially important for answering the research questions. The analysis of the open codes revealed other topics that were not included in the a priori codes. These topics enhanced my understanding of the topics being studied and broadened the scope of the research.

Table 2

A Priori Codes and Categories

Category	A Priori Codes	Research Question(s)
Linguistic Background	First language, the influence of the first language on second language teaching and learning	1. What roles do experiences play in how NNES ESL teachers negotiate their present and imagined identities?

1a. What experiences have salient impacts on NNES ESL teachers' negotiation of present and imagined identities? |
Cultural Background	Cultural values, alignment/conflict between different cultural systems	
Teaching Experience	Epistemic stances in different educational systems, teacher knowledge, teacher beliefs	
Educational Experience	Teacher education, ESL learning experience	
Intersectionality of Experiences	Intersections of experiences	1b. How do NNES ESL teachers perceive the intersectionality of their multilevel experiences in relation to the development of their teacher identities?
Investment	Professional learning, pedagogical knowledge development, linguistic knowledge development	2b. In what ways do NNES ESL teachers' investment in professional learning experiences contribute to teacher identity development?
Ideology	Institutional expectations, parents' expectations, students' expectations, Social expectations	2a. How do NNES ESL teachers perceive and react to (language) ideologies in teaching contexts?
Present and Imagined Identities	Past experience, present experience, future experience, present identity, imagined identity	1. What roles do experiences play in how NNES ESL teachers negotiate their present and imagined identities?

Phase III: Cross-Case Analysis

In cross-case analysis, the entire interpretation of each case is compared with the

explanation from another case (Yin, 1981). The purpose of the cross-case analysis in this

study was to establish a more general explanation (Yin, 1981) of the issue of NNES ESL

teacher identity development. To achieve this purpose, the analysis in this phase involved the process of comparing and contrasting each participating teacher's unique experiences to explore whether these experiences had similar or distinct influences on the teachers' negotiation of the present and imagined teacher identities. In this phase, I employed a constant comparison method in which "each interpretation and finding is compared with the existing finding as it emerges from the data analysis" (Michael et al., 2004). The utilization of this method combined inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of the categories (Memon et al., 2017) to analyze the differences and commonalities across each participating teacher's case.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Memon et al. (2017) suggested the following four steps to conduct a constant comparative analysis. I first identified the recurring themes and concepts in the data. These themes were developed from the a priori and open codes, as explained in the earlier section. Then, themes from the individual cases generated from all the data sources that overlapped with each other were combined. Second, I refined the categories by grouping similar themes under one category. Third, I examined the relationships across categories. These relationships helped to further explore the intersectionality between NNES ESL teachers' multileveled experiences, such as the interplays between teaching and learning experiences. Lastly, I grouped relevant categories around each research question and synthesized the meanings of the categories obtained from all data sources.

Validity and Reliability

Validity in qualitative research refers to the assessment of the accuracy of the findings (Creswell and Poth, 2016). In this study, I utilized a triangulation approach to collect data from multiple sources that included artifacts (timeline and teaching philosophy statement), individual interviews, and focus group interviews. Although the participating teachers could enact distinct identities in different social spaces, the triangulation approach can, to the

largest extent, ensure the validity of their represented/narrated teacher identities. In the process of data analysis, I looked for consistency in each participant's narratives across multiple sources and explored potential reasons for variations in their narratives. In addition, to ensure the validity of the analysis of the a priori and open codes, I collaborated with the participants through member checking to negotiate the meanings of the stories (Creswell and Poth, 2016). I explained to the participants my interpretations of their narratives and confirmed with them whether these interpretations accurately represented their experiences and identities. I then further discussed with the participants to clarify the meanings of their narratives when they did not agree with my interpretations. When an agreement was not reached, I considered both my interpretation and their clarification in the analysis and presentation of the findings.

In a course project, I piloted some of the individual questions and analyzed the responses from a few teachers in order to preliminarily assess the validity and reliability of this study. To further ensure the reliability of the present study, (Yin, 2003; Creswell and Poth, 2016; Memon et al., 2017), I read and reread the transcripts several times to ensure these data present only what the participants have said (Yin, 2003; Creswell and Poth, 2016; Memon et al., 2017). In addition, the constant comparison method (Yin, 2003) utilized in this study, as previously discussed, included a systematic and constant process of comparing the data to improve reliability. Through the comparison of all identified categories, I ensured the consistency of the coding patterns.

Positionality

My research interest in NNES ESL teacher identity comes from my own identities that are rooted in my past experiences. These identities are multiple and have developed as my life and career timeline proceeded. As an NNES ESL teacher and a former ESL learner from China, my language learning and teaching experiences were significantly affected by

the ideologies in the Chinese education system before relocating to the United States. One example is the language ideology that considers native or native-like speakers more capable of teaching the language. The impact of this ideology on the development of my teacher identity was twofold. On one hand, it motivated me (extrinsically) to improve my English language skills, especially in mimicking a so-called standardized accent of English, in order to be more acknowledged by the students, parents, colleagues, and school administrators. On the other hand, the ideology always overwhelmed me when I noticed that there is a difference in accents between me and an NES. Such self-doubt created by the conflicts between the inner self and the language ideology in the external world created struggles in different stages and contexts of my life. One question I kept asking myself was – am I qualified to be an English language teacher? This example was just one of the struggles I experienced in my personal and teaching trajectories caused by my NNES status.

However, the influences of the struggles on my teacher identity were significantly mitigated as I proceeded to enroll in postgraduate studies. The master's and doctoral programs have provided me with access to authentic knowledge of English language teaching and teachers who understand the real purpose of education. In the doctoral courses, I read articles related to teacher identity and came to an understanding of the relationships between experiences, especially personal and socio-cultural experiences, and identity development. I started to realize the significant role identity plays in the formation and development of teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practice and decided to focus on studying NNES ESL teachers' identities. This focus not only relates to my own life and career trajectories but also allows me to explore further how other NNES ESL teachers negotiate their experiences and identities in the past, present, and future.

These experiences equipped me with an understanding of the issues related to NNES ESL teachers' identity development. My positionality as an insider of the NNES ESL teacher

and ESL user populations could allow the participants in this study to share their stories more genuinely. Once the participants perceive the interpersonal connections between themselves and me (as we share some similar backgrounds), they are more likely to reflect deeply on the challenges and opportunities they face as an NNES ESL teacher. However, with my experiences and identities considered, I acknowledge that my case as an ESL teacher and former language learner has shaped my attitudes toward the topics being studied in this research. I am also aware that my insights should not impact my participants' perceptions of identity development, as identities are formed in each individual's unique experiences across time and space.

Chapter Summary

In this multiple-case, narrative study, participants were recruited from three graduate programs at a public research university in the southwestern United States. Screening criteria included the participants' rich teaching, cultural, and language learning experiences. Data were collected from the participating teachers' personal and professional timelines, individual interviews, and a focus group interview. Each of the teachers participated in two individual interviews and a focus group interview (each of these interviews was 45 minutes long). In the first individual interview, the teachers were asked to describe or draw a timeline that included the most significant events in their life and career trajectories. I asked questions based on their timelines. In the second individual interview, the participants responded to the structured questions (Appendix B), follow-up questions, and questions developed from their responses in the first interview. The teachers then participated in a focus group interview, in which they responded to a few structured questions (Appendix C) and one another's stories. Data in this study were analyzed in three phases – preliminary analysis, within-case analysis, and cross-case analysis. I also discussed the analytical framework, validity and reliability of this study, and my positionality in this study.

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CHAPTER FOUR: ALARA

Personal Timeline

At the time of the study, Alara was a Ph.D. student in applied linguistics and an ESL teacher at the Intensive English Program at a public university in the southwestern United States. She was originally from Turkey, where she completed her undergraduate studies in English language teaching. She then decided to further pursue a master's degree in the United States to gain more experience and skills in English language teaching in an English-speaking country. After graduation, she joined the faculty at a university in South Korea, where she worked as an English composition instructor and an ESL teacher. After two years of teaching in South Korea, she moved back to the United States for her doctoral studies, during which she worked as a graduate teaching assistant teaching English grammar courses to international students.

Educational Experience

One focus of Alara's narratives about her educational experiences was the quality of English language instruction she received as a language learner in Turkey, where authentic language input and effective teaching were not always accessible in public K-12 education there.

> I don't think I got a really high-quality education when I was in primary school because I was in this very small town, not that developed at the time, and I didn't have an actual English teacher. After primary and middle school, I got better quality education. I took the national exam and got placed in a teacher training high school, and it was a good school…I had an actual English teacher. I remember the listening materials were interviewing random British people on the street about the topics that we were learning, and then every week, we had some sort of a cartoon. It was not like

the grammar-translation method was really like the communicative approach that our

teacher took.

For Alara, her early educational experience in English language learning played an important

role in how she viewed English and her identity as an ESL student. In an EFL setting,

engaging and authentic language learning materials and effective instructional strategies

could help students develop interests in learning the language, which later, in Alara's case,

led to the decision to become an ESL teacher. Another factor that impacted Alara's initial

career choice was the people around her in the teacher training high school and her

immediate family member.

When I was in high school, there were many role models around me. When you see

people [the teachers] around you that you look up to, you start thinking about

becoming a teacher too…Also, [my goal of becoming a teacher] started with my

father, who was a primary school teacher. I still remember that we would sit together

and I watched him writing his lesson plans in this letter notebook over the weekend.

He would dictate the lesson plan to me, and I would write it down. I started high

school, then I had a really great English language teacher, and we really bonded. I

know teachers shouldn't have favorites, but I might have been her favorite.

Alara explained that she had built a positive image of what a teacher should look like through

the interactions and connections with people surrounding her when she was a student. In

other words, with the impact of people in her social spaces, she developed an initial teacher

identity even before she had become a teacher. This initial teacher identity led to her decision

to become a teacher, which was also carried forward to when she started teaching. These

initial educational experiences impacted her teaching philosophy and how she saw herself as

a novice teacher.

I have to be exposed to the same word or sentence structure a couple of times, [When I teach], I know that I have to be patient with my learners just as what my teachers did. I have to create multiple opportunities for them to learn.

In this example, Alara's language learning background and how she learned English had created an affordance in ESL teaching. She could better understand student needs as she experienced something similar to her students. This experience allowed her to make better decisions and implement more effective strategies to help the students feel comfortable in a language classroom.

In addition to how her early educational experiences had influenced her initial teacher identity development, Alara told a story about a peer student who had significantly impacted her life and career trajectories and helped her decide to come to the United States to pursue a master's degree.

I always wanted to study abroad because I teach English, but I was so worried about the tuition because I couldn't afford it. I met this one peer student who changed my life. She encouraged me to do so… She told me I should only apply for universities that give me teaching assistantships. She took me through that process [of application]. Then I did the same thing the next year and ended up at a university in the United States to do my master's in linguistics. So, I just wanted to give thanks to that one single person. Without her, I was going to stay in Turkey and probably just teach English there.

In this experience, Alara's imagined teacher identity had transitioned from an EFL teacher teaching in local schools to an ESL teacher in an English-speaking country. She attributed this transition to the interactions with people in her social spaces. When she internalized people's thoughts and experiences in the external world, she developed a clearer picture of what she desired to be in the future.

In short, the relationship between Alara's educational experience and ESL teacher identity development was threefold. To begin with, her early educational experiences revealed her pathway from a student interested in learning English toward the initial development of her ESL teacher identity. In Alara's case, her motivation in learning English came from three aspects: authentic and engaging language learning materials, quality instruction, and a positive personal connection with the teacher. Furthermore, through the interactions with the significant influencers in her social spaces, she was able to internalize the voices in the external world and negotiate her identity between her own experiences and others' experiences. Finally, Alara carried forward the sense she made of the educational experiences to the present and future moments. In this process, her teacher identity had been constructed and reconstructed across time.

Linguistic Experience

Alara had developed a strong ESL user identity out of an ESL learner identity. Unlike what some others would believe, the ESL user identity, to her, created some challenges when she taught, especially grammar courses to the students.

> I was constantly reminded that I was still learning that language because I would keep saying things that sounded weird. I have developed a great deal of English proficiency [when I speak English] to my husband, who is American. Because we communicate in English all the time, and I feel like I started starting to sound more like him because I was picking up the language that he was using, I was getting a lot of my language input. However, in the past, I could explain this is how it works, and this is why it is this way, but then. There were some moments when I couldn't remember when I learned something in what context. I was teaching grammar, not speaking. If I were teaching a pronunciation class or a speaking class, I think sounding like a native speaker matters.

For Alara, her ESL learner identity was confirmed when she received feedback from other English speakers surrounding her, especially when she noted that the English she spoke did not sound like a native speaker. Like many others, her ESL user identity started to emerge when she had extensive opportunities to communicate with native speakers, especially in her case, to practice with her husband in life contexts. Finally, when comparing her language output with a native speaker and noticing the similarities, she developed an ESL user identity out of the learner identity. At the time of the study, Alara demonstrated a strong ESL user identity. In the interviews, she never referred to herself as an ESL learner unless prompted or asked questions related to her first language background. Her enacted ESL user identity was possibly influenced by other people's reactions to her developed English proficiency. In other words, when the external world no longer considered her an ESL learner, Alara developed and enacted a strong ESL user identity.

However, as she explained, the ESL learner identity and experiences in language learning benefited her grammar instruction because she could explicitly point out the grammatical rules to the students. With the development of language proficiency, grammatical knowledge became more implicit. For this reason, Alara mentioned that the ESL user identity does not always lead to better teaching. Although in communication classes for oral proficiency, a native accent would help the students better acquire the language, as a grammar teacher, maintaining a language learner identity would be more beneficial.

Cultural Experience and Epistemic Clashes

Another focus of Alara's narratives was her cultural experiences, especially the conflicts between the Turkish culture she grew up with and the American culture she worked in.

> Growing up in Turkey and having my education up until my master's degree, I
> certainly experienced moments when you're not supposed to question your teacher

that much and they're supposed to know everything, and even if they don't know the answer, sometimes they make up things because as teachers They have to give an answer.. I found a good balance negotiating those two cultures…. When I first started teaching, I would be uncomfortable when I didn't know the answer. I feel comfortable enough now because I have been teaching in the U.S. higher education setting. If I don't know the answer, I will tell my students I'll look into that and get back to them.

For Alara, one major difference between the two educational systems was the different power structures and expectations imposed on teachers. The society where she grew up imposed a role on teachers as the absolute expert in their disciplines. Therefore, the authority and professionalism of a teacher would be challenged and doubted if the teacher showed they did not know certain things. However, the negotiation between different cultural values allowed Alara's teacher identity to further develop through a reconstructed understanding of the power dynamic between the teacher and students.

In addition, Alara mentioned the epistemology of what knowledge changed her teacher identity, especially related to her own expectation of what good teaching is.

I hate memorization. When I was in Turkey, learning and knowledge meant memorizing things, and I didn't think it was helping me at all when I reflected back on the courses [I took back home]. I remember that even writing an argumentative paper in high school in Turkey was all about memorizing facts and the [standard article] structure. Here [in the United States], [knowledge] is not either black or white. It challenged me, in the beginning, to think outside the box, which is [something] lacking in the Turkish educational system.

Alara experienced epistemic clashes when she transitioned from Turkey to the United States. For her, epistemology in the Turkish education system considers knowledge as the only reality that needs to be discovered. Hence, the purpose of teaching is to provide students with

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the truth, which does not allow for negotiating. When exposed to the ideologies in the U.S. educational system, Alara actively reflected on the real meaning of knowledge and adopted an opposite epistemology that grants the students agency to interpret what knowledge is. In this example, Alara no longer considered herself the only expert in the classroom, as she started to challenge her old value system developed in her home country.

Another aspect of the impact of competing cultural values was related to how Alara made important decisions. She told a story about her experience with an American professor teaching at her University in Turkey, which later changed her life and career trajectory.

> I realized that in Turkey, I was just rushing too much. After high school, I have to go to college. Then, I have four years to graduate. I cannot fail a class. Then, I will get a master's and Ph.D. and then go back to Turkey. [That was what I thought], until I met a professor when I was 20 in Turkey. She is a graduate of MIT, and I really looked up to her. [She said] guys are putting too much pressure on yourself. How old are you? Go explore, and there's room for failure. So after my master's degree, I decided to go explore South Korea – why not?

The varying cultural values of the life philosophies in the two countries provided Alara with different world views and life wisdom. In her narrative, people in Turkey are expected to follow a specific life trajectory determined by the collective voices in the society. In other words, people are expected to do specific things in specific life stages. However, Alara perceived more tolerance and flexibility regarding each individual's different life trajectory in the United States, as there are more spaces for explorations and failures when people make important decisions in life. The process of negotiating between different value systems and ideologies contributed to the development of her teacher identity. The words from the professor in this example allowed Alara to become more open to opportunities, which potentially changed her imagined teacher identity toward an international ESL educator. This

change again happened through the interaction between the inner and external world and continually affected how she saw herself as an ESL teacher across time.

The negotiations of the epistemologies in Alara's social spaces of life and teaching also resulted in an identity struggle, as she mentioned "this is my almost 10th year [in the United States] since I left my country …I don't feel Turkish enough, but I also don't feel American enough." Alara's cultural identity struggle revealed her lack of sense of belonging to any specific cultural group, which was possibly a result of the discontinuity between her past and present experiences. However, these disconnected transnational experiences also challenged Alara to negotiate relational positions in her social spaces, which positively contributed to her identity development.

In conclusion, Alara's cultural experiences revealed the epistemic clashes she went through when she transitioned from one value system to another. Such epistemic clashes have led to three stages– the construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of her teacher identity. To begin with, Alara's teacher identity had been initially constructed under the influence of the external voices in Turkey. However, when exposed to a different value system, she became skeptical about her teacher identity and belief system, which resulted in the deconstruction of her initial teacher identity. Finally, through the negotiation of past and present experiences, Alara started to reconstruct her teacher identity by developing a belief system that worked best for herself. In short, although the clashes caused struggles in the beginning, the negotiation of the competing epistemologies provided her with opportunities to further develop her life and teaching philosophy, as well as construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct her teacher identity.

Teaching Experience

Another focus of Alara's narrative was how her teacher identity had changed with the accumulation of teaching experience. Alara highly valued the importance of teaching

experience as she mentioned multiple times how she saw herself as a more successful teacher with more teaching experience.

> If I were to order [the importance of what makes a good ESL teacher], I think it was first my teaching experience and then my increase in English language proficiency because novice native ESL teachers could have the same concerns [as they lack experience]…On the first day of teaching, I had to really depend on what other people were doing because I was a new instructor. Then after that first semester. that terrifying feeling started to go away…That feeling was because of my lack of teaching experience rather than my non-native status…These teaching experiences helped me see the bigger picture of the journey that ESL learners from different backgrounds go through. I was able to provide better instruction…

The lack of knowledge of the teaching context and information about the student population, in the beginning, created a terrifying feeling for Alara. Thus, as a novice teacher, she had to highly rely on what she was told to do and what her colleagues were doing. With the accumulation of experience working with a diverse population of ESL students, Alara started to gain more confidence in teaching as she started to consider herself a better teacher who could address ESL students' different needs. In addition, through the interaction and reflection on the experience of NES ESL teachers, she realized a common challenge most novice ESL teachers, both NES and NNES, were facing due to the lack of teaching experience. In addition, she noted that her NNES status was not the main reason that caused her negative feelings as a novice teacher.

Alara also shared her perspective of what teaching is in both her narratives and her teaching philosophy statement.

> [When I gained more experience], I just realized that this [teaching] is a science. There are steps I should be following and there are methods to teach vocabulary and

grammar. As a teacher, if there is no structure [in your lesson], you will feel
overwhelmed like what am I teaching and how am I going to teach this…I am
thankful that I went through the rigorous programs in my BA and MA, because I
learned the science of teaching…When you realize there is a technique to it, you feel
powerful as a teacher.

With the accumulation of teaching and educational experiences, Alara started to perceive
language teaching as a science. Her confidence in teaching came from when she could
implement the scientific structures, techniques, and strategies she learned in her teacher
education programs as well as those gained from her teaching practice. Alara attributed her
development of teacher identity as a confident language teacher to the experiences when she
could support her students by addressing their different learning needs in grammar and
vocabulary by implementing scientifically proven teaching models and techniques.

In short, similar to most novice teachers, Alara felt terrified and clueless when she
first entered a language classroom. Teaching experience played a significant role in her
identity change across time. In Alara's case, teaching practice not only allowed her to gain
more teaching experience but also enabled her to make better sense of and implement the
knowledge and skills she learned in teacher education programs in her classroom. Moreover,
this identity change unpacked her pathway of becoming an independent ESL teacher who
could actively apply her teacher knowledge and skills rather than simply relying on adopting
how others teach and what she was expected to do in the classroom.

Intersectionality of Experiences

The previous discussion showed evidence of how Alara's experiences in different
social spaces intersected with each other. In this section, I present other examples of how her
intersected experiences contributed to the development of her teacher identity. To begin with,

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Alara mentioned her early experience when she worked as a new language instructor at an intensive English program and, at the same time, being a master's student.

> [I felt] a lot of pressure and people kept saying remember you are a student first and then a teacher. Your coursework comes first and then you're teaching. But I didn't feel that way because I felt like it was a lot of responsibility on my shoulders. The students paid a lot of tuition, and I am responsible for their learning. My teacher identity came before my student identity.

As a new international student and a novice language teacher, Alara felt a lot of pressure as she not only needed to get used to her master's coursework, but also the teaching context, both of which were disconnected from her previous experiences. In addition, she was facing the challenge of the competing student and teacher identities. At the intersection of these two identities, Alara's teacher identity came first. She demonstrated a passion for teaching and an understanding of the important role a teacher plays in student learning. Thus, she put herself in charge of the language learners, although she was a student herself. In this example, Alara's teacher identity development took place when she had to negotiate between past and present experiences as well as the sub identities in different social spaces.

Another aspect of how Alara's experiences in different social spaces intersect was related to the way she negotiated between her former ESL learner identity and ESL teacher identity.

> Some teachers get upset when they taught something and they [the students] are still not able to use this in their writing or speech. But as a second language learner, I have to be exposed to the same thing a couple of times before I could actually produce it or use it in a meaningful context… I would have to say that language learning is a process, I still can't pick the correct article or the correct prepositions sometimes…. So you have to be patient with your learners because you have to create multiple

opportunities for them...[I always] listen to [my] students [about] their needs and

thinking about what do they want to accomplish and trying to help them get

there…[The students] also bring numerous identities into the classroom…We need to

foster a sense of belonging…If they are experiencing imposter syndrome, [their

learning] is not going to be as effective…These are all from what I experienced as a

[learner] myself and teaching as well.

For Alara, her language learning experience created affordances in her teaching. In comparison to her colleagues, she believed that she could better relate to the learners as her language learning experience allowed her to understand some possible needs or struggles the students had. First, Alara understood that language learners need multiple exposures to meaningful contexts. Thus, successful ESL teachers need to create opportunities for students to apply linguistic knowledge in different real-life situations. Second, she believed that effective language teaching should build on the students' identities, past experiences, and current language proficiency levels. Lastly, Alara was aware that the affective filters, i.e., negative attitudes associated with the learners' emotions, especially those created by an excluding environment, could impede language learning.

In addition to how Alara's linguistic background and language learning experience affected her teaching philosophy and practice, Alara told a story about how she used herself as an example to motivate a student of hers in language learning.

[I had a student who] was actually thinking of dropping out of school because she

found it very difficult to continue her education in English. Although it was

embarrassing for me, I showed her my very first writing. Looking back at it was

painful for me. Just after that, she started talking to me more and I kept telling her this

is a process where you just have to be patient with yourself.

Alara used her own experience to show her student that language learning is a long process that needs perseverance. By showing her painful and embarrassing moments, she was able to build a positive rapport with the student, as the student could connect their emotions to Alara's feelings. The commonality between her and the student further motivated the student in language learning.

In short, the intersection between Alara's language learning and teaching experiences revealed the positive influence of her NNES status on ESL teacher identity development. As a former second language learner, Alara had a good understanding of students' academic needs. Furthermore, the students could connect to Alara as they went through the same emotional struggles in the process of language learning. Lastly, Alara used herself as an example to show her student the journey of language learning and the time it took her to develop English proficiency.

Alara's Negotiation of Ideologies and Investment in Teaching

Negotiation of Ideologies

One focus of Alara's narrative was how she perceived, negotiated, and internalized the ideologies in her social spaces. She began her stories about ideologies from when she was hired as a language instructor at a university in South Korea but the government refused to issue her a valid work visa due to her NNES status.

> It was a dark time for me the first year [in South Korea]. The perception in Korea is that if you're not a native speaker, you are not qualified [to teach ESL]. I could not figure out my visa there because I was not [an NES teacher]… Having a government tell you that you cannot teach because you're not from a certain language background is really discouraging. When I left my master's program, I felt really prepared…and empowered. I have my master's degree, and now I can go put into practice everything I've learned. I was just so ready, but then just through that sort of an experience, I

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started thinking myself - as a teacher and my abilities as a second language speaker. They think that I'm not qualified enough to teach. Of course, that's gonna plant a seed in your mind…. I was just doing volunteer stuff here and there to keep my sanity… I never forget that experience. It's always in the back of my mind like that I went through something like that.

In the interviews, Alara kept referring to this experience as a dark time, which demonstrated the significant impact of ideologies on her teacher identity development. As a recent graduate from the master's program, Alara was ready and full of passion to apply what she had learned to teaching. However, although she was hired by the university as a language instructor, she was not able to receive a valid work visa to teach ESL courses at the university only because of her non-native speaker status. She started to doubt her own qualifications in teaching, although she felt well prepared with everything needed as an ESL teacher in the classroom. The conflicts between Alara's teacher identity and ideologies in the society led to her struggles in defining what she was as a teacher. She also carried forward this experience to the future moments as she mentioned it "plant[ed] a seed in [her] mind" until she received a valid visa the following year and talked more openly to others about this experience.

I got my visa the second year when I was there…and we're now talking more openly about these things. There are non-native English speaker teacher interest sections [at the conferences]. [I then realized that] I was not alone, [as] a lot of people are going through this. Then I started thinking that there's nothing wrong with me. This is an issue that we're dealing with as a field, and it is obvious that I'm qualified. We just need to take steps to make [things better]. I just realized that there are a lot more discussions going on about this than I was aware of.

Alara's struggle of seeing herself as a qualified ESL teacher in South Korea was alleviated when the government issued her a valid work visa after one year of volunteering. Her

perception of the unequal power structure between herself and NES ESL teachers was readjusted when they were considered equally capable of teaching the English language by the government. Alara's negotiation of collective voices and identity change in this example was also impacted by her interactions with teachers in the field who had faced the same challenges. Through these interactions, she developed a sense of belonging and realized that she was not fighting alone with the discriminatory ideologies which commonly exist in EFL settings. In addition, the sense she made of herself from past experiences was readjusted under the impact of external voices in her social spaces at the present moments (i.e., when people shared the same experience at the academic conferences).

Furthermore, Alara shared a story about the support she received from the administrators and colleagues the first time she taught a university-level ESL course in the United States.

Coming to United States for the first time, and knowing that I was going to teach English in the United States, of course, because I was an inexperienced teacher, I was always a little bit worried because I am a non-native speaker of English. Of course, little did I know back then that even native English speakers are terrified of teaching when it's their first time teaching. I have to say that I broke that cycle when I saw how much trust the Department of Linguistics [had in] me to teach those courses in the United States because as much as it was terrifying it was also showing me that they [believe] that I can do this. They trust me [because] I have the skills... That was really eye opening because they believe that I should do this, why don't I believe in myself like [they do]… That really was a positive experience.

In this story, Alara again experienced conflicts between the inner self and the external world. However, these conflicts positively contributed to her teacher identity development. Being a novice teacher, she viewed herself as unskilled and incapable due to her lack of teaching

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experience and her NNES status. Nevertheless, the level of trust and support from administrators and colleagues in the department reassured her of her qualifications. Such a conflict created an opportunity to reflect on and negotiate between how she saw herself and how others saw her as an NNES teacher.

Alara's negotiation of ideologies illustrated the role that collective voices played in the two dimensions of her teacher identity development - continuity and interaction. Through the ongoing interactions with people and negotiation of ideologies in her social spaces, her teacher identity developed from past experiences was reconstructed. In addition, ideologies related to her NNES status created both constraints and affordances in the process of teacher identity development. To negotiate the discriminatory ideologies against NNES ESL teachers, Alara actively sought support from other teachers with the same experiences, which led to the positive development of her teacher identity. In addition, the positive ideologies, such as trust from the administrators, enabled her to reposition herself and regain power as a novice NNES ESL teacher. Her positive ESL teacher identity, constructed from these collective voices in the external world, resulted in an increase in her investment in teaching and commitment to her teaching career. In the next section, I will discuss the major findings related to how the rewarding moments in Alara's teaching experience affected her investment, and thus shaped her teacher identity.

Investment and Identity Development

In Alara's stories, her investment in teaching, professional growth, and career development stood out as significant contributors to her teacher identity development. To begin with, she shared some rewarding moments from her teaching experience.

> If you are here for money, you are in the wrong business…The pleasure [you receive from teaching] makes you forget about everything else… It doesn't matter what bad news you might have received in the morning you just go in there [the classroom],

and you forget about it [the bad news], and I really like that feeling [of teaching]
…Even just thinking about a teaching sparks a joy when you know the students are
learning…Every time I teach something new I also learned so much new stuff. In one
of the job interviews I was asked which one I would choose between doing research
or teaching. And I feel like teaching always comes first and I would definitely go with
teaching.

Alara's narrative demonstrated her great passion for teaching. Her investment in and
commitment to teaching were not for an increase in her economic or social capital but
motivated by her personal enjoyment of teaching and students' learning outcomes. In
addition, Alara considered teaching itself as a professional development experience as she
was simultaneously learning when she taught. When negotiating between different sub
identities, such as a researcher and a teacher, her teacher identity always came first. Alara
then went on to tell another story of how her students' success impacted her way of seeing
herself and her teaching career.

Even years after, I [still] hear from my students. They email me during major
holidays. it's just really nice to hear from them like you know I still remember that
class about blah blah… wow they still remember that. That's very exciting because I
spent hours [preparing for and teaching the lesson]…You remember the student I
talked about? I [used my own story to tell her] not to feel disappointed…I only spent
one year with her but at the end of each semester [after then], she would send me
some updates [on] what courses she was taking and what she learned. The student
ended up with a minor in writing – English composition. Every time she wrote to me,
she kept saying like you know the two classes I took from you really inspired me
about writing and being a writer in English as a second language user of English. That
was one of the most rewarding moments, because she was thinking of dropping out

and then she graduated with honors. Those are the moments when you realized why

you become a teacher – to make a real difference in people's lives.

In addition to the enjoyment of teaching in the classroom, Alara's career commitment was

reinforced by the ongoing connections with students outside instructional settings. She shared

that some previous students kept sending her holiday emails, and one student continually

shared their academic achievements. These connections highlighted the rewarding and

significant moments in her career, in which her investment in teaching was recognized,

valued, and appreciated by the students. As a result of these rewarding moments, Alara's

teacher identities in the present and future moments were further reinforced as she developed

a clearer picture of who she was and wanted to be in the future.

Besides the investment in teaching, Alara's career goal led to her investment in career

growth. Alara shared some reasons why she decided to pursue a doctoral degree after

teaching ESL in the United States and South Korea for years.

My husband and I were both teaching ESL in South Korea…We wouldn't be able to

teach different courses [without a PhD]. We kept teaching like [introduction-level]

ESL composition courses, there was no way of moving up or teaching different

courses… We got burned out on teaching the same courses over and over. Also,

there's always things we can learn, especially considering the amount of knowledge

out there - the number of journals people publish. Sometimes I really felt

overwhelmed like I'm falling behind in the field and I can't keep up to date.

Alara's narrative demonstrated a gap between the present self and imagined teacher identity.

With a master's degree, she could only teach the same introductory composition courses

repetitively at the university level. This status conflicted with her imagined identity as a

university instructor who could teach multiple higher-level courses. Alara's husband, in this

example, played a significant role in her decision-making process of choosing a career path.

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This interaction also showcased how her sub identity as a wife in one social space intersected with her sub identity as an ESL teacher in another social space. In other words, Alara's decision to pursue a doctoral degree was a result of the negotiation of past, present, and future experiences and interaction with a significant influencer, i.e., her husband, in the social spaces of marriage and teaching. Consequently, her present and imagined teacher identities, to some extent, converged, as her imagined identity created some intrinsic motivation to move toward what she desired to be in the future.

Alara's narratives in this section exemplified the interplay between investment in teaching and teacher identity development. The rewarding moments as a return for the investment in teaching enabled the construction and reconstruction of her teacher identity. The imagined teacher identities, such as commitment to teaching and career goal in Alara's case, in turn, resulted in her further investment in the practice and career of teaching.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I investigated the relationship between Alara's multilevel experiences and teacher identity development based on the analysis of four through lines – *when* (temporality), *where* (contexts), *with whom* (interaction within social spaces), and *why* (rationality)– in her narratives.

To begin with, the through line of *when* illustrated the continual development of Alara's teacher identity, in which she made sense of and carried forward experiences from the past and present to the future. Alara's initial teacher identity emerged earlier than her experience in the teacher preparation program. In fact, her first exposure to a teacher's role dated back to high school when she assisted her father, a primary school teacher, in lesson plan development. In addition, the positive English language learning experiences in a teacher-training high school led to her decision to become an ESL teacher. Alara's teacher identity later in her career trajectory was greatly impacted by these early experiences,

especially the challenges and opportunities she faced as a language learner. In short, Alara's present teacher identity at each moment along her teaching trajectory has always been a result of her negotiations of the meanings of self she carried forward from past experiences. Another aspect that stood out in this through line was how her imagined teacher identity was shaped and reshaped by the rewarding moments she received from teaching. Similar to many teachers, Alara's enjoyment of teaching and satisfaction of seeing the students' success had positively contributed to her career commitment, which motivated her to move forward in her teaching career.

Additionally, the two through lines of *where* and *with whom* in Alara's narratives emphasized the impact of ideologies and power structures, as well as the role of interaction in social spaces as a mediator and influencer, in the negotiation of internal and external conditions. For example, Alara attributed her self-skepticism about her capabilities in teaching ESL to the discriminatory ideologies against NNES ESL teachers in South Korea. These ideologies could be understood as a contextual factor that led to an unequal power structure between Alara and NES teachers. However, through interaction and active participation in the community, especially with support from other NNES teachers, her teacher identity was reconstructed. In another example, Alara's strong ESL user identity was constructed from her reflections about the collective voices in her social spaces, e.g., her husband and colleagues, when the external world no longer considered her an ESL learner. Such an ESL user identity also contributed to her teacher identity as she spoke with confidence about her abilities to teach ESL in the interviews. Additionally, the interplay between Alara's sub identities in different social spaces was also evident in her narratives. Her identities as a wife and a teacher mutually affected each other and collaboratively influenced her significant decisions related to life and career paths. Therefore, the *where* and *with whom* through lines in Alara's narratives exemplified how her teacher identities are

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shaped and reshaped by her negotiations of the relational positions within and across different social spaces.

The through line of *why* (rationality) in Alara's narratives revealed the autonomous process of teacher identity development, in which she had agency in the negotiation of self and external voices, rather than simply influenced by external conditions. To begin with, when encountering the epistemological clashes of two cultural value systems, Alara actively sought a balance between them and developed a meaning system that worked for her situation. Additionally, when people in her social places told her she should prioritize her coursework as a graduate student, her teacher identity always came first due to her perceived responsibilities as a GA instructor and enthusiasm for teaching. These significant moments in Alara's narratives showcased the relationship between her inner self and external conditions. In other words, although her teacher identity development is always dependent on external conditions, her constructed self, rooted in experiences, usually determines how she defines their relational positions in new social spaces.

In conclusion, the interactive and continual development of Alara's teacher identity is evident in the four through lines of her narratives. Her teacher identity at any specific moment was a result of her negotiations of the relational positions in and across multiple social spaces. These negotiations, between the internal and external conditions, are ongoing and rooted in the sense she made of her experiences in the past, present, and future moments. More importantly, Alara played an active role, by reflecting on the inner self and external world and their relationships, in defining who she was and what she desired to be as a teacher, rather than who she was designated or expected to be.

CHAPTER 5: BENJAMIN

Personal Timeline

Benjamin had almost 25 years of experience working with ELLs in the United States and Costa Rica. He started teaching after receiving his bachelor's degree in Central America. He then moved to Costa Rica and taught ESL at a language institute there. In the late 1990s, he decided to pursue another graduate degree in ESL and bilingual education at a public university in the Southwestern United States. By the time of the study, Benjamin had taught in U.S. public elementary and middle schools as Spanish bilingual teacher for 20 years and as an adjunct instructor in Spanish and ESL at a public University in the southwestern United States during the last ten years.

Benjamin's Language Learning Experience

In Benjamin's narratives, the language learning experiences across his personal and professional timelines highlighted the development of his identities from an ESL learner to an ESL user, and finally as an ESL teacher at the time of the study. To begin with, his early language learning experiences in both the first (Spanish) and second (English) languages were positively influenced by his mother, an elementary school teacher.

> When I was growing up, I always loved reading so my Spanish reading level was so good that I could read any book in many areas…Before I went to the first grade, my mom would make me read every night. She would also read me stories because she loved stories. We read bilingual books together. She first made me read the ones in Spanish and then we were trying to figure out what it said in English…[Those experiences] made me believe that I [was] able to read.

It is evident in Benjamin's account of his early language learning experience that a learner's first language proficiency could positively influence the development of their second language proficiency. This example allowed him to develop a philosophy of utilizing the

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students' first-language background in second-language instruction, which I discuss in a later section. In addition, the early exposure to bilingual books and support from Benjamin's mother enabled him to generate enthusiasm for reading at a young age. Such enthusiasm resulted in the development of his reading proficiency, which led to the construction of his identity as a strong reader at a young age. Furthermore, his reading proficiency in the first language had a positive influence on his English learning and the development of his ESL learner identity.

> [My first language] definitely helped me develop my vocabulary in English, because I could memorize the spelling of English words [more easily]…I [then] started reading National Geographic in English, watching documentary like discoveries about the ancient civilizations…I didn't feel like I was being challenged when I went to [the English] class – it was in the sixth grade – and I felt like I had to challenge myself to read something more difficult.

Due to these early language learning experiences, Benjamin found himself more advanced in his English class, and thus actively sought other opportunities to improve his English proficiency. Such a commitment to language learning extended to his later education experience as he would "set up my goal of how many words need to be learned every day" when he was at college. His diligence and enthusiasm for language learning later impacted his teaching philosophy and attitudes toward his English learners.

> In my own view, [when] I worked hard, I always noticed that I did better in a lot of different areas, but not necessarily all the time, but I felt like perseverance and resilience are [something we all need]. As a teacher, if you're positive, and I feel like if I don't get something, I go back and I'm very stubborn. So I keep trying until I figure it out…As a teacher, you are always a role model to your students, therefore, I gotta walk the walk not just talk the talk.

Benjamin believed that the teacher is always the students' role model, and the efforts he made to learn a language could be a great example to motivate the students in the long journey of second language learning. His own learning experiences allowed him to understand the many challenges in language learning, and thus the teacher needs to assist the students to develop persistence.

Furthermore, Benjamin's positive language learning experiences at an early age contributed to the development of his understanding of and enthusiasm for language teaching.

Knowing more about different languages and how [people] acquire language intrigued me…I worked with kids who were able to master language and others who had a hard time with it. Or, they master one language well, but they had a hard time with others. I became very interested in figuring out why…You know the whole debate on nurture vs. nature. I believe that it's more about nurture because I think when a kid grows in an environment in which stimuli is everywhere, I feel like that creates a really positive environment for kids to learn.

In this example, Benjamin demonstrated his philosophy of teaching that language learners benefit from positive, encouraging learning environments. In these environments, significant influencers, such as the teacher and peers, play a key role in providing positive reinforcement and authentic language input. Such a philosophy was possibly a result of how he learned English from reading bilingual stories with his mother, who created a positive learning environment for him. In addition, his passion for language teaching was rooted in his language learning experiences when he was an advanced language learner typically in Central America.

Benjamin then shared his experience of how he developed an ESL user identity from being immersed in an English-speaking environment when he relocated to the United States and how that experience impacted his ESL teacher identity.

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I feel like it was when I was immersed in some kind of [authentic English-speaking environment]. In the first six months [when I was in the United States], I kept translating back and forth - In English I do need to keep translating from Spanish...It took me about one year… [before the two languages could] run parallel depending on who I was talking to... I felt like I could at least you know carry on my conversation and express meaning without you know having to go back and forth [between my first language and English]…You know [when I learned English], I [was] just memorizing the words…So I felt like I had to focus [not only] on vocabulary building but also helping my students apply it…Because that was the biggest thing as there are lots of words but the student were using them just from memorization.

Having learned English in an EFL context in which the grammar-translation approach and rote memorization of vocabulary were commonly used, Benjamin faced the challenge that he had to rely on his first language when speaking English in the first several months in the United States. He noted that his ESL user identity started to emerge after a year when he could produce language output in English without having to translate from Spanish. Such an experience allowed him to relate to some of his ELLs' challenges, and thus deepened his understanding of the significance of focusing on the application of linguistic knowledge in teaching.

In short, the impact of Benjamin's language learning experiences on the development of his ESL learner and teacher identities was significant. Firstly, the interplay between the learning environment, motivation in learning, learning outcomes, and learner identity is evident in his narratives. In Benjamin's case, the positive learning environment, i.e., support from his mother, created motivation in learning; motivation resulted in positive learning outcomes; the positive learning outcomes, in turn, enhanced motivation, and contributed to the development of a positive language learner identity. Secondly, Benjamin's positive

language learner identity created a foundation for the later development of his ESL teacher identity. In other words, without the positive language learning experiences, the emergence of his ESL teacher identity might not have taken place. Thirdly, his ESL learner identity and language learning experiences contributed to the development of his teaching philosophy and consequently shaped his ESL teacher identity. Therefore, Benjamin's ESL teacher identity is rooted in the language learning experiences he made sense of and carried forward from the past, which highlighted the continuity of his teacher identity development.

Benjamin's Teaching Experience; Emergence and Development of Teacher Identity

One focus of Benjamin's narrative was the impact of his earlier experiences on the emergence of his teacher identity. To begin with, he noted his family members' influence on his imagined identity as a teacher before choosing the education major.

> I grew up in the classroom. My mom was a special ed teacher and my dad was a math teacher. My brother is also a teacher. We all follow our parents because it was something I enjoyed. I enjoy[ed] going to her [my mom's] classroom and seeing her teach the kids how to write and they couldn't even hold a pencil – they use a sand box to practice writing different letters. After school, I had to wait for my mom so I would go help in her classroom or my dad's classroom,,,I actually became a teacher when I was 18 and I tutored someone…I thought I would absolutely get a degree in education because I don't think I chose it and it was planned out for me because that's all I knew…

In this example, the emergence of Benjamin's teacher identity was a result of the significant influencers in his social spaces as both his parents were teachers. His experience of helping his parents in their classrooms made his decision of becoming a teacher an absolute thing as he developed a strong imagined teacher identity through his participation in his social spaces at an early age. In other words, it is evident that Benjamin's career choice and imagined

identity as a teacher were shaped, or designated, by the external voices in his past experiences.

In addition to the impact of Benjamin's parents on the emergence of his initial teacher identity, the interaction with his mother at an early age had a profound influence on the development of Benjamin's teacher identity later in his teaching career. Benjamin noted that his beliefs about the students' past experiences had been greatly influenced by his mother's attitude toward teaching.

Every single student comes in with expectations for themselves and I hear [some of] them every day like oh I don't like school…I think what happens is that they have had a lot of negative experiences before, so I think that's a defense mechanism…I don't blame their prior teachers…I can't do that because my mom is a very positive person. She's like the epitome of teaching…I always noticed how she interacted with her students. Her voice was always calm, and she always use[d] polite words with them…When she worked with the special kids [who were] upset…she will not get mad. I think that attitude that you bring into the classroom can be contagious and maybe you can give it to the student…So I told my students if that is what your prior experience [is], blaming people doesn't do anything…so let's make it better.

In this example, Benjamin's mother, who was an elementary special education teacher, always held a positive attitude toward her students and her teaching career. Benjamin's interaction with his mother, as a significant influencer, contributed to the construction of his identity as a teacher who can always make a difference to reshape students' negative learning experiences. The interplay between his teacher identity and the social spaces was twofold. Firstly, the significant influencer in Benjamin's social spaces had a profound impact on the development of his teacher identity. Secondly, the enactment of his teacher identity could also influence other members in the community of practice, i.e., the students, in this example.

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Benjamin went on to share some of his feelings about when he first started in the classroom in Costa Rica and how that experience impacted his way of seeing himself as a novice teacher.

> My feeling when I was first in the classroom was excitement…I was really excited about teaching. The classroom was never something new to me…One biggest challenge in Costa Rica was that I got disappointed to like no one did their homework. I think I was oblivious sometimes about their financial situations when they had to help their family out. I then realized that you know you could not expect those guys to work on their homework for a couple of hours. There were all other social issues that you have to become aware.

As opposed to some novice teachers, Benjamin felt excited rather than panicked or clueless when he first started teaching. This positive feeling could be understood as the result of his converging present and imagined teacher identities. As discussed in the previous section, he was familiar with the classroom context at a young age and always had a strong imagined teacher identity. When he became an actual teacher, there were not many disconnects between his present teaching experience and the imagined teacher identity. Moreover, in his initial teaching experience, he developed a deep understanding of the impact of students' socio-economic status and backgrounds on learning, which also helped him negotiate the competing teaching experiences he had in Costa Rica and in the United States later in his career.

> The social contexts of the classrooms [in Costa Rica and the United States] were different. When I was teaching over there, the students really wanted to be there. Looking back on my years of teaching [in the United States], not all the students that came through that door wanted to be there, because they [the ESL students] had negative experiences – [they didn't] wanted to be there - so they probably already had

the defensive mechanism, or you know the affective filter…I knew it was not my fault…when they didn't welcome me in the beginning. I made some [efforts] to understand their negative experiences… [Their teachers before] were already saying that there was something wrong with the students…To me, it is just because they don't speak the language fluently. [That] doesn't mean that's something wrong. To me, teachers are the biggest game changer in education because if you keep nurturing even though they're struggling, they know that you're there and you're not going to [move] back away from them.

In this example, Benjamin had a different experience when he first started teaching ESL in the United States, compared to his previous classrooms in Costa Rica. The students in the new classroom showed a negative attitude toward him and were not ready to accept him as their teacher. However, his prior teaching experience allowed him to explore the students' backgrounds in order to understand their situations rather than lowering his self-esteem as a teacher. This example highlighted Benjamin's agency in actively defining his relational position in the social space. More importantly, in Benjamin's case, the construction of such an agency was a result of the negotiation of past experiences. In other words, his relational positions were not completely independent of the external voices and past experiences but heavily reliant on his internalization of conditions across time and within social spaces. In addition, the confidence he developed as a teacher in his earlier experiences made him stay positive and willing to help the ELLs overcome the affective filters and reestablish a positive attitude towards learning.

In Benjamin's narrative, he reached a critical understanding of the ELLs' non-native status by reflecting on his own experiences and status as an NNES ESL teacher.

[When talking about identity], I think it depends on people's conscious biases of whoever labels them. I feel like it's up to our interpretation. I think, when in the US,

we put labels on students, it's like we are saying they have big gaps. The intention is just to say that they don't speak the language well yet because there's not the first language….It actually motivated me because I feel like if I could show that I could improve many other areas, I could show students that there's hope for them too.

In this example, Benjamin demonstrated an awareness that identity development occurs through a person's interpretation of external voices. Benjamin's reflection on his teacher identity and past experiences as an NNES teacher enabled him to challenge the ideologies related to ELLs and assumptions about their achievement gaps. Such reflection allowed Benjamin to enact his NNES teacher identity and utilize it as an example to motivate the students to work hard for a better future. This example highlighted the interplay between Benjamin's identity development and participation in social spaces.

To conclude, Benjamin's account of pathways that shaped his teacher identity underscored the significant influence of experiences in three ways. Firstly, the emergence of his professional identity had taken place before his experience in the teacher preparation program, especially with the impact of a significant influencer, i.e., his mother, in his social spaces at an early age. Such an impact initiated the development of his imagined identity as a teacher, which later affected his career choice and initial professional identity as a novice teacher. Secondly, the disconnects of experiences between different teaching contexts were seen as an opportunity to deepen Benjamin's teacher's philosophy of teaching and, consequently, shaped his teacher identity. Thirdly, through the explication of the concept of identity, Benjamin was more likely to develop an agency in defining his relational positions in their social spaces, as well as utilize his own experiences and identities to support students' needs.

Intersectionality of Experiences across Social Spaces

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Another aspect that contributed to the development of Benjamin's teacher identity was how he made sense of the experiences in social spaces other than the classroom context. As a father of a 15-year-old boy, Benjamin noted how he grew together with his son and how that experience impacted his teaching philosophy and teacher identity development.

> I knew that kids go through different stages from reading books, but seeing them happen right before my eyes is a different issue. That helped me understand a lot better how kids think. I see my son every day from taking a bath to writing or oh I'm hungry to writing a sentence or asking for help. [Those experiences] definitely opened my mind like oh I didn't think of that…I became more patient to my students when they need help as I knew they were going through different stages…When I talk to my students, I sometimes think of my son.

From his participation in the social space of being a father, Benjamin developed a better understanding of kids' needs as they went through different stages of development. This understanding was also connected to his learning experience in the teacher education program, which allowed him to apply the theory to the real teaching context. The impact of his sub identity as a father also enabled him to readjust his relational position with his students, as he would think of his son when talking to his students. In this example, Benjamin's sub identities developed in different contexts overlapped as his experiences in multiple social spaces intersected.

In addition, Benjamin also shared how his experience of volunteering for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an international organization aiding children from relatively low socio-economic status (SES) families, enabled him to better understand the needs of some of his ELLs in the classroom.

> I used to run a sports program for UNICEF…That got my mind wrapped around this idea that you know about equity and disadvantaged population[s]. I used to bring like

different sports equipment to get these kids that did not quite attend school…to give

them some kind of non-formal education…at least some kind of educational

experience.   They really loved it…and if we canceled because it was raining too hard,

they were disappointed, so I felt it was meaningful… I [started] thinking why are

these kids not in school…because I thought everyone was supposed to be in school

Monday through Friday and that was my life, but not for these kids…When I worked

with kids [in my ESL classroom], I knew that some of them were having the same

issues…

Benjamin's account of the volunteering experience with the kids in a UNICEF sports

program highlighted how his reflections on the participation in different communities

contributed to the development of teaching philosophy and teacher identity. Before then,

having grown up in a middle-class family in Central America, Benjamin was not able to

understand the challenges that kids from low SES families faced in life. Such a disconnected

experience between the past and present experience made him reconsider his role as a

teacher. Later in his own classroom, the readjusted teacher identity allowed him to become

aware of the many challenges his ELLs were facing in life other than the struggles in

academic settings. Moreover, Benjamin considered the students' enjoyment in the sports

program as a rewarding moment, which reinforced his belief in helping kids in and outside

instructional settings. This belief also contributed to the construction of his teacher identity

and enhanced his investment in teaching, which I will discuss further in the next section.

Investment in and Rewards from Teaching

In Benjamin's narratives, his investment in and rewards from teaching stood out as

key factors that contributed to his teacher identity development. To begin with, he shared his

preference in some intangible rewards he received from his kids over the monetary benefits in

other careers.

If I didn't love kids, I wouldn't be here…I remember many years ago, the Border

Patrol approached me as they wanted some bilingual officers at the border…They

were paying me like $150,000 but I was like no it's not about money. I was not gonna

chase people down…Money is helpful but it's not everything. When you teach, there

are some [in]tangible [rewards], like when a kid learns or is happy, that gives me

some [in]tangible benefits.

In this example, Benjamin, like many other teachers, did not consider economic capital as a

main factor that impacted their career choice or commitment. Instead, Benjamin

demonstrated his great enthusiasm for teaching. The kids' happiness, enjoyment, and learning

in the classroom were the rewarding moments that reinforced his teacher identity. These

rewarding moments received in the external world were internalized and transferred to his

commitment to the teaching career. Similar to Alara, Benjamin also shared specific examples

of how the students' learning impacted his ways of seeing himself as a teacher.

I can think of this student who came to me, and I used to teach her ESL reading in 5th

grade. She was struggling in the beginning…Only after six months [working with

me], she was able to complete the grade level. I could relate to her because she had

very high L1 [first language] and she was the top of her class in Mexico…I used to

struggle like that like not having enough vocabulary [in English], so I felt like I had to

focus on vocabulary building…She was such a hard worker, so she improved a lot…I

also love challenges, because I had another student who was like no matter what I did

as a teacher she come to the class next morning and have forgotten everything. But

she tried so hard for me…that just kept me going. If a student tries hard, I feel more

excited even if they are not making much progress.

The example Benjamin shared about the rewarding moments in teaching highlighted three

different aspects where his enjoyment of teaching came from – the students' learning

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outcomes, diligence, and the connection with students' experiences. Noticeably, to Benjamin, when he saw that a student had the same experience, or faced the same struggles, as in his own learning experience, he developed an affinity that allowed him to easily relate to the student. Such an affinity also enabled him to see the student as a reflection of himself, and thus become more willing to help the student out. Benjamin then went on to tell a story of another rewarding moment in his teaching career.

> There was a student I didn't know I made an impact in her life but she wrote me this beautiful letter thanking me [years after graduation]. She didn't think she thanked me enough before for helping and get[ting] the motivation to make it through high school. She told me that she already applied for college and she said that she saw me as a leader. I felt very flattered and very excited to see her pursue her college career so that was very rewarding...I was glad that I actually had her in my classroom as my student.

Similar to Alara's case, Benjamin's enjoyment of teaching was also reinforced by the student's appreciation of his teaching after graduation. Benjamin felt honored when the student shared that he made a difference in her academic trajectory as his efforts and investment in teaching not only inspired her to successfully finish high school but also apply for college.

Another aspect of Benjamin's rewarding moments as a teacher was the interaction with the ELLs' parents. He then shared reasons why he enjoyed communicating with the parents.

> I'm not a very social [person] but I love talking with [the] parents. If a parent comes in, they say, can we chat for a little bit so, of course, so I asked a fellow teacher to cover my station I go meet with them [the parents]. I love to [do so] you know because parents are busy too, so if they come to look for me, I am happy to do so. I'm not going to turn them down. That's also great to communicate with them, and you

know, to hear their worries, their plans, and how we can help their kids. There are also

kids who don't like school because you know they think school is boring because

they're not that successful or they feel like they're not good at writing or

reading…And sometimes I think because I speak their language, I can connect to

them [the parents] and better help the kids.

Benjamin's account of the connections with the parents spotlighted his perception of the

relational positions with the parents. In addition to understanding better the students'

backgrounds and needs outside of instructional settings, another possible reason why he

considered communicating with the parents as a rewarding moment was the level of trust he

received. In this case, his identity as a teacher willing to help the students was recognized and

respected in the social space when the parents openly shared their situations and concerns

with him.

To conclude, the stories about the rewarding moments in Benjamin's teaching career

again highlighted how his professional identity was developed across time and space. Firstly,

his career choice could be understood as a result of the enactment of his identity at a specific

moment, which was rooted in the values and beliefs developed from his past experiences.

Secondly, his career commitment was reinforced by the rewarding moments of his

investment in teaching, such as the students' appreciation and the parents' trust. When he

made sense of the meanings of these rewarding moments, he internalized the voices in the

external space, and thus developed an enhanced present teacher identity and a desired,

imagined identity. Thirdly, his willingness to stay in the teaching career could also be seen as

a product of his converging present and imagined teacher identities. In other words, when he

saw a clear picture of what he desired to be in the future, he would continue investing in

teaching practice and teacher identity development, in order to meet his ideal self in the

future.

Negotiation of External Voices and Ideologies

Another focus of Benjamin's narratives was how he negotiated and internalized the external conditions in his social spaces. To begin with, Benjamin shared his attitudes toward the negative voices, especially those coming from his colleagues.

> I think that [the impact of the environment] is huge because, in terms of professional learning communities, of course, working together is better. I would say sometimes they [some of my colleagues] are hard to work with. When they do not get along and there is more than tension, I think there's a lot of animosity that I saw among certain teachers. There's a lot I feel like that's unprofessional and it's a negative [thing] that brings everyone down…I don't tend to trust many of them [my colleagues], because I don't know if they are real or not…When I hear gossip or something, I just stay away from it. But if I hear something good like a good strategy, [or] new ideas or a new lesson, I will [learn from them].

In this example, Benjamin demonstrated a clear perception of his relational position with his colleagues. When he encountered negative voices, especially when some of his colleagues could not get along with each other, he would choose to stay away from those tense relationships. In the meantime, Benjamin highly valued the importance of professional learning communities. He developed and demonstrated an affinity for learning from his colleagues when there was new knowledge that could inspire his teaching. This example highlighted that Benjamin was not passively involved in the social spaces, but played an active role in determining his relational positions in his social spaces, i.e., with his colleagues. Benjamin also shared his belief that a teacher's interaction with their colleagues could potentially influence their students in the classroom.

> I was never involved in [the conflicts between my colleagues], because my kids can see that and then if you are asking them to get along with their peers and they see I'm

fighting with my peers, I have no right to ask them to behave…I have no control of

whatever animosity that goes in my building, the only thing I can control is how I deal

with my classroom personally. I feel like at least I should always be consistent.

Benjamin noted that his beliefs and actions should be consistent across different social

spaces. In this example, he shared that the students would notice if he was involved in the

conflicts between his colleagues, and thus there was no way that he would ask the students to

get along with each other. One possible interpretation of Benjamin's account of this

experience is that he supposed his sub identities in different social spaces could affect each

other. In other words, he developed a core identity that, to the greatest extent, determined the

development and enactment of the sub identities. In addition, Benjamin demonstrated an

understanding of the relationship between the enactment of his teacher identity and teaching

practice, which could further impact the students. Benjamin then shared another way of

interpreting the tension between his colleagues.

I always know it [the tension] happens because people [have different ways of]

coping with stress and different issues…You know everyone is fighting their own

struggles…Sometimes we are always jealous because someone else might be more

fortunate than we are like we always want the nicest car, the nicest house, the most

money, but I feel I am very lucky. I survived this pandemic, and I was able to stay and

teach my classes. I think we have overcome a lot of barriers…I think that frustration,

that jealousy, especially during the pandemic, came from for example they felt

incapable of like teaching online during the pandemic, they would freak out. The

negative thoughts in my colleges [were] because they feel like they cannot go ahead

or it is too tough to teach any more.

In this example, Benjamin's way to interpret and internalize the negative voices in the

external world was to develop an understanding of the challenges his colleagues were facing.

In particular, he understood that the COVID-19 pandemic had led to many struggles that made his peers want to quit their teaching careers. He also felt fortunate to have survived the pandemic, which enhanced his career commitment. Benjamin's interpretations of these external conditions not only allowed him to better determine his relational positions with his colleagues but enabled him to develop a clearer picture of who he was as a teacher at the moment and who he desired to be in the future. This example again showcased Benjamin's agency in the interpretation of the external conditions in his social spaces and the development of present and imagined teacher identities.

Another aspect of Benjamin's stories of how he internalized the external voices in his social spaces is how he negotiated the disconnect between the beliefs developed within his past experiences and ideologies in the U.S. educational system he was in at the moment. To begin with, Benjamin shared his observation of how some of his ELLs' parents viewed education.

> I was raised to view education as my top priority. But, what I see here is [that] some parents have the same view but there [are] a lot of them [other parents who hold different perspectives about education] because [of] I would say economic inequality… [These parents and their children] have not had positive interactions with the system. Therefore, I feel like that's why they have a negative view of schools.

Benjamin's belief about the significance of education was again greatly affected by his parents, both of whom were teachers, from an early age. He also noted that some parents from low SES families held different views of schooling than what he had developed from his experience. These different views could be attributed to the parents' lack of positive interactions with the educational system. In this experience, he perceived a disconnect between constructed self and the external conditions. Consequently, Benjamin actively

sought to negotiate the disconnect by reflecting on his interactions in different social spaces across time, i.e., with his parents and the children's parents.

Benjamin also demonstrated a deep understanding of the impact of social factors on parents' perceptions of and students' beliefs about education, which led to negative interactions between family and school. Then, he shared an example to illustrate his observation of the negative interactions.

> Schools have been failure factories, I think. Instead of just stimulating students, we have just been punishing them. Because it's always you know you break a rule here's your consequence, there's no real value of [doing so]. Because when I did something wrong, my mother would sit with me and say see this is what is wrong with what you're doing and how we can fix that, instead of just we just punish students and then you're done…We don't teach them how to fix the problem, because that is the [reason why] they keep making the same problem. For example, we have a lot of kids who hate writing or reading, because we have not taught them how to read effectively, therefore, of course, if you have a negative stimulation, you're not going to engage you're going to try to [passively] avoid it [the punishment]. If my students are late to class or someone forgot a pencil, how staying two hours after school is going to help them? Those are the issues I struggle with still.

In this example, Benjamin attributed students' negative interactions with the school to the overuse of punishment for misbehaviors. In his view, reinforcement such as positive stimulation and problem-solving skills are what needed to be taught to activate students' agency in learning. Such a belief was again rooted in his experience with a significant influencer, his mother, in his childhood when they tended to seek solutions to solve problems. To Benjamin, the negative learning experiences some teachers created led to the students' and parents' defensive mechanisms. Benjamin perceived this experience as a struggle

between the inner self and the external world, or between his beliefs and the common practices in the field. Such a struggle, to some extent, allowed him to reconstruct his teacher identity, or relational positions with students, especially those from low SES families.

Benjamin also noted that despite these negative voices, he always held a positive attitude toward his students.

> Again, I have no control of what goes outside [my classroom]…That [teachers' different attitudes toward ELLs] creates a huge range of expectations. [What I can do is] always… be ready for them, and having high expectations, and always be flexible.

Benjamin shared that he had no control over the students' experiences outside his classroom. In other words, Benjamin was aware of the different voices in the external world about ELLs, but he chose to enact his beliefs from his inner world to better support his students. In this example, Benjamin's process of internalizing the negative perspectives was to observe, reflect on, and then disregard them. Such a process highlighted another possible way to interpret the construction of his teacher identity. His lack of belongingness in a certain community of practice, i.e., reproducing the ideologies in this example, could be understood as a result of enactment of his self-defined relational position. Such a pattern of (non)participation in turn enhanced his perception of the relationship between the inner self and the external world, which consequently contributed to his teacher identity development.

Chapter Summary

With Whom, When, and Why

In this chapter, three through lines – *with whom* (interaction within social spaces), *when* (temporality), and *why* (rationality) – highlighted how Benjamin's teacher identity was constructed and reconstructed within his experiences.

To begin with, the interactions with significant influencers exemplified the impact of *with whom* on Benjamin's teacher identity. In particular, Benjamin's mother, an elementary special education teacher, played a significant role in the emergence and development of his teacher identity. For example, Benjamin's experience of helping his mother in her classroom at an early age enabled him to develop an imagined teacher identity even before entering a teacher preparation program. In addition, the positive learning atmosphere his mother created at home led to the early development of his bilingual proficiency, which later turned into his strong interest in being a language teacher. These interactions at an early age had a profound and lifelong influence on Benjamin, especially on the continual development of his ESL teacher identity

The second through line, *when (temporality),* underscored the relationship between Benjamin's experiences in past, present, and future (imagined) moments and the development of his teacher identity across time. A story that stood out from Benjamin's narratives exemplified how his career commitment, as a critical aspect of his teacher identity, was reinforced by the rewarding moments, such as the students' positive feedback on his teaching and their success in and outside the classroom. More specifically, Benjamin's willingness to stay in the teaching career could be interpreted as a result of the sense he made of past and present experiences. By internalizing the interactions with his students in the past and present, Benjamin developed a clear picture of who he desired to be in the future. Such a desire further contributed to the convergence of his present and imagined teacher identities. In another example, Benjamin's demonstrated his unique experience as a confident novice teacher. His familiarity with the classroom context at an early age enabled him to develop much confidence as a teacher and a strong teacher identity even before the beginning of his teaching career. Such an initial teacher identity played a significant role in how Benjamin negotiated and enacted his relational positions in his social spaces later in his teaching career.

The interplay between the continuity and interaction of Benjamin's teacher identity development was evident in his narratives. His participation in the communities of practice and negotiation of external voices in social spaces were greatly affected by his identities and beliefs developed within his past, present, and imagined experiences. The third through line, *why* (rationality), emerged in his narratives, especially those about how he critically reflected on his multilevel experiences across time and space. Benjamin's agency in internalizing the external voices, to a great extent, allowed him to determine who he was at the moment and desired to be in the future. In one example, Benjamin noted that he would not be influenced by his colleagues' negative attitudes toward students from low SES backgrounds. Such a self-defined relational position with his colleagues had led to his nonparticipation in a certain social space. One critical contributor to the development of Benjamin's agency in the construction of his teacher identity was again the interaction with a significant influencer, i.e., his mother, in the past. Benjamin's teacher beliefs and identity were profoundly influenced by his mother's positive teaching philosophy and practice. Consequently, he played an active role in the negotiation between the inner self and the external world, such as whether being involved in the conflicts between his colleagues or reproducing the ideologies about ELLs.

Benjamin's Explication of Identity

In addition to these three through lines, another aspect that stood out from Benjamin's narratives was his explication of the notion of identity, in which he demonstrated an awareness that understanding the concept benefited him as an ESL teacher. For example, Benjamin explained that he viewed identities as labels that were up to people's interpretations. The development of such a perspective was also rooted in Benjamin's past experiences. Benjamin had always been a hard worker, as a previous ESL learner and an NNES teacher, which allowed him to proceed further academically and teaching-wise. Benjamin believed and informed his students that diligence could lead to better outcomes,

which might consequently change how they are viewed by other people. This example illustrated Benjamin's awareness of identity development as a dynamic process, which he utilized in his own classroom to motivate his ELLs to overcome the challenges in learning and make sense of their own positions in different contexts.

In addition, Benjamin's years of experience with ELLs allowed him to understand that socio-cultural factors had created more challenges for his students. For example, the misconceptions some colleagues held about students from linguistically diverse backgrounds and low SES families might lead to negative interactions between children and school. In other words, Benjamin attributed his ELLs' defense mechanisms against the school to the labels some teachers created for their students. Nevertheless, as a result of Benjamin's insightful understanding of the notion of identity, he demonstrated a different way of interpreting ELLs' identities, In addition, he enacted a teacher identity as a game changer for his students by always holding high expectations and having hope for them. This example also highlighted the interplays between his teacher belief, identity, and teaching practice. Benjamin's teacher identity, at the core of these three aspects, was shaped by his teacher belief and reflections on his own and other teachers' practices. In turn, the construction, reconstruction, and deconstruction of his teacher beliefs and teaching practices were greatly impacted by his developing teacher identity.

CHAPTER SIX: YVETTE

Personal and Teaching Timeline

Born and raised on the border of Mexico and the United States, Yvette had many opportunities to learn English at a young age. In addition to the formal education of EFL courses received at school, she frequently traveled to the United States with her parents. As an advanced English language learner in high school, she applied for a BA in English language teaching at a public university in Mexico. With a bachelor's degree, she started working as a full-time college EFL instructor and then became a teacher educator for preservice teachers. After almost twenty years of college teaching, she decided to move forward in her career as a teacher educator and pursued master's and doctoral degrees in TESOL and applied linguistics in the United States. At the time of the study, Yvette was a faculty member at a public university in Mexico. She self-identified as an ESL teacher, teacher educator, and administrator.

A throughline guided Yvette's stories – she developed a clear career goal or a strong imagined identity of being an ESL teacher educator from a young age. In this chapter, I present findings and interpretations of Yvette's multilayered experiences following this throughline, which guided Yvette's ways of negotiating experiences across time and social spaces along her learning and teaching trajectories.

The Initial Formation of Yvette's ESL Teacher Educator Identity

The beginning of Yvette's stories, similar to other participants in this study, was about the initial formation of an ESL learner identity. Yvette first shared some of her early English learning experiences.

> When I was [growing] up, I always liked languages, and English in particular, we
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> used to travel for vacation to the United States because [our town] is on the border
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> with Arizona. I was aware that there are other languages… Every time [when] we

[were at] a hotel and [heard] someone speaking English, I would just go to them and talk to them… I remember that when I was very little, I remember going to the United States and just going to a store and [I would] choose the busiest aisle, so I could go through and say the few things I knew like "excuse me" and "sorry".

Yvette developed a positive language learner identity and awareness of linguistic diversity at a young age when her family frequently traveled to the United States. Although not explicated in her story, this experience could illustrate the interplay between the development and enactment of her language learner identity, and the external conditions. First, her interactions with external conditions, i.e., an authentic language learning environment, formed an initial language learner identity. Second, her willingness to actively seek opportunities to interact with people could be seen as a way of enacting her language learner identity. In addition, Yvette's enactment of her language learner identity represents her active investment in language learning, through which she received enjoyment within interactions between the inner self and the external world. Such a process, in turn, further reinforced her positive language learner identity. Another aspect that stood out from this example was Yvette's initial development of linguistic awareness at a young age. This linguistic awareness set up a solid foundation for the construction of her cultural awareness in her career, which will be discussed in a later section.

Moving on from her early, informal language learning experiences, Yvette noted her language learning did not progress as much in her second language classroom in a formal school setting.

But I was not studying [English] in school until when I went to a public secondary school, [which is] equivalent to the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades [in the American system], but there were only three classes of 50 minutes each week. The classes [language of instruction] were in Spanish… I liked it but I didn't really learn that

much…Also, I noticed that, when I was twelve [or] thirteen years old, all that the curriculum, or the syllabus, started with the verbiage and ended in the past tense…I cannot say I learned a lot…I didn't make progress.

Yvette's formal language learning contradicted her experience in the United States, an environment full of authentic language input. Her learning in the authentic environment enabled her to recognize some inadequacies (e.g., improper writing styles and use of tense) of the common EFL curriculum in middle school. It can be interpreted that Yvette's negotiations of these competing learning experiences impacted her teacher beliefs later in her career. In other words, Yvette's initial understanding of effective language learning practices opened a door for her later career, in which her ESL learner identity was transferred to teacher and teacher educator identity.

Furthermore, Yvette's initial language learner identity led to her motivation to seek additional language learning programs as a teenager.

You can enroll in language courses at the universities [in Mexico] as long as you are 15 years of age…At school I remember the activities were just translating some kind of reading…But at the same time when I was doing my high school I started taking EFL courses at [a public university on the U.S.-Mexico border, Mexico side]…I really wanted to learn… and I think I learned because there was more for communicative purposes; I had fantastic teachers – they were speaking English. The class was in English. I even took summer [language] courses. After I finished high school, I went to a summer language program at [a community college on the U.S.-Mexico border, U.S. side]…I was placed at the highest level of English language proficiency…

Yvette demonstrated confident language user and learner identities in her narratives. In this example, Yvette carried forward her negotiation of the positive and negative language

learning experiences in the past and reconstructed a language learner identity who was passionate about language learning. This reconstructed learner identity resulted in her investment in self-growth, or actively seeking other opportunities to improve her language proficiency. In addition to the positive impact of Yvette's early language learning experience, another factor that led to her additional investment in language learning was her life experience of living on the border. Although not explicated in her stories, the environment of cultural and linguistic diversity in the town on the U.S.-Mexico border provided Yvette with the possibility to seek additional language learning opportunities. The impact of this social space might be implicit, but it is hard to separate Yvette's language learner identity development from her interactions with these external conditions.

Yvette then mentioned that her experience in the summer English immersion program enabled her to become a more confident English speaker.

> I only took that summer [course in the United States], and that was when I started feeling more comfortable with English, because even though I had studied for two years at [a public university on the U.S.-Mexico border, Mexico side], I was not confident to speak. In that summer program I started developing more confidence in speaking and definitely more grammar and more reading and writing skills…And that same summer I applied to the English language teaching program…

This piece of Yvette's stories illustrated a significant moment in her language learning trajectory when she developed a confident ESL user identity out of her learner identity. The ESL user identity was a product of her participation in and negotiation of an authentic language-speaking environment, i.e., the summer language learning program in the United States. Moreover, the developed confident ESL user identity enable her to move forward to become a preservice ESL teacher.

When asked about other factors that led to her decision of pursuing a bachelor's degree in English language teaching, Yvette mentioned the impact of a clear career goal she developed at a young age.

I remember the first day we were in our (B.A. in English language teaching) program, they asked why you want to be an English teacher…I said because I want to teach others (how) to teach English…I was kind of clear on what I wanted…And if I wanted to be a teacher trainer, I had to do my B.A. in English language teaching.

Yvette demonstrated a strong imagined identity as a teacher educator, which guided her pathway toward becoming a preservice teacher, as she believed the only way to achieve her career goal was to pursue a bachelor's degree in English language teaching Based on the stories about her earlier language learning experiences, the formation of her imagined teacher educator identity can be interpreted as a result of her negotiations of experiences in her past. Namely, through reflections on experiences in different language learning environments, Yvette was aware of what and how she could contribute to advancing EFL teaching in Mexico. This example illustrated the relationship between Yvette's language learning experience, ESL learner identity development, and ESL teacher (or teacher educator) identity formation.

In addition, Yvette noted that her interactions with caring and supportive teachers had a profound impact on the further development of her imagined identities as an ESL/EFL teacher and teacher educator.

I had amazing teachers, amazing professors, who set really high the standards and [were] examples for all of us… That really made me more enthusiastic for the program. All the professors were so committed to education and their profession. They have transmitted it [the commitment] to the classes. For example, when they

would correct papers, they would give you like the why – this is the reason why this

was not correct. That way you could really learn.

Similar to other participating teachers in this study, Yvette's initial teacher identity formation

was, to a great extent, influenced by her internalization of her role models' (i.e., her

professors in the teacher education program) teaching beliefs and practices. In this example,

the teacher educators in Yvette's undergraduate program all had high expectations and

provided constructive feedback on her work. The interactions between these external

conditions and Yvette's career goal of becoming an ESL teacher educator led to further

development of her ideal self-image of what a good teacher educator should be. This piece of

Yvette's stories again highlighted the interplay between her present experience and the

development of future identities.

Yvette's Developing Professional Identities

Another aspect that stood out from Yvette's narratives was her developing professional

identities as an ESL teacher, teacher educator, and administrator. In this section, I present 1)

how Yevette's professional identities were negotiated and further developed within and across

time and social spaces and 2) the interplays between her identities as an ESL teacher, ESL

teacher educator, and administrator.

To begin with, Yvette shared her first classroom teaching experience. She mentioned

that a university requirement for all undergraduate students was to complete specific hours of

social service. Therefore, she opted to teach EFL to a group of indigenous ELLs in Mexico,

aiming to fulfill the university requirement and enhance her teaching skills.

> I was really happy [that] I was invited to teach a group of Yaqui students. They are
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> from an indigenous group here in Mexico. I was their teacher for one year. I was
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> doing what we call social services. Here in Mexico, that is something that everybody
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> who is enrolled in public universities [has to do]. [It] was a great experience. They

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[the Yaqui students] were amazing. They were there every day at seven in the

morning. They really wanted to learn. That's how I started teaching before I

completed my bachelor's degree.

As a preservice teacher, Yvette was invited to teach EFL to Yaqui students. One piece of her

motivation for participating in this social service program was to fulfill the requirements of

her undergraduate program. As a result, this experience allowed her to further develop her

awareness and understanding of cultural diversity and the needs of ELLs from traditionally

underrepresented backgrounds. In addition, the students' diligence in learning, as an external

condition in her social space, contributed to the development of her enjoyment of teaching

and career commitment. Similar to other participants in this study, students' commitment to

learning enabled Yvette to construct a positive teacher image. This example also illustrated

the positive influence of the additional requirements in Yvette's teacher preparation program

on the formation of her present and imagined teacher identities.

Yvette moved on and shared another service experience that she participated in during

and after her undergraduate program.

I was working for a non-profit [organization], the Mexican TESOL [Teaching English

to Speakers of Other Languages], where I got to know another great friend. She was

my teacher at some point and she invited me to work for the Department of Education

in the English program for elementary and preschools. That [was] what I had

wanted… She invited me to do teacher training and material design and teacher

observations, so I could help other teachers.

In this example, Yvette's interactions with a significant influencer, i.e., a teacher and friend,

illustrated the interplay between her external conditions and teacher identity development. To

begin with, Yvette's imagined ESL teacher and teacher educator identities, developed from

her past experiences, guided her decision to actively participate in a non-profit professional

organization, namely the Mexican TESOL. In addition, her involvement in Mexican TESOL provided her with opportunities to interact with other professionals in the field, creating the possibility of participating in a different social space. Consequently, her participation in the new social space initiated further development of her professional identities as an ESL teacher and teacher educator. Furthermore, her interaction with the significant influencer in the social space enabled her to move forward toward her ultimate career goal and imagined identity as a teacher educator. Therefore, viewing Yvette's professional identity development from the dimensions of continuity and interaction provided additional lenses to understand her decision-making and career development.

In addition, Yvette responded to how her involvement in the administrative work in the Department of Education in the English program for elementary and preschools contributed to the development of her ESL teacher and teacher-educator identities.

> I know what it [the policy] implies and that some things [the policies] don't look the way they look. As a teacher, I am only getting one side, but I don't really know what's behind it- what might be a rationale. So I stop and think before anything…. When some decisions are made [by the policy makers], I try not to rush to the conclusion or [feel] like they are doing everything wrong. For example, when I was working for the English program for elementary and preschools, someone asked me why they were doing everything wrong. [I told them] it is a different time [now]. It was a different circumstance that [the policy] was happening. It doesn't mean I always agree with the administration, but I tend not to over-criticize.

In this example, Yvette's experience of working as an administrator enabled her to develop an understanding of the policy-making process, as one of the many external conditions that create expectations of an ESL teacher's role. In other words, this experience allowed her to view the traditionally defined power structure in the field of education from a unique

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perspective. Consequently, her internalizations of the top-down power structure possibly involved the meaning-making process, rooted in her past experiences and the construct of her belief system, of the policies made and decisions implemented.

Another factor that stood out from this piece of Yvette's stories was the change in her ' perceived relational position with the significant influencer. When Yvette first participated in the Mexican TESOL, she enacted a learner identity as an emerging scholar in a professional organization and thus she considered the significant influencer as a teacher at that point. The accumulation of her experience led to an evolved relational position with the significant influencer. Yvette's account of the developing relationship with the significant influencer from mentorship to friendship, to some extent, reflected her identity development of herself as a more experienced scholar. This example illustrated that Yvette's identity evolved within an interaction with an individual over time, with the change of perceived power relationship. Another aspect that highlighted Yvette's ESL teacher identity development was her willingness and desire to participate in other professional development programs to pursue additional certificates.

> I took a couple of certification courses. One was the Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English …and the other one is the Certificate for Teaching English as a Foreign Language. I also have one that is more of a [certificate] in methodology, the RASSIAS method with the RASSIAS center in Dartmouth…I have to admit that I have almost always been a part of [certificate programs] …because I have not paid for them…Some institutions, mostly the [university I currently work at], they [provided] financial support to do this. That doesn't mean I was not committed to it. I was always interested in learning more for me and for my classes. I also wanted to share with other teachers…I always have the desire of knowing more so I can share with others.

This piece of Yvette's stories underscored the intersectionality between her inner self and external conditions, especially the impact of departmental/institutional support on her professional identity development. As an ESL teacher and teacher educator, Yvette constantly sought opportunities to engage with the current trend of ESL teaching practices so she could share her learning with her colleagues and students. As a faculty member, the financial support she received from her university made it possible to approach the goal of further learning and professional growth. The examples of Yvette's participation in professional organizations and professional learning programs highlighted the influence of external conditions (e.g., a significant influencer in her social spaces and support from the departmental/institutional levels) on her investment in teaching and professional growth.

Furthermore, Yvette shared another significant moment in her career trajectory – getting admitted into a master's program at a public research university in the Southwestern United States.

> In 2010, I was accepted into the MA TESL [Teaching English as a Second Language] program. Because the university I work at offers scholarships for people who want to further their education, I applied for that. When I was there, I [was] so lucky that I had amazing teachers. I was a full-time student… but the summer of 2011, there were summer courses at the Program in Intensive English, and I got a position as a halftime instructor. That's how I started teaching English as a second language [in an English-speaking country] … After that [my master's degree] I realized if I wanted to continue growing professionality, I had to grow academically so the only option was to do a Ph.D. That's how I started my Ph.D in Applied Linguistics.

This piece of Yvette's stories demonstrated two critical factors that initiated her journey of pursuing her master's degree, i.e., the external support from her university and her ideal image of self as an ESL teacher educator. Furthermore, due to Yvette's clear image of who

she desired to be, she continued to pursue a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics. This example underscored how her imagined identity guided her decision-making along her learning and professional growth trajectories. In addition, Yvette frequently noted in her narratives that she had amazing teachers in different stages of her educational experience, which highlighted the impact of caring teachers in her social spaces on the further development of a positive professional identity.

Another aspect that stood out from Yvette's narratives was the development of her research interest during the Ph.D. program.

My dissertation was in terms of how a narrative intervention in EFL contexts in public school would help sixth graders improve their speaking…I was invited by someone to be her research assistant because she was developing different programs for English and Spanish [bilingual students]. Then I realized this particular program could be adopted and could be of help for sixth graders in elementary public schools [in Mexico]. I want to emphasize the [context] of public schools because they only have three sessions of 50 minutes a week. They don't have much time to develop speaking, so usually speaking is left aside…

This piece of Yvette's stories illustrated the interplay between her teaching, learning, and research experiences and her identity development. Her motivation to study the effectiveness of a narrative intervention in speaking was developed for two reasons. First, as an EFL teacher in Mexico, her knowledge of the context and inadequacies of the curriculum led to her actively seeking resolutions to support the students' language proficiency development. The development of her research interest can be also understood as closely related to teacher identity as a problem-solver to improve her students' learning experience and outcomes. In addition, in her experience as a research assistant, she explored the possibility to fix the inadequacies of the EFL curriculum in Mexico. This example again highlighted the

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interactive nature of experience as well as how these experiences shaped the development of Yvette's sub identities within and across social spaces.

Yvette moved on to share her other concerns about the insufficient emphasis on speaking and communication skills in the EFL curriculum in Mexican public schools.

I am very concerned, there [are] all [the efforts] put in by teachers and by the education department in terms of financial effort, but the students, [when they finish their elementary education], they are not able to speak, they don't feel confident…I realized that kids in public education, they go through many years of education, and they are not able to even say "I'm hungry." For them, it is also a sign of success to be able to say something and be understood in another language. That would give them more motivation to do other things – that would open doors…for like getting to know the world through a language.

Yvette demonstrated a deep understanding of the ELLs' learning needs of communication skills and established empathy with their emotional challenges in the language learning process. At one level, Yvette's understanding and prediction of the learners' struggles and academic needs were developed from observations in her teaching experience. At a deeper level, the formation of such empathy was rooted in her own language-learning experience and language-learner identity. As discussed earlier, Yvette's negative language learning experience in middle school and positive experience in an authentic language environment contributed to the initial development of her ESL teacher identity. In particular, benefiting from those positive language learning experiences, Yvette's language learner identity as a confident and fluent speaker of English resulted in the possibility of better knowing the world and becoming an EFL/ESL teacher in Mexico and the United States. She carried forward these experiences and her language learner and teacher identities from the early years, guiding her thinking and practice later in her career. Therefore, viewing Yvette's experiences

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and identity development along the time continuum provided another possible way of understanding her beliefs and decision-making at specific moments.

Yvette's ESL teacher identity was reinforced through the enjoyment received from rewarding moments in her career. In particular, she shared three examples of these rewarding moments that enhanced her career commitment. The first example illustrated how Yvette's professional identity as an ESL teacher educator was reinforced through providing professional development workshops for teachers. She shared, "I have a greater responsibility of…sharing with others…Anytime when people invited me to do a workshop, I almost always say yes… That's definitely gratifying." In this example, Yvette demonstrated a strong motivation to share her expertise with other teachers. Rooted in her personality and past experiences, she perceived providing professional development workshops as a responsibility of herself as an ESL teacher educator. However, this responsibility was not a passive response to her duties or external conditions but was created by her intrinsic motivation, i.e., a strong desire to share. Consequently, she received enjoyment, which enhanced her identity as an ESL teacher educator.

The second and third examples highlighted the rewarding moments that reinforced Yvette's ESL teacher identity.

> Also, I remember see[ing] [students'] faces when they understand something, it's just something you cannot get on a paycheck… They [would] open their eyes widely and they said, "I got it" or "I understood something" – I made a difference. Also, when you receive this message once in a while that says, "oh you were my teacher and I really enjoyed this and this."… I really enjoyed having people become less afraid of learning a language or becoming more comfortable for learning, either the language or the culture, or learning something that contributes to their well-being and their own growth. It just makes my day in the teaching profession.

Similar to other participants in this study, Yvette's career commitment grew stronger when her students made progress in learning. Her internalization of this external condition was exemplified in her account of the impact of her teaching on student learning. For instance, Yvette proudly shared that her teaching made a difference in students' learning outcomes which "contributed to their well-being and own growth." Additionally, Yvette's career commitment was reinforced by the ongoing connections with students outside instructional settings, especially when she received thank-you messages from the students. These external voices were students' responses to Yvette's teaching, allowing her to develop clearer images of who she was at the moment and desired to be in the future. Another aspect of Yvette's stories was about how the voices around her shaped her ESL teacher identity. She mentioned that the positive feedback on her teaching reinforced her confidence as a teacher.

> I guess I have a good reputation because I always look for opportunities to learn like [participating in] innovative projects. You gain respect because of your work. That's what I believe in. My students were very respectful. They were always like – oh that's a professor or that's a teacher.

This example illustrated another critical factor that contributed to the reinforcement of Yvette's career commitment, which was driven by the respect she received from students. She believed that her efforts of continuous learning and diligent work led to positive feedback in her social spaces. Positive feedback, as external conditions, in turn, reshaped the way how she saw herself as a teacher.

This piece of Yvette's narratives underscored the interplay of her beliefs, practice, and teacher identity development. To begin with, her beliefs and identity, rooted in the meanings she made of her past experiences, guided her practices. Her practices, as ways of enacting her beliefs and identities, reshaped the external conditions in her social spaces, which, in turn, contributed to the further development of her teacher identity. In addition, Yvette's account

of students' respect provided another possible way of viewing power, or her relational positions with students, as a positive contributor to her identity development. In other words, her perceived relational position with students was a product of her negotiation between her hard work (the inner self) and the external conditions, which positively affected how she saw herself as an ESL teacher.

Navigating Transcultural Experiences

One focus of Yvette's stories was the intersections of her transcultural experiences. As an English language teacher who had taught in both EFL and ESL contexts, her teacher identity was greatly impacted by how she negotiated these mostly dissonant experiences. In particular, her professional identity development process involved negotiating the divergent common teaching practices and collectively constructed expectations of a language teacher's role in these contexts. To begin with, Yvette responded to the question about what transcultural experiences had shaped how she saw herself as a language teacher. She noted a significant change in the context when she first taught in a U.S. ESL classroom, which contradicted what she believed was good teaching practice in Mexico.

> Back then, [when I started teaching in Mexico], the students were expecting me to speak Spanish…They were not used to listening to me speak English all the time in class…I would [speak English first], show them a picture, explain with other words, or give them many examples. And then, if nothing worked, I could use the first language because we shared it. When I [taught] in the Program in Intensive English [in the United States], people were expecting me to speak English all the time because we didn't share a language…They [the students] were speakers of Arabic, Japanese, Chinese…That was a shift.

This example illustrated Yvette's teaching practice in a college EFL classroom in Mexico where she utilized both English and Spanish as the languages of instruction for English

language teaching. The effectiveness of this practice can be understood from three aspects. First, in the students' prior English language learning experience in secondary school, as discussed in a previous section, Spanish was the primary language of instruction. To a great extent, the use of Spanish could connect to her students' prior learning experiences. This practice was a decision after internalizing the external conditions, or the students' expectations. Second, from the perspective of additive bilingualism, the use of both languages could help students reach their second language learning goals by activating and utilizing the students' first language. Third, Yvette's use of visual aids provided comprehensible input for second language learners to activate their already developed language meaning systems that are, in most cases, universal across different languages. This simple teaching practice reflected Yvette's identity as a supportive and knowledgeable ESL teacher committed to fostering student learning by seeking and applying optimal teaching strategies.

On the other hand, Yvette perceived a different expectation in an ESL classroom in the United States, where her students did not share the same first language as her. As a result, she solely used English as the language of instruction because it was hardly possible to explain concepts in Spanish to her ESL students from around the world. Although not explicated in Yvette's narratives, the change of the common teaching practices in English language classrooms created a challenge to renegotiate her expected role as an ESL teacher.

She moved on to share some examples of her interactions with ESL students' diverse cultural norms in the U.S. ESL classroom. She noted, "I realized I was not aware of the cultural issues. In Mexico, they are not even an issue. For example, putting them to work together, males and females, in Mexico it's not a big deal. But there were Arabic speakers…" Having completed teacher preparation in Mexico, Yvette was not prepared to work in a culturally diverse classroom in the United States. As a result, she encountered a challenge

working with students from other countries of origin who held divergent cultural beliefs. This challenge made her rethink what effective teaching strategies, especially grouping configurations, should be implemented in her classroom.

In addition, Yvette shared that her ESL students' different writing systems in their first languages resulted in the further development of her teaching beliefs and practices.

I also gave them a test in a format that they were not expecting…They were students who were in the United States for the first time ever…For Arabic students they write from right to left, and Japanese students write from up to down, so they were not used to crossword puzzles. I thought it was going to be a very simple activity, which turned out to be very complicated. So I was like wait a minute – there is a cultural aspect I need to be careful and consider when I plan my lessons…I cannot go and impose my own culture…so I encourage that it's okay to be different.

Although Yvette had many years of language teaching experience in Mexico, she was unfamiliar with the student population in the new setting. Yevette was surprised when the commonly used crossword puzzle activity was a challenge for many of her ESL students practicing different writing systems. This experience allowed her to become more open-minded towards different cultural norms and develop an awareness of understanding the students' prior experiences.

Additionally, Yvette gave another example of how ESL students' belief systems, rooted in their cultures and religions, affected her practice, beliefs, and identity.

One time, I was explaining something related to evolution in the reading, like Darwin's evolutionary theory. In Spanish, we have the same word – evolución. Students from Arabic-speaking countries don't see that in their school classes…because of religion. The students were like are you trying to tell us that we come from monkeys…I was a woman trying to explain something so I have to

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careful… I was like I was in a big trouble here…In the end I said we are all entitled to an opinion… I told them this is just what the word means…[I also said to the students] I really like you and the students were like oh teacher we like you too.

This piece of Yvette's stories exemplified a common challenge for many ESL teachers – to resolve the conflicts between the belief system behind a specific concept in the English language and students' cultural or value systems, such as the origin of humans in this example. Noticeably, Yvette explicitly mentioned her gender identity as a woman when working with Arabic students in a U.S. ESL classroom. One possible interpretation was her perceived power relationship between herself as a woman and the external conditions. In other words, her account of her gender identity, in this case, can be attributed to her internalizations of the socially constructed expectations of a female teacher's role in American and Arabic cultures. This interpretation was, to some extent, evident in her experience when she thought she was in trouble. Consequently, she came up with two resolutions – educating the students that different explanations of human origin are opinions and enhancing the rapport with students to mitigate the conflict.

In these three examples, the disconnects between Yvette's past and present teaching experiences, at one level, led to her efforts to discover new teaching practices, reconstruct beliefs, and reshape teacher identity. Similar to many other NNES ESL teachers, Yvette's teacher identity struggle can be attributed to her unfamiliarity with the contexts in the U.S. education system. At another level, her efforts to close the gaps between her past and present beliefs and identities afforded further development of her teacher identity through a deeper understanding of cultural diversity in the classroom.

Despite Yvette's hard work in negotiating the disconnected cross-cultural teaching experiences, she mentioned that she "saw [herself] in the [U.S.] classroom the same as [how she] would see [herself] in Mexico, in terms of facilitating, to help [students] learn." Her core

professional identity as a teacher committed to supporting student learning guided the negotiation processes of her sub identities and multilevel experiences across time and social spaces. Her teaching practices, as enactments of her teacher identities, in turn, contributed to the further development of her core and sub identities. In conclusion, Yvette's experiences of navigating her cross-cultural experiences, guided by her core teacher identity, highlighted two unique aspects in the process of her professional identity development. First, Yevette enacted a professional identity as a teacher committed to creating an inclusive language learning environment by learning the cultural differences and providing accommodations for the students. Second, her perceived external conditions led to reconstructed power relationships between herself and students in her social spaces. These aspects again underscored the significance of understanding Yvette's professional identities by exploring how she negotiated experiences across time and space.

The NNES Status: Affordances and Constraints

Similar to other participants in this study, Yvette noted that her NNES status created opportunities and challenges for her identity development as an ESL teacher in the United States. To begin with, she shared how her English (as a second language) learning experience was transformed into her teaching belief and practice.

> I would say one positive aspect of us being second language speakers of English is that I think we feel what our students feel. We know the process that they are going through. We ourselves have gone through or are still going through [the process of language learning] because learning is forever. So, I can help you [the students]. We have developed some tools and different ways of explaining things [from our own language learning experience]. We have been interested in knowing why something is different, having a full understanding of what that is and then being able to explain it to others.

Yvette noted that her language learning experience allowed her to develop empathy with language learners' academic challenges. This experience also led to a better understanding of the rationales behind linguistic knowledge and language learning strategies, which informed her teaching practice. This piece of Yvette's stories also connected to her early language learning experience, in which she always desired to tutor her peers. In this process, she developed skills in explaining linguistic knowledge, which was transformed into her pedagogical skills later in her career. Noticeably, Yvette mentioned that she still possessed a language learner identity after many years of ESL teaching, suggesting the co-existence of her ESL learner, user (as previously discussed), and teacher identities. At the intersection of these identities was her commitment to supporting her ESL students by relating to and resolving their struggles in language learning.

Yvette moved on to share an example of the constraints created by her NNES status in her teaching in U.S. ESL classrooms.

> People are coming from other countries to learn English. They come and see someone who's not a native speaker of the language, so they think that you don't know what you are doing… So I think you really have to prove yourself – I can do it; I have studied for this; I have invested years of my life trying to understand the language. Having that anxiety of having to establish my [credibility made me think] ...I need to try my best. After [teaching] one or two classes, the confidence came back.

This piece of Yvette's stories exemplified the interplay between her inner self and external conditions in her ESL teacher identity development. To begin with, she encountered some external voices which doubted her qualifications to teach ESL due to her NNES status. The impacts of these external voices are twofold. On one hand, these external conditions led to an identity struggle of having to redefine who she was as an ESL teacher. On the other hand, at the intersection between her constructed self and these external conditions was her desire to

work harder in order to prove her capabilities as a successful ESL teacher. With the intention to reshape these external conditions, learning took place.

Yvette's Ideal ESL Teacher Identity

One focus of this study was to explore how Yvette's imagined ESL teacher identity was constructed within her past and present experiences. She responded to the question about her ideal ESL teacher identity by sharing a few expectations for her preservice teachers. These expectations, indeed, mirrored her desired self as an ESL teacher. This section highlights how her negotiations of experiences in the past and present led to her ideal ESL teacher identity of who she desired to be.

To begin with, Yvette mentioned at the core of her ideal ESL teacher image was the genuine enjoyment of being a teacher.

> First of all, you have to enjoy being a teacher, a teacher [for] students who may be very different from you, but still value what they bring into the classroom, because they are not empty, just coming to listen to what you have to say. They come with a whole background of things - experiences and ideas. You need to know that you are working with humans – we are different.

The formation of Yvette's imagined professional identity as a teacher enjoying and committed to supporting students from diverse backgrounds can be attributed to her internalizations of external conditions at two significant moments that were previously discussed. First, her educational experiences, including language learning and teacher preparation, involved interactions with supporting teachers and professors, which consequently created a positive ESL teacher image. This positive imagined teacher image developed in the past contributed to her constructing an ideal self as an educator passionate about teaching. Second, her teaching experiences in the U.S. ESL classrooms with culturally

and linguistically diverse students enhanced her understanding of valuing students' prior experiences and backgrounds.

Yvette moved on to share that an ideal ESL teacher is not only well-prepared with content and pedagogical knowledge but committed to learning for growth.

> You [need to have] the wisdom to share and to discover new things. You have to be clear of what you want to teach and share so you can be a resource for students. You have to be knowledgeable of different strategies that you can use to teach…and know some students need something in specific. You have to be willing to learn at the same time. While you are teaching, you have to be learning. It is indeed willing[ness] to learn something so [you] can improve to be a better teacher every time.

As previously discussed, throughout Yvette's career trajectories as an ESL teacher and teacher educator, she had been actively seeking professional growth opportunities. As a practitioner, she applied her learning through meaning-making of self and reflections on contexts and practices. The formation of her ideal imagined teacher identity was driven by her core teacher identity as an educator committed to supporting student needs. Therefore, she believed only through learning could she engage with the current trend of theories and practices in the field.

Yvette then shared an example illustrating how she enacted her ideal self, as a teacher always willing to learn, to foster her students' sense of belonging to the physical learning environment under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

> I teach a group of students who have never been to the university because of the pandemic, so I decided to take my laptop and give them a tour of the building, like this is how [the classroom] looks like from this side and this is where you can get your snacks…Even though they are not here, I think they need to feed that [they are] connected to the university.

This piece of Yvette's narratives illustrated that her ideal teacher image as a lifelong learner led to continuous adaptions of her practices to overcome challenges created by the changing world. In addition, Yvette mentioned that she was also taking "a course in technology to create videos with questions" in virtual classrooms. In these examples, Yvette was sensitive to her students' struggle of being isolated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, she actively sought resolutions, e.g., showing her students the physical structure of the learning environment and taking a course on educational technology, to foster students' learning and sense of belonging to the university while taking virtual classes.

In the cases of the two other participants in this study, there was often a dissonance between their present and ideal teacher identities. Yvette, on the other hand, demonstrated converging present and ideal teacher identities. One possible reason for this is that, with over twenty years of teaching experience, Yvette had reached her ideal self through negotiations of experiences and growth in practices and beliefs. Another aspect that stood out from Yvette's account of her ideal ESL teacher image was how her reflections on the process of her ESL teacher identity development were transformed into her expectations for her preservice teachers. The examples in this section again highlighted how one sub identity, (i.e. ESL teacher identity) contributed to the development and enactment of another (i.e. ESL teacher educator identity).

Chapter Summary

Yvette's pathways toward becoming an ESL teacher and career trajectories highlighted how she negotiated her unique experiences in the past, present, and future. In addition, across social spaces, her experiences and identities as an ESL teacher, ESL teacher educator, and administrator underscored the intersections of these sub identities. In this chapter, I described Yvette's multilevel experiences and professional identity development following three through lines – temporality, sociality, and rationality.

To begin with, across the time continuum, Yvette's past experiences played a critical role in the development of her present and imagined teacher identities. One unique aspect of Yvette's narratives was a clear ultimate career goal as an ESL/EFL teacher educator developed at a young age. Her reflections on her positive and negative language learning experiences initiated her desire to change the common EFL teaching practices. Her strong imagined identity as an ESL teacher educator guided most of her decisions made throughout her educational experiences, including language learning and teacher education. In other words, in her journeys as an ESL learner and ESL teacher, she carried forward her language learning experiences and the future identity developed in the past to make meanings of self at different moments across the time continuum.

Similar to other participating teachers in the study, Yvette also perceived some disconnected experiences when she switched to a different teaching context in the United States. To her, this transcultural experience was a learning experience for further growth as a teacher. For example, the different ESL classroom context in the United States enabled her to reflect on her constructed cultural beliefs. Consequently, she developed sensitivity to her ESL students' diverse needs, allowing her to better address the students' language and learning backgrounds. This example highlighted the impact of her negotiations of the dissonant experiences on her professional identity development.

The second through line, sociality, emphasized how Yvette internalized the external conditions within and across multiple social spaces. Yvette's identities in multiple social spaces, i.e., as an ESL teacher, teacher educator, and administrator, contributed to the development of one another, when she actively sought meanings of her practices and beliefs across social spaces. As an example, her experience in an administration position allowed her to rethink policies and the power structures in the educational system as a teacher. In addition, her professional identity development was greatly impacted by significant

influencers in her social spaces, such as her mentors, professors, friends, and students. One example that stood out from her interactions with the significant influencers in her social spaces was her diligent work as a teacher shaped individuals' impressions on her as a teacher, which, in turn, reshaped how she saw herself as a teacher.

The third through line, rationality, underscored that Yvette's ESL teacher identity was a rational process, in which she developed meaning systems of her relational positions between the inner self and the external world that worked best for her own situations. As an example, her commitment to supporting student learning mediated the process of closing the gaps between conflicting experiences. For example, the changes in student needs, in contexts such as a diverse U.S. ESL classroom and the virtual classroom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, motivated Yvette to seek solutions through continuous learning to better meet the students' expectations. In addition, Yvette demonstrated a unique way of interpreting the external conditions in her social spaces. As an example, she noted that other peoples' uncertainty about her competencies as an NNES ESL teacher created opportunities for further learning. As a result of her personal and professional growth, her teacher identity evolved.

The three throughlines highlighted Yvette's unique identity development process. At the intersection of her experiences along the time continuum and across social spaces was her core identity as a thinker and problem solver. This core identity guided her practices or her enactments of sub identities in multiple contexts. Furthermore, her efforts in negotiating the disconnected experiences and the competing external conditions in social spaces led to the further development of her professional identities. As an experienced ESL teacher and teacher educator, Yvette did not seem to demonstrate a strong desire of who wanted to be as a teacher in the future. Nevertheless, it was noticeable in her stories that her present self was a product of her imagined self constructed across social spaces in the past. Therefore, Yvette's language, cultural, learning, and teaching experiences again underscored the importance of

understanding her professional identity development from the three dimensions of continuity, sociality, and rationality.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I present how the three NNES ESL teachers' stories contribute to teacher identity research. Across the cases of the three teachers, the findings provide another way of understanding teacher identity. In particular, I discuss the importance of viewing teacher identity development as a rational process that involves teachers' negotiations of experiences across time and space. I offer implications for teacher educators and teacher education researchers to support the development of teacher identity for NNES ESL teachers. Furthermore, the findings in this study can be transferred to aide the identity development of teachers in other areas (and from different backgrounds). To conclude this chapter, I discuss the limitations of this study and directions for future identity research to further explore the complex process of teacher identity development.

Teacher Identity Development: A Rational Process

Identity, by its nature, is a product of human relationships. Previous works considered teacher identity development as a meaning-making process of who a teacher thinks they are in their social spaces (Yazan, 2019; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Coldron & Smith, 1999). These social spaces might range from interaction with an individual or a few individuals to participating in a much broader, collectively constructed community or society. However, a teacher's social spaces, i.e., relations a person has to others (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), can influence their conception of who they are only when internalizations and negotiations of the external conditions within and across these social spaces take place. In other words, experience contributes to teachers' identity development through their interpretations of relational positions (Coldron & Smith, 1999) rather than their observation of or attendance in contexts.

Therefore, teacher identity development is a rational process. Teacher selves are at the core of their identity development, linking their past, present, and future experiences across

social spaces. The idea of rationality neither focuses on whether identity development guarantees reasonable beliefs or practices, as defined by other people nor suggests that identity development is an independent process (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). Rather, teachers' rationally positioning themselves in social spaces may result in the development of belief systems that work best for their situations at specific moments. In this study, viewing teacher identity development as a rational process created opportunities to understand the participating teachers' NNES status as a product of their negotiations of external voices. Teachers' agency, or rationality, in defining what the NNES status meant to them was rooted in their selves developed in past and present experiences. Thus, the NNES status is not a collectively constructed category but a conception of who they are as teachers in relation to the external expectations of their roles as ESL teachers.

The NNES Status: Negotiation of External Conditions

Previous studies suggested that NNES ESL teachers' NNES status could create both constraints and affordances in their professional identity development. Examples of the constraints included their disrupted continuity of experience, marginalization and self-marginalization, and the socially constructed preferences of NES ESL teachers' roles (Huang & Varghese, 2015; Swearingen, 2019; Lindahl & Yazan, 2019; Park, 2012; Phillipson, 1992; Llurda & Huguet, 2003; Amin, 1997). Nevertheless, other studies pointed out that NNES ESL teachers' transcultural teaching and learning (especially language learning) experiences allow them to better understand and predict ESL students' academic, social, and emotional needs (Medgyes, 1994; Swearingen, 2019, Calafato, 2019, Braine, 2018). Therefore, they are more likely to develop a deeper understanding of a multicultural learning environment that fosters the learning of students from divergent backgrounds (Jiang et al., 2014). Although these typical constraints and affordances in the literature informed the framework of the study, the three participating teachers' belief systems guided their unique ways of negotiating

what the collectively constructed voices about their NNES status meant to them. By reporting

on these teachers' teaching and life trajectories, this study highlights their ways of

interpreting and enacting their NNES status.

The Development of Identities as NNES Teachers

The three teachers' stories showcased that the conceptions of their NNES status, as a

part of their personal and professional identities, were developed through their interactions

with external conditions. These external conditions, as defined by Gee (2000), are "the very

forces that constitute" (p. 102) their perspectives on identity. The participants' identities as

NNES teachers seemed to be labels assigned to them, but what, indeed, mattered was their

negotiations of how these identities were recognized. This section showcases the

commonalities and disparities of how the three teachers' identities as NNES teachers were

constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed.

Language Learning Experience

The three participating teachers' accounts of their early language learning experiences

demonstrated how their identities as successful English language learners at an early age

positively contributed to the initial formation of their ESL teacher identities. Alara's

engagement with authentic language learning materials in a teacher training high school

allowed her to experience the communicative approach rather than the grammar-translation

method as implemented in many other EFL settings. Benjamin's mother, an elementary

school teacher, encouraged him to start reading bilingual Spanish and English bilingual books

at an early age, allowing him to develop an identity as an advanced language learner

compared to his peers. For Yvette, her frequent travels to the United States as a child

provided her with opportunities to interact with native speakers of English, enabling her to

develop an initial understanding of authentic language input and effective language learning

strategies. The formation of the three teachers' identities as successful English language

learners were rooted in their unique pathways, but these identities were all products of their interactions with external conditions. They carried forward these identities to their later teaching, learning, and social experiences.

From an identity perspective, these experiences should not be considered as the cause of these teachers' career choices, as investigating the connections between a teacher's past experiences and their teacher identity does not lead to a conclusion about the cause-effect relationship. However, the participating teachers' stories resonated with Ellis' (2006) study suggesting that ESL teachers' second language learning experiences (including formal, informal, childhood, and adult) are potent resources in forming their knowledge and beliefs about language teaching. Moreover, teacher knowledge, belief, and practice possess natural connections with teacher identity, as the former can be viewed as both contributors to and ways of enacting teacher identity. Therefore, the three teachers' stories indicated the possibility of investigating ESL teachers' early language learning experience to understand their knowledge, belief, practice, and identity development at the moment.

(Dis)Continuity of Experiences

The contribution of the three teachers' early language learning experiences to their professional identity development resonates with the scholarly works about the continuity of experiences and identities (Dewey, 1986; Yazan, 2019; Farrell, 2011; Luehmann, 2007; Darvin & Norton, 2015). These works pointed out that identity development is a continual process that links a teacher's past, present, and future experiences. In this section, I discuss how the participating teachers' identities were developed within their negotiations of past experiences. The future dimension in identity development will be discussed in a later section to highlight the interplays between identity and career commitment.

Epistemic Clashes. NNES ESL teachers' transcultural and transnational teaching, learning, and social experiences across time tend to result in epistemic clashes between the Western and non-Western systems (Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). In Alara's case, the Turkish education system considers education as teaching spaces in which the socially constructed reality should not be challenged. Her educational experience in the United States encouraged her to rethink the real meaning of knowledge and authentic language teaching practices. The gap between these seemingly disconnected, or even competing, experiences were closed through Alara's active negotiation of who she was and wanted to be as a teacher. For Yvette, her teaching experience in a U.S. classroom with newcomer ESL students from a wide range of countries of origin made her rethink her own cultural values and understanding of diversity in the classroom. This epistemic clash initiated further development of her core teacher identity and the sub identity as an ESL teacher in U.S. classrooms.

Benjamin's disconnected teaching experiences were exemplified in his accounts of students' strong desire to learn in Costa Rica and his ELLs' defensive mechanism against learning in U.S. ESL classrooms. He attributed this defensive mechanism to their negative interactions with the education system. At the intersection of these competing teaching experiences was Benjamin's strong core identity as a teacher committed to supporting student learning. This core identity allowed him to take further actions to approach the students and their families to build a rapport and remedy their negative attitudes toward education.

The three teachers' stories highlight a commonality that their transnational teaching or learning experiences created epistemic clashes that led to identity struggles (Lindahl and Yazan, 2019). More importantly, their unique ways of closing the gaps between these transnational experiences showcased that they carried forward the meanings of self and external conditions made in the past to their teaching trajectories along the way. In other words, their negotiations of the disconnected past and present experiences led to the continual

development of their teacher identities. Teachers' active reflections on and meaning-making of experiences across time hold the competing experiences in tension with each other. Therefore, experiences at different moments do not naturally link to one another. Rather, it is teachers' negotiations that make these disconnected experiences connected.

Marginalization and Self-Marginalization. The three teachers' stories resonate with studies indicating that NNES ESL teachers tend to feel marginalized, although they possess the willingness to articulate and contribute to the community (Swearingen, 2019; Park, 2012). The three teachers' stories showcased that marginalization is a socially constructed external voice, while self-marginalization is a teacher's response to the social spaces through their internalization and reproduction of these external voices. The distinction between the ideas of marginalization and self-marginalization highlights the interrelationships between external conditions, teacher identity development, and practices within and around educational settings.

Internalizing External Voices

The three teachers' NNES ESL teacher identity development was never through passively receiving the external voices, including the expectations of an NNES ESL teacher's role from individuals surrounding them and the collectively constructed ideologies. Instead, the participating teachers made sense of these expectations and actively sought their relational positions with the external condition. Based on the previous discussions, the NNES status needs to be considered as one of the teacher sub identities that affect the reconstruction of one another. The three teachers' stories showcased their unique meaning-making processes of how their language backgrounds were recognized, which further impacted the development of their core and teacher sub identities.

In Alara's stories, one significant moment in which her NNES status reshaped her ESL teacher identity was her teaching experience in South Korea, an EFL context. She

experienced an identity struggle, as she recounted, when the South Korean government denied her work visa application due to her NNES status, despite the fact that a local university hired her as an EFL instructor. This experience led to her rethinking her capabilities in teaching English as a second/foreign language, and thus actively seeking support from and connections with other NNES ESL teachers who had the same experience. These interactions allowed her to redefine what her NNES status meant to her and rebuild confidence in her capabilities of English language teaching. This discriminatory ideology she encountered in an EFL setting impacted her decision-making in her career and life trajectories, such as moving back to the United States, where the higher education context is more friendly to ESL teachers from all backgrounds.

For Yvette, her NNES status was recognized by individuals in her social spaces, especially newcomer ESL students in the United States, who tended to doubt her qualifications to teach ESL. Her internalizations of these external voices led to her additional investment in teaching and professional growth to prove that she was a capable ESL teacher. Benjamin's interactions with other individuals' recognition of his language backgrounds were guided by his philosophical belief, as explicated by him, that these seemingly discriminatory labels are up to people's (including the self and other people's) interpretations. Like Yvette, Benjamin was a hardworking teacher who believed diligence could result in better outcomes. These outcomes could reshape the external conditions, such as the stereotypes about his language background. For Benjamin and Yvette, the reshaped external conditions, in turn, led to the further development of their teacher identities.

Noticeably, the teachers' stories showcased two patterns when they interacted with the external conditions at two levels – the immediate or direct social spaces at a micro level and ideologies at a macro level. Alara felt powerless in her interaction with the government policies and thus questioned her own capabilities. On the other hand, Yvette's and Benjamin's

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internalizations of students' expectations of their roles as ESL teachers resulted in their efforts to reshape the external conditions surrounding them. Therefore, teachers' conceptions of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) play a vital role in the construction of relational positions within their social spaces. Furthermore, teachers' negotiations of power could reconstruct their belief systems that guide their ways of enacting their teacher identities.

Enactment of NNES ESL Teacher Identities

The mutual impact between the participating teachers' inner self and the external conditions in identity development highlighted the complex interplay between their teacher identity and practice (Wenger, 1998; Enyedy et al., 2005). Therefore, teacher practice, as a way of identity enactment, should be seen as more than an outward action or a response to external conditions. At one level, teachers' available choices in teaching practice, as a part of their teacher identities, come ready-packaged in their ways of thinking (Coldron & Smith, 1999). At another level, the external world's recognition and feedback on teachers' practice might lead to the deconstruction and reconstruction of their professional identities. This section discusses examples standing out from the three teachers' stories that illustrate the mutual impact between their NNES ESL teacher identities and teaching practice.

Cultural Congruence . The three teachers' stories showcased that the enactments of their NNES teacher identity can build and enhance positive relationships with ELLs (Calafato, 2019). This finding suggests the importance of understanding the concept of cultural congruence (Caspers, 2019) in order to unpack the relationship between NNES ESL teachers' identity enactment, teaching practice, and student learning.

According to Caspers (2019), cultural congruence refers to a connection between the teacher and students due to their shared "experiences, values, traditions, norms, languages, and understandings of systems of power" (p. 793). Although the participating teachers in this study did not always share the same cultural background with their students, the teachers'

transcultural, language learning, and immigration experiences allowed them to better relate to students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Alara and Yvette both noted how their language learning experiences were transformed into their classroom practices, which helped reinforce positive relationships with their students. Alara frequently used her own language learning experiences as examples to motivate her students. As a result, this teaching practice mitigated the learners' affective filters in language learning. Yvette's language learning experience allowed her to develop the ability to quickly understand her students' challenges in a U.S. ESL classroom, leading to her adaptations of teaching practices to meet the students' needs and prior experiences. For Benjamin, his transcultural experiences enabled him not only to understand his students' academic needs but also to interpret their behaviors in school through a sociocultural lens. For example, he attributed his students' reluctance to actively engage in the classroom to their previous negative interactions with the education system that undervalued their cultural and social experiences.

From an identity perspective, cultural congruence highlights how the participating teachers enacted their professional identities developed within their past sociocultural experiences to meet the student' enacted cultural identities. Furthermore, teachers' perceptions of their ELLs' cultural identities can be understood as results of their internalizations of external conditions, i.e., students' expectations. For NNES ESL teachers, the idea of cultural congruence suggests that there might be less dissonance between their inner selves (constructed in prior language learning and cultural experiences) and the social space (where the learners have some common needs in language learning). Therefore, although NNES ESL teachers' transcultural or transnational experiences are usually seen as factors that cause identity struggles, their experiences in diverse linguistic and cultural

contexts may help accelerate the process of closing the gaps between their past experiences and voices in the new social space, e.g., an ESL classroom in a different culture.

Reshaping External Conditions. A factor contributing to ESL teacher identity formation is their teaching experiences, especially knowledge obtained from academic discourse practices (Ahmadi et al., 2013). The three teachers' stories exemplified how their professional identities were constantly shaped through their reflections on their teaching practices. More importantly, their teaching trajectories highlighted how their teaching practice, in unique ways, shaped the external conditions. Furthermore, these reshaped external conditions, directly or indirectly, led to the further development of their teacher identities. Therefore, it is crucial to view a teacher's interaction between their inner self and external world as more than a simply inward or outward action. Instead, the mutual impact between teachers' inner selves and their external worlds underscores the interplays between the constantly changing teacher identity, teaching practice, and external conditions.

For example, Benjamin's identity as a teacher and problem solver committed to fostering his ELLs' learning led to his interactions with the Hispanic parents, through which the parents' negative impressions of the education system were reshaped. Consequently, the ELLs' attitudes toward him as a teacher in the education system changed. This reshaped external condition reinforced his teacher identity as an advocate for his ELLs. In Yvette's case, with the intention to reshape the external voices that doubted her capabilities of teaching, she worked extra hard to prove herself. As a result of her efforts to close the gaps between her self-image and how she was seen in her social spaces, further learning and identity development took place.

NNES Status as a Teacher Sub identity

In this section, I discuss the ways in which the participating teachers negotiated their experiences that contributed to the development of their NNES status. Despite the fact that

the NNES status is a product of teachers' internalizations of external conditions in and outside of educational contexts, I emphasized how their NNES status impacted the teachers' professional identity development as well as their teaching practice. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I consider the NNES status as one of the teacher sub identities that influence the development of another. Furthermore, these sub identities contribute to the development of the teacher core identity that is more uniform across educational contexts (Gee, 2000). Hence, in addition to exploring the formation of their NNES status and its impact, I aim to unpack how these teachers' unique social, educational, and teaching experiences shape their teacher core identities and other teacher sub identities. In the next section, I discuss how these teachers' core identities and other sub identities were shaped in different social spaces along their teaching and life trajectories.

The Development of Teacher Identity: Continuity and Sociality

The findings of this study resonate with other scholarly works indicating that teacher identity development involves a teacher's negotiations of experiences across time and social spaces (Yazan, 2017; Beijaard et al., 2004; Cooper & Olson, 1996; Darvin & Norton, 2015). More specifically, a teacher's ongoing construction of the meaning of self in relation to the external voices occurs along the time continuum. Viewing teacher identity development from the two dimensions of continuity and sociality leads to the discussion of the significant moments along their life and career trajectories and significant influencers in their social spaces. It is important to note that the two dimensions are interdependent as a teacher's identities at a specific moment are products of negotiations of the relational positions with individuals (especially the significant influencers) in their social spaces. In other words, teacher identity development involves their negotiations of experiences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) through which they construct the meanings of self and relationships with the external conditions from one moment to another.

In a previous section, I discussed one of the most influential past experiences that contributed to NNES ESL teacher identity development, that is, (successful) language learning experiences. This section discusses other moments and influencers that profoundly impacted their teacher core identities and other teacher sub identities that are not specifically related to language teaching or their NNES status. The teachers' stories about the significant moments and influencers in their life and career trajectories highlight the dynamic quality of teacher identity development. In other words, identity is constantly changing and transforming (Hall, 2000) across time and space. Again, these identity changes and transformations are not directly triggered by teachers' exposure to, observation of, or attendance in specific contexts. Rather, it is the meanings they make of the external conditions that contribute to the further development of identities. The length of experiences matters, but teachers' reflections on their experiences across time matter more. Therefore, experiences that make teachers think about the questions of who they were, are, and desire to be are more significant than others in studying their professional identity development. The participating teachers were at different career stages, with varied lengths of teaching and learning experiences. Despite this, the teachers' stories highlight two critical phases that impacted how they see themselves as teachers across the time continuum – early engagement in teaching and tutoring, and experiences as novice teachers.

Early Engagement in Teaching and Tutoring

One significant moment from the three teachers' past experiences that profoundly impacted the initial development of their teacher identities was their early interactions with their immediate family members (e.g., parents or siblings) who were teachers. Their interactions with these family members enabled them to become more familiar with the teaching profession. As a result of their families' influences, all three teachers, more or less, had tutoring experiences in which they volunteered to help their peers learn English or other

academic content. When asked why they decided to become a teacher, their responses seemed definite. For the three participants, being a teacher was their first and only career choice. This coincidence does not suggest that teachers are more likely to choose the profession because their family members are teachers. However, it is essential to note that their interactions with these family members at an early age contributed to their self-dialogue about who they desired to be. The idea of self-dialogue at a specific moment can be understood as a story the storyteller tells themselves about themselves (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) that is significant and leads to the construction of their identities. Therefore, identities developed from early experiences (sometimes long before their teacher education programs) might directly or potentially guide teachers' decision-making along their life and career trajectories.

Experiences as Novice Teachers

The three teachers' stories about their life and career trajectories exemplify the continual dimension of teacher identity development (Dewey, 1986; Darvin & Norton, 2015; Leuhmann, 2007; Farrell, 2011). Previous sections discussed the findings of their stories before the beginning of their teaching career. More importantly, this study aims to unpack the participants' identity change from novice to expert. The teachers' stories, in unique ways, demonstrated their professional growth over time.

Alara's identity as a novice teacher was heavily dependent on external conditions. In her teaching, she followed what other teachers were doing and what she was told to do. With the accumulation of her teaching experience, she started to develop her own belief system about effective teaching and carried this belief system to classrooms in different educational systems. In this process, further professional growth and identity development took place. In contrast, as Benjamin recounted, his first day of teaching was full of excitement. His identity as a confident teacher was developed before entering the career and impacted his decision-

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making and identity development throughout his teaching trajectory. Yvette's first teaching experience was with a group of diligent indigenous ELLs who desired to learn. This experience inspired her to become a teacher committed to supporting students from diverse backgrounds.

The three teachers' professional growth demonstrates how their identities are developed within their communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). In particular, their engagement in their social spaces shaped and reshaped their professional identities as reflective practitioners (Banegas et al., 2013). In addition, Wenger (1998) pointed out that teacher identity development involves their energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures. The teachers' stories highlight that teacher identity development is heavily influenced by external conditions at specific moments but is never an outward action to align the inner self with others' expectations. Instead, it is a meaning-making process of seeking relational positions between self and external conditions that work best for their own situations. Therefore, at the intersection of experiences across time and spaces is teachers' rationality in negotiating between the past, present, and future selves as well as actively defining who they are within their social spaces.

The Intersections of Experiences

Based on previous discussions, teacher identity development takes place at the intersections of experiences across the time continuum. More specifically, from an identity perspective, teachers' experiences shape their meaning systems about human relationships, or relational positions, which they carry forward from one moment to another. At another level, a teacher core identity might consist of multiple teacher sub identities constructed by their experiences in social spaces (Swennen et al., 2010). The three teachers' stories suggest that the development of sub identities are products of teachers' perceived power relationships in social spaces within and around educational settings. These teacher sub identities can impact

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the development of one another and lead to the further development of teacher core identities. This section discusses the interplays between the teachers' sub identities across social spaces in teaching contexts and how their other identities (those not directly developed in educational contexts) impact the construction of teacher core identity.

Teacher Sub Identities

Alara's stories about her professional growth showcased her affinity for external conditions in her teacher identity development. These external conditions include support from her colleagues, school administrators, and students. More specifically, her identity as a novice and unconfident teacher in the classroom was reshaped through interactions with her colleagues and school administrators' encouragement as well as students' positive learning outcomes.

For Benjamin, he encountered the challenge of the stereotypical voices that undervalued the capability of his ELLs in his interactions with some of his colleagues. These voices contradicted his developed identity as a teacher committed to supporting his ELLs, especially those from traditionally marginalized groups. The conflicts between the two sub identities constructed in different social spaces led to his decision to filter those negative voices. As a result, the meaning system he carried forward from the past was enhanced, and his teacher core identity was further developed.

Yvette's stories highlight her adaptability to meet student needs in different educational systems. In other words, her core identity as a teacher dedicated to fostering the learning of students from diverse backgrounds guided her teacher sub identities and teaching practices in Mexican and U.S. ESL classrooms. These sub identities, in turn, reshaped her teacher core identity. As an example, she was sensitive to her ESL students' divergent language backgrounds and made accommodations for them in her classroom. This experience

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enabled her to rethink the impact of her own cultural values on her teacher identity and student learning.

These stories suggest that teacher sub identities are developed through teachers' negotiations of their relational positions between self and others (Bulcholtz & Hall, 2005; Coldron & Smith, 1999). In other words, because of teachers' perceived power relationships in the interactions with different individuals (e.g., students and colleagues), they developed and enacted divergent sub identities. These interactions create multiple sub identities that may be conflicting, overlapping, or complementary (Saka et al., 2013). It is important to note that teachers' rationality guides the process of negotiating these, sometimes dissonant, sub identities. More specifically, teacher identity development is a rational process in which teachers seek meanings of and responses to the external conditions that work best within their situations.

For example, Alara's affinity for external conditions can be attributed to her constructed self as a novice teacher with less power. This self-image was developed through her interactions with people in her social space and the experiences she carried forward from the past. On the contrary, Benjamin was a veteran teacher at the time of the study. His teaching experience allowed him to construct a strong meaning system that led to his affinity for the inner self in his teacher identity development. Therefore, the idea of rationality does not aim to suggest that teacher identity development is a completely autonomous or independent process. Instead, the continual and interactive dimensions suggest that such rationality is indeed a product of teachers' experiences across time and social spaces.

Identities in Other Contexts

In addition to the teacher sub identities developed in teaching contexts, the teachers' stories highlight the ways in which their identities constructed in other contexts impact how they see themselves as teachers. According to Ajayi (2011), the personal histories teachers

bring into the classroom are a critical component of the classroom's sociocultural context. These personal histories are connected to their identities in divergent social settings. This section discusses some of these settings that stood out from the participants' narratives, including their experiences in teacher education programs, roles as family members, and memberships of their communities and society.

In Alara's and Yvette's cases, their identities as students in teacher education programs impacted the initial and further development of their professional identities. The positive teacher image Alara developed as a student in a teacher training high school greatly influenced her teaching philosophy and teacher identity in her early career. Likewise, Yvette's interactions with caring professors in her undergraduate and graduate programs made the identity change possible, from a student being supported by her teachers to a teacher committed to supporting student needs.

In addition, identity development takes place at the intersections between the three participants' experiences in the classroom and in the family. Although not explicated in Alara's stories, the ways in which she saw herself as a language teacher were, to some extent, influenced by her identity as a wife. Because Alara's husband was also an ESL teacher, they made many career decisions together. Benjamin's experience as a father enabled him to develop a deeper understanding of child development. Similarly, Yvette's experience of learning English idioms and slang together with her daughter contributed to the development of her identity as an ESL teacher who is also a lifelong learner.

Benjamin's identity as a society member devoted to aiding children from low SES backgrounds enhanced his teacher core identity of supporting the traditionally underrepresented ELLs in his classroom. The identities in these two different contexts can be understood as the sub identities of his core identity as a person committed to advocating for social justice. Again, this core identity was constructed in his past experiences, belief

systems, and relational positions with others in his social spaces. Therefore, a thorough exploration of a teacher's professional identity cannot be done by simply discussing one or a few of their experiences without considering the complex interplays between them.

Imagined Identities, Professional Growth, and Career Commitment

Identity development involves the negotiation of habitus and desire (Darvin & Norton, 2015). A teacher's habitus is a product of their past and present, and their desire represents their ideal future. The construction of a teacher's desired self or imagined experiences may also be attributed to their internalizations of external conditions over time. Therefore, viewing teacher identity development from the interplays between a teacher's habitus and desire emphasizes the continual nature that links their past, present, and future. This section discusses how the participating teachers' imagined identities were developed, guided their professional growth, and contributed to their career commitment.

The Development of Imagined Identities

Research indicated that teachers' imagined identities are products of who they desire to be (Darvin & Norton, 2015) and are expected to be (Farrell, 2011; Sfard & Prusak, 2005) in the future. Therefore, a teacher's imagined identity, or who they think they will be in future moments, might consist of two types of sub identities - desired identities and designated identities (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Indeed, these two types of sub identities are developed through teachers' internalizations of external conditions in their past, present, and future social spaces. I argue that a designated identity represents a teacher's affinity for external conditions in the development of imagined identities, while a desired identity focuses more on an affinity for a teacher's inner world.

It Is also important to note that the concept of future (as well as past and present) does not only refer to the future moments at the time of the study, but can also be the future of a specific moment in the past. This understanding allows for a deep exploration of a teacher's

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past, present, and future at different moments across their career trajectories. The three teachers' stories highlight the development of their designated and desired identities and how these two types of imagined identities affected the further development of their present identities.

In Alara's stories, she noted that she had to follow a designated career path in Turkey, while her interactions with people in her social spaces in the United States provided her with another possibility of exploring the world and her potentials before deciding on what to do in her next career stage. Her internalizations of these two competing external voices led to her decision to teach in a completely new EFL context (i.e., South Korea), which impacted her later career. In addition, the external voices, or stakeholders' expectations of an EFL teacher's role, in South Korea created another designated teacher identity. More specifically, she doubted whether she could be a qualified language teacher due to her NNES status. Through her interactions with other NNES teachers who had the same concerns, this designated identity evolved into a desired identity as a capable teacher who was confident and prepared to work with students in the present and future moments.

Benjamin viewed schools as failure factories, which can be attributed to his participation in and observation of the policies, curriculum implementation, and teaching practices in his social spaces. Despite this, his own educational experiences allowed him to develop a strong belief system that guided his teaching practices to focus on problem-solving instead of using negative stimulation to punish students for misbehaviors. As a result, he developed a desired identity as an advocate for his ELLs and a teacher committed to students' long-term success. Similarly, Yvette's development of designated and desired identities involved the negotiations between her inner self and external conditions. As an example, the common EFL curriculum in Mexico focuses on the transmission of linguistic knowledge, but her teacher belief, as developed in her teaching and educational experiences, allowed her to

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focus language teaching on authentic, communicative purposes. The competing conditions in her external and inner worlds enabled her to develop desired identities as a teacher and teacher educator committed to reforming the existing curricula and teacher education programs in Mexico.

The three participants' stories highlight that a clear boundary that separates a teacher's desired and designated identities might not exist because both identities are products of their internalizations of external conditions and results of experiences in the past and present moments. However, the exploration of how teachers' imagined identities are constructed can add to the understanding of how their present identities are reconstructed as they move toward their ideal selves in the future. This movement might further lead to their motivation to invest in their professional growth through professional development or informal learning in their teaching career.

Investment in Professional Growth

A teacher's present and imagined identities may be in alignment or competition. As discussed in the previous section, the interplay between a teacher's present and imagined identities might create motivation to be actively involved in professional growth. Professional growth, in this study, refers to teachers' formal learning in the contexts of professional development programs and informal learning such as through reflective practice and interactions with individuals in their social spaces. The concept of investment, as presented in the theoretical framework, suggests that investment is at the core of identity construction, negotiation of ideologies, and development of capital (power) (Norton, 1995). Due to the complex nature of teacher identity, another possible way of viewing the relationships between identity and investment is that the interplays between a teacher's present and imagined identities may lead to further investment in professional growth. This section

discusses factors that resulted in the participating teachers' investment in professional growth and the impact of investment on their teacher identity development.

One key factor that impacted Alara's investment in professional growth was her interactions with a significant influencer, or more specifically, her husband. The fact that they made most of their career decisions together highlights how a teacher's identity outside of teaching contexts can shape how they see themselves as a teacher. As an example, after a few years of teaching as an ESL instructor at a university in the United States, they decided to explore the world, leading to their decision to teach EFL in South Korea. Thereafter, they decided to pursue their Ph.D. degrees in order to teach higher-level ESL courses and to further engage with teaching practices and research. Evident in Alara's stories is her investment in career growth was a result of negotiations between identities across social spaces and her efforts in closing the gap between her present and imagined identities.

Benjamin and Yvette are veteran teachers with over twenty years of language teaching experience. Despite this, their stories demonstrated competing patterns of professional growth. At the time of the study, Benjamin had a strong belief system developed in his past teaching and educational experiences. His teaching beliefs and developed identities exemplified an affinity for inner self that guided his professional growth through reflective practices. On the contrary, a through line in Yvette's stories was her core teacher identity as a lifelong learner. This core teacher identity allowed Yvette to actively seek learning opportunities in order to meet the needs of students in different contexts. As an example, after many years of teaching EFL in Mexico, she experienced a dissonance between her developed teacher belief and the new external conditions, in which students in a U.S. ESL classroom had diverse needs in language learning. This dissonance can be seen as a product of her competing present and designated identities. As a result of her rational negotiations of these competing identities, her understanding of language learner diversity evolved. Another

example of Yvette's professional growth was her engagement with professional development of educational technology to better support her students during the COVID-19 pandemic. These examples highlighted ways in which her core teacher identity impacted the negotiations between sub identities across time and space.

The examples discussed above showcase each participating teacher's unique pattern of the interplays between teacher identity and professional growth. Despite this, their stories underscore the significance of understanding their motivation in professional growth from an identity perspective. More specifically, learning takes place where a dissonance between habitus and desire (Darvin & Norton, 2015) develops, especially when such dissonance is at an intermediate level (Danielowich, 2012; Canipe, 2020). These three teachers demonstrated their particular ways of defining intermediate-level dissonances and how their competing habitus and desire were negotiated. Alara received support from significant influencers within (e.g., other NNES ESL teachers) and outside of teaching contexts (e.g., her husband) in her negotiation processes; Benjamin's developed belief system and affinity for the inner self guided his sense-making of the external conditions; Yvette's commitment to supporting student needs and core teacher identity as a lifelong learner led to her continual professional growth and learning. Therefore, the complex process of teacher identity development suggests that in-depth explorations of teachers' unique experiences across time and space are needed to help understand their investment in professional growth.

Rewarding Experiences and Career Commitment

Another factor that contributes to the construction of teachers' desired identity is the rewarding experiences gained from teaching practices. These rewarding moments shape and reinforce teachers' positive perceptions of being a teacher (Dassa & Derose, 2017), and thus enhance their career commitment. Not surprisingly, Alara and Benjamin both noted that their decisions to become a teacher and stay in their careers were never for the purpose of making

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monetary profits. Instead, evidence documented in these three teachers' stories is that many of their rewarding moments in teaching came from their interactions with students' success in learning and life.

For example, one of Alara's rewarding experiences was when the influence of her teaching was recognized and valued by her students. Benjamin noted a joyful moment when he observed an improvement in one of his students' reading proficiency. Similarly, Yvette shared how her interactions with diligent language learners who had strong commitments to learning impacted how she saw herself as a language teacher. These examples again highlight that the teachers' professional identities were further constructed through interactions with students in their social spaces. More specifically, these rewarding moments enhanced their positive images as teachers, which made teaching a sustainable career for them.

Implications for Teacher Education

The previously discussed findings emphasize the importance of understanding NNES ESL teachers' identity development by deeply exploring their experiences across time and space. In this section, I outline implications for teacher educators and teacher education researchers who work with NNES ESL teachers and teachers from other backgrounds. I discuss the vital roles of transcultural experiences and teachers' conceptions of power in supporting the continual development of teacher identity.

Rethinking Teachers' Transcultural Experiences

ESL teachers are more likely to encounter epistemic clashes that lead to identity struggles. In particular, their transcultural experiences may result in the development of multiple sub identities that are disconnected from one another (Lindahl & Yazan, 2019). The three teachers' stories highlighted how their transcultural experiences created constraints in their professional identity development. In particular, their transnational teaching and learning experiences initiated negotiations of teacher sub identities developed in dissonant

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educational systems, which required them to reconstruct the relationships between the inner self and external conditions across social spaces. Negotiating dissonant sub identities can sometimes be painful because, in this process, teachers often deconstruct their developed belief systems and reinterpret past experiences in order to make meaning of self in the new social space. Despite this, the dissonant sub identities might create motivation to further construct present identities. Therefore, ESL teachers' transcultural experiences can create both constraints and affordances for professional identity development.

It is important to note that the concept of culture should be viewed in a broader way than one's country of origin or ethnicity. Indeed, culture is the socially constructed values shared by some group of people (Peoples & Bailey, 1998). Applying this definition to identity research, this study emphasizes the significance of exploring teachers' (not only NNES ESL teachers') transcultural experiences in order to understand how their teacher identities are constructed across social spaces. For example, many teachers experience teacher preparation in a social space surrounded by predominantly white female peers and instructors. When they enter a classroom with a more diverse student population, they might perceive an identity clash caused by the transcultural experience between the teacher preparation program and the reality in the classroom. In order to understand the change in teachers' beliefs and teaching practice, teacher educators and teacher education researchers are encouraged to deeply explore how teachers negotiate their identities across competing social spaces.

External Conditions and Power

In addition to the competing social spaces, the gaps between the external voices and inner self can impact teacher identity development, as identity development is a sense-making process that links self and contexts (McCarthey & Moje, 2002). More specifically, teacher identity development involves both reflective and reflexive practices in which

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teachers internalize the external conditions and position themselves (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Coldron & Smith, 1999) in different social spaces. Therefore, a deep exploration of a teacher's professional development should focus on how they make sense of the power structures created by the external conditions and construct their relational positions between the inner self and the external world(s).

Among the many external conditions, ideology can play a significant role in teacher identity development. According to Darvin and Norton (2015), ideologies are "dominant ways of thinking that…stabilize societies while determining modes of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 79). The participating teachers in this study demonstrated different patterns of how they interact with ideologies in their external worlds. As an example, when Alara encountered the language ideology that privileged NNES ESL teachers, she felt powerless against the strong power structure as it was a governmental policy in South Korea. In this situation, she had to accept the existence of this ideology and seek help from other teachers in order to reconstruct her teacher identity. On the contrary, Benjamin's stories demonstrated how his strong teacher identity guided his ways of interacting with the ideology that undervalues his ELLs. This ideology further enhanced his core identity as a teacher committed to the success of students from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Unlike ideologies, teachers might have more agency to reshape external conditions at the micro levels (e.g., students' voices). For example, Yvette's identity as a diligent teacher led to her extra efforts in teaching, which changed how her students and colleagues viewed her as an ESL teacher despite her NNES status. As a result of the reshaped external voices, her teacher identity further developed.

Therefore, teachers' unique ways of interacting with external conditions are guided by their conceptions of relational positions with the power structures in their social spaces. Teachers make meaning of the gaps between who they think they are and are expected to be

(Sfrad & Prusak, 2005), which might lead to their decisions to accept, respond to, or reshape the external conditions. Teacher identity development is not only an inward process (through reflective practices) in which teachers internalize the external conditions, but also involves their outward actions (i.e., reflexive practices). Hence, teacher identities can shape and are actively shaped by power structures.

For teacher educators working with teachers experiencing the disconnected inner self and external world, it is important to activate teachers' agency in actively constructing their relational positions to develop a meaning system that works best for their situations. In other words, although sometimes ideologies seem hard to change, the impact of power is up to teachers' interpretations. Additionally, teachers might shape the external conditions (especially those at micro levels) through reflexive practices to reconstruct the power structure in their social spaces.

To achieve this goal, teacher educators can develop teacher preparation and professional development programs to encourage teachers' reflective and reflexive practices in professional identity development. In these programs, teachers can critically reflect on their relational positions with the external voices (policies, stakeholders' expectations, etc.) to negotiate and renegotiate who they are as teachers. Furthermore, by emphasizing the role of agency in reflexive practice, teachers can be empowered to reshape external voices at micro levels, or even ideologies at macro levels.

Teachers' Past, Present, and Future

The commonality of the three teachers' stories provides another possible way of understanding identity development. Viewing identity development as a continual process does not suggest a definite cause-effect relationship between one's past, present, and future. However, the lens of continuity helps to understand a teacher's present and imagined identities through exploring their past experiences. This understanding is rooted in Dewey's

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(1986) philosophy of experience and Clandinin and Connelly's (1990) framework of narrative inquiry. More specifically, teachers carry forward their experiences and belief systems constructed in the past to the present and future moments. As teachers proceed in their career trajectories, they internalize the continually emerging new external conditions. In this process, they reinterpret the meaning of experiences and reconstruct their belief systems, leading to the further development of present and imagined identities.

In addition, the three teachers' stories highlighted the ways in which their imagined identities created motivation to actively engage with professional growth to become the teachers they desire or are expected to be. Moreover, the teachers' stories about the rewarding moments demonstrated how their career commitment was enhanced by positive teaching experiences. Therefore, uncovering the interplays between a teacher's present identity and past experiences can provide additional lenses for teacher educators and teacher education researchers to support teachers to move forward from the present to the future. In teacher education and professional development programs, teacher educators can encourage teachers to construct a desired teacher identity based on their past and present experiences in order to guide teachers as they proceed in the teaching profession.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study had several limitations given the context of research and data collection techniques. In this section, I discuss two of the limitations including the study's focus on teachers' narrated identities and the employment of a purposeful sampling approach for participant recruitment. These limitations provide potential directions for future teacher identity research. In particular, I suggest that teachers' enacted identities can be further explored by collecting data in other contexts, such as from observation of classroom practice. Furthermore, recruiting participants from more diverse backgrounds may further add to the understanding of the different challenges teachers face in professional identity development.

Narrated Identities and Enacted Identities

The narrative-case study approach employed in this study is grounded in the concept of narrative-defined identity as "discursive counterparts" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 17) of one's experiences. In particular, the stories collected from the participants in this study are stories they told the researcher about themselves. Therefore, two limitations arise. First, the stories the participant told in this study only represented their teacher identities within the particular interactions in the context of research, but never truly reflected the stories they tell themselves about themselves through a self-dialogue process (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Second, their narrated identities may not be their full, lived experiences of engagement in practice (Wenger, 1998). It is important to note that identity development and enactment involve the participants' deliberate and critical awareness of the power relationships (Darvin & Norton, 2015) within and across social spaces.

In other words, the focus of this study was on "the dialectic between identity-building and other human relationships" (Sfard & Prusak, 2005, p. 17). Hence, identities discussed in this study were indeed the participants' narrated teacher identities within specific social spaces (with the researcher in the personal interviews and with other participants in the focus group interview) rather than their enacted identities in the classroom. More specifically, in the focus group interview, the participating teachers enacted pieces of their teacher identities that were co-constructed by other people in the same social space (i.e., the focus group interview setting). The stories told by the participating teachers might not be the full picture of their experiences but are important parts of their teacher identities.

Additionally, understanding teacher identities from their narratives may overlook relevant emotional factors. Storytelling is mostly a rational process. The stories teachers tell other people about themselves (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) are stories that teachers want to be heard. Moreover, despite that teacher identity development is more of a rational process,

teacher identity enactment might involve emotional factors or decisions that are subconsciously made.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the different facets of teacher identities, data can be collected from additional sources such as classroom observation and teaching notes. In addition, the narrative-defined identity theory (Sfard & Prusak, 2005) suggested that the power relation between the storyteller and the recipient provides additional lenses for understanding how teacher sub identities are developed. Therefore, it would be helpful to also include the stories that teachers tell other individuals (such as students and colleagues) in future research to further explore how narrated identities shift along with the change of power in social spaces.

Purposeful Sampling

This study employed a purposeful sampling approach (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) based on the theoretical framework and the purpose of the study. More specifically, several screening criteria (e.g., the participants' transcultural teaching experience and language learning experience) were considered during participant recruitment in order to explore the interplays between experiences in diverse settings and teacher identity development. Although implications were presented in an earlier section through the discussion of the transferability of the study, one limitation of this study is that the commonalities between the selected participants may not represent the full picture of the vast array of challenges that teachers face in their identity development process. For example, the participants in this study are all "survivors" of identity negotiations. In other words, the dissonant sub identities they perceived were at an intermediate level (Danielowich, 2019; Canipe, 2020) that made learning and professional growth possible. In some other cases, the dissonance between teachers' sub identities developed in two educational systems may be so pronounced that the discomfort results in teachers' decisions to move back to their countries of origin or quit the

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teaching profession. Therefore, future research that recruits teachers from more diverse backgrounds, not only limited to NNES teachers who teach ESL in an English-speaking country, may help to further unpack the influence of transcultural experiences in teacher identity development.

Conclusion

This study aimed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the interplays between NNES ESL teachers' multilevel experiences and professional identity development. Using identity as a tool to analyze teachers' stories provides additional lenses to understand the interactions between teachers' inner selves and external worlds across time and space. Alara, Benjamin, and Yvette's cases highlight that their negotiations of experiences and active positioning of selves are at the core of teacher identity development. The findings of this study offer suggestions for teacher educators working with teachers from diverse backgrounds and provide future directions for teacher education researchers to further support the development of teacher identity.

APPENDIX A: IRB CONSENT FORM

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Non-Native English-Speaking, English as a Second Language Teachers' Experiences and Professional Identity Development
Principal Investigator: Yuanyibo Zhang

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you do not have to participate. This document contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. The purpose of this project is to investigate the influence of non-native English-speaking, English as a second language (NNES ESL) teachers' varied linguistic, cultural, social, educational, and teaching backgrounds on their identity development and teacher knowledge. There are no expected risks to you as a result of participating in this study. You will not benefit directly from participating in this study.

In this project, you will be asked to participate in three in-person interviews regarding your experiences as an ESL teacher and in other social contexts (45-60 minutes each). You will also be offered the option to do the interviews via Zoom if this is what you would prefer. In the first interview, you will draw a personal and teaching timeline and discuss with the interviewer how the significant moments in your life and career trajectory affected your teacher identity development. The second interview is semi-structured, with some pre-developed and follow-up questions. The third interview will be a focus group interview, in which you will discuss with other participants your own experiences as an ESL teacher. With your permission, I would like to audiotape the interviews so that I can make an accurate transcript. Once I have made the transcript, I will erase the recordings. Your name will not be in the transcript or my notes. Data will also be collected from your course assignments, such as teaching philosophy statement in BME 530 or BME 698. Education records used by this research project are education records as defined and protected by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Your consent gives the researcher permission to access the records identified above for research purposes. Your name will not be used in any report. Identifiable research data will be encrypted and password protected. Your responses will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this code will be kept in an encrypted and password protected file. Only the research team will have access to the file. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list will be destroyed. Because of the nature of the data, it may be possible to deduce your identity; however, there will be no attempt to do so and your data will be reported in a way that will not identify you. Information that may identify you may be used for future research or shared with another researcher for future research studies without additional consent. The information that you provide in the study will be handled confidentially. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released or shared. Even though we will tell all participants in the study that the comments made during the focus group should be kept confidential, it is possible that participants may

repeat comments outside the group.

Whether or not you choose to participate in this project will have no effect on your relationship with NAU now or in the future. Your decisions will not affect your grades or employment status. If educational records are collected from a course you are currently enrolled in, data will not be analyzed until grades have been submitted.

As required by law, Northern Arizona University Institutional Review Board may review the research records for monitoring purposes.

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact *Yuanyibo Zhang at yz85@nau.edu*.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Human Research Protection Program at 928-523-9551 or online at http://nau.edu/Research/Compliance/Human-Research/Welcome/.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form, and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I affirm that I am at least 18 years of age and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

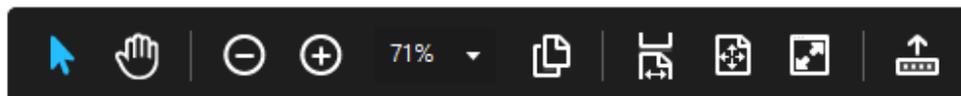|		
Printed name of subject	**Signature of subject**	**Date**

AGREEMENT TO BE AUDIORECORDED

Subject Signature:_____ Date:_____

AGREEMENT TO BE VIDEORECORDED

Subject Signature:_____ Date:_____

APPENDIX B: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Topic	Description	Example Question
Linguistic Background	Questions about how the participating teachers' NNES status affects their teacher identity development	Do you think your status as a non-native English-speaking ESL teacher has some influence on your teaching practice and self-image as an ESL teacher? Please explain.
Cultural Background	Questions aimed at understanding the conflicts or alignments between the participants' cultural values and the Western epistemology	How do you negotiate your cultural values and the western teaching philosophy? Do they conflict? If so, do the conflicts affect how you see yourself as a teacher? Please elaborate.
Teaching Experience	Questions focused on unpacking how the participants' teacher identities are developed in different teaching contexts.	Imagine this scenario that an observer walks into your current ESL classroom. What does the classroom look like? What did your classroom look like when you first started teaching?
Educational Experience	These questions aim to explore the impact of teacher education and language learning experiences on identity development.	As an ESL teacher, would you consider your ESL learning experience as a positive or negative thing? Please elaborate.
Investment	Questions addressing participants' investment in professional learning	Why did you decide to pursue a graduate degree? How would/did the graduate studies benefit your teaching and the way how you see yourself as an ESL teacher?
Ideology	Questions that explore how the participants negotiate between ideologies and teacher identities	What are your perceptions of how society would expect an NNES ESL teacher's role? Do you think your students, parents, colleagues, and society might have different expectations of NNES and NES ESL teachers? If so, has your way of seeing yourself been affected by those expectations?

APPENDIX C: MODERATED FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Please introduce yourself to one another. Where are you originally from? What lagnauges do you speak? What is your ESL teaching experience? What is your educational experience?

2. Do you think your NNES status is a good or a bad thing for you? What impact does your NNES status have on who you think you are as an ESL teacher?

3. What are some biggest challenges you have ever experienced in your teaching career?

4. When you taught in different countries, was there any cultural shock or reverse cultural shock you have ever experienced?

5. Were there any external conditions that made you see yourself differently as a NNES ESL teacher?

6. Was there any other experience that had significantly impacted the way you saw yourself as an ESL teacher? Please elaborate.

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