10 Identity and Professional Development of First-year NNES Teachers: Two Case Studies

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Given the large population of international students pursuing graduate degrees in the US and thus becoming graduate instructors in U.S. institutions, it is critical to study how those non-native English-speaking (NNES) teachers construct their identities and develop their profession in the new discourse communities, especially during their first year of teaching. The complexity of academic socialization, which involves negotiating various cultures, competence and power relations (Her, 2005; Pavlenko, 2003), has warranted research into NNES teachers' experiences in English-speaking countries, and a great deal of this research focuses on identity issues. Furthermore, teacher identity has been recognized as a critical issue in teacher education with "identity" used as analytical lens to better understand teachers' development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In the literature of teacher education, Myron Friesen and Susan Belsey (2013) see an increasing emphasis on "the teacher as a person, and the interaction of personal and professional selves" (p. 23). Studies also show that the development of teacher identity is conducive to a teacher's decision-making (Beijaard et al., 2004), effectiveness (Sammons et al., 2007) and educational philosophy (Mockler, 2011). However, not many teacher identity studies focus on how NNES graduate instructors, who were not enrolled in teacher education programs, negotiate their identities as both students and teachers to develop their profession as educators in particular. For those instructors, their teacher identity can be more complex because they have not been systematically trained to be teachers but rely more on the learning from their own teaching experience and interacting with colleagues for professional development. Thus, their interactions with students and other peer NNES graduate instructors also play an important role in their teacher identity formation, but we still have insufficient understanding of how they learn to teach and develop their teacher identity.

Taking this into account, this research aims to explore the relationship between NNES teachers' identity formation and professional development, especially during their first year teaching. It focuses on two NNES graduate instructors who were teaching their first language (Chinese and Japanese respectively) and English academic writing simultaneously. Their unique experiences provided rich data for case studies of NNES teacher's identity construction and reconstruction along with their professional development. By positioning themselves differently in different classrooms the two focal graduate instructors constructed and reconstructed their teacher identities and developed professionally through individual efforts as well as peer support.

Because teachers' pedagogical decision-making is based on both institutional and biographical factors (Duff & Uchida, 1997), understanding the process of first-year NNES teachers' identity formation will also shed light on how those teachers improve their instructional strategies. The research adopted an interactionalist approach to explore how NNES teachers form identities and develop professionally by focusing on their interactions with peer instructors and students. Through those interactions, the first-year NNES teachers made sense of their own experiences and socialized themselves into the new discourse communities of teaching and studying. In addition, they employed individual agency to negotiate their identities through positioning themselves strategically in different interactional contexts.

A Dynamic View of Teacher Identity and NNES Teachers' Agency

Teacher identity has been a subject of interest in research on teacher education and development because learning to teach "involves not only discovering more about the skills and knowledge of language teaching but also what it means to be a language teacher" (Richards, 2010, p. 110). Recently, there has been an increase of research focused on language teachers' identities (Barkhuizen, 2016; Cheung et al., 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2019; Norton, 2016; Trent, 2010). Although challenges are found in defining the concepts of identity and teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), literature on language teacher identity has three primary characteristics: 1) it understands identity as multidimensional and shifting; 2) identity is situated in social, cultural and political contexts; 3) and identity is constructed and negotiated through discourse (Zacharias, 2010). This line of research helps develop new interpretations of "identity," which is recognized as not static, unitary or internally coherent; rather it is pluralistic, shifting, and even in conflict (Miller, 2009; Tsui, 2011). Such understanding of teacher identity foregrounds the importance of

agency in identity formation and provides the premise for teacher identity research, i.e., that teachers are internal beings who can actively pursue the identities they want to achieve and transform the identities that are negatively assigned to them (Park, 2012; Reis, 2011; Zhang & Zhang, 2014). In this particular study, the examination of first-year NNES teachers' identity and professional development also relies on this dynamic view of teacher identity. It focuses on how NNES teachers construct and reconstruct multiple identities through their discourse and practice (Varghese et al., 2005) during their first year teaching English academic writing. Identity in this research is operationalized as the ways in which NNES teachers talk about themselves, their roles and their teaching practices, as well as how they position themselves in the social and political contexts of work.

Identity is closely related to social, cultural and political contexts (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Mockler, 2011), which means that researchers need to take into consideration the contextual elements of teacher identity construction such as interlocutors, academic settings and the political environment. This view of identity is also relevant to the study of NNES teachers' identity because many NNES teachers tend to experience professional and social marginalization both inside and outside schools through different discourses (Casanave & Schecter, 1997; Johnston, 1999; Widodo et al., 2020; Yazan & Rudolph, 2018). Accordingly, Laura Ahearn's (2001) construct of agency—"the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (p. 112) is useful in studying NNES teachers' identities because language, culture, and society are mutually constituted and agency could also contribute to identity construction and reconstruction. Although the validity of the dichotomy between NES and NNES has been problematized by many scholars (e.g., Faez, 2011b; E. Lee & Canagarajah, 2019; Liu, 2013) and the assumption that the ideal teacher of English is a NES has been criticized as the "native speaker fallacy" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 185), the dominant "either/or discourse" (i.e., NES or NNES teacher) in English language teaching unavoidably results in negative impacts on NNES teachers' self-esteem (Faez, 2011a; Selvi, 2009). It divides English language teachers into two social categories that enjoy different power and status, and NNES teachers are "constantly reminded of their NNES group membership in their own comparison with peers, their confidence about academic work, and interaction with faculty and students" (Varghese et al, 2005, p. 25).

Manka Varghese's (2004) study reinforced the agency of individual teachers in the process of identity formation to ease the tension between assigned identity and claimed identity. In the case of NNES teachers, re-imagination and repositioning of themselves allows teachers "not only to view themselves positively but also to transmit these views to others and to engage in active

attempts to reshape the surrounding contexts" (Pavlenko, 2003, p. 266). Research has demonstrated that NNES teachers benefit more from a friendly environment with collegial support in terms of confidence gaining and professional development (e.g., Braine, 2010; Mahboob, 2010). Nevertheless, from a poststructuralist view, individuals as agents are able to develop alternative understanding of self and visions about the world. The environment may impose authoritative discourse upon NNES teachers (e.g., they are not as competent as NES teachers or don't have the legitimacy to teach the English language) but they can also develop a sense of agency to open new possibilities for understanding their teaching as well as their self.

Moreover, many new teachers struggle to reconcile their conflicting identities as student and teacher (Britzman, 1991; Friesen & Belsey, 2013). Similarly, for NNES graduate instructors of English academic writing in this research, they face more challenges to balance their multiple identities such as a learner of English language while also a teacher of English writing. The attitudes of the people around them will considerably influence their consciousness of their status as NNESs. Therefore, seeking membership in a group that is supportive will help NNES teachers forge a positive identity as a teacher (Johnson, 1992; Norton, 2016). In this research, the focal NNES teachers joined a study group in which they exchanged teaching resources with other NNES teachers and supported each other intellectually as well as emotionally. This study group played an important role in those NNES teachers' self-identification and development of professional identity.

Drawing upon Vygotskian sociocultural theory, Davi S. Reis (2011) explored how a NNES teacher developed his professional identity and established his legitimacy as a qualified English writing instructor against the native speaker (NS) fallacy. He found that a teacher preparation program with a supportive environment would enable NNES teachers to reshape their instruction "in response to more empowering conceptualizations of self" (Reis, 2011, p. 141). The NS fallacy often causes a sense of professional inadequacy for NNES teachers to become confident instructors (Llurda, 2005), but Lia D. Kamhi-Stein (2013) argued that NNESs could achieve positive professional identity with legitimacy by being empowered to recognize and contest ideological discourses that discriminate and marginalize them implicitly or explicitly. Furthermore, researchers and teacher educators have proposed collaborations between NES and NNES teachers to build a positive and productive learning community for both (e.g., de Oliveira & Clark-Gareca, 2017; Matsuda, 1999). The collaborative model can also be applied to NNES teachers among themselves, where NNES teachers are given voice about their stories and are empowered by interactions with peers.

A sociocultural perspective on identity construction and transformation indicates that one's identity arises from the dialectical relationship between the individual and the social context (Cheung et al., 2014; Valsiner, 1998; Wetherell & Maybin, 1996). The professional development of NNES teachers involves their awareness of how they position themselves as teachers and how they are positioned by the public discourse: "as teachers develop new beliefs and acquire new attitudes to their practice, as they adopt new pedagogies, and as they see themselves taking on certain roles in their work contexts, they construct new identities as teachers" (I. Lee, 2013, p. 331). Through critical reflection and collaborative inquiry about their belief and attitudes towards the public discourse, teachers might have a better idea of how to position themselves in both the local and the broad contexts. In particular, NNES teachers can benefit from social mediation and collaboration in conceiving of and internalizing identity options that lead to more professional agency (Reis, 2011). Thus, how individuals dialogically engage with hegemonic ideologies and confront them with instructional strategies is also crucial in the identity formation for NNES teachers.

Methodology

This study on how NNES teachers develop professionally is guided by the following questions: 1) How do first-year NNES graduate instructors negotiate multiple identities (e.g., from graduate students to graduate instructors and from NES language teachers to NNES writing teachers) by positioning themselves in different classrooms? 2) How do they construct and reconstruct teacher identities and develop professionally through individual efforts and peer support?

This chapter comes from a larger qualitative study, which investigated how a group of graduate instructors of English academic writing at a research university in the Midwestern US constructed and reconstructed their identities to improve themselves in the first year of teaching. It looks closely at the cases of two focal teachers who were teaching their first language (as NES language teachers) and English academic writing (as NNES writing teachers) at the same time. My work focuses on the links that teachers see between their previous educational experiences, their multiple identities, and their teaching practices in the classroom.

Research Setting

The setting of this study is a first-year writing (FYW) course for ESL (English as a second language) students. This course is offered in the same program as

regular FYW courses, but includes a stronger focus on helping students address particular linguistic concerns. Accordingly, the instructors of the ESL version of this course are expected to have knowledge of second language writing and pedagogy. The FYW course is required for all undergraduate students at the university and only those students whose English placement test scores meet the departmental standard are eligible to take it. The ESL FYW students completed previous studies in languages other than English and most of them are international students. The course takes place for 50 minutes three days a week and the enrollment cap for each class is 15 students.

Participants

Rachel (self-chosen pseudonym) and Jason (self-chosen pseudonym) were two graduate instructors of this course. Both of them are NNES and taught the ESL FYW course for the first time when the study was conducted. Meanwhile, they had been teaching their first language (Chinese and Japanese respectively) at the same university. They were selected as the focal teachers for this chapter because of their unique experiences of teaching first language and second language simultaneously. In particular, I looked into how their identities shifted and transformed when they were positioned as NNES and NES in different language classrooms.

Rachel is from China, in her early thirties. She came to the US for graduate school and already got a master's degree in Chinese language pedagogy from the university where she was studying and working. During her master's studies, she taught Chinese language to college students as a graduate instructor. Rachel was pursuing a Ph.D. degree in English language education when she participated in this study. Although it was her first year teaching English academic writing at college level in the US, she had been teaching the Chinese course in the same university for two years.

Jason is from Japan, in his late twenties. He received an MA in education in another university in the US and came to the university where this study was conducted to pursue his Ph.D. in the same program as Rachel did. Jason had extensive experience teaching Japanese as a foreign language in different U.S. universities and was teaching Japanese courses when he was assigned to teach the ESL FYW course for the first time.

Neither Rachel or Jason had experiences of teaching English academic writing at college level before, and they were enrolled in a practicum on teaching of composition when interviewed for this study. The practicum is required for all first-year graduate instructors of FYW but the instructors of the ESL version would be trained with a focus on working with ESL students.

Data Collection and Analysis

To understand how the focal teachers position themselves in the social context of their work, I observed the writing classes that the participants taught, spending five hours in each classroom throughout the semester. The Chinese and Japanese language classes were not observed due to lack of permission, but both the teachers talked about their language classes in the interview to provide an idea about how they teach their first language. Evaluative observation forms and ethnographic field notes are used for each observation. Those forms and notes documented the teachers' teaching practices and interactions with students in the classroom. I also conducted audio recorded interviews with the instructors at the end of the semester asking about their relationship with the students, experiences in the classroom, self-development, and their perspectives on the teacher identities. Each interview lasted about 90 minutes. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, after which I coded each transcript and sorted codes into overarching themes including teacher role and positioning, instructional practice and self-reflection, individual efforts and peer support for professional development. Additionally, I selected classroom data that exemplified trends in improvement of instructional strategies that I observed. For example, how the teachers used plain English rather than the sophisticated language in the textbook to explain a point of knowledge in composition so as to make it easier for ESL students to understand, and how they pose analytical questions to facilitate students' discussion and learning. Then I combined my observations with the interview data to illustrate how first-year NNES teachers develop professionally with individual efforts as well as peer support.

Findings

Rachel and Jason's multiple identities (such as NNES and NES, doctoral students and graduate instructors) shifted and transformed during their first year of teaching English academic writing but they had navigated their own ways to negotiate the conflicting identities and constructed positive teacher identities to develop themselves professionally. This section will discuss how the two focal teachers constructed and reconstructed teacher identities by positioning themselves differently in different classrooms (NES language teachers vs. NNES writing teachers) and how they developed professionally through individual efforts as well as peer support. Looking into the two NNES teachers' experiences of first-year teaching also sheds light on what influence teachers' attitudes, beliefs and decision-making process in their everyday classroom practices (Zacharias, 2010).

Negotiating and Reconstructing Teacher Identities

Pervious educational experiences will, to a great extent, shape teachers' perception of good teaching and influence their self-positioning in the classroom. As international graduate students functioning in their second language, Rachel's and Jason's experiences enabled them to shuttle between different teaching contexts and be sympathetic with the ESL students they were teaching. More importantly, their dual identity as student teachers made them tend to consider teaching from students' perspective. In the interview data, teacher-student relationships stood out as a major concern in their teaching. Both of the participants wanted to be the kind of teacher that they longed to have as a student and the differences between the teacher-student relationship in their home country and that in the US also had an impact on their expectation of the relationship with their own students. As Jason related,

> . . . back in my country, teachers have more authority . . . so it's hard to reach to our professors in Japan. I mean, it's OK to ask questions but not, not many people do that just because they feel more distance between students and teachers. But here, . . . we get to interact with each other more often. I think that's makes our relationship closer.

Similarly, Rachel also felt the distance between teachers and students during the college years in her home country:

> I have never had instructors who are graduate students because in my college it's always professor . . . older professor . . . I have questions to ask and I really cannot find the answer then I might go to them but not for other concerns . . . . If it is not necessary, I don't want to bother them because I think . . . they are professors and I feel there's a distance between me and them so if I never had that kind of relationship . . .

From those quotes, we can tell that both Rachel and Jason wanted to make themselves accessible and supportive to the students. Jason used the words "friendly" and "open" to describe the ideal relationship he would like to have with his students while Rachel described her as a "cheerleader" in class and positioned herself as a mentor rather than an instructor: "I try to be more like a mentor because I experienced a process they are going through right now so I think from that perspective I know what they are thinking . . ." It is worth noting that although they preferred to have stronger teacher-student relationship, Rachel and Jason embraced mixed feelings about the closeness

with the students, which sometimes would also result in students' trying to challenge them or negotiate about the course policies. As Rachel noted, "I'm trying to be helpful but they would think they can negotiate with me and that would be one weakness in managing the class." Jason felt that students often did not respect him as a teacher, though he enjoyed greetings from the students when they ran into each other outside the classroom. As can be seen from these examples, it became apparent that a crucial part of the two participants' teacher identity construction concerned their roles as teachers and students and how to position themselves in the classroom in a way that balanced authority with approachability.

Interestingly, the interviews with Rachel and Jason also revealed that they felt the same level of comfort teaching their first language courses (as NES teachers) as compared with the English writing course (as NNES teachers). Rachel admitted that she felt more confident teaching Chinese while Jason felt that he had more authority when teaching Japanese as a native speaker.

> Rachel: It's because I'm the native speaker so I feel comfortable even tell them I don't know this or I never heard about this but you might be right . . . but I don't feel comfortable to say that in the English writing class. I don't feel comfortable to tell them I have never heard about this . . . I try to make them feel or believe like I know everything you are talking about, which is not true.

> Jason: . . . when I teach Japanese, especially this semester, I teach Japanese 101. So they are zero level. So everything I say they believe it . . . But in the English class, they already know some maybe basic English or some of them are more proficient in terms of speaking. So, when I explain something, . . . I sometimes feel that they don't really believe me because . . . I speak less fluently than some of them do . . . And also I'm a native speaker of Japanese, so I have more authority (in the Japanese class).

Both the participants were more confident teaching their first languages, and they recognized that the experiences of teaching their first language influenced their pedagogy of teaching English academic writing as an NNES teacher.

Research shows that many NNES teachers feel their confidence and authority in the classroom is threatened and they are often disempowered by their students' stereotype of an authentic English teacher (e.g., Widodo et

al., 2020; Zhang & Zhang, 2014). The authoritative discourse of the program they study or teach in constructs them as NNES teachers with low status and less power, but marginalized individuals such as NNES teachers can actively change the status quo through local teaching practice and at the same time develop themselves professionally (Simon-Maeda, 2004).

Self and Peer Support for Professional Development

Despite the challenges in first-year teaching, the participants in the study illustrated how they improved their teaching practice through both individual and collective efforts. Such improvement also helped them to construct more positive teacher identities for their teaching career. On top of that, the instructional strategies that those teachers adopted (based on either personal experience or peer support) reflected their identity transformation during the process of professional development.

As NNES teachers in the US, Rachel and Jason agreed that winning students' trust and establishing legitimacy was very important for them, especially when they faced negative judgements due to their accents. They had attempted to deal with student prejudice by sharing personal stories as second language learners with the ESL students and referencing authorities in the field. Personal experience learning English, a unique asset of NNES teachers, served as a way of demonstrating their development from a novice language learner to a successful one. It also enabled Rachel to form a stronger bond with the students: "I guess my strength (of being an NNES teacher) is I also experienced (what the students have experienced) so I know why they are doing that and what they might think difficult in doing that, so they would buy what I say because I know what you are thinking." In addition, Jason tapped into pedagogical theories that validated language difference in the classroom. With these strategies, Rachel and Jason were able to build a positive relationship with their students and gain credibility in their own classrooms.

Since teaching writing to ESL students also involves teaching culture, Rachel and Jason had to research into specific elements of U.S. culture that they had little knowledge about in the textbooks and spent more time preparing lessons in order to teach with better understanding of the content. For example, when teaching the five analytical moves (from *Writing Analytically by Rosenwasser and Stephen*)—Suspend Judgement, Define Significant Parts & How They Are Related, Make the Implicit Explicit, Look for Patterns, and Keep Reformulating, which are based on a Western epistemology, Jason designed a series of visuals himself to help students understand the concepts such as suspending judgement, and making the implicit explicit. Moreover, they would

ask NES colleagues about the cultural references that they did not know. Jason found this collaboration very helpful and not only beneficial to them but also to the NES teachers, because the NES teachers could also figure out what part of the teaching materials might not make sense to their students from different cultures. Most of the time, Rachel and Jason would look for examples that were relevant to their students' culture and life rather than adopting the exact examples in the U.S.-centered textbook. As Tyrone Howard (2001) suggested, culturally relevant teaching can promote students' motivation and NNES teachers have advantages in terms of cross-cultural competence.

The participants' strategy to deal with anxieties as first-year NNES teachers was to build self-confidence as well as rapport with the students. For example, one student in Jason's class also wanted the instructors to help him improve vocabulary complexity, sentence variety and stylistic choices of writing. However, as an ESL writer himself, Jason knew it was not something an NNES can learn within a short period of time. Explaining this to his students, he provided more resources along with guidance in using them in hope that students could develop their writing over time. Rachel also shared her own experiences as an ESL student and told the students that they were learning together and she was more than willing to help them with all her capacity. Through reflecting on their experience as teachers in different language classrooms and as students in different countries, the participants employed agency to negotiate and reconstruct the multiple and even conflicting identities across contexts. As their teacher identities shifted and transformed in different teaching contexts, they were also able to build positive relationship with students and became more confident NNES teachers in the US.

> Rachel: I think it's getting better and better. The first a few weeks were more difficult as I felt myself not ready even though I spent the whole summer preparing for this course. I was very self-conscious as an NNES teacher in the FYW class and always worry about how my students perceive me. Do I know enough about the English language and English writing? What if the student asked a question and I don't have the answer? Because in many Asian countries including my home country, teachers are like "sages" who are expected to know everything . . . But now, I realized that if I am being sincere and supportive, students are willing to learn with me, not "through" me.

> Jason: The first semester (of teaching a new course) is always challenging because you are not familiar with the (teaching)

content. For me, it is also a different group of students and I need to think more about what they need. In my Japanese classes, students want me to teach more about the language techniques and maybe also Japanese culture, because they see me as a native speaker, an expert on the language and the culture behind it. But in the FYW class, most of them are international and ESL students, and I need to overcome the tendency to see my NNES background as a disadvantage, which often makes me nervous. In fact, I noticed that my ESL students appreciated I sharing my own experiences of learning English academic writing as an NNES. My understanding of their linguistic challenges also made them trust me.

Moreover, both Rachel and Jason were enrolled in the practicum on teaching FYW and they formed a study group with other first-year NNES teachers for peer support. The members of the study group met regularly to check in with each other, and they developed teaching materials together. They also shared resources and exchanged ideas about curriculum and pedagogy. The study group, as a supplement to the practicum, contributed to the professional development of those first-year teachers in many ways. While the study group created a discourse community where NNES teachers could share their experiences and feel valued, both Rachel and Jason still expected more guidance from the practicum. They sought explicit directions from the program director and advanced teachers, who were all NES teachers. Rachel explained,

> They've got lot of resources over there. We don't even know when to use that . . . and also we don't really know whether we are doing the right thing because all of us (first-year teachers of English academic writing) are guessing but I mean we as a group is very helpful, like the way we support each other.

Here Rachel was saying that they were offered many teaching materials from the classic version of FYW, which is usually taught by NES teachers to NES students. Nevertheless, those materials were not necessarily making sense to NNES students or even teachers due to cultural or linguistic barriers. Therefore, the NNES teachers in the study group worked together to adapt those materials and made them more helpful to ESL students.

> Rachel: For example, when teaching visual analysis, the teacher (of the classic version of FYW) shared with me a few posters she used as examples to guide students to analyze the visual el-

ements. I appreciate it that she shared her lesson plan, but those posters contain some cultural signs that many students who are not from the US would not get the meaning. So, we (NNES teachers in the study group) worked together to find some other posters from different cultures so that students from various cultural backgrounds could feel them more relevant. I myself also felt more comfortable teaching with the posters we found because they reflected a wider range of cultural perspectives and some of them aligned with my cultural identity.

Jason acknowledged the usefulness of the practicum as well as the study group, but he also pointed out that more sharing and communication with the experienced teacher, most of whom happened to be NES teachers, can be added to improve the practicum. On the contrary, he was completely satisfied with the study group consisting of NNES teachers and had no further suggestions on that.

> I learned a lot from both practicum and this study group . . . I have no suggestion for the study group, but practicum . . . maybe it's sometimes better to have more experienced (NES) teachers…so that we can see what they are saying based on their experience.

Discussion and Conclusion

Teacher identity has now been widely recognized as a crucial component in teaching and classroom practice (Tsui, 2011; Zacharias, 2010). The identities that teachers bring with them into the classroom will influence the learning dynamic and the interpersonal interactions in the class (Boomer, 1998). As Lawrence Jun Zhang and Donglan Zhang (2014) pointed out,

> teachers' identities are constructed by their own practice in conjunction with the professional knowledge and expertise they bring to the workplace and the work they do. Meanwhile, their identities are also constructed by their students through the words students use and the behaviors and actions that embody their attitudes toward their teachers. (p. 119)

Ultimately, Rachel and Jason had more commonalities than differences in their experiences as NNES teachers. It can be seen that the NNES identity stood out in their multiple teacher identities. Bonny Norton and Kelleen Toohey (2011) argued that language can be a site of struggle in NNES teachers'

journey of professional development. Nevertheless, both of the participants managed to transform the drawbacks related to this identity into strength in teaching. Although they faced many challenges as first year NNES writing teachers in the US, Rachel and Jason spared no effort to become the ideal teachers that they wanted to have when they were students. Douwe Beijaard and colleagues (2004) contended that teachers develop their professional identities through interpretations and reinterpretations of who they are and who they would like to become. They built on their experiences of teaching their first language and drew upon cross-cultural competence to improve their teaching practice. They also adapted the U.S.-centered teaching materials to make them more inclusive and suitable for ESL students with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which demonstrated that NNESs had their own advantages and could tap into the resources they bring with them transnationally into the classroom.

More than often, NNES teachers have lower professional status than NES teachers because English language teaching as a profession has positioned NES as the ideal English teacher (Moussu & Llurda, 2008). As Zhang and Zhang (2014) contend, when standards of English are defined in favor of native speakers, NNES teachers' identities are closely related to how NES colleagues and students regard their performance and competence vis-à-vis the legitimacy of their professional practice. Although NNES teachers have been acknowledged to have more metalinguistic awareness due to their language learning experiences, they usually lack the confidence and information to navigate the sociopolitical contexts in which they teach English (Park, 2012). Moreover, the NNES/NES dichotomy tends to neglect the multiple identities of NNES teachers that might be drawn upon as strengths. Therefore, NNES teachers often struggle to gain credibility for themselves as qualified English language teachers. Pursuing graduate degrees in English-speaking countries and learning from NES colleagues are common ways NNES teachers (e.g., the participants in this study) take to seek credibility and reconstruct their identities as English language teachers. However, they sometimes tend to underestimate their own linguistic and cultural assets which could actually become their advantages in teaching English. In this study, both Rachel and Jason had made good use of their multilingual and multicultural background to adapt teaching materials developed by NES teachers. Meanwhile, they were also eager to work with NES teachers and learn from them.

Furthermore, the findings of this research reinforced that teacher identity also plays an important role in professional development. Especially for NNES teachers, they usually have to negotiate and reconstruct their identities according to the different contexts they are studying and teaching. Carla Dawn Nelson

(2003) found that attention to NNES teachers' shifting identities can help enhance their confidence and give them a sense of wholeness of life. For instance, the teachers in this study drew upon their own identities to enrich their teaching resources and built a healthy relationship with their students, which has been shown to ultimately be more effective than clinging to NES norms (Amin, 2005; Morgan, 2004). In addition to their individual efforts, it is worth mentioning that peer support is also vital for those teachers to develop professionally. In the study group formed by their cohort of NNES teachers, they shared resources, exchanged ideas and met regularly to make sure no member was isolated or left behind. The study group created a discourse community where those teachers helped each other to gain confidence and built on their own identities for instructional improvement rather than just following the NES norms.

Critical theories inform the complexities of the construction of NES and NNES, which involves power relationship among different language status and races of the speakers. Many researchers have proposed that critical pedagogy and cross-culture competence need to be encompassed in the curriculum of teacher education programs (e.g., Kamhi-Stein, 2013; Pavlenko, 2003). Narges Sardabi and colleagues (2018) found in their study that the teacher education program attempting to help novice teachers develop a critical perspective could empower them to "be engaged in the effort to shape their values and beliefs, and to produce their own critical philosophy of teaching" (p. 621). Besides, cross-culture competence needs to be promoted in teacher education because it will enable teachers to better understand how students' way of learning and knowing are shaped by their native or home culture and enhance their instructional practice accordingly (Woolworth & Thirumurthy, 2012). This chapter argues that cross-cultural competence and critical self-reflections are essential for NNES teachers' professional development. The environment may impose authoritative discourses upon NNES teachers, which sometimes affects their identity formation negatively. Nevertheless, engaging with critical reflections on their own experiences of teaching and learning across different cultural contexts will "open up new discourses and offer new identity options" (Ilieva, 2010, p. 362) that allow them to develop agency as professionals. The sense of agency will also provide opportunities for NNES teachers to develop "alternative instructional practices that are compatible with positive imagined identities" (Ilieva, 2010, p. 362).

In addition to practicum and formal workshops for teacher training and development, program administrators should encourage and provide more opportunities for NNES teachers to communicate and collaborate with each other. NNES teachers can work together to collect more resources for students and share effective teaching practices to improve their profession collabora-

tively. It is also important for NNES teachers, especially first-year teachers, to support each other psychologically and construct positive teacher identities against the negative public discourse which tends to marginalize them. Those opportunities could be informal meetings or a shared working space where teachers are able to socialize among themselves. It will be also beneficial to encourage collaborations between NNES teachers and NES teachers (de Oliveira & Clark-Gareca, 2017; Matsuda, 1999), which would support teachers in building a positive and productive learning community for all.

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